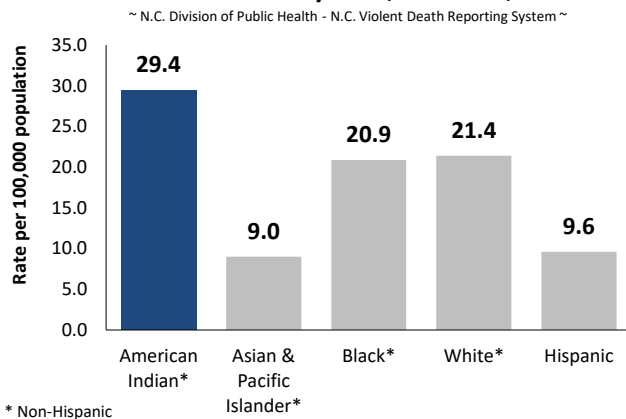# VIOLENT DEATHS AMONG AMERICAN INDIANS IN NORTH CAROLINA: 2008-2017

The North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System (NC-VDRS) is a CDC-funded statewide surveillance system that collects detailed information on deaths that occur in North Carolina 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 all deaths from violence among non-Hispanic (NH) American Indian residents for the years 2008-2017.

North Carolina Violent Death Reporting System

Violent Death Rate by Race, NC-VDRS, 2008-2017
~ N.C. Division of Public Health - N.C. Violent Death Reporting System ~

* Non-Hispanic

• For the year 2017, there were 122,735 NH American Indians living in North Carolina, accounting for 1.2% of the state's population.
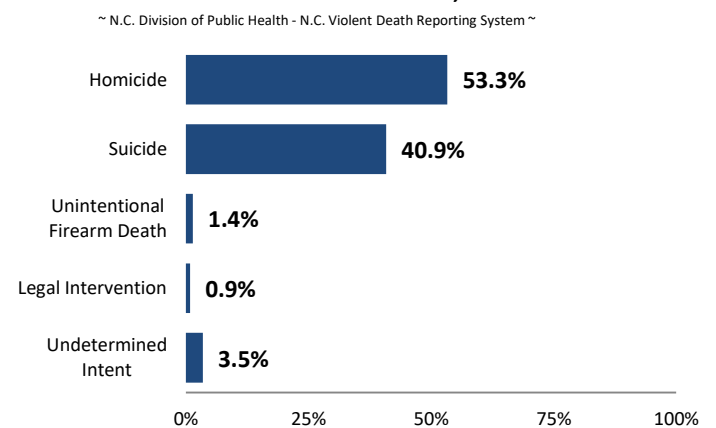
• NH American Indians had the highest rate of violent death by race in North Carolina for the years 2008-2017 (29.4 per 100,000 population).

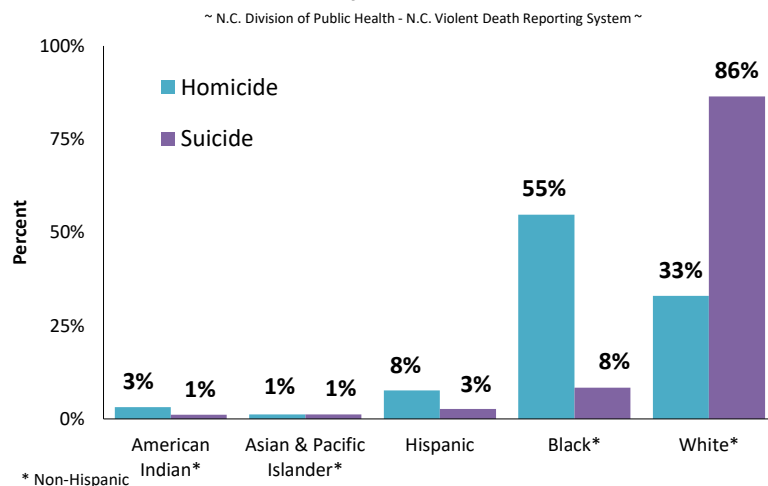• From 2008-2017, 345 NH American Indians in North Carolina died by violence.

• There were 184 homicides (53.3%), 141 suicides (40.9%), five unintentional firearm deaths (1.4%), three deaths from legal interventions (<1%), and 12 deaths of undetermined intent (3.5%).

Manner of Death: NC-VDRS
NH American Indian Violent Deaths, 2008-2017
~ N.C. Division of Public Health - N.C. Violent Death Reporting System ~

Manner of Death by Race: NC-VDRS, 2008-2017
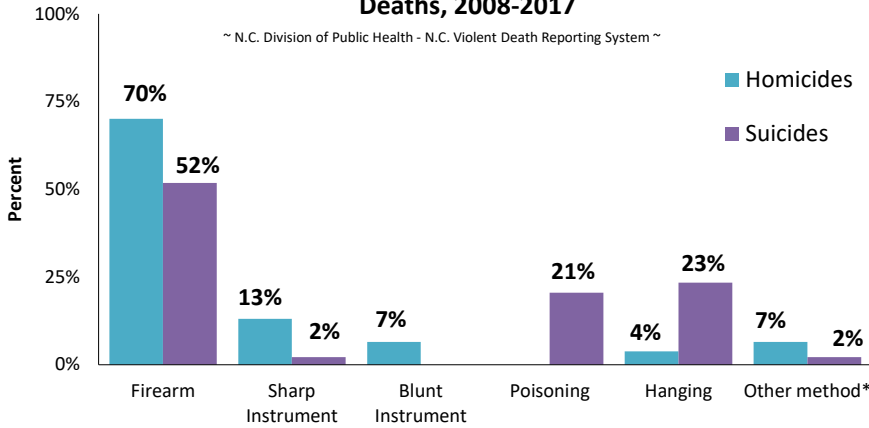~ N.C. Division of Public Health - N.C. Violent Death Reporting System ~

* Non-Hispanic

• NH American Indians accounted for 3.2% of all homicides and 1.1% of all suicides, across all racial groups in North Carolina from 2008 to 2017.

• In contrast, 54.8% of all homicide victims were NH black and 86.5% of all suicide vicitims were NH white from 2008 to 2017.

Method of Death: NC-VDRS, NH American Indian Violent Deaths, 2008-2017

~ N.C. Division of Public Health - N.C. Violent Death Reporting System ~

Legend: Homicides, Suicides

Method	Homicides	Suicides
Firearm	70%	52%
Sharp Instrument	13%	2%
Blunt Instrument	7%	
Poisoning		21%
Hanging	4%	23%
Other method*	7%	2%

*Other includes fire/burns, unarmed assault, falls, and other methods of death.

• Of all homicides among NH American Indians with known circumstance information, more than half (57.4%) involved an argument or conflict.

• Another serious crime (e.g., robbery, buglary) precipitated 35.5% of homicides among NH American

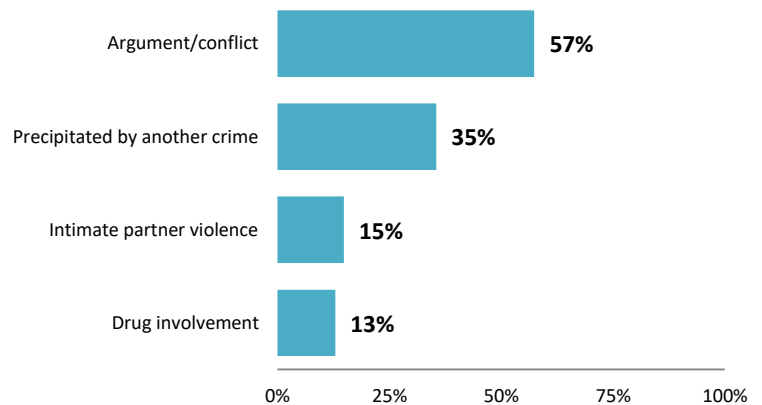• Of these homicides, 12.9% were suspected to have been related to drug dealing, trade, or use.

• The majority of homicides (70.1%) and suicides (51.8%) among NH American Indians were committed using firearms.

• The second most common method of homicide was sharp instruments (13.0%).

• The second most common method of suicide was hanging (23.4%).

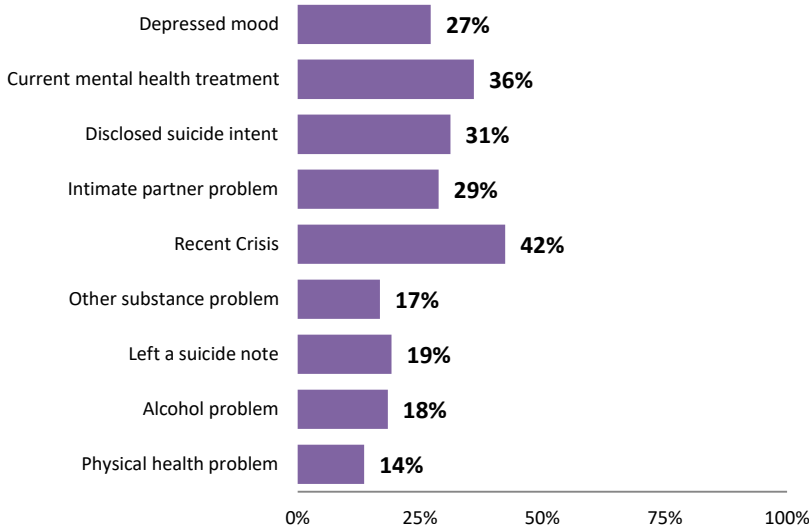## Homicide Circumstances* Among NH American Indians, 2008-2017

~ N.C. Division of Public Health - N.C. Violent Death Reporting System ~

Circumstance	Percent
Argument/conflict	57%
Precipitated by another crime	35%
Intimate partner violence	15%
Drug involvement	13%

* 84.2% of homicide cases had circumstance information.

Suicide Circumstances* Among NH American Indians, 2008-2017

~ N.C. Division of Public Health - N.C. Violent Death Reporting System ~

Circumstance	Percent
Depressed mood	27%
Current mental health treatment	36%
Disclosed suicide intent	31%
Intimate partner problem	29%
Recent Crisis	42%
Other substance problem	17%
Left a suicide note	19%
Alcohol problem	18%
Physical health problem	14%

* 88.7% of suicide cases had circumstance information.

• Among NH American Indian suicide victims with known circumstance information, 27.2% were characterized as being depressed when they completed suicide.

• More than a third (36%) of victims were receiving treatment for a mental health problem.

• More than a quarter (28.8%) of suicide victims experienced an intimate partner problem, and 16.8 percent experienced some substance use

NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Public Health

North Carolina Violent Death
NC VDRS
Reporting System