

Prevalence of Lifetime Indirect and Direct Firearm Violence Victimization and Perpetration: National Survey Results

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BACKGROUND

- An estimated 48,830 firearm-related deaths occur annually within the U.S (14.71 per 100,000), 42.9% being homicides. The homicide rate in the US is 7.5 times higher than 28 other high-income countries combined.
- Firearms are now the leading cause of death for youth in the US and account for 12% of all firearm deaths in 2020.
- Firearm-related deaths cost the American economy \$532 billion in 2021.
- Firearm homicides are concentrated in young adults, males, and racial minority groups. Young males are five times more likely to carry firearms than females.
- Few nationally representative studies examine youth firearm violence.

METHODS

- Youth and young adults (10-34 years old) will be surveyed three times over the 3-year study period using the AmeriSpeak panel. Analyses were conducted using Wave 1 data; 5,311 youth and young adults participated in the baseline survey between September and January 2024.
- Youth are contacted via email and phone to complete the online survey. Measures of firearm carrying, victimization, perpetration, and background information were collected.
- Descriptive analyses and logistic regression models were performed to describe the prevalence of firearm carrying, perpetration, and victimization.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS (N=5,311)

Characteristic	n (%)
Birth sex	
Female	49.6%
Male	47.9%
Intersex	0.3%
Gender Identity	
Female	47.4%
Male	47.1%
Gender minority	3.6%
Age	
10-17	30.2%
18-25	28.2%
26-34	41.6%
Race/Ethnicity	
White	62.9%
Black or African American	14.2%
Asian	7.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.8%
Native Hawaiian	0.4%
Other race	4.1%
Two or more races	7.5%
Hispanic ethnicity	22.4%
Urbanicity	
Urban	36.9%
Suburban	48.8%
Rural	14.3%
Sexual minority identity	18.3%
Household Income	
Less than \$30,000	22.8%
\$30,000 to under \$60,000	24.2%
\$60,000 to under \$100,000	24.2%
\$100,000 or more	28.0%
Region	
Northeast	16.6%
Midwest	20.3%
South	38.6%
West	24.6%

RESULTS

Frequencies of Gun Carrying

Lifetime	Past Year	Before Age 18
1402 (26.7%)	767 (13.9%)	379 (7.6%)

Frequencies of Gun Victimization

Lifetime	Past Year	Before Age 18
595 (9.5%)	149 (2.5%)	301 (5.2%)

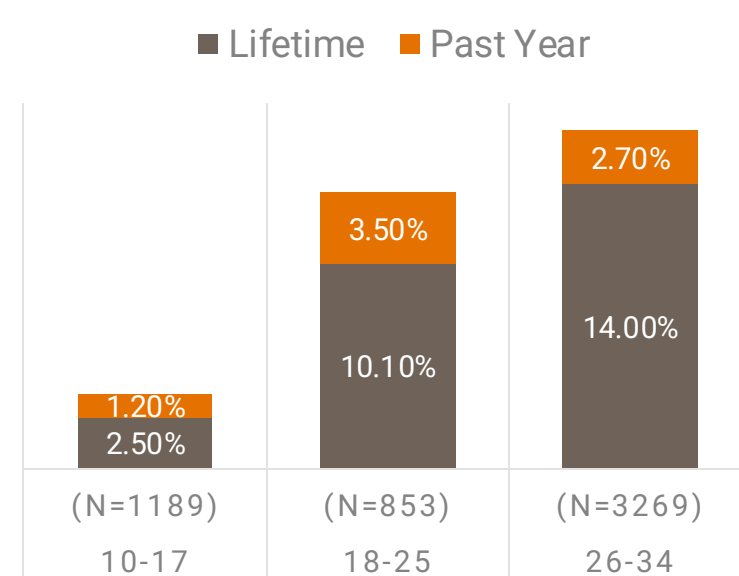
Frequencies of Gun Perpetration

Lifetime	Past Year	Before Age 18
197 (3.3%)	50 (0.9%)	84 (1.8%)

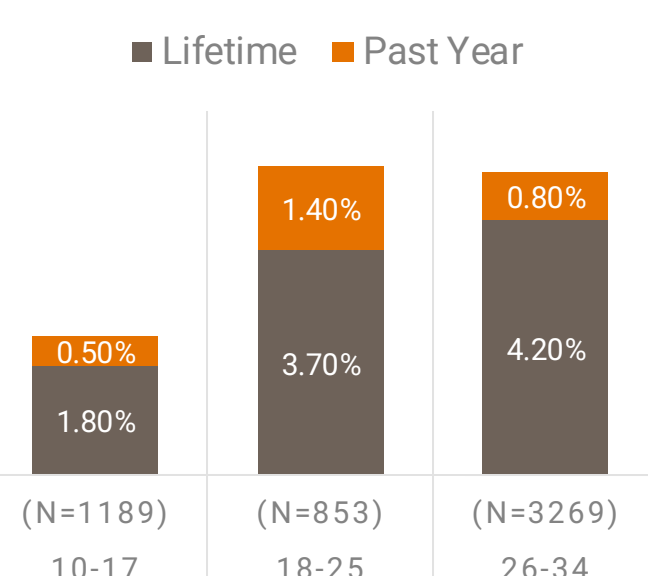
- Carrying:** Possessing gun in hand, pocket or in a bag; not counting for hunting, target shooting, or a gun safety class.
- Victimization:** Has been threatened, stolen from, or shot at by someone with a gun that had real bullets.
- Perpetration:** Has threatened to hurt someone, take something away, or shot at someone with a gun that had real bullets.
- Before Age 18:** Includes all youth respondents (lifetime) and adults reporting on their firearm exposure before 18.

Frequencies by Respondent Characteristics

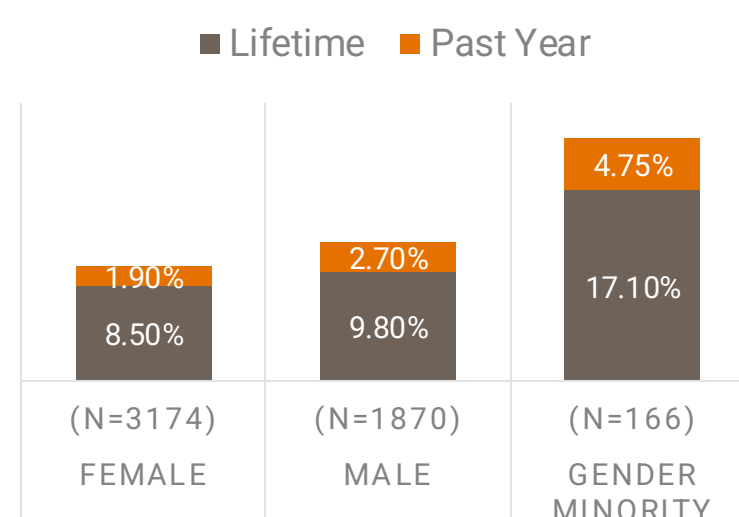
VICTIMIZATION BY AGE



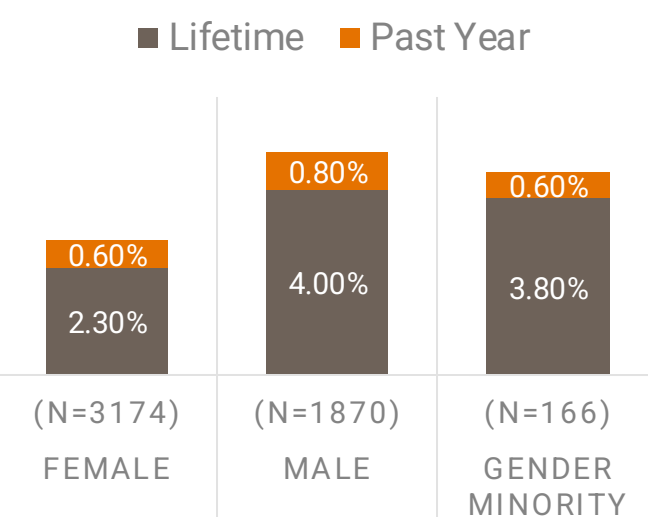
PERPETRATION BY AGE



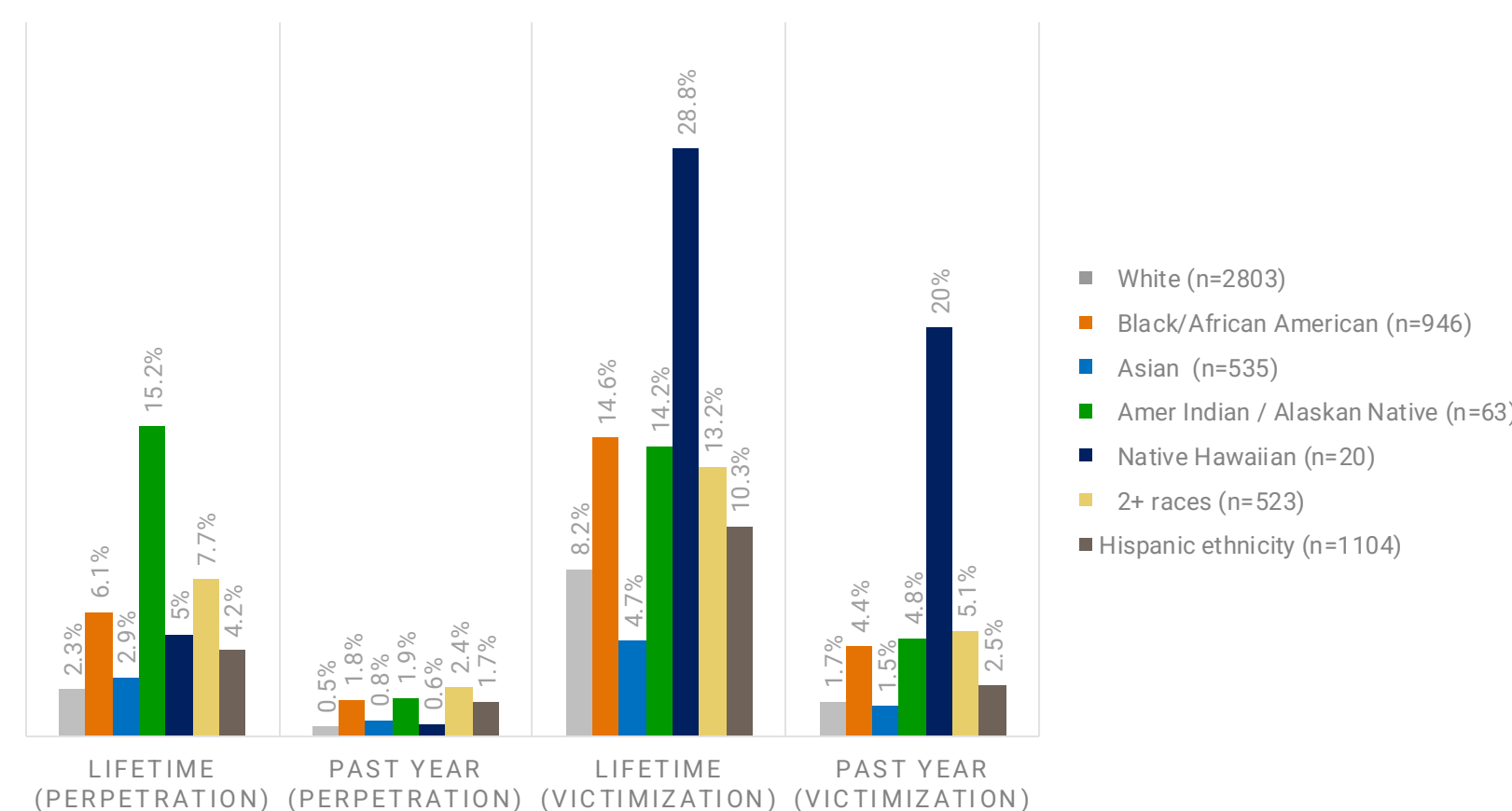
VICTIMIZATION BY GENDER IDENTITY



PERPETRATION BY GENDER IDENTITY



PERPETRATION AND VICTIMIZATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Odds Ratio of Lifetime Gun Carrying, Victimization and Perpetration

		Adjusted odds		
	Group n	Gun Carrying OR (95% CI)	Victimization OR (95% CI)	Perpetration OR (95% CI)
Overall	5,311		---	
All Participants				
Gender Identity (Ref= Female)				
Male	1,870	1.9 (1.6, 2.3)***	1.3 (1.0, 1.6)*	1.9 (1.3, 2.9)***
Gender Minority	166	1.2 (0.7, 2.1)	2.0 (1.0, 3.8)*	1.6 (0.7, 3.9)
Age (Ref= 10-17)				
18-25	853	6.8 (4.8, 9.7)***	3.5 (2.1, 5.9)***	1.8 (0.9, 3.9)
26-34	3,269	9.1 (6.7, 12.4)***	5.5 (3.5, 8.8)***	2.3 (1.2, 4.5)**
Race (Ref=White)				
Black/African American	946	1.7 (1.4, 2.3)***	1.7 (1.2, 2.4)**	2.5 (1.6, 3.9)***
Asian American	535	0.5 (0.3, 0.7)***	0.5 (0.3, 0.9)*	1.3 (0.5, 3.5)
American Indian/ Alaska Native	63	2.2 (0.8, 6.0)	1.3 (0.6, 2.7)	6.5 (1.5, 27.9)**
Native Hawaiian	20	1.3 (0.3, 4.6)	3.1 (0.8, 11.8)	1.9 (0.2, 15.3)
2+ Races	523	0.9 (0.6, 1.3)	1.6 (1.1, 2.3)*	3.3 (1.6, 6.9)***
Hispanic Ethnicity				
Yes	1,104	1.1 (0.9, 1.5)	1.1 (0.7, 1.5)	1.5 (0.9, 2.5)
Urbanicity (Ref= Urban)				
Suburban	2,311	1.1 (0.9, 1.4)	0.9 (0.7, 1.3)	1.3 (0.9, 2.0)
Rural	740	2.2 (0.6, 1.1)	1.3 (0.9, 1.8)	1.3 (0.7, 2.3)
Sexual Identity (Ref= Hetero)				
LGBQA+	1,047	0.9 (0.7, 1.1)	1.4 (1.0, 1.9)*	1.2 (0.7, 2.1)
Household Income (Ref <\$30k)				
\$30,000 to under \$60,000	1,373	0.8 (0.6, 1.0)*	1.0 (0.7, 1.4)	0.7 (0.5, 1.2)
\$60,000 to under \$100,000	1,260	1.3 (1.0, 1.7)*	0.7 (0.5, 0.9)**	1.0 (0.6, 1.8)
\$100,000 +	1,365	0.8 (0.6, 1.1)	0.6 (0.4, 0.8)**	0.7 (0.4, 1.3)
Region (Ref= Northeast)				
Midwest	1,367	1.3 (0.9, 1.8)	1.3 (0.9, 2.0)	1.7 (0.8, 3.6)
South	1,901	1.7 (1.2, 2.3)***	1.5 (1.0, 2.3)*	2.1 (1.0, 4.3)*
West	1,403	1.3 (0.9, 1.8)	1.6 (1.1, 2.5)*	1.3 (0.5, 3.1)

*p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01

Odds Ratio of Past Year Gun Carrying, Victimization and Perpetration

		Adjusted odds		
	Group n	Gun Carrying OR (95% CI)	Victimization OR (95% CI)	Perpetration OR (95% CI)
Overall	5,311		---	
All participants				
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Black/African American	946	1.8 (1.3, 2.4)***	2.0 (1.1, 3.5)**	3.0 (1.1, 8.0)*
Asian	535	0.4 (0.2, 0.7)***	0.9 (0.2, 3.7)	3.3 (0.7, 15.0)
Amer Indian / Alaska Native	63	1.9 (0.8, 4.1)	2.5 (0.6, 9.9)	3.1 (0.4, 22.9)
Nat Hawaiian	20	2.2 (0.5, 10.7)	13.1 (2.8, 60.9)***	0.7 (0.1, 8.7)
2+ races	523	0.8 (0.6, 1.2)	3.1 (1.6, 5.9)***	3.7 (1.3, 10.7)**
Hispanic ethnicity				
Yes	1,104	1.2 (0.8, 1.6)	0.9 (0.5, 1.7)	4.2 (1.7, 10.3)**
Urbanicity (Ref= Urban)				
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South	1,901	1.9 (1.3, 2.8)**	1.9 (0.7, 4.8)	2.0 (0.5, 8.3)
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*p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **13.9% of participants reported carrying a gun in the past year.**
 - 78.8% carried for protection against attacks by other people.
- **9.5% of participants reported being a victim of gun violence in their lifetime.**
 - 3.3% admitted to perpetrating violence with a gun.
- **Characteristics associated with greater odds of being a gun violence victim:**
 - Older youth.
 - African American or Black and multi-racial youth.
 - Individuals with more favorable attitudes towards guns.
 - Perpetrators of gun violence.
- **Characteristics associated with greater odds of being a perpetrator of gun violence:**
 - African American or Black and Hispanic youth.
 - Individuals with more favorable attitudes towards guns.
 - Victims of gun violence.
- **It is important to note individual characteristics are proxies for social and environmental contexts that increase risk, not risk factors themselves.**

LIMITATIONS

- The lifetime measures of direct gun violence knowledge across age groups are differentiated by differing opportunities of exposure based on time and thus we cannot discern if there are actual cohort effects.
- Data are self-reported and thus are susceptible to under-reporting or exaggerating of responses.
- The measures for structural conditions in this study were based on current experiences and may not reflect the community in which the participant became aware of the gun violence situation.
- We had a completion rate of 62.5% among 10-17-year-olds and 29.1% among 18-34-year-olds.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- Dr. Elizabeth Mumford, NORC
- Dr. Weiwei Liu, NORC
- Dr. Caroline Lancaster, NORC
- Chandler Carter, NORC
- Mireim Alibrahim, NORC
- GWG Youth Advisory Group
- Dr. Victoria Banyard, Rutgers
- Dr. Heather Turner, UNH
- AmeriSpeak

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