

NORTH CAROLINA

Violent Death  
Reporting System  
Gaston County 2004 – 2007

March 2010

North Carolina  
Injury & Violence  
PREVENTION Branch

Division of Public Health

## Background and Acknowledgements

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS) is a CDC-funded state-wide surveillance system that collects detailed information on deaths resulting from violence: homicide, suicide, unintentional firearm deaths, legal intervention, and deaths for which intent could not be determined. NC-VDRS is a multi-source system that gathers information from death certificates, medical examiner reports, and law enforcement reports. The goal of this system is to aid researchers, legislators, and community interest groups in the development of public health prevention strategies to reduce violent deaths. NC-VDRS began collecting data in January, 2004. This document summarizes findings from Gaston County, North Carolina that occurred from 2004 to 2007.

A Statewide Annual Report for 2007 will be completed by summer of 2010. More information can be found at: [www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/About/ncVDRS.htm](http://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/About/ncVDRS.htm).

The task of locating, abstracting, entering, and evaluating the data that are used to create the NC-VDRS is challenging, time-consuming and difficult. The extent and quality of the data in this report are the direct result of the dedication of the NC-VDRS staff: Tammy Norwood, Program Manager, and Susan Autry and Pat Jones, Statistical Research Assistants.

Thanks to Sharon Schiro for the analysis and programming of the NC-VDRS data, and Becca Byrd for the formatting and updating of this report.

Three advisory groups provided assistance to us with this report. The leadership of these advisory groups formed the Board Leadership & Evaluation Team (BLET). Members of the BLET for 2007 were Tamera Coyne-Beasley, Kay Sanford, Phillip J. Cook, Sandra Martin, Steve Marshall, and Anna Waller.

We acknowledge the assistance and on-going support of the N.C. State Center for Health Statistics, the N.C. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and the N.C. State Bureau of Investigation, as well as the many local law enforcement agencies throughout N.C. that have provided information to the NC-VDRS.

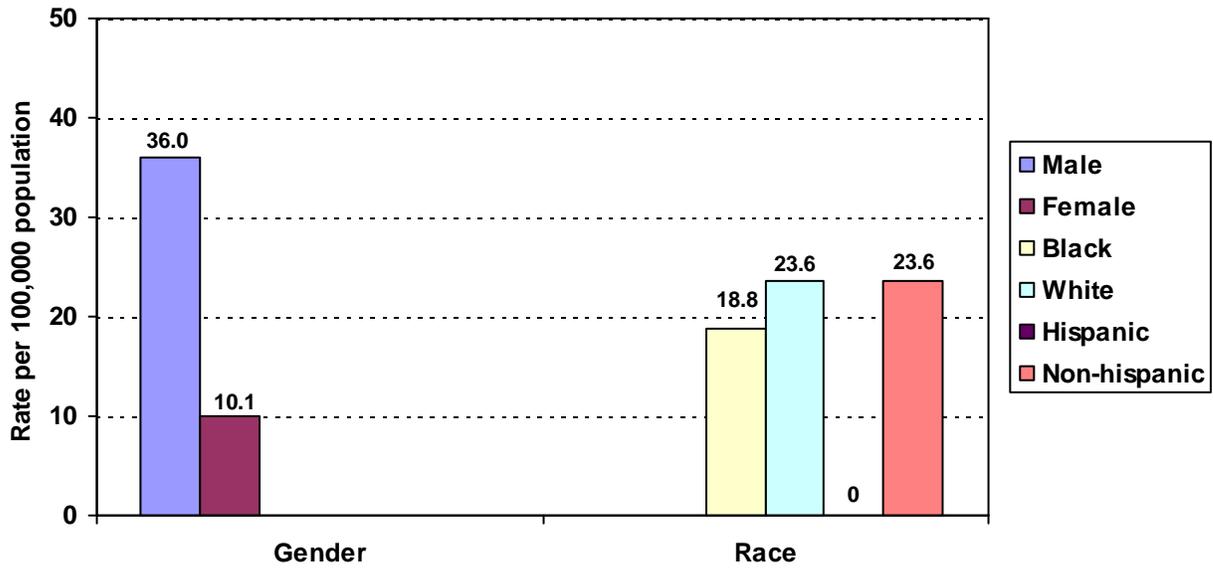
This report was supported in part by Cooperative Agreement Number 5U17CE423098-07 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## SECTION I: OVERALL

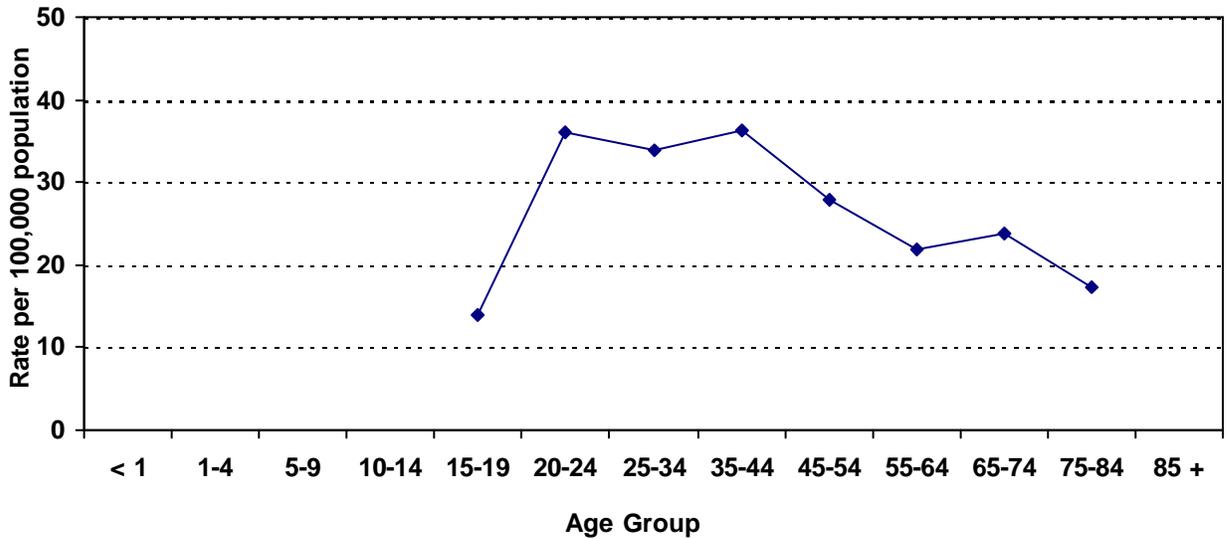
Table 1: Gender, Race, and Age Group of Violent Death Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007					
		Number	%	Rate	CI
<b>Gender</b>					
	Male	137	77.0	36.0	30.0 – 42.0
	Female	41	23.0	10.1	7.0 - 13.2
<b>Race</b>					
	American Indian	0	0	*	*
	Asian	1	0.6	*	*
	Black	22	12.4	18.8	11.0 - 26.6
	White	155	87.1	23.6	19.9 - 27.3
<b>Hispanic</b>					
	Hispanic	1	0.6	*	*
	Non-Hispanic	177	99.4	23.6	20.1 - 27.1
<b>Age Group</b>					
	< 1	0	0	*	*
	1 - 4	1	0.6	*	*
	5 - 9	2	1.1	*	*
	10 - 14	1	0.6	*	*
	15 - 19	7	3.9	14.0	3.6 - 24.4
	20 - 24	16	9.0	36.1	18.4 - 53.8
	25 - 34	37	20.8	33.9	23.0 - 44.8
	35 - 44	43	24.2	36.2	25.4 – 47.0
	45 - 54	32	18.0	27.8	18.2 - 37.4
	55 - 64	20	11.2	21.8	12.2 - 31.4
	65 - 74	13	7.3	23.9	10.9 - 36.9
	75 - 84	6	3.4	17.4	3.5 - 31.3
	85 +	0	0	*	*
<b>Total Deaths</b>		<b>178</b>	<b>100</b>		

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Overall Violent Death Rates by Gender and Race,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



**Overall Violent Death Rates by Age, Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

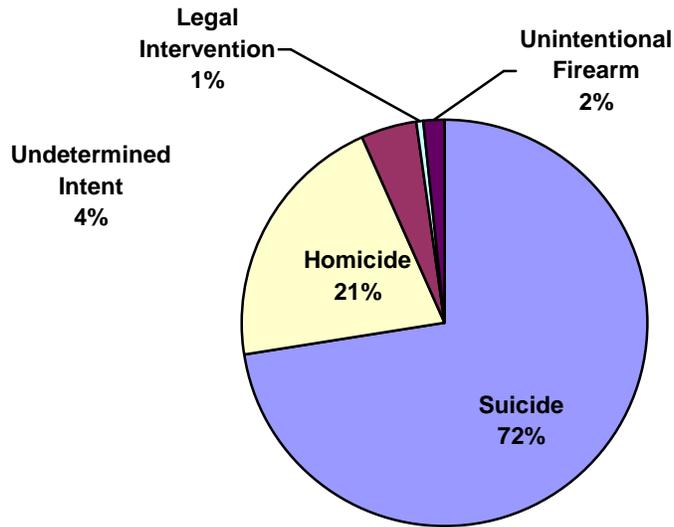


Note: Some values are zero or not available due to low count so the lines appear "broken".

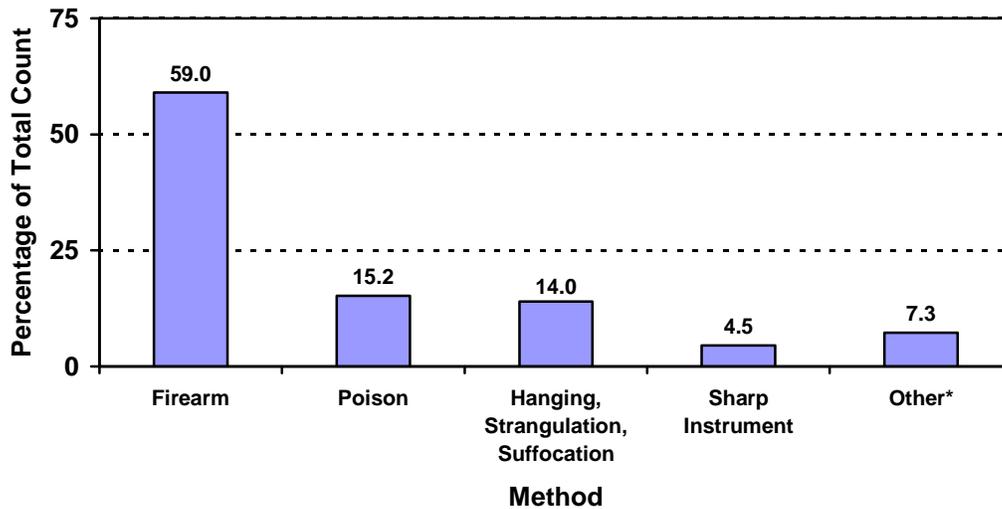
**Table 2: Manner and Method of Violent Death Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

		<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Manner of Death</b>			
	Suicide	129	72.5
	Homicide	37	20.8
	Undetermined Intent	8	4.5
	Unintentional Firearm	3	1.7
	Legal Intervention	1	0.6
<b>Method</b>			
	Firearm	105	59.0
	Poisoning	27	15.2
	Hanging, Strangulation, Suffocation	25	14.0
	Sharp Instrument	8	4.5
	Blunt Instrument	3	1.7
	Fall	2	1.1
	Unarmed Assault	2	1.1
	Drowning	1	0.6
	Fire or Burns	1	0.6
	More than One Method	1	0.6
	Motor Vehicle	1	0.6
	Other Transport Vehicle	1	0.6
	Unknown	1	0.6
<b>Total Deaths</b>		<b>178</b>	<b>100</b>

**Manner of Violent Death,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



**Method of Death for Overall Violent Deaths,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



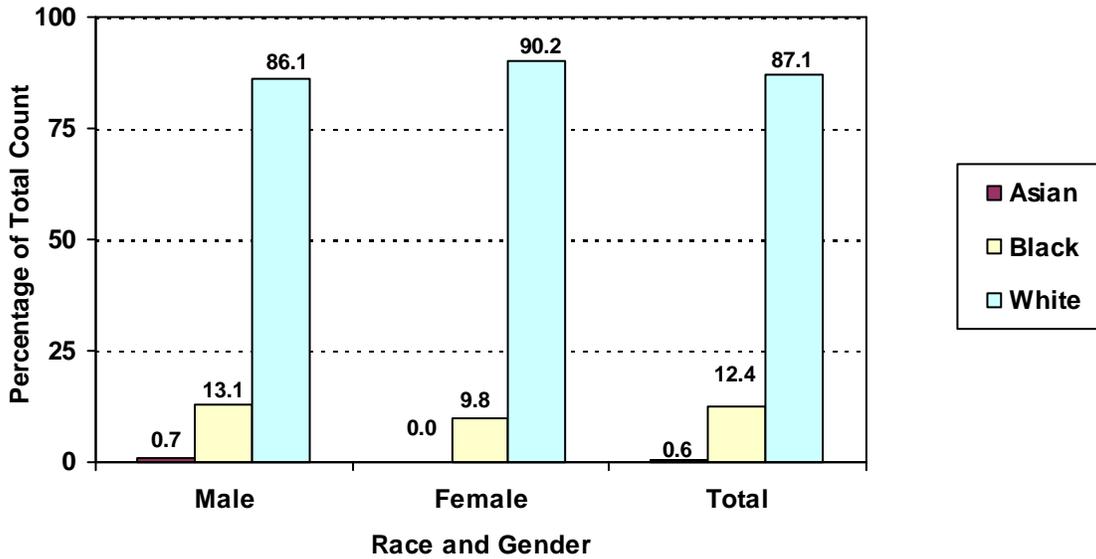
\* Other methods include: blunt instruments, unarmed assaults, falls, drowning, fires or burns, violent shaking, motor vehicles, other transport vehicles, intentional neglect and other unspecified methods.

**Table 3: Race by Gender of Violent Death Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Race	Male				Female				Total	
	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%
Asian	1	0.7	*	*	0	0	*	*	1	0.6
Black	18	13.1	33.3	17.9 - 48.7	4	9.8	*	*	22	12.4
White	118	86.1	36.8	30.2 - 43.4	37	90.2	11	7.5 - 14.5	155	87.1
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>178</b>	<b>100</b>

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Race by Gender of Violent Death Victims,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

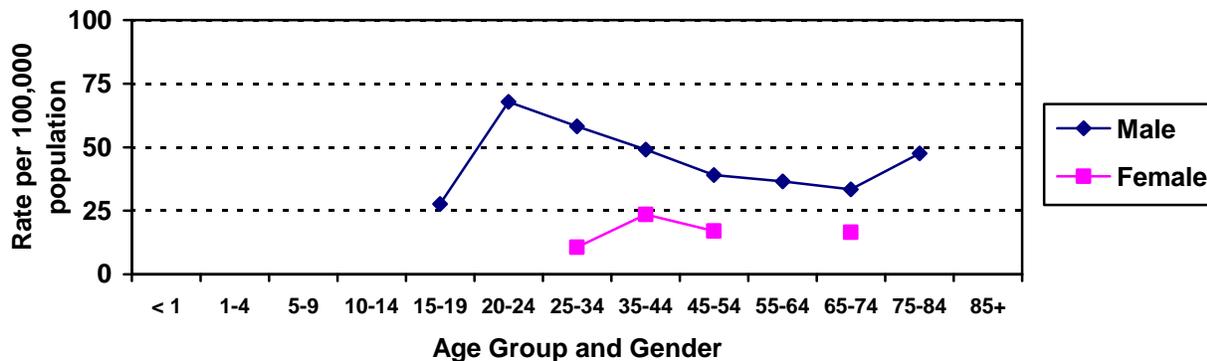


**Table 4: Age Group by Gender of Violent Death Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Age Group	Male				Female				Total	
	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%
< 1	1	0.7	*	*	0	0	*	*	1	0.6
1 - 4	1	0.7	*	*	1	2.4	*	*	2	1.1
10 - 14	1	0.7	*	*	0	0	*	*	1	0.6
15 - 19	7	5.1	27.6	7.2 - 48.0	0	0	*	*	7	3.9
20 - 24	15	10.9	67.8	33.5 - 102.1	1	2.4	*	*	16	9.0
25 - 34	31	22.6	58.2	37.7 - 78.7	6	14.6	10.7	2.1 - 19.3	37	20.8
35 - 44	29	21.2	49.0	31.2 - 66.8	14	34.1	23.5	11.2 - 35.8	43	24.2
45 - 54	22	16.1	39.1	22.8 - 55.4	10	24.4	17.0	6.4 - 27.6	32	18.0
55 - 64	16	11.7	36.5	18.6 - 54.4	4	9.8	*	*	20	11.2
65 - 74	8	5.8	33.4	10.3 - 56.5	5	12.2	16.5	2.0 - 31.0	13	7.3
75 - 84	6	4.4	47.5	9.5 - 85.5	0	0	*	*	6	3.4
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>197</b>	<b>100</b>

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Overall Violent Death Rates by Age Group and Gender of Victims, Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



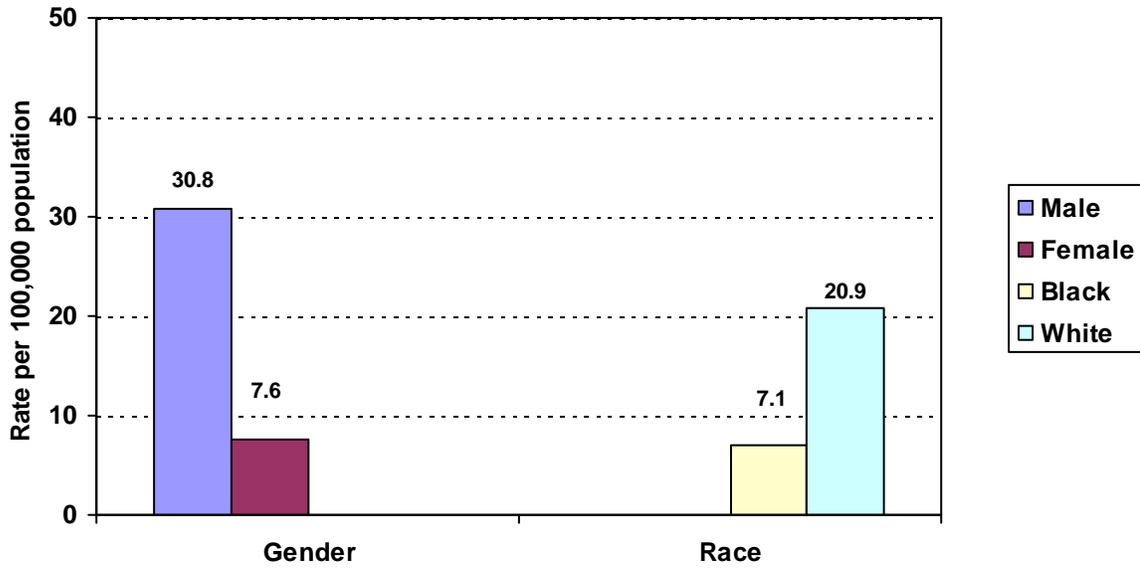
Note: Some values are zero or not available due to low count so the lines appear "broken".

## SECTION II: SUICIDE

Table 5: Gender, Race, and Age Group of Suicide Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007					
		Number	%	Rate	CI
<b>Gender</b>					
	Male	101	78.9	30.8	24.8 - 36.8
	Female	27	21.1	7.6	4.7 - 10.5
<b>Race</b>					
	American Indian	0	0	*	*
	Asian	1	0.8	*	*
	Black	7	5.5	7.1	1.8 - 12.4
	White	120	93.8	20.9	17.2 - 24.6
<b>Hispanic</b>					
	Hispanic	1	0.8	*	*
	Non-Hispanic	127	99.2	19.4	16 - 22.8
<b>Age Group</b>					
	10 - 14	1	0.8	*	*
	15 - 19	4	3.1	*	*
	20 - 24	8	6.3	18.1	5.6 - 30.6
	25 - 34	21	16.4	19.2	11.0 - 27.4
	35 - 44	34	26.6	28.6	19.0 - 38.2
	45 - 54	27	21.1	23.5	14.6 - 32.4
	55 - 64	17	13.3	18.5	9.7 - 27.3
	65 - 74	12	9.4	22.1	9.6 - 34.6
	75 - 84	4	3.1	*	*
	85 +	0	0	*	*
<b>Total Deaths</b>		<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>		

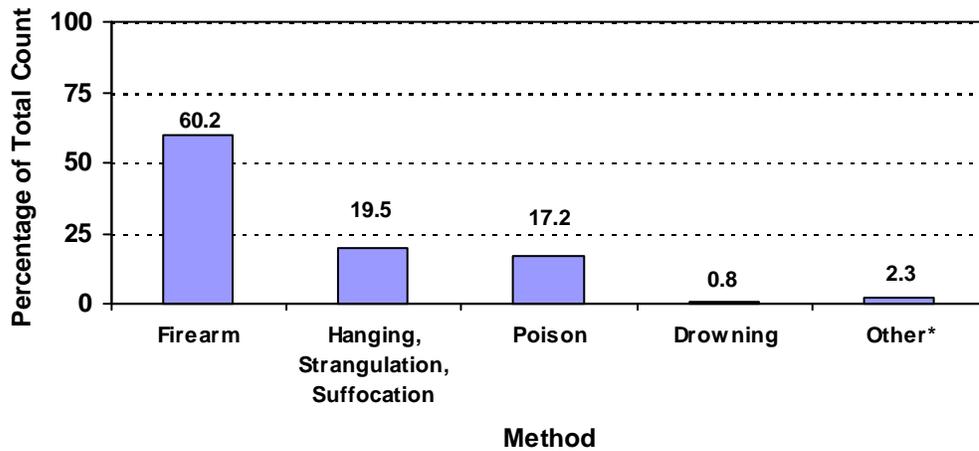
\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Suicide Rates by Gender and Race,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



<b>Table 6: Method of Death for Suicide Deaths in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007</b>			
		<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Method</b>			
	Firearm	77	60.2
	Hanging, Strangulation, Suffocation	25	19.5
	Poisoning	22	17.2
	Drowning	1	0.8
	Fall	1	0.8
	More than One Method	1	0.8
	Other Transport Vehicle	1	0.8
<b>Total Deaths</b>		<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>

**Method of Death for Suicide Deaths,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



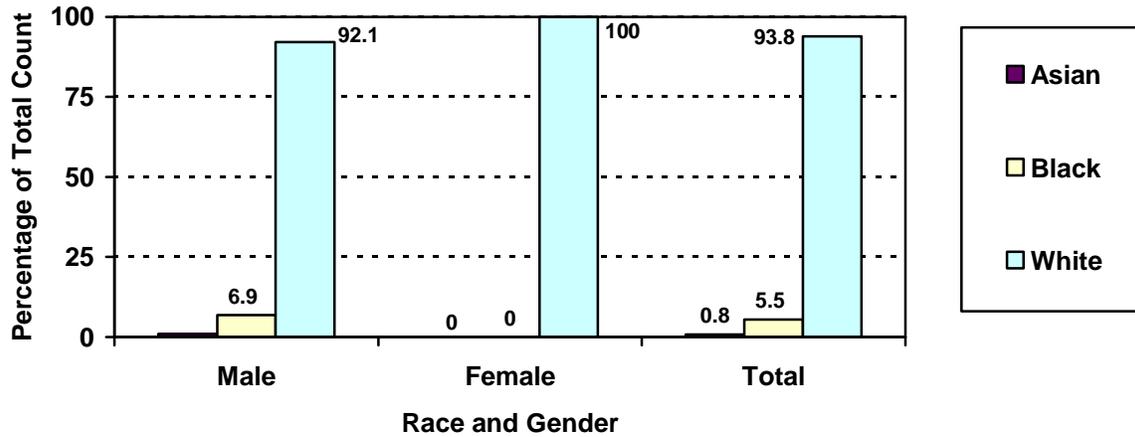
\* Other methods include: blunt instruments, unarmed assaults, fires or burns, motor vehicle, falls, violent shaking, intentional neglect, and other unspecified methods.

**Table 7: Race by Gender of Suicide Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Race	Male				Female				Total	
	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%
Asian	1	1.0	*	*	0	0	*	*	1	0.8
Black	7	6.9	15.7	4.1 - 27.3	0	0	*	*	7	5.5
White	93	92.1	33.4	26.6 - 40.2	27	100.0	9.1	5.7 - 12.5	120	93.8

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Race by Gender of Suicide Victims,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

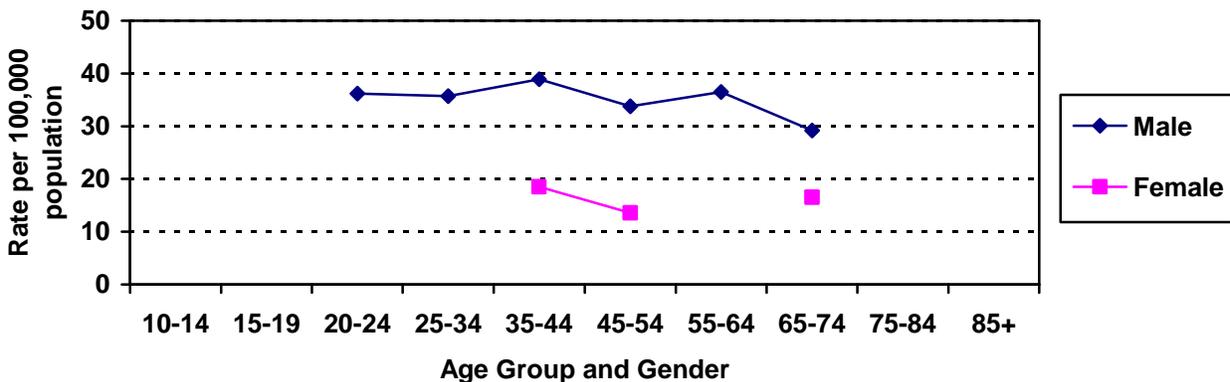


**Table 8: Age Group by Gender of Suicide Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Age Group	Male				Female				Total	
	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%
10 - 14	1	1.0	*	*	0	0	*	*	1	0.8
15 - 19	4	4.0	*	*	0	0	*	*	4	3.1
20 - 24	8	7.9	36.2	11.1 - 61.3	0	0	*	*	8	6.3
25 - 34	19	18.8	35.7	19.7 - 51.7	2	7.4	*	*	21	16.4
35 - 44	23	22.8	38.9	23.0 - 54.8	11	40.7	18.5	7.6 - 29.4	34	26.6
45 - 54	19	18.8	33.8	18.6 - 49.0	8	29.6	13.6	4.2 - 23.0	27	21.1
55 - 64	16	15.8	36.5	18.6 - 54.4	1	3.7	*	*	17	13.3
65 - 74	7	6.9	29.2	7.6 - 50.8	5	18.5	16.5	2.0 - 31.0	12	9.4
75 - 84	4	4.0	*	*	0	0	*	*	4	3.1
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Suicide Rates by Age Group and Gender of Victims, Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



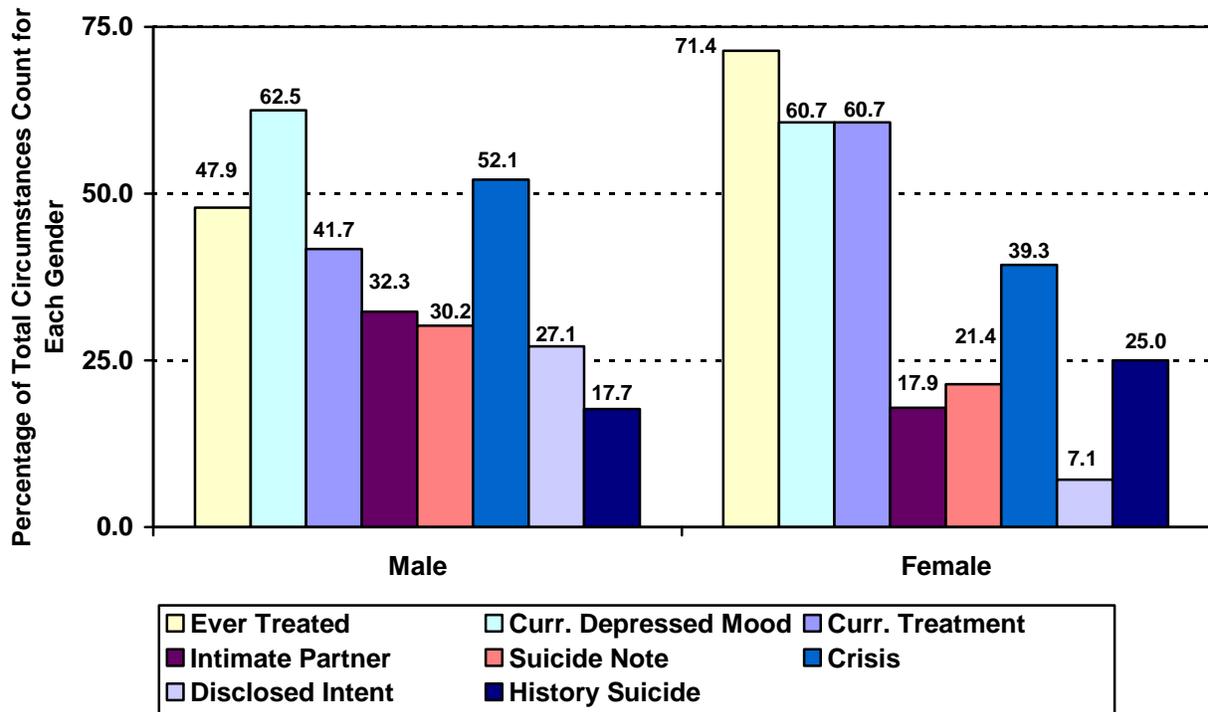
Note: Some values are zero or not available due to low count so the lines appear "broken".

**Table 9: Circumstances of Suicide Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Victim Circumstances</b>						
Current depressed mood	60	62.5	17	60.7	77	62.1
Current treatment for mental illness	40	41.7	17	60.7	57	46.0
Ever treated for mental illness	46	47.9	20	71.4	66	53.2
Alcohol problem	15	15.6	5	17.9	20	16.1
Other substance problem	18	18.8	3	10.7	21	16.9
Left a suicide note	29	30.2	6	21.4	35	28.2
Disclosed intent to commit suicide	26	27.1	2	7.1	28	22.6
History of suicide attempts	17	17.7	7	25.0	24	19.4
Crisis in past two weeks	50	52.1	11	39.3	61	49.2
Physical health problem	21	21.9	3	10.7	24	19.4
Intimate partner problem	31	32.3	5	17.9	36	29.0
Other relationship problem	11	11.5	5	17.9	16	12.9
Job problem	18	18.8	1	3.6	19	15.3
School problem	1	1.0	0	0	1	0.8
Financial problem	10	10.4	3	10.7	13	10.5
Suicide of family or friend in past 5 years	3	3.1	0	0	3	2.4
Other death of friend/ family	9	9.4	3	10.7	12	9.7
Recent criminal/ legal problem	10	10.4	0	0	10	8.1
Other legal problems	3	3.1	1	3.6	4	3.2
Perpetrator of interpersonal violence in past month	9	9.4	2	7.1	11	8.9
Victim of interpersonal violence in past month	0	0	1	3.6	1	0.8

\* Circumstances are only available for 1,000 of the 1,085 suicide deaths where age was  $\geq 10$ . The denominator of the percentage is the total number of suicide victims for each gender category who had circumstance data available. Each suicide victim may have 0 to many circumstances.

**Circumstances by Gender for Suicide Victims,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



\* Note: Multiple options are available therefore such responses add up to more than 100%. This figure does not include all circumstances.

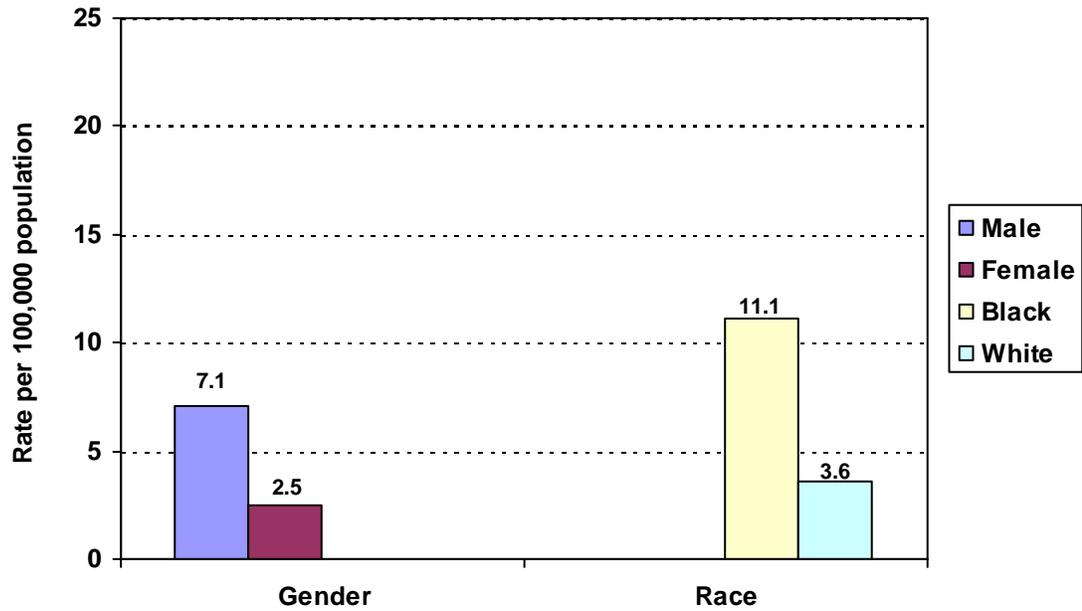
<b>Table 10: Mental Illnesses Under Treatment at the Time of Suicide in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007</b>			
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Mental Illness</b>			
Depression/ Dysthymia	43	18	61
Bipolar Disorder	2	2	4
Anxiety Disorder	3	1	4
Unknown	1	1	2
Schizophrenia	1	0	1
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	1	0	1
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder	0	1	1

### SECTION III: HOMICIDE

Table 11: Gender, Race, and Age Group of Homicide Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007					
		Number	%	Rate	CI
<b>Gender</b>					
	Male	27	73.0	7.1	4.4 - 9.8
	Female	10	27.0	2.5	1.0 - 4.0
<b>Race</b>					
	American Indian	0	0	*	*
	Asian	0	0	*	*
	Black	13	35.1	11.1	5.1 - 17.1
	White	24	64.9	3.6	2.1 - 5.1
<b>Hispanic</b>					
	Hispanic	0	0	*	*
	Non-Hispanic	37	100	4.9	3.3 - 6.5
<b>Age Group</b>					
	< 1	0	0	*	*
	1 - 4	1	2.7	*	*
	5 - 9	0	0	*	*
	10 - 14	0	0	*	*
	15 - 19	2	5.4	*	*
	20 - 24	7	18.9	15.8	4.1 - 27.5
	25 - 34	15	40.5	13.7	6.7 - 20.7
	35 - 44	5	13.5	4.2	0.5 - 7.9
	45 - 54	3	8.1	*	*
	55 - 64	1	2.7	*	*
	65 - 74	1	2.7	*	*
	75 - 84	2	5.4	*	*
	85 +	0	0	*	*
<b>Total Deaths</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>		

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

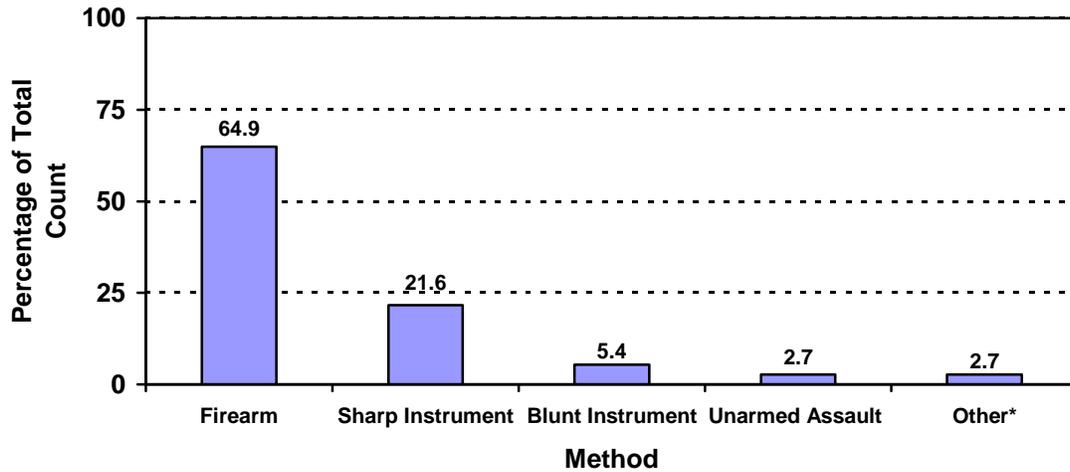
### Homicide Rates by Gender and Race, Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007



**Table 12: Method of Death for Homicide Deaths in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Method	Number	%
Firearm	24	64.9
Sharp Instrument	8	21.6
Blunt Instrument	2	5.4
Fall	1	2.7
Fire or Burns	1	2.7
Unarmed Assault	1	2.7
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

**Method of Death for Homicide Deaths, Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



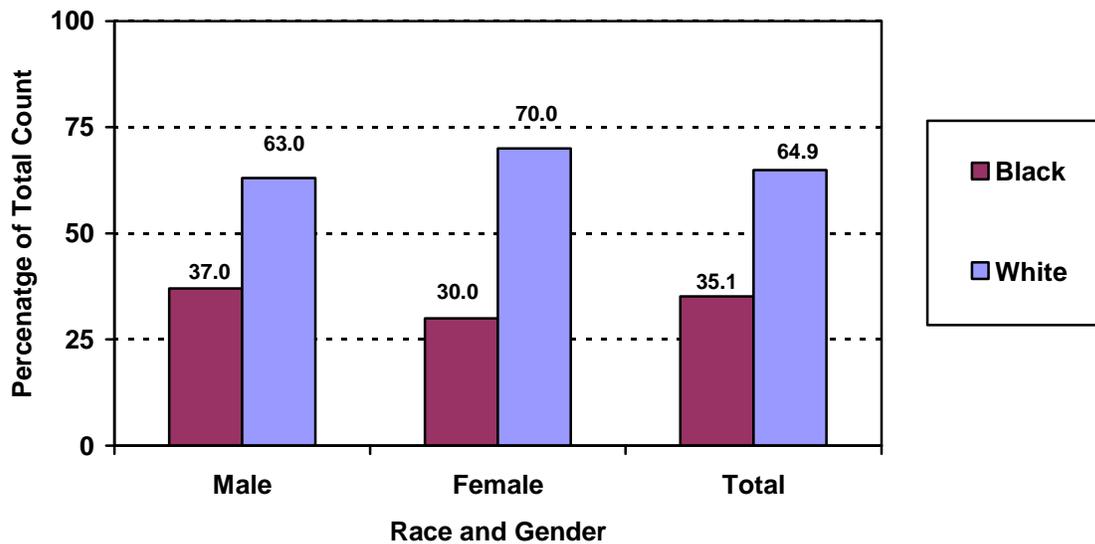
\* Other methods include: fires or burns, drowning, motor vehicle, falls, violent shaking, intentional neglect, and other unspecified methods.

**Table 13: Race by Gender of Homicide Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Race	Male				Female				Total	
	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%
Black	10	37.0	18.5	7.0 – 30.0	3	30.0	*	*	13	35.1
White	17	63.0	5.3	2.8 - 7.8	7	70.0	2.1	0.6 - 3.6	24	64.9

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Race by Gender of Homicide Victims,  
Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

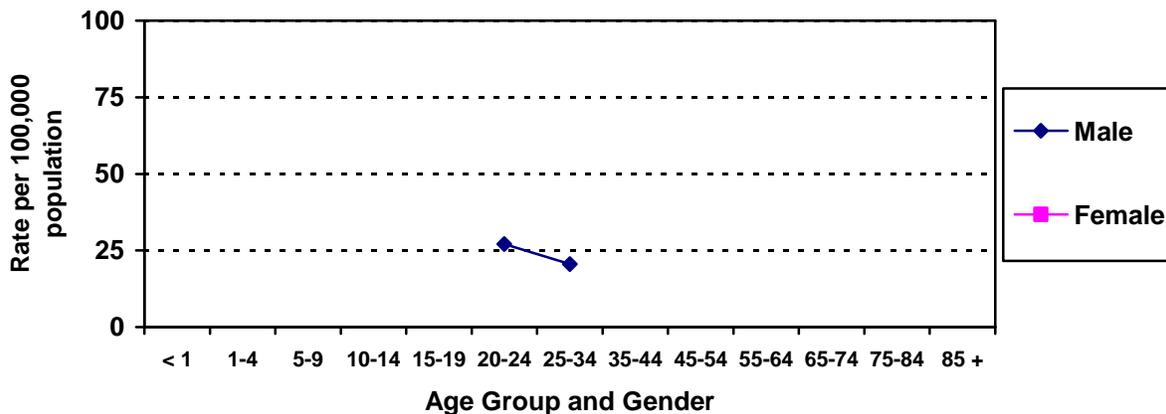


**Table 14: Age Group by Gender of Homicide Victims in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Age Group	Male				Female				Total	
	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%	Rate	CI	Number	%
1 - 4	1	3.7	*	*	0	0	*	*	1	2.7
10 - 14	2	7.4	*	*	0	0	*	*	2	5.4
15 - 19	6	22.2	27.1	5.4 - 48.8	1	10.0	*	*	7	18.9
20 - 24	11	40.7	20.6	8.4 - 32.8	4	40.0	*	*	15	40.5
25 - 34	3	11.1	*	*	2	20.0	*	*	5	13.5
35 - 44	1	3.7	*	*	2	20.0	*	*	3	8.1
45 - 54	0	0	*	*	1	10.0	*	*	1	2.7
55 - 64	1	3.7	*	*	0	0	*	*	1	2.7
65 - 74	2	7.4	*	*	0	0	*	*	2	5.4
75 - 84	2	1.9	*	*	0	0	*	*	2	1.7
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>			<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

\* The number of deaths was zero or too small to support the calculation of a rate.

**Homicide Rates by Age Group and Gender of Victims, Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**



Note: Some values are zero or not available due to low count so the lines appear "broken".

<b>Table 15: Circumstances of Homicides in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007</b>			
		<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Event Circumstances</b>			
	Other argument, abuse, or conflict	19	55.9
	Precipitated by another serious crime	11	32.4
	Intimate partner violence related	7	20.6
	Jealousy (lovers triangle)	2	5.9
<b>Victim Characteristics</b>			
	Victim used a weapon	4	11.8
	Victim was a bystander	2	5.9
	Justifiable self defense	1	2.9

\*The denominator of the percentage is the total number of homicide victims who had circumstance data available. Each homicide victim may have anywhere from zero to many circumstances.

<b>Table 16: Crimes Precipitating Homicides in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007</b>			
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Crime</b>			
Robbery	3	3	6
Arson	1	1	2
Drug Trade	1	0	1
Motor Vehicle Theft	1	0	1
Rape, Sexual Assault	0	1	1

**Table 17: Type of Weapon by Manner of Death in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**

Weapon Type	Manner of Death										Total	
	Suicide		Homicide		Unintentional Firearm		Legal Intervention		Undetermined Intent			
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Firearm	77	59.7	24	64.9	3	100.0	1	100.0	0	0	105	59.0
Poisoning	23	17.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	50.0	27	15.2
Hanging, Strangulation, Suffocation	25	19.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	14.0
Sharp Instrument	0	0	8	21.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	4.5
Blunt Instrument	0	0	2	5.4	0	0	0	0	1	12.5	3	1.7
Unarmed Assault	0	0	1	2.7	0	0	0	0	1	12.5	2	1.1
Fall	1	0.8	1	2.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1.1
Drowning	1	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
Fire or Burns	0	0	1	2.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
Motor Vehicle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	12.5	1	0.6
Other Transport Vehicle	1	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
More than One Method	1	0.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	12.5	1	0.6
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 18: Type of Firearm by Manner of Death in Gaston County, NC; 2004 - 2007**  
***For Firearm Deaths only***

Firearm Type	Manner of Death								Total	
	Suicide		Homicide		Unintentional Firearm		Legal Intervention			
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Handgun	49	63.6	15	62.5	1	33.3	1	100.0	66	62.9
Shotgun	16	20.8	2	8.3	0	0	0	0	18	17.1
Rifle	12	15.6	3	12.5	2	66.7	0	0	17	16.2
Unknown Firearm Type	0	0	4	16.7	0	0	0	0	4	3.8
<b>Total Deaths</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>

## **GLOSSARY**

Adult	Person was 18 years of age or older on date of death.
Child	Person was less than 18 years of age on date of death.
Legal intervention	Decedent was killed by a police officer or some other peace officer, including military police, acting in the line of duty. Includes legal executions.
Occurrent death	Death occurred in NC. Decedent may or may not have been a NC resident at the time of death.
Peace officer	Person with specified legal authority to use deadly force.
Rates	Calculated as count x 100,000/population.
Resident death	Victim was a NC resident at the time of death and the death occurred in NC. All deaths reported in this report are resident deaths.
Undetermined intent	A death resulting from the use of force or power against oneself or another person for which the evidence indicating the manner of death was not sufficient to determine intent.
Violent death	Intentional use of physical force or power against oneself, another person, or against a group or community. Deaths meeting this definition include suicides, homicides, and legal interventions.



State of North Carolina • Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary  
Division of Public Health • Jeffrey P. Engel, State Health Director  
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch

[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov) • [www.ncpublichealth.com](http://www.ncpublichealth.com) • [www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov)

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