

## Firearms and Crime: Statistics from UCR and the Substance Abuse Monitoring Program

The cost of gun violence in America is significant (approximately \$12.8 million per day, or \$229 billion per year), including expenses related to medical treatment, police investigations, prison costs, disability expenses, mental health care, and emergency services, as well as security enhancements.<sup>1</sup> Other studies have also shown the effect that gun violence can have on local economies. For example, in Oakland, California, every additional gun homicide in a census tract in a given year was significantly associated with five fewer job opportunities in contracting businesses the next year.<sup>2</sup>

While the San Diego region has traditionally had one of the lowest violent crime rates compared to other large U.S. cities/areas, the use of firearms and the effect on victims and the community at large is still important. This CJ Flash examines the most recent annual (2017) crime statistics for the region regarding how frequently firearms are used in different crimes, as well as 2017 Substance Abuse Monitoring program statistics regarding the frequency with which arrestees in local detention facilities report having carried a gun and factors associated with having done so.

**40%**

*of all serious violent crime that involved a firearm was not reported to police in 2016.<sup>3</sup>*

**58%**

*of juveniles who reported ever carrying a gun reported that they had previously brought a weapon (gun or something else) to school.*

### Highlight 1

**What percentage of crimes in the San Diego region in 2017 involved a firearm compared to nationally?**

San Diego	Nationally
<b>12%</b> of aggravated assaults	<b>26%</b> of aggravated assaults
<b>18%</b> of robberies	<b>41%</b> of robberies
<b>53%</b> of homicides	<b>73%</b> of homicides

### Highlight 2

**1 in 3**

adult arrestees report ever having carried a gun (32%)

**1 in 4**

juvenile arrestees report ever having carried a gun (25%)

<sup>1</sup> Singletary, M. (February 22, 2018). *The enormous economic cost of gun violence*. Washington, DC: The Washington Post. Available online at [washingtonpost.com/news/get-there/wp/2018/02/22/the-enormous-economic-cost-of-gun-violence/?utm\\_term=.997a446e495d](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/get-there/wp/2018/02/22/the-enormous-economic-cost-of-gun-violence/?utm_term=.997a446e495d)

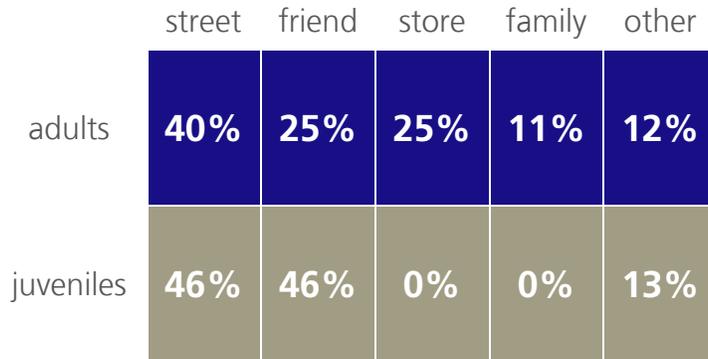
<sup>2</sup> Irvin-Erickson, Y., Bai, B., Gurvis, A., & Mohr, E. (2016). *The effect of gun violence on local economies*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

<sup>3</sup> Morgan, R. E. & Kena, G. (2017). *Crime victimization, 2016* (NCJ 251150). Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

## Highlight 3

### Where did adults and juveniles get firearms?

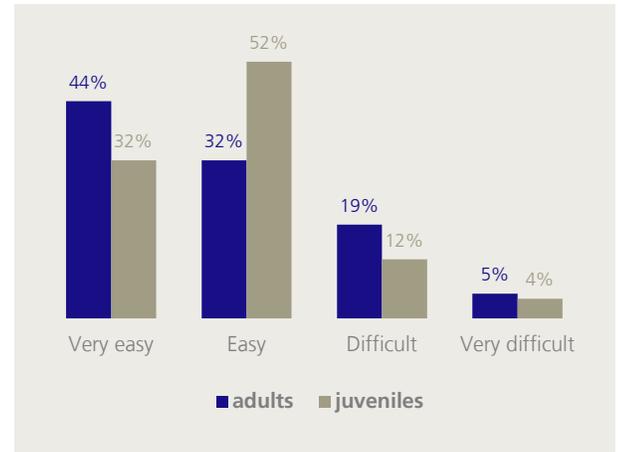
Only 1 in 4 adult arrestees report they got the gun they carried most recently at a store or retail establishment. Most arrestees (adult and juvenile) report they got it off the street or from a friend. Juveniles were more likely to report they got it from a friend than adults.



## Highlight 4

### How easy is it to get a gun?

Both adults and juveniles describe getting a gun as "very easy" or "easy" more often than not. Only around 1 in 20 arrestees say getting a gun is "very difficult."



## Highlight 5

### Who is more likely to have carried a gun among adult and juvenile arrestees?

adults	juveniles
<b>37%</b> males ( <i>versus 21% females</i> )	<b>30%</b> males ( <i>versus 7% females</i> )
<b>46%</b> prior arrest as a juvenile ( <i>versus 23%</i> )	<b>39%</b> family prior involvement in CPS ( <i>versus 17%</i> )
<b>35%</b> prior adult arrest ( <i>versus 17%</i> )	<b>29%</b> prior arrest ( <i>versus 11%</i> )
<b>46%</b> served time in prison ( <i>versus 26%</i> )	<b>28%</b> history of truancy ( <i>versus 6%</i> )
<b>50%</b> gang members or associates ( <i>versus 25%</i> )	<b>42%</b> gang members or associates ( <i>versus 11%</i> )
<b>47%</b> committed crimes to support a drug habit ( <i>versus 24%</i> )	
<b>51%</b> reported ever selling drugs ( <i>versus 15%</i> )	
<b>58%</b> ever pimped or pandered ( <i>versus 30%</i> )	
<b>48%</b> positive for cocaine/crack ( <i>versus 31%</i> )	

As others have noted,<sup>4</sup> gun crime is not only a crime and it is not a singular problem, with those affected including those who have been touched by suicide, homicide, and mass shootings. Locally, the San Diego City Attorney's Office is commended for spearheading a Gun Violence Restraining Orders (GVRO) Working Group to get firearms out of the hands of gun owners shown to be a danger to society. Through this effort, the City Attorney's Office has obtained 63 GVROs on behalf of the San Diego Police Department since December 2017, removing more than 200 firearms from irresponsible gun owners and has also received State funding to train law enforcement agencies throughout California on the use of GVROs. More information about this initiative can be found at: [sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/nr180216a.pdf](http://sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/nr180216a.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Police Executive Research Forum (2018). *Key findings and an action plan to reduce gun violence*. Available online at [policeforum.org/assets/gun%20violence%20meeting\\_guiding%20principles%20%20recommended%20approaches%20final2%206%208%2018.pdf](http://policeforum.org/assets/gun%20violence%20meeting_guiding%20principles%20%20recommended%20approaches%20final2%206%208%2018.pdf).