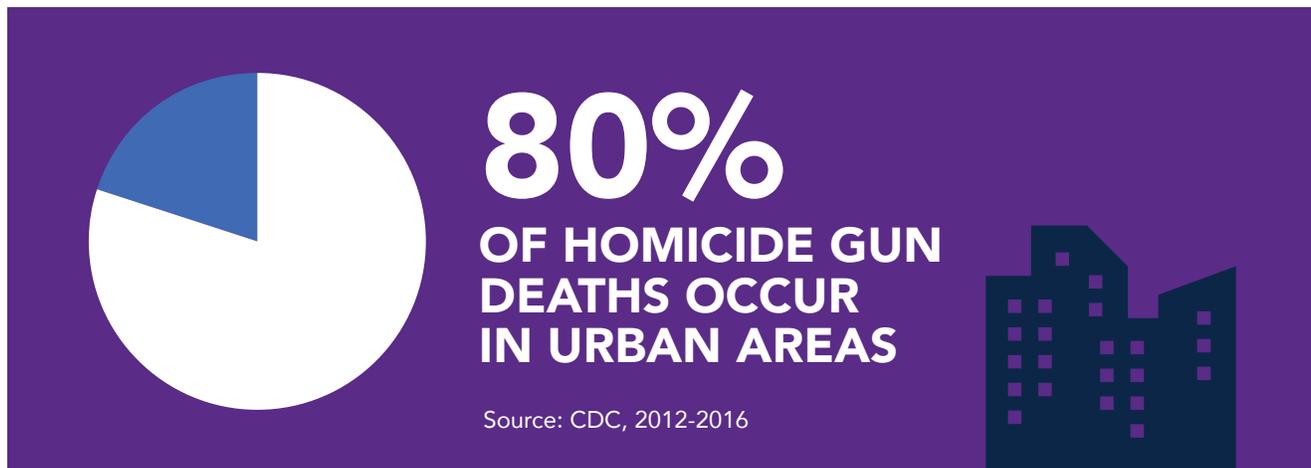


CRIME GUNS IN IMPACTED COMMUNITIES



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Gun violence is responsible for a more than four year reduction in life expectancy for black men in America.¹ While gun violence touches Americans in diverse communities across the country, homicides are largely concentrated in urban areas with high minority populations. The most recent 5-year average of CDC data on gun deaths show that approximately 80% of them occur in such areas.



But where do these guns come from? They don't simply appear in places like Oakland, Baltimore, Milwaukee, or Chicago, all cities with astronomical gun violence homicide rates year over year. Irresponsible gun dealers are the source of many crime guns, and a scourge on these communities. These dealers often willfully engage in illegal or corrupt behavior - selling guns that they know will be trafficked into areas of high crime. Further, they participate in an economic system that contributes to systemic poverty and continued structural violence that disproportionately impacts communities of color. Most of the cities chronically impacted by gun violence do not have many, if any, federally licensed gun dealers within their city limits.² Instead, gun dealers typically sit outside these communities, frequently in less diverse and more affluent suburbs, and profit off of irresponsible or illegal sales that drive guns into cities that later turn up at crime scenes.

Nearly every gun recovered in a crime starts as a legal sale from a licenced dealer. The small percentage of dealers that are responsible for the majority of crime guns are not only affecting lives through the physical impacts of gun violence, but also contributing to the social, racial, and economic injustices that continue to plague this country.

WHAT ARE IMPACTED COMMUNITIES?

Gun violence is a uniquely American problem, but it does not impact all Americans equally. In particular, gun homicide has a disparate impact on African American communities.

Gun violence in America is largely a story of race and geography. Nationally, the homicide rate for black men is 30.7 per 100,000 and for white men it is 2.4 per 100,000.³ This disparity is even greater in some states.⁴ The top three states where disparities in gun homicide rates were greatest — Missouri, Michigan, and Illinois - correlate with three major cities in the top 10 for gun homicide rates overall — St. Louis, Detroit, and Chicago.⁵ In Chicago, for example, there are no gun dealers inside city limits. But crime gun tracing undertaken by the city of Chicago has shown how guns are trafficked from dealers in surrounding counties, and even from neighboring Indiana.⁶

In 2015, an African American person in Wisconsin was 26 times more likely to be fatally shot than a white person.⁷ The combination of being black and living in an urban area is even more deadly: in 2015, 81% of homicide victims in Milwaukee were African American,

PERSONALLY KNEW SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF GUN VIOLENCE

AFRICAN AMERICAN RESPONDENTS

42%

WHITE RESPONDENTS

15%

Source: Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: February 2013

despite being only 39% of the city's population. Just last year in Baltimore, 94% of homicide victims in Baltimore were black, and an analysis by the Baltimore Sun showed that over half of all homicide victims were shot in the head.

The toll of gun violence goes beyond just those that have been shot. Polling data show that African Americans are far more likely to know a victim of gun violence or be personally worried about gun violence than white respondents.⁸ The poll found 42% of African Americans personally knew someone who has been the victim of gun violence, compared to only 15% of white respondents. African Americans were also more than twice as likely to be personally worried about gun violence. The chronic stress of living in a community disproportionately impacted by gun violence has lifelong physical and mental health impacts. Children growing up in such communities are more likely to suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms, disassociation, depression, and anxiety, and struggle to complete school. In some instances, the level of stress may be so great that the prefrontal cortex does not develop properly.⁹

These communities also bear larger costs such as depressed home prices, reduction in growth of new retail and service businesses, lack of economic or career opportunities in their immediate vicinity, and lack of access to healthcare, healthy food, or social opportunities. One study found that for each additional gun homicide in Minneapolis, there were 80

fewer jobs the next year.¹⁰ Business owners are forced to incur high costs for extra security, and residents of impacted neighborhoods tend to stop frequenting businesses after dark due to fear of gun violence, hurting those businesses that have opened in their communities. High rates of violence prevent many necessary social services from being readily available and thus lead to a "feedback loop" of violence.¹¹

HOW THE SUPPLY OF GUNS CONTRIBUTES TO IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

Gun violence in communities of color is often driven by two factors, easy access to guns and a small group of people at high risk of engaging in violence—sometimes no more than 0.25% to 1% of the city's population.¹² In one Chicago neighborhood, 41% of gun homicides occurred among a social network containing less than 4% of the neighborhood's population.¹³

A recent study from the Urban Institute found that it "remains too easy for this [small] group to obtain guns. In the hands of these high-risk people, guns escalate minor disputes into fatal incidents, and firearm violence poses a particular risk to law enforcement officers. Limiting easy access to guns by this group is an essential step in reducing gun violence."¹⁴ Indeed, access, to guns is a critical driver of chronic violence.

THE MYTH THAT BAD GUYS WILL “ALWAYS GET GUNS”

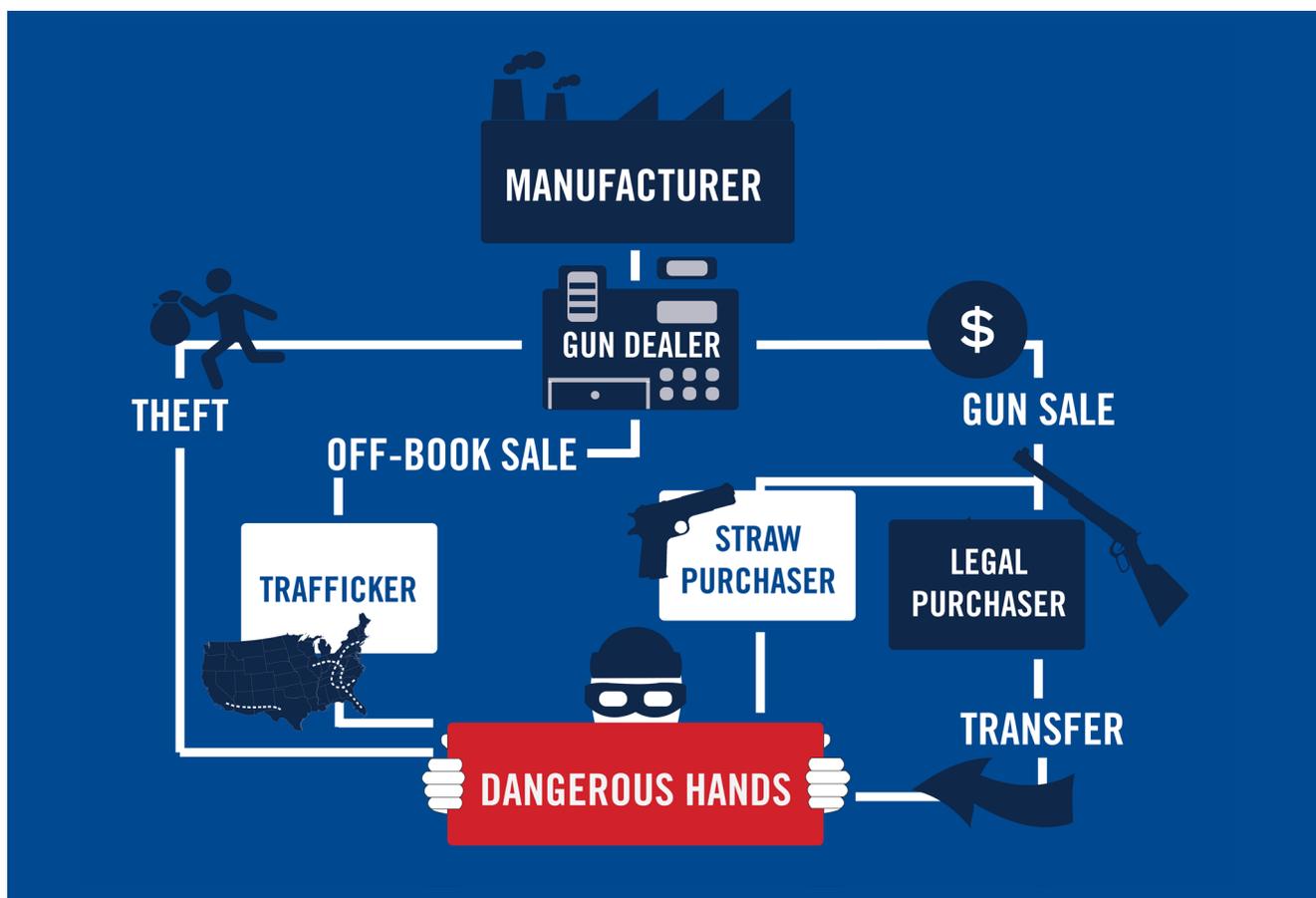
Often, guns recovered during crimes were recovered from someone who was not legally allowed to possess a gun.¹⁵ These individuals obtain their firearms from a myriad of sources: straw purchasing or “off the books” sales by negligent gun dealers, theft, and the “underground” gun market. Cutting off access for these individuals will reduce the number of guns available for criminal use.

The actions of negligent or irresponsible gun dealers have an impact on the number of guns available to criminals. Directly addressing those dealers - by reforming their business practices or shutting them down - is associated with decreased access to guns.

Undercover stings of suspected irresponsible gun dealers in the Chicago area were associated with a 61.8% reduction in new crime guns sold by in-state retailers and an overall 46.4% reduction in the supply of new guns to criminals.¹⁶

In fact, even a single dealer’s actions can change the ease of access to firearms by criminals. After being cited as the country’s single largest source of crime guns, one dealer in Milwaukee stopped selling inexpensive handguns. That changed sales policy was associated with a 44% decrease in the flow of all new, trafficked guns to criminals in Milwaukee.¹⁷

Indeed, the actions of dealers are directly related to the supply of crime guns. “Bad guys” will not always get guns - cutting off their supply is an important step in keeping neighborhoods safe.



IMPACT OF NEGLIGENT AND IRRESPONSIBLE GUN DEALERS

Gun trafficking is the diversion of firearms from the legal market into the hands of criminals or others who cannot legally possess guns. The most frequent type of trafficking channel identified in ATF investigations is straw purchasing from federally licensed firearms dealers.¹⁸

Jeri Bonavia of the Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort has noted that a small number of negligent and irresponsible dealers “help divert guns from legal markets for use in crimes.” Increasing dealer oversight and “targeting the small number of dealers found to disproportionately divert guns to criminal users can help reduce the supply of crime guns.”¹⁹

Gun dealers are crucial gatekeepers that stand as the front line of defense to prevent criminals — and the straw purchasers and traffickers who supply them — from obtaining guns. Responsible gun dealers know that their families, friends, and communities are safer when they keep guns out of the wrong hands. But there are others whose negligence and irresponsible actions facilitate risky gun transfers, which in turn adversely affects communities across the country.

STOPPING THE SUPPLY OF GUNS WILL CREATE SPACE FOR COMMUNITIES TO GROW

As noted above, gun violence has a pervasive impact on communities. For each new gun homicide in a census tract for any given year, researchers discovered:²⁰

- in Minneapolis, there were 80 fewer jobs the next year;
- in Oakland, there were five fewer job opportunities in shrinking businesses the next year;

THE COMMUNITY IMPACT OF EACH NEW GUN HOMICIDE

JOBS NEXT YEAR

MINNEAPOLIS:

80

FEWER ▼

OAKLAND:

5

FEWER ▼

AVERAGE HOME VALUE

MINNEAPOLIS:

\$22,000

DECREASE ▼

OAKLAND:

\$24,621

DECREASE ▼

AVERAGE CREDIT SCORE

MINNEAPOLIS:

20-PT

DECREASE ▼

OAKLAND:

9-PT

DECREASE ▼

HOME OWNERSHIP RATE

WASHINGTON,
DC:

3%

DECREASE ▼

BATON
ROUGE:

1%

DECREASE ▼

Source: The Crime Report, 2017

- in Washington, D.C., there were two fewer retail and service establishments the next year. Every 10 additional gunshots in a census tract in a given year were related to one less new business opening, one more business closing, and 20 fewer jobs in new establishments the same year;
- a \$22,000 decrease in average home values in Minneapolis, and a \$24,621 decrease in Oakland;
- a 20-point decrease in average credit score in Minneapolis and a 9-point decrease in Oakland, as well as a 3% decrease in home-ownership rates in Washington, D.C., and a 1% decrease in Baton Rouge;
- in Chicago, 70 people moved outside city limits.²¹

Reducing gun violence in those communities will have tremendous positive impacts for that community. Every 10 fewer incidents of gunfire in a census tract have been found to be associated with one new

business opening, the creation of 20 more jobs in new businesses, and one less business closure.²² A 10% decrease in homicides has been found to cause a 0.83% increase in property values during the next year, while a 25% reduction yielded a 2.1% increase in property values.²³

Where you live should not determine whether you live.

In lower income neighborhoods chronically impacted by gun violence, about six in ten residents say they would like to move permanently to another area if they had the opportunity, and two in ten say they actually have plans to move in the next 12 months. Of these residents who would like to relocate, 51% say crime is a major reason they would like to do so.²⁴

Stemming the flow of guns into these communities is a first, and necessary, step to create broader economic and social opportunities for all.

ENDNOTES

1 <https://ebm.bmj.com/content/early/2018/11/22/bmjebm-2018-111103>

2 According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF's) most recent federal firearms listing, there are no licensed dealers in Oakland or Baltimore. Chicago, Los Angeles, and Milwaukee only have a small handful.

3 This is the five-year average from CDC data available for 2012-2016.

4 <https://annals.org/aim/fullarticle/2679556/comparison-rates-firearm-nonfirearm-homicide-suicide-black-white-non-hispanic>

5 <https://www.thetrace.org/2018/04/highest-murder-rates-us-cities-list/>

6 <https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/mayor/Press%20Room/Press%20Releases/2017/October/GTR2017.pdf>

7 <https://theconversation.com/gun-violence-in-the-us-kills-more-black-people-and-urban-dwellers-86825>

8 <https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/poll-finding/kaiser-health-tracking-poll-february-2013/>

9 <http://vpc.org/studies/trauma17.pdf>

10 <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/gun-violence-affects-economic-health-communities>

11 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK189992/>

12 <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/80061/2000760-engaging-communities-in-reducing-gun-violence-a-road-map-for-safer-communities.pdf>

13 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3910040/>

14 <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/80061/2000760-engaging-communities-in-reducing-gun-violence-a-road-map-for-safer-communities.pdf>

15 Determining the percentage of guns recovered from illegal possessors is incredibly difficult because of how guns are logged according to their crimes. ATF data show that for approximately 25% of guns recovered during a crime, "unlawful possession" was the most serious offense. However, for crimes like homicide or armed robbery, unlawful possession is a lesser crime and thus not reported. The Bureau of Justice Statistics finds that nearly 68% of violent criminals are repeat offenders (averages 2005-2015), individuals who are not able to get a gun legally.

16 D. Webster et al. "Effects of undercover police stings of gun dealers on the supply of new guns to criminals," *Journal of Injury Prevention*, August 2006, 12(4): 225-230.

17 D. Webster et al. "Effects of a Gun Dealer's Change in Sales Practices on the Supply of Guns to Criminals," *Journal of Urban Health*, Sept. 2006, 83(5): 778-787.

18 <http://www.nfaoa.org/documents/ATF-%20Following%20the%20Gun,%20Enforcing%20Federal%20Laws%20Against%20Firearms%20Traffickers.pdf>

19 <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/80061/2000760-engaging-communities-in-reducing-gun-violence-a-road-map-for-safer-communities.pdf>

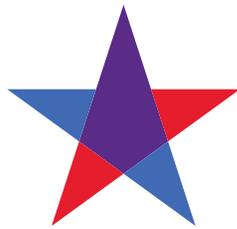
20 <https://thecrimereport.org/2017/06/01/gun-violence-kills-business-growth-and-jobs-report/>

21 Cook, Philip J., and Jens Ludwig. 2000. *Gun Violence: The Real Costs*. New York: Oxford University Press.

22 https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/85401/the-effect-of-gun-violence-on-local-economies_0.pdf

23 https://lawcenter.giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/The-Economic-Cost-of-Gun-Violence_FINAL.pdf

24 <http://www.advancingopportunity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/The-State-of-Opportunity-in-America-Report-Center-for-Advancing-Opportunity.pdf>



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