

One in five Americans knows a victim of gun violence, poll says

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Survey also looked at attitudes toward mental illness following Newtown, Conn., tragedy.

(HealthDay)—One in five Americans knows a victim of gun violence and four in 10 are worried about becoming the victim of gun violence, according to a new poll released by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Among the 20 percent of respondents who said they know a victim of [gun violence](#), most said that person was a family member, good friend or even themselves. Blacks (42 percent) and people aged 18 to 29 (28 percent) were most likely to know a victim of gun violence.

Members of racial and ethnic minorities were most likely to say they worried about becoming victims of gun violence, with 75 percent of Hispanics and 62 percent of blacks expressing such concern, compared with 30 percent of whites, according to a Kaiser news release.

The Kaiser Health Tracking Survey involved telephone interviews conducted with more than 1,200 adults from Feb. 14 to 19, as gun control re-emerges as a major political issue following the Newtown, Conn., [school shooting](#) of Dec. 14, 2012.

The poll also examined experiences and attitudes about mental illness and [mental health care](#) following the Newtown tragedy. Three-quarters of respondents said people with severe [mental health issues](#) experience "a lot" or "some" discrimination. That's higher than the number who said the same about minorities, women and people with physical disabilities.

The survey also revealed that many people hold potentially stigmatizing attitudes about people with mental illnesses. Two-thirds of parents said they would not feel comfortable having a person with a serious mental illness work in their child's school, 41 percent said they would feel uncomfortable working alongside them and 47 percent said they would feel at least somewhat uncomfortable living next door to such a person.

Eight percent of all respondents said someone in their household has had difficulty getting needed mental health care, but the rate was 20 percent among those without health insurance. The most common barrier to mental health care was cost, followed by insurance coverage issues and confusion over where to seek care.

More information: Women Against Gun Violence has more about [gun violence](#).

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