



# County of San Diego Gun Violence Reduction Preliminary Findings Community Forum

March 9, 2023

# Introductions

---



County of San Diego

- Julie Jeakle,  
Program Manager, Public Safety Group

# Introductions

---



- Daniel V. Polk, PhD  
Research and Evaluation Associate

Community Research Firm

# Project Overview

---

- April 2022: Board of Supervisors authorized a **gun violence community needs assessment**
- Assessment includes looking at various types of gun violence **including community violence, suicide and family/domestic partner/intimate partner violence**
- **Community engagement** at the center of the project
- Ongoing community and collaboration with a **Gun Violence Reduction Advisory Group**
- Will bring **recommendations** to the Board of Supervisors at the conclusion of the assessment



# Project Methods & Overview

---

- Secondary Data Sources
- Community and Professional Surveys
- Listening Sessions
- Literature Review

# Research Products

---

- Preliminary Findings: 3 Community Forums (March 2023)
- Final Report (May 2023)
- Final Recommendations: 3 Community Presentations (May 2023)

# Community Forums

---

Date	Time	Location
March 9	6:00 - 7:30 PM	Virtual
March 11	2:00 - 3:30 PM	Jackie Robinson Family YMCA (San Diego)
March 14	6:00 - 7:30 PM	Escondido City Hall (Escondido)

# Preliminary Findings

---

- Secondary Data Sources
- Community and Professional Surveys
- Listening Sessions
- Recommendations





# Secondary Data Review

---

# Secondary Data

---

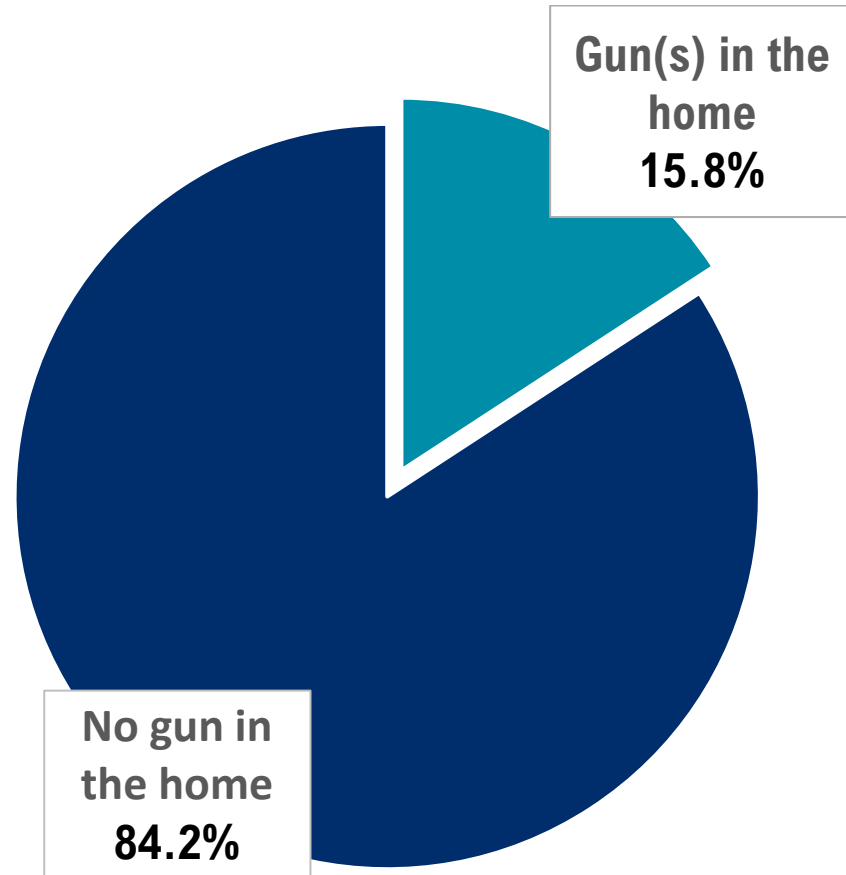
- Gun ownership
- Firearm-related deaths
- Firearm-related hospitalizations
- Firearm-related emergency medical services
- Firearm-related crimes
- Media analysis

# Secondary Data

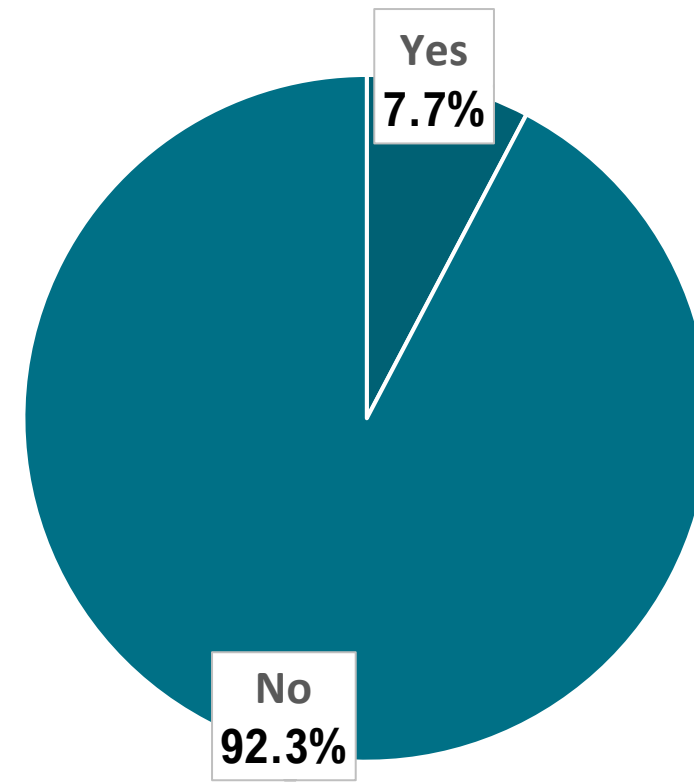
---

<b>California Health Interview Survey</b>	Large, comprehensive health-related survey, completed via phone call or internet, and is intended to be generally representative of the State of California or individual Counties.
<b>Medical Examiner</b>	Investigates all deaths in the County for which a cause of death is not immediately known.
<b>Hospitalization Data</b>	Hospitalization data includes detailed patient-level information on all people hospitalized at a licensed hospital within San Diego County.
<b>Emergency Medical Services</b>	Emergency Medical Services data includes patient-level information on all people in San Diego County who called 9-1-1 for a medical emergency.
<b>ARJIS Data</b>	ARJIS (Automated Regional Justice Information System) is a joint powers authority tasked with sharing information among relevant agencies in San Diego and Imperial counties. These data provide firearm-related criminal cases and arrests (including on suspects and victims) as reported by city police departments as well as other law enforcement agencies (County DA's office, County Probation Dept., SD Harbor Police, and Sheriff's Dept.).
<b>Gun Violence Archive</b>	An independent research and data collection organization with the goal to provide an unbiased, unfiltered database of gun violence and gun crime incidents.

# Secondary Data: Gun Ownership/Safety

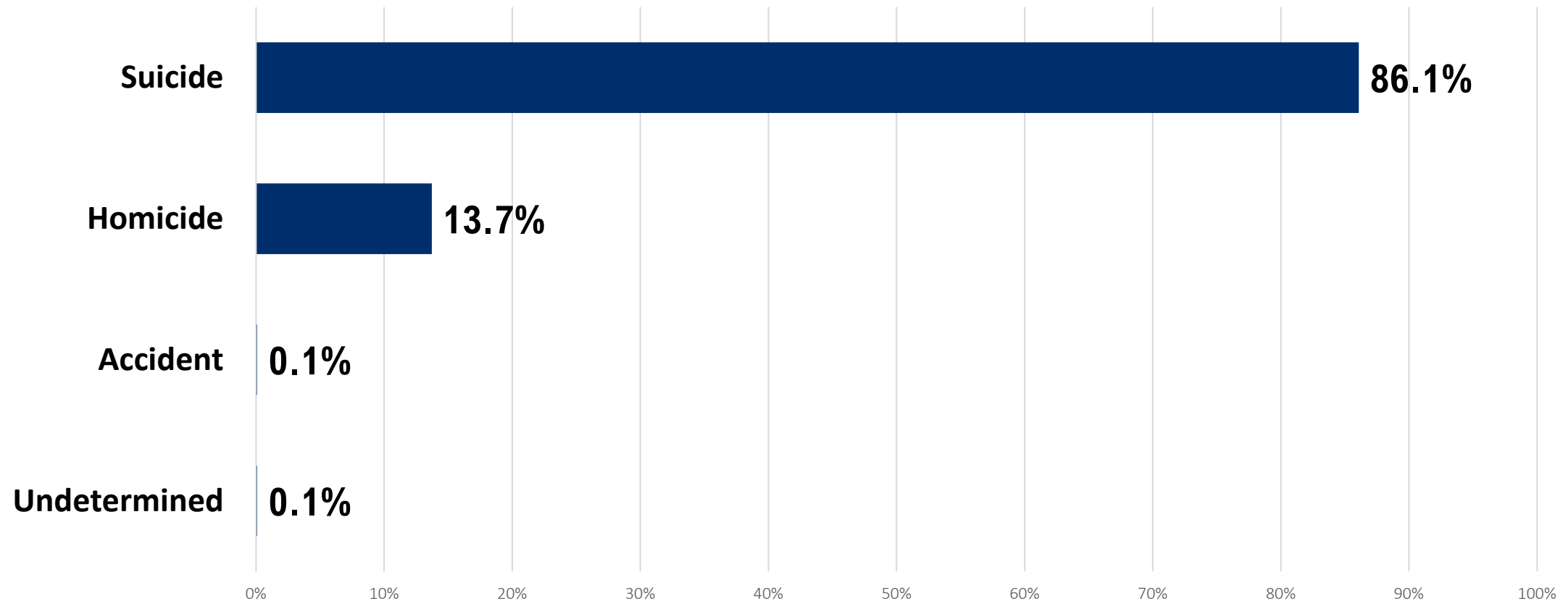


Do you keep your gun loaded and unlocked?

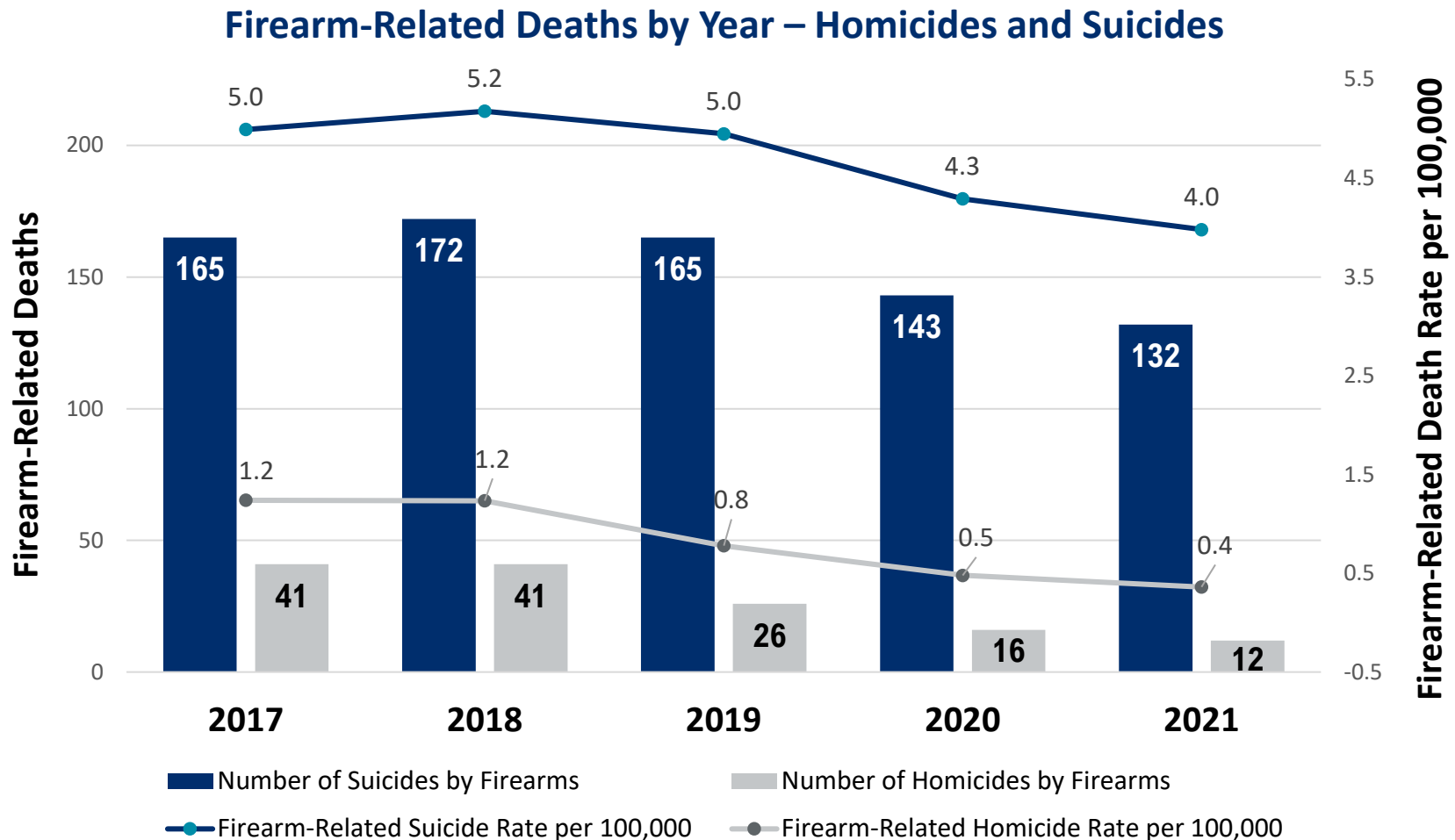


# Secondary Data: Deaths by Firearms

Manner of Death by Firearms in San Diego county – 2017 to September 2022

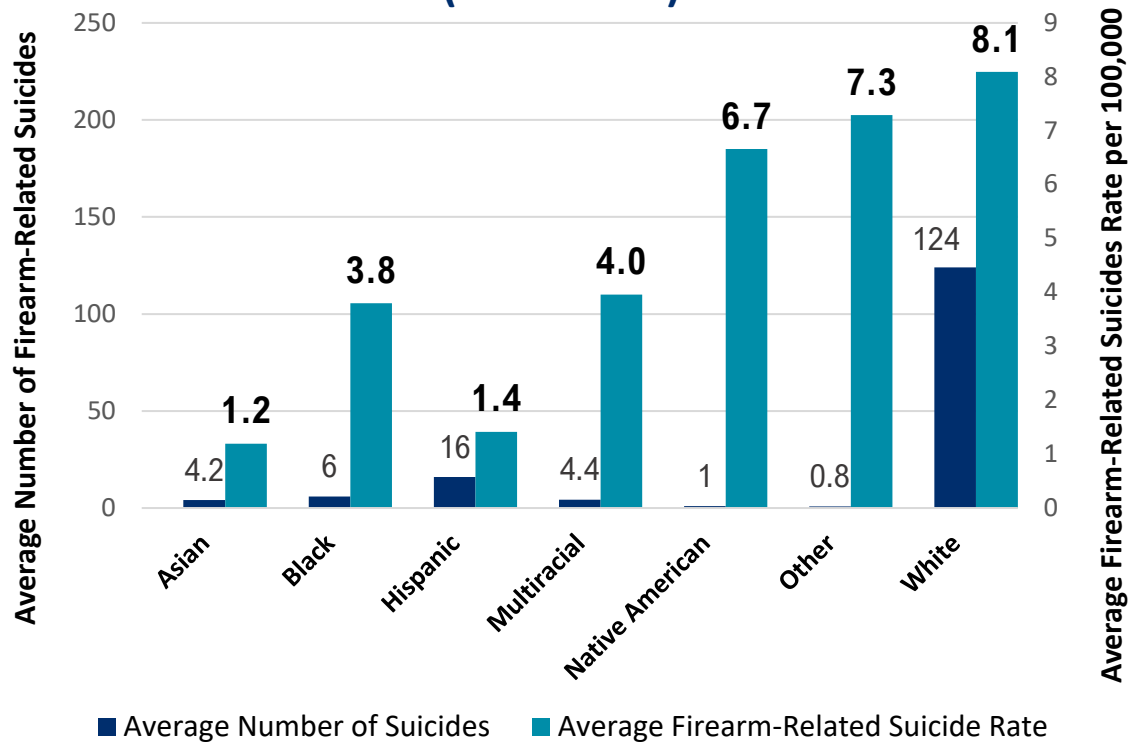


# Secondary Data: Deaths by Firearms

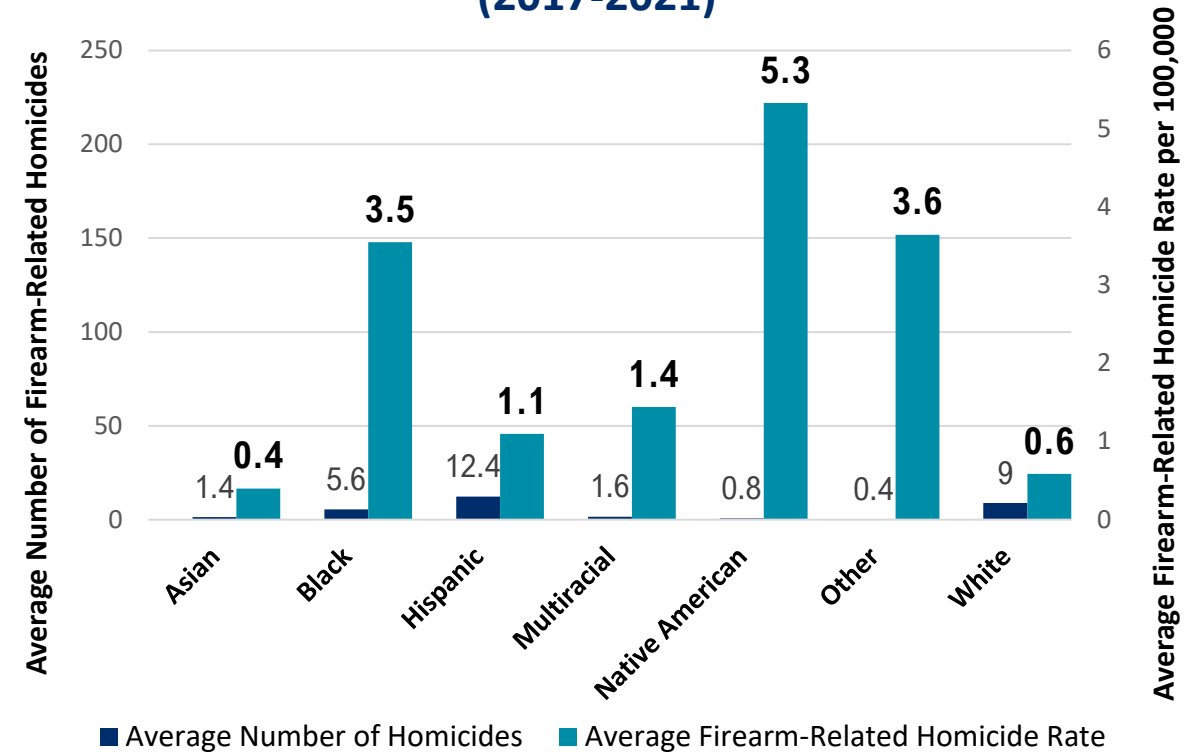


# Secondary Data: Death Rates by Race

Firearm-related Suicides by Race  
(2017-2021)

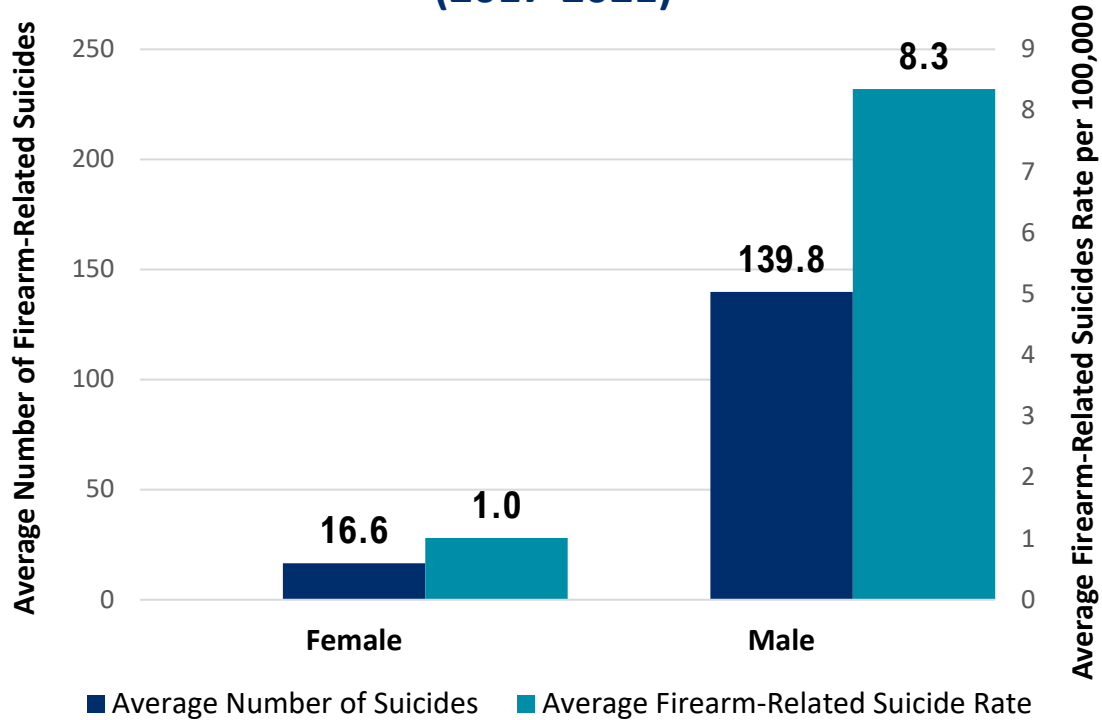


Firearm-related Homicides by Race  
(2017-2021)

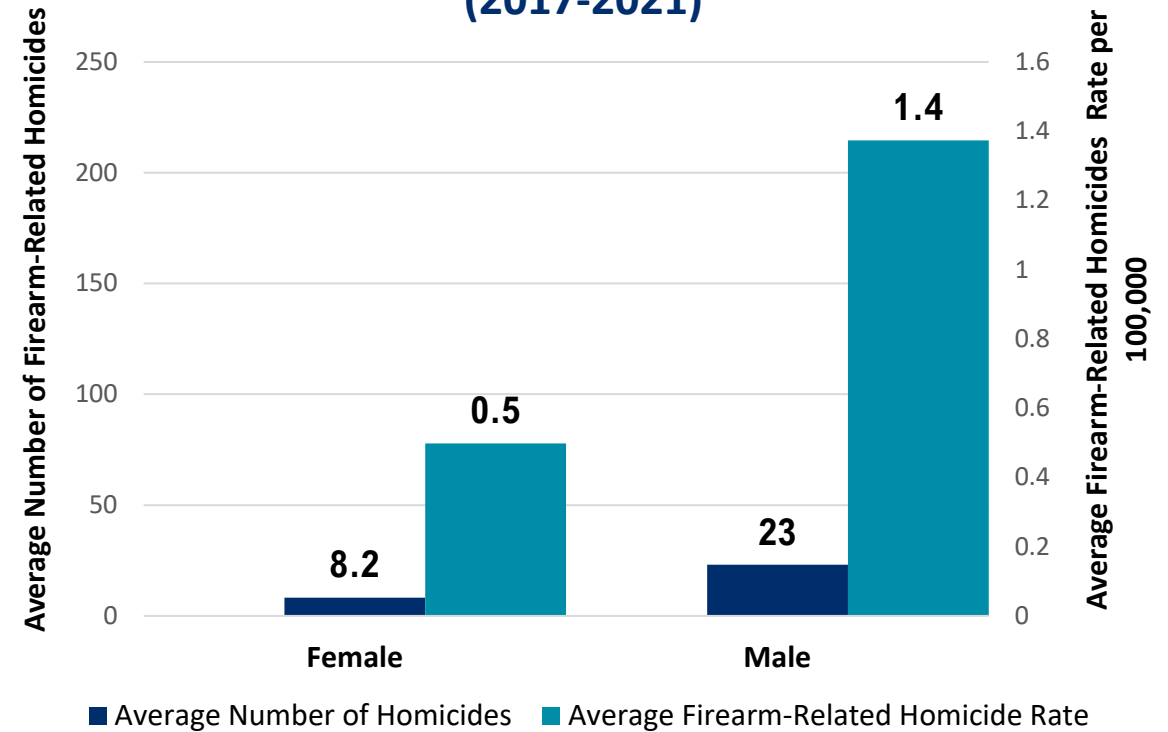


# Secondary Data: Death Rates by Gender

Firearm-related Suicides by Gender  
(2017-2021)



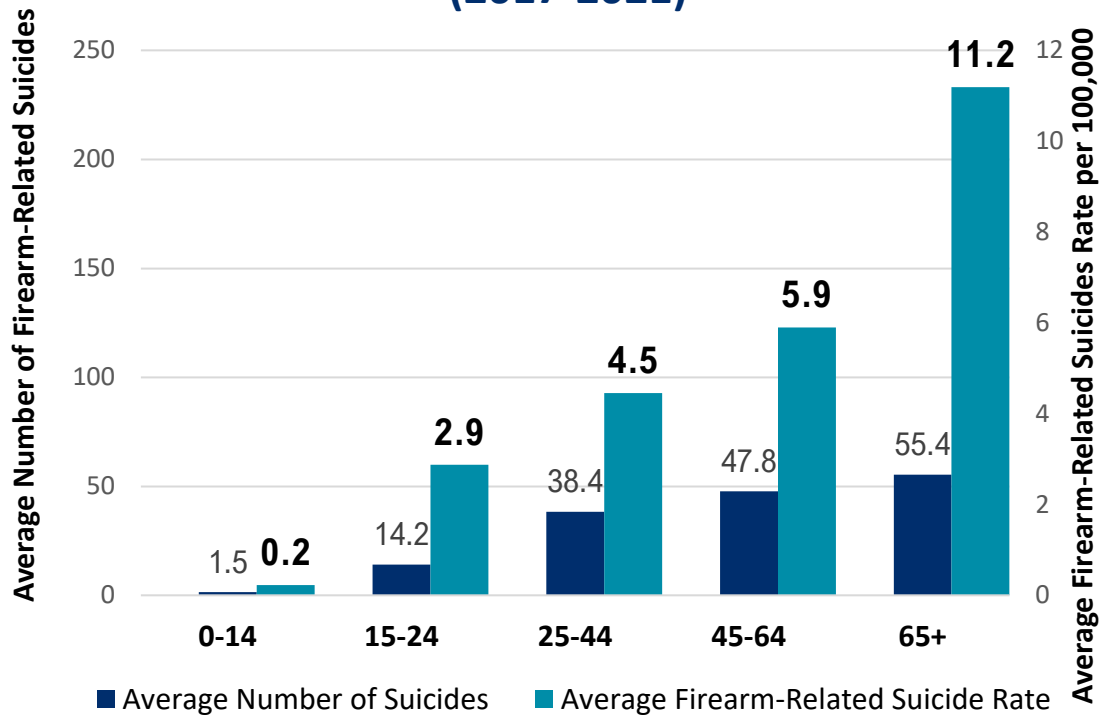
Firearm-related Homicides by Gender  
(2017-2021)



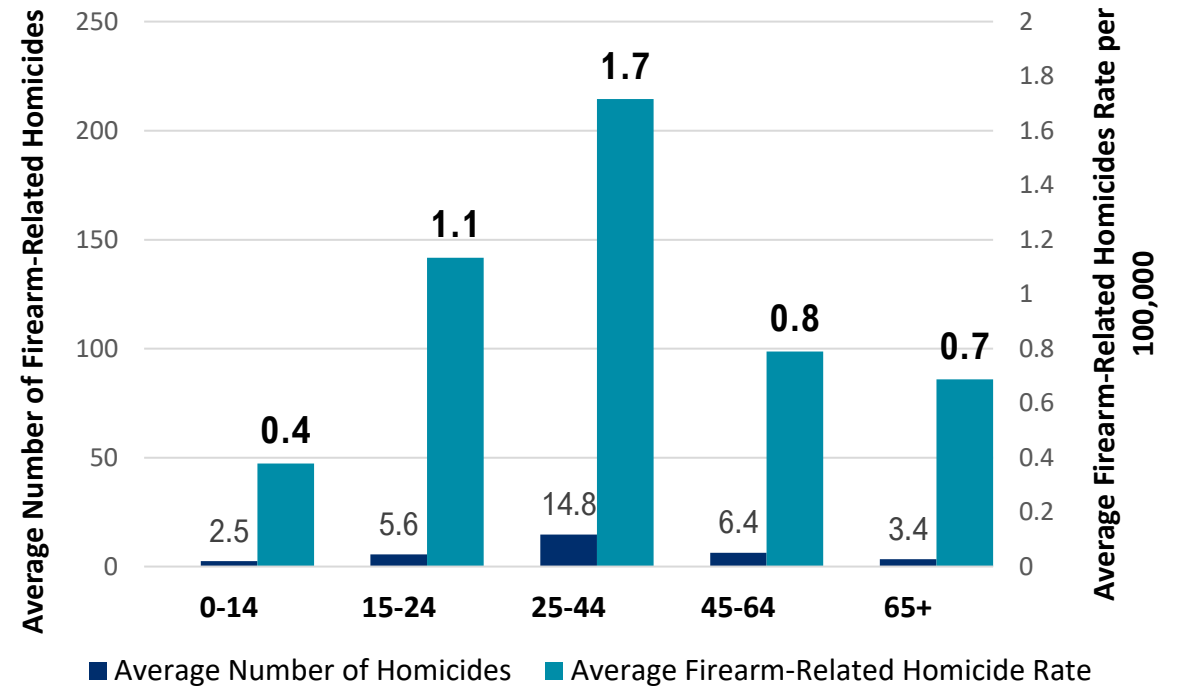


# Secondary Data: Death Rates by Age

## Firearm-related Suicides by Age (2017-2021)

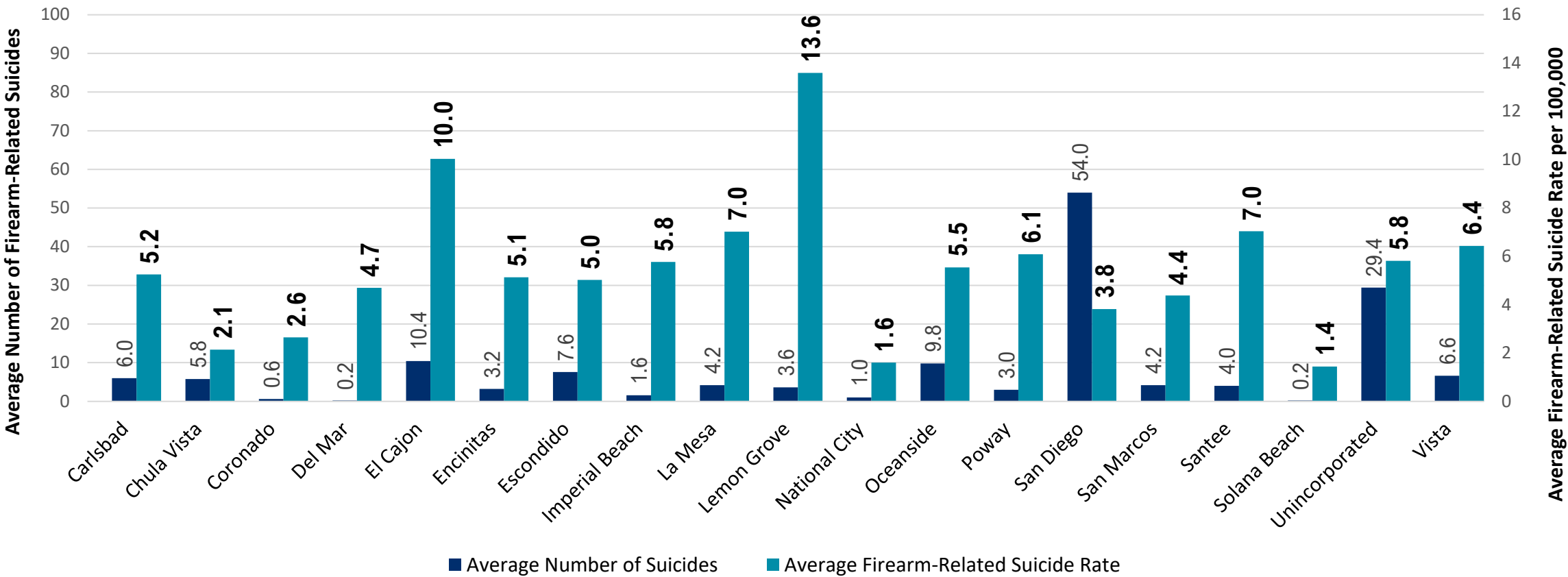


## Firearm-related Homicides by Age (2017-2021)



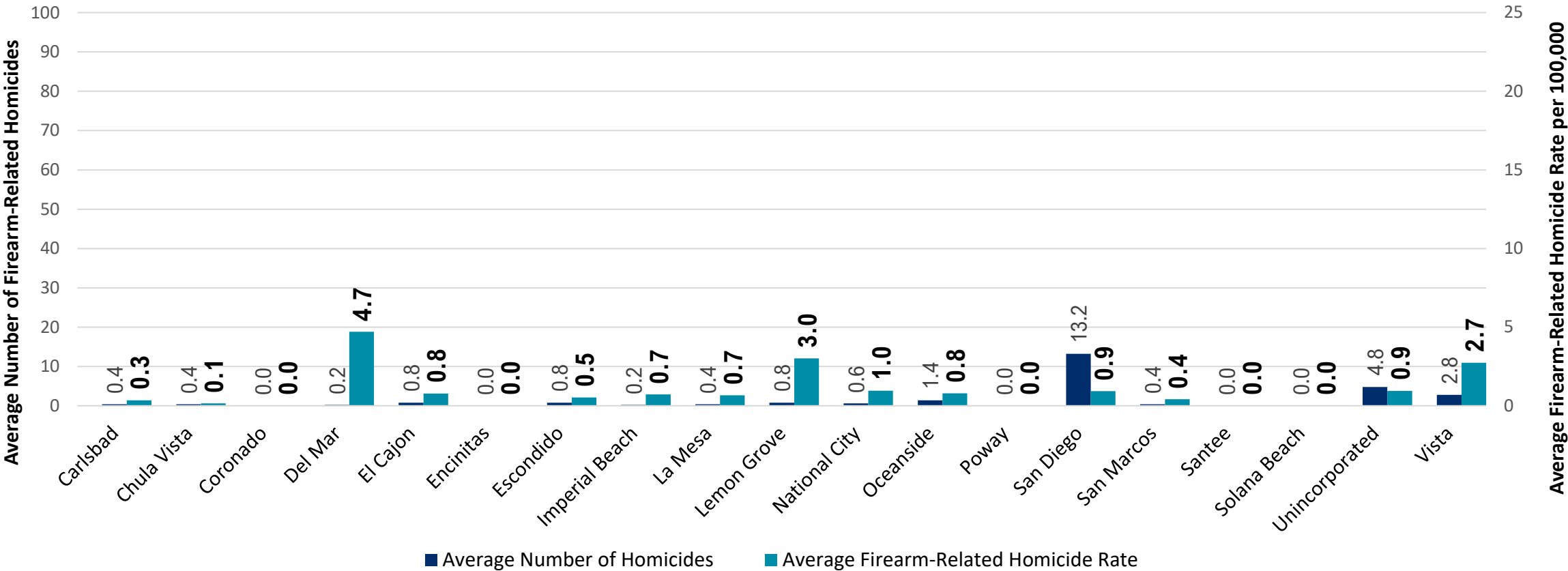
# Secondary Data: Death Rates by City

Firearm-related Suicides by City (2017-2021)

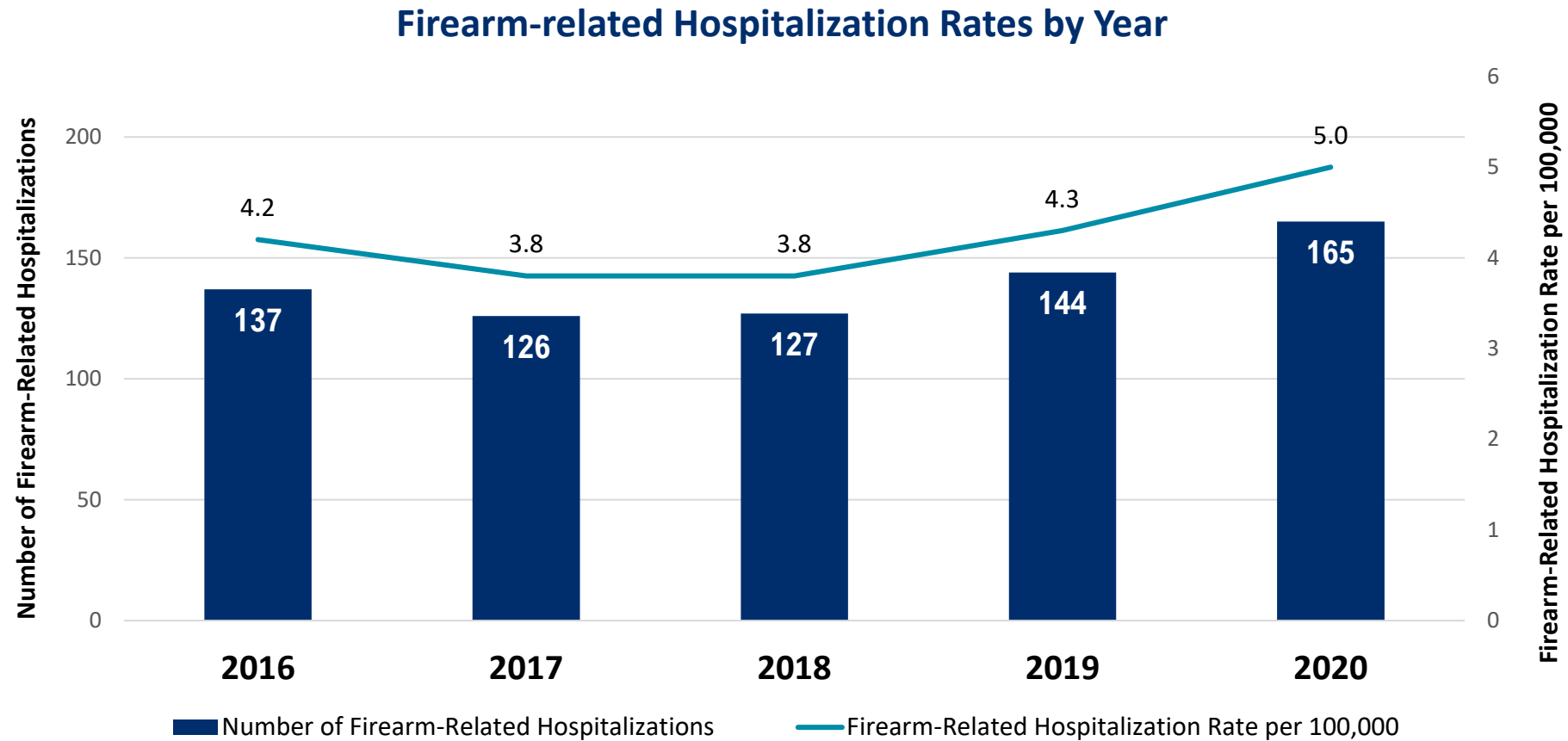


# Secondary Data: Death Rates by City

Firearm-related Homicides by City (2017-2021)

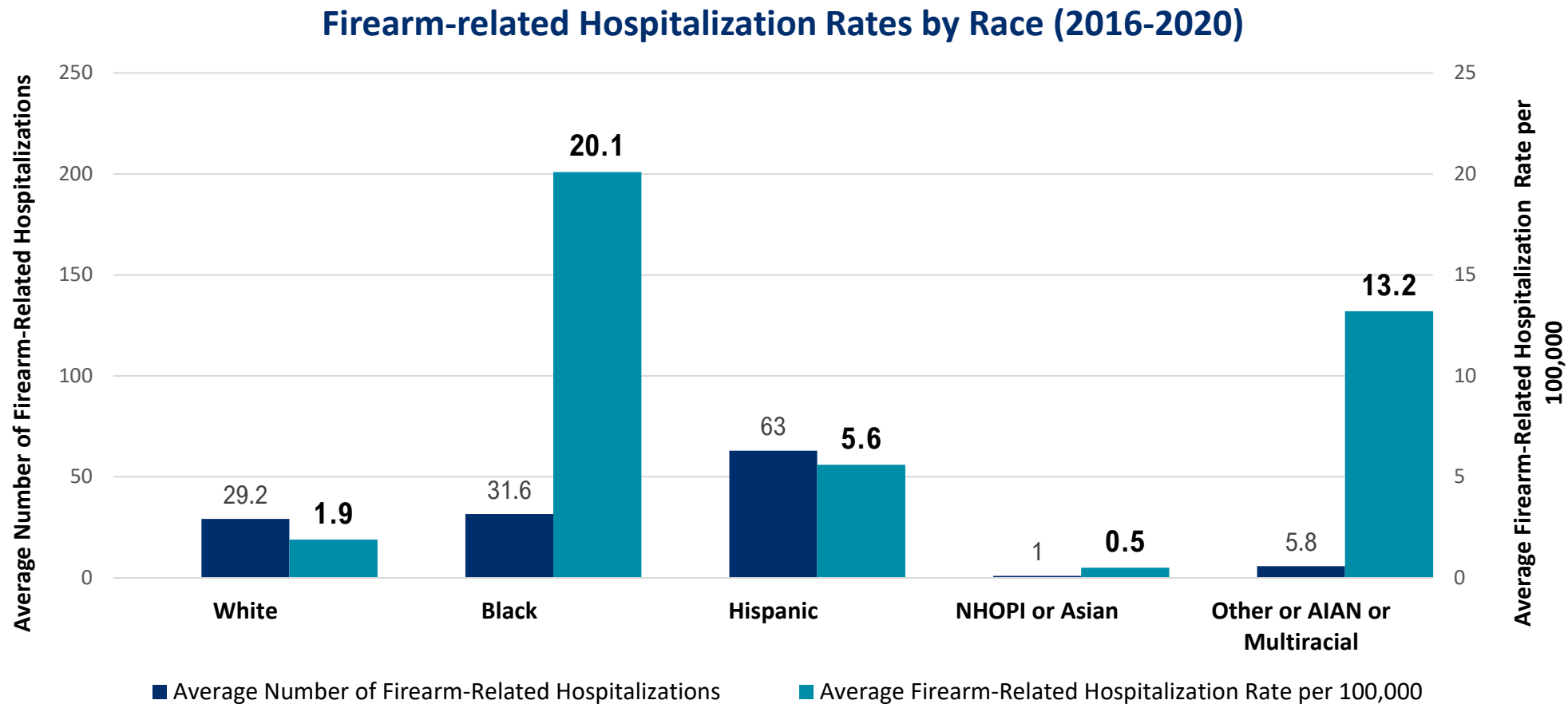


# Secondary Data: Hospitalization Rates

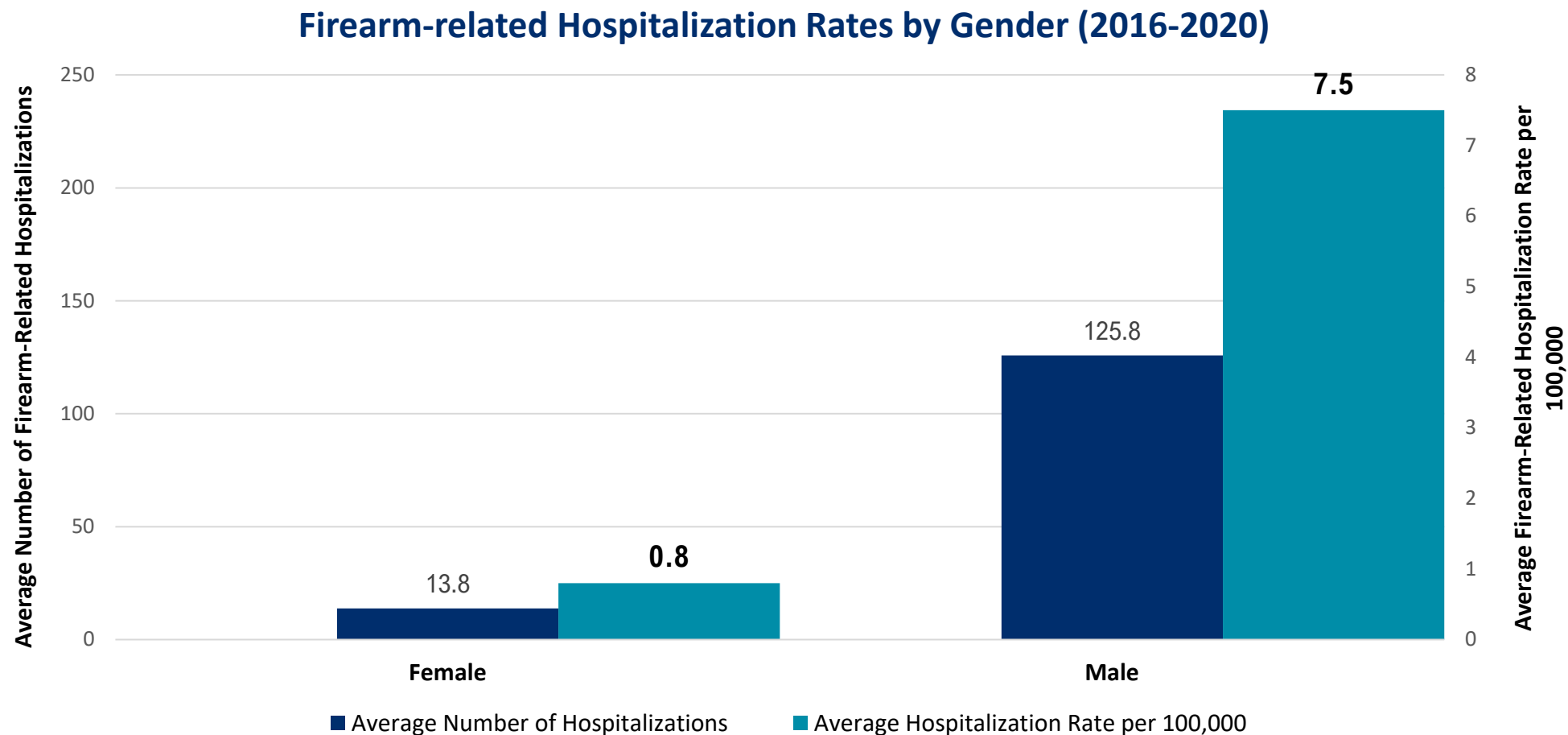


**Source: County Health & Human Services Agency**

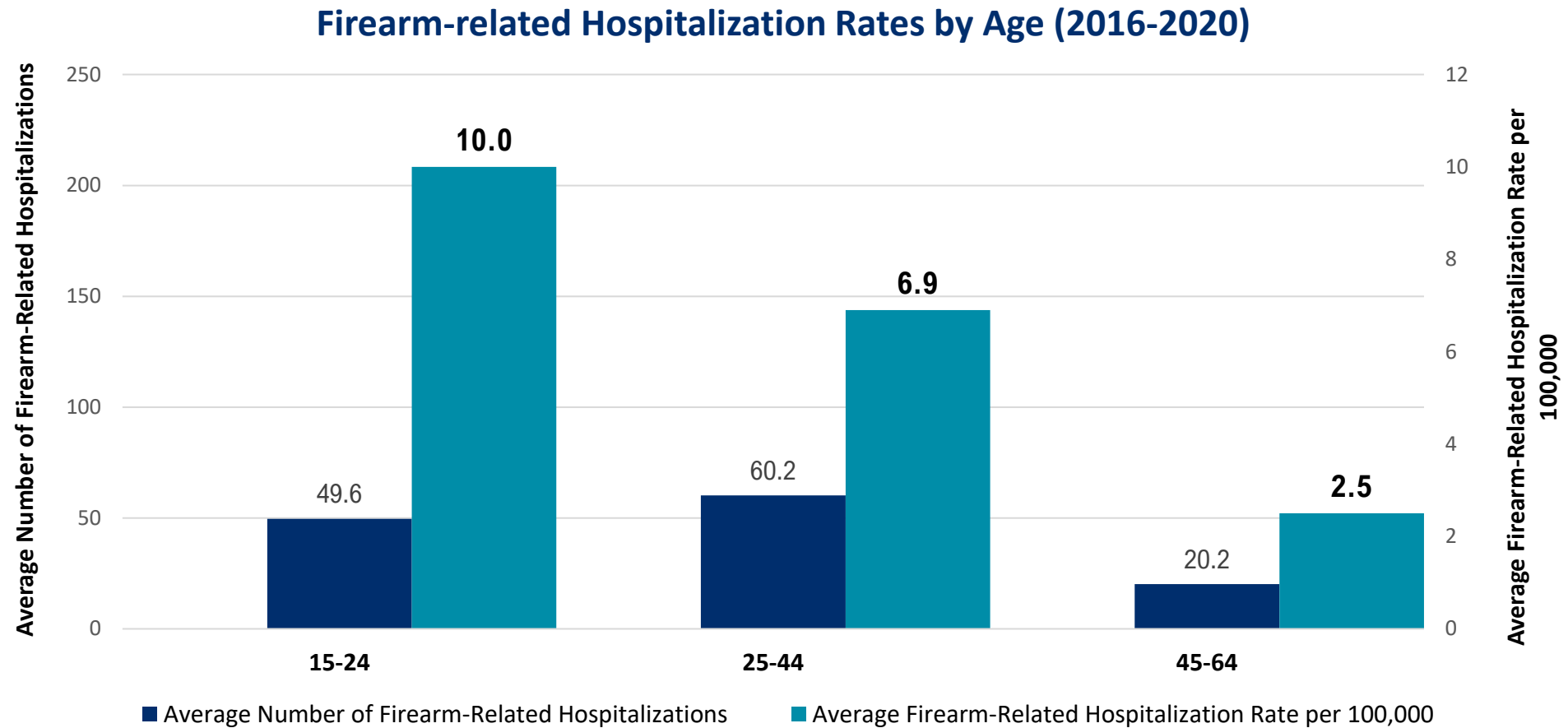
# Secondary Data: Hospitalization Rates by Race



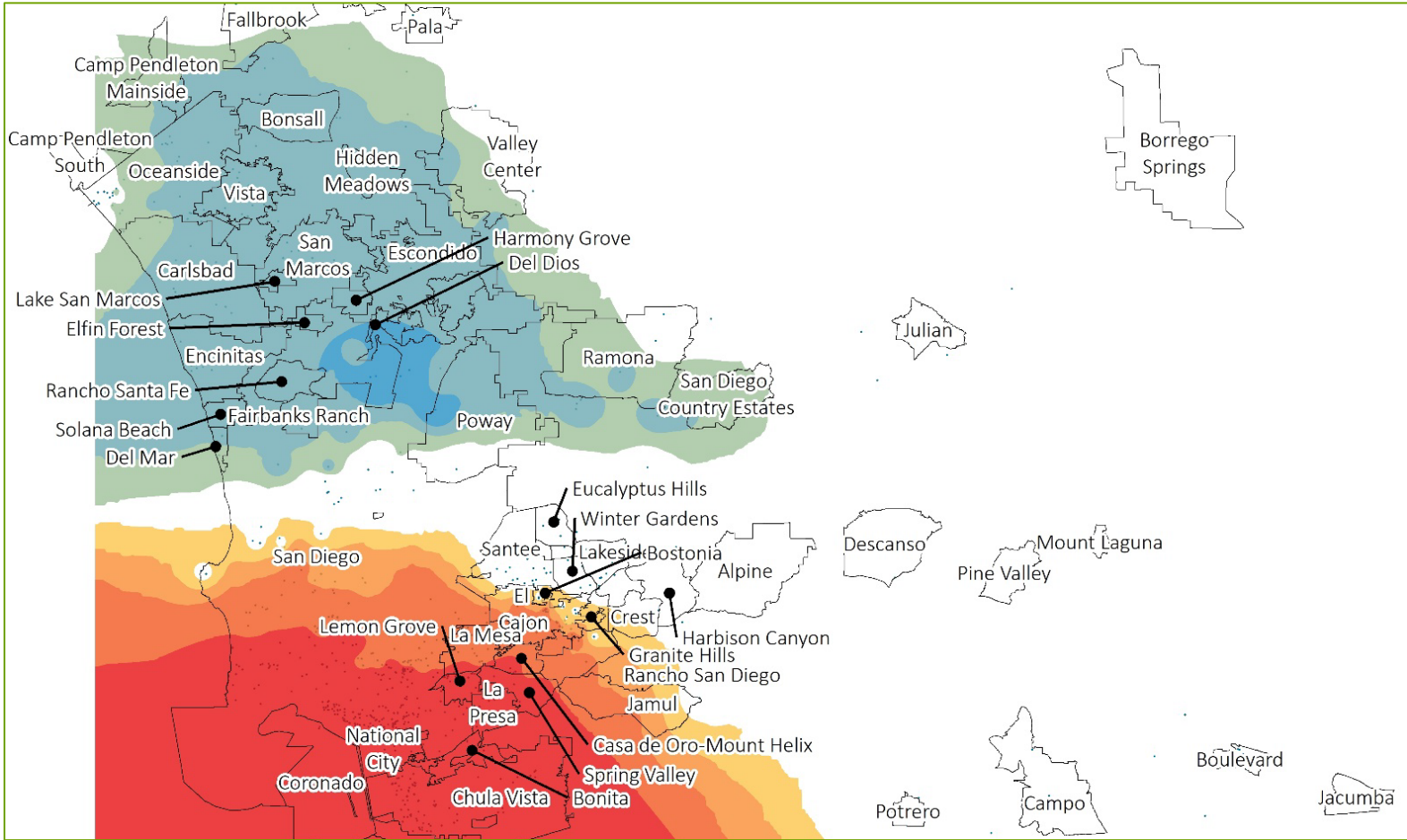
# Secondary Data: Hospitalization Rates by Gender



# Secondary Data: Hospitalization Rates by Age



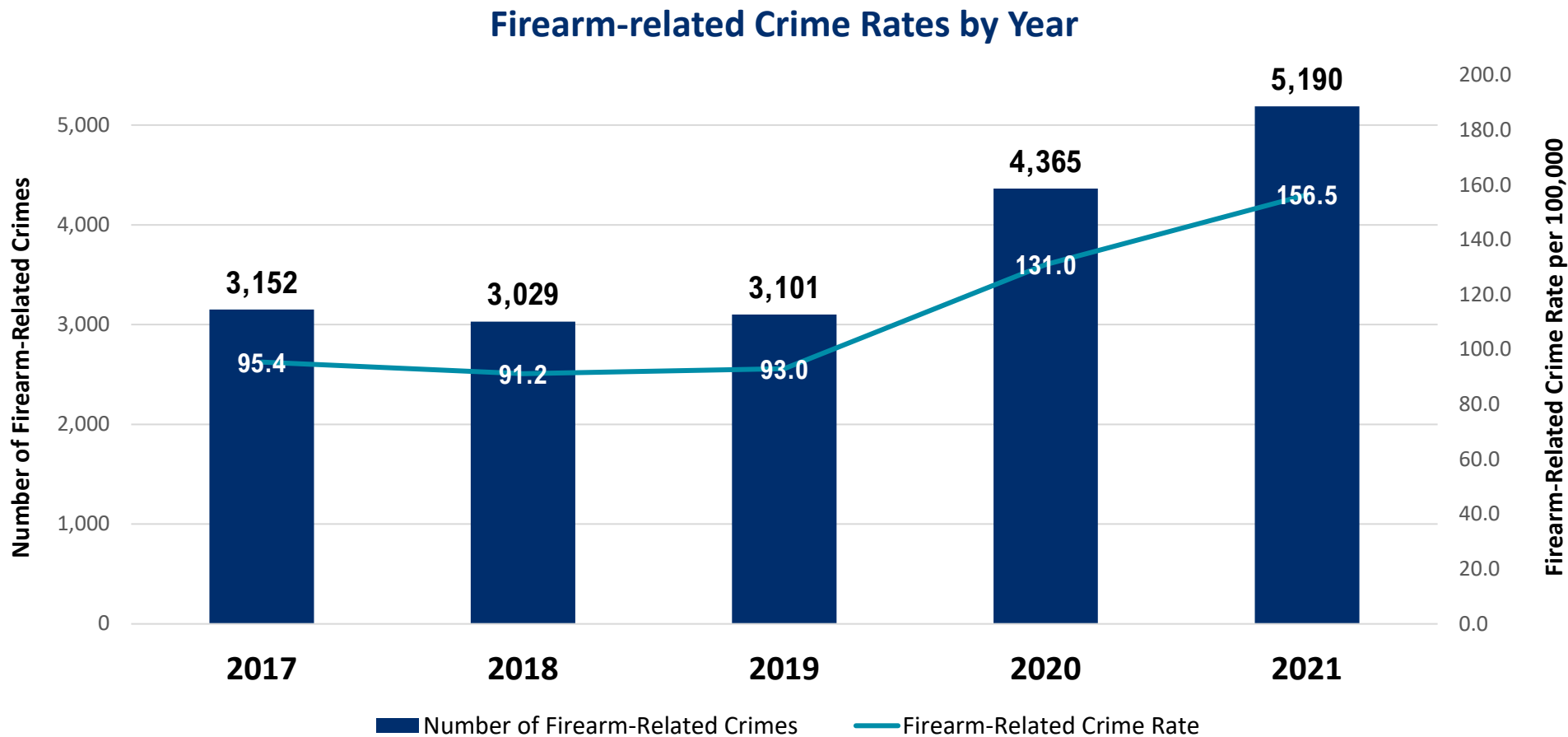
## Secondary Data: Emergency Medical Services



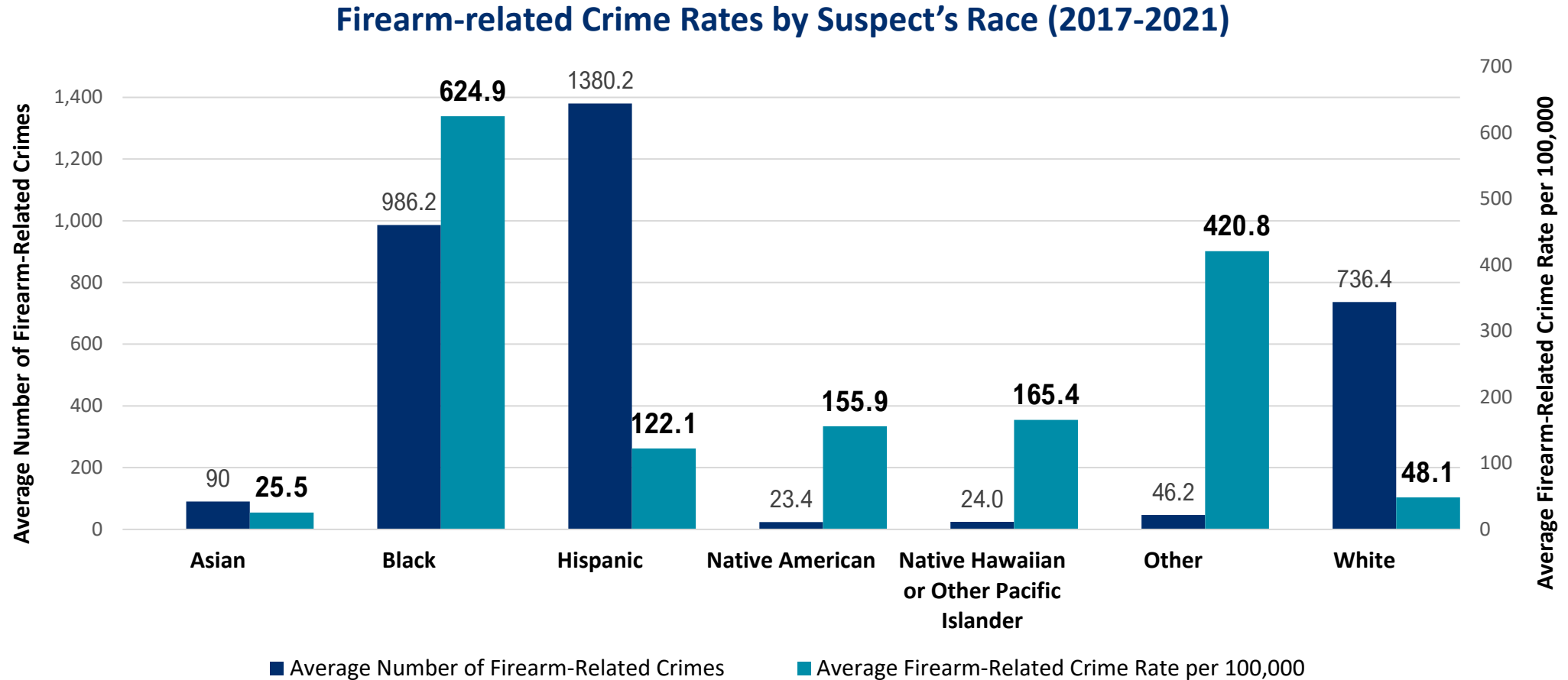
**Source: County of San Diego Emergency Medical Services**



# Secondary Data: Crimes Involving Firearms



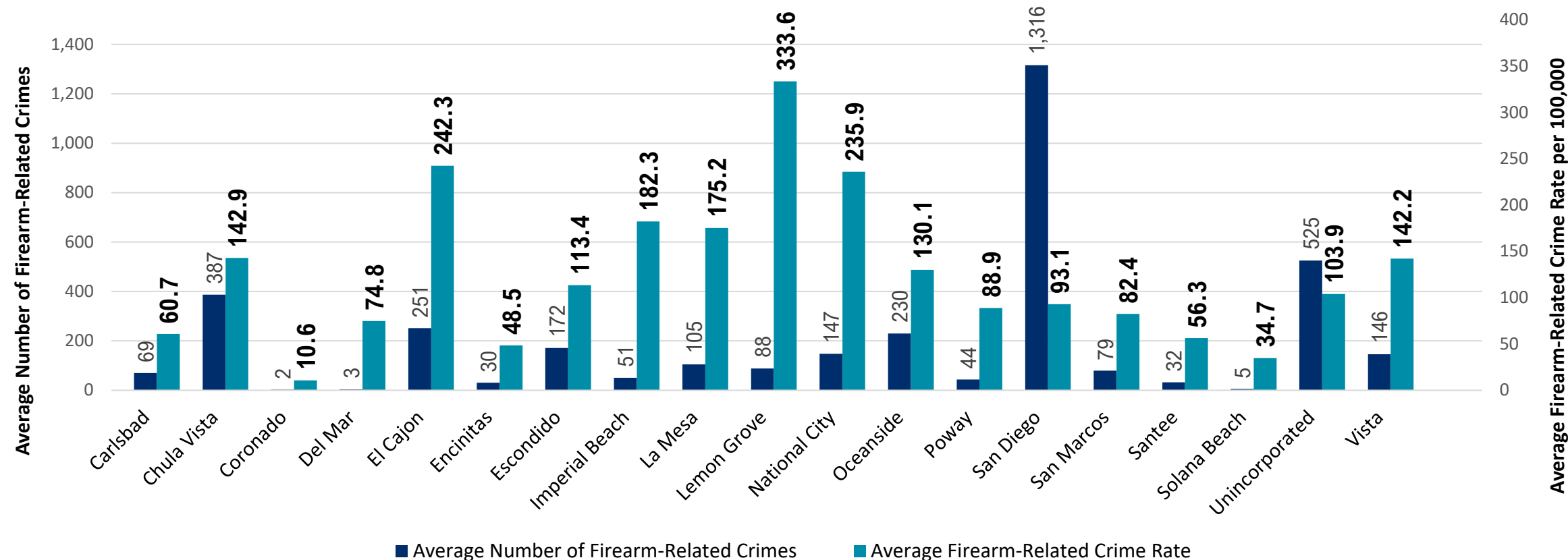
# Secondary Data: Crime Rates by Race



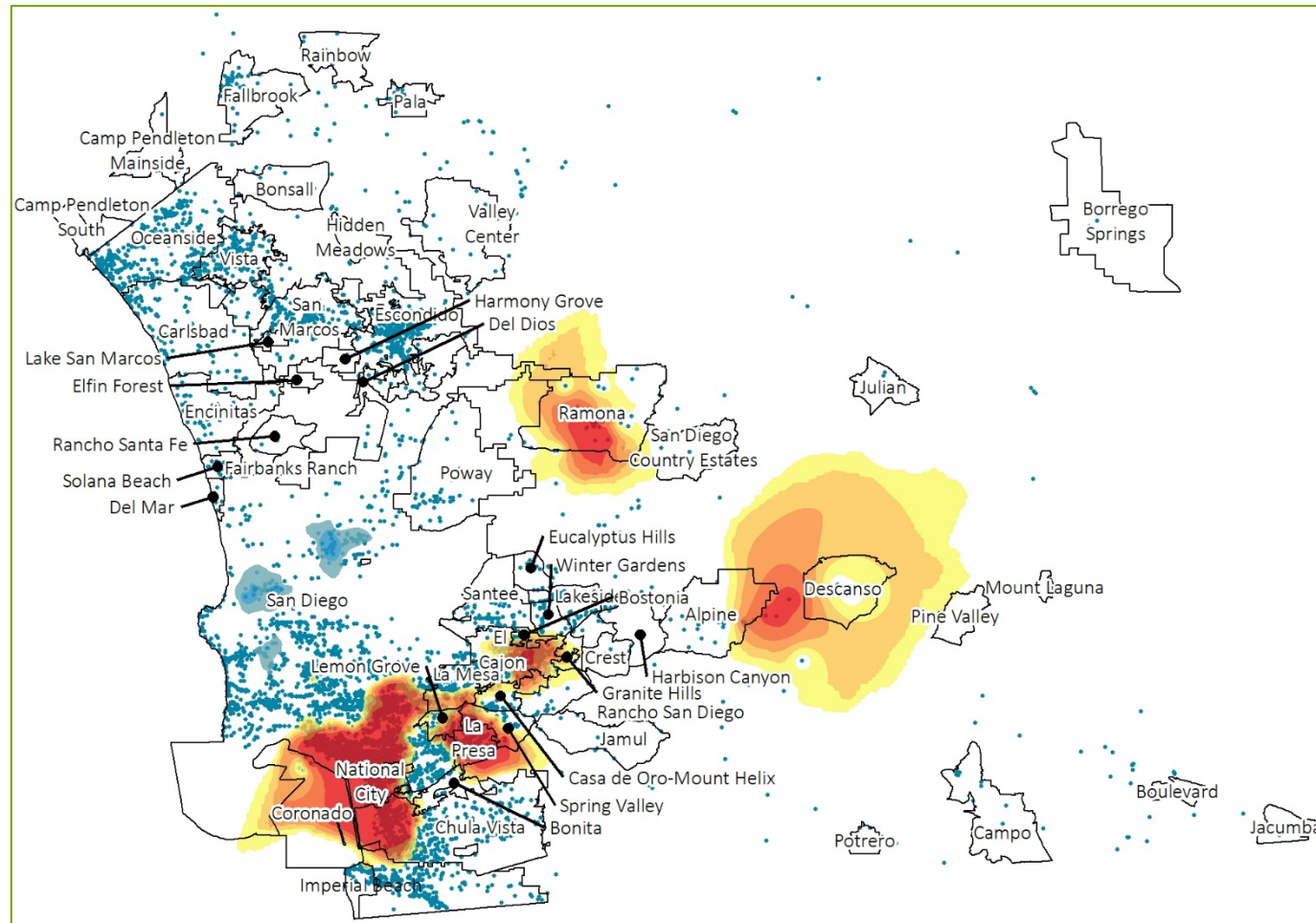
Source: Automated Regional Justice Information System

# Secondary Data: Crime Rates by City

Firearm-related Crime Rates by City (2017-2021)



# Secondary Data: Crime Rates by City

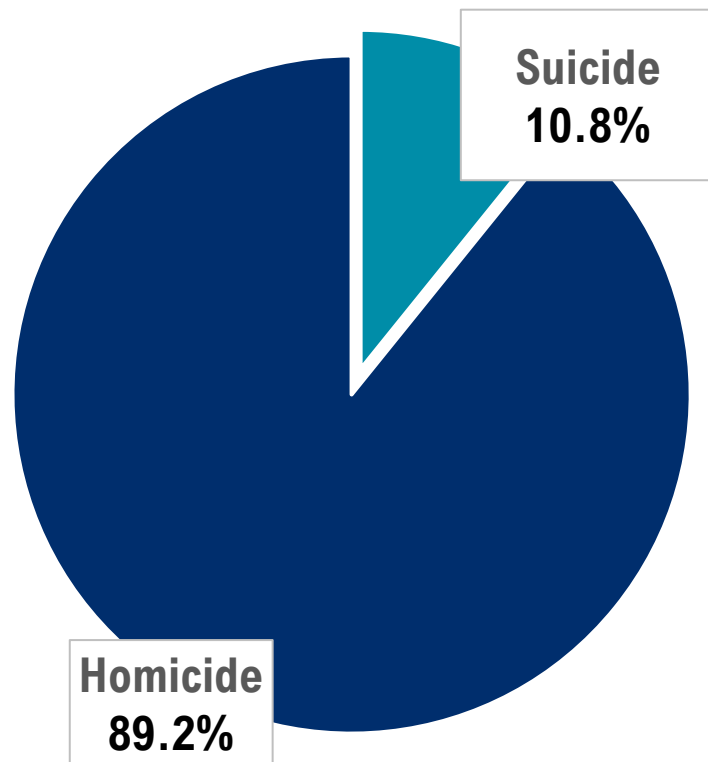


Source: Automated Regional Justice Information System

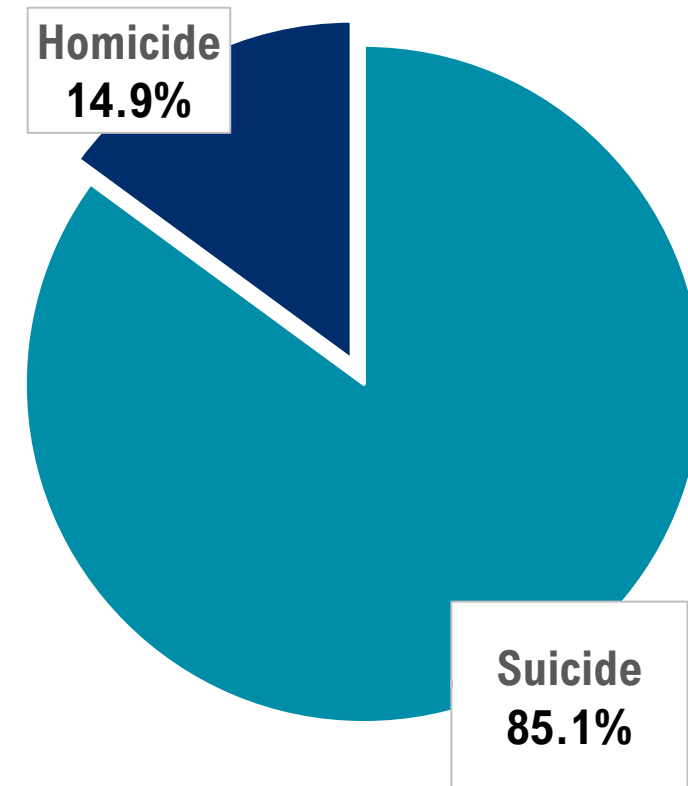
# Secondary Data: Media Analysis

---

**Media Reports**

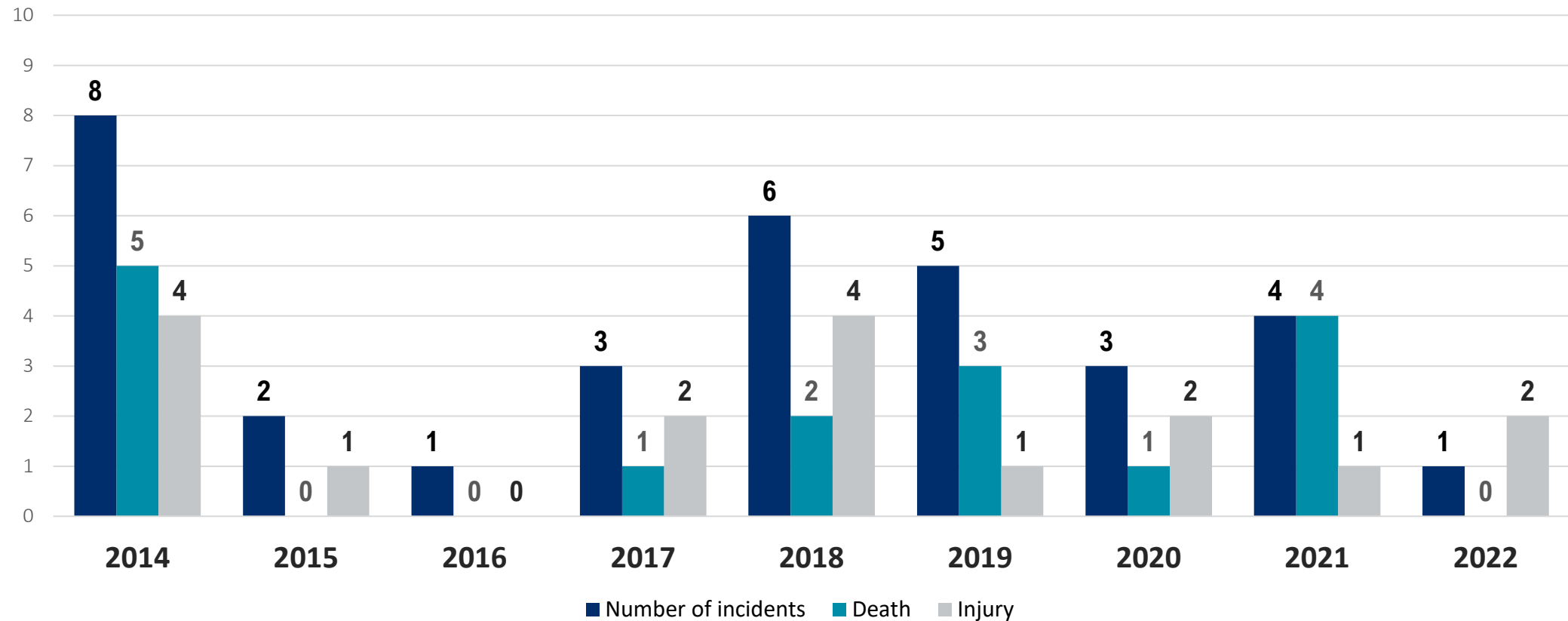


**Medical Examiner Data**



# Secondary Data: Media Analysis

Incidents Involving Defensive Gun Use



# Secondary Data: Takeaways

---

- Average of 27 firearm homicides and 155 suicides per year (2017-September 2022)
- Most firearm deaths are suicide (86.1%), then homicides (13.7%)
- Highest firearm suicide rates: men; White, “other” race, and Native American; ages 65+ & 45-65
- Highest firearm homicide rates: men; Native American, Black, and “other” race; ages 25-44 & 15-24
- Cities with highest firearm death/injury rates are Lemon Grove, El Cajon, Vista, and National City (2017-2022/2016-2020)
- Firearm deaths have slightly declined; injuries and crimes have increased



# Community & Professional Surveys

---



# Assessment Surveys

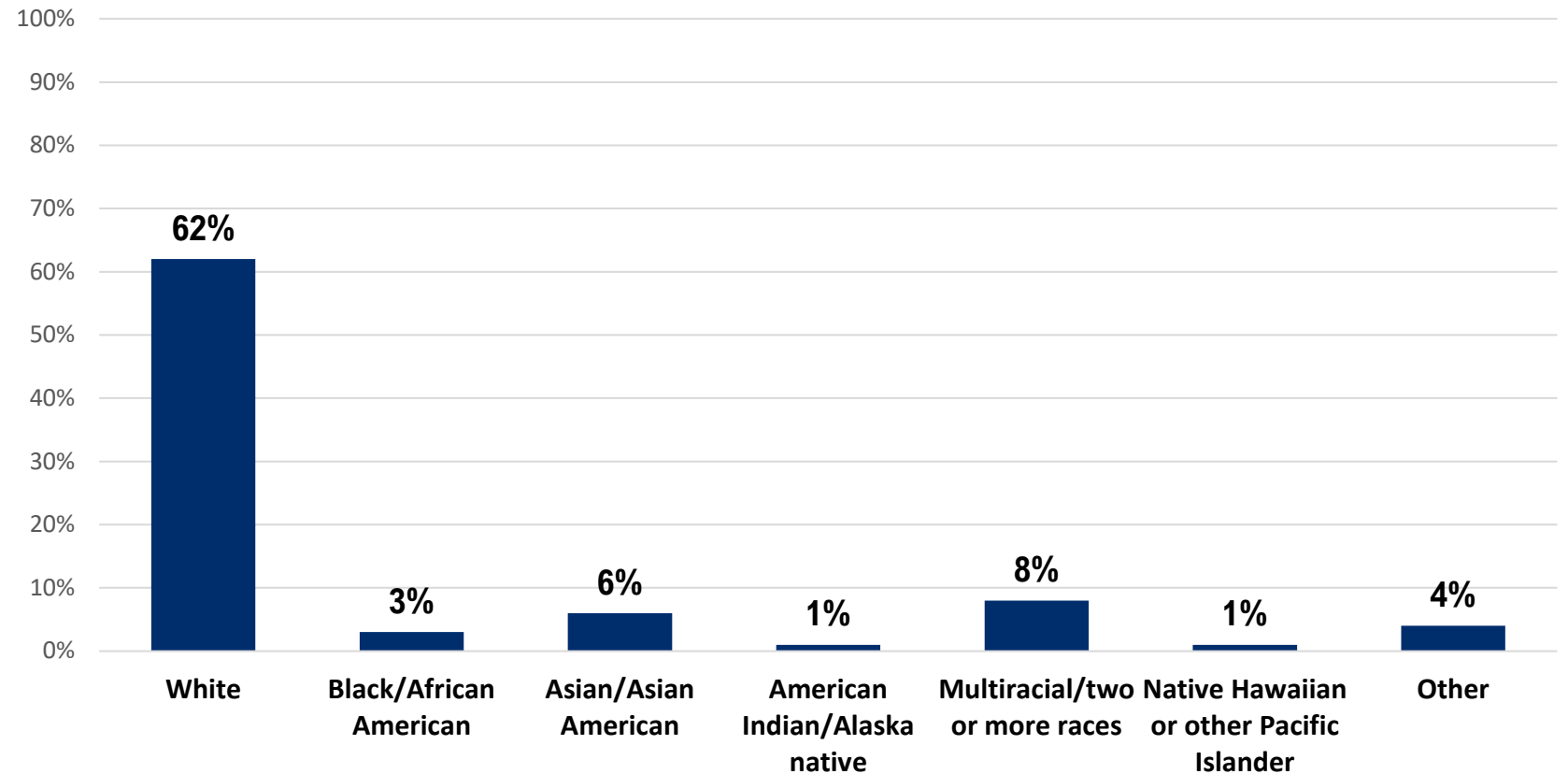
---

- Community Survey (county residents)
- Professional Survey (professionals working in the county)

# Community Survey: Demographics

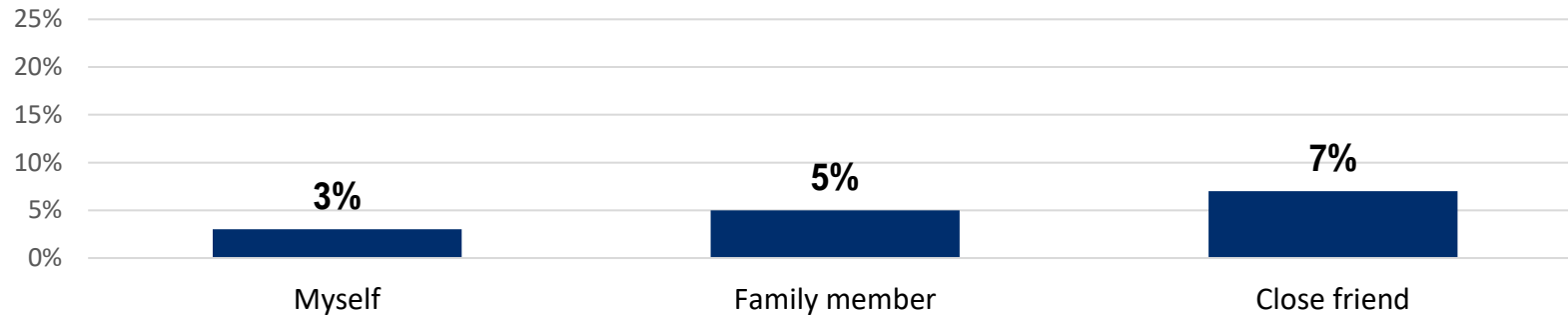
- 1,181 participants
- 15% Hispanic
- 50% male
- 72% college degree or higher

Community Survey Participant Race

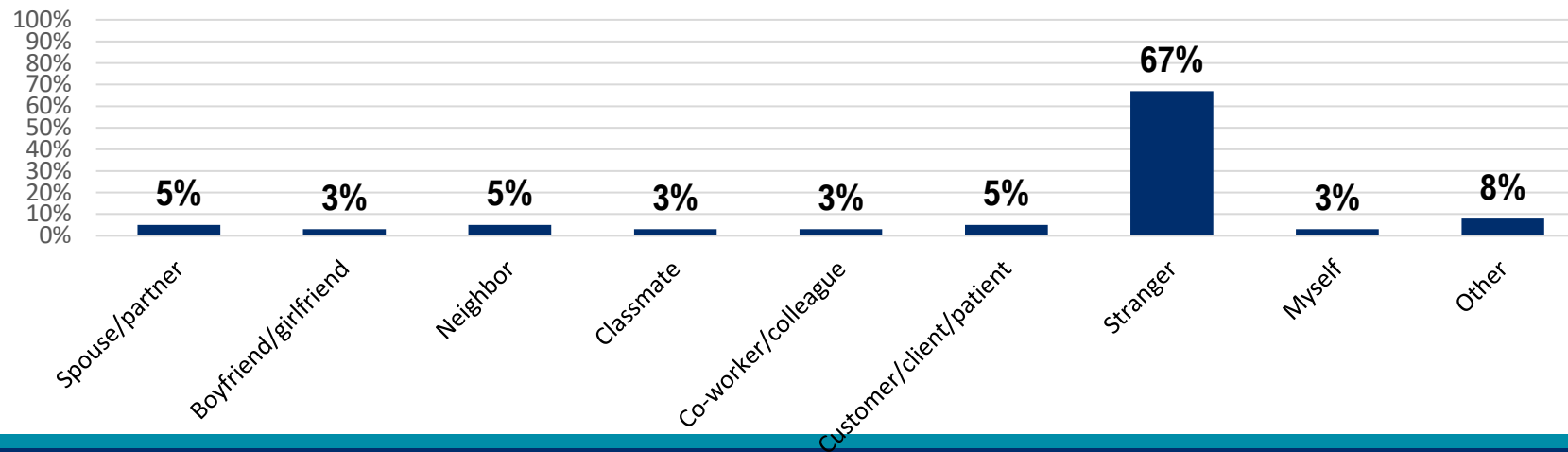


# Community Survey: Impacts of Gun Violence

## Community Survey: Victims of Gun Violence

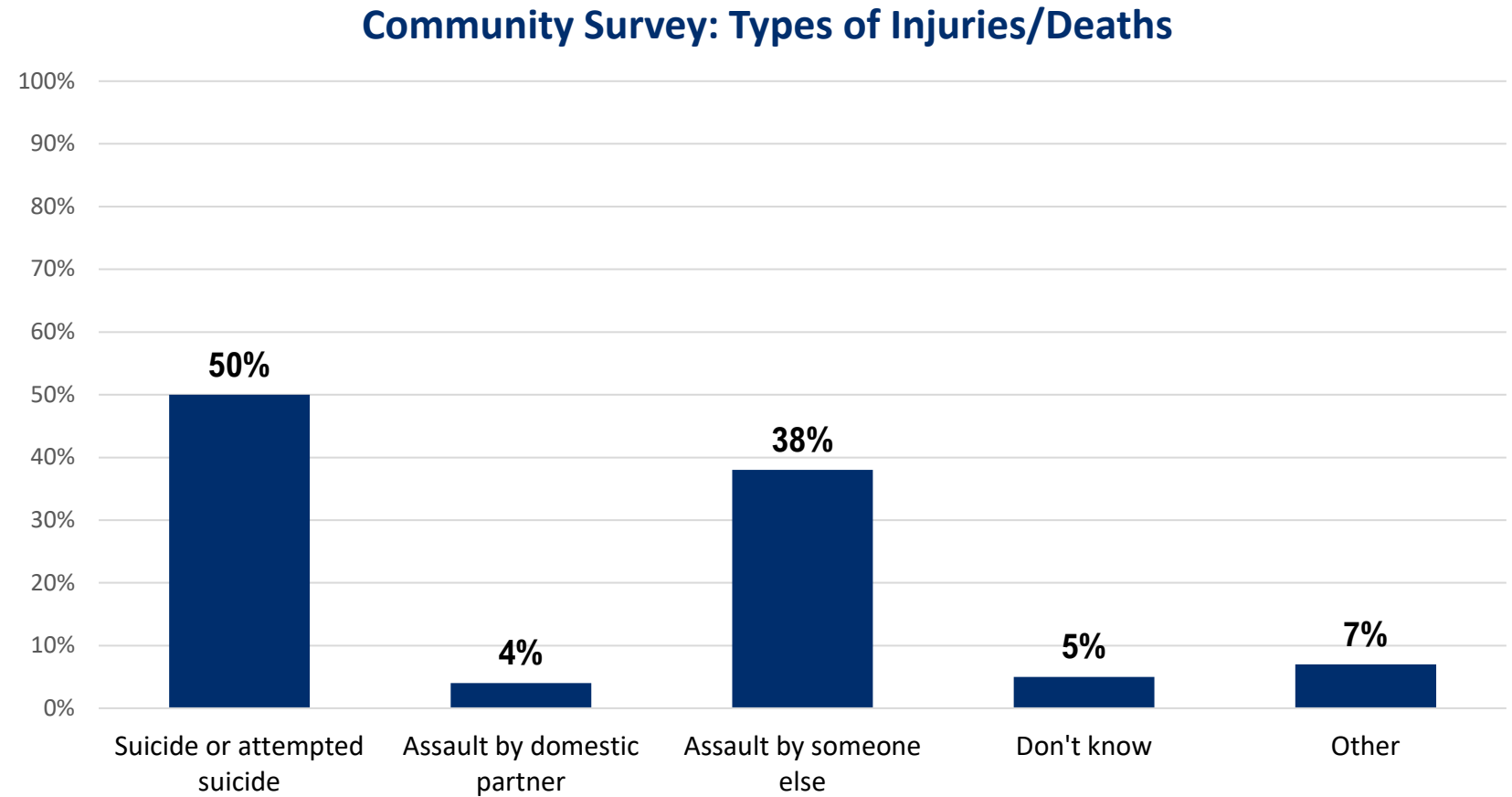


## Community Survey: Perpetrators of Gun Violence

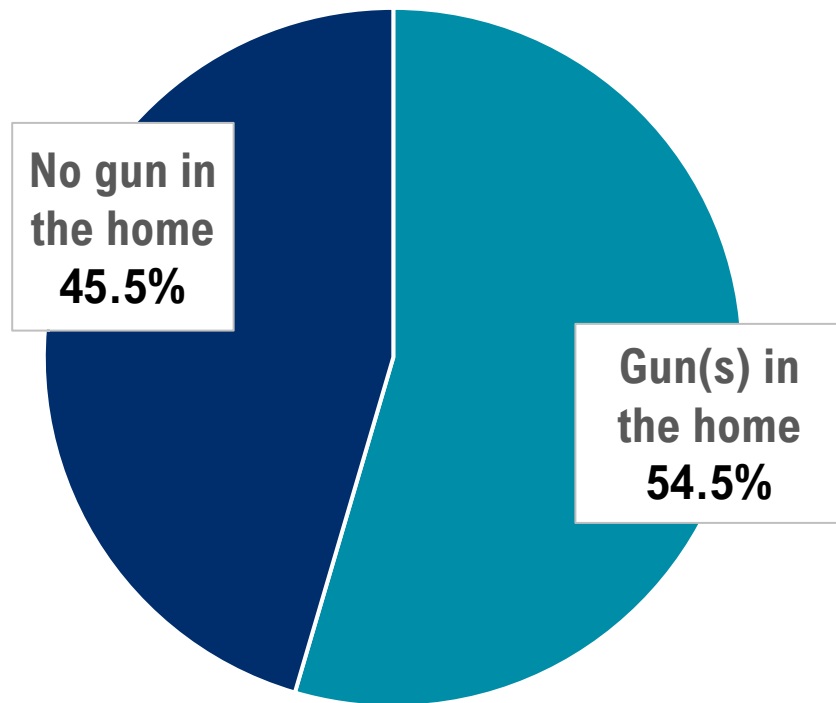


# Community Survey: Impacts of Gun Violence

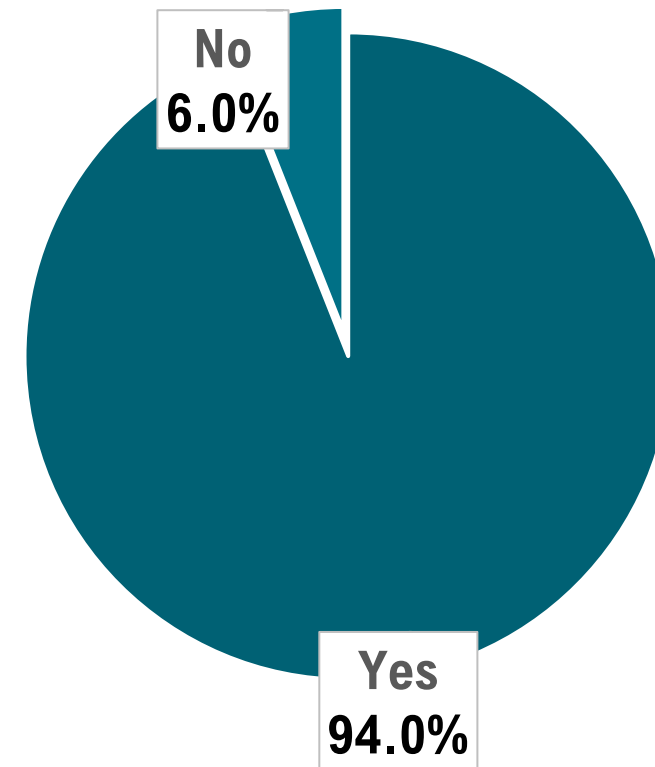
- 17% have known someone personally who has been injured or killed by a firearm



# Community Survey: Firearm in Home



Is the firearm in your home safely stored  
(such as in a safe or locked container)?

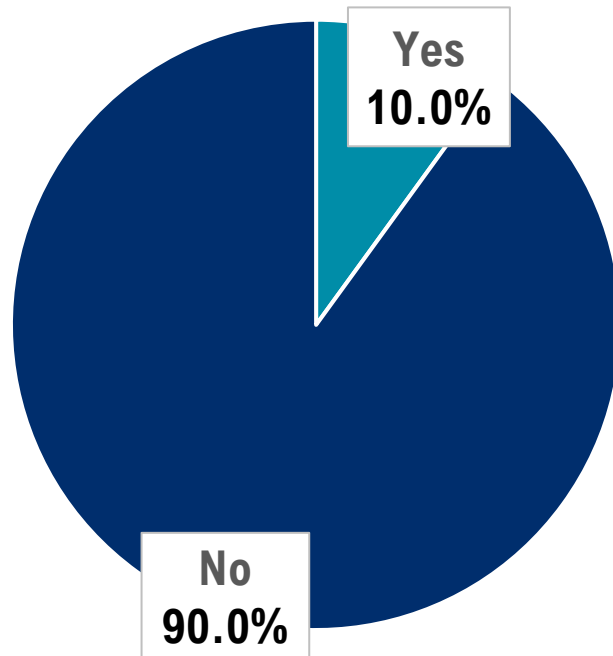


**\*California Health Interview Survey: 15.8% reported a firearm in home**

# Community Survey: Self Defense

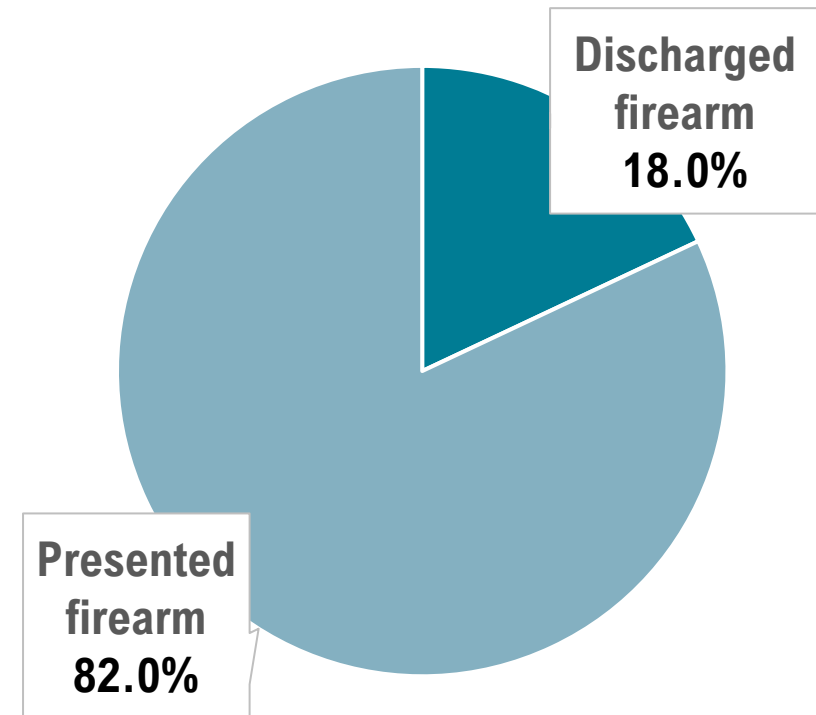
---

Ever used a firearm in self-defense?



$n = 1,236$

Did you discharge the firearm or was it just presented?

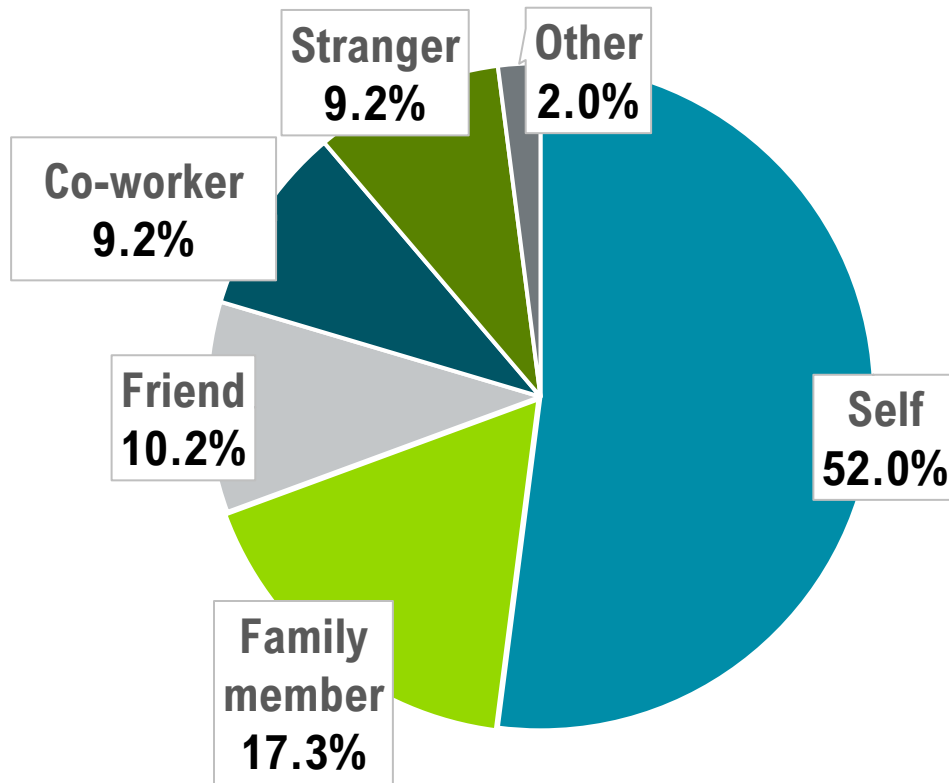


$n = 111$

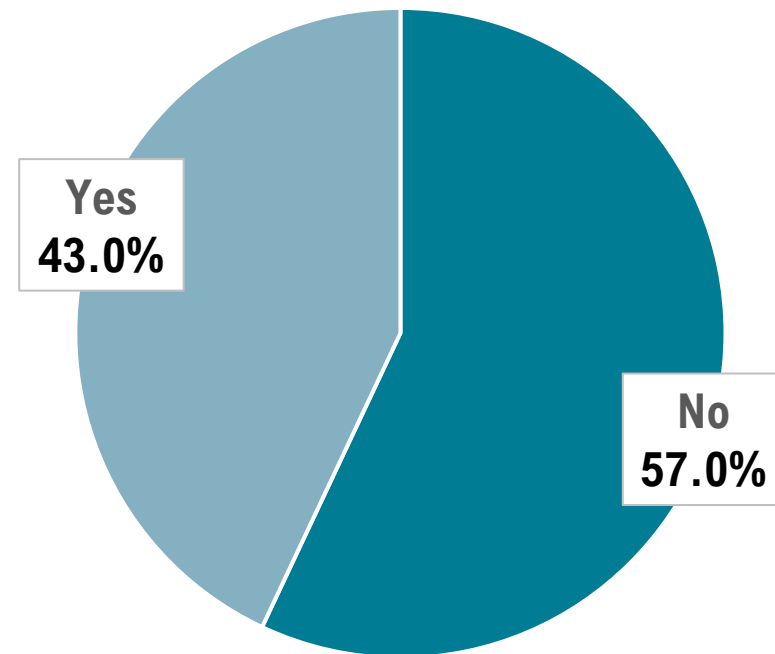
# Community Survey: Self Defense

---

Who were you defending or protecting?

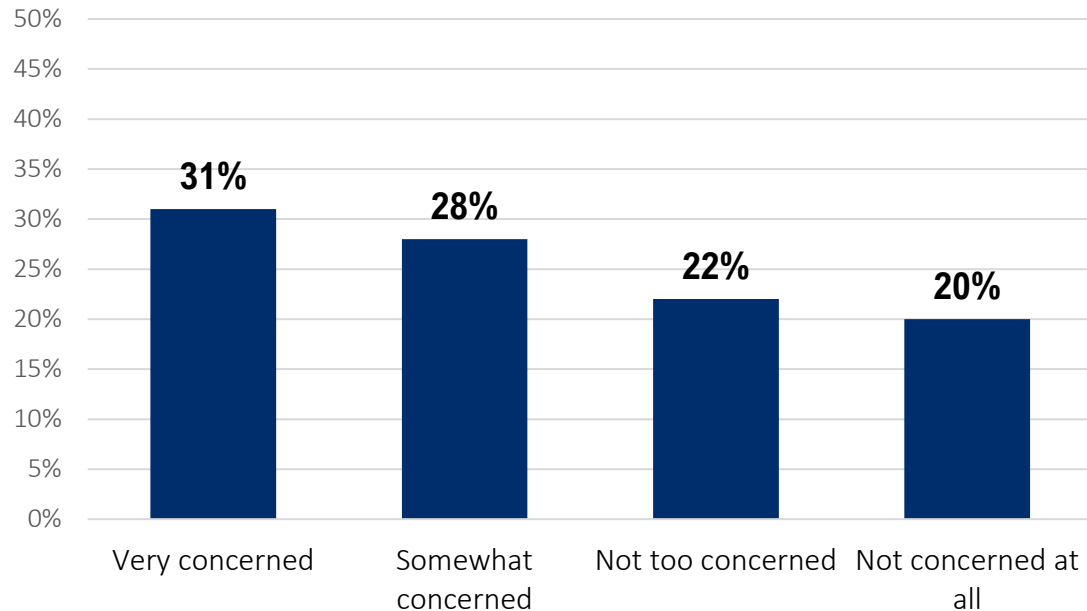


Did you report this incident to law enforcement?

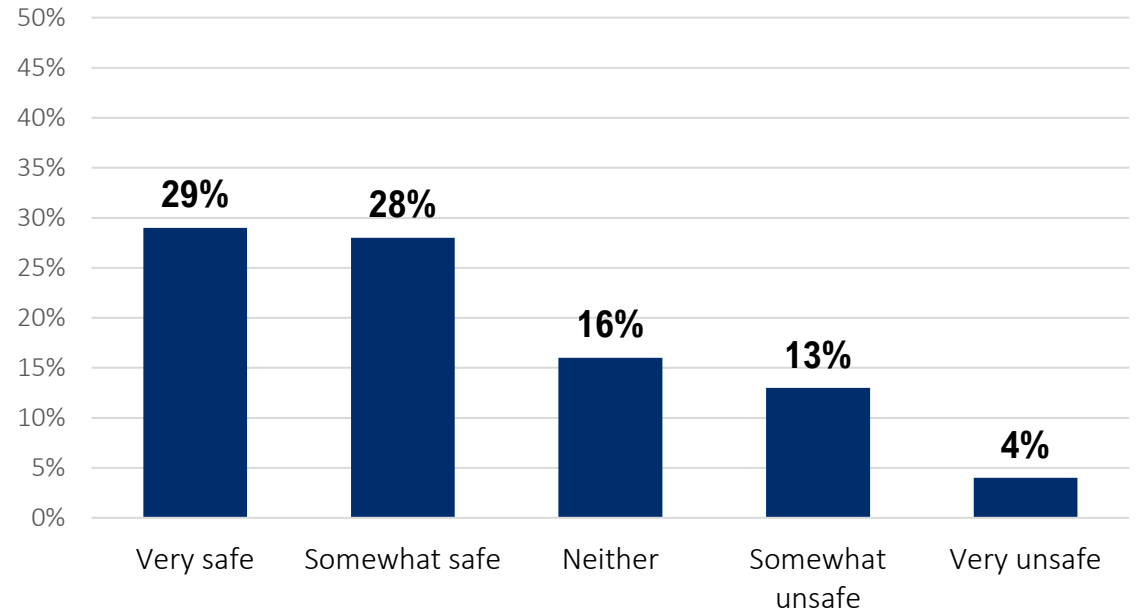


# Community Survey: Concern with Gun Violence

## Concern with Gun Violence in Your Community



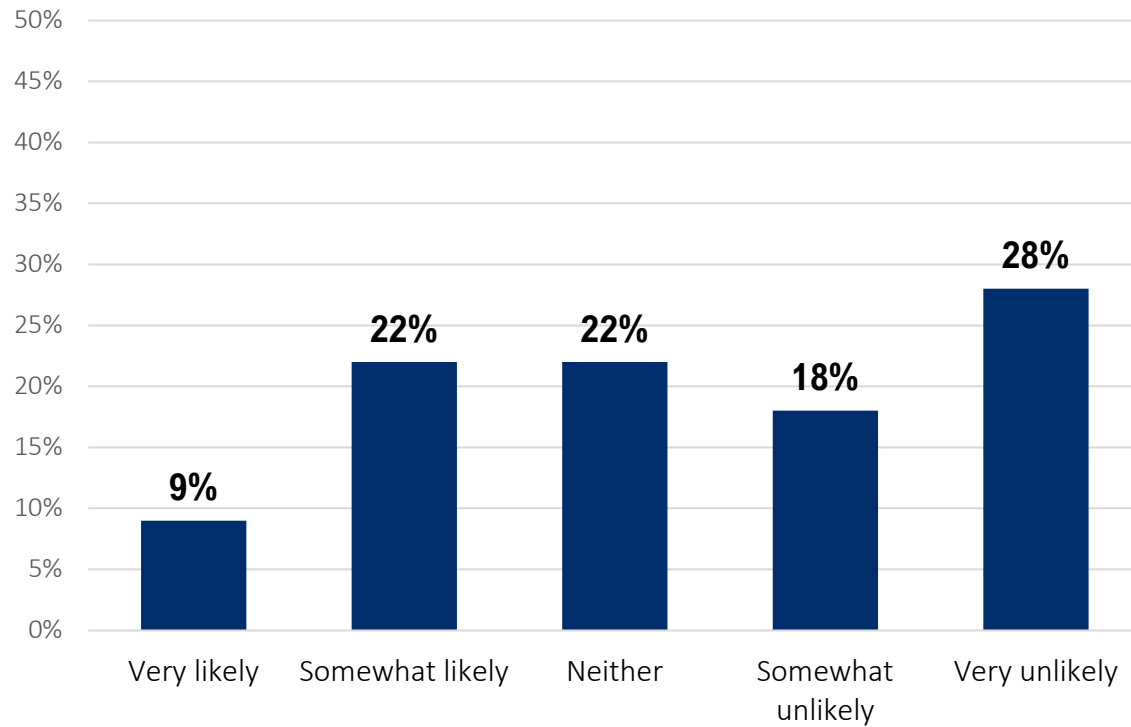
## Feeling of Safety in Community (Regarding Gun Violence)



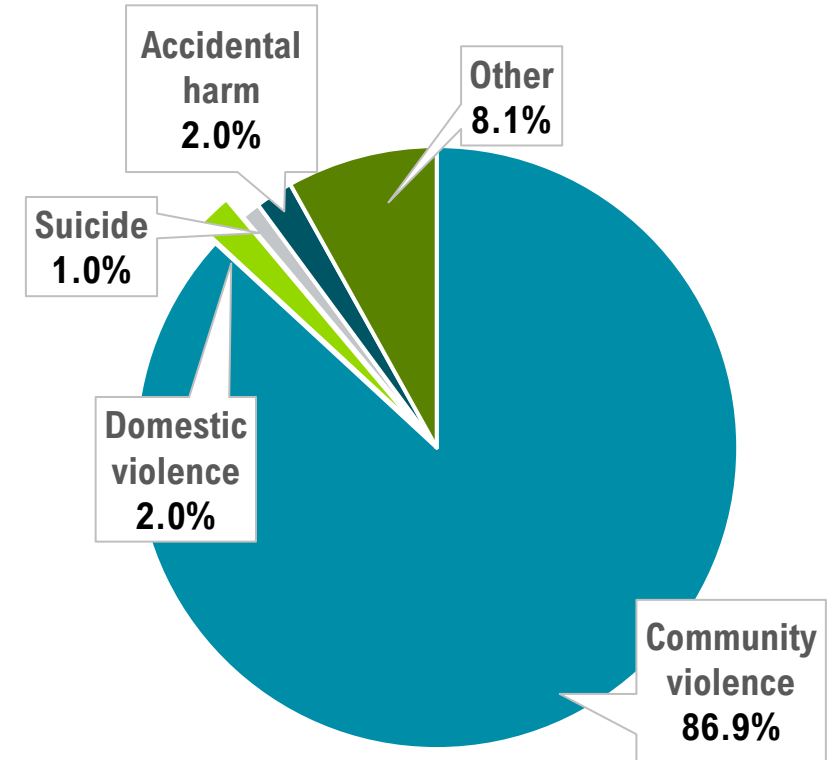


# Community Survey: Concern with Gun Violence

## Likelihood of Being a Victim of Gun Violence



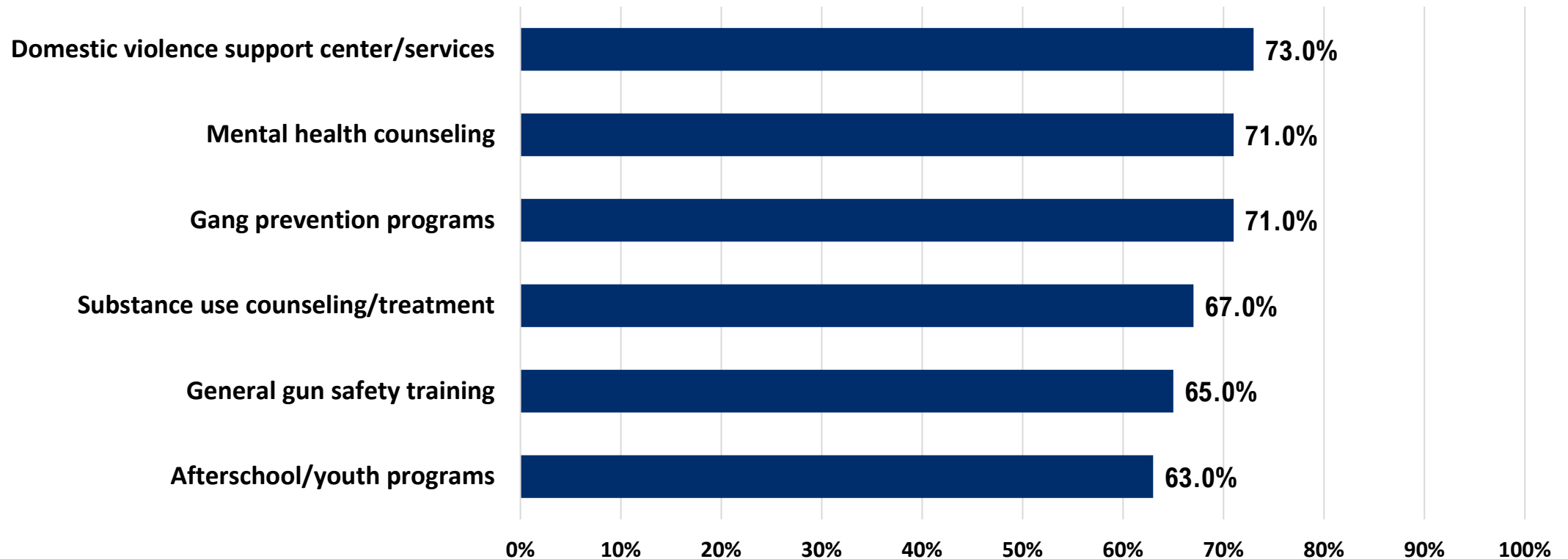
## What type of violence?



# Community Survey: Reducing Gun Violence

---

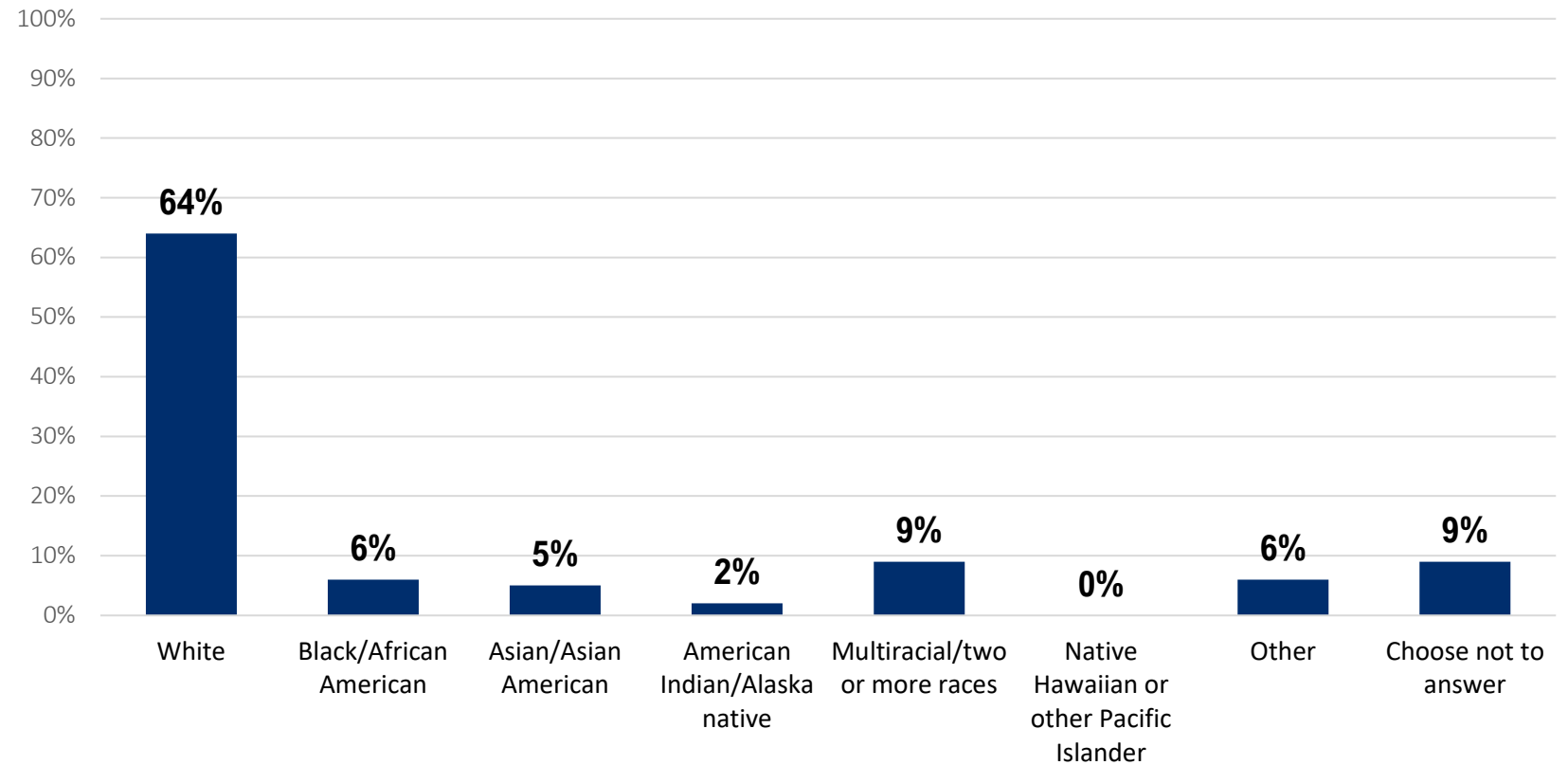
## Most Needed Services/Programs



# Professional Survey: Demographics

- 217 participants
- 17% Hispanic
- 55% female
- 88% college degree or higher

Professional Survey Participant Race

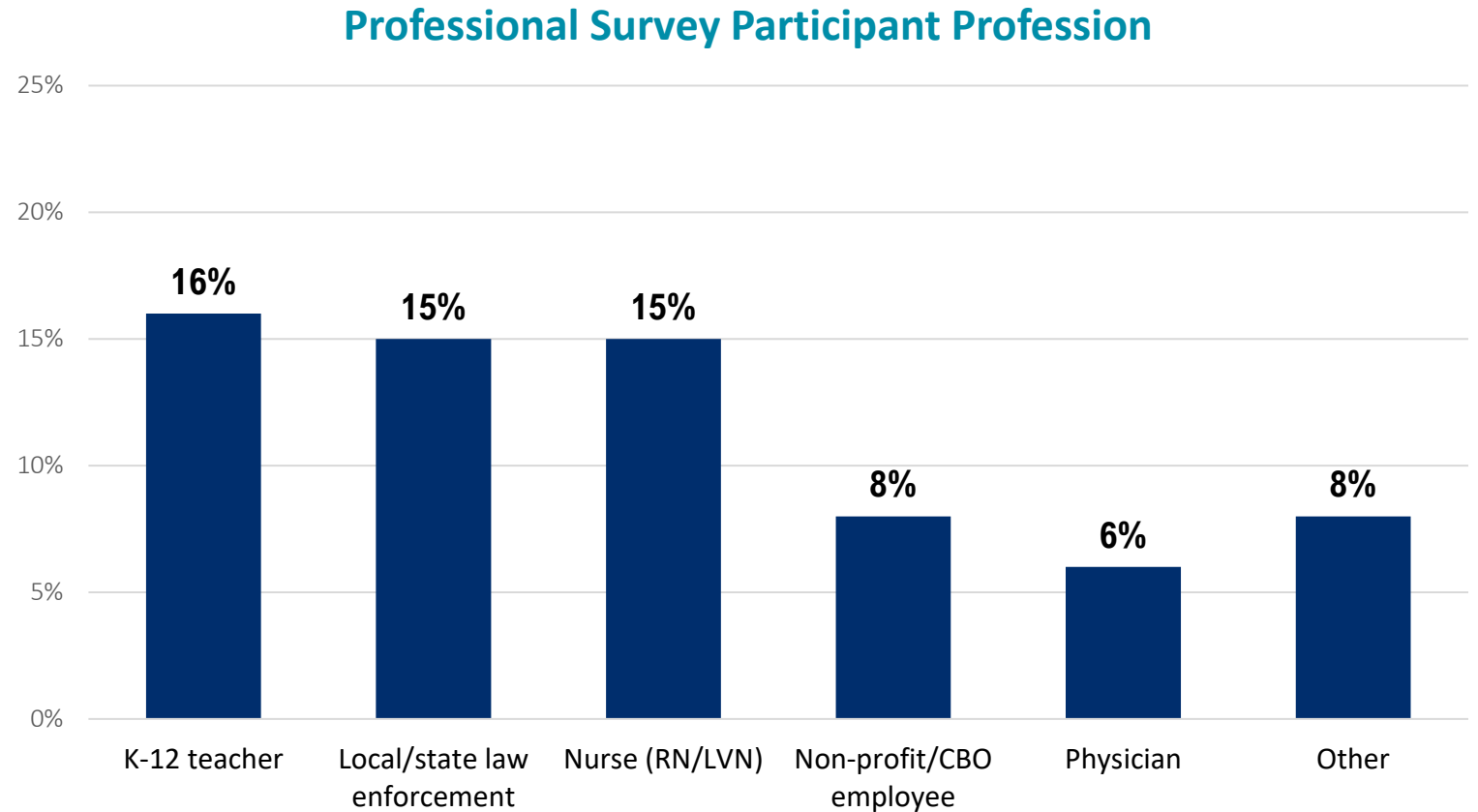


# Professional Survey: Professions

- 23% employed by County
- 68% provide direct services

## Types of violence work engaged:

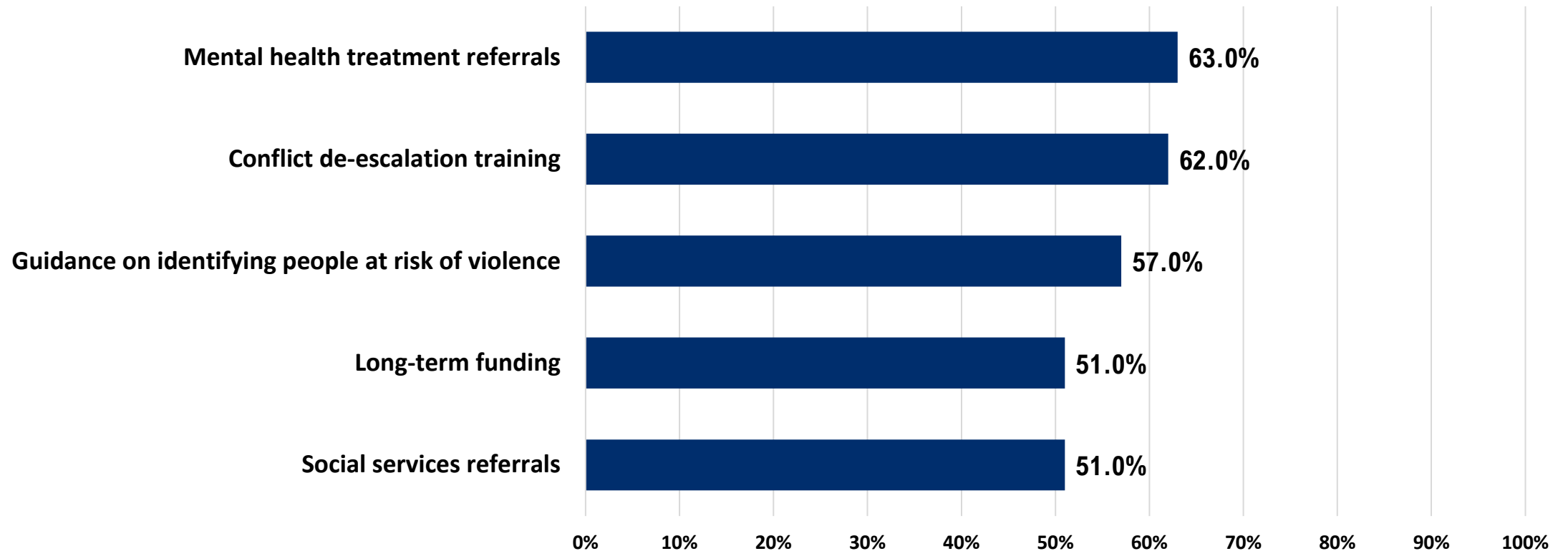
- 28% Community violence
- 25% Domestic violence
- 23% Suicide
- 19% Accidental harm
- 1% N/A
- 4% Other



# Professional Survey: Professional Needs

---

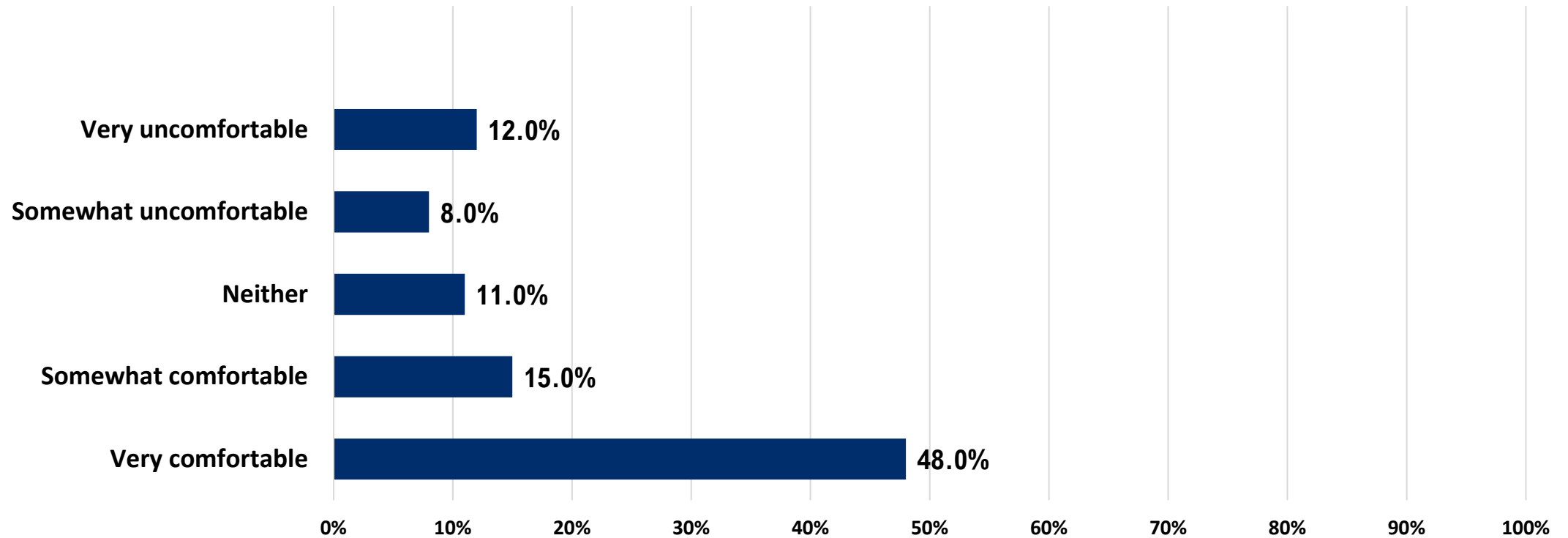
## Most Needed Resources for Professionals



# Professional Survey: Client/Patient Interaction

---

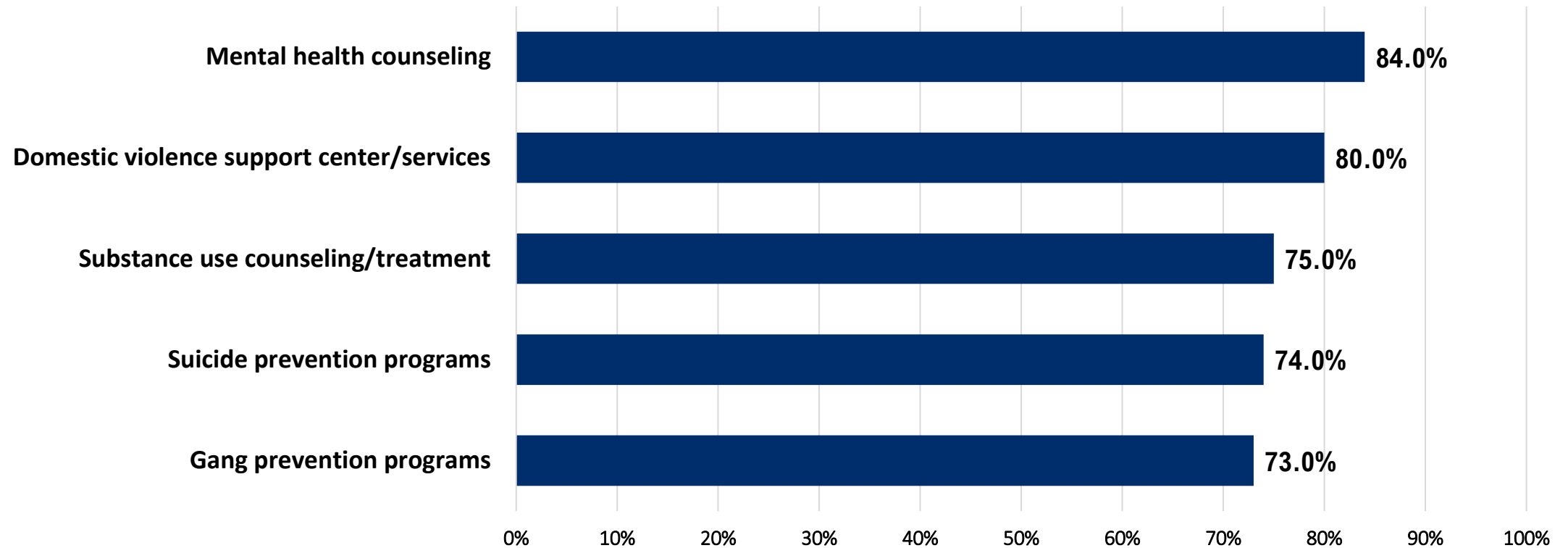
## Comfort with Asking Client/Patient about Guns



# Professional Survey: Reducing Gun Violence

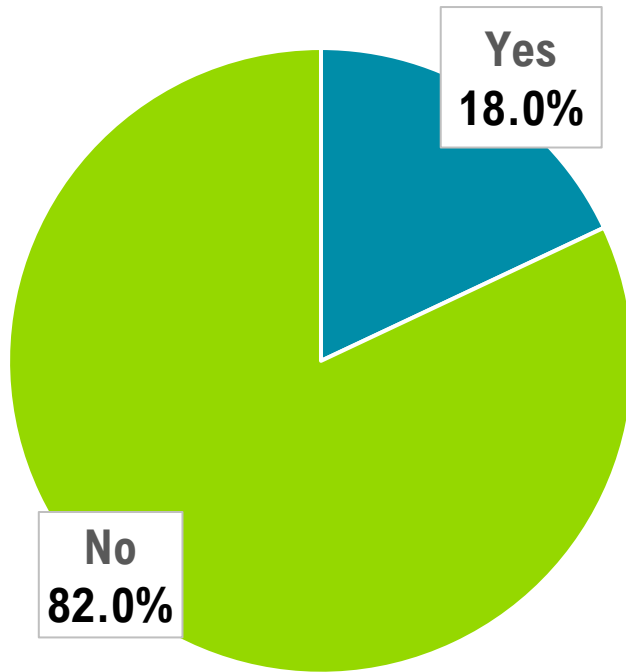
---

## Most Needed Community Services/Programs

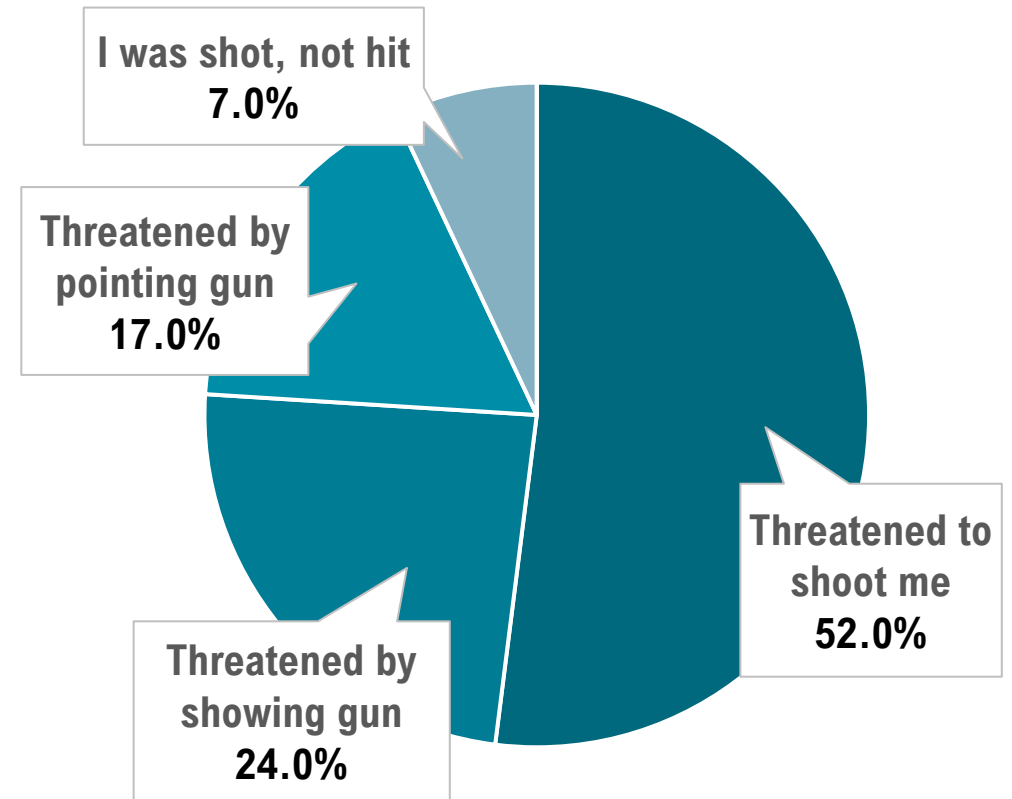


# Professional Survey: Concern with Gun Violence

Have you experienced gun violence while carrying out professional duties?



What type of violence?





# County Surveys: Takeaways

---

## Community Survey

- Oversample of White, non-Hispanic, well-educated residents with guns in home
- 17% have known someone personally who has been injured or killed by a firearm
- **Most needed resources: Domestic violence support center/services, mental health counseling, and gang prevention programs**

## Professional Survey

- 20% said they were “somewhat” or “very uncomfortable” with asking clients/patients about guns.
- **Most needed resources for professionals: Mental health treatment referrals, conflict de-escalation training, guidance on identifying people at risk of gun violence**



# Listening Sessions

---

# Listening Sessions

---

- Defining the problem
- Causes of gun violence
- Solutions for reducing gun violence
- Youth listening session themes

# Listening Sessions: Defining the Problem

---

- Gun violence is a matter of concern ( $n = 17$ )

*“When you're responding to somebody in a crisis situation [when someone is suicidal or when someone is in an abusive relationship], the presence of the gun is always the worst-case scenario.”*

*-County resident*

- Focus on all violence, not “gun violence” ( $n = 20$ )

*“[W]e need to define what ... the problem is [of] gun violence in our community. The reason why is because the guns by itself—it won't harm anybody. It takes a finger to pull that trigger.”*

*-County resident*

# Listening Sessions: Defining the Problem

---

- Gang violence or community violence ( $n = 17$ )
- Impacts on youth ( $n = 11$ )

*“[Gang violence is] something that [is] affecting our community, it's affecting our families, it's affecting our children, and we need solutions. It needs to stop. Our children need to be allowed to live and grow up.... [T]o be honest, it's devastating. We have to do something about it.”*

*-County resident*

- Suicide ( $n = 13$ )
- Domestic and intimate partner violence ( $n = 5$ )
- Lack of trust/don't feel safe around law enforcement ( $n = 4$ )

# Listening Sessions: Causes

---

- Mental health ( $n = 17$ )

*“[I]f we talk to the young people, and ... they start to trust you... they will tell you how angry, or how upset, or how displeased they are with the situation that they live in, the situation that they're growing up in.... I hope that the plan from the County, from the government, from the community, is that we need to do triage just like we would do for any community that's been through war.... We need to do triage with our young people, in the schools, outside the schools. We need to figure out how to help them mentally, physically, and spiritually because there is a gap right now.”*

*-Southeast San Diego resident*

- Lack of family or social support ( $n = 12$ )
- Illegal access to firearms ( $n = 18$ )

# Listening Sessions: Solutions

---

- Youth mentorship ( $n = 11$ ) and youth support ( $n = 11$ )
- Funding for community-based organizations ( $n = 16$ )

*“I’m going to start with the punchline, and that is money. Money is needed in order to correct some of these deficiencies. When we talk about how the schools are ... underperforming, how ... programs for youth can't do what they have to do because they're just inundated with so many different victims of violence that they just can't help them all... with their wraparound services.... Those folks who came from very limited means.... That's where some of that money needs to flow.”*

*-North County resident*

# Listening Sessions: Solutions

---

- Enforcing existing laws ( $n = 9$ )

*“I think the County, first of all, needs to get off the kick of thinking that we need more gun-related laws because California is already very highly regulated. Those laws could be even more effective if they would properly prosecute criminals who violate those laws.”*

*-County resident*

- Related theme: Support for gun rights ( $n = 14$ )

*“I am coming to you as someone whose family has been personally impacted by gun violence, yet I am here today to voice my support for gun rights..”*

*-County resident*



# Listening Sessions: Solutions

---

- Skepticism or critique of the gun violence reduction study (n = 11)

*“We had a disparity study in our community 20 years ago, and recently we had the same disparity studies that didn't change anything.... Racism is a [public] health issue, but they put no money behind the resolution. How do we trust that this [study] is going to garner what the community is coming out tonight to see a change in their disparity, a change in their resources?”*

*-Southeast San Diego resident*

# Youth Listening Sessions

---

- Personally affected by gun violence ( $n = 10$ )
- Desensitization to gun violence ( $n = 5$ )
- Impacts on mental health ( $n = 4$ )
- Need to talk about/engage the issue ( $n = 10$ )

*“I just feel like a seat at the table is necessary [for youth]. Adults will claim, ‘Oh, it's my kid in there.’ That's like they're [playing] to ... the crowd. It's us in there. Why are we mature enough to be prepped for the totally real idea of being gunned down in a school, but we're not mature enough to be able to talk about a subject [for which] our lives realistically lie in the balance?”*

*-High school student*

# Listening Sessions: Takeaways

---

- **Biggest problem:** *Gang violence; impacts on youth; suicide; domestic violence*
- **Causes:** *Mental health; lack of social/family support; illegal access to guns*
- **Solutions:** *Youth support; funding for community organizations; enforce existing laws*
- **Youth comments:** *Personally affected by gun violence; focus on mental health; need to engage/talk about issue*



# Best Practices

---

# “Best Practices”/Recommendations

---

- Literature review (past gun violence reduction-related studies)
- Collaboration with County and community Advisory Group
- Developing a list of “best practices” to help with forming recommendations for future actions

# “Best Practices” – Suicide

---

- Promotion of mental health resources
- Promotion of safe storage

# “Best Practices” – Domestic Violence

---

- Survivor and Family Support Centers
- GVROs (Gun Violence Restraining Orders)
- Protocols/assessments to identify victims

# “Best Practices” – Community Violence

---

- Violence intervention/interruption
  - Street outreach/conflict mediation
  - Youth mentorship and support
- Hospital-based violence intervention
  - Provides guidance & social services



# Thank You

---

- Final Report: May 2023
- Community Presentations: May 2023

*For questions, please email Daniel Polk at [dpolk@HARCdata.org](mailto:dpolk@HARCdata.org)*