

# An Update on Suicides in San Mateo County

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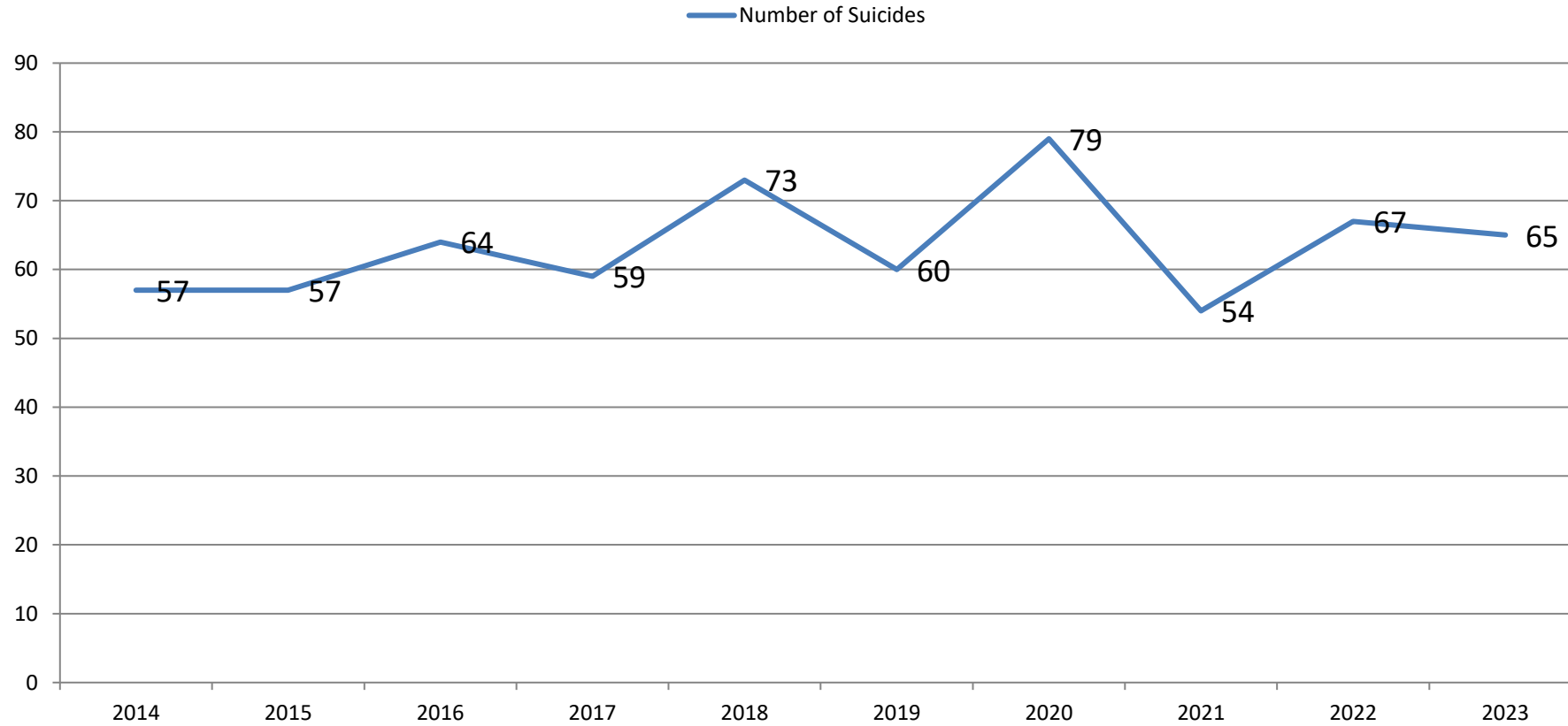
**SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH**  
**PUBLIC HEALTH,**  
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# Overview

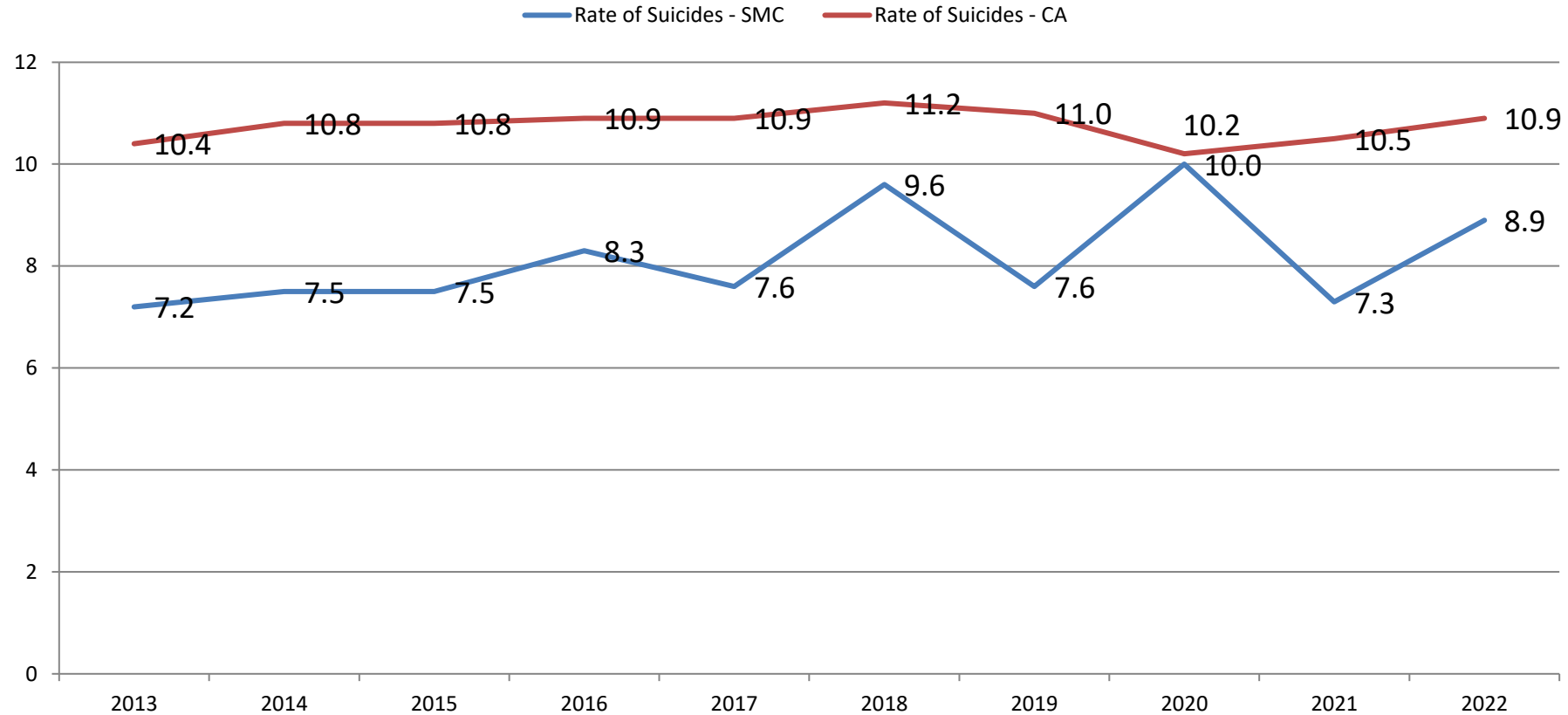
- Suicides in San Mateo County **increased** 24% from 2021 to 2022, while suicides in California **increased** 3% from 2021 to 2022
- Suicides in SMC **decreased** 3% in 2023 compared to 2022
- Not any overarching reason(s) for the changes; many sub-trends occurring



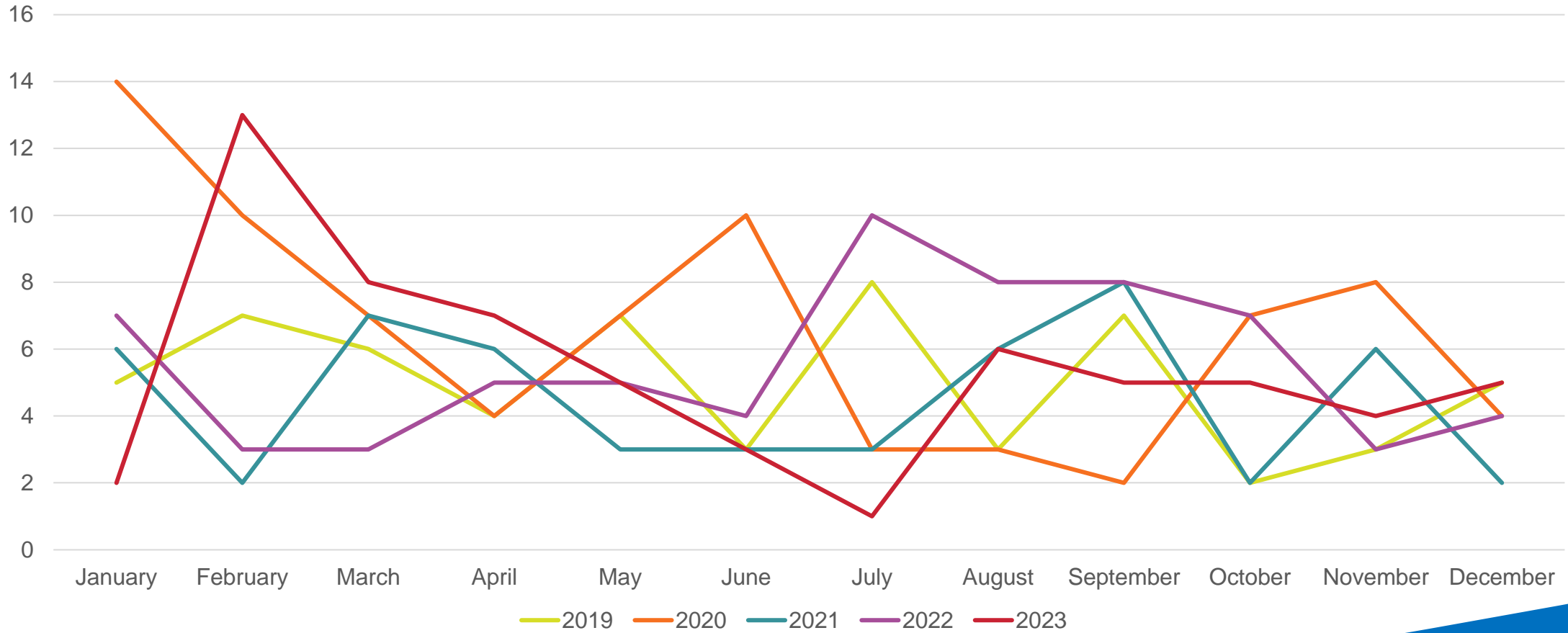
# Number of Suicides in San Mateo County, 2014-2023



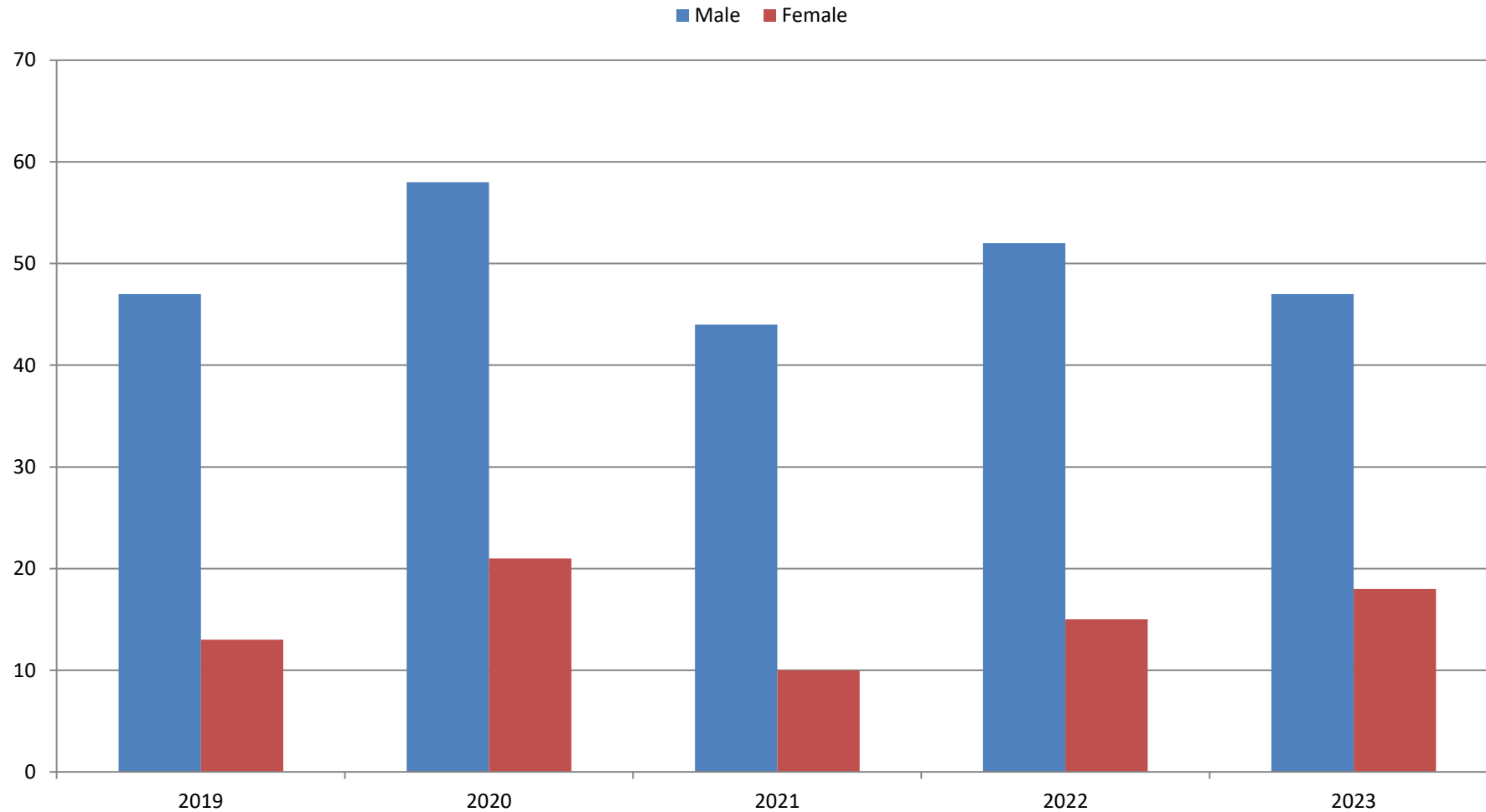
# Rate of Suicides in San Mateo County and CA, 2013-2022



# Suicides in San Mateo County by Month, 2019-2023



# Suicides by Gender, SMC, 2019-2023



Increasing trend among females from 2021-2023

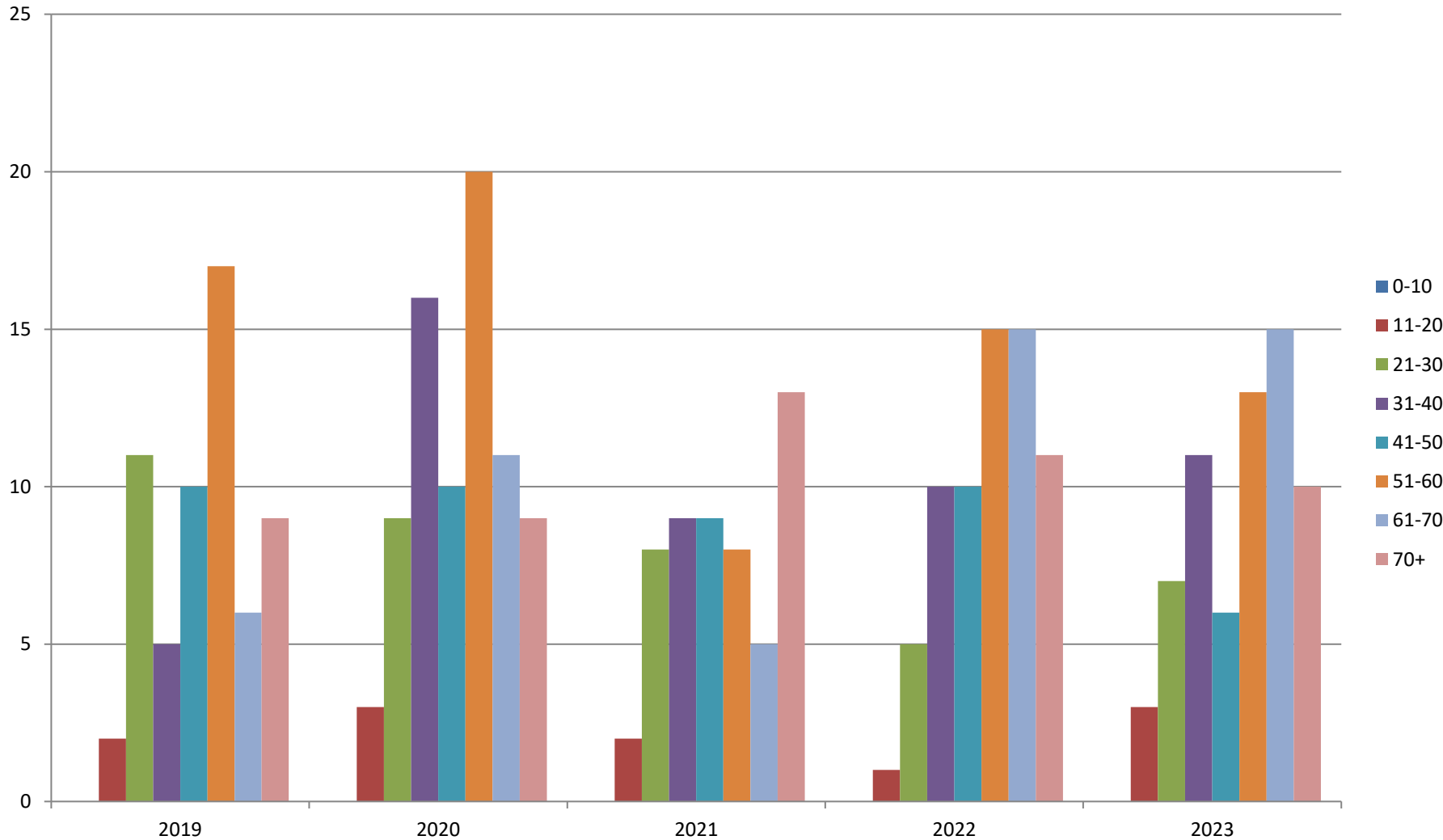


# Percentage of Suicides by Gender, SMC & CA, 2021-2022

Gender	SMC 2021	CA 2021	SMC 2022	CA 2022
Male	81.5%	78.5%	77.6%	78.3%
Female	18.5%	21.5%	<b>22.4%</b>	21.6%



# Suicides by Age Group, SMC, 2019-2023



Numbers have been increasing for 61-70 year olds.

Numbers are small for youth aged 11-20.

Individuals 65 and older have the highest rates.





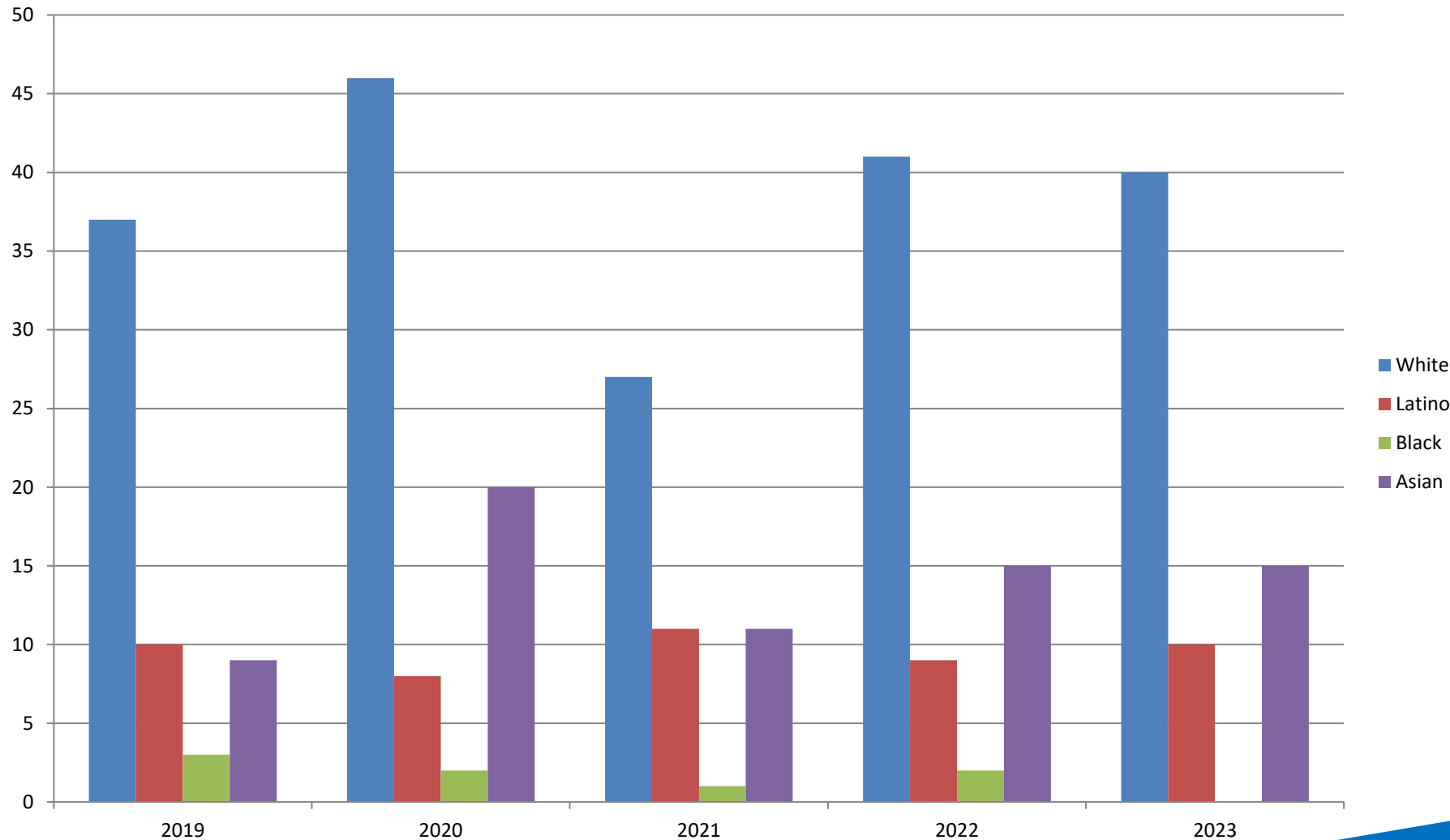
# Percentage of Suicides by Age Group, SMC & CA, 2021-2022

Age Group	SMC 2021 suicides	SMC 2021 Pop %	CA 2021 suicides	CA 2021 Pop %	SMC 2022 suicides	SMC 2022 Pop %	CA 2022 suicides	CA 2022 Pop %
10-18	1.9%	9.9%	3.7%	12.0%	0.0%	11.2%	3.6%	13.2%
19-24	11.1%	6.1%	9.3%	8.0%	4.5%	5.4%	7.8%	6.8%
25-44	27.8%	28.9%	35.5%	28.6%	23.9%	29.1%	32.8%	28.5%
45-64	29.6%	26.8%	29.4%	25.0%	<b>41.8%</b>	26.7%	31.8%	24.8%
65-84	<b>25.9%</b>	15.3%	18.3%	12.5%	<b>23.9%</b>	14.5%	19.5%	13.0%
85+	<b>3.7%</b>	2.3%	2.4%	1.8%	3.7%	2.4%	4.4%	1.9%

SMC suicides tend to skew older than CA suicides.



# Suicides by Race/Ethnicity, SMC, 2019-2023



Most suicides occur among White individuals, followed by Asians. Whites have the highest rates.



# Percentages of Suicides by Race/Ethnicity, SMC & CA, 2021-2022

Race/Ethnicity	SMC 2021 suicides	SMC 2021 Pop %	CA 2021 suicides	CA 2021 Pop %	SMC 2022 suicides	SMC 2022 Pop %	CA 2022 suicides	CA 2022 Pop %
<b>White</b>	50.0%	37.8%	57.0%	35.8%	61.2%	37.0%	57.0%	35.2%
Asian	20.4%	30.8%	9.5%	15.0%	22.4%	30.3%	9.5%	14.9%
Latino	20.4%	24.1%	24.8%	39.5%	13.4%	23.9%	24.8%	39.7%
Black	1.9%	2.2%	5.0%	5.4%	3.0%	2.1%	5.0%	5.3%



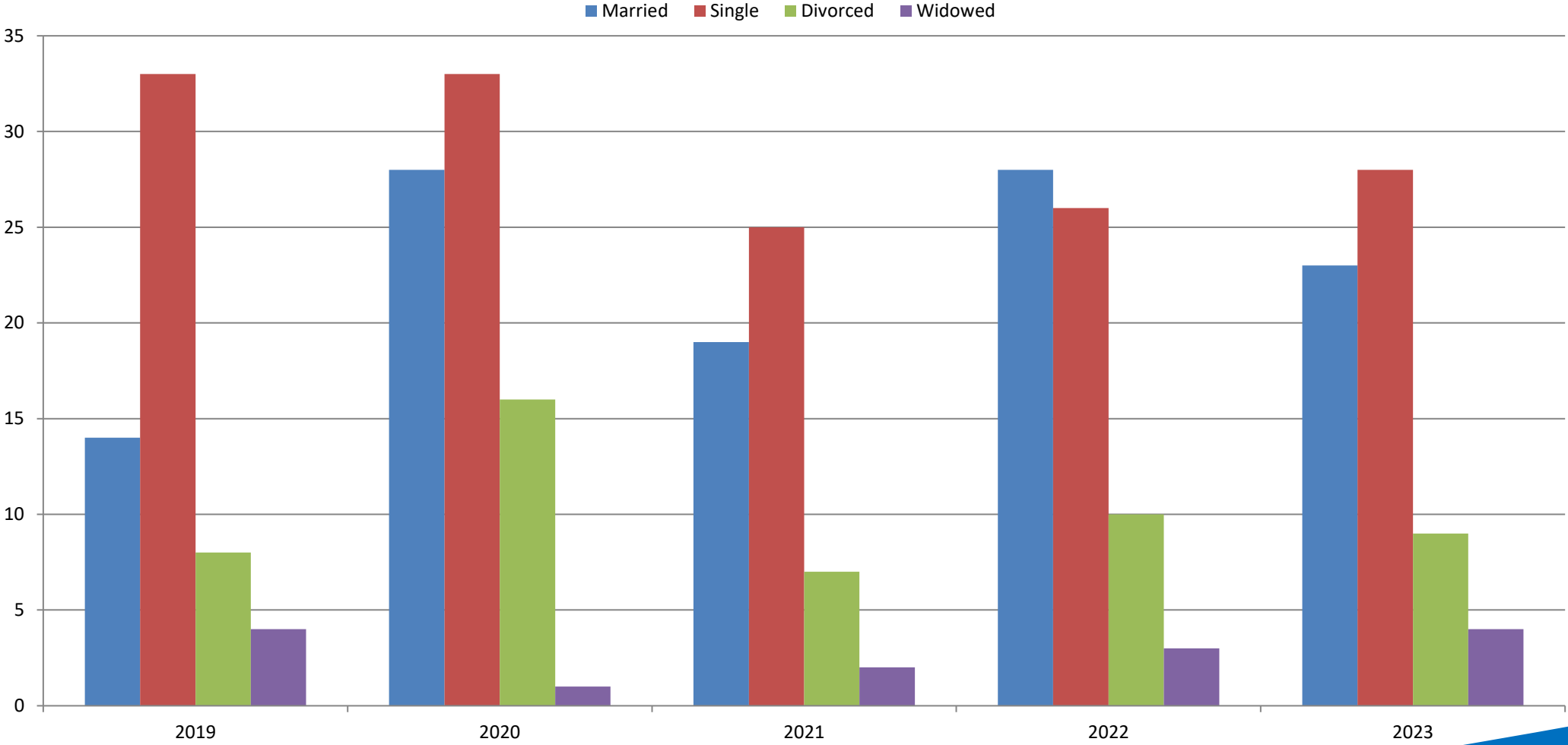
# Number and Percent of Suicides in SMC by Birthplace, 2019-2023

Birth-place	2019 #	2019 %	2020 #	2020 %	2021 #	2021 %	2022 #	2022 %	2023 #	2023 %
CA	33	55.0%	35	44.3%	26	48.1%	28	41.8%	37	56.9%
Other state/ territory	17	28.3%	13	16.5%	8	14.8%	20	29.9%	6	9.2%
Other country	9	15.0%	29	36.7%	20	37.05	18	26.9%	19	29.2%

About 65% of the population in SMC is US-born, and 35% is foreign-born.



# Suicides by Marital Status, SMC, 2019-2023

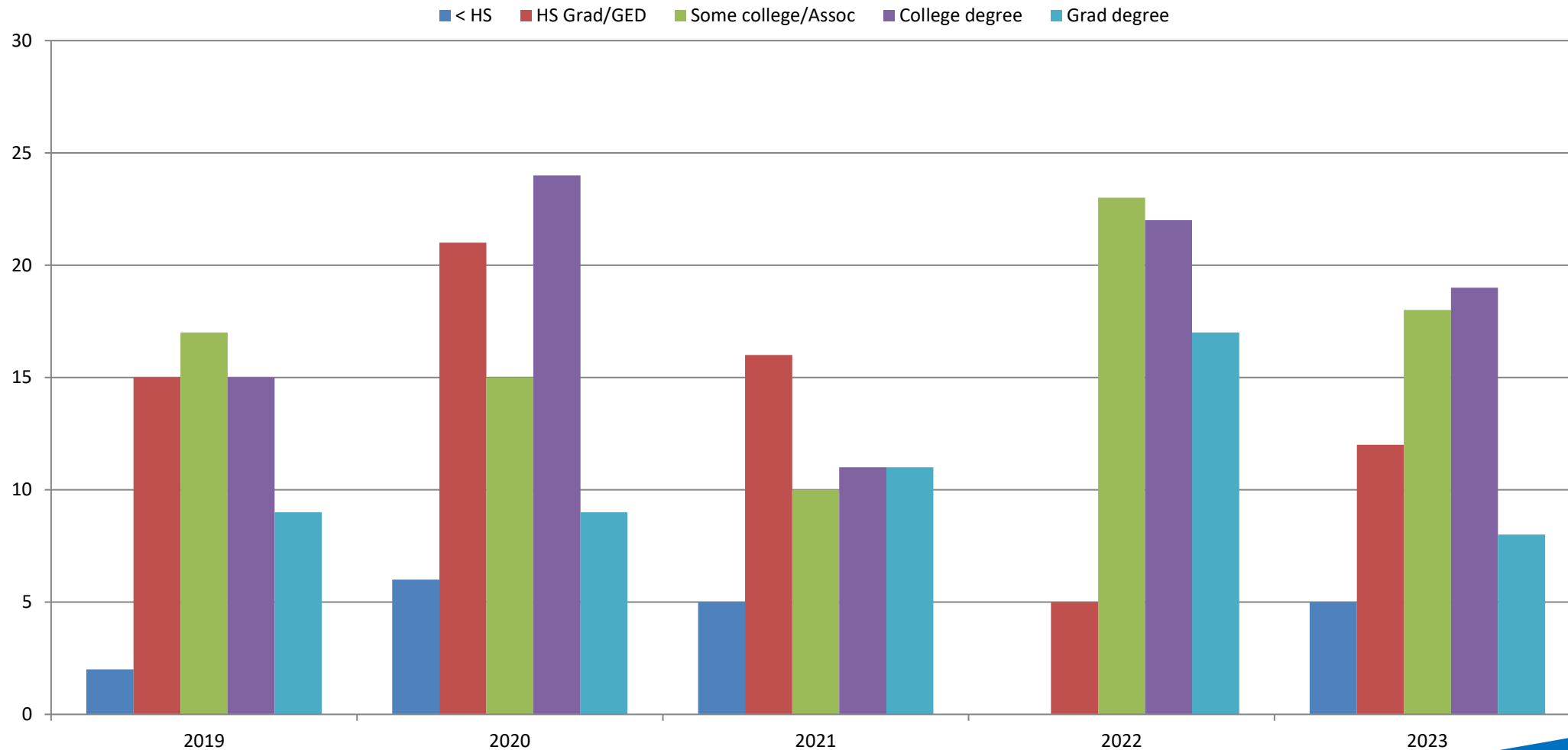


Suicides generally the highest among individuals who are single.

In SMC in 2022 among individuals 15 and older, 52.4% were married, 33.3% were single, 7.9% were divorced, and 4.9% were widowed.



# Suicides by Educational Level, SMC, 2019-2023

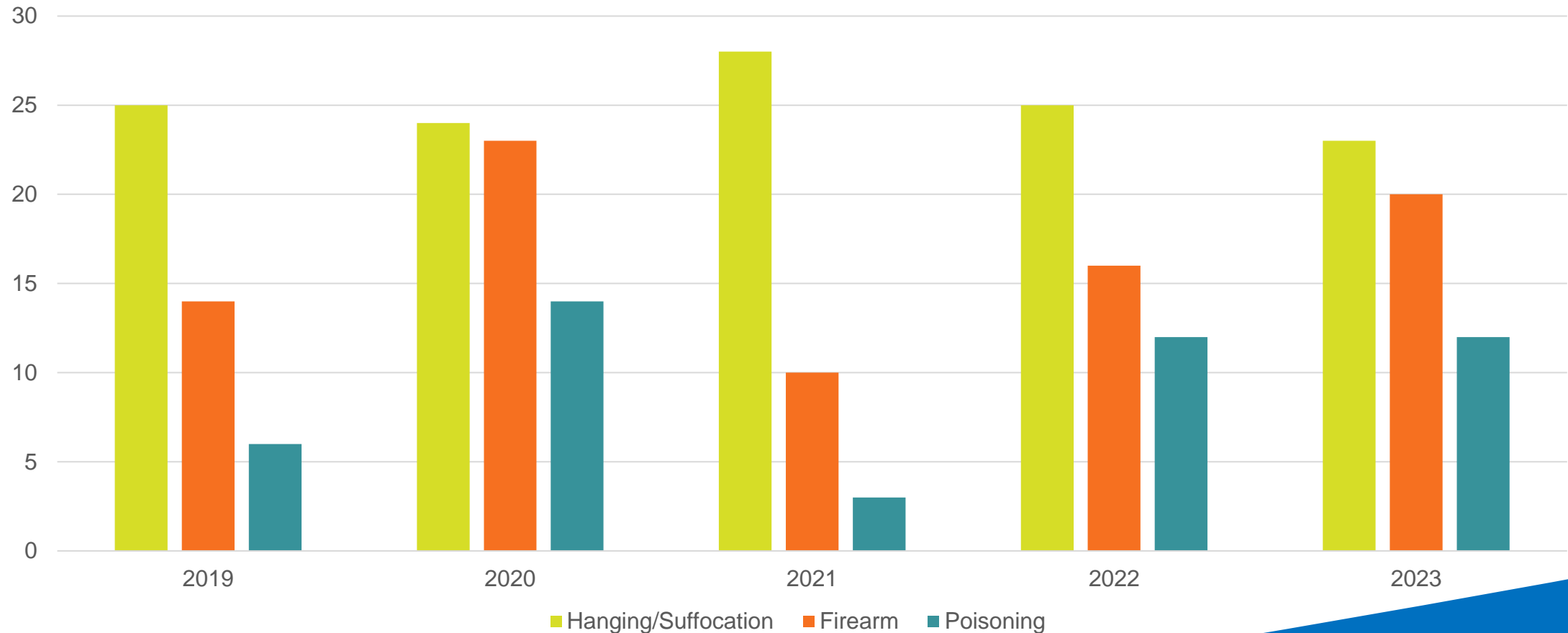


Over the 5 year time period, there is a shift towards more educated individuals dying by suicide.

In SMC in 2022 among individuals 25 and older, 24.7% HS degree or less, 21.2% had some college or an Associate's degree, 28.7% had a Bachelor's degree, and 25.4% had a Graduate/Professional degree.



# Suicides by Method, SMC, 2019-2023



Hanging/suffocation has overtaken firearms as the most common method of suicide in SMC.



# Percentages of Suicides by Method, SMC & CA, 2021-2022

Method	SMC 2021	CA 2021	SMC 2022	CA 2022
Firearm	18.5%	38.0%	23.9%	39.1%
Hanging/ Suffocation	<b>51.9%</b>	34.0%	37.3%	32.5%
Poisoning	5.6%	12.9%	<b>17.9%</b>	14.3%





# Percentage of Suicides by Method and Sex, San Mateo County, 2022-2023

Method	Females 2022	Males 2022	Females 2023	Males 2023
Firearm	0.0%	<b>28.8%</b>	5.6%	<b>40.4%</b>
Hanging/ Suffocation	46.7%	40.4%	50.0%	36.2%
Poisoning	<b>26.7%</b>	11.5%	<b>22.2%</b>	14.3%

Suicide by firearm is high for males, while suicide by poisoning is high for females. Hanging/suffocation is high for both males and females.



# Percentage of Suicides by Method and Race/Ethnicity, San Mateo County, 2022-2023

Method	Asians 2022	Latinos 2022	Whites 2022	Asians 2023	Latinos 2023	Whites 2023
Firearm	18.2%	0.0%	<b>41.9%</b>	13.3%	20.0%	<b>40.0%</b>
Hanging/ Suffocation	54.5%	50.0%	29.0%	40.0%	60.0%	35.0%
Poisoning	9.1%	12.5%	12.9%	13.3%	10.0%	15.0%

Whites die by suicide by firearm at much higher percentages than Asians and Latinos. Data for Blacks not included due to small numbers.



# Percentage of Suicides by Method and Select Age Groups, San Mateo County, 2022-2023

Method	25-44 years old 2022-2023	45-64 years old 2022-2023	65-84 years old 2022-2023
Firearm	17.6%	26.4%	36.7%
Hanging/ Suffocation	50.0%	43.4%	30.0%
Poisoning	11.8%	13.2%	20.0%

Suicide by firearm and poisoning have an increasing trend as age increases. Hanging/suffocation has a decreasing trend as age increases. Data not shown for <25 and >84 years of age due to small numbers.



# Other Data of Note

- Train-related suicides: possible increasing trend (1/60=1.7% in 2019; 1/79=1.3% in 2020; 2/54=3.7% in 2021; 4/67=6.0% in 2022; 3/65=4.6%; 2/19=10.5% so far in 2024)—**these are not among youth**
- Sodium nitrite intoxication; 2 cases in 2019; 1 case in 2020; 2 cases in 2023. **All 5 cases were adult males.** A lot of articles in medical journals about this starting in 2022. AB 1109 passed last year to restrict the sale (particularly online) of sodium nitrite in California to youth under the age of 18; takes effect on July 1, 2024.
- 16/65 (~25%) suicides occurred in Daly City in 2023. 7/16 are female—this represents nearly 40% of the female suicides in 2023.



# Suicides among Veterans

- 2018:  $7/73 = 9.6\%$
- 2019:  $8/60 = 13.3\%$
- 2020:  $9/79 = 11.4\%$
- 2021:  $6/54 = 11.1\%$
- 2022:  $9/67 = 13.4\%$
- 2023:  $4/65 = 6.2\%$



# Data Sources

- EpiCenter, CA injury data: <https://skylab4.cdph.ca.gov/epicenter/>
- Vital Records Business Intelligence System (VRBIS) for San Mateo County Mortality data
- U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 5-yr estimates for 2021 & 2022

Note: Data is preliminary and subject to change



# Looking Ahead...

- Continue tracking suicides in 2024; 19 so far this year
- Homeless mortality analyses/report
- Try to access social history and other relevant data to get a better picture of the lives of individuals that die from suicide;  
<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/document/dsu-2021-Vermont-social-autopsy-report.pdf>





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