

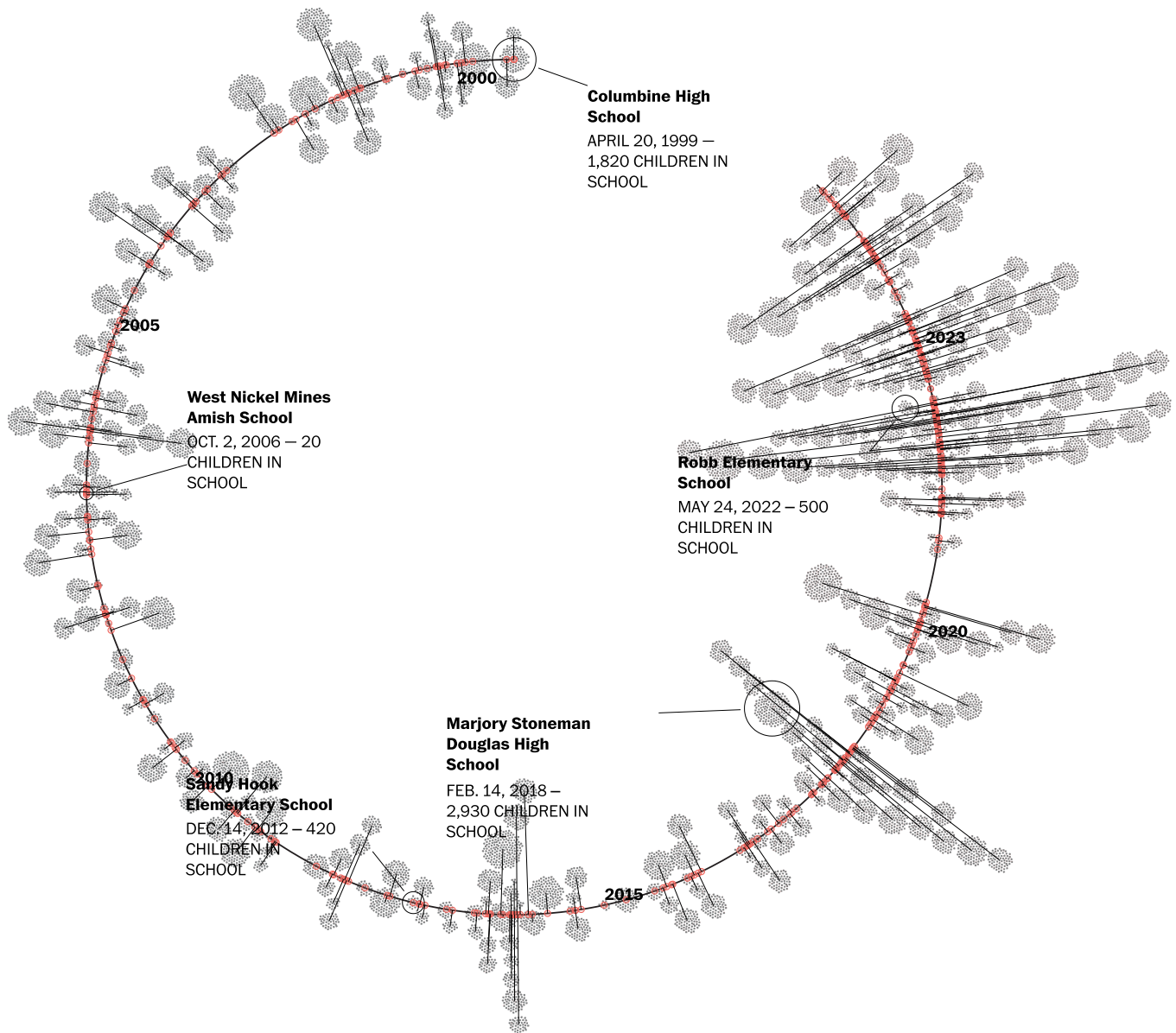
Education Higher education Local Education

More than **394,000** students have experienced gun violence at school since Columbine

There have been 428 school shootings since 1999, according to Post data

One dot represents 20 children exposed to gun violence

Replay



By [John Woodrow Cox](#), [Steven Rich](#), [Lucas Trevor](#), [John Muyskens](#) and [Monica Ulmanu](#)

Updated Jan. 24, 2025

🎁 📌 📄 962 / 962 New

There were more school shootings in 2022 — 46 — than in any year since at least 1999.

Beyond the dead and wounded, children who witness the violence or cower behind locked doors to hide from it can be profoundly traumatized.

[\[Mass shootings: Tracking gun violence in the U.S.\]](#)

The federal government does not track school shootings, so The Washington Post has spent years tracking how many children in the United States have been exposed to gun violence during school hours since the Columbine High massacre in 1999.

The Post pieces together its numbers from news articles, open-source databases, law enforcement reports, and calls to schools and police departments.

There have been 428 school shootings since Columbine

The most recent school shooting was **33 days ago**.

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JAN. 22, 2025

Antioch High School in Antioch, Tenn.

1 dead **1** injured **1,980** children present in school

A 17-year-old male student killed one female student and wounded another before dying from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Source: [WSMV4](#)

JAN. 14, 2025

Newburgh Free Academy in Newburgh, N.Y.

0 dead **0** injured **1,760** children present in school

An 18-year-old male former student fired into a crowd following a fight at dismissal time resulting in no injuries.

Source: [LoHud](#)

DEC. 16, 2024

Abundant Life Christian School in Madison, Wisc.

2 dead **6** injured **270** children present in school

A teenage student killed two people and wounded at least six more. (This story is still developing.)

Source: [Washington Post](#)

DEC. 4, 2024

Feather River School of Seventh-Day Adventists in Palermo, Calif.

0 dead **2** injured **20** children present in school

A 56-year-old man shot and critically wounded two boys, ages 5 and 6, inside the school.

Source: [Action News Now](#)

NOV. 7, 2024

West High School in Salt Lake City, Utah

0 dead **1** injured **2,320** children present in school

Someone shot and wounded a 15-year-old in the school parking lot.

Source: [KUTV](#)

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Injuries and death tolls do not include the shooters.

[Download the data](#) [Read the methodology](#) [Send information](#)

The Post's search for more shootings will continue, and it's possible reporters will locate additional incidents from previous years.

Hundreds of outlets cover the deadliest attacks, such as the Feb. 14, 2018, rampage at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High in Parkland, Fla., where a 19-year-old man with an AR-style rifle killed 17 people.

Others are covered by a single newspaper, such as a 2001 shooting at Pearl C. Anderson Middle School in Dallas, where a 14-year-old boy held a revolver to a girl's chest and asked her whether she was "ready to die" before a bullet fired, grazing her hand.

Across all such incidents, The Post has found that at least 216 children, educators and other people have been killed, and another 487 have been injured.

Even as the list of incidents has expanded, however, the trend lines have remained consistent.

School shootings disproportionately affect Black children

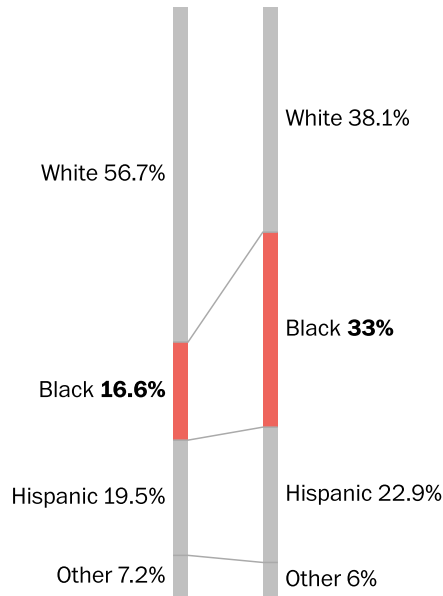
Among The Post's most important findings: the disproportionate impact of school shootings on children of color.

Almost all the deadliest assaults were committed by White gunmen, a reality that has left much of the public with the false impression that school shootings almost exclusively affect White students. Children of color, however, are far more likely to experience campus gun violence: more than twice as much for Hispanic students and over three times as much for Black students.

At schools with majority Black student bodies, shooters typically target a specific person, limiting the number of people shot — and the subsequent media exposure.

Black students make up 16.6% of the school population ...

... but they experience school shootings at twice that rate.

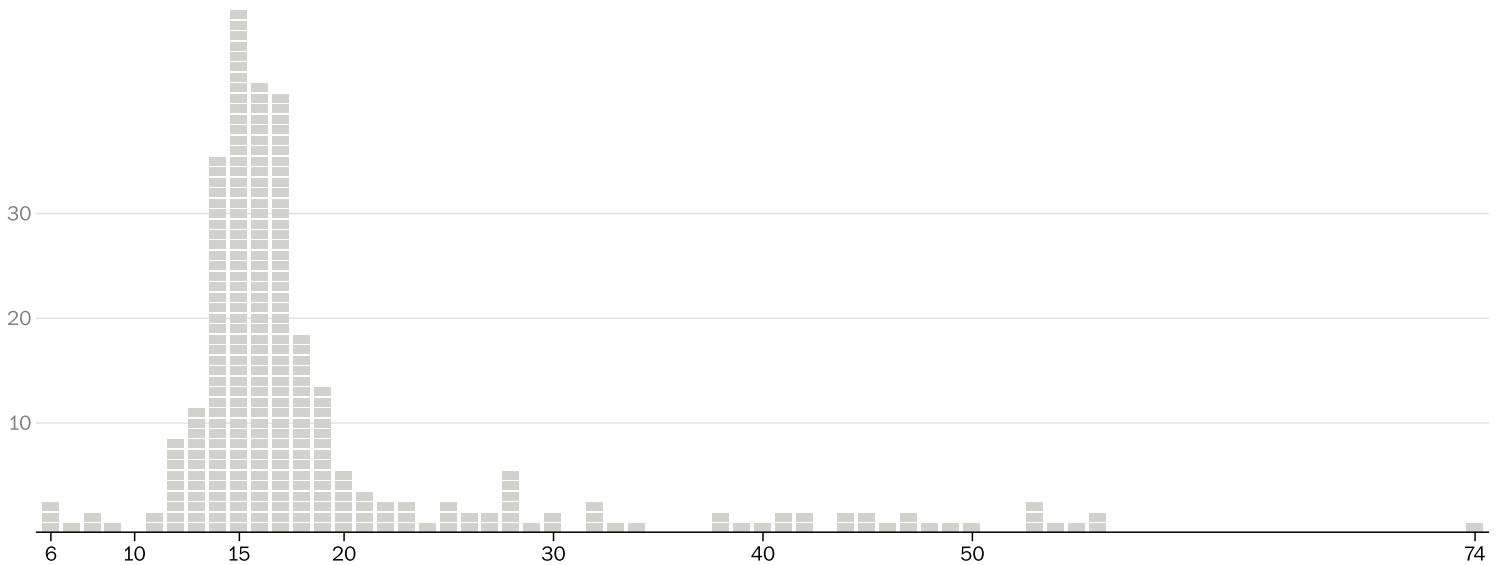


The Post has reviewed more than 180 shootings committed by juveniles since Columbine, and in cases where the source of the gun could be determined, 86 percent of the weapons were found in the homes of friends, relatives or parents.

The median age of a school shooter is 16

Children, The Post also determined, are responsible for more than half the country's school shootings — none of which would be possible if those children didn't have access to firearms.

The ranks of school shooters include a 6-year-old boy, who killed a classmate he shot on purpose, and a 15-year-old girl, who did the same to a friend for rejecting her romantic overtures.

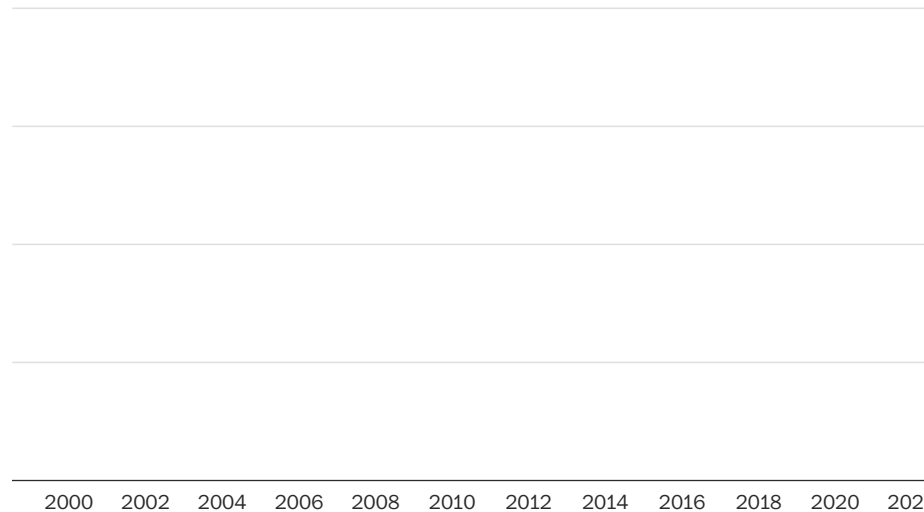


129 shooters with unknown age not included

School shootings on the rise

While it remains highly unlikely that any student will experience a school shooting, the number of incidents has risen rapidly in recent years. Through 2017, the country averaged about 11 school shootings a year, never eclipsing 16 in a single year. But starting in 2018, violent incidents started climbing.

School shootings by year



In 2020, the novel coronavirus closed campuses for months, and the number of shootings declined. But with classes in session again, 42 K-12 schools experienced school shootings in 2021, and 46 endured one the next year — mirroring the nation’s broader rise in gun violence as it emerged from the pandemic.

About this story

The Washington Post spent a year determining how many children have been affected by school shootings, beyond just those killed or injured. To do that, reporters attempted to identify every act of gunfire at a primary or secondary school during school hours since the Columbine High massacre on April 20, 1999. Using Nexis, news articles, open-source databases, law enforcement reports, information from school websites, and calls to schools and police departments, The Post reviewed more than 1,000 alleged incidents but counted only those that happened on campuses immediately before, during or just after classes.

Shootings at after-hours events, accidental discharges that caused no injuries to anyone other than the person handling the gun and suicides that occurred privately or posed no threat to other children were excluded. Gunfire at colleges and universities, which affects young adults rather than kids, also was not counted.

After finding more than 200 incidents of gun violence that met The Post's criteria, reporters organized them in a database for analysis. Because the federal government does not track school shootings, it's possible that the database does not contain every incident that would qualify.

To calculate how many children were exposed to gunfire in each school shooting, The Post relied on enrollment figures and demographic information from the U.S. Education Department, including the Common Core of Data and the Private School Universe Survey.

The analysis used attendance figures from the year of the shooting for the vast majority of the schools. Then The Post deducted 7 percent from the enrollment total because that is, on average, how many students miss school each day, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. Reporters subtracted 50 percent from a school's enrollment if the act of gun violence occurred just before or after the school day.

You can obtain the raw data [here](#). To provide information about school shootings since Columbine that fit The Post's definition, send us an email at schoolshootings@washpost.com.

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