

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT VIOLENCE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY TEMPLATE

1. OVERVIEW AND PUBLIC HEALTH CONTEXT

Purpose: Explain why violence and community safety are public health priorities. Highlight that violence is preventable and connected to health equity.

Describe the short- and long-term effects on physical, mental, and social well-being, noting that violence contributes to disparities in life expectancy, mental health outcomes, economic burden, and chronic disease prevalence.

Summarize local and systemic factors contributing to violence, such as economic and housing inequality, historical disinvestment practices and policies, community-shaping events, limited behavioral health access, community disinvestment, redlining, gentrification, gender-based inequities, and cultural practices around firearm access.

There are many factors that may influence how your county chooses to present this topic and what you choose to include. Your selection process will likely be data driven and reflective of priorities advanced by county leadership and resources currently available.

Breadth

- Safety broadly (e.g., motor vehicle crashes, drowning, drug overdoses, suicides, homicides, sexual violence)
- Violence broadly
- Gun violence specifically

Types of victims

- Unintended victims (i.e., accidental shootings)
- Self-directed violence (i.e., suicide)
- Other-directed violence (e.g., community violence, gang violence, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, police violence)

2. DATA SNAPSHOT: LOCAL AND COMPARATIVE INDICATORS

Use local data to describe patterns and trends in violence. Table 1 has a list of potential indicators and Table 2 provides relevant data sources and links to easy-to-use tools to access and analyze existing data. Include both secondary and primary data where possible. Consider presenting data from the state or appropriate comparison counties as well.

Table 1. Example Indicators

Primary Data	Secondary Data
Community survey data on perceptions and concerns about safety	Violent crime rate (per 100,000) and trend (5–10 years)
Community feedback sessions on concerns about safety	Firearm-related incidents and deaths
Implementation data from violence prevention programs	Homicide and suicide rates
Quotes about the importance or impact of programs	Victimization and perpetration by race/ethnicity, age, and gender
	Youth involvement (school incidents, juvenile arrests)

3. HEALTH EQUITY AND DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT

Focus: Identify populations or neighborhoods disproportionately affected by violence. At-risk populations can vary by violence types (e.g., suicide vs homicide)

4. CURRENT COMMUNITY ASSETS, PARTNERS, AND INITIATIVES

List existing partners, coalitions, and initiatives working to prevent, treat, and respond to violence. These may include safe storage initiatives, anti-bullying campaigns, hospital-based violence interruption programs, Family Justice Centers and domestic violence support programs, School-based violence prevention programs, and reentry programs.

5. RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Outline evidence-based or community-driven recommendations. These can include:

- Upstream primary prevention (i.e., universal pre-school, economic support for families)
- Proximal primary prevention (i.e., conflict resolution training, youth engagement)
- Policy/System Change (i.e., equitable enforcement, investment in safe spaces)

Table 2. Data Sources and Descriptions

Data Source	Description	Link / Access Point
NC Office of Violence Prevention	County-level violent crime and injury data	Violence Prevention Data NC DPS
NC Firearm StoryMap	Multi-agency firearm data visualization	Firearm Injury in North Carolina: Pervasive but Preventable NC DETECT
NC State Bureau of Investigation	County trends for violent and property crime	NCSBI - Crime in North Carolina - Annual Summaries
FBI Crime Data Explorer	Agency-level crime trends	CDE
NC Justice Data Portal	County-level FBI crime data aggregation	NC Justice Data Portal

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Data Source	Description	Link / Access Point
NC violence death reporting system (VDRS)	Death data on homicide, suicide, firearm deaths	NCVDRS Dashboard
County Health Rankings & Roadmaps	County-level firearm and social determinant data	County Health Rankings
Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)	State-level and some NC school districts data on youth violence and risk behaviors	YRBS Explorer
EveryShot by Everytown	AI-tracked firearm injuries and deaths	EveryShot Map
NC DETECT	Emergency department and EMS data available upon request	NC DETECT Suicidal ideation dashboard
Local data: EMS, hospital data, Sheriff, law enforcement	Good source for additional detail on gun violence such as accidental shootings, number of incidents involving firearms, firearm injuries, etc.	Contact local agencies
Shot spotter	For cities that have this technology, this can provide an estimate of the number of shots fired over a period of time	Contact local agencies
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)	Firearm safety data is available by region for 2021 and some previous years; county health departments may also conduct their own BRFSS	BRFSS Gun Statistics
Jamie Kimble Foundation	County-level estimated cost of domestic violence in 2019 in NC	Report