

2020 Firearm-Related Homicides of Children Ages 0-18

1st

Firearms were the leading mechanism for homicide among children ages 0-18 in Michigan and the U.S.

2,040

U.S. children died as a result of firearm-related homicide.

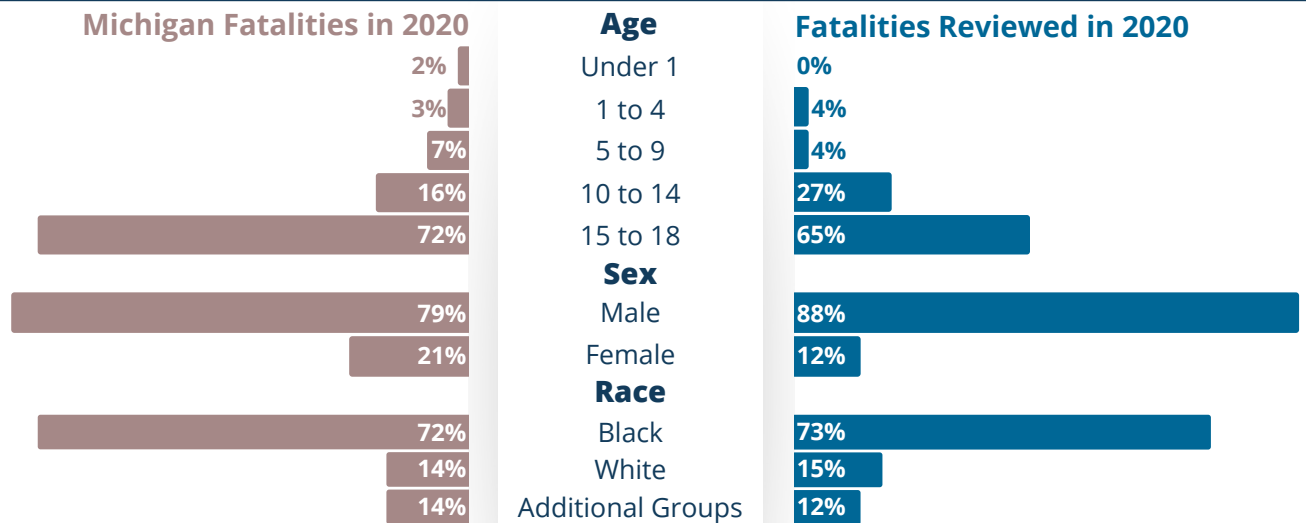
58

Michigan children died as a result of firearm-related homicide.

26

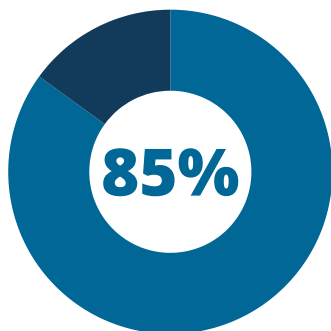
The circumstances leading to 26 firearm-related homicides were reviewed by local Child Death Review (CDR) teams.

Child's Demographic Information



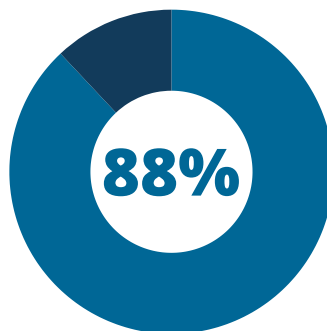
Characteristics of the 26 Firearm-Related Homicides Reviewed by Local CDR Teams

In many instances, the circumstances surrounding firearm-related homicides are unknown to investigators and local CDR teams. Despite this, reviewing available data and better understanding what information is missing is an important way for communities to contextualize the ways firearms pose a risk for children and youth. Opportunities exist to learn more about: whether or not the firearm was kept loaded, who owned the firearm, and whether or not the firearm was stolen.



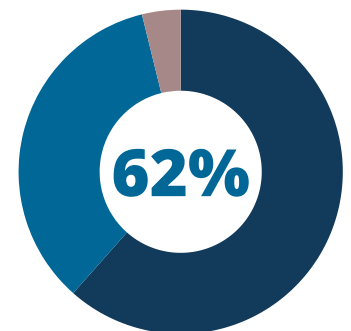
of the incidents it was not known whether the firearm was kept locked.

■ 15% were known to be kept locked.



of the incidents it was not known whether a parent or caregiver knew a firearm was present.

■ 12% of parents or caregivers knew a firearm was present.



of the incidents were known to be due to a handgun.

■ Handgun
■ Rifle
■ Unknown

Child Death State Advisory Team Recommendations

The Michigan Child Death State Advisory Team (SAT) was established to identify and make recommendations on policy and statutory changes pertaining to child fatalities and to guide statewide prevention, education, and training efforts. The SAT reviews Michigan's child mortality data as well as local child death review team findings and recommendations to identify causes, risk factors, and trends in child deaths. The SAT offers the following recommendations to policymakers to prevent firearm-related homicides:

- Establish a culture of gun safety through a public education campaign emphasizing that gun safety and Second Amendment rights are not mutually exclusive issues. Increase community awareness of [Public Act 17 of 2023](#), which requires firearm owners to store their firearms in a locked container, such as a safe or lockbox, or unloaded with a locking device when there is a reasonable chance that a minor is or is likely to be on the premises.
 - Promote [Project ChildSafe](#), which provides education and [free gun safety locks](#) throughout Michigan and other states.
- Gun violence is a critical and preventable public health problem requiring comprehensive solutions. Having a history of violence, youth justice involvement, physical interpersonal abuse, and parental justice involvement are key predictors of future violence and are associated with [adverse childhood experiences \(ACEs\)](#).
 - Support increasing investments in evidence-based programs such as [Advance Peace](#) and [SafERteens](#) to proactively address youth violence.
 - Promote the [National Center for School Safety](#) research, data, and education to improve school safety and prevent school violence.
- Local CDR team members and partners are encouraged to review and incorporate up-to-date Michigan [firearm data](#), when feasible, within their local community programs/initiatives to mitigate firearm injuries and deaths by increasing awareness and education. Additional data can be accessed from the [Michigan Violent Death Reporting System Data Dashboard](#).

Opportunities for Prevention

Parents, caregivers, and community partners can keep children safe from firearms by:



Keeping firearms out of the home or learning about the [safest way to store a firearm](#), including [Michigan laws about secure firearm storage](#).



[Talking to children about firearms](#), even if guns are not kept in the child's home, and teaching them that they are not toys and are very dangerous.



Asking about the presence of [guns in homes](#) children visit.



[Ensuring safety](#) is part of every conversation about [hunting and firearm use](#).



[Storing firearms unloaded and locked](#) in a cabinet, safe, gun vault, or storage case. Consider using a gun lock.



Lock bullets in a place separate from the firearm and ensure keys/passcodes are not accessible.

Local Initiatives:



CDR teams have implemented initiatives in their local communities to prevent firearm-related homicides. Law enforcement in **Hillsdale County** was able to obtain gun locks, which they distributed to community members along with information about firearm safety. **Marquette County** law enforcement hosts outdoor safety classes for 5th through 10th graders. **Alpena and Montmorency Counties** are providing gun locks to community members.

About This Data

The information presented in this brief is based on data gathered through Michigan's local CDR process. Data about deaths reviewed are presented by year of review by the local CDR team, which may not be the same as the year in which the child died. **It is important to note that not all child deaths in the state are reviewed. As not every child death is reviewed, Michigan's CDR Program dataset is not population-based and should not be directly compared with vital statistics data, nor should it be used to compute mortality rates.** It is recommended that complementary data sources are examined alongside the CDR Program data when making prevention, policy, or practice decisions.

References

- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics. (2022). 2020 Michigan resident death files [Unpublished raw data set].
- United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2020 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 2021. Data are compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html> on Jan 26, 2024

Contact Us

Additional CDR data, reports, and fact sheets can be found on our [website](#). Please contact the Michigan CDR Program at the Center for Child and Family Health (CCFH) at MPHI at MichiganCDR@mphi.org with any questions or requests for additional data.