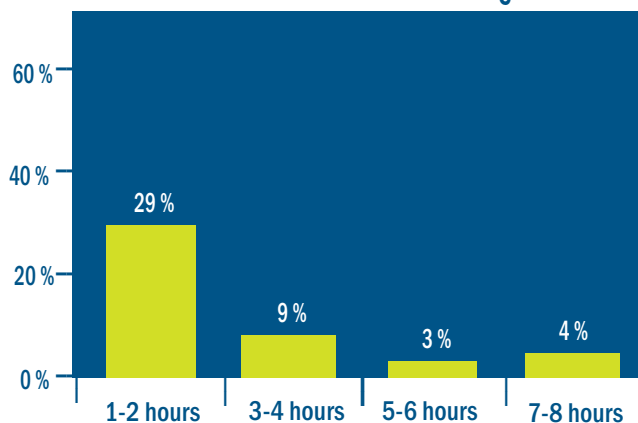




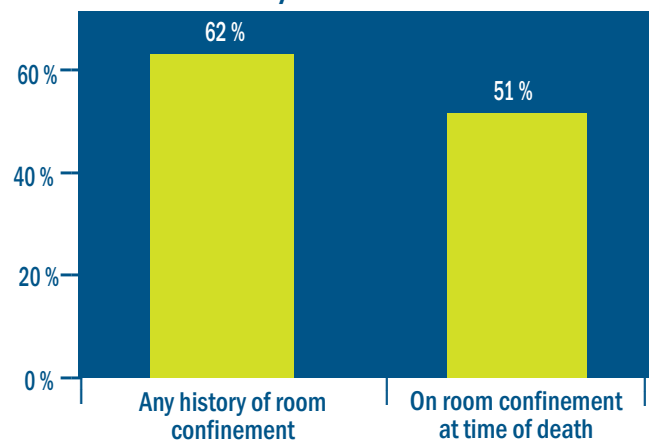
Staff Training and Use of Isolation Important Factors in Suicide Risk for Confined Juveniles

The U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention recently released a report describing 79 cases of juvenile suicide in confinement occurring between 1995 and 1999.¹ Regular suicide prevention training for staff was associated with decreased incidence of suicides. Only 38% of suicides occurred in facilities that provided training annually. Also, fewer occurred in facilities that provided more comprehensive training. Only 4% occurred in facilities that provided full-day training, compared to 29% occurring in facilities that provided only 1-2 hours of training. Additionally, the use of isolation/room confinement² was associated with increased suicide risk. Almost two-thirds (62%) of all victims had a history of room confinement before their deaths, and half (51%) were on room confinement status at the time of death.

Percentage of Suicides in Juvenile Facilities, by Length of Staff Prevention Training



Percentage of Suicides in Juvenile Facilities, by Room Confinement History and Status at Time of Death



Source: Hayes, L. M. (2009). Juvenile Suicide in Confinement: A National Survey. OJJDP Report. Office of Justice Programs Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, NCJ 213691. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

Notes:

- ¹ Of these 79 suicides, 42% occurred in training school/secure facilities, 37% in detention centers, 15% in residential treatment centers, and 6% in reception/diagnostic centers.
- ² Room confinement is a behavioral sanction technique involving isolation used in juvenile confinement settings. While often used following assaultive or disruptive behavior or as a quarantine for newly arrived residents or those in need of protective custody, it is sometimes used for suicidal youth.

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to build, enhance, and sustain strong and vibrant communities by promoting policies and practices that stop the cycle of drugs and crime. We conduct research and evaluations, and offer policy analysis, trainings, and technical assistance in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at www.centerforhealthandjustice.org.

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