

GUN VIOLENCE FACT SHEET: SHOOTING INCIDENTS INVOLVING *WOMEN*

Community gun violence is one of the most common forms of interpersonal violence, and it disproportionately impacts Black and Brown Americans, affecting youth, families, and the overall safety of their neighborhoods.¹ The presence of a gun can escalate even minor disagreements, increasing the risk of serious harm.

In the United States, more than 6,500 women's lives are claimed by gun violence annually.² The US accounts for 92% of all women killed with guns in high-income countries each year.³ Black women are nearly four times as likely as their White counterparts to be victims in gun homicides, and twice as likely as their Asian counterparts.⁴ Studies also show that Latino communities are disproportionately impacted by violence; however, research into how violence specifically impacts Latina women is sparse.⁵ While there is a great deal of research regarding men and their experience with gun violence, there has been a lack of research surrounding women, specifically Black and Brown women, and their experiences with gun violence. Men remain the center of violence prevention and intervention efforts.

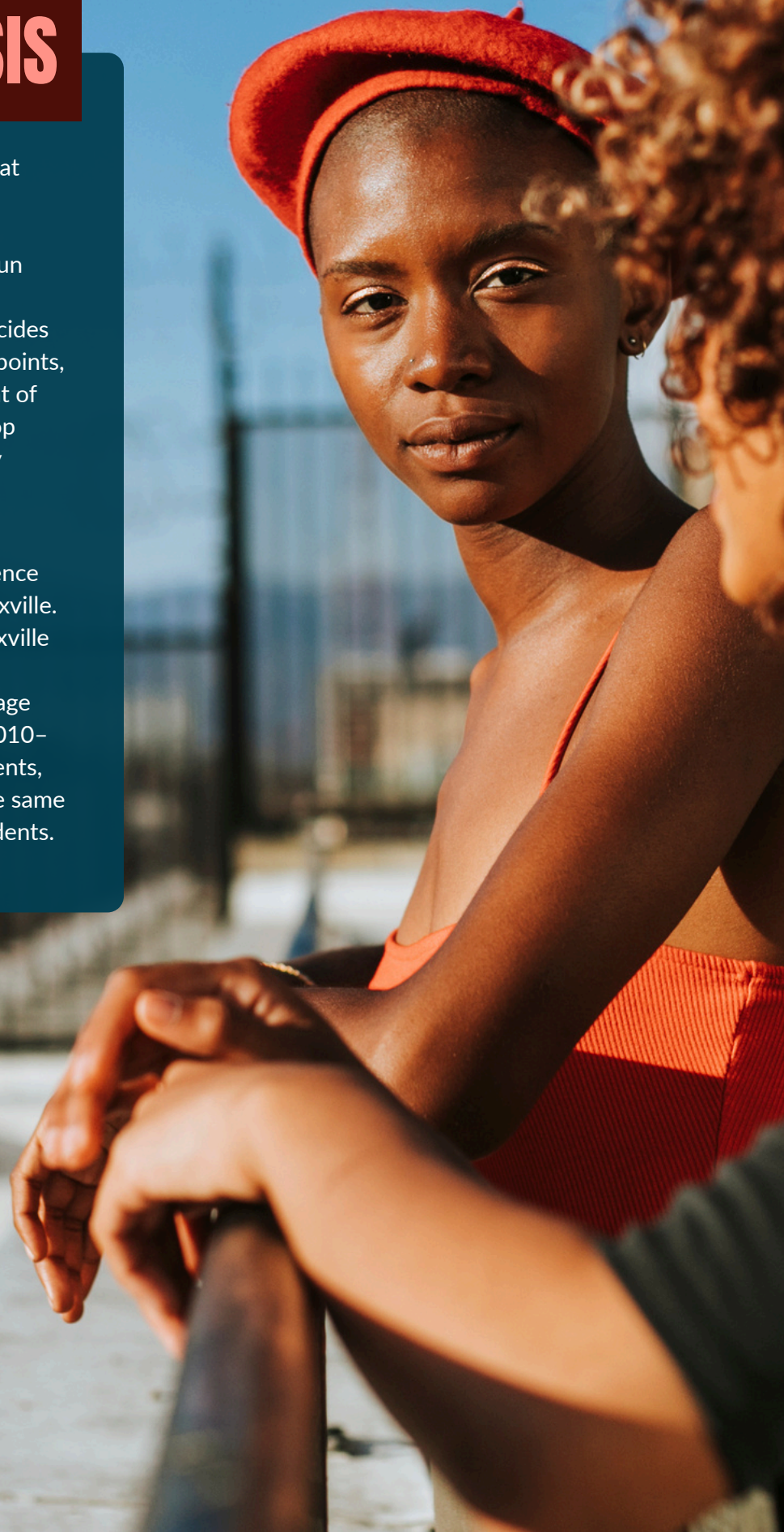
To get a clearer look into how gun violence impacts women, the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) analyzed existing data obtained through our Gun Violence Problem Analysis (GVPA) process. The GVPA is a set of analyses that provide insight into the ways gun violence shows up within a jurisdiction and the detailed characteristics of those who drive violence within the area. These analyses include demographic, group, and location dynamics related to violence within the jurisdiction.

Through additional analyses, we intend to better understand details related to women involved in violence in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Knoxville and Memphis, Tennessee. With this, we seek to inform, educate, and advocate for more visibility of women's experiences as they relate to gun violence.

OUR ANALYSIS

We believe it is important to look at both fatal and nonfatal shootings involving women to gain a more complete understanding of how gun violence affects them. Examining nonfatal incidents alongside homicides allows us to identify intervention points, which can inform the development of prevention strategies that may stop violence from escalating to deadly outcomes.

It is important to note that both Indianapolis and Memphis experience violence at a higher rate than Knoxville. The average homicide rate in Knoxville from 2011–2024 was 12.78 per 100,000 residents, while the average homicide rate in Memphis from 2010–2023 was 36.2 per 100,000 residents, and the rate in Indianapolis for the same period was 21.5 per 100,000 residents.



Across cities, women account for 15–20% of individuals involved in shootings; 75–85% of those women are victims of gun violence.

In Indianapolis, 95 of the 630 individuals (15.08%) involved in homicides in 2022 and 2023 were women. The majority of these women, 82.1%, were victims, and 17.9% were suspects. Nonfatal shootings in 2023 saw a similar pattern: 18.9% of individuals involved were women, 83.5% of whom were victims, and 16.5% of whom were suspects.

In Memphis from July 2022 through June 2024, 944 individuals were involved in homicides, and 1,371 individuals were involved in nonfatal shootings. Among the individuals involved in homicides, 14.0% were women, and 18.7% of those involved in nonfatal shootings were women. Similar to Indianapolis, 76.5% of women involved in homicides and 79.0% of women involved in nonfatal shootings were victims.

Knoxville also saw similar patterns. From January 2022 through December 2024, of the 153 individuals involved in homicides and 346 individuals involved in nonfatal shootings, 16.3% of those involved in homicides and 18.8% of those involved in nonfatal shootings were women. Again, women were far more likely to be victims than suspects, with 72% of women involved in homicides and 69.2% of women involved in nonfatal shootings being victims.



¹ Semenza DC, Kravitz-Wirtz N. Gun violence exposure and population health inequality: a conceptual framework. *Inj Prev.* 2025 Jan 23;31(1):1-8. doi: 10.1136/ip-2023-045197. PMID: 39358037; PMCID: PMC11874337.

² [The Devastating Toll of Gun Violence on American Women and Girls](#)

³ Everytown analysis of the most recent year of gun deaths by country (2015–2019), [GunPolicy.org](#)

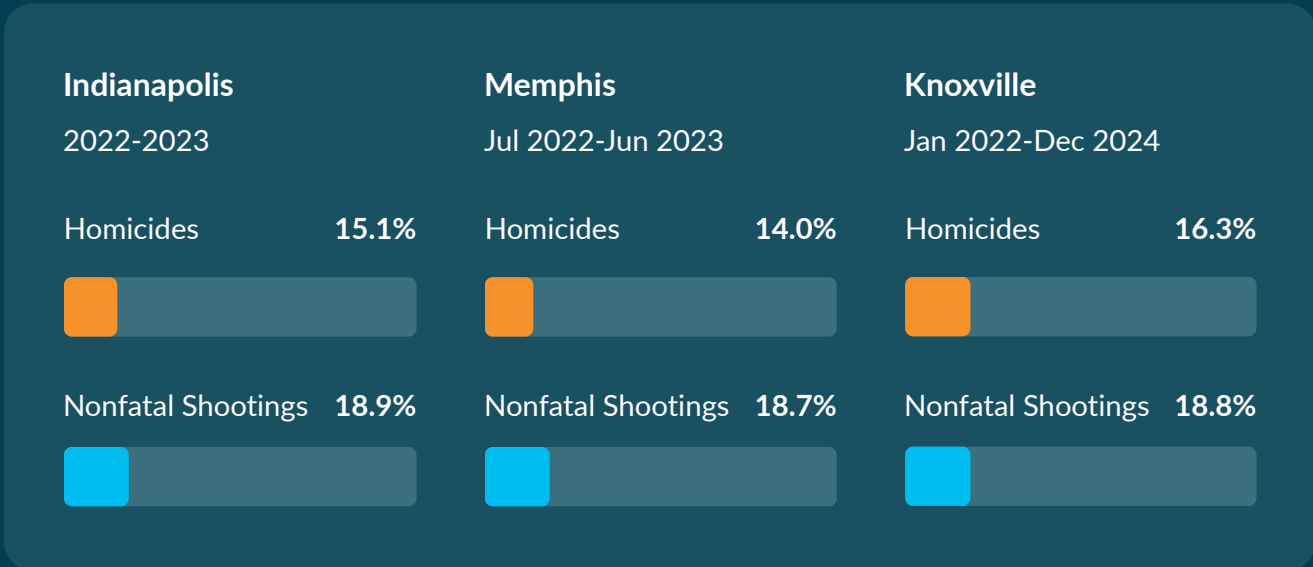
⁴ [In-Depth - Community Gun Violence](#)

⁵ [Hispanic Victims of Lethal Firearms Violence in the United States](#)

Women Involved in gun violence across three cities: share of total involved and victim vs. suspect

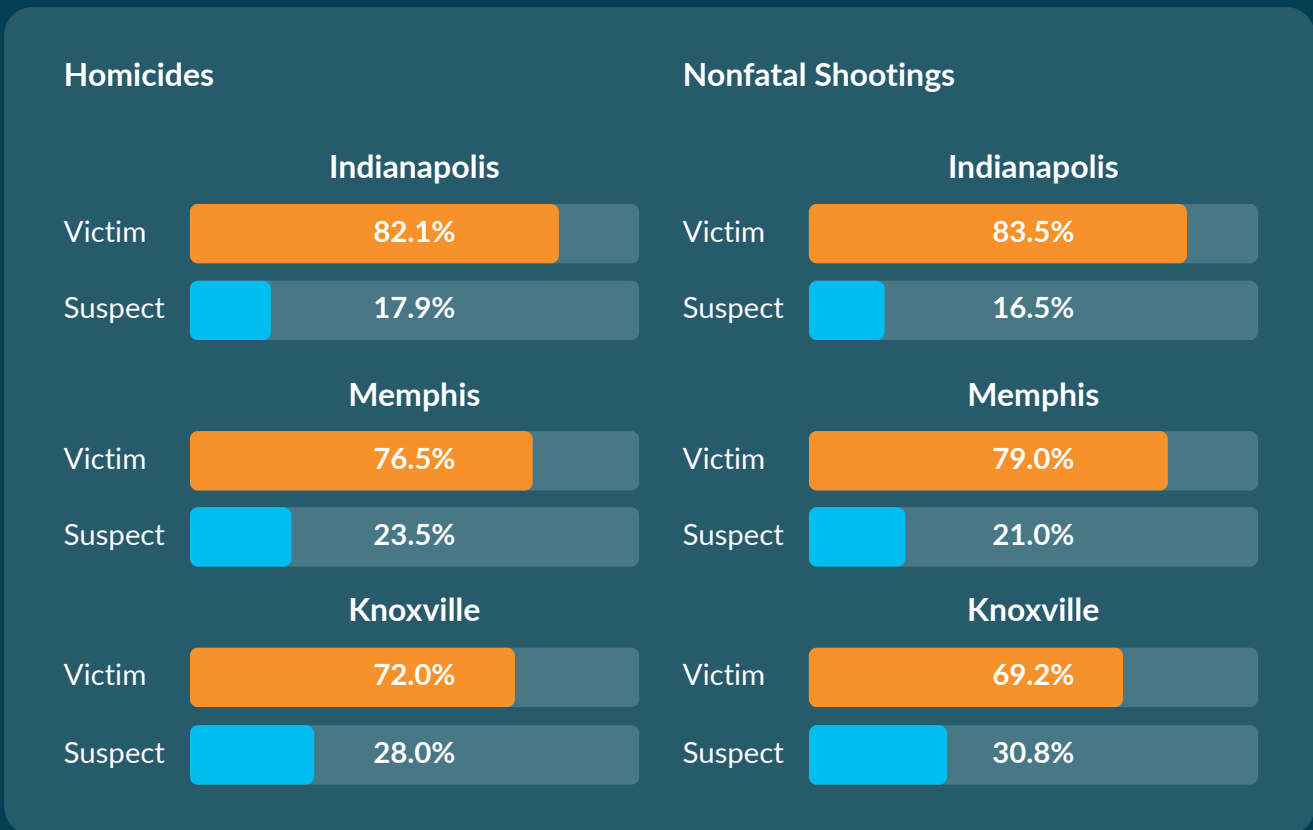
Women as a share of all individuals involved

■ Homicides ■ Nonfatal Shootings



Among women involved – Victim vs. Suspect

■ Victim ■ Suspect



Age patterns differ by outcome, with fatal shootings involving older victims and younger suspects compared to nonfatal incidents.

Girls aged 17 and under were more likely to be victims in fatal shootings in cities like Indianapolis and Memphis. This stands in contrast to Knoxville, where there were no victims under the age of 17 during the period of assessed data.

Across jurisdictions, the average age of female fatal shooting suspects was 29.69. The average age of female fatal shooting victims was slightly older, at 34.33.

In nonfatal shootings, suspects are older than victims, on average. The average ages of suspects and victims, respectively, were 32.53 and 30.03 years.

Violence between women occurs at relatively low rates across jurisdictions.

Across jurisdictions, violence between women was relatively low. However, in Knoxville there was one woman-to-woman homicide and five woman-to-woman nonfatal shooting incidents, and in Memphis, there were seven woman-to-woman homicides and 19 nonfatal woman-to-woman shooting incidents. In Indianapolis, there were six woman-to-woman homicide incidents and nine woman-to-woman nonfatal shooting incidents.

In Indianapolis, 75 homicides and 112 nonfatal shootings involved women; of those, 8.00% of homicides and 5.36% of nonfatal shootings involved both a female suspect and female victim. In Memphis, 98 homicides involved women, 7.14% of which involved both a female suspect and victim. Memphis also experienced 87 nonfatal shootings involving women, 19.54% of which involved both a female suspect and female victim. Knoxville experienced 25 homicides and 39 nonfatal shootings involving women; 4.00% of those homicides and 12.82% of those nonfatal shootings involved female suspects and victims.

- In Knoxville, 60% of the woman-to-woman nonfatal shooting incidents involved Black individuals and 40% involved White women.
- In Memphis, 100% of the woman-to-woman homicides involved Black women, and nearly 95% of the woman-to-woman nonfatal shooting incidents involved Black women.
 - Half of the woman-to-woman homicide incidents were domestic violence cases, and 33.33% were personal disputes.
 - Nearly 88% of the woman-to-woman nonfatal incidents were personal disputes.
- In Indianapolis, over 80% of the woman-to-woman homicide incidents involved Black women.
 - Half of the woman-to-woman homicide incidents involved ongoing group conflict, and 37.50% of those involved in the woman-to-woman homicide incidents were group or gang involved.⁶

⁶ It is important to note that group and gang involvement is not always known; as such, the true rate may be higher.



Comparable Demographics in Homicide and Nonfatal Shooting Cases

Black women account for a large majority of women involved in fatal shooting incidents, whether as victims or suspects.

- In Memphis, 100% of female homicide suspects were Black, and 85.15% of female victims were Black.
- In Indianapolis, 87.50% of female homicide suspects were Black, and 62.86% of female victims were Black.
- In Knoxville, women involved in fatal shootings were largely White, with White women making up 71.43% of fatal shooting suspects and 55.56% of fatal shooting victims.
 - Black women accounted for 28.57% of fatal shootings suspects and 33.33% of fatal shooting victims.
- Latino women accounted for 6.25% of the homicide suspects in Indianapolis.⁷
 - Latino women accounted for 1.43% of homicide victims in Indianapolis, 11.11% in Knoxville, 4.95% in Memphis.



Black women account for a large majority of women involved in nonfatal shooting incidents, whether as victims or suspects.

- Overwhelmingly, across all jurisdictions, Black women accounted for the majority of women involved in nonfatal shooting incidents, whether as victims or suspects.
 - In Memphis, 97.67% of female suspects and over 90.09% of female victims were Black.
 - In Indianapolis, 70.80% of female victims and 88.89% of female suspects were Black.
- Compared to other jurisdictions, Knoxville had higher percentages of White women involved in nonfatal shooting incidents.
 - White women accounted for 35% of female suspects and 26.67% of female victims in Knoxville nonfatal shootings.

⁷ Latino women were not present in the data sets as suspects in Knoxville and Memphis, Tennessee.

Age of Women Involved in Fatal Shootings

	Suspects			Victims		
Age Range	Indianapolis (n=17)	Knoxville (n=7)	Memphis (n=31)	Indianapolis (n=78)	Knoxville (n=18)	Memphis (n=101)
17 and Under	5.88%	-	3.23%	21.79%	-	18.81%
18-24	47.06%	28.57%	29.03%	21.79%	22.22%	14.85%
25-34	29.41%	42.86%	38.71%	23.08%	5.56%	19.80%
35-44	11.76%	14.29%	22.58%	15.38%	33.33%	21.78%
45-54	5.88%	-	3.23%	7.69%	33.33%	11.88%
55+	-	14.29%	3.23%	10.26%	5.56%	12.87%

Age of Women Involved in Nonfatal Shootings

	Suspects			Victims		
Age Range	Indianapolis (n=25)	Knoxville (n=20)	Memphis (n=84)	Indianapolis (n=78)	Knoxville (n=45)	Memphis (n=303)
17 and Under	-	-	5.95%	8.03%	11.11%	14.19%
18-24	44.00%	20.00%	34.52%	47.45%	40.00%	22.77%
25-34	32.00%	30.00%	34.52%	20.44%	20.00%	25.74%
35-44	12.00%	30.00%	19.05%	13.87%	20.00%	19.80%
45-54	12.00%	10.00%	3.57%	5.84%	4.44%	10.23%
55+	-	10.00%	2.38%	4.38%	4.44%	7.26%

Race and Ethnicity of Women Involved in Fatal Shootings

	Suspects			Victims		
Race and Ethnicity	Indianapolis (n=16)	Knoxville (n=7)	Memphis (n=31)	Indianapolis (n=70)	Knoxville (n=18)	Memphis (n=101)
Asian	-	-	-	-	-	-
Black	87.50%	28.57%	100%	62.86%	33.33%	85.15%
Latino	6.25%	-	-	1.43%	11.11%	4.95%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	.99%
White	6.25%	71.43%	-	35.71%	55.56%	8.91%
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-

Race and Ethnicity of Women Involved in Nonfatal Shootings

Race and Ethnicity	Suspects			Victims		
	Indianapolis (n=27)	Knoxville (n=20)	Memphis (n=86)	Indianapolis (n=78)	Knoxville (n=45)	Memphis (n=303)
Asian	-	-	-	1.46%	2.22%	-
Black	88.89%	65%	97.67%	70.80%	62.22%	90.09%
Latino	-	-	2.33%	1.46%	8.89%	4.29%
White	11.11%	35%	-	25.55%	26.67%	5.28%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	.33%
Unknown	-	-	-	0.73%	-	-

Domestic violence led as the number one circumstance of women involved in fatal shootings.

Across jurisdictions, domestic violence led as the number one cause of fatal shootings involving women. Personal disputes served as the second most common circumstance, specifically in Indianapolis and Memphis.

In Memphis, approximately 33.64% of fatal shootings involving women were related to domestic violence, while 20% were related to personal disputes. Among cases with available racial demographic data, the majority of fatal shooting incidents involving Black and Latino women were associated with these two circumstances.

In Indianapolis, among cases with available racial demographic data, the majority of fatal shooting incidents involving Black women were also associated with domestic violence and personal disputes. Black women were 1.5 times as likely as White women to be victims of domestic violence-related homicide and twice as likely to be killed in fatal shootings stemming from personal disputes.



Circumstances of Fatal Shooting Incidents

	Indianapolis (n=75)	Knoxville (n=25)	Memphis (n=98)
Domestic Violence	33.33%	56.00%	33.64%
Drug Robbery	1.33%	-	-
Drug-Related Dispute	8.00%	4.00%	0.91%
Instant Dispute	5.33%	20.00%	6.36%
Ongoing Group Conflict	2.66%	4.00%	9.09%
Other	9.33%	4.00%	15.45%
Personal Dispute	22.66%	12.00%	20.00%
Retaliation/Revenge	8.00%	-	4.55%
Robbery	9.33%	-	10.00%

Circumstances of Nonfatal Shooting Incidents

	Indianapolis (n=112)	Knoxville (n=39)	Memphis (n=87)
Domestic Violence	19.64%	28.21%	14.81%
Drug Robbery	0.89%	-	0.93%
Drug-Related Dispute	1.78%	7.69%	-
Instant Dispute	11.60%	12.82%	15.74%
Internal Group Conflict	-	2.56%	-
Ongoing Group Conflict	13.39%	12.82%	21.30%
Other	15.17%	2.56%	11.11%
Personal Dispute	31.25%	28.21%	25.93%
Retaliation/Revenge	2.67%	2.56%	5.56%

Gang-affiliated individuals represent a small portion of the total fatal and nonfatal shooting statistics.

While research on gun violence often focuses on male involvement in gangs or groups, data across jurisdictions show that women impacted by gun violence were largely not connected to gangs, crews, or organized groups.⁸

⁸ Group and crew information was largely not known for nonfatal shootings.

Based on available data:

- The percentage of women involved in gun violence who were affiliated with groups and crews was lower in Indianapolis than in Memphis. In Indianapolis, the percentage of affiliated women who are involved in gun violence was about the same as the percentage of unaffiliated women who are involved in gun violence. In Memphis, 63.81% of shooting-involved women were not affiliated with a group or crew.

Group Involvement in Fatal Shootings by Incident

Incident Gang/Group Involved	Indianapolis (n=164)	Knoxville (n=18)	Memphis (n=152)
No	28.05%	38.89%	63.81%
Yes	22.56%	22.22%	7.89%
Unknown	49.39%	38.89%	28.28%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Group Involvement in Fatal Shootings by Subject

Individual Gang/Group Involved	Indianapolis		Knoxville		Memphis	
	Suspects (n=17)	Victims (n=78)	Suspects (n=26)	Victims (n=28)	Suspects (n=30)	Victims (n=101)
Yes	5.88%	1.28%	23.1%	10.7%	6.45%	8.91%

Group Involvement in Nonfatal Shootings by Incident

Incident Gang/Group Involved	Indianapolis (n=164)	Knoxville (n=47)	Memphis (n=257)
No	28.05%	27.66%	33.46%
Yes	22.56%	23.40%	3.89%
Unknown	49.39%	48.94%	62.64%

Group Involvement in Nonfatal Shootings by Subject

Incident Gang/Group Involved	Indianapolis (n=164)	Knoxville (n=47)	Memphis (n=257)
No	28.05%	27.66%	33.46%
Yes	22.56%	23.40%	3.89%
Unknown	49.39%	48.94%	62.64%



CONCLUSION

Data used in this analysis were received through NICJR's GVPA process, which seeks to understand how gun violence uniquely impacts specific jurisdictions.⁹ Throughout the GVPA process, the data are primarily used to understand those at the highest risk of involvement in gun violence, which are often men. Men have unique experiences, and years of attention, training, and development have been dedicated to intervention methods supporting men who are involved in violence or who are at immediate or potential risk of involvement in violent behaviors. This new analysis affords opportunities to tailor supports for violence-involved women.

⁹ This analysis is limited to binary gender classifications due to data availability; statistics regarding transgender and nonbinary individuals were not captured in the primary dataset.