

GUN VIOLENCE IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Gun violence is a priority issue for African-Americans and other minorities. Nearly 350,000 Americans were victims to murders, robberies, and aggravated assaults in 2003 committed by perpetrators carrying a firearm,[1] and our minority communities are the hardest hit:

- In 2002, firearm homicide was the number one cause of death for 15-34 year old African-Americans.[2]
- In 2002, the firearm death rate for African-Americans was over twice that of whites.[3]
- In 2002, an African-American male under age 30 was nearly 9 times more likely to be murdered than a white male under age 30.[4]
- In 2003, 91 percent of African-American murder victims were slain by African-American offenders.[5]
- In 2002, African-American males accounted for 47 percent of all homicide victims,[6] while they only account for 6 percent of the entire population.[7]
- Firearms have become the predominant method of suicide for African-Americans aged 10-19 years, accounting for 64 percent of suicides in 2002.[8]
- In Florida, African-American males have an almost eight times greater chance of dying in a firearm-related homicide than white males. In addition, the firearm-related homicide death rate for African-American females is greater than white males and over four times greater than white females.[9]
- In Florida, White males have over twice as high a firearm-related suicide death rate as their African-American male counterparts and almost five times the rate of white females.[10]

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Endnotes:

1. Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Key Facts at a Glance: Crimes committed with firearms, 1973-2003*, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/glance/tables/guncrimetab.htm>
2. WISQARS, *Leading Causes of Death Reports*, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control. <http://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10.html> (hereafter *Leading Causes of Death Reports*).
3. WISQARS, *Injury Mortality Reports*, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control. http://webapp.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate10_sy.html (hereafter *Injury Mortality Reports*).
4. Ibid.
5. FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 2003, table 2.7, p. 18.
6. WISQARS, *Injury Mortality Reports*.
7. U.S. Census Bureau, July 1, 2004 national population estimates. <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2004-srh.html>
8. WISQARS, *Leading Causes of Death Reports*.
9. Florida Injury Prevention and Control Program. HRS Office of Health Promotion and Wellness, 1993
10. Florida Injury Prevention and Control Program. HRS Office of Health Promotion and Wellness, 1993