

# P.R.I.D.E NEWSLETTER

## Gun Violence & Mental Health

Spring2023

It's in our sessions, it's in our community, it's on our minds.



### Gun Violence

- About 1 in 5 mass shooters has a serious mental illness (SMI) at the time of the shooting.
- Less than 3% of overall gun violence can be attributed to SMI.
- Only about 20% of mass shooters have a major mental illness.
- It is estimated that, of the 857 million civilian guns available worldwide, around 393 million are owned by US private citizens—120 guns for every 100 citizens in the United States.

### All too common

"...A kid brought a gun to school today... I wasn't even phased by it" - 16 year old high school student seen at NYCTWC.

How have we gotten here? My typical evening session starts with a casual line like this one too frequently.

"We have to address the real issues at hand, such as the fact that it's easier in our country to get a gun than to get mental health care, and the unfortunate reality that self-directed gun violence is fueling our nation's suicide epidemic," said Daniel H. Gillison Jr, NAMI chief executive officer. "The majority of firearm deaths each year are suicides, and firearms are the most common method used for suicide."

# OUR ROLE

## as mental health professionals



### Risk Evaluation

We can enlighten our patients and peers to understand mental health diagnosis and the separate risk assessment that is also involved in determining predictors of such violence. We must also focus on the access to guns on suicide which occurs more frequently than mass shootings. We are trained to assess risk, work within the context of varying levels of risk, and increase the presence of protective factors.

### Disproportionate Effects

Gun violence disproportionately affects communities of color and low social economic status. Black and Latino youth are 3 - 7x more likely to experience exposure to gun violence than white peers. Those living in disadvantaged neighborhoods are up to 50% more likely to experience exposure to gun violence. [More Info](#)



### Changing the Narrative

Have effective, factual conversations with peers, patients and the broader society. The power of conversation is one of our major tools in reducing gun violence. Focus your efforts in and out of the therapy room by voting, presenting at community boards, and simply being present for the conversation.