

## MN Statewide Safety Council Meeting

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Dedicated to reducing violence through research that is accessible and actionable

Committed to generating knowledge to enlighten and empower the public, guide practitioners, and drive informed policy decisions.

**VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT**  
RESEARCH CENTER  
HAMLINE UNIVERSITY

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### Different Problems, Different Solutions

The Many Faces of Gun Violence

Suicides	Community Violence	Mass Shootings		
Most gun deaths occur in private crises	Non-fatal shootings drive retaliation cycles	Rare but high-profile events		
Type of Gun Violence	Share of U.S. Gun Deaths	Main Drivers	Most Effective Responses	Police Role
Suicide / Self-Harm	~60%	Crisis, lethal means	ERPOs, safe storage, crisis intervention	Train officers on ERPO petitions & welfare checks; link to mental health teams
Community / Street	~35%	Retaliation, social networks	Focused deterrence, NIBIN/CGIC, witness support	Prioritize nonfatal shooting clearance; use gun-intel & group violence intervention
Domestic / Intimate Partner	~4-5%	Household access, escalation	Firearm removal orders, victim safety planning	Enforce DV orders; coordinate with advocates; manage safe surrender
Mass / Public Attacks	<1%	Grievance, crisis, fame-seeking	Threat assessment, ERPOs, storage laws	Build multidisciplinary threat teams; train officers to recognize leakage
Accidental / Unintentional	<1%	Unsafe storage, inexperience	Child access prevention, education	Promote gun locks / storage outreach through community programs

**Bottom Line: prevention strategies differ across event types**

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### The Long Reach of Mass Shootings

- "Mass shooting" ≠ "mass public shooting" ≠ "active shooter" ≠ "targeted violence"
- ~7% of American adults report being "on the scene" of a mass shooting in their lifetime, about half of these since 2015
- Among the directly exposed, 1/3 reported an associated physical injury
- 94% reported mental health impacts



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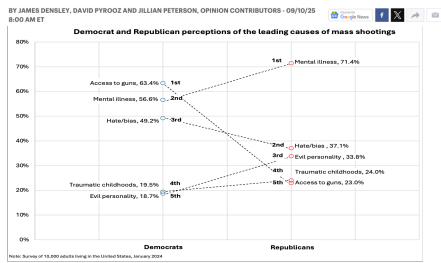
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### THE HILL

#### Americans agree more on mass shootings than politics makes it seem



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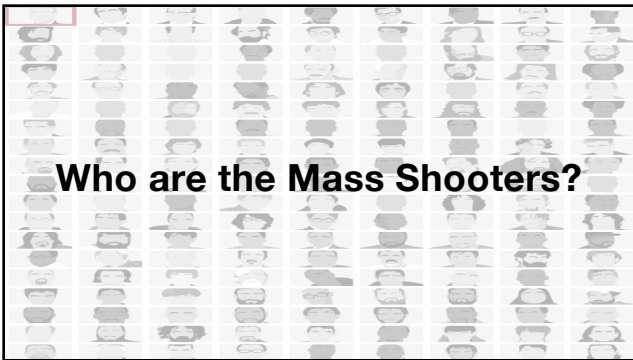
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### Who are the Mass Shooters?



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**THE VIOLENCE PROJECT**

HOW TO STOP A MASS SHOOTING EPIDEMIC

JILLIAN PETERSON, PHD & JAMES DENSELY, PHD

**U.S. Mass Shootings and Shooters**

Mass Shootings, Injured, and Killed

Mass Shootings	Injured	Killed
195	2,177	1,398

Trend in Mass Shootings

Locations of Mass Shootings, 1966 to 2024

List of Mass Shooters

Year	City	State	Age	Gender	Race	Dead	Injured
2017	Las Vegas	NV	64	Male	White	60	500
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20
2017	San Bern Co	CA	29	Male	White	1	20

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**Our data shows a common pathway to violence for mass shootings:**

**Trauma**

Adverse childhood experiences are common among mass shooters

**Crisis**

Mass shooters reach breaking point — often it is a suicidal crisis

**Social Proof**

Violence is scripted in our culture. Mass shooters study other mass shooters. They get radicalized online.

**Opportunity**

Mass shooter need the means to shoot and access to people and places they target.

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**1. Shooters often insiders**

Mass Shootings by Gender

19% of mass public shootings include a family member or romantic partner

Location	Insiders (%)	Outsiders (%)
Warehouse/Factory	100%	0%
Post Office	100%	0%
College/University	89%	11%
K-12 School	86%	12%
Office	75%	25%
Government building / Place of civic importance	69%	31%
House of Worship	30%	64%
Place of Residence	37%	63%
Outdoors	29%	71%
Restaurant/Bar/Nightclub	21%	79%
Retail	26%	74%

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**The Minnesota Star Tribune**  
**Minnesota districts work to take the trauma out of school shooter drills**  
 A gentler training protocol is now the blueprint for a growing number of districts.

**The Minnesota Star Tribune**  
*Opinion | School shutdowns are only a Band-Aid solution to gun violence*  
 By Jillian Peterson and James Densley

**THE CONVERSATION**  
 Associated Press, Journalismistic file  
**School shootings dropped in 2025 - but schools are still focusing too much on safety technology instead of prevention**  
 Published December 16, 2025 8:26am EST

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**2. Shooters in visible crisis**

**0 SIGNS** (N=674)    **1-4 SIGNS** (N=1074)    **5+ SIGNS** (N=774)

**Over 80%**  
 of mass shooters show signs like depression, mood swings, agitation, isolation, or trouble with daily tasks before they attack.

<p><b>After a bad breakup in February 2022, Card became delusional, thought people were calling him a pedophile, stopped taking medication, and lost weight.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>	<p><b>After graduating high school in 2016, he withdrew from social activities.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>	<p><b>Bling had been paranoid about the government and social media since at least 2016.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>	<p><b>He became isolated from friends.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>
<p><b>He believed that the administrators of the college he attended were conspiring against him and having him bugged and followed.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>	<p><b>He fired guns into the air to scare officials off his property and was verbally abusive and threatening to them.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>	<p><b>He had been a reclusive, paranoid, and abusive person for as long as his neighbors could remember.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>	<p><b>He had been paranoid for 14 years - he used to tape his employees' phone calls because he thought they were talking about him.</b>  <small>Associated Press</small></p>

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**Is this Mental illness?**

**Role of Psychotic Symptoms in Mass Shootings**

69.8%    11%    8.7%    10.5%

**NO ROLE**    **MINOR**    **MODERATE**    **MAJOR**

- 20% Prior Hospitalization
- 25% Mood disorder
- 24% Psychiatric Medication
- 27% Thought disorder
- 23% Indication

*Psychotics and Mass Shootings: A Systematic Examination Using Publicly Available Data*  
 Blake A. Pearson, Amy A. Denney, Amy Stapp, Scott Riegler, and Kenneth Schulz

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### 5. Shooters leak plans

**How Many Public Shooters Use Social Media, Exploring Themes and Future Directions**  
 Communication of Intent to Do Harm Preceding Mass Public Shootings in the United States, 1966 to 2019

**Abstract**  
 A review of the literature on mass public shootings in the United States, 1966 to 2019, focusing on the role of social media in the communication of intent to do harm. The review identifies key themes and future directions for research on this topic.

**Keywords**  
 mass public shootings, communication of intent, social media, United States, 1966 to 2019

**Introduction**  
 The purpose of this review is to explore the role of social media in the communication of intent to do harm preceding mass public shootings in the United States, 1966 to 2019. The review identifies key themes and future directions for research on this topic.

**Method**  
 A systematic review of the literature on mass public shootings in the United States, 1966 to 2019, focusing on the role of social media in the communication of intent to do harm. The review identifies key themes and future directions for research on this topic.

**Results**  
 The review identifies several key themes related to the communication of intent to do harm preceding mass public shootings in the United States, 1966 to 2019. These themes include the use of social media, the role of mental health, and the impact of gun culture.

**Conclusion**  
 The review concludes that social media plays a significant role in the communication of intent to do harm preceding mass public shootings in the United States, 1966 to 2019. Future research should focus on understanding the mechanisms through which social media facilitates this communication and on developing strategies to reduce the risk of mass public shootings.

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TwinCities.com PIONEER PRESS

### Meet the St. Paul-based team trying to get ahead of school shootings and workplace violence

In the 20 years since Red Lake High School violence, more is understood about warning signs.

**Strategy for Targeted Violence Prevention for the State of Minnesota**

**C.A.R.E. TEAM**

Collaborate. Assess. Respond. Evaluate.

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### 6. Have access to firearms

Prevalence of Assault Weapons in US Mass Public Shootings, 1980-present

Year/Period	Prevalence (%)
1980-1984	13%
1985-1989	23%
1990-1994	27%
1995-1999	27%
2000-2004	18%
2005-2009	23%
2010-2014	54%
2015-2019	49%

How Perpetrators, Age 18 and Under, Acquired their Weapons

**59%** Theft/borrowed from family or... (59%)

**How Acquired by 18 Firearms**

- Theft/borrowed from family or friend: 59%
- Store purchase: 12%
- Illegal street sale: 10%
- Federal Firearms Licensed dealer: 8%
- Gifted: 8%
- System failure (background check missed something incorrect...): 3%

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**American Journal of Preventive Medicine**

**Factors Associated With Secure Firearm Storage Among U.S. Gun Owners**

James A. Denney, MPH, David C. Finkel, PhD, John A. Prevention, PhD\*

**Introduction:** The study examined the prevalence of secure firearm storage among U.S. gun owners. The study included 10,000 gun owners who responded to a survey in 2014. The study found that 40% of gun owners reported using secure storage for their firearms. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to be female, white, and have a higher education level. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to have a history of violence against them or someone they know.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey of 10,000 gun owners designed to be representative of U.S. gun owners was conducted in 2014. The survey included questions about firearm ownership, secure storage, and other factors. The study included 10,000 gun owners who responded to a survey in 2014. The study found that 40% of gun owners reported using secure storage for their firearms. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to be female, white, and have a higher education level. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to have a history of violence against them or someone they know.

**Results:** Approximately half of gun owners reported using secure storage for their firearms. Gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to be female, white, and have a higher education level. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to have a history of violence against them or someone they know.

**Conclusion:** The study found that secure storage is used by a significant portion of gun owners. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to be female, white, and have a higher education level. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to have a history of violence against them or someone they know.

**INTRODUCTION**

Secure storage of firearms is a public health strategy to reduce gun violence. The study found that 40% of gun owners reported using secure storage for their firearms. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to be female, white, and have a higher education level. The study also found that gun owners who used secure storage were more likely to have a history of violence against them or someone they know.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables by Sex, Race, and Education**

Variable	Non-gun owners		Gun owners	
	n (%)	95% CI	n (%)	95% CI
Age (years)	41.1	40.5-41.7	42.2	41.6-42.8
Sex				
Male	58.2%		58.2%	
Female	41.8%		41.8%	
Race				
White	72.5%		72.5%	
Black	13.8%		13.8%	
Hispanic	10.2%		10.2%	
Other	9.3%		9.3%	
Education (years)	12.8	12.6-13.0	12.8	12.6-13.0
History of violence				
No history	88.2%		88.2%	
Yes	11.8%		11.8%	
Secure storage				
No	60.0%		60.0%	
Yes	40.0%		40.0%	

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## Assault Weapons & High-Capacity Magazines

What the Data Show

**<5%**

**Community Violence**

- While less than 5% of gun crimes involve rifles (most use handguns), rifles with high-capacity magazines significantly increase lethality, leading to more shots fired and victims hit
- Rising trend in AR-style pistols and converted auto-sear ("switch") handguns

**~26%**

**Mass Shootings**

- ~26% of public mass shooters used assault-style rifles; these attacks average twice as many fatalities and injuries as those using handguns alone
- High-capacity magazines are present in ~60% of mass shootings with 4+ fatalities
- AWB/LCM limits reduce harm once an event begins

**Higher Risk**


**Officer Safety**

- First responders face higher risk when shooters possess rifles or converted handguns due to increased penetration and sustained fire, complicating engagement


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**Minnesota's Extreme Risk Protection Order Law**

**Implementation Guide**



JANIS HENNING  
MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE CENTER  
JULY 2015

New user guide for Minnesota's risk protection law, advocates say the law is saving lives 

Comparing Ex Parte and Long-Term ERPOs

Minnesota's Extreme Risk Protection Order Law			
Order Type	Max Duration	Burden of Proof	Who Can petition for ERPO
Ex Parte Order	<b>14</b> days	Probable cause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Law enforcement</li> <li>- Family members</li> <li>- Household members (people who reside together, dating partners)</li> </ul>
Long-Term Order	<b>6</b> months to <b>1</b> year	Clear and convincing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Civilly to petition</li> <li>- Domestic violence, stalking, harassment, or history of self-harm</li> <li>- Existing ERPO</li> </ul>

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## Implications for prevention

**Insiders:** Think beyond doors and drills

**Crisis:** Know the signs, crisis intervention

**Final act:** Suicide prevention, not punishment

**Study others:** Child protection, media and social media focus

**Leakage:** BTAM, reporting systems, relationships

**Firearms:** Secure storage, ERPOs, point of sale, lethality

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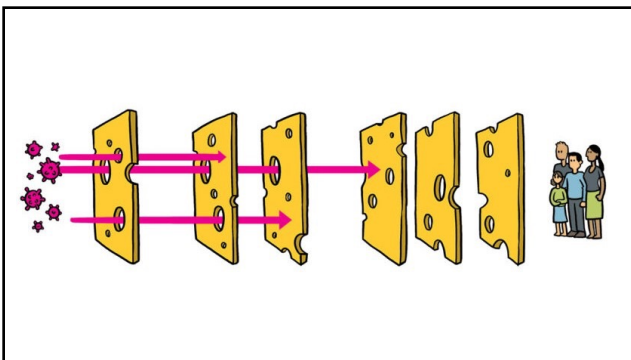
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Find the right data for your needs and download the full data file

<b>Mass Shootings</b> # Number of Data Fields: 236 # Records: 200	<b>Firearms Used in Mass Shootings</b> # Number of Data Fields: 18 # Records: 454	<b>Victims in Mass Shootings</b> # Number of Data Fields: 13 # Records: 1,396	<b>K-12 School Homicide Incidents</b> # Number of Data Fields: 85 # Records: 349
<b>K-12 School Homicide Victims</b> # Number of Data Fields: 7 # Records: 469	<b>Higher Education Homicide Incidents</b> # Number of Data Fields: 77 # Records: 291	<b>Higher Education Homicide Victims</b> # Number of Data Fields: 8 # Records: 529	<b>House of Worship Homicide Incidents</b> # Number of Data Fields: 37 # Records: 417
<b>House of Worship Homicide Victims</b> # Number of Data Fields: 6	<b>US Presidential Assassinations</b> # Number of Data Fields: 18	<b>Political Assassinations / Attempts</b> # Number of Data Fields: 48	

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## Political Assassinations

The past five years of assassinations and attempts on the lives of politicians is the highest on records dating back to the 1960s

### Offenders

**Age:** 20 to 72 years old (M=37)

**Gender:** 90% men

**Race:** 79% white

**83% of perpetrators under age 30** had a documented mental health history and were in crisis at the time of the attack

### US Political Violence Surges to Record, Bloomberg Analysis Shows



Source: The Violence Project, Bloomberg Economics. Note: the assassination of Charlie Kirk is not included in the data because he was not a politician.

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[www.theviolenceproject.org](http://www.theviolenceproject.org)



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THANK YOU

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