



Research Brief:

Examining the Relationship Between 911 Calls and Gun Violence

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Project Completed:

December 2018

Brief Issued:

October 2019

Summary:

Researchers from Niagara University examined the potential association between 9-1-1 calls for fights and ensuing gun violence in the city of Niagara Falls using an epidemiological approach. The study presents the relationship between fights and shootings over time and location.

Background

Through an epidemiological lens, the distribution and diffusion of gun violence is not distributed evenly throughout society. Gun violence occurs in specific locations, and between specific people, with many incidents connected to interpersonal disputes or conflicts. Researchers from Niagara University delved more deeply into these incidents, and results indicate that fights may be related to gun violence.

Design

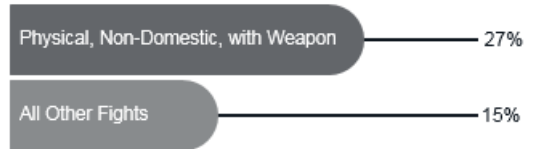
Researchers examined and coded two years of 9-1-1 calls for fights (n=1,315) and confirmed shots-fired calls (n=40) from January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2016. This analysis estimates the types of fights likely to escalate to gun violence and examines the geographical proximity of serious fights to shots-fired calls.

Results

- Physical, non-domestic fights involving a gun or other weapon are relatively rare (3% of all fight incidents and occurring on fewer than 6% of days included in the study period).
- The analysis showed that physical, non-domestic fights with a weapon occurred within the same location as the shooting incidents, implying a geographical link between the fights and the shootings. The majority of shootings

(90%) were in close proximity (within 500 feet) to the location of the physical, non-domestic fights with a weapon.

- There was an increased probability that a shooting would occur in the three days immediately following a physical, non-domestic fight with a weapon (27%), compared to all other fights (15%).



- There is no way to know through this analysis if the same people are involved both in the physical, non-domestic fight and the nearby shooting.

Recommendation

Niagara Falls Police should consider increasing patrols in areas where physical, non-domestic fights with a weapon are reported and gather intelligence about individuals involved in ongoing disputes in Niagara Falls as a possible way to reduce firearm-related violence.

About the Research Consortium

An initiative of the state Division of Criminal Justice Services, the Research Consortium promotes criminal justice research and the use of data and evidence by facilitating partnerships between local practitioners and college and university-based researchers. The research design and conclusions detailed here are the sole work product of the academic partner that conducted the research. Neither DCJS nor the State of New York endorse the program, methodology or results.