

DSU Gun Possession Study

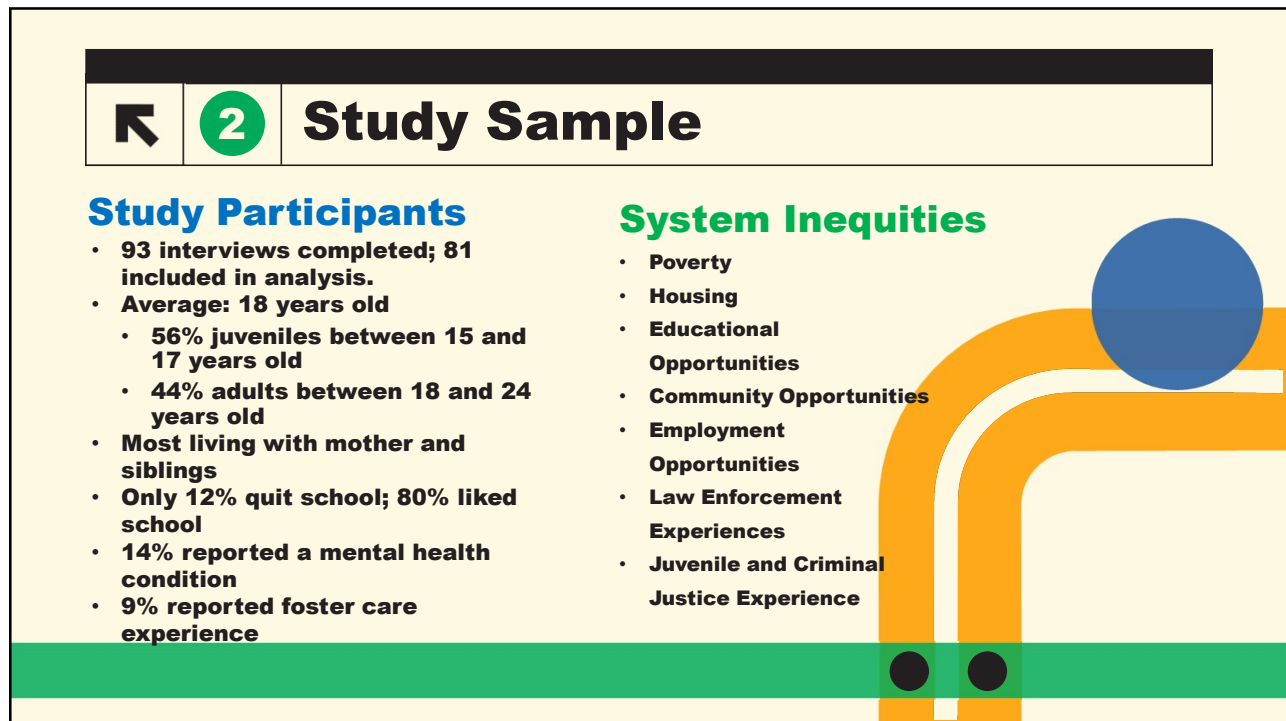
STUDY OVERVIEW

- **Funded by the National Collaborative of Gun Violence Researchers**
- **Examines why young African American men in high crime cities possess guns**
- **Phenomenological study combining community engaged research and grounded theory methodology**
- **364 study participants in four cities (Baltimore, Houston, Jackson & Wilmington)**
- **The Center for Structural Equity served as the Wilmington Community Partner**

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Study Participants

- **93 interviews completed; 81 included in analysis.**
- **Average: 18 years old**
 - **56% juveniles between 15 and 17 years old**
 - **44% adults between 18 and 24 years old**
- **Most living with mother and siblings**
- **Only 12% quit school; 80% liked school**
- **14% reported a mental health condition**
- **9% reported foster care experience**

System Inequities

- **Poverty**
- **Housing**
- **Educational Opportunities**
- **Community Opportunities**
- **Employment Opportunities**
- **Law Enforcement Experiences**
- **Juvenile and Criminal Justice Experience**

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Study Recommendations

Increase Community Involvement in Research

- **CFSE Community Partner**
 - Involved in all components of the research process
- **Action Research:**
 - Presentations to disseminate findings and educate stakeholders
 - Action Planning to inform practice and policy

Enact Data Driven Policies

- Only 2 participants owned a licensed gun.
- 77% possessed a gun before they were 15 years old.
- Most did not possess a gun all the time. They obtained a gun when they needed it.
- Participants support many current gun safety laws: age restrictions & buy back programs
- Additional suggestions: stop selling bullets & reduce the number of gun stores



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Study Recommendations

Improve Police Training & Relations

- 1st interaction at 10 to 15 years old; only 10% for criminal activity
- “Made me feel belittled;” “...they don’t listen;” “I was dizzy for 3 days”
- Participants need and want police in their community, but they want tactics and interactions to change.
 - “They don’t have the right resources.”
 - “They need to do their jobs better; not getting enough training.”
 - “They think they are above the law. They harass people for fun.”

Implement Behavioral Interventions

- 88% wish they had taken a different path; stayed in school or took school more seriously; continued to play sports.
- 94% knew someone who had been shot
 - 37% before they were 10 years old
 - 91% before they were 15 years old
- 81% knew someone who had been killed by a gun
 - 43% before they were 10 years old
 - 93% before they were 15 years old
- Most possess a gun by 15 years old for social acceptance and protection.



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