

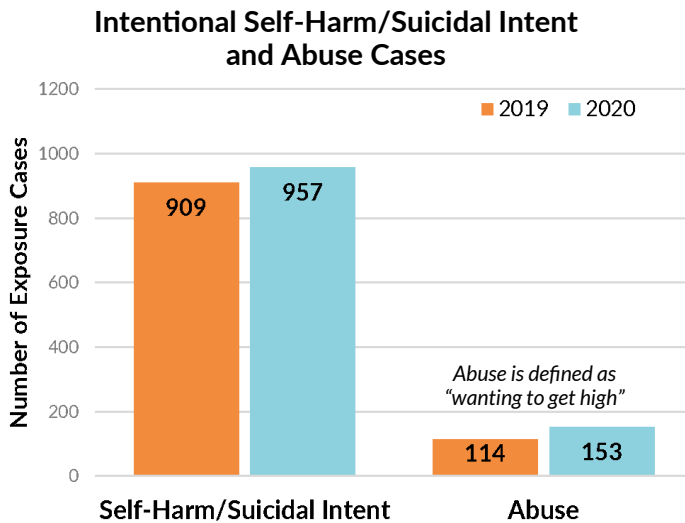


Exposure Trends During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Special Focus: Adolescent Intentional Self-Poisoning

Issued August 12, 2020 | Contact mryuk@wapc.org with questions

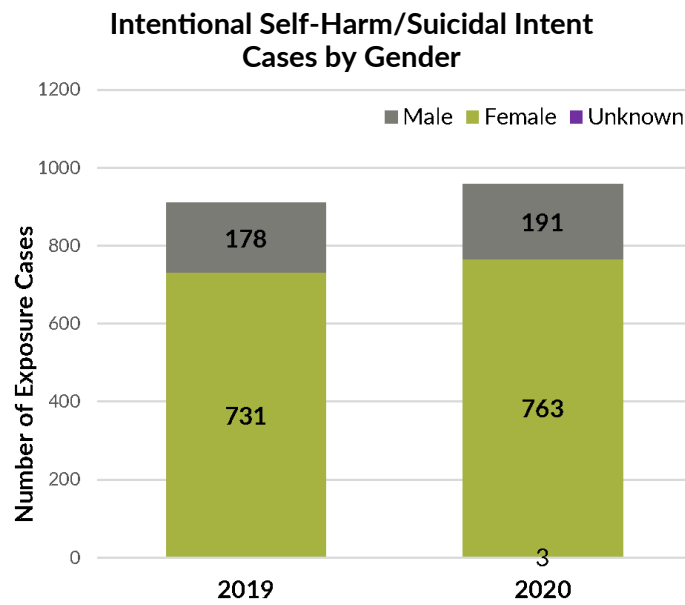
There are growing concerns about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on substance use, mental health, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts. Reports to the Washington Poison Center of self-harm and suicidal intent via self-poisoning and intentional abuse of drugs are showing increasing trends, specifically in adolescents. *The following data compares intentional poison exposures in [adolescents ages 13-17](#) that were reported to the Washington Poison Center during the first 6 months of 2020 (January 1–June 30) to those reported in the first 6 months of 2019.*



Intentional self-harm/suicidal intent cases increased 5%. Abuse cases increased 34%.

| Top 5 Substances | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | 2019 | 2020 |
| Self-Harm/Suicidal Intent Cases | Ibuprofen | Ibuprofen |
| | Acetaminophen (Adult Formulation) | Acetaminophen (Adult Formulation) |
| | Fluoxetine* | Fluoxetine* |
| | Sertraline* | Sertraline* |
| | Antihistamine | Atypical antipsychotics** |
| Abuse Cases | Antihistamine with Dextromethorphan | Antihistamine with Dextromethorphan |
| | Dextromethorphan | Dextromethorphan |
| | Unknown Drug | Unknown Drug |
| | Benzodiazepine | Ethanol |
| | Ethanol | Cannabis/marijuana |

*Antidepressant
**Atypical antipsychotics include aripiprazole, olanzapine, quetiapine, risperidone and others



The majority of self-harm/suicidal intent cases in adolescents continue to occur in females.

| Public Health Education Events by Year | | | | |
|--|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| Topic | 2019 | | 2020 | |
| | In Person Events | Online Events | In Person Events | Online Events |
| Opioids & Other Drugs of Abuse | 6 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Cannabis | 1 | 0 | 9 | 8 |
| Vaping | 33 | 1 | 10 | 6 |
| Medication Management | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| General Poison Prevention*** | 19 | 0 | 3 | 5 |
| Lead*** | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Other | 6 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

***includes presentations and fairs

Disclaimer: Reporting of exposures to the Washington Poison Center is voluntary and not mandated by law. As such, these data reflect only the exposures reported to the Washington Poison Center, and are most likely an underrepresentation of the true occurrence of any one substance.

