

# New report examines gun violence 'hot spots' in Houston area

June 6 2023, by Avery Ruxer Franklin

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A [new report](#) by Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy

sheds light on the reality of gun violence in the Houston area.

The report examines [firearm](#) incidents in Harris County from 2018 to 2021 using data from the four largest law enforcement jurisdictions in the county—the Houston, Pasadena and Baytown police departments and the Harris County Sheriff's Office. The authors identified trends in homicide rates, the distribution of firearm incidents by severity and firearm incident "hot spots."

The findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to reducing gun [violence](#), argue authors Ned Levine, Bindi Naik-Mathuria, Cary Cain, Lisa Pompeii and Abiodun Oluyomi.

Nearly half of the region's gun crimes were transportation-related; 27% occurred on a sidewalk or adjacent to a road and 19% occurred in a parking lot. Single-family homes saw 12% of the area's incidents, 9% occurred at apartments and 7% took place at retail establishments. Of the latter, [convenience stores](#) and gas stations were the most common locations. Furthermore, 29% of the firearm crimes occurred within 300 feet of an alcohol-serving business.

"Gun killings are of course tragic, but nonfatal firearm violence can also severely injure victims, leaving them physically debilitated or psychologically damaged for years on end," the authors wrote. "The family and friends of the victims are often left traumatized as well."

Due to exacerbating factors such as expanded gun access and a lack of registries and user licensing, limited after-school programs and inadequate mental health services, there is no single solution to the issue, the authors argue.

"We are not fatalistic about gun violence. It can be curbed. But we should start from a realistic understanding of its scope," they wrote.

"Gun violence is ingrained in American society, and the problem will not disappear as the result of any single policy—e.g., banning assault rifles, arming school guards or intervening with mentally ill people who have violent impulses. These policy actions may help, but a substantial reduction in [gun violence](#) will require a comprehensive approach encompassing many different programs and policies."

Provided by Rice University

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