The Connecticut Violent Death Reporting System and Homicide Victimology in Connecticut 2015 to 2021*

Presented by Michael Makowski, MPH
October 15, 2021

Injury and Violence Surveillance Unit
Community, Family Health and Prevention Section
Connecticut Department of Public Health

CTVDRS Data about Homicide Victims

The Connecticut Violent Death Reporting System (CTVDRS) collects data about the **victims of homicide**; limited information about perpetrator

- Data sources: LE reports, Supplementary Homicide Reports, Family Violence (DESPP), OCME investigation, autopsy and toxicology data

- Data collection began in 2015

* Data from Connecticut Violent Death Reporting System (CTVDRS) 2015 to September 30th, 2021

Homicide Rates In Connecticut 2015 to Present

Crude Homicide Rates and Numbers for CT 2015 to 2021

|	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of Homicides	129	87	124	97	122	157	131
Crude Homicide Rates	3.59	2.43	3.46	2.72	3.42	4.40	3.70

Number of Homicides — Crude Homicide Rates
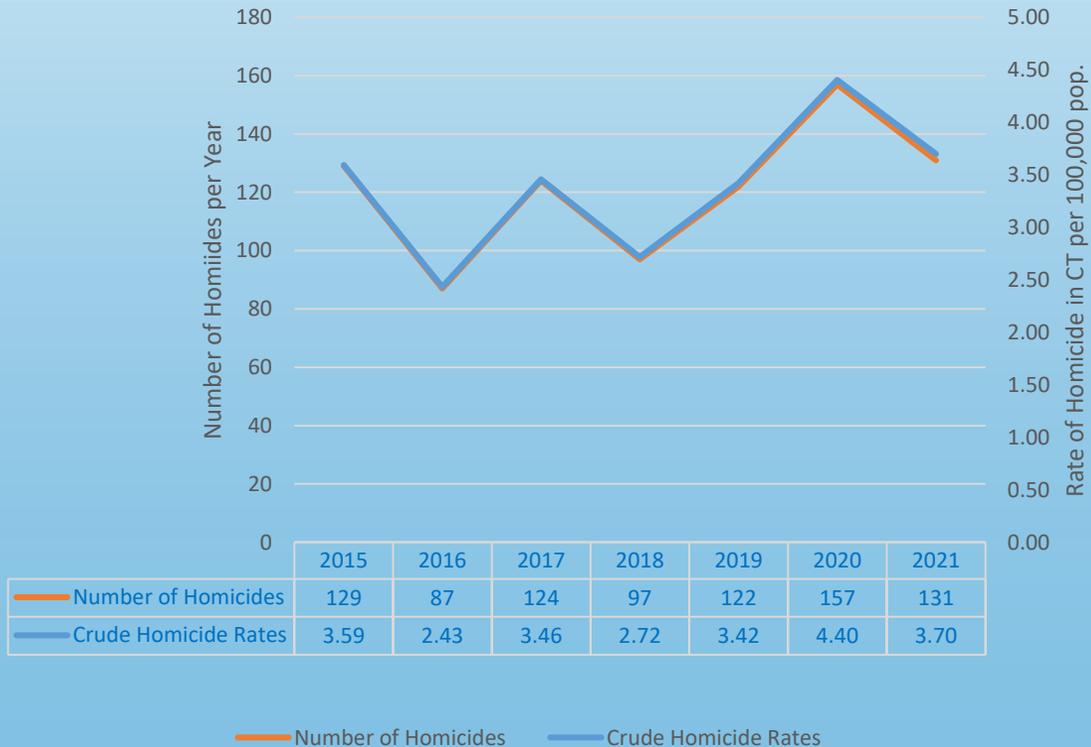
- 2020 and 2021 data is preliminary* Rates are provisional, currently using 2019 population data for CT

- As September 30,2021 there were 131 homicides

Comparison of Homicide Rates Pre-Pandemic (2015 to 2019) to Pandemic (2020) by Race/Ethnicity

Rate of Homicides by Race and Ethnicity per 100,000 Population, CT 2015-2019
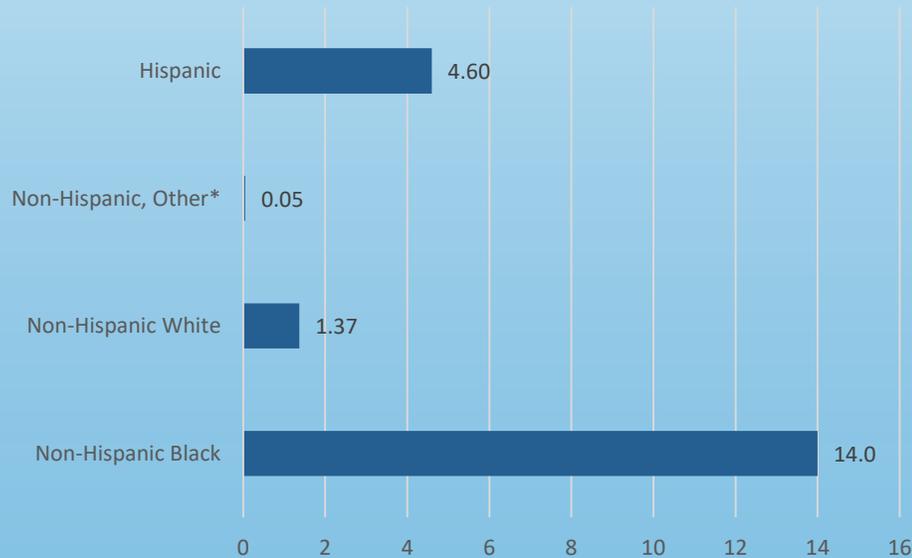
Race/Ethnicity	Rate
Hispanic	4.60
Non-Hispanic, Other*	0.05
Non-Hispanic White	1.37
Non-Hispanic Black	14.0

Comparison of Homicide Rates Pre-Pandemic (2015 to 2019) to Pandemic (2020) by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Average Number Homicides (2015 to 2019)	Crude Rate *2015-2019	Crude Rate *2020	Number of Homicides 2020	Rate Difference 2015 to 2019 Compared to 2020
Non-Hispanic Black	51	14.0	20.6	76	+ 47%
Non-Hispanic White	33	1.40	1.40	33	No change
Hispanic	27	4.60	7.82	47	+ 70 %

*per 100,000 CT population

Homicide 2015 to 2019

Homicides By Sex, CT 2015 - 2019

- Male Homicide
- Female Homicide (non-IPV)
- Female IPV Homicide
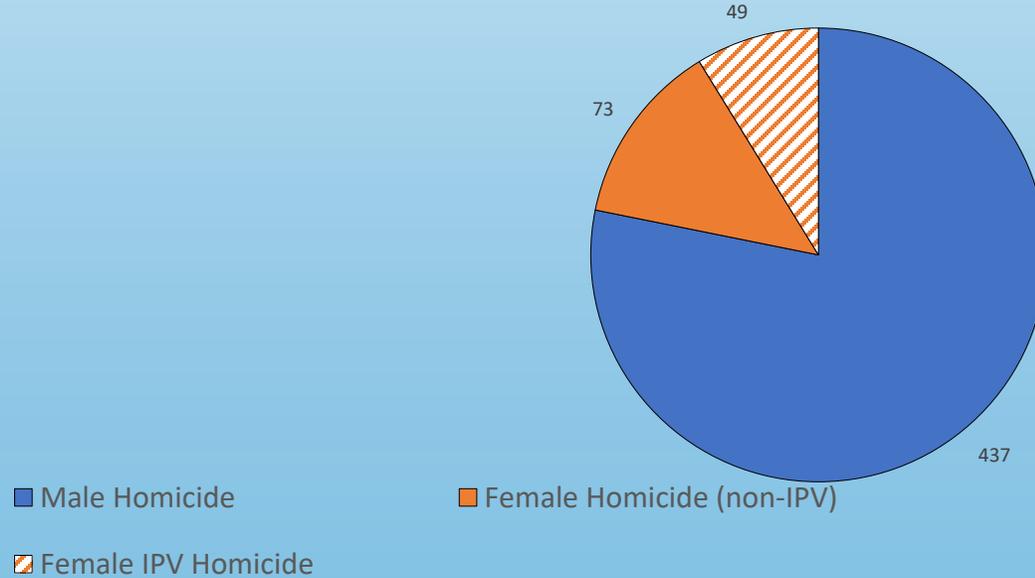
CTVDRS Data Lethal Means 2015 to 2021

Years	Weapon Type	Number of Homicides by Weapon Type	Total Number of Homicides for 2015 to 2019	Rate Weapon Death per 100 Homicides
Pre-Pandemic (2015to 2019)	Firearm	343	559	61.3
	Sharp Force Injury (Stabbing)	69	559	12.3
Pandemic				
2020	Firearm	108	157	68.7
	Sharp Force Injury (Stabbing)	31	157	19.7
2021	Firearm	96	131	73.2
	Sharp Force Injury (Stabbing)	13	131	9.9

Connecticut Department of Public Health - *Keeping Connecticut Healthy*

Circumstances of Homicide/ Possible Areas for Intervention

- For 2015 to 2019 homicide circumstances were known for 80% (N=452)of the cases (LE and OCME reports)

- Gang* or groups involvement: rate 9 per 100 homicides

* Defined by law enforcement as organized gangs as Bloods, Crips and Latin Kings

Circumstances	Number of Occurrences	Rate per 100 Homicides
Disputes/Arguments	167	36.9
Commission of a Crime:		
Assault	132	29.2
Robbery	63	13.9
Drug Trade	48	10.6
Drug Involvement	86	19.0

Substance Use in Homicides 2015 to 2021

Rate of Positive Drug Results from Blood at the Time of Autopsy
2015 to 2019 (N= Number of Homicides (559))

Drug	Number of Positives	Rate per 100 Homicides
Marijuana	171	30.5
Alcohol	135	24.1
Opiates	66	11.8
Cocaine	56	10.1
Benzodiazepines	41	7.3

Rate of Positive Drug Results from Blood at the Time of Autopsy
2020 to 2021 (N= Number of Homicides (288))

Drug	Number of Positives	Rate per 100 Homicides
Marijuana	150	52.0
Alcohol	66	22.9
Cocaine	48	16.6
Opiates	42	14.5
Benzodiazepines	12	4.5

Substance Use in Homicides by Race/Ethnicity

Number of Positive Marijuana Results by Race by Year *

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Black NH	19	27	44	49
Hispanic	7	6	25	14
White NH	3	7	10	7
Other NH (Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander)	0	1	0	1
Number of Homicides	97	122	157	131

* Note: Rates calculated from counts less than 20 should be interpreted with caution

due to the variability of small numbers resulting in low reliability of rates

Rate of Positive Marijuana Results at the Time of Autopsy by Race per 100 Homicides

Comparision Of Positive Marijuana Rate for Homicide Victims by Race

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Black NH	19.5	22.1	28	37.4
Hispanic	7.2	4.9	15.9	6.8
White NH	3.1	5.7	6.3	1.7
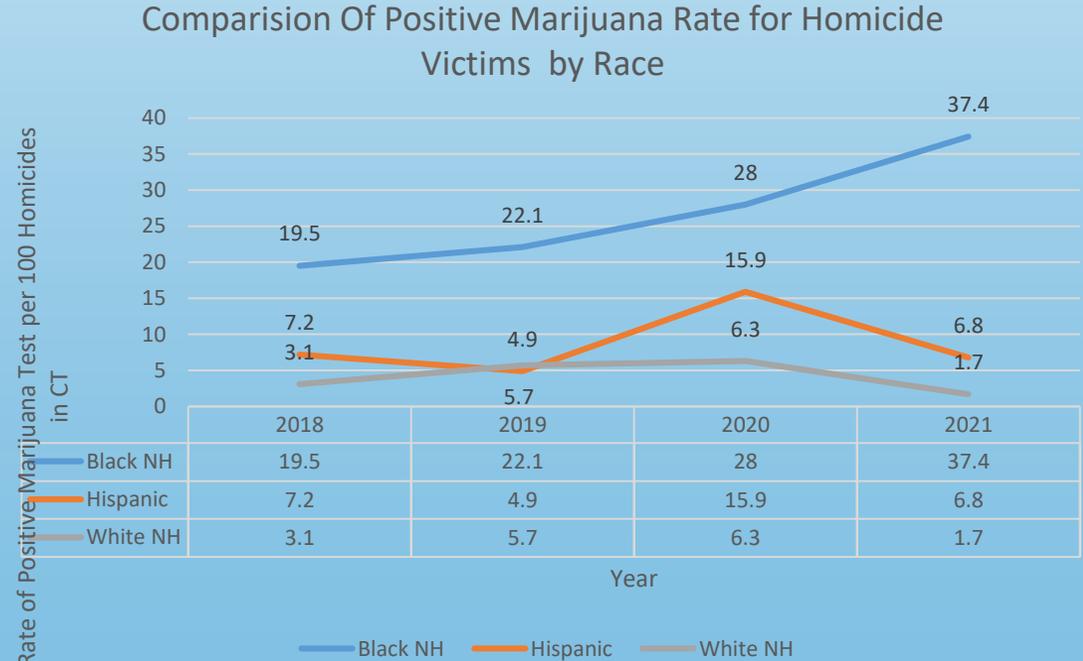
Substance Use in Homicides by Race/Ethnicity

Number of Alcohol Results (BAC ≥ .08)by Race by Year *

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Black NH	7	12	19	10
Hispanic	6	6	12	5
White NH	13	15	14	6
Other NH (Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander)	0	0	0	0
Number of Homicides	97	122	157	116

*note: Rates calculated from counts less than 20 should be interpreted with caution

due to the variability of small numbers resulting in low reliability of rates

Rate of Alcohol Results (BAC ≥ .08) by Race per 100 Homicides

Rate of BAC≥ .08 Results in Blood of Homicide Victims at the Time Autopsy per 100 Homicides by Race

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hispanic	6.1	4.9	7.6	3.8
Black NH	7.2	9.8	12.1	7.6
White NH	13.4	12.2	8.9	4.5
Other NH(Asian,Native American)	0	0	0	0

Rate of BAC Greater Than Equal To .08 in Blood of Homicide Victims per 100 Homicides

Hispanic — Black NH — White NH — Other NH(Asian,Native American)

Substance Use in Homicides by Race/Ethnicity

Number of Positive Opiate Results *

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Black NH	4	5	8	9
Hispanic	3	4	7	2
White NH	8	13	8	8
Other NH (Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander)	0	0	0	0
Number of Homicides	97	122	157	116

* Note: Rates calculated from counts less than 20 should be interpreted with caution

due to the variability of small numbers resulting in low reliability of rates

Rate of Opiate Positive Results in Blood of Homicide Victims at the Time of Autopsy per 100 Homicides by Race

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hispanic	3	3.2	4.4	1.5
Black NH	4.1	4.1	5.1	6.8
White NH	8.2	10.6	5.1	6.1
Other NH(Asian,Native American)	0	0	0	0

Rate of Positive Opiate Results per 100 Homicides

— Hispanic — Black NH — White NH — Other NH(Asian,Native American)
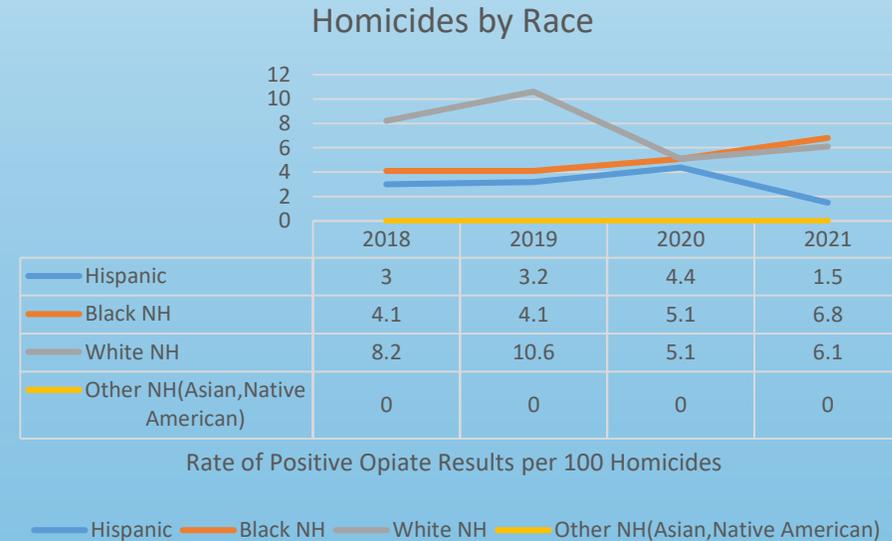
Substance Use in Homicides by Race/Ethnicity

Number of Positive Cocaine Results *

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Black NH	6	3	7	6
Hispanic	6	6	10	4
White NH	7	13	12	9
Other NH (Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander)	0	0	0	0
Number of Homicides	97	122	157	116

* Note: Rates calculated from counts less than 20 should be interpreted with caution

due to the variability of small numbers resulting in low reliability of rates

Rates of Cocaine Positive Results in Blood of Homicide Victims at Time of Autopsy per 100 Homicides by Race

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hispanic	6	4.9	6.3	3
Black NH	6	2.4	4.4	4.5
White NH	7	10.6	7.6	6.8
Other NH(Asian,Native American)	0	0	0	0

Rate of Positive Cocaine Results per 100 Homicides

— Hispanic — Black NH — White NH — Other NH(Asian,Native American)

Substance Use in Homicides by Race/Ethnicity

Number of Positive Benzodiazepine Results *

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Black NH	2	4	0	2
Hispanic	3	3	3	0
White NH	9	8	5	2
Other NH (Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander)	0	0	0	0
Number of Homicides	97	122	157	116

* Note: Rates calculated from counts less than 20 should be interpreted with caution

due to the variability of small numbers resulting in low reliability of rates

Rates of Benzodiazepine Results in Blood of Homicide Victims at Time of Autopsy per 100 Homicide by Race

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Hispanic	3	2.4	1.9	0
Black NH	2	3.2	0	1.5
White NH	9	6.5	3.1	1.5
Other NH(Asian,Native American)	0	0	0	0

Rate of Positive Benzodiazepines Results per 100 Homicides

Hispanic Black NH White NH Other NH(Asian,Native American)

A. **Subculture of Violence**: theme of violence that make up the life-style, the socialization process, interpersonal relationships of individuals living in similar conditions; not necessary to use violence to solve problems, but have greater exposure, susceptibility to violent victimization; **retaliation a major theme**

B. **Informal Social Control**: a form of self-help " the expression of a grievance by unilateral aggression such as personal violence"; used by people of lower social status who have reduced access to formal control institutions- police; offenders may use crime as a means of **retaliation or censure** when they cannot or will not seek police help

Theories of Homicide Victimization

C. **Lifestyle**- an individual's lifestyle influences their exposure to high-risk situations, placing them as a potential target for victimization

1. **history of alcohol, and drug misuse**

2. *gang membership*

3. *criminal history (incarceration, arrests*)

4. **routine activities- convergence of space and time of motivated offenders, and suitable targets**

All three theories share a common theme: the convergence of vulnerable people, risky people and risky places

The Connecticut Homicide Victimology

Questions?

Contact:

Susan Logan, MS, MPH; Supervising Epidemiologist

Susan.Logan@ct.gov

Mike Makowski, MPH; Epidemiologist

Michael.Makowski@ct.gov

Main office phone: 860-509-8251

Connecticut Department of Public Health - *Keeping Connecticut Healthy*