Population Metrics
Department of Social and Health Services

We transform lives
Highlights

• Between 2000 and 2018 all education-related metrics have consistently improved: educational attainment of adults, high school graduation rates, and school dropout rates.

• During the same period, two metrics indicative of serious behavioral health problems have worsened: suicide rates and domestic violence rates.

• Poverty rates among children and persons all ages increased between 2000 and 2013, and especially quickly during the Great Recession. Poverty rates have been slowly improving in the last few years and are now slightly lower than in 2000 for all measures but one.

Health Impact: Improving the health status of vulnerable populations

H.4 Suicide rate for all Washington residents

Stability Impact: Improving economic stability, employment and self-sufficiency

P.4 Percent of people at or below 100% | 200% | 300% of Federal Poverty Level
P.5 Percent of Washington’s children at or below 100% | 200% | 300% of Federal Poverty Level

Safety Impact: Improving individual and public safety

S.1 Domestic violence incidents reported to law enforcement

Education Impact: Improving individuals’ readiness and ability to succeed in school

E.1 Percent of Washington high school students who drop out
E.2 Percent of those freshman students who graduate within five years
E.3 Percent of Washington adults 20 to 64 without high school degree or diploma
Suicide rate for all Washington residents
Suicide rate has increased by 31% since 2000

Age-adjusted deaths due to suicide, per 100,000 Washington residents
Statewide


For data tables and notes, click HERE:
http://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/H.4.xlsx

SUMMARY

- Although the age-adjusted suicide rate has seen fluctuations over the reporting period, the overall trend is an increase. Since 2000 the rate has increased by 31 percent.

- The most promising way to prevent suicide and suicidal behavior is through the early recognition and treatment of depression and other psychiatric illnesses. Interventions work best when done as part of a comprehensive approach to prevention.

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services included a comprehensive list of suicide risk and protective factors in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. Protective factors for suicide include:
  - Effective clinical care for mental, physical, and substance abuse disorders
  - Easy access to a variety of clinical interventions, including mental health services, and support for help-seeking
  - Family and community support
  - Support from ongoing medical and mental health care relationships

- Recommended strategies include:
  - Treat and care for depressed older adults
  - Reduce future risk among suicide attempters in emergency rooms
  - Train gatekeepers who work with youth
Washington's poverty rates have been improving in the last 5 years

SUMMARY

- This chart shows the percentage of Washington residents with incomes at or below 100%, 200% and 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) between 2000 and 2018.
- Low-income families and individuals are at an increased risk of negative social and health outcomes.
- The trend lines have been fairly stable, with fluctuations reflecting changes in economic conditions.
- The Great Recession of 2007-2009 pushed the trends in the negative direction; the negative trend reached its peak in 2011-2013 and began improving as the economy has seen improvements.
- The share of people below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level is now less (10.6%) than it was in 2008.
- A report comparing indicators of economic well-being in Washington to eight similar states is available at https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/rda/documents/research-11-156.pdf


MEASURE DEFINITION: Persons with income at or below 100%, 200%, and 300% of the Federal Poverty Level as a percentage of all Washington residents for whom poverty status is determined.

For data tables and notes, click HERE:
http://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/P.4.xlsx

DECEMBER 2019
Washington's child poverty rates are now slightly lower than in 2000

SUMMARY

- This chart shows the percentage of Washington's children under 18 years old living at or below 100%, 200% and 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) between 2000 and 2018.

- Compared to all Washington residents, children are more likely to live below poverty level. Low-income children are at an increased risk of negative social and health outcomes.

- The trends have seen some fluctuations. The sharp upward trend which started in 2008 leveled off by 2013. The child poverty rates have been improving in the last 5 years.

- In 2018, 13 percent of children were at or below 100% FPL and 32 percent at or below 200% FPL.


MEASURE DEFINITION: Children 0 to 17 years old with family income at or below 100%, 200%, and 300% of poverty level as a percentage of all Washington children for whom poverty status is determined.

For data tables and notes, click HERE:
http://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/P.5.xlsx
Domestic violence incidents reported to law enforcement

Domestic violence incident rates increased by 17% since 2000

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INCIDENT RATES INCREASED BY 17% SINCE 2000

Summary

- Reported Offenses of Domestic Violence decreased from 6.9 offenses per 1000 population to 5.3 offenses per 1000 population from 2000 to 2008. From 2009 to 2014 the rate varied only slightly. It then increased to a rate of 8.1 incidents per thousand persons in 2018, an overall increase since 2000 of 17 percent.

- The Manual for Law Enforcement Agencies: Stalking and Sexual Assault in the Context of Domestic Violence (2009) lists a number of approaches to address domestic violence.

  - "Proactive and aggressive police response can deter further violence and ultimately save lives. Increasingly, law enforcement agencies are promoting early intervention in domestic violence and stalking cases to protect victims before more injuries occur. Officers are being trained to thoroughly investigate sexual assault cases, while being sensitive to the vulnerabilities of victims. Timely and responsive law enforcement intervention can increase victim safety, enhance investigations, and facilitate successful prosecution."

  - "Community Collaboration is essential. Connecting domestic violence victims to community resources is vital to their continued safety and safety planning. It can also lead to their healing process and being able to move forward. Law enforcement should work collaboratively with the local domestic violence center and sexual assault program. Law enforcement needs to know how to make referrals to each of these programs, have resource materials to give to victims, and what services are provided. In addition, protocols need to be in place with the community based programs and Children’s Protective Services if children are involved in any way."


Measure Definition: The annual number of domestic violence-related offenses, per 1,000 persons. Domestic violence includes any violence of one family member against another family member. Family can include spouses, former spouses, parents who have children in common regardless of marital status, adults who live in the same household, as well as parents and their children.

For data tables and notes, click HERE: http://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/S.1.xlsx
### POPULATION MEASURE

**Percent of Washington high school students who drop out**

**Dropout rate has decreased by 20% since 2011**

#### Washington State High School Cumulative Dropout Rate

Cumulative percent for cohort (grades 9 through 12), statewide

- **Estimated Cohort Method**
- **Adjusted Freshman Cohort Method**

**SUMMARY**

- The dropout rate declined from 14 percent in 2011 to just above 11 percent in 2018.

- The substantial drop in cumulative dropouts from 2010 to 2011 is due to a change in computation methods rather than an actual decrease. Beginning with the 9th-grade cohort in the 2010/2011 school year, OSPI has started using the actual cohort of students for their calculations. This process greatly simplified the formulas used to calculate number of students who graduate and dropouts. Our charts have been updated to show the demarcation between these methods. Data previously offered in the estimated method for 2011 and 2012 has been replaced with data using the new adjusted freshman cohort method.

- The accuracy of the data continues to improve as more scrutiny and care are given to the rates and the coding of students’ enrollment status. Stringent business rules, and checks and balances, are applied to the data received from districts to ensure greater data accuracy. Moreover, OSPI uses the unique state student identification number to locate students who moved from one district to another and who would have previously been considered dropouts. State law (RCW 28A.175.010) requires school districts to account for the educational progress of each of its students in grades 9–12. Districts provide information on students monthly to OSPI through the Core Student Record System (CSRS), which includes data on the number of students who dropped out, and the reasons why students dropped out.


**MEASURE DEFINITION:** A cumulative or cohort dropout rate is based on the percentage of students who began grade 9 in a given year but dropped out of school over a four-year period and did not receive a regular diploma.

**DATA NOTES:** See notes on Data Page for this measure.

For data tables and notes, click HERE:

http://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/E.1.xlsx
Percent of those freshman students who graduate within five years

Graduation rates have increased slightly since 2011

Washington State High School Graduation Rate
Extended graduation rate (includes both on-time and late graduates), statewide

SUMMARY

- The drop in extended graduations from 2010 to 2011 is due to a change in computation methods rather than an actual decrease. Beginning with the 9th grade cohort in the 2010/2011 school year, OSPI has started using the actual cohort of students for their calculations. The cohort was adjusted for students moving in or out of Washington, tracking actual student locations. This process greatly simplified the formulas used to calculate graduates and dropouts. Our charts have been updated to show the demarcation between these methods. Data previously offered in the estimated method for graduates from 2011 and 2012 has been replaced with data using the new adjusted freshman cohort method. The new method does not add graduates after year 5 to the extended graduation rate.

- To deter schools from discharging or “pushing out” low-performing students in order to achieve better test results, the federal No Child Left Behind law requires the use of graduation rates to determine if a high school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

- Students are now often offered the option of staying in school past the senior year to complete graduation requirements, allowing continued access to school support systems. Rather than a GED, these students get a valid high school diploma.


MEASURE DEFINITION: The percent of students who graduate including those students who take more than four years to complete their degree.

DATA NOTES: See notes on Data Page for this measure.

For data tables and notes, click HERE:
http://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/E.2.xlsx
Percent of Washington adults 20 to 64 without high school degree or diploma

Washington adults without high school degree declined 26% since 2000

Summary

- This chart shows the percentage of Washington adults age 20 to 64 years without high school degree or diploma between 2000 and 2018.

- Adults who have not completed a high school education earn less than half of the income earned by those with high school or higher education.

- The trend has had some fluctuation but seems to be going in the right direction; the percentage dropped 26% between 2000 and 2018.

- Younger adults are more likely to have completed a high school education; as time goes by, older adults without a high school education "age out" of the cohort. Washington may be doing a better job educating its children. The state may be attracting, on balance, a more educated workforce.

- Efforts to ensure that all students graduate from high school and a state economic development policy aimed at attracting an educated workforce are likely to strengthen the positive trend.


Measure Definition: Percentage of Washington adults ages 20 to 64 years who have not obtained a high school degree or diploma, or its equivalent.

For data tables and notes, click HERE:
http://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/E.3.xlsx