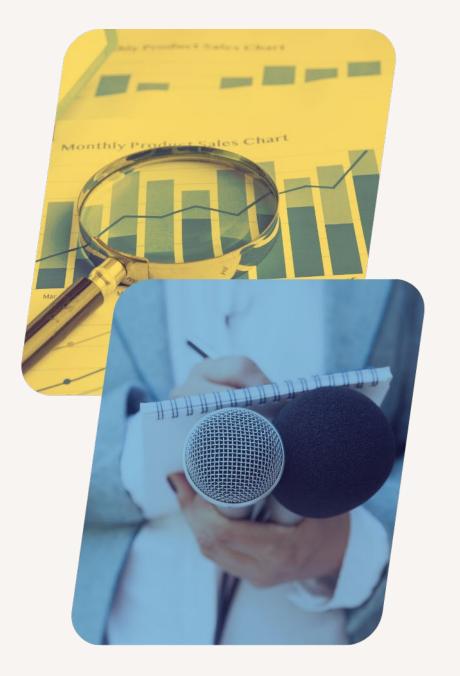




Monday, November 17th | 2 PM

BEST PRACTICES WEBINAR

Centering Survivors in Gun Violence Reporting



Welcome & Opening Remarks



Austin Davis

Lieutenant Governor & Chair of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)



Welcome & Opening Remarks



Tina Ford

Founder of Moms of Murdered Sons (M.O.M.S.) & Member of PCCD's Gun Violence Executive Committee

Welcome & Opening Remarks



Jim MacMillan

Founder & Director,
The Philadelphia Center
for Gun Violence
Reporting (PCGVR)







NATIONAL CONFERENCE



1/24

Nearly 120 journalists, researchers, prevention professionals and experts from the survivor community gathered in Philadelphia this fall for: *What Now? Gun Violence Reporting in*

WHAT NOW?



GUN VIOLENCE REPORTING IN UNPRECEDENTED TIMES.

October 2 - 3, 2025 Philadelphia, PA

















Gun Violence in PA: Data & Trends



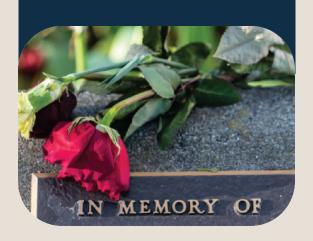


Samantha Koch

Director of Policy & Legislative Affairs, PCCD



Firearm suicides account for **the majority** of PA's gun-related deaths.



Nearly **2/3** of domestic violence homicides involved guns in 2024.



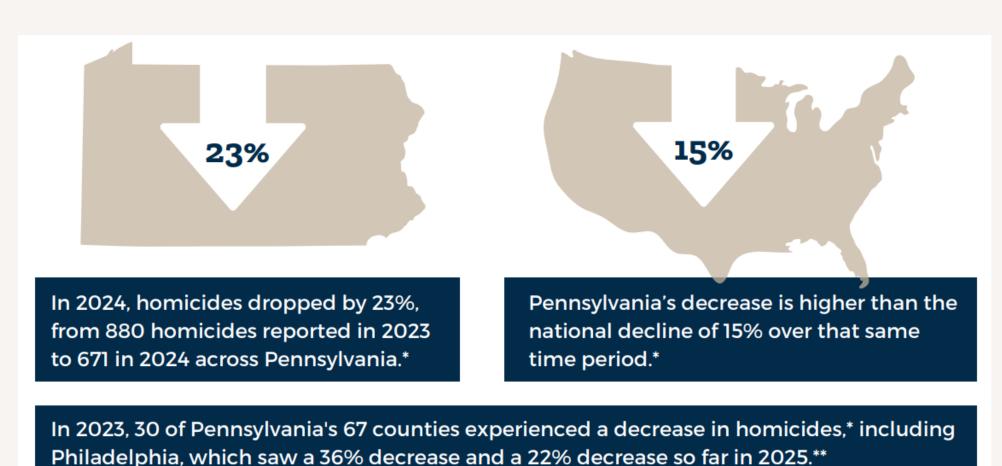
Gun violence is the **leading cause of death** among children and young adults.



Gun violence impacts **all communities**– from urban centers to rural towns.



We are making significant progress in reducing gun violence statewide...





...but progress is not victory.

On average, about

1,600

Pennsylvanians die from gunshot wounds each year, with 3,000 more injured.

CeaseFirePA

In Pennsylvania, on average

151 children & teens

die from gun suicides and homicides each year.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Firearm-related injuries are the

Leading cause of death

among children and adolescents in the United States.

Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions

Black Pennsylvanians are more than

22X as likely to die by gun homicides

than white Pennsylvanians.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

In 2024, more than

64%

of domestic violence homicide victims in Pennsylvania were shot.

PA Coaltion Against Domestic Violence

In 2023.

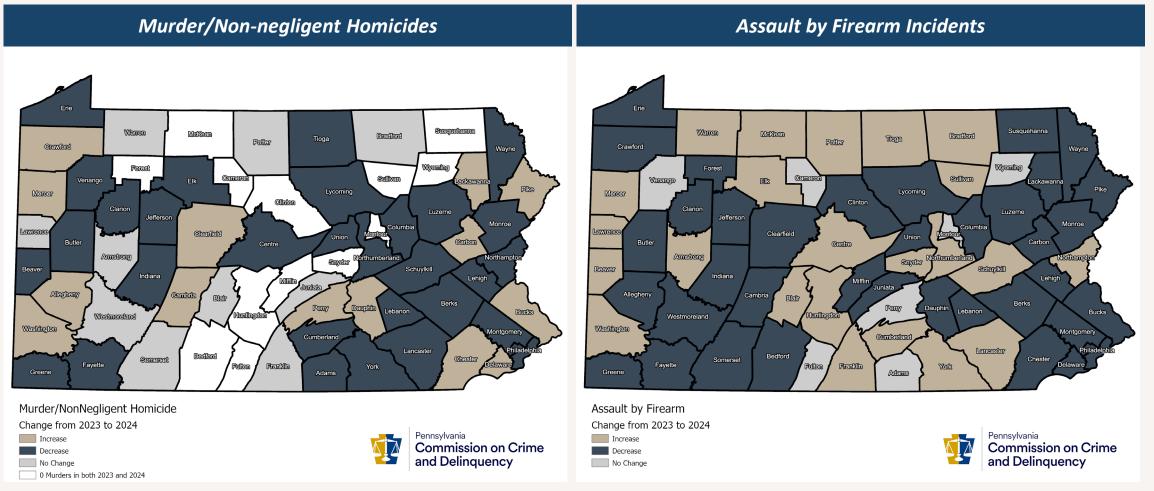
60%

of gun deaths in Pennsylvania were suicides.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

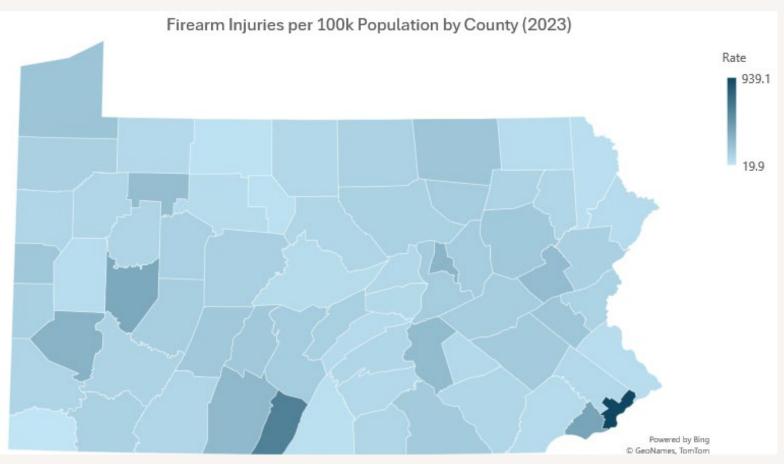


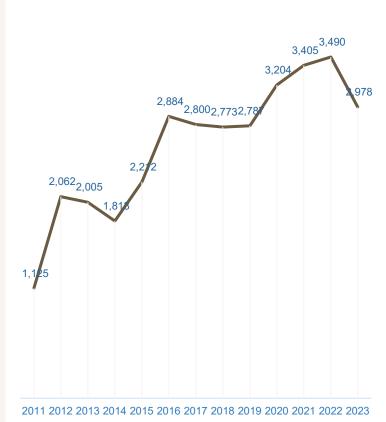
Firearm violence decreased in many, but not all, PA counties between 2023 and 2024.





In 2023, nearly 3,000 Pennsylvanians were injured by firearms statewide.





Understanding Survivor Experiences

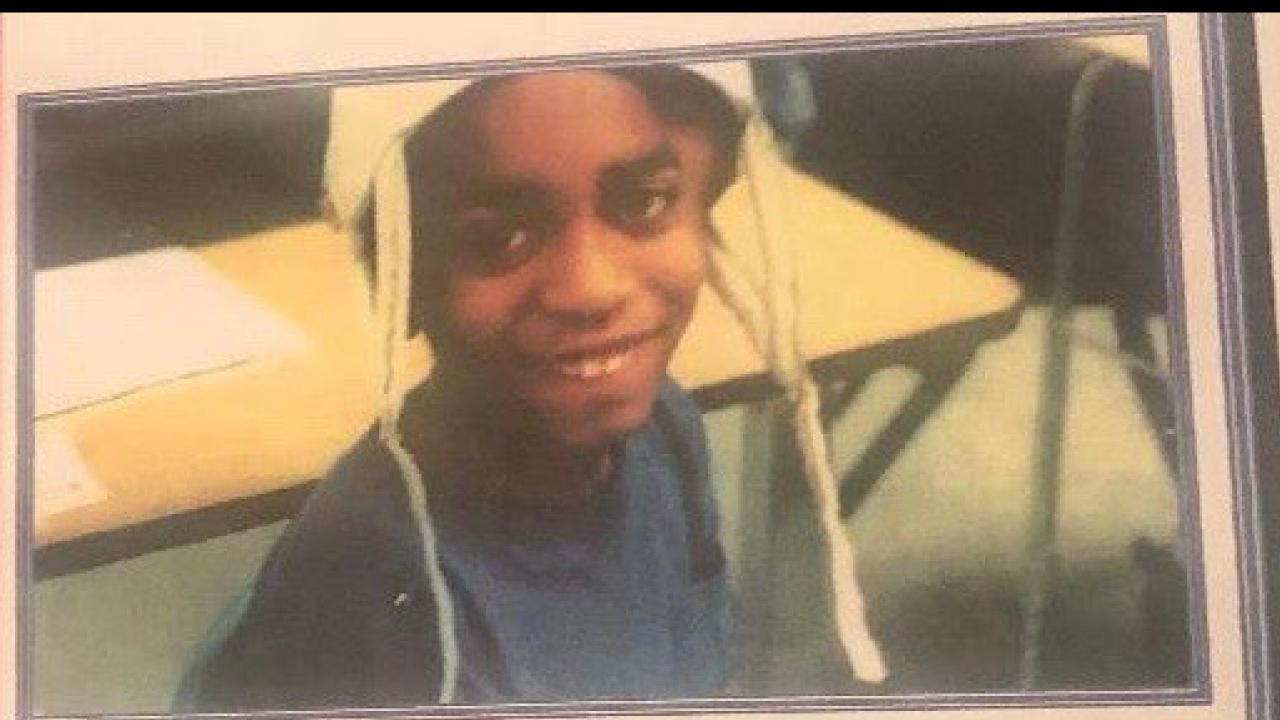


Oronde McClain

Gun violence survivor & Survivor Connection Director, The Philadelphia Center for Gun Violence Reporting

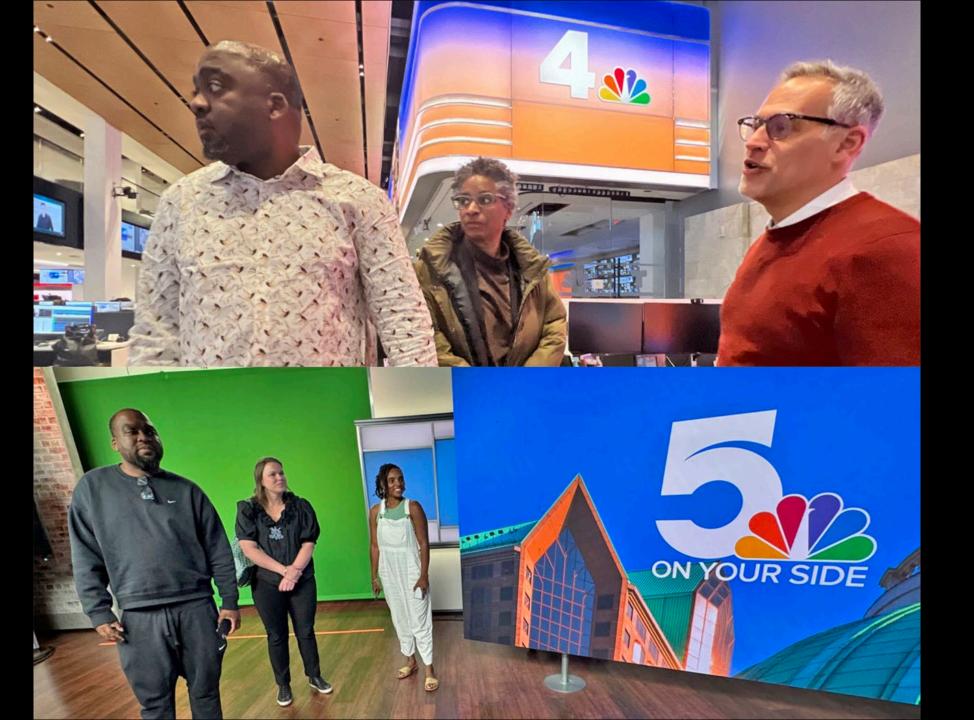












THE SECOND TRAUMA

HOW CAN WE DO BETTER?

HOME

TRAILER

ABOUT

REQUEST A SCREENING

Watch the trailer



About the film

This 25-minute documentary shows the effects of episodic gun violence reporting on survivors and co-victims. The documentary offers solutions on how we can do better to shift the narrative to a public health focus and give power back to the community to advocate for their safety. [MORE INFO]





Bringing Journalists & Survivors Together

Survivor Connection is a new tool that helps reporters put the survivor at the center of their coverage.

For Registered Journalists:



View the Directory

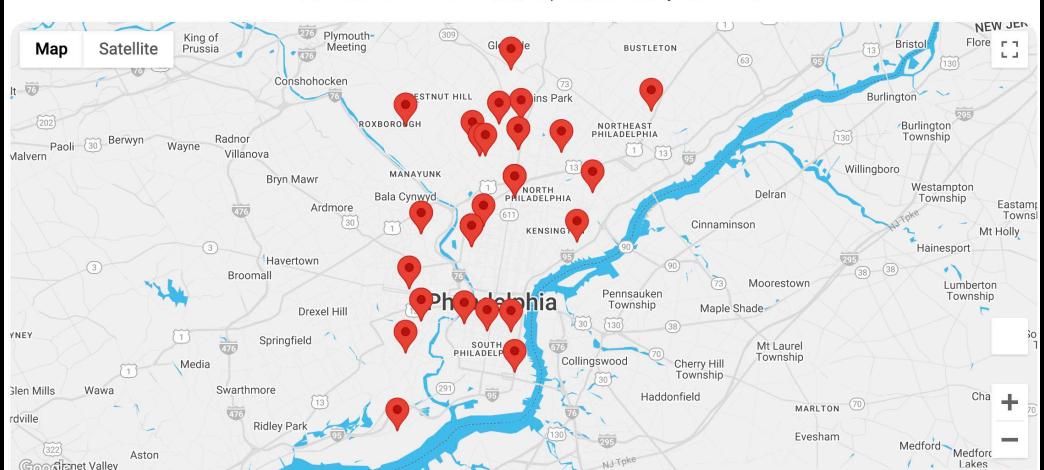


Explore the Map



Survivor Map

Note: Locations are based on ZIP code, not precise addresses of the survivors.



Oronde Mcclain

West Oak Lane

What is your current role?

- I lead or work in a violence prevention initiative or organization.
- I volunteer to make things better in my neighborhood.
- I help survivors cope with their injuries.
- I volunteer to help survivors at a hospital.
- I participate in media reports and/or press conferences.
- I organize events to help survivors.

Victim age at time of incident: 10 years old

Date of incident: 2000



oronde@pcgvr.org

& 267-325-1164

Organization: PCGVR

The best time to reach me is: Anytime

The best days to contact me: Any day

The best way to contact me: Call

Consent to use my name? Yes

I am available for these types of interview: On the record, including my name and my face

I am interested in these types of interview: TV (live), TV (recorded), Audio (live), Audio (recorded)

I am interested in these types of media: Web, Print, Photo











Best Practices in Gun Violence Reporting





Dr. Jessica Beard

Trauma surgeon, Interim
Trauma Program Medical
Director, Director of Trauma
Research, and public health
researcher at Temple
University Hospital; Director
of Research for the PCGVR;
and Stoneleigh Foundation
Fellow



Best Practices in Reporting on Gun Violence

Jessica H. Beard, MD, MPH, FACS
Associate Professor of Surgery, Temple University
Interim Trauma Program Medical Director
Stoneleigh Foundation Fellow
PCGVR, Director of Research
PCCD and PCGVR Webinar
November 17, 2025

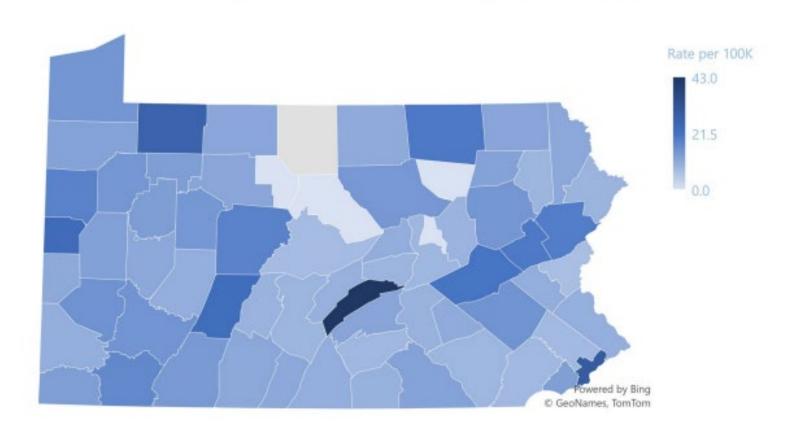


TEMPLE HEALTH

LEWIS KATZ SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT TEMPLE UNIVERSITY | TEMPLE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SYSTEM

Gun violence in Pennsylvania

Firearm Injury Death Rate per 100k People by PA County, 20231





Gun violence solutions



Temple Health

TWAP

TRAUMA VICTIM ADVOCACY PROGRAM

- Federal, state, and local policies
- Built environment improvements
- Hospital and communitybased programs
- Social services

Current media narratives

- **Episodic crime** reports
- Blame victims
- Undermine effective public health responses
- Similar across platforms
- Rooted in harmful news practices









Firearm-injured people's perspectives

- 26 recent gunshot wound survivors
- Qualitative interviews
- Thematic analysis





Feeling dehumanized

"They didn't ask me any questions. There was no calls made to me or talk to me personally. They didn't tell the story from my perspective. It was like she was shot and that's it. I would prefer if they asked me specific feelings about me, if they actually interviewed me instead of just writing it like I'm a nobody."



Negative impact on public safety

"You report the gun violence but why not do a followup report [...] for the victims, the survivors, the families that had to bury these people, the whole process? Just don't do a guy got shot over there, a guy got shot over here. You're making people more fearful. You're more fearful, you're going to arm yourself more."





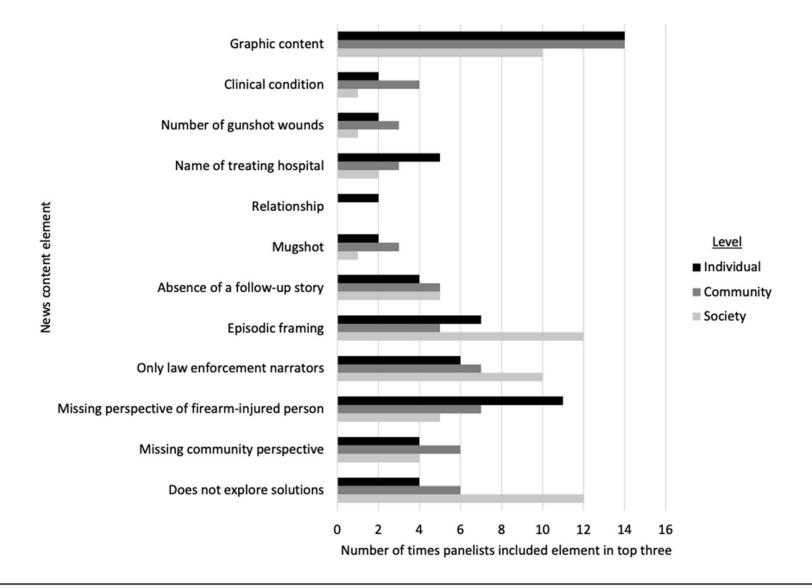
12 harmful news content elements

Potentially Harmful News Content Element	Description
Graphic content	News coverage includes graphic or explicit news content about firearm violence, such as a video of shooting or a detailed description of the crime scene.
Clinical condition	News coverage of a shooting includes information on the clinical condition of a firearm-injured person (e.g. "critical" or "stable").
Number of gunshot wounds	News coverage of a shooting includes information on the number of gunshot wounds of a firearm-injured person.
Name of treating hospital	News coverage of a shooting includes the name of the treating hospital of a firearm-injured person.
Relationship between firearm-injured person and perpetrator	News coverage of a shooting includes information on the relationship between the firearm-injured person and the alleged perpetrator of the shooting.
Mugshot	News coverage of a shooting includes a mugshot of the alleged perpetrator
Absence of a follow-up story	There is no follow-up story (e.g. an update on how a community has fared after a shooting or an interview with a survivor about their recovery) after the initial "breaking news" coverage.
Episodic framing	News coverage of firearm violence that focuses only on a specific shooting event and does not include context, root causes, or solutions to firearm violence.
Only law enforcement narrators	News coverage of firearm violence that only or predominantly presents the perspectives of law enforcement representatives (e.g. police).
Missing perspective of firearm-injured person	News coverage of a shooting that does not include the perspectives of the firearm-injured person and/or their loves ones.
Missing community perspective	News coverage of firearm violence that does not include the perspectives of people from the impacted community.
Does not explore solutions	News coverage of firearm violence that does not explore potential solutions.





Harmfulness ratings

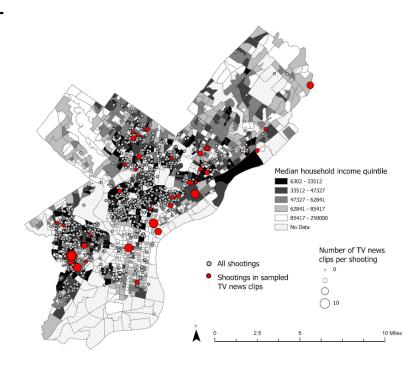




Systematic reporting disparities

Philadelphia TV news outlets overreport:

- Shootings of children
- Mass shootings
- Shootings that occur in neighborhoods with higher income, less inequality, lower rates of racialized economic segregation





Can we think about reporting differently?



What if journalists can be part of the solution to gun violence?



Gun violence prevention reporting

Every story starts with the world view that gun violence is preventable, not inevitable





Gun violence prevention reporting

Trauma-informed

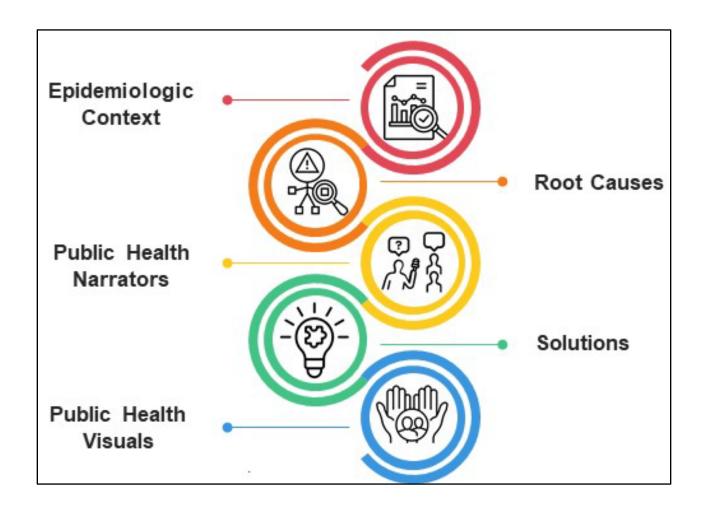
- Empathetic
- Solutions

Public health frame





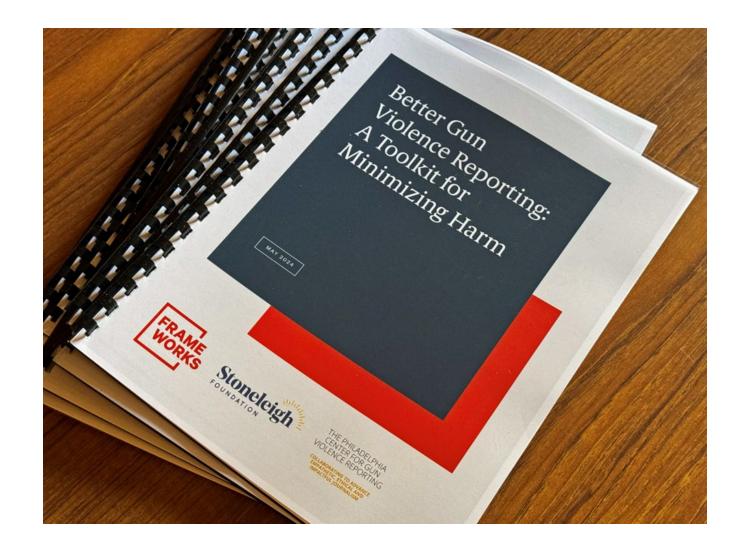
Elements of a public health frame







PCGVR Toolkit



When Covering Episodic Gun Violence, *Don't*:

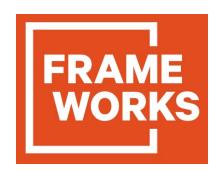
- Don't focus on the scope of the problem without emphasizing that prevention is possible.
- Don't discuss the disparate effects of gun violence without explaining the drivers of those disparities (e.g., structural racism).
- Don't blame victims. Never report in a way that suggests a victim "deserved" to be shot because of what they were engaged in prior to the shooting.
- Don't use sensationalizing language or dramatize a traumatic situation for a more visceral reaction from an audience.
- Don't include the clinical condition of the victim(s), number of gunshot wounds, or the treating hospital, without first obtaining the consent of the victim(s).
- Don't reduce victims to a number or a datapoint or use data to sensationalize the issue of gun violence.
- Don't contextualize a mass shooting by referring to a "gun violence epidemic."
- Don't use racist codewords like "gritty" or "urban."
- Don't include graphic images of the shooting or crime scene.
- Don't rely exclusively on police imagery.



When Covering Episodic Gun Violence, *Do*:

- Do humanize victims and tell their stories via their own accounts or those of their close family/community members.
- Do use humanizing language to describe victims, such as "son" or father."
- Do offer solutions relevant to the specific shooting (see "Drivers of Gun Violence" for examples).
- Do explain what drives gun violence and frame it as a structural issue (see "Drivers of Gun Violence" for ideas).
- Do use data in context to talk about trends or the effects of policy choices.
- In the case of a mass shooting, do emphasize that these events are rare.
- If the victim is a woman or a child, do emphasize that this is rare.
- Do direct your audience to community resources.







Gun Violence Driver #1: Lack of access to social supports.

Framing: Gun violence is driven in part by a lack of social supports such as health insurance and violence recovery services. Without a reliable safety net for people to depend on in times of crisis, gun violence can spread.

Solution: Increasing and improving health care-based solutions like hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIPs) can help reduce gun violence.



Thank you!





Best Practices in Gun Violence Reporting





Sammy Caiola

Gun Violence Reporter for Chalkbeat Philadelphia, Co-Director of the Association of Gun Violence Reporters



Trauma-informed reporting: The Basics

November 17th, 2025

Sammy Caiola, Association of Gun Violence Reporters

"Trauma-informed journalism ... is about creating the safe and predictable spaces. It's about forgetting all the rules that we usually abide by when we're interviewing school board officials and politicians and recognizing that when it comes to trauma, we need to be treating our interview subjects differently."

Tamara Cherry, Host of The Trauma Beat podcast

A few definitions

Institutional Betrayal



When an institution harms individuals who depend on it by failing to protect them or by inadequately responding to harm. Breaks trust and can lead to psychological harm. (Jennifer Freyd, Stanford University)

Moral Injury



Suffering due to perception that one's moral compass has been compromised by breaching fundamental values or ethics, which can in turn feed into susceptibility to post-traumatic stress.

Compassion Fatigue



A cumulative stress from exposure to trauma and the emotional strain of helping others. It results in a diminished capacity for empathy, emotional withdrawal, and can be similar to <u>secondary traumatic stress</u> (STS) or <u>vicarious trauma</u>.

The Trauma Informed Interview Process (Kate Porterfield, The Global Center)

1 2 3 4

SAFETY

Is the space OK?

Are you comfortable?

Here's what I'm hoping we can talk about

Does that feel like an OK shift?

CONTROL

What would you like me to know?

What do you need right now?

Would it be okay to...?

REFLECT

Can I clarify this with you?

"I see you crying/I hear your voice changing"

DON'T try to put a bow on it

Avoid words like "traumatized"

CLOSURE

Clarify your next steps- "I'd like to tell you what i'll be doing next" Ask for feedback: "How did you feel about this conversation?" Especially after a traumatic interview: What is the interviewee doing next? Ask! Are you in a community or position to offer a resource? Show appreciation of what the interviewee has given "I appreciate it, this has been helpful for x,y,z"

"Insightful trauma reporting can promote accountability, bolster the resilience of individuals and help the public to meaningfully engage in issues that have a determining value to the quality of their lives."

-Gavin Rees, The Global Center for Journalism and Trauma

"Partial and inaccurate reporting that is high in entertainment value but low on insight and sensitivity likely compounds distress, marginalizes victims and survivors and diminishes society's ability to face key decisions."

-Gavin Rees, The Global Center for Journalism and Trauma

	Responses and resources	A neighborhood fights for its trees (<u>Kensington Voice/ Green PHL</u>) Teachers who survive shootings form a crisis line (<u>Chaklbeat</u>)
	Forgiveness and reconciliation	A mother forgives her son's killer (StoryCorps) Victims of police brutality take the stage with police (Broad Street Review)
\rightarrow	Building better systems	Funding for survivor-led organizations (<u>The Philadelphia Tribune</u>) A new generation of peacemakers (<u>WHYY</u>)



Thank you



If you have any questions, contact: journalists@pcgvr.org

School-based story ideas? Send to scaiola@chalkbeat.org



Q&A Session If you have a question, please submit it via the chat

Available Resources & Closing Remarks





Kathy Buckley

Director of Victims' Services, PCCD



Available Resources

Resources for Victims of Gun Violence Initiative

Needs Assessment Reports

Statewide

Greater Pittsburgh

Greater Philadelphia
 "T" Zone



Available Resources

Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP)

VCAP supports crime victims and their families by providing financial assistance to help ease the emotional and physical impact of the crime.

Local Victim Service Programs

Victim service programs provide support and resources for crime victims and survivors; including toll-free and online hotlines, referrals to local and state programs, therapy and counseling, victims' rights information and more.



Available Resources

Philadelphia Center for Gun Violence Reporting

- A Toolkit for Better Gun Violence Reporting
- Multidisciplinary Research
- Community Engagement
- Professional development







Thanks for joining us!