



# Gun Violence Intervention Status Report

June 2021

## About the Gun Violence Intervention Team

The Gun Violence Intervention Team (GVIT) was launched on August 12, 2020 to support existing interventions and implement recommended strategies to address gun violence in Anne Arundel County. The GVIT is a coalition of more than two dozen county agency and department leaders who have come together as a community of practice and have a shared concern for rising community gun violence and an interest in reducing the number of gun injuries and deaths in our own county.

## Strategic Direction

### Vision Statement

The GVIT envisions a community where all residents are safe from gun violence.

### Mission Statement

The GVIT's mission is to prevent and reduce gun-related injuries and deaths in Anne Arundel County.

Informed by our data-driven approach and guided by the recommendations of the Task Force, the county is prioritizing three strategies that will best match the capacity of the county's resources with areas of identified need. The GVIT will focus on these strategies through the fall of 2021, working collectively and pulling in additional resources to make progress. The data, policy and prevention, and environment workgroups will implement each of these priorities, respectively:

- 1. Create and publish a monthly data report of gun violence data for Anne Arundel County.**
- 2. Develop and implement a public awareness campaign about safe gun storage to prevent gun violence.**
- 3. Implement a coordinated crisis response for reporting and following up on gun violence incidents in Anne Arundel County.**

In addition to advancing the three priorities, Anne Arundel County is a leading member of the national Gun Safety Consortium, a coalition of law enforcement and government leaders who are applying their expertise and purchasing power to promote gun safety through the research of gun lock technology.

The GVIT also hosts quarterly community discussions to engage local communities in developing our county's responses. These are open to the public and are intended to integrate the lived experiences and on-the-ground knowledge of county residents to inform and shape the GVIT's approach. The summer community discussion will line up with the county's National Gun Violence Awareness Day events.

## Priority Areas

### **1. Create and publish a monthly data report of gun violence data for Anne Arundel County.**

A thorough understanding of gun violence in our local community is the foundation for the GVIT's decisions and actions. Recognizing the many forms of gun-related crimes, injuries, and fatalities that involve a complex mix of considerations, the GVIT will pull together local data sources to clarify what gun violence looks like in Anne Arundel County. The report's goal is to provide insights about who in the county is involved in and affected by gun violence, where gun violence happens, and in what ways.

There are several sources that collect data on gun violence in the county. Both Anne Arundel County and Annapolis City Police Departments report on gun incidents including homicides, suicides, contact shootings, and other crimes. The Department of Health pulls Vital Statistic Administration (VSA) death certificate data on homicides and suicides, and the Health Services Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) provides hospital data on gun-related inpatient admissions and emergency department visits.

The first edition of the gun violence data report is included in this June Status Report, offering year-to-date insights about gun violence since the start of 2021. The data workgroup, in collaboration with the police departments, Department of Health, and ArundelStat team, will continue to develop a monthly report to be released to the public.

### **2. Develop and implement a public awareness campaign about safe gun storage to prevent gun violence.**

The policy workgroup will develop and release a toolkit of informational materials on safe gun storage. These materials are intended to raise awareness and prevent common forms of gun violence including suicides and youth-involved gun violence where there is proven success of preventive strategies significantly reducing injuries and deaths.

Of all gun fatalities in the county, suicides are more common and make up approximately two-thirds of all fatalities. Guns are the most common means for fatal suicides among Anne Arundel County residents (29%) and the fifth most-used method in non-fatal suicides (0.5%).<sup>1</sup> Several key strategies for preventing suicides include reducing access to lethal means, such as guns, and informed messaging for individuals at risk of suicide. Mental health resources and options for securely storing guns will be included in the toolkit.

Of incident report data available for Anne Arundel County, adolescents make up 7% of all victims. Information about child access prevention laws and practices will be provided in the toolkit to promote safe storage options that deter incidents involving children and adolescents. Numerous studies have found that awareness about child access and safe storage in households with firearms reduces gun injuries and deaths among children and teens by more than 54%.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Preventing Suicide: A Technical Package of Policy, Programs, and Practices. Division of Violence Prevention, National Center for Injury and Disease Control (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/pdf/suicideTechnicalPackage.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Child Access Prevention. Giffords Law Center. <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/child-consumer-safety/child-access-prevention/#:~:text=Numerous%20studies%20over%20the%20past.require%20safe%20storage%20of%20firearms.>

To overcome issues of accessibility and ensure that county residents can adopt the practices recommended in the toolkit, the policy workgroup is exploring options to provide gun locks at a reduced price or at no cost to residents alongside informational materials.

### **3. Implement a coordinated crisis response for reporting and following up on gun violence incidents in Anne Arundel County.**

The county has a robust network of crisis and emergency response teams with comprehensive protocols for responding to violent incidents. Recognizing the strengths of our crisis response system, the environment workgroup will coordinate with agency leaders to develop a response plan for gun violence incidents to connect residents in crisis more quickly to appropriate resources and support.

The impacts of gun violence are far-reaching, affecting the victims and the many individuals around them, including family members, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. The coordinated plan will detail the immediate response and ongoing follow-ups to help these individuals process and cope with the trauma of gun violence, provide wraparound services, and to deter future violence.

**Stay up to date about Gun Violence Intervention Team activities and engagement opportunities by going to our project page at [Gun Violence Intervention](#).**

**“In Anne Arundel County we have the people and the passion to actually reduce gun violence and to show the rest of our state and our nation that there is a way to put politics aside and do the work.”**

**- Stuart Pittman  
County Executive**

## Gun Violence Data for Anne Arundel County

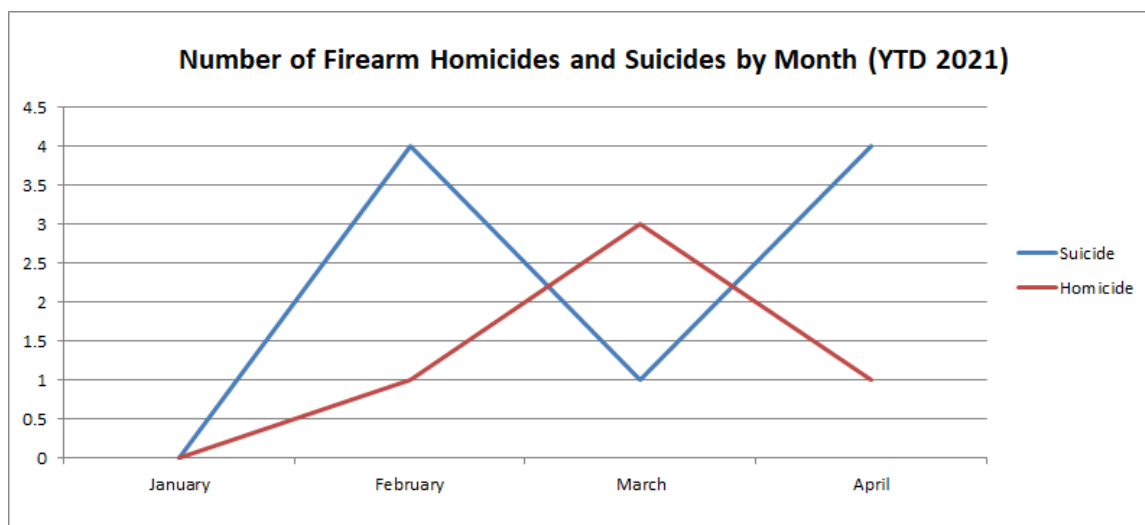
The GVIT data group has merged several sources to produce a data snapshot of gun injuries and fatalities year-to-date (YTD) for 2021 in Anne Arundel County. So far, from January to April, 2021 there have been a total of 10 suicides, 5 homicides, and 55 injuries that involved a firearm.

Of all gun fatalities in Anne Arundel County, suicides consistently make up the majority. On average, two-thirds of gun fatalities are suicides and one-third are homicides. However, the vast majority of gun incidents in the county do not result in a fatality. The most common form of gun violence, comprising over a third of all incidents, are gun-related assaults and threats.

Among suicide deaths in the county, firearms are the most common means (39%). Of suicide attempts, firearms are the fifth most common means. Between January and April of 2021, a total of 10 suicides have occurred in Anne Arundel County. This is compared to 14 suicides that occurred by April of 2020 and 13 suicides that occurred by April of 2019. Middle-aged white males make up the highest proportion of suicides.

A total of five homicides have occurred in all of Anne Arundel County between January and April 2021. This is compared to four homicides that occurred by April of 2020 and two homicides that occurred by April of 2019. The highest proportion of homicide victims are young adult Black males, median age 29.

Crime incident report data is provided by Anne Arundel County and Annapolis Police Departments and compiled by the Department of Health. All numbers are subject to change as incidents are recategorized. All reported suicides and homicides included in the following data are fatalities, and all reported injuries are defined as non-fatal incidents where a victim was physically shot.





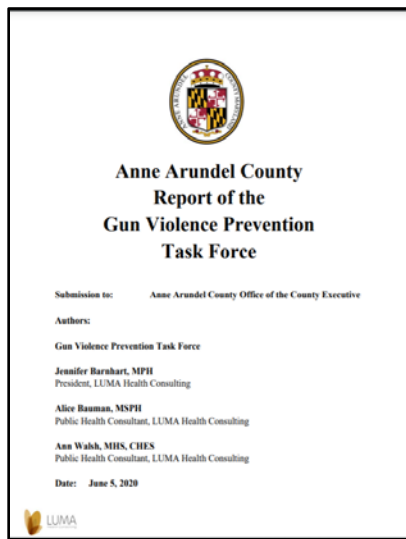
# Background

Preceding the GVIT was the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, a group of government stakeholders, organizational representatives, and community leaders which was formed by County Executive Stuart Pittman’s Executive Order on April 5, 2019. The Task Force compiled data on gun incidents and recommended actions to help reduce gun violence in the county. A Final Report was published by the Task Force on June 5, 2020 that outlined their findings including 55 recommendations.

In direct response to the Task Force’s recommendation that the county address gun violence as a public health crisis, the GVIT was formed under the leadership of the Department of Health. The GVIT is applying a multi-pronged approach to prevent and reduce gun violence through data-driven decisions, community-engaged interventions, and a public health lens that focuses on targeting the risk factors and promoting the protective factors of gun injuries and deaths.

The GVIT is drawing the research of the Task Force on best practices for gun violence interventions including in the areas of public education, youth and schools, victim services, law and policy, and behavioral health. These findings and data from county police and health departments help the GVIT to better understand the complex forms and impacts of gun violence.

Recognizing the complexity of addressing gun violence, the GVIT formed three workgroups that focus on making improvements through policy and prevention, system-level change through data, and environment. The workgroups were formed in the fall of 2020 to implement strategies informed by underlying data and according to the needs of the county. Each workgroup is chaired by members of the GVIT who will lead the current strategic priorities.



For more information about the GVIT and its activities, [click here](#).