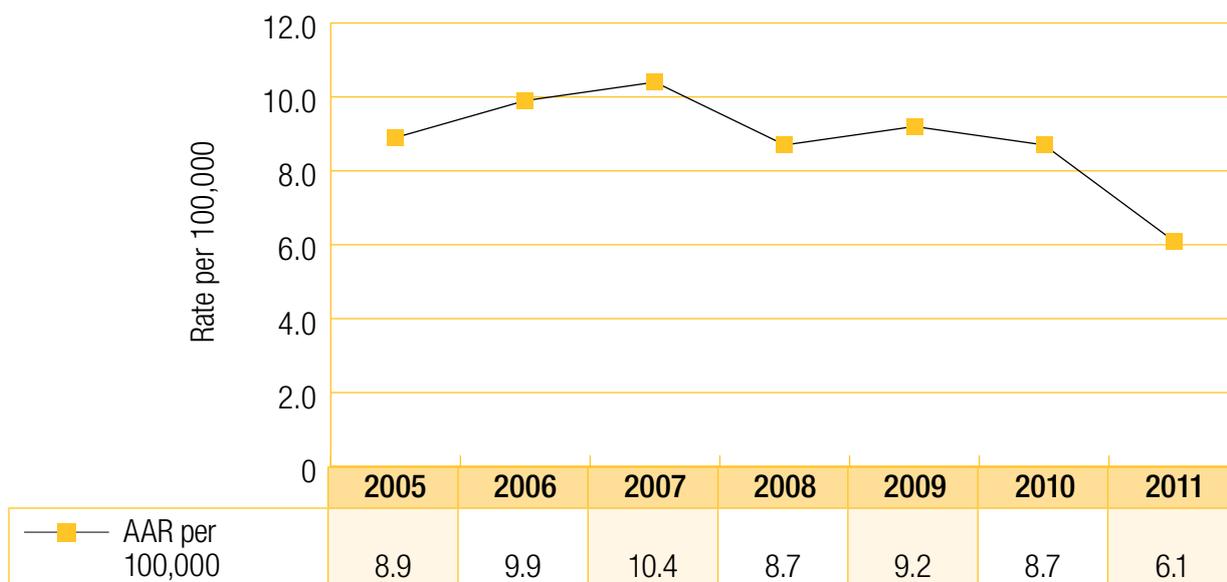


3.15 Deaths from injury and poisoning

Why this measure is included

Injury is a leading cause of death among children and young people in Australia.²⁰⁹ In many cases injury is largely preventable through appropriate strategies. Measuring the incidence of death through injury and poisoning is an indicator of overall safety for children in the community.²¹⁰

Figure 3.19: Deaths due to injury and poisoning among children and young people: age-adjusted rate (AAR) per 100,000 population 0 to 17 years, Western Australia, 2005 to 2011



Source: Data supplied by Epidemiology Branch, Public Health and Clinical Services Division, Department of Health WA, custom report (unpublished)

Table 3.52: Causes of death due to injury and poisoning among 0 to 17 year-olds: number and in per cent, Western Australia, 2005 to 2011

Cause of Death	Number	Per cent
Transport accidents	133	41.2
Falls	9	2.8
Accidental drowning	31	9.6
Fires, burns and scalds	12	3.7
Accidental poisoning	7	2.2
Other unintentional injuries	43	13.3
Intentional self-harm	57	17.7
Interpersonal violence	26	8.1
External causes of morbidity and mortality of undetermined intent	5	1.6
Total	323	100.0

Source: Data supplied by Epidemiology Branch, Public Health and Clinical Services Division, Department of Health WA, custom report (unpublished)

Table 3.53: Proportion of deaths due to injury and poisoning among 0 to 17 year-olds: in per cent, by age group, Western Australia, 2005 to 2011

Cause of Death	0 to 4	5 to 12	13 to 17
Transport accidents	26.7	54.0	45.9
Falls	4.0	6.0	1.2
Accidental drowning	22.8	10.0	1.7
Fire, burns and scalds	4.0	4.0	3.5
Accidental poisoning	0.0	0.0	4.1
Other unintentional injuries	26.7	12.0	5.8
Intentional self-harm	0.0	2.0	32.6
Interpersonal violence	11.9	12.0	4.7
External causes of morbidity and mortality of undetermined intent and medical complications	4.0	0.0	0.6

Source: Data supplied by Epidemiology Branch, Public Health and Clinical Services Division, Department of Health WA, custom report (unpublished)

What is this measure?

This measure examines the incidence and causes of deaths due to injury and poisoning among children and young people aged 0 to 17 years. Data for Western Australia (WA) was provided by the Epidemiology Branch of the WA Department of Health and shows the number for each cause of death for the period 2005 to 2011. It also shows the incidence for each cause of death in the three age groups – 0 to four, five to 12, and 13 to 17 years. The data is also presented by Aboriginal status and by remoteness.

National data showing rates for deaths due to injury for 0 to 14 year-olds has been sourced from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) publication *A Picture of Australia's Children 2012*.²¹¹ Data is not comparable to WA data as the national data covers a different time period (2008 to 2010), and deals with different age groupings and type of data reported. In addition, the AIHW datasets use slightly different classifications of 'injury'.²¹²

It should be noted that the overall numbers of deaths are low and therefore rates are subject to considerable change year by year. Measurements of statistical significance of trends over time are limited because of the low numbers and large potential for variation annually.

Commentary

In 2011, the death rate due to injury and poisoning among children and young people aged 0 to 17 years was 6.1 per 100,000 children and young people.

Transport accidents were the most likely cause of death due to injury for children and young people, accounting for 41.2 per cent of deaths in WA between 2005 and 2011, followed by intentional self-harm (17.7%), other unintentional injuries (13.3%), accidental drowning (9.6%) and interpersonal violence (8.1%) (Table 3.52).

Table 3.53 outlines more specific data for each age group:

- For children 0 to four years, 26.7 per cent of deaths were the result of transport accidents, 26.7 per cent from other unintentional injuries and 22.8 per cent from accidental drowning.
- Among children five to 12 years, 54.0 per cent of deaths resulted from transport accidents, 12.0 per cent from interpersonal violence, and 12.0 per cent from other unintentional injuries.
- For young people 13 to 17 years, transport accidents were the cause of 45.9 per cent of deaths, with intentional self-harm accounting for 32.6 per cent of deaths.

National data collated by the AIHW shows that in Australia the death rate from accident and injury for people aged 0 to 14 years from 2008 to 2010 was five per 100,000 population.²¹³ The overall trend from 1997 and 2010 has been decreasing, having halved from the 1997 rate of 10 per 100,000.²¹⁴ The death rate for males has been consistently higher than that for females over this period.²¹⁵

In the 2008 to 2010 period, the leading causes of death due to injury for 0 to 14 year-olds in Australia were road transport accidents, accidental drowning and assault.²¹⁶

Strategies

The Western Australian Health Promotion Strategic Framework 2012–2016

The framework sets out WA's strategic directions for health and priorities for the prevention of chronic disease and injury. The goal of the framework is to lower the incidence of avoidable chronic disease and injury by facilitating improvements in health behaviours and environments.

The framework focuses on the main lifestyle and injury risk factors including eating for better health, a more active WA, maintaining a healthy weight, making smoking history, reducing harmful alcohol use and creating safer communities.

The 'creating safer communities' factor recognises that injuries have the potential to be anticipated, and could therefore be avoided. It lists priority areas for WA Health including reducing road crashes and road trauma, preventing falls in older people, protecting children from injury, improving water safety and reducing interpersonal violence.

To make progress on these priorities the WA Department of Health has a policy team addressing injury prevention and supports local NGOs such as the Injury Control Council WA, Royal Life Saving WA, Kidsafe WA, Council on the Ageing and Farmsafe to provide injury prevention programs within the community.

Further information is available at www.public.health.wa.gov.au/cproot/4462/2/wa_health_promotion_strategic_framework.pdf

National Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Plan: 2004–2014

This plan provides a strategic framework for injury prevention and safety promotion. It includes specific sections on children and youth and young adults. The plan identifies key objectives and actions to achieve a positive safety culture in Australia and create safe environments. The plan is available from www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-injury-index.htm

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Safety Promotion Strategy (released 2005)

The strategy outlines specific strategic requirements for improving safety and reducing the incidence and harm of injury to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The strategy builds on and is integrated with the National Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Plan 2004–2014. Further information is available from www.nphp.gov.au/publications/sipp/atsi.pdf

Towards Zero – Road Safety Strategy to Reduce Road Trauma in Western Australia 2008–2020, Government of Western Australia

Towards Zero is the Western Australian Government's road safety strategy, developed by the Road Safety Council. It draws on research and best practice to address the road toll in WA and attempts to reduce the number of road deaths and serious injuries. The strategy is available at www.ors.wa.gov.au/Documents/Strategies/ors-towards-zero-strategy.aspx

Australian Water Safety Strategy 2012–15

This strategy was developed by the Australian Water Safety Council, a body of organisations with an interest in water safety, and is supported by the Commonwealth Government. The overall goal of this strategy is to reduce drowning deaths by 50 per cent through promotion of water safety strategies and concentration on particular areas of concern. It has a specific goal to reduce drowning deaths among children aged up to 14 years. The strategy is available from www.royallifesaving.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/4016/AWSC_Strategy2012_Brochure-Lowres.pdf

Want to know more?

Kidsafe WA – Biannual Bulletin

Kidsafe WA compile the WA Childhood Injury Surveillance, Biannual Bulletin which address specific childhood injury types and outlines trends and data relating to that injury for WA. Recent bulletins have included: Injuries Resulting from Trampolining, Injuries to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children, Ingestion Injuries, Injuries Resulting in Fractures, Burns and Scalds. In addition, Kidsafe WA publish an annual WA Childhood Injury Surveillance Bulletin. Further information is available at www.kidsafewa.com.au/

ICCWA Injury Prevention Summit

In 2012 ICCWA coordinated the WA Injury Prevention Summit which provided opportunity for the WA injury prevention sector to discuss and detail injury prevention priorities for WA. Further information is available at www.iccwa.org.au/useruploads/files/ip_summit_report_final_june_2013.pdf

Royal Life Saving WA – Annual Drowning and Near Drowning Report

The Royal Life Saving Society Western Australia has been collecting drowning death statistics and information from the WA Coroner's Office since 2000 to better understand who, how and why people drown in Western Australia. An annual drowning report is produced each year, providing a profile of drowning in WA and helping to direct water safety and drowning prevention initiatives in the community. Further information is available at www.lifesavingwa.com.au/community/stats-facts/drowning-reports/

Royal Life Saving WA is the largest provider of water safety education in WA and delivers targeted and effective health promotion, injury prevention and research programs. Well known programs include; Keep Watch, Watch Around Water and Don't Drink and Drown. Further information is available at www.lifesavingwa.com.au/community/

Data on deaths from injuries and accidents

The Australian Bureau of Statistics publishes annual data on deaths, available at www.abs.gov.au, under Deaths (series by year).

The Epidemiology Branch of the WA Department of Health provides population statistics including data on injury. An overview is available at www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/1496/1/injury.pm

The Perinatal and Infant Mortality Committee, WA Department of Health, provides information on WA infant deaths via triennial reports. Reports are available at www.health.wa.gov.au/publications/subject_index/p/Perinatal_infant_maternal.cfm

Other information

The Injury Control Council Western Australia (ICCWA) is the peak non-government organisation involved in injury prevention and community safety promotion in WA. The mission of ICCWA is to reduce the incidence, severity and effect of injuries through the promotion of safe and healthy communities. Further information is available at www.iccwa.org.au

Additional tables

Table 3.54: Causes of death due to injury and poisoning among 0 to 17 year-olds: number, by remoteness status, Western Australia, 2005 to 2011

Cause of Death	Metropolitan	Regional	Remote
Transport Accidents	74	39	18
Falls	<5*	<5*	<5*
Accidental Drowning	18	9	<5*
Fires, burns and scalds	10	0	<5*
Accidental poisoning	<5*	<5*	<5*
Other unintentional injuries	26	9	8
Intentional self-harm	27	13	14
Interpersonal violence	19	<5*	5
External causes of morbidity and mortality of undetermined intent	5	0	0
Total	187	77	54

Source: Data supplied by Epidemiology Branch, Public Health and Clinical Services Division, Department of Health WA, custom report (unpublished)

* Number is suppressed for confidentiality reasons.



Table 3.55: Causes of death due to injury and poisoning among 0 to 17 year olds: number, by Aboriginal status, Western Australia, 2005 to 2011

	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
Transport Accidents	102	31
Falls	6	*
Accidental Drowning	23	7
Fires, burns and scalds	8	*
Accidental poisoning	6	0
Other unintentional injuries	34	8
Intentional self-harm	34	21
Interpersonal violence	22	*
External causes of morbidity and mortality of undetermined intent	5	0
Total	240	78

Source: Data supplied by Epidemiology Branch, Public Health and Clinical Services Division, Department of Health WA, custom report (unpublished)

* Number is suppressed for confidentiality reasons.

Note: There are five deaths for which Aboriginal status is unknown.

