Firearm Access and Suicide Risk Among California Youth

Suicide is a leading cause of death among youth ages 15–24, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Firearms are used in half of all suicides in the U.S. A new UCLA CHPR study on suicide prevention examines firearms ownership, psychological distress, and suicide ideation and attempts among California youth in 2021 and 2022.

1 in 4 (24.6%) adolescents (ages 15–17) reported having had thoughts of suicide in their lifetime

Nearly 1 in 3 (30.8%) young adults (ages 18–24) reported having had thoughts of suicide in their lifetime

**Youth reporting firearms at home**

*20,000+ (1.5%)*
ages 15–17

*500,000+ (14.2%)*
ages 18–24

**Suicide ideation, attempts, and gun ownership**

*10.9%*
of youth who had thought about suicide in their lifetime reported a firearm at home

*8.4%*
of youth who made a suicide attempt in their lifetime reported a firearm at home

**Worried about being a victim of gun violence**

Compared with youth who did not have concerns about firearm victimization, youth who reported concerns about firearm victimization in 2022 were:

More than *2x* as likely to report experiencing suicidal thoughts in their lifetime

More than *2x* as likely to have psychological distress

Sources: 2021 and 2022 California Health Interview Surveys
Read the policy brief at: [https://ucla.in/3UgWkfl](https://ucla.in/3UgWkfl)