

History of the Data Sheets and Slide Set

DATA SHEETS. Originally the data sheets were created by John annually (primarily from CDC data, with other sources of unofficial statistics and research findings— for issues such as suicide attempts and later survivors of suicide loss) in the early 1980s for John’s classes on suicide and depression that he taught as well as for lectures and presentations he made to various groups. In the mid-1980s, after presenting at American Association of Suicidology (AAS) sessions with the sheets distributed, Lanny Berman (AAS’s Executive Director at the time) asked if John would create them and permit them to be distributed through AAS. John agreed to this and from the late 1980s-2019 data years (the AAS logo was included for 1989 data through 2019 data) but AAS made them available, usually by email, to members and those who requested them, eventually posting them at their webpages. They were created every year immediately after the official final mortality data for the newly released year was made available and annual reports published (some of the data were gleaned from computer tapes that included all mortality in the USA for the year, providing data that were not made directly available from any CDC site at that time).

Beginning with 2010 data, the data sheets have been co-produced with Christopher Drapeau. Starting with 2012 data, the order of “authorship” of the data sheets was reversed (Drapeau & McIntosh as opposed to the earlier McIntosh & Drapeau) to reflect Chris’ role and contribution to the sheets and to begin a transition to John’s eventual departure from their preparation. With respect to process, Chris and John both produce a separate version of the 2-page sheets within 24-48 hours of the release of data at CDC’s WISQARS website and then the versions are carefully checked by both to discover any possible errors or issues in the data provided. The data sheets from 1982-2021 are posted at John’s personal website at <https://jmcintos.pages.iu.edu/SuicideDataCompiled.htm>. Also posted are links to a number of tables of archived data, particularly for state, region, firearms, life periods as well as sex and age, and a table by race and ethnicity at <https://jmcintos.pages.iu.edu/SuicideDataCompiled.htm>.

In 2021 (after 2019 data that appeared in that year), John and Chris sought a new home for the data sheets. After discussions with Dan Reidenberg (Executive Director of SAVE) the data sheets for 2020 and 2021 were posted and distributed by SAVE (in the calendar years 2022 and 2023, respectively), posted at their websites and advertised by press releases. After these two years, Chris and John discussed with the National Council for Suicide Prevention (with its 8 national organization members, including both AAS and SAVE among others) the hosting of the annual data sheets and slide set by NCSP at its website. Following a meeting with the NCSP Board, it was agreed that the data sheets, slide set, and other table files will appear at the NCSP website beginning with 2022 data. The copyrighted 2022 data sheets were posted in May 2024 (following a several month delay in the release of official mortality data by CDC/NCHS).

SLIDE SET. In addition to the 2-page data sheets, SAVE also distributed a set of slides (139 for 2021 data) created annually by John and assisted by Chris since 2012 data. AAS distributed these slides (for a nominal financial charge) through their store from 1995 (1993 data; 33 slides) until 2019 data in 2021. It was reported to John each year that this was the leading item (best seller) in the store. SAVE distributed the slides (for nominal charge also) for data years 2020 and 2021. After some discussion of distributing the slide set – which had 50 slides for 1999 data – without cost, it was ultimately decided that this would take place beginning with 2022 data and be posted also at the NCSP website. Before 1999 data, John prepared slide sets annually from the early-

1980s but they were not distributed widely; again, like the data sheets, the slides were created initially by John to utilize in his own classes and lecture/presentations to groups across the country and the number of slides essentially increased every year. The slides are copyrighted by John and Chris. Slides are provided only in PDF format to somewhat lessen problems with end users modifying the slides and their content and slides also include a copyright message. A User's Guide was developed for the 2021 slide set to assist users. The 2021 slide set contained 139 slides (including a title slide and developers slide). The 2022 User's Guide, and Index are posted at the NCSP website along with the annual data sheets, slide set, and other table files. The 2022 slide set has 146 slides, including a title slide, developers slide, and NCSP slide (13 new slides and 6 removed/replaced for a net of +7 total slides).

Users of the data sheets and the slide set are encouraged to make suggestions for additional slides or data to be included in upcoming data years.

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