

## **Study Highlights Suicide Risk Factors Among U.S. Educators**

A new study examining suicide among primary and secondary educators in the United States has identified important demographic and timing-related risk factors that could help guide prevention efforts in schools.

The study, *“Who’s Most at Risk? Examining Suicide Characteristics in Primary and Secondary Educators,”* was recently published in *Psychology in the Schools* and co-authored by Jackie Mesenbrink-Sainz, DrPH, from Georgia Southern University’s Department of Health Sciences and Kinesiology in the Waters College of Health Professions, along with a team of researchers.

While student well-being often receives significant attention, the mental health of educators remains less explored, despite the growing challenges and stressors in the teaching profession. This study helps fill that gap by analyzing data from the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) between 2018 and 2021.

The research revealed several critical patterns:

- **Demographics:** Suicide rates were higher among male, white, and unpartnered educators. Male educators also tended to die by suicide at older ages than female educators.
- **Timing:** Suicides were significantly more likely to occur during school hours (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.), with a noticeable peak on Mondays. Rates were lower on weekends, suggesting a strong connection to work-related stress.
- **Method:** The most common method of suicide was the use of firearms.

The findings are intended to help schools and policymakers design targeted, data-driven prevention strategies. By understanding when and among whom risk is highest, school systems can better time interventions, provide mental health resources and offer stronger support to those most at risk.

The full study is available through the Wiley Online Library:

<https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.70114>