

# VIOLENCE DATA BRIEF

## Violence continues to be a serious public health problem.

Violence impacts us all, from infants to the elderly. It affects people in all stages of life and can lead to a lifetime of physical, emotional and economic problems. Community violence can cause significant physical injuries and mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Violence can erode communities by reducing productivity, decreasing property values and disrupting social services.<sup>1</sup>

This data brief provides a snapshot of the problem through local, state and national indicators of violence. The City of Columbus, along with other community partners, is working to reduce violent crime in our community. Timely, local data from multiple sources can help community leaders understand community violence patterns and the most affected groups and locations.<sup>1</sup>

The economic costs of violence are staggering. In 2020, suicide cost the U.S. economy \$68 billion and homicide \$36 billion for medical care and lost work.<sup>2</sup>

Each year, more than 39,000 people in the United States die as a result of gun violence, and tens of thousands more suffer non-fatal gun injuries.<sup>3</sup>

## IN THE U.S.

In the United States, seven people per hour die a violent death.<sup>2</sup> U.S. homicide rates still far exceed those in other high-income countries. In 2020, there were over 24,000 homicides and 1.4 million assaults requiring hospital treatment in the U.S.<sup>4</sup>

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. and the third leading cause among young people.<sup>5</sup>

Firearm related deaths continue to be a growing public health problem across the U.S. In 2020, almost 79% of homicides and over 50% of suicides in the U. S. involved a firearm.<sup>6</sup>

Rates of violence, including self-harm, vary greatly by sex, age and geography. In addition, violence is attributable to underlying risk factors, such as poverty and low education.<sup>3</sup>

## IN OHIO

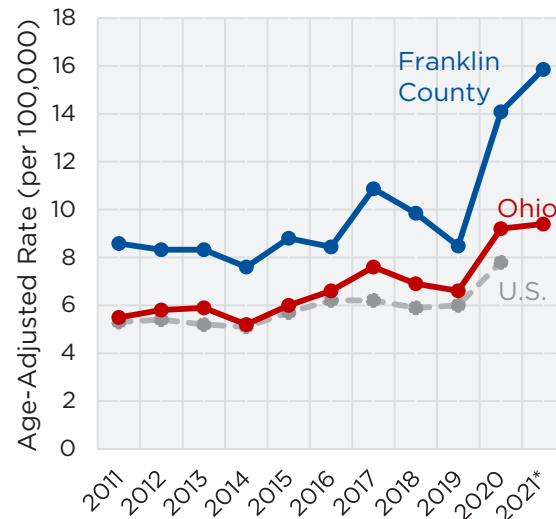
The 2020 homicide rate for Ohio (9.2 per 100,000) is higher than the U.S. (7.5 per 100,000). Unlike the U.S., in the past five years, Ohio has seen a 41% increase in the annual number of homicides. (See Chart 1.) Metropolitan counties and those in the southeast and northeast part of the state tend to have higher rates of violent death. Similar to the U.S., Ohio has variations in rates of violence by sex and race. The disparity is most evident in homicides among men, with the rate for Black males being 16 times the rate for white males.

In 2021, suicide was the 12th leading cause of death in Ohio and was the second leading cause of death among young people (10-14).<sup>7</sup>

Similar to data nationwide, firearms are the most common mechanism for violent deaths in Ohio. In 2020, more than half of the violent deaths were suicides, while over a third were homicides.<sup>8</sup>

### CHART 1: HOMICIDES

Age-Adjusted Death Rates; 2011-2021



\*Data not available for U.S.

## IN FRANKLIN COUNTY

**Homicides:** Homicide is among the top 15 causes of death.

- The number of homicides has increased by 41% over the past five years, from 150 in 2017 to 212 in 2021.
- Homicide rates are higher among the non-Hispanic African American population (see Chart 2), with the highest homicide rates seen among non-Hispanic African American males.

**Suicides:** Suicide is the 12th leading cause of death.

- The rate among males is almost five times higher than among females.
- The rate among the non-Hispanic white population is almost two times higher than among non-Hispanic African American people.
- The highest rate of suicide is among non-Hispanic white males.

**Assault-Related Hospitalizations:** In 2020, the rate of hospitalizations due to assault/alleged abuse was 90 per 100,000 population.

**Domestic Violence:** In 2021, there were 5,261 victims of domestic violence with an injury reported to Columbus Police.

- This is a 150% decrease since 2017.
- One of these incidents was fatal.
- Among incidents, the highest percentage (15%) was committed by an individual with a non-spousal relationship with a child involved.

**Child Abuse:** From 2020 to 2021, there were 12,927 reports of child abuse.

- 47% of these reported physical abuse.
- 9% reported sexual abuse.

## FIREARM-RELATED VIOLENCE IN FRANKLIN COUNTY

Between 2010 and 2021 in Franklin County, there was a 109% increase in the number of firearm related homicides (91 vs. 190). Nationwide over the same time period, there was an 89% increase (11,078 vs. 20,958).

**Homicides:** In 2021, firearms were the leading mechanism of homicide, accounting for 90% of homicides.

- The rate among non-Hispanic African American males (83.7 per 100,000) is ten times higher than the rate for non-Hispanic white males (8.0 per 100,000).

**Suicides:** In 2021, firearms were the leading mechanism of suicide, accounting for 48% of suicides.

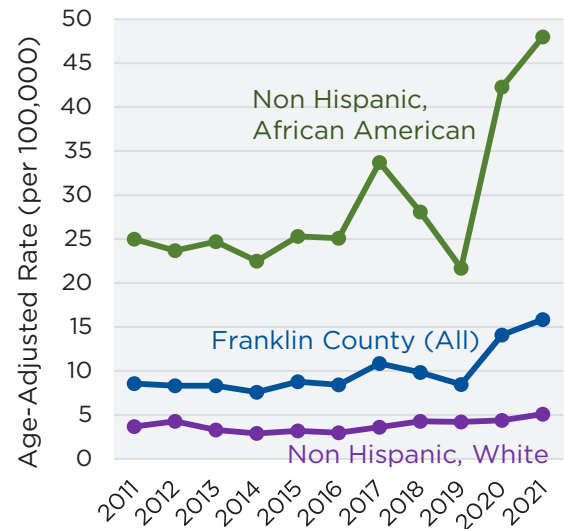
- The rate of firearm-related suicide deaths is highest among non-Hispanic white males.

**Emergency Department Visits:** In 2022, there were more than 1,100 visits to local emergency rooms for suspected gunshots.

- This is a 151% increase over the past 10 years.
- The average age for these patients was 34 years old.
- Males were four times more likely to visit the emergency room for a gunshot than females.

**CHART 2: AGE-ADJUSTED HOMICIDE RATES BY RACE AND ETHNICITY**

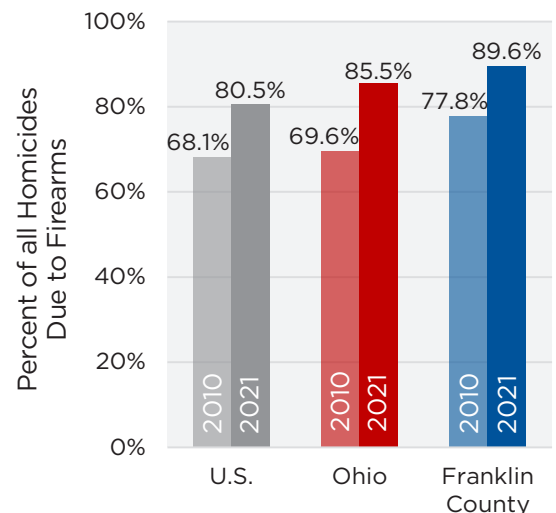
Franklin County; 2011-2021



A report released by the National Commission on COVID-19 and Criminal Justice shows that domestic violence incidents in the U.S. increased by 8.1% following the imposition of lockdown orders during the 2020 pandemic.<sup>10</sup>

**CHART 3: PERCENT OF HOMICIDES DUE TO FIREARMS**

Franklin County, Ohio and U.S. Comparison; 2010 and 2021



## REFERENCES:

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3. American Public Health Association. <https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/gun-violence>
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8. Ohio Department of Health, ODH Bureau of Vital Statistics, OH-VDRS
9. Gun Violence is a Public Health Crisis. American Public Health Association Fact Sheet, 2021. [https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/factsheets/200221\\_gun\\_violence\\_fact\\_sheet.ashx](https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/factsheets/200221_gun_violence_fact_sheet.ashx)
10. "New Analysis Shows 8% Increase in U.S. Domestic Violence Incidents Following Pandemic Stay-At-Home Orders," Council on Criminal Justice, <https://counciloncj.org/new-analysis-shows-8-increase-in-u-s-domestic-violence-incidents-following-pandemic-stay-at-home-orders/>.
11. Franklin County HealthMap 2022. <https://centralohiohospitals.org/franklin-county-healthmap/>

## SOURCES (OHIO AND FRANKLIN COUNTY DATA):

- **Homicides and Suicides:** Ohio Department of Health Vital Statistics, 2011-2021. Ohio Public Health Data Warehouse. The Department specifically disclaims responsibility for any analyses, interpretations or conclusions. 2021 data considered preliminary.
- **Assault-Related Hospitalizations:** Franklin County HealthMap 2022. Central Ohio Trauma System (COTS), Regional Trauma Registry, 2020. Data are reported for injuries resulting in hospitalizations.
- **Domestic Violence:** Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, Domestic Violence Report (Franklin County), 2020.
- **Child Abuse:** Public Children Services Association of Ohio, 2019-2020 Factbook (Franklin County).
- **Emergency Department Visits:** 2022 (through 11/23/2022) Ohio Department of Health's EpiCenter application (Ohio's statewide syndromic surveillance system used by state and local public health agencies). Additional data preparation and analysis by Columbus Public Health, Office of Epidemiology. Ohio Department of Health and Columbus Public Health specifically disclaim responsibility for any further analyses, interpretations or conclusions.

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