



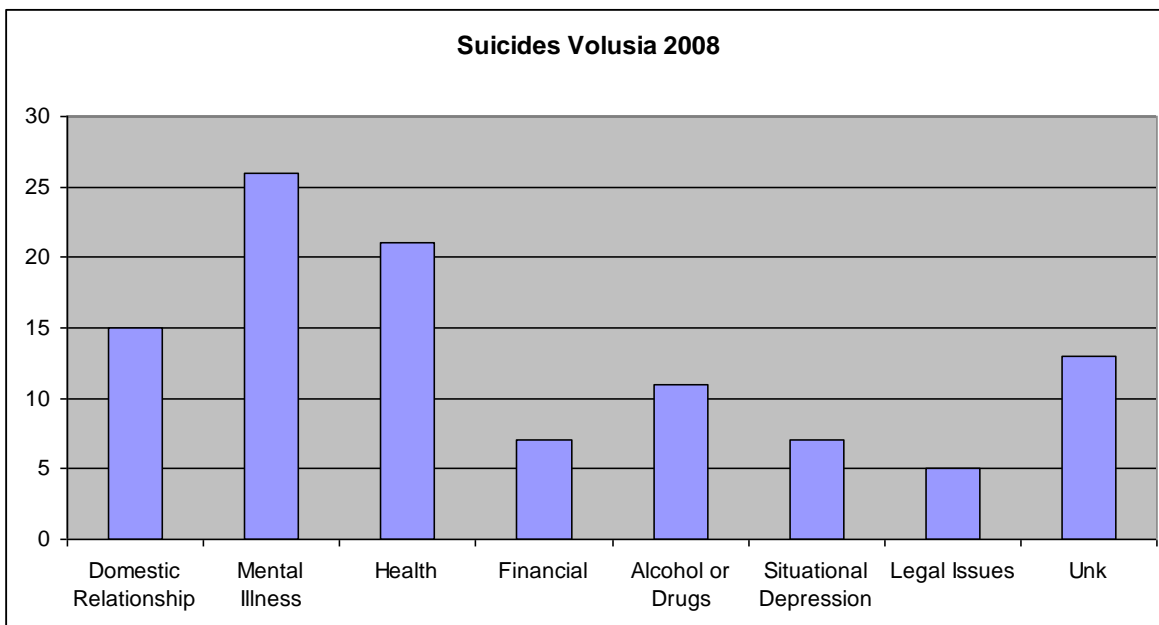
April 8, 2009

### Suicide Data 2008

There were 105 suicides in Volusia County in 2008. There were eighty three (83) were males and twenty two (22) females who chose death by suicide. This compares to 86 deaths by suicide in 2007 and represents a 22% increase of deaths by suicide in 2008.

Mental Illness tops the reasons for 2008 and shows an 8% percentage increase from 2007. The mental illnesses were depression, major mental illness (i.e. Bi-Polar, Schizophrenia), and post traumatic stress disorder. Seventeen (17) had previous suicidal ideation or attempts. In addition to the primary reason being mental illness there were nearly as many with depression as the secondary reason. The cases identified as situational depression involved recent losses and complicated life situations.

This chart shows the deaths by primary reason.



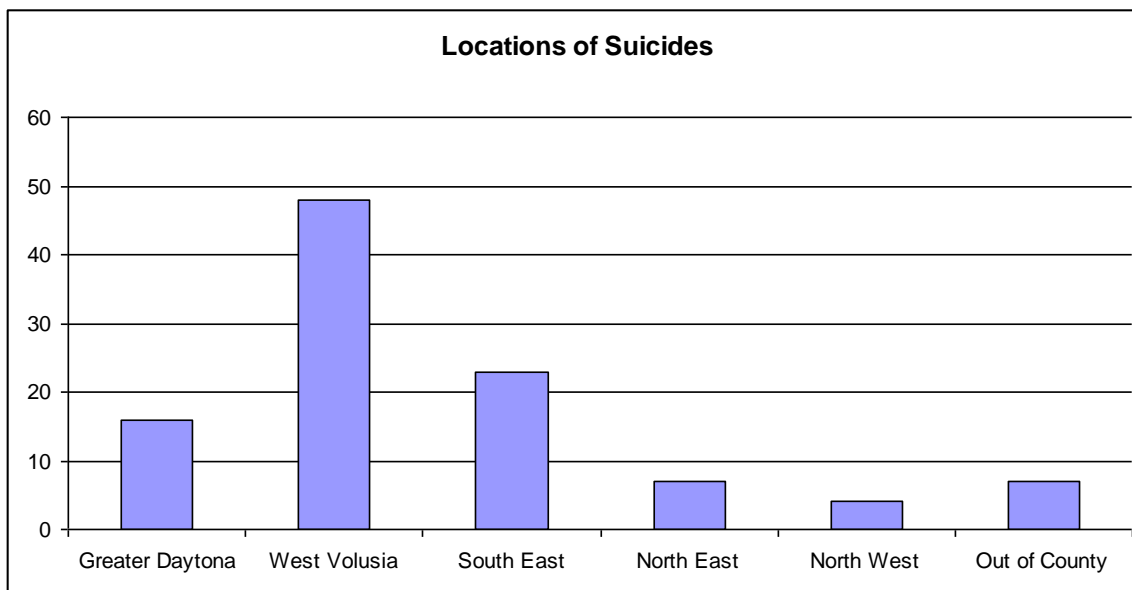
There was a high number of people who chose death by suicide due to health reasons. Their ages ranged from 47 to 92. Many were identified as having chronic pain and using strong pain medications.

Alcohol and drug use claimed the lives of a number of folks who used multiple drugs both legal and illegal. Many of these were known to the system. There was actually a decrease of suicides by this method this year compared to last year where multiple drug use was implicated in a number of cases regardless of the primary reason for suicide.

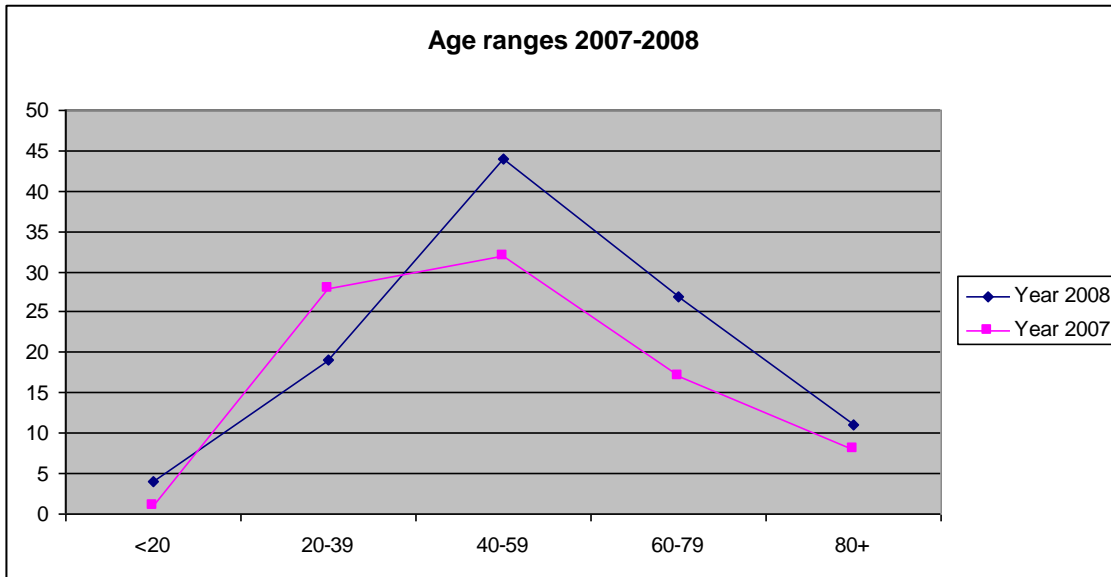
Domestic relationships played a role in suicides. The 2008 data is statistically similar in percentage with 2007. Usually anger played a major role in these deaths and the suicides were more dramatic. Financial reasons included foreclosures, loss of jobs, loss of portfolio and medical bills.

The number of unknowns represent cases where additional information is needed to identify the reason for the suicide.

**Location:** The location of the residents who committed suicide were predominately in the western end of the county.

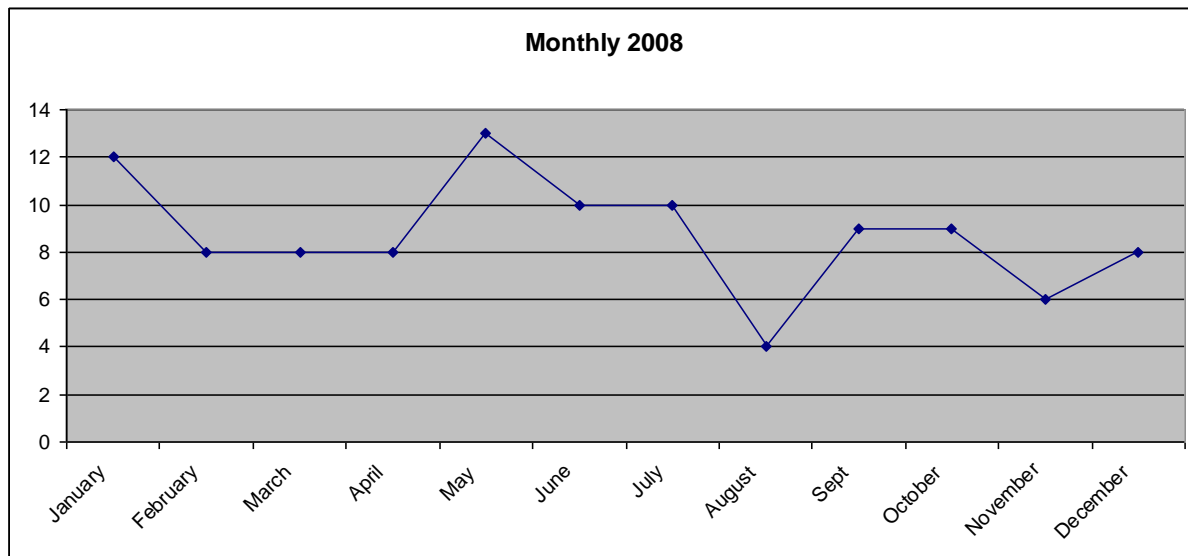


**Ages:** The under 20 year olds who died by suicide two had depression, and the other two related to situational issues. One was a homicide/suicide.



The middle ages of 40-59 had the highest number of deaths with depression heading the list of reasons (27%). Other reasons were health problems, drugs and legal problems (impending incarceration, for example).

**Month of death:** The highest number of deaths were in the late spring and summer with the lowest number in August.



There continues to be a high rate of death by suicide in Volusia County. Volusia has over two times the rate of suicides compared to neighboring Seminole County. It is disturbing that 16% of the suicides had a history of suicidal ideation or attempts. This points to a possible lack of access to effective mental health services. It is likely that the down turn in the

economy will increase the number of suicide attempts or actual deaths by suicide this year.

The lack of health insurance in this area also may be a contributing factor in the co-morbidity of health problems and depression leading to suicide.

#### Recommendations:

1. Increase suicide prevention efforts through community wide training in suicide prevention.
2. Provide training in effective coping strategies in 'tough times'
3. Engage the diverse groups in raising the consciousness of the issues of suicide, its impact on the families and the community.
4. Better collaborate with hospital emergency rooms to evaluate the extent of attempts
5. Provide support groups county-wide in a number of venues to work with families and individuals in crisis
6. Provide Psychological First Aid stations in agencies providing social services and in the faith community.