

Gun Violence

Obj. 7.3: Demonstrate how to influence and support others to reduce gun violence.



Guns in Violent Incidents

Use the data table to answer the questions below.

Presence of offender's weapon	Violent crime	Rape/ sexual assault	Robbery	Simple/ aggravated assault
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
No weapon	73 %	85 %	48 %	76 %
Weapon	22 %	10 %*	47 %	19 %
Firearm	8	-- *	28	5
Knife	6	8 *	9	5
Other	7	2 *	8	7
Type not ascertained	2	-- *	2 *	1
Don't know	6 %	5 %*	6 %*	6 %

Note: Percentage may not total to 100% because of rounding. If the offender was armed with more than one weapon, the crime is classified based on the most serious weapon present.
 *Based up 10 or fewer sample cases.
 --Less than 0.5%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics (<http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=43>)

1. Did any of the data in this table surprise you? Explain.
2. Which type of weapon was most commonly used in violent crimes?
3. Of the four types of violent incidents, which type is the use of a firearm most common?
4. Which type of weapon should efforts be directed toward removing from potential offenders in order to target robbery in a community?



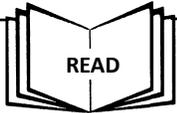
Gun Control

Gun control: any law, policy, practice, or proposal designed to define, restrict, or limit the possession, production or modification, importation, shipment, sale, and/or use of firearms. (wikipedia.org)

DISCUSS

Your Voice

Gun control is a timely and controversial topic. With school shootings making headlines and debate among citizens and politicians about how to reduce the violence, the conversation on gun control is ongoing. With a partner, discuss your views on gun control in a respectful, thoughtful, and open-minded manner. What do you think influences your views? What issues are you convinced about and unsure about? Why might others disagree with your views?

**National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Gun Violence Facts****Who Has Guns and How Are They Acquired?**

NIJ's earliest firearms studies uncovered who owns guns, legally and illegally, and how illegal gun trafficking is tied to juvenile gun violence and other crimes such as drug dealing and gang crime. Highlights of these studies:

- Many juveniles and young adults can easily obtain guns illegally; most claim to carry them for self-defense.
- A study of persons arrested for a wide range of crimes showed that a higher percentage of arrestees than regular citizens own firearms. Arrestees are also more likely to be injured or killed by gun violence. Within a community, this amounts to an identifiable group of “career” offenders.
- Surveys of offenders have found that they prefer newer, high-quality guns and may steal or borrow them; most, however, acquire guns “off the street” through the illicit gun market.

Who Is Most Affected by Gun Violence?

People between the ages of 15 and 24 are most likely to be targeted by gun violence as opposed to other forms of violence. From 1976 to 2005, 77 percent of homicide victims ages 15-17 died from gun-related injuries. This age group was most at risk for gun violence during this time period.

Teens and young adults are more likely than persons of other ages to be murdered with a gun. Most violent gun crime, especially homicide, occurs in cities and urban communities.

Intimate partner violence can be fatal when a gun is involved — **from 1990 to 2005, two-thirds of spouse and ex-spouse homicide victims were killed by guns.** The overall number of firearm homicides among intimates has fallen considerably during the past 30 years, however.

Gangs and Gun-Related Homicide

Gun-related homicide is most prevalent among gangs and during the commission of felony crimes. In 1980, the percentage of homicides caused by firearms during arguments was about the same as from gang involvement (about 70 percent), but by 1993, nearly all gang-related homicides involved guns (95 percent), whereas the percentage of gun homicides related to arguments remained relatively constant. The percentage of gang-related homicides caused by guns fell slightly to 92 percent in 2008, but the percentage of homicides caused by firearms during the commission of a felony rose from about 60 percent to about 74 percent from 1980 to 2005.

Gun Violence Prevention

Faced with a national epidemic of gun violence that began in the 1980s and continued throughout most of the 1990s, the federal government launched a new effort to help local authorities address gun crime. Many cities worked with NIJ researchers and other federal, state and local partners to design and test interventions to get illegally obtained guns off the streets and out of the hands of urban youth.

Initially, firearms violence intervention and research focused on either reducing the **demand** for illegally obtained guns or reducing the **supply**. More than 20 years of intervention programs, however, have shown that a single approach is not likely to work. To reduce gun violence, a sustained program that addresses both demand and supply is needed. A successful intervention will have elements of federal-local law enforcement collaboration, community involvement, targeted intervention tactics and continuous program evaluation.

A key lesson learned from several decades of gun violence intervention programs is that sustained federal-local partnerships improve efforts to reduce gun violence within a city or community. The U.S. Department of Justice's national gun violence reduction program, **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, helps localities develop and implement partnerships and strategies that are likely to work.

Source: National Institute of Justice, Gun Violence (<http://www.nij.gov/topics/crime/gun-violence>)



Gun Violence Interventions

Working as a team of social workers and public health professionals, develop an intervention to reduce gun violence. Select a target population from the list below and identify the specific action that will help prevent, reduce, or avoid gun violence among that population. Then explain your intervention clearly.

	Description of Plan:
Target Population	Examples: <i>children, teenagers, elderly, young adults at risk for gang involvement, adults, parents, law enforcement, prison inmates, etc.</i>
Desired Action (to Reduce, Prevent, or Avoid Gun Violence)	
Intervention	



Review

1. What population most often has easy access to illegal guns? How do they access guns?

2. Who is most affected by gun violence?



Reflection

Reflect upon the issue of gun violence in your community by completing a free-write (approx. 2-4 paragraphs). As you write, answer the following questions:

- Does your community have problems with gun violence? How do you know?
- If so, what is the impact of gun violence on your community?
- If not, what can be done to reduce the likelihood of gun violence?