

RALEIGH FIREARM VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGY

A focused approach to reduce firearm violence through education and training, intelligence-led policing, and community partnerships



RALEIGH POLICE DEPARTMENT



2018



Message from the Chief

Firearm-related violence has risen to the forefront of many conversations, school policies, and various national platforms. However, we continue to see single-victim incidents and mass-casualty events alike devastate families and communities throughout the country. The collaboration of various facets of the community is an essential component needed to address firearm-related crime. Raleigh's firearms violence data supports the Raleigh Police Department's need to respond with an innovative approach to reducing firearm-related crime. The mission statement of the Raleigh Police Department sums it up well:

In the spirit of service, the Raleigh Police Department exists to preserve and improve the quality of life, instill peace, and protect property through unwavering attention to our duties in partnership with the community.

To accomplish this mission, we must be vigilant in our efforts to identify problems, create strategies to mitigate them, and routinely review and update those strategies in light of new issues that may present themselves. We are bound by the unwavering reality of the tragic and irreversible impact of firearm violence on individuals and communities. Like many large cities, Raleigh has experienced growth and expansion issues. This growth comes with a continuous necessity to assess crime trends and patterns, resource allocation, and personnel training so that our Department can respond and adapt to evolving public safety needs. National events have changed the narrative between the community and the police. These changes necessitate that we reassess our efforts with renewed energy toward a holistic approach to reducing firearm violence. This strategy consists of three fundamental pillars that support our overall objective to reduce firearm violence:

1. Training to Ensure Safe and Engaged Officers;
2. Engaging and Partnering with the Community; and
3. RPD Intelligence-led Policing.

These pillars allow for a broader approach to addressing the issues surrounding firearm violence in the following ways:

- Continuing to provide an opportunity to train our officers beyond tactics, giving them the necessary skill set to perform in circumstances that are highly stressful. Training must always evolve and allow for forward thinking.
- Working and training with our partners in the justice system will ensure that we are prepared for case presentation and prosecution. We will also work with them to identify resources that may help to reduce violent crime in the community.
- Community engagement is a critical function in this strategy. We must work with our community to identify issues that create opportunity for crime. We must continue to build greater confidence in our residents to report crime. Whereas unbiased reporting is equally as important as unbiased policing, we will also continue our efforts to educate our community in ways to help solve problems, prevent crime, and reduce firearm violence occurring in our neighborhoods.

- Communication at all levels within the organization and utilization of the information received from others is a key element of intelligence-led policing. Credible information allows for effective and proactive policing to address violent crime.
- Via intelligence-led policing, community education will have a specific and intended outcome. As we enlist support from the community, all education efforts will incorporate factors related to the intelligence function, including:
 - Knowing how to observe
 - Knowing what is suspicious
 - Knowing how to report
 - Knowing what to report
 - Knowing the next steps

This allows us to maximize the quality and quantity of information provided by the community, which will provide our Department with a greater framework of knowledge to conduct thorough case investigations, identify strategies to solve crime, and enhance the quality of life.

It is important to note that a citywide initiative like the 2018 Firearm Violence Reduction Strategy can only be best implemented in partnership with the various facets of the community. Real and perceived safety is a basic need for our community to thrive, and we must all work together to maintain it.

Lastly, much energy and many hours were committed to developing this strategy. Personnel from throughout the Raleigh Police Department helped to establish the framework of this strategy. This speaks to the greater desire of many of the men and women in the Department, sworn and civilian, who want to see and be a part of a greater plan to truly make the city of Raleigh a great place to live, work, play, and learn. Although there is still much work ahead of us, I thank you all for your vision.

To our community - we are excited about what is to come with this effort.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cassandra Deck-Brown". The signature is written in black ink and has a fluid, connected style.

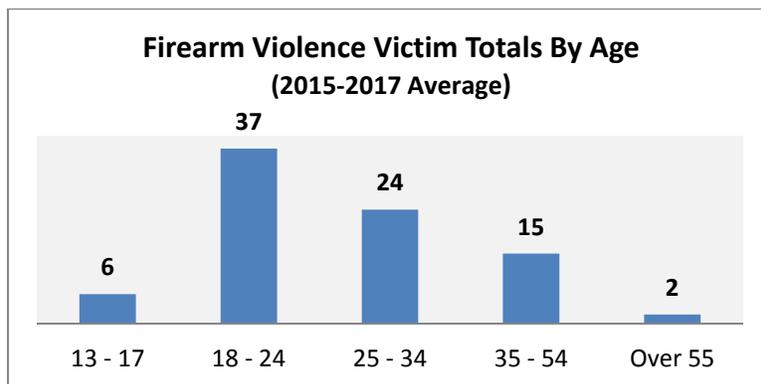
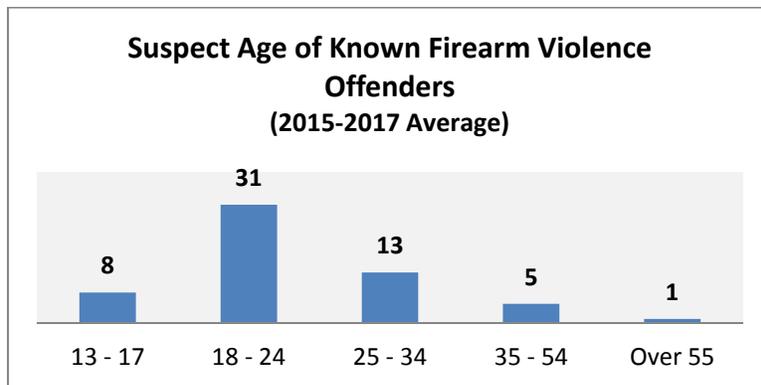
Cassandra Deck-Brown
Chief of Police

Analysis of Raleigh’s Firearm Violence Data

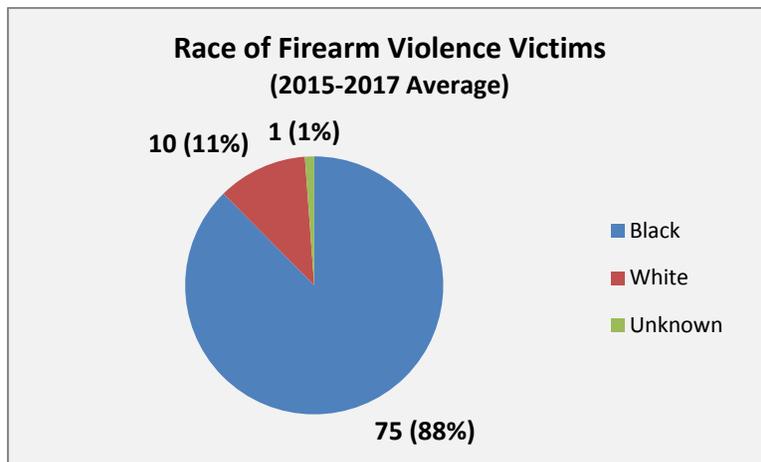
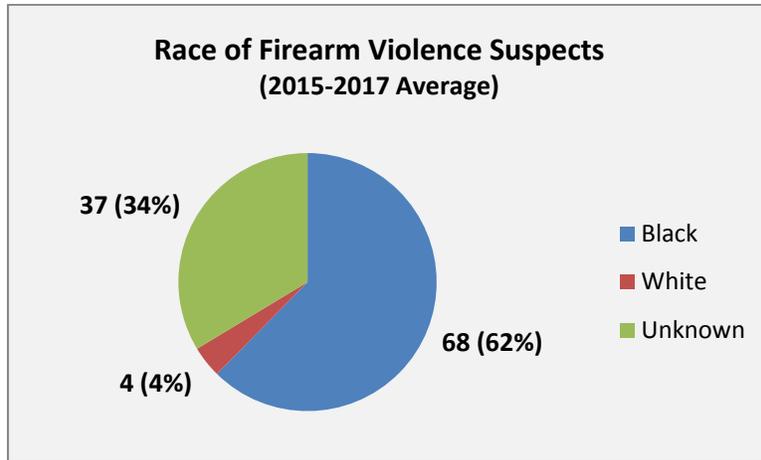
As an intelligence-led police department, we see the importance of an analytical application to addressing our firearm-related crime. A multi-year analysis of Raleigh firearms violence data from 2015 through 2017 shows that:

- In 2016, the national rate of firearms violence for people age 12 and older was 1.8 per 1,000. During that same year, Raleigh had a rate of 1.35 per 1,000 people.
- For the past three years, Raleigh has averaged 1,610 serious violent crime incidents (this includes aggravated assault, robbery and forcible rape). Of these serious violent crime incidents, 38 percent involved the use of a firearm.
- Breaking the serious violent crime down to aggravated assaults, between 2015 and 2017, an average of 266 involved a firearm. These counts reached a high of 295 for the year 2017. This averages out to 25 aggravated assaults with a firearm per month for 2017.
- The violent crimes involving firearms left 258 victims with gunshot wounds for the period 2015 – 2017. Youth under the age of 20 were more likely to be victims of firearm violence. Fifty-one percent of these victims were under the age of 24. Forty-five percent of known suspects were between the ages of 18 and 24.

The charts below represent the ages of victims and suspects of firearm violence, which is defined as any crime where the victim was physically injured from a gunshot wound, ranging from minor injuries to homicides. The multi-year statistics show the following trends:



Intelligence-driven analyses identify crime trends in order to forecast potential criminal activity. When units within the Department utilize these tools, we ensure that our resources are directed to the areas of need based on crime data rather than on socio-economic factors or implicit bias. The following charts represent the races of victims and suspects of firearms violence.



Pillar #1

Training to Ensure Safe and Engaged Officers

(Training + Wellness = Resiliency)

The Raleigh Police Department expects its officers to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. This expectation requires the Department to ensure that its officers are equipped both mentally and physically. Providing appropriate training in these areas increases officer resiliency and decreases stress.¹ Creating this resiliency as the first pillar strengthens the two remaining pillars through enhanced professionalism and engagement with the community we serve.

¹ Mike Atkinson and Rollin McCraty, "Resilience Training Program Reduces Physiological and Psychological Stress in Police Officers," *Global Advances in Health and Medicine* 1, no.5 (Nov. 2012): 52.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4890098/>.

Goal:

Empower officers through innovative training that enhances officer safety, increases situational awareness, heightens officer professionalism, and lowers the effects of stress.

Objectives:

- 1. Increase officer wellness/resiliency through skills training to mitigate the negative effects of stress by teaching techniques to maintain mental and physical health.**

Giving Raleigh Police Department officers the tools to manage job stress, as well as stress from outside the workplace, strengthens their ability to make critical decisions during both routine and crisis incidents experienced during their shifts.² The ability to make critical decisions positively affects officer engagement during community contacts and supports intelligence-led policing.

- 2. Educate officers on case preparation and prosecution practices of firearm-related crime.**

While every officer receives case preparation training in the academy, the intricacies and particulars of what is needed to prosecute a case evolves with the unique aspects of each case. This preparation often requires partnering with the Wake County District Attorney’s office, federal prosecutors, U.S. Marshals, ATF, FBI, the DEA, the City Attorney’s office, and others. These partners help educate officers on how to strengthen their cases in order to increase the probability of successful prosecution of violent offenders.

- 3. Alignment of Reality Based Training (RBT) with the 2018 Firearm Violence Reduction Strategy to instruct and demonstrate skills that increase officers’ ability to operate within the three pillars of the firearm strategy.**

RBT will provide support in several ways, including teaching defensive tactics and firearms training. Also included are soft skills such as critical decision making; interpersonal engagement; communication; and mental health resiliency. Combined, these skills help ensure street survival, support intelligence-led policing, and encourage positive community engagement.

City Business Process Alignment for Pillar #1

Strategic Plan Alignment: Organizational Excellence
Strategic Plan Alignment: Safe, Vibrant & Healthy Community
Department Business Plan Alignment:
 Administrative Division Objective 2: Maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of training for sworn and non-sworn personnel in order to enhance the professional and operational readiness of the department.
Department Business Plan Alignment:
 Detective Division Objective 2: Reduce street shootings by 10 percent by June 30, 2019.

Pillar #2

Engaging and Partnering with the Community

Goal:

To reduce firearm violence by promoting and strengthening partnerships within the community to help

² Atkinson and McCraty, 52.

ensure collaborative problem-solving, ethical and unbiased policing, and increased community trust and confidence in the Department.

Objectives:

1. Identify and engage diverse stakeholders in meaningful dialogue and beneficial partnerships within the community.

The Raleigh Police Department recognizes the importance of community support for effective policing.³ Maintaining, strengthening, and developing strong relationships with community groups, CACs, schools, churches, non-governmental organizations, and our online communities helps the Department remain transparent. These community ties can play a significant role in helping reduce firearm-related violence. It is also important to identify key leaders and individuals in the community who are willing to partner with the police department and support our efforts to reduce these types of crimes.

2. Create an environment of community intolerance towards gun violence.

As the Department engages community members, we are better able to utilize community resources to instill an attitude of intolerance toward gun violence. The intolerant community does the following:

- Provides information on violent offenders⁴;
- Mentors young members of the community in non-violent conflict resolution⁵;
- Partners with schools to provide accurate information on the negative impacts of gun violence⁶; and
- Enlists schools' support for appropriate conflict resolution and intolerance of violence of any kind⁷.

3. Educate the community about the Raleigh CrimeStoppers program and encourage residents to utilize this resource to assist in solving crimes involving firearms while maintaining their anonymity.

Raleigh CrimeStoppers has proven to be a valuable resource and effective partner to the Department. This is the organization the public calls with anonymous tips that may improve investigative lead generation. The RPD can strengthen the relationship with CrimeStoppers by continuing to promote the organization and support their efforts to pay callers for tips that lead to arrests. This can be done by:

³ Sam Bieler et al., "Engaging Communities in Reducing Gun Violence: A Road Map for Safer Communities," Justice Policy Center (April 2016), 28.

⁴ Sara Bennett et al., "Crime Prevention Research Review: Legitimacy in Policing," *Community Oriented Policing Services* 10, (June 2013), 4. <https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p262-pub.pdf>

⁵ Richard Bodine and Donna Crawford, "Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth-Serving Organizations, and Community and Juvenile Justice Setting," U.S. Department of Justice, (October 2016), 1. <http://biblioteca.cejamericas.org/bitstream/handle/2015/4078/doj-adr-educ2.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

⁶ "Combatting Youth Violence in American Cities: Programs and Partnerships in 30 Cities," *Community Oriented Policing Services*, (2016), 3. <https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-w0806-pub.pdf>.

⁷ Crawford and Bodine, Conflict Resolution Education.

- Attending CrimeStoppers community events, which also allows RPD officers to build community relations;
- Passing out CrimeStoppers cards at firearm-related crime scenes, thereby encouraging residents to call with tips;
- Promoting CrimeStoppers on RPD social media with links to the website; and
- Continuing to include the message, “Call CrimeStoppers with tips,” on RPD media releases.

4. Partner with other criminal justice, governmental, and non-governmental organizations to ensure shared vision and strategy regarding the reduction of firearm violence.

The Raleigh Police Department relies on the community and its organizations to be successful in reducing crime. It is imperative for the Department to identify and foster collaborative relationships with other agencies within the communities we serve and protect.⁸ Some of these groups include the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department; the Wake County District Attorney’s Office; Teen Court; Child Protective Services; the Salvation Army; Boys and Girls Clubs; community churches; mental and physical health agencies; the YMCA; and many other agencies that work to improve our communities.

City Business Process Alignment for Pillar #2

Strategic Plan Alignment: Safe, Vibrant & Healthy Community

Strategic Plan Alignment: Organizational Excellence

Department Business Plan Alignment:
Departmental Objective 1: Increase public trust between youth and the police department.

Department Business Plan Alignment:
Departmental Objective 2: Develop and implement a comprehensive communications policy and plan to effectively tell the Raleigh Police Department’s story, both internally and externally.

Department Business Plan Alignment:
Field Operations Objective 2: Fortify existing community relationships in order to enhance public trust and police legitimacy.

Department Business Plan Alignment:
Detective Division Objective 2: Reduce street shootings by 10 percent by June 30, 2019.

Department Business Plan Alignment:
Office of Professional Standards Objective 1: Enhance public trust of the Raleigh Police Department through transparency and accountability.

Pillar #3:

RPD Intelligence-led Policing

Goal:

Reduce violent crime and maximize public safety outcomes by prioritized utilization of Raleigh Police Department enforcement and investigative resources.

⁸ The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. 2015. *Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 20.

Objectives:

1. Dedicated and coordinated response to all firearm-related incidents.

The 2018 Firearm Violence Reduction Strategy builds on the Departmental Business Plan and provides guidance for yearly initiatives and daily tasks. This structure improves the coordinated efforts that already exist within the Department. Each division working toward a common goal heightens the level of response to incidents, including those that involve firearm violence.

2. Strategic deployment of resources in response to intelligence-driven analyses identifying patterns of elevated levels of firearm violence.

The Raleigh Intelligence Center (RIC) provides tools and reports that show areas with elevated levels of crime, including those that involve firearms. Supervisors and officers are able to view crimes in their assigned districts in real time so they can quickly deploy appropriate resources. Intelligence-driven analyses identify crime trends in order to forecast potential criminal activity. When units within the Department utilize these tools, we ensure that our resources are directed to the areas of need based on crime data rather than on socio-economic factors or implicit bias.

3. Apprehend people identified as illegally possessing firearms, utilizing firearms in the commission of a crime, or identified as violent offenders.

In the “Training to Ensure Safe and Engaged Officers” pillar of the Firearm Violence Reduction Strategy, officers receive training on how to identify individuals who use firearms during the commission of crimes or who carry firearms illegally. This training aids officers in apprehending violent individuals. Investigating these crimes includes relentless follow-up and adherence to the mantra of leaving the affected community better than it was when the crime occurred.

City Business Process Alignment for Pillar #3

Strategic Plan Alignment: Organizational Excellence

Strategic Plan Alignment: Safe, Vibrant & Healthy Community

Department Business Plan Alignment:
Special Operations Objective 2: Increase real and perceived safety of the community through focused engagement of Special Operation resources utilizing timely and accurate intelligence during non- directed time.

Department Business Plan Alignment:
Detective Division Objective 2: Reduce street shootings by 10 percent by June 30, 2019.

Accountability

Initiating accountability ensures follow-through on any plan. This accountability should not be at the expense of dexterity but should ensure allocation of resources and deconfliction of effort. This will increase efficiency and effectiveness.

The workflow below details oversight for implementation of the strategy:

- Pillar Champions

A Division Commander is assigned to each pillar as a Pillar Champion and ensures that work continues for each pillar. Personnel below this rank will also have a member of the executive staff

they can consult with to ensure that initiatives remain consistent with the Department's Business Plan and the City's Strategic Plan goals. The Champions also work to ensure consistency and proper resource allocation by communicating with other Pillar Champions, Division Commanders, the Deputy Chiefs, and the Chief.

- Commanders' Committee

Initiatives brought to Pillar Champions are communicated to the Division Commanders. This executive group ensures deconfliction, and proper alignment and timing of projects for appropriate departmental resource allocation and effort. The method of communication for this committee can range from scheduled meetings to conference calls. The primary objective is timely communication.

- Captains

Captains develop yearly goals for their commands that are aligned with the City's Strategic Plan, the Department Business Plan, and the 2018 Firearm Violence Reduction Strategy. Upon development of these goals, the Captains delegate responsibility to their Lieutenants for developing plans to meet the set goals. Captains ensure follow-through on the plans.

- Lieutenants

Lieutenants are responsible for generating plans that meet their respective Captain's goals. As they develop effective plans to decrease firearm violence, they are encouraged to include their Sergeants and network with other colleagues. They should utilize Department-approved tools and resources. Lieutenants utilize the appropriate Department forms to communicate their plans. These forms must be approved by their Captains. If the initiative involves multiple Department resources or affects multiple commands, the plan is sent to the Pillar Champion for approval.

- Sergeants

Sergeants' responsibilities include assisting Lieutenants with plan generation and supervising plan implementation. They should be familiar with the tasks they are leading and the desired outcomes. Sergeants are responsible for collecting the data needed to measure the outcomes of the plan.

- Officers and Civilian Employees

Employees are encouraged to identify problems, communicate those problems to their supervisors, work with their supervisors to identify solutions, and partner with Sergeants and Lieutenants in the creation of plans. Working as a team increases the probability of success and ensures that our employees learn the process of problem identification and plan development.

Conclusion

The 2018 Firearm Violence Reduction Strategy enhances the direction that was presented and approved in the Department Business Plan. The goals and objectives presented here provide direction for the Pillar Champions as they plan initiatives to lower firearm violence this year. Creating divisional and district goals that align with this plan and are measurable, allows the Raleigh Police Department to assess its progress, action steps, and resource allocation in carrying out its mission.

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