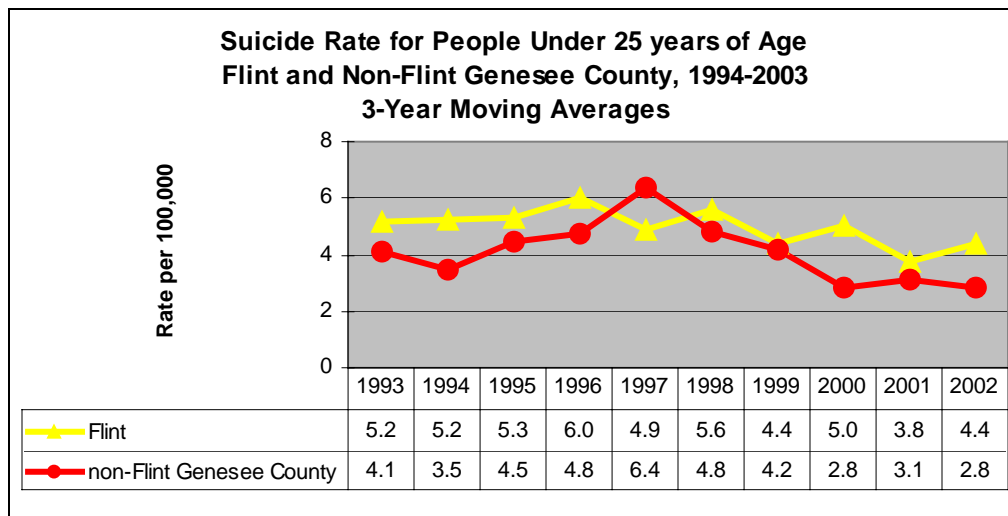




**Mission:** Improve the quality of life for children and families in Genesee County through assessment, public awareness and advocacy.

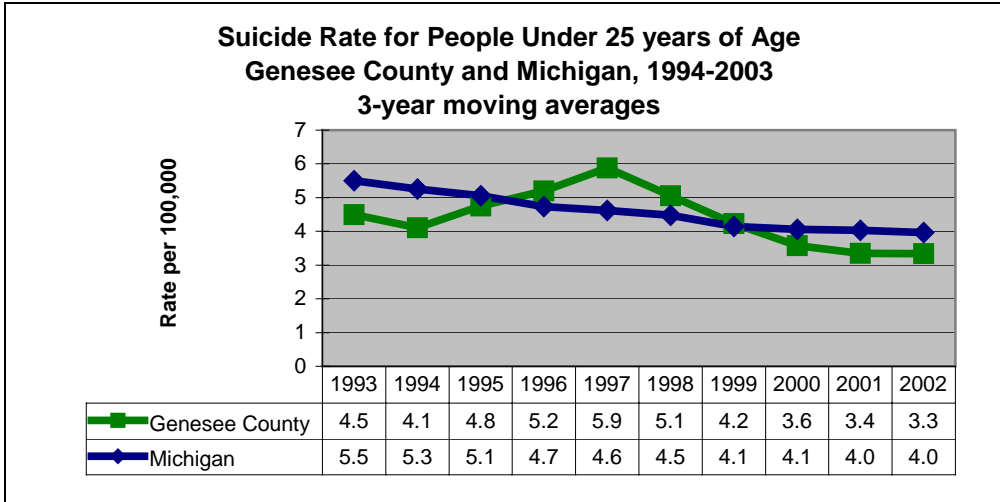
## Fact Sheet 2.4 Youth Suicide and Homicide

Suicide among young people, below the age of 25, is a major cause of death in the United States. Rates of suicide among youth are unacceptable since it is not a natural cause and is viewed as mostly preventable. Due to low numbers, it is statistically meaningless to attempt to calculate an incidence rate based upon a single year's data for even a fairly large such city as Flint. For this reason, rate based upon the-three year moving average number of suicides is used to describe trends over time. Historically, there is consensus that suicides, especially in youth, are underreported.



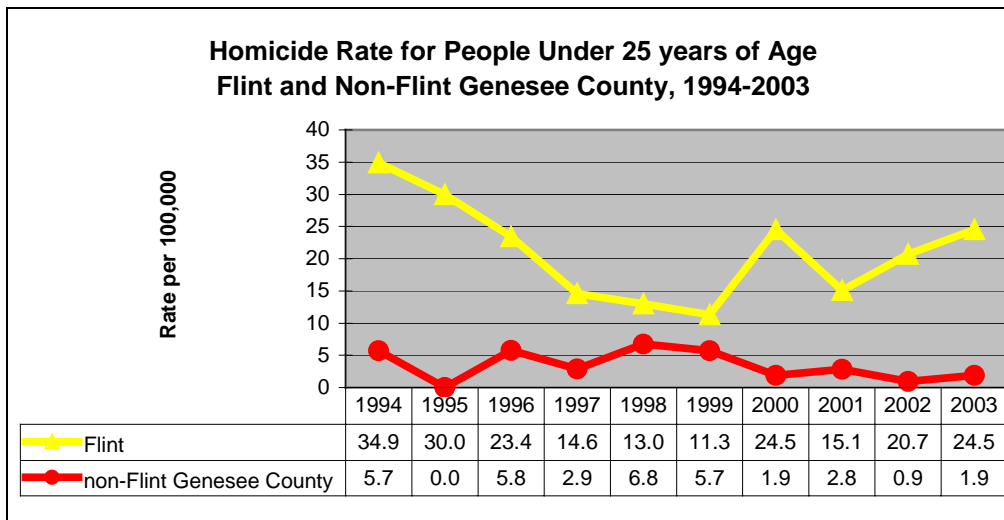
- The suicide rate for young people in Flint and Genesee County outside of Flint has fallen from 1992-94 through 2001-03.
- With the exception of the period 1996-98, the suicide rate among young people in Flint was higher than the rate in Genesee County outside of Flint.

**Fact Sheet 2.4: Youth Suicide and Homicide continued...**



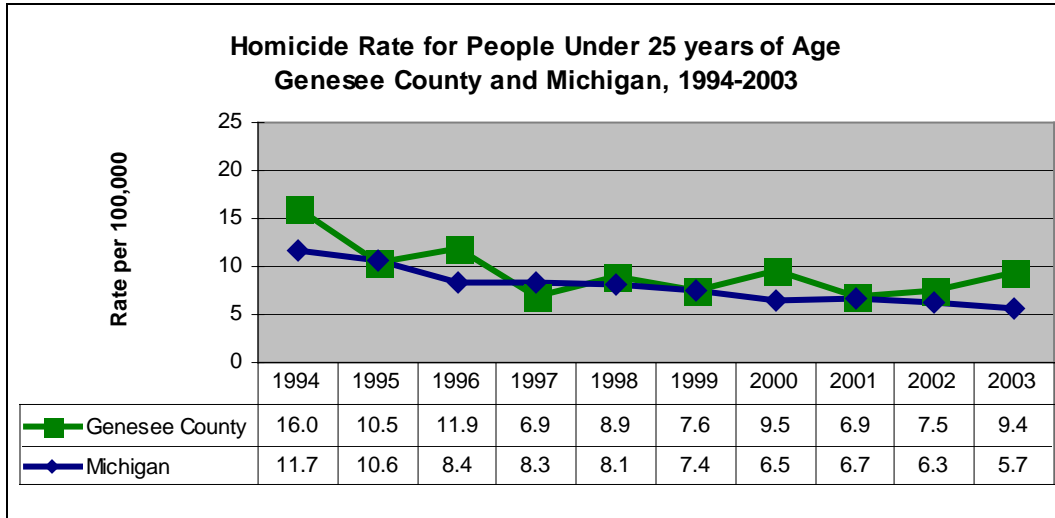
- The rate in Michigan declined by 28% in the period, and by 26% in Genesee County as a whole.

Homicide is much more common than suicide among young people in this age group, and, for that reason, it is possible to calculate one-year rates per 100,000 young people.



- In 1994, the homicide rate in Flint was quite high – 34.0 per 100,000 young people less than 25 years old. By 2003, it fell to 24.5 per 100,000.
- The homicide rate in Genesee County outside of Flint has been consistently quite low, and was 1.9 per 100,000 in 2003.

## Fact Sheet 2.4: Youth Suicide and Homicide continued...



- The homicide rate in Michigan has been falling steadily from 11.7 to 5.7 per 100,000.
- While the homicide rate in Michigan fell by 51.3% in the period, it fell only by 30% in Flint.
- In 2003, the homicide rate among young people in Flint was 430% higher than that in Michigan as a whole, and 1,305% the rate in Genesee County outside of Flint.

### BEYOND THE NUMBERS

The numbers and graphs cannot depict the emotional background against which they are set. Hopelessness needs to be addressed on many fronts – school, community, and faith-based organizations. There is also a tendency to underreport suicides, such as those resulting from accidents. These deaths may be attributed to blunt force trauma or chest injuries, when in actuality they were the results of deliberate acts.

### EXAMPLES OF INTERVENTION EFFORTS

- **Mott Children's Health Center's Columbia University TeenScreen Program** - Provides suicide/mental health screenings at Northwestern, Longfellow, Accelerated Academics Academy, Beecher and Flint Schools of Choice. Screenings are also available at Mott Children's Health Center. In addition to screening for risk factors, another goal is to help communities develop permanent mental health screening centers.
- **School-based Health Centers** - Operate at Northwestern High School, Longfellow Middle School and Beecher High School. Their services include services by mental health specialists.
- **Youth Empowerment Services (YES)** - Focuses on reducing youth violence in the Holmes School district.
- **Youth Violence Prevention Center** - Works with youth and community groups to address issues of violence in the community.

**Source:** Michigan Department of Community Health and the Genesee County Health Department.

**Note:** There was a change in the coding systems with which those deaths were classified in 1999. These systems were substantially similar, however.

**Revised:** 12/5/2005