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Youth Homicide in Maryland

Analysis of Youth Homicide Data Shows Troubling Trends

Executive Summary

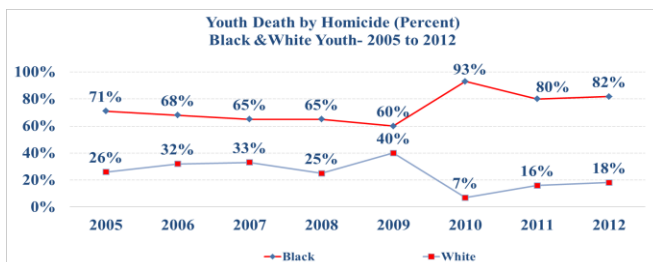
While Youth homicides are falling, the disproportionality of victims is rising. Black youth continue to be the overwhelming majority of Youth homicide victims. Solutions toward reducing disproportionality and overall Youth homicides should be expanded to provide safety for Maryland's most vulnerable youth¹.

Background

In the wake of the gun-control debate, ACY began analyzing Youth homicide data for Maryland. With data obtained by ACY from the Maryland State Police Department over a five year period, ACY was able to examine trends in Youth homicides in Maryland. The data summarized the following: the majority of Youth homicide victims are black, from Baltimore City and Prince George's County and were killed by handgun/firearm.

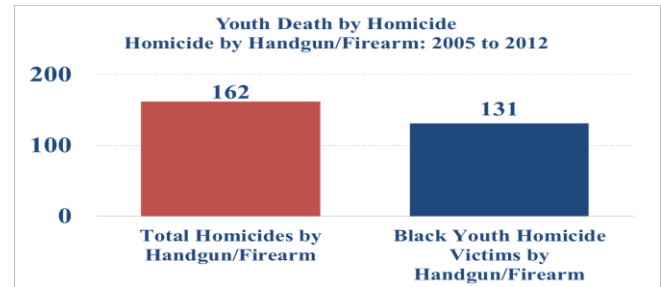
Findings

ACY examined data obtained from the Maryland State Police from 2005-2012², looking at the number of youth homicides disaggregated by county and by race/ethnicity. During that time period, there were 293 homicides victims under 18. Of those 293 homicides, black youth were victims in 210, or 72 percent of homicides. In the same seven year period, black youth never represented less than 60 percent of total homicide victims under 18, climbing to a high of 93 percent in 2010, and then declining to 82 percent in 2012.



Additionally, of the 293 reported homicides, 162, or 55 percent, were homicide by handgun/firearm.³ Of

those 162 victims, 131, or 81 percent were black youth.



Lastly, the majority of all homicide victims, 63 percent, were youth from Baltimore City and Prince George's County. Of those 63 percent, a staggering 89 percent were black youth. In other words, over this seven year period, black youth were disproportionately victims of handgun/firearm violence.

Conclusion and Solutions

Intervention programs aimed at reducing conflict and delinquency seem to offer some measurable success in reducing and preventing Youth homicide. Programs like Operation Safe Kids in Baltimore and the Philadelphia Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP), are working to connect with youth at greatest risk of killing or being killed, in an effort to connect these youth with wrap-around preventative services.

Additionally, research has shown that those in contact with the courts are at greatest risk to be a victim of violent homicide⁴, so connecting with youth through to these types of programs while in court supervision is also a critical component. Targeting youth through school-based preventions programs, such as the PATHS⁵ program, have offered positive, means tested results in reducing violence and anti-social behavior.

⁴ Huizinga, D., Loeber, R., & Thornberry, T. (1994). *Urban Delinquency and Substance Abuse*. U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Youth Justice and Delinquency Prevention

⁵ Bardon, L., Dona, D. & Symons, F. (2008). *Extending Classwide Social Skills Interventions to At-Risk Minority Students: A Preliminary Application of Randomization Tests Combined with Single-Subject Design Methodology*. *Behavioral Disorders*, 33 (3), 141-152

¹ Re-released September 2013 to include 2012 figures

² The 2012 Maryland Uniform Crime Report is the most recent available

³ These figures include handguns, shotguns and rifles.

