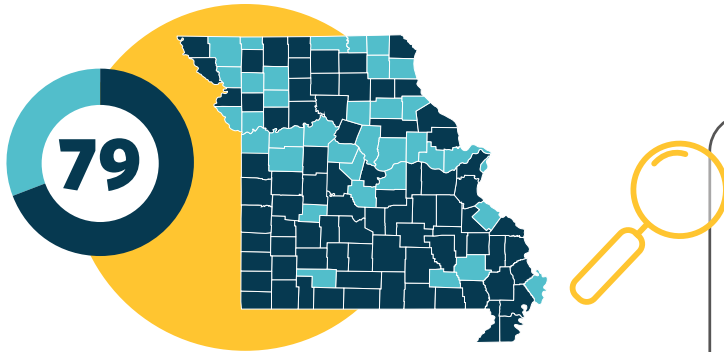


WHY ARE DEATH RATES RISING AMONG WHITES IN MISSOURI?

Long-term mortality rates in the U.S. had been steadily decreasing for all races. What is the cause of this unprecedented break in the trend?

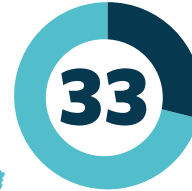
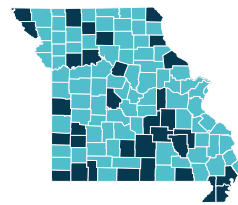
79 of 114 Missouri counties saw white mortality rates rise since 2000

(for white adults aged 25-59)



Who is being affected?

Certain groups of white people*, men and women, especially those who are middle-aged, living in economically distressed areas, and have less education.



rural counties are bearing the brunt of this trend—a rise of more than 50 deaths per 100,000 people

"DEATHS OF DESPAIR"

Leading causes:
substance abuse & suicides

From 1995-2014 we've seen a:

585% increase in **DRUG OVERDOSES**

763% increase in **ALCOHOL POISONINGS**

30% increase in **SUICIDES**

The **Ozarks** and **Bootheel** regions experienced the largest increases in mortality rates.



People here have:
less education
lower incomes
limited job opportunities



Higher rates of:
unemployment
food insecurity
stagnant wages



A lack of access to:
health insurance
health care providers
transportation



This is happening throughout the U.S., but not in other industrialized countries.
Why?

The U.S. lacks robust social safety-net benefits such as:

- Universal health care
- Paid leave
- Subsidized post-secondary education
- Job retraining



Policy approaches that enhance social benefits and rebuild the social safety net may help blunt the rise in death rates.



Sectors outside of health must help boost the economy, increase wages, create jobs, reform education, and revitalize communities.

*What about people of color?

Certain groups of non-white people still have a higher overall mortality rate, but their life expectancy continues to lengthen. While efforts must continue to reduce the inequity in mortality rates for all groups, it is also important to bring attention to this unprecedented reversal in long-term trends. There is hope that this work will further an examination of overall disparities in life spans.



Read the full report: mffh.org/WhiteMortality