2021 Durham Community Gang Assessment

SUBMITTED FEBRUARY 28,2022

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List of Abbreviations

Centers for Disease Control	CDC
Durham County Department of Public Health	DCDPH
Durham County Sheriff's Office	DCSO
Durham Office on Youth	DOY
Durham Police Department	DPD
Durham Public Schools	DPS
Federal Bureau of Investigation	FBI
Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee	GRSSC
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council	JCPC
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction	NCDPI
North Carolina Department of Public Safety	NCDPS
North Carolina Youth Risk and Behavior Survey	NC YRBS
North Carolina Assessment of Risk	NCAR
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	OJJDP
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	PTSD
Social Vulnerability Index	SVI
Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument™	YASI™

Acknowledgements

Michelle Young Consulting would like to express our appreciation to the City of Durham and Durham County for underwriting this report and to the Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee and the Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee for coordinating and providing project management for this study.

David Johnson and Charles Johnson from Bull City United were responsible for connecting with gang-involved or associated individuals in Durham and conducting face to face interviews with this group of people. These interviews provide valuable information that can help community members, professionals and policymakers better understand local gang issues and implement strategies to more effectively assist young people involved in gangs.

We would like to express our appreciation to the individuals who participated in these interviews, and who so candidly and openly shared their life experiences with us for their valuable contributions to this report.

Jason Schiess, Manager, Analytical Services Division and Mary Ann Roberts, Supervisor, Crime Analysis Unit for Durham Police Department spent considerable time cleaning and preparing police incident report and suspect/victim demographic data for this report and carefully reviewed the police incident report data section of this report. We are indebted to them for this assistance.

This study was also guided by an assessment advisory committee that helped to craft questions for surveys and reviewed individual data sets to provide input and guidance. We are grateful for the time they committed to participate in survey and data review meetings and their painstaking work of reviewing report sections for this report.

2021 Durham Gang Assessment Advisory Committee

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Tina Ingram	Durham Public Schools	Karmisha Wallace	City of Durham

We also want to express our thanks to the over 1,300 people in Durham: residents, community leaders, youth-serving agency personnel, school personnel and public safety personnel who took the time to participate in surveys for this report.

Abstract

Beginning in 2021, the Durham Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee (GRSSC) commissioned an updated community gang assessment for Durham. The GRSSC community gang assessment used the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2009).

This report presents five key findings and related recommendations arising from that exercise.

Key finding 1: What is the most acute problem related to gangs/violence in Durham and where is it most acute?

At least 12 census tracts/neighborhoods in Durham are currently affected by extremely high rates of violent person incidents (aggravated assault and homicide) that are up to 7.5 times higher than Durham's overall rate per capita of these crimes. Eight of these census tracts have experienced high rates of violence since the last community gang assessment was conducted in Durham. Violence exposure in these areas is exacerbated by extreme poverty and exposure to other social vulnerabilities that have remained mostly unchanged since 2014.

Key finding 2: Why are youth in Durham joining gangs? What risk factors locally must be addressed to keep youth out of gangs?

Young people in Durham experience an elevated level of exposure to risk factors for gang involvement, including substance use, delinquency, the presence of gangs in their neighborhood and at school, family gang involvement, victimization, and exposure to violence. This level of risk exposure is higher for youth who enter the juvenile justice system and highest for gang involved individuals.

Key finding 3: What is keeping young people in gangs? What must be addressed to help gang-involved individuals exit gangs?

Research indicates that young people who join gangs become disconnected from mainstream pursuits. Gang involved individuals in Durham have difficulty exiting gangs because of high rates of school dropout, unemployment/underemployment, substance use, gang activity in the neighborhood, and a need to replace the social and emotional needs currently met by their gang.

Key finding 4: How is this issue affecting the wider community? What should motivate policymakers to address the problem?

People who live and work in Durham experience the gang issue very differently depending on their role and location. In some neighborhoods, gangs are deeply imbedded in the neighborhood's culture which plays a key role in the decision to join a gang in Durham. Other neighborhoods experience gang issues indirectly. However, surveys across constituency groups indicates that the widespread nature of gang activity and community violence in Durham reduces quality of life for residents across the community.

Key finding 5: How well is the current response to gangs working? What should be done differently in the future?

All constituency groups that participated in this study described low levels of satisfaction with the current response to gangs and identified specific deficits that have caused this dissatisfaction. These issues include a failure to address the underlying conditions that give rise to gangs, a lack of awareness about the current

responses to gangs across constituency groups, lack of information about the results of current strategies, and concerns about criminal justice policies.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Implement intensive, place-based strategies to address underlying social conditions that increase the vulnerability of children and youth in the most violence affected census tracts to gang involvement

Recommendation 2: Implement comprehensive, intensive, and neighborhood-based service delivery specifically for gang-involved individuals in the highest violence neighborhoods.

Recommendation 3: Because of the elevated level of gang exposure/involvement and youth risk exposure locally, Durham policymakers should expand available gang prevention and intervention programming, localize these services in the most violence/gang affected census tracts, and prioritize these services for children and youth who are at the highest level of risk of involvement in violence and gangs

Recommendation 4: More regularly collect and report data that reflects the progress of the community's gang violence reduction efforts.

Recommendation 5: Institute standardized performance measures to track reductions in violence and improve existing criminogenic social conditions at the census tract level and more regularly report the outcomes attained by gang prevention, intervention and desistance strategies to policymakers and the community at the census tract level.

Executive Summary

Durham conducted its first community gang assessment in 2006-07 (Howell and Lamm Weisel, 2007) and conducted a follow-up community gang assessment in 2013 (Stuit, 2014). These assessments resulted in recommendations that were utilized as goals and objectives that the Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee has been tracking for almost 15 years.

In 2019, Durham's rate of homicides, robberies, and violent offenses overall were the 2nd highest of the 6 largest cities in North Carolina. While this statistic is concerning, at the census tract level, the rate of homicides and aggravated assaults per capita is significantly higher. There are at least 12 census tracts/neighborhoods in Durham that experience violent person offenses (homicides and aggravated assaults) at a rate that is between 1.5 and 7.5 times higher than Durham's overall rate per capita of these crimes. Eight of these census tracts have experienced high rates of violence since the last community gang assessment was conducted in Durham. Across constituencies that participated in this assessment process, there was a high degree of concern about violent crime, gun crime and gang activity in Durham.

Neighborhood level gang activity and violence plays a crucial role in the cycle of gang membership in Durham. Gang-involved individuals reported elevated levels of violence in their own neighborhoods (92.5% reported that someone was shot in their neighborhood at least monthly, 80% reported that someone was robbed at least monthly in their neighborhood). Gang-involved individuals reported that the top issue caused by gangs in Durham is violent crime. Over 90% of the gang-involved individuals interviewed reported that they know someone personally who has shot, injured, or killed someone. Most gang-involved individuals interviewed reported joining a gang because it was part of their neighborhood's culture (70.0%) and 87.5% of these individuals report that their gang protects them.

Violence exposure in these census tracts is exacerbated by extreme poverty and exposure to other social vulnerabilities that have remained mostly unchanged since 2014. The nine census tracts that were examined in detail in the 2013-14 Durham Community Gang Assessment were found to have elevated levels of risk factor exposure across multiple areas (Stuit, 2014). During the period reviewed for this report (2018-2020),eight of the nine tracts continued to experience high rates of risk factors including poverty, low educational attainment, disrupted family structures, and children living in poverty

Youth in Durham experience elevated risk exposure compared to youth in other parts of the state in several different areas of risk. These include exposure to gangs in the home, neighborhood, and school; criminal and gang involvement by family members; parental abuse/neglect; access to and use of drugs; delinquent behavior and involvement with the juvenile justice system; and access to and use of firearms. While the global population of youth in Durham report exposure to these factors at higher rates than youth statewide, this risk exposure is higher for youth involved in the juvenile justice system and gang-involved individuals report the most acute levels of risk exposure in these areas.

Gang involved individuals reported an elevated level of disengagement from mainstream pursuits: two-thirds of interview participants ages 18+ (63.9%) reported having less than a high school diploma or GED and two-thirds (65.0%) were unemployed at the time of the interview. This disconnection from the mainstream is worsened by high rates of drug use and engagement with criminally involved peers. While

interview participants were not asked about their personal involvement in crime, over 90% of interview participants 90% reported knowing someone personally who was involved in violent criminal activity up to aggravated assault and homicide. Gang-involved individuals also reported very high rates of exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) which may mean that they may also experience mental health issues at higher rates than the overall population. While most of these individuals are disconnected from mainstream pursuits, they are highly and emotionally connected to their gang, with 95% of gang-involved individuals reporting that their gang is like a family to them.

Community residents, community leaders, public safety personnel, youth-serving agency personnel, school personnel and gang-involved individuals reported substantial concerns about gang activity and violence in Durham. Many residents and gang-involved individuals described limiting their daily activities because of potential exposure to violence, which restricts their ability to freely enjoy their lives and feel safe in their own homes and neighborhoods. As a result, respondents across all constituency groups expressed low levels of satisfaction with the current response to gangs, indicating a low level of awareness and access to information about current efforts to address gang activity and violence in Durham.

Key Findings

Key finding 1: What is the most acute problem related to gangs/violence in Durham and where is it most acute?

At least 12 census tracts/neighborhoods in Durham are currently affected by extremely high rates of violent person incidents (aggravated assault and homicide) that are up to 7.5 times higher than Durham's overall rate per capita of these crimes. Eight of these census tracts have experienced high rates of violence since the last community gang assessment was conducted in Durham. Violence exposure in these areas is exacerbated by extreme poverty and exposure to other social vulnerabilities that have remained mostly unchanged since 2014.

For this report, violent person incidents were examined at the census tract level and rates of violent incidents per 100,000 people were calculated. This is a standard measurement of criminal incidents that allows the level of crime to be examined across areas of varying population and geographic sizes. Examining violence exposure per capita along with other risk factor exposure can provide policymakers with valuable information on the geographic area of the community that is the most acutely affected by community-level violence and other criminogenic risk factors. Utilizing this analysis, 12 census tracts were identified that experienced elevated levels of violent person incidents per 100,000 people between 2018 and 2020.

Table 1. Homicide and aggravated assault per 100k persons (2018-2020 3-year average rate)

Census tract	3-year average rate
14	2544.8
13.01	1929.6
11	1885.0
23	1837.1
10.01	1268.2
9	1267.1
10.02	1140.9
22	908.7
17.09	899.9
1.01	846.6
13.04	840.4
18.02	562.3
City of Durham	337.5

These 12 census tracts experience violent person incidents (aggravated assault and homicide) at a rate that is between 1.6 and 7.5 times higher than the citywide rate.

The Durham Community Gang Assessment conducted during 2013-2014 (Stuit, 2014) identified 9 census tracts that were affected by disproportionately elevated levels of violent incidents. These 9 census tracts were also found to have high rates of underlying social conditions that contribute to children and youth becoming involved in the criminal justice system and gangs. Eight of the nine census tracts identified in the 2013-14 Durham Community Gang Assessment are among the 12 census tracts identified in the analysis for this report as having high rates per 100,00 persons of violent person incidents (See blue highlights on Table 1).

During 2018-2020, the number of violent person incidents and robbery of an individual (typically street-level robberies that are frequently connected to gang activities) in these 12 census tracts comprised a substantial percentage of all crimes in these categories that occurred citywide. Over half of homicides and aggravated assaults in the city of Durham occurred in these 12 census tracts and 45% of robberies of an individual (Table 2, p. 14). The rate of these incidents (2018-2020) per square mile was 157.6 in the 12 census tracts, compared to 38.9 citywide. The rate of these incidents per 100k persons for the 12 census tracts is 3.2 times higher than the rate citywide.

Table 2. Selected rates of violent crime in 12 census tracts and city of Durham overall from 2018-2020

	2019 Population	Square miles	Homicides	Aggravated assault	Robbery of an individual	Rate per square mile	3-year average rate per 100k population
12 census tracts	43,679	13.9	64	1426	700	157.6	1671.3
City of Durham	279,447	112.6	106	2723	1551	38.9	522.5
Percent of total	15.4%	12.4%	60.4%	52.4%	45.1%		

Neighborhood level gang activity and violence plays a crucial role in the cycle of gang membership in Durham. Data was not available from Durham Police Department to assess the demographic characteristics of gang involved individuals, including their geographic distribution in Durham County. Further, the level of reported gang member participation in violent crimes was not consistent enough over the three-year period to reliably predict the most gang-affected neighborhoods.

However, data derived from the gang member interviews is helpful in establishing the tie between gangs and interpersonal violence in Durham. Gang-involved individuals reported elevated levels of violence in their own neighborhoods (92.5% reported that someone was shot in their neighborhood at least monthly, 80% reported that someone was robbed at least monthly in their neighborhood). Gang-involved individuals reported that the top issue caused by gangs in Durham is violent crime. Over 90% of the gang-involved individuals interviewed reported that they know someone personally who has shot, injured, or killed someone. Most gang-involved individuals interviewed reported joining a gang because it was part of their neighborhood's culture (70.0%) and 87.5% of these individuals report that their gang protects them.

In addition to elevated levels of violent crime, the nine census tracts explored in during in the 2013-14 Durham Community Gang Assessment were identified as experiencing high levels of risk factor exposure across multiple areas (Stuit, 2014). Eight of the nine tracts continue to experience high rates of risk factors including poverty, low educational attainment, disrupted family structures, and children living in poverty (Table 3). Blue highlights were placed over areas where issues became more acute by census tract between 2013 and 2019.

Table 3. Designated census tracts by key measures, 2013 and 2019

	Population in poverty		Persons 25+ with less than high school diploma		Single-headed households		% children in poverty
2013 tracts	2013	2019	2013	2019	2013	2019	2019
9	58.1%	29%	38.7%	33%	38.1%	46%	54%
10.01	43.7%	31%	38.4%	41.8%	34.2%	47%	40%
10.02	30.8%	55%	35.8%	40.9%	43.1%	57%	73%
11	44.2%	41%	27.6%	26.7%	31.5%	42%	61%
13.01	45.6%	26%	25.3%	20.5%	37.1%	47%	82%
13.04	37.1%	40%	42.0%	30.2%	34.9%	67%	68%
14	58.7%	51%	36.3%	32.4	62.6%	73%	80%
23	59.7%	43%	43.4%	19.7%	35.3%	17%	55%
Additional census tracts explored in this report							
1.01		29%		15%		39%	48%
17.09		33%		25%		41%	50%
18.02		25%		26%		45%	47%

22		20%	3	9%		17%	32%

Across constituencies that participated in this assessment process, there was a high degree of concern about violent crime, gun crime and gang activity in Durham.

Key finding 2: Why are youth in Durham joining gangs? What risk factors locally must be addressed to keep youth out of gangs?

Young people in Durham experience an elevated level of exposure to risk factors for gang involvement, including substance use, delinquency, the presence of gangs in their neighborhood and at school, family gang involvement, victimization, and exposure to violence. This level of risk exposure is higher for youth who enter the juvenile justice system and highest for gang involved individuals.

Numerous studies over the past 20 years have identified criminogenic risk factors as well as risk factors for gang involvement. The more risk factors a young person is exposed to, the greater their vulnerability to gang involvement. In one large-scale study, youth who experienced risk factors across all five domains of risk were 40 times more likely to join a gang than those with risk in just one domain (Howell, 2010).

Risk factor exposure by local youth is tracked every two years using the North Carolina Youth Risk and Behavior Survey (NC YRBS). Risk factor exposure by juvenile court-involved juveniles is tracked regularly by court counselors at the point of intake and over the course of the juvenile's court involvement. Risk exposure of gang-involved individuals was assessed during the gang member interviews conducted for this study. The information analyzed for this report indicates that youth in Durham experience elevated risk exposure in multiple areas.

Exposure to violence in the community

The risk exposure most reported for Durham youth by professionals who regularly interact with youth is community-level violence exposure. All youth-serving agency personnel reported that youth they serve are exposed to this risk factor, as well as 82.3% of public safety personnel and 78.8% of school personnel. This risk exposure was covered extensively in Key Finding 1. While the youth risk assessment tools currently utilized in the school and juvenile justice systems do not collect data on this risk factor, youth from the Durham Youth Listening Sessions addressed this topic specifically, as well as the cycle of weapon-carrying by youth that is connected to community-level violence exposure: "Other safety concerns shared by young people included guns, gangs, and violence in schools. Several young people who do not feel safe in Durham mentioned the need to carry weapons" (Durham Office on Youth, 2021). Gang involved individuals reported very high levels of community violence: 92.5% report that someone is shot in their neighborhood at least monthly. The high rates of violence in specific Durham neighborhoods expose children and youth to trauma and may cause youth to seek protection by joining a gang.

Exposure to gangs in school, the community, and/or in their family

First, while youth exposure to gangs at school has decreased since 2015, youth in Durham continue to report high rates of exposure to gang members at school and in the community. About one in five (19%) of middle school students and 34% of high school students in Durham reported gang activity in their school in 2019 (DCDPH, 2021). Gang exposure at school was higher for Black high school students (40% reported in 2019). In 2021, the percentage of juvenile court-involved juveniles who reported being a gang member or gang associate was 3.1 times higher than the statewide average (NCDPS, 2021) (Table 4, p. 15).

Table 4. Durham youth exposure to and involvement in gangs (2019 and 2021)

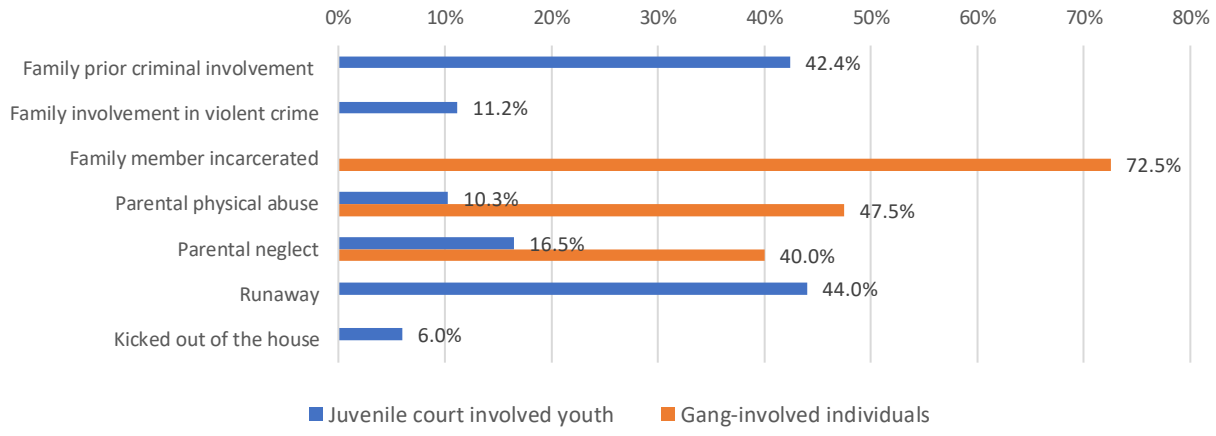
Durham youth reporting gang activity in their school (DCDPH, 2021)			Durham juvenile court-involved juveniles reporting personal/family gang involvement (NCDPS, 2021))			Gang involved individuals
All middle school students	All high school students	Black high school students	Gang associate	Gang member	Gang-involved family members	Gang involved family members
19%	34%	40%	20.5%	15.4%	3.4%	85.5%
			Statewide juvenile court-involved juveniles			
			8.5%	3.0%	*1.3%*	

The rate of court-involved juveniles in Durham reporting family members involved in gangs was 2.6 times higher than the statewide percentage (NCDPS, 2021). Most gang-involved individuals interviewed for this report (85.0%) indicate that they have family members involved in gangs and 62.5% joined the gang because of family members involved in the gang. Over one third of gang-involved individuals (35.5%) indicate that they did not have to follow a process to join the gang because they already had family members in the gang.

Family history of criminal involvement, abuse, and/or neglect

Another significant risk factor for youth in Durham who become involved in both the juvenile justice system and in gangs is a family history of criminal involvement, abuse, and/or neglect. Durham youth involved in the juvenile court are 47.7% more likely to have experienced a prior sustained finding of child neglect versus all juveniles involved in the court statewide (NCDPS, 2021) (Object 1). A sizable percentage of Durham juvenile court-involved juveniles (42.4%) have a family member with prior criminal involvement (NCDPS, 2020). Durham juvenile court-involved juveniles are 83.6% more likely to have a family member with prior violent incidents compared to juvenile court-involved juveniles statewide (NCDPS, 2021). Durham juvenile court-involved juveniles are 91.3% more likely to have been a prior runaway and 11.1% more likely to have been kicked out of their house compared to juvenile court involved youth statewide (NCDPS, 2021).

Object 1. Durham juvenile-court involved youth and gang-involved individuals' exposure to family criminality, abuse, and neglect



Even higher percentages of gang-involved individuals reported a family history of criminal involvement, abuse, and/or neglect. Almost half (47.5%) of gang involved individuals reported being exposed to parental physical abuse, 57.5% reported being exposed to parental verbal/emotional abuse, and 40% reported experiencing parental neglect. Almost three-fourths of gang-involved individuals (72.5%) reported that a family member was incarcerated before their 18th birthday.

Substance use

Substance use is also a significant risk factor for Durham youth. In the 2019 NC YRBS survey, 26% of high school students reported marijuana use in the past month. From 2015 to 2019, the percentage of Durham high school students reporting recent marijuana use surpassed the percentage of high school students reporting recent alcohol use (DCDPH, 2017, 2019, 2021). More than half of juveniles referred to the juvenile court during the first six months of 2021 reported using substances (52%) (NCDPS, 2021). Most (92.5%) of gang involved individuals interviewed reported using marijuana and 62.5% reported using marijuana more than once a day.

Involvement in delinquency

Durham youth involved in the juvenile court are 1.3 times more likely to be assessed as high risk compared to juvenile court involved youth statewide (NCDPS, 2021). Gang-involved individuals report exceptionally high levels of peer involvement in even the most serious crimes.

Access to and use of weapons

While youth in Durham reported lower levels of carrying a weapon to school in 2019 (DCDPH, 2021), juvenile court-involved juveniles in Durham are 40.7% more likely to display a weapon compared to juvenile court-involved juveniles statewide and 86.4% more likely to use a weapon in the commission of a crime. Similarly, most of the gang-involved individuals interviewed reported that it would be very easy to get a pistol (90%) or an assault weapon (87.5%).

Low educational attainment

Only a little more than a third of Durham Public School students in grades 3-8 achieved college and career proficiency on end of grade exams in 2018-19 (37%) and only a little more than a quarter of students in grade 9-12 (27%) scored college and career ready on end of course exams. Low graduation rates in prior years and low rates of educational attainment are particularly apparent within the 12 selected census tracts (see Finding 1), where 9 of 12 census tracts reported that above 20% of residents ages 25 and above had less than a high school diploma. This problem is particularly acute with the gang involved individuals interviewed for this report. Of the individuals aged 14-17, 75% were not currently attending schools and 63.9% of individuals 18 or older had exited school before 12th grade.

School behavior problems

While the Durham Public Schools suspension rate for students has declined markedly over recent years, Black students in Durham Public Schools were still being suspended at a rate that is 7 times higher than White students as of 2019-2020 (Southern Coalition for Social Justice, 2020). For court-involved juveniles, 64.5% were assessed as having serious behavior problems during 2020 (NCDPS, 2020). More than two thirds (69.2%) of gang-involved individuals reported being suspended from school and most were suspended during multiple grades.

Most constituent groups who participated in this assessment process indicated that there is a need for gang prevention and intervention programs and youth programs and recreation (Table 5.) Other prevention/intervention strategies suggested by multiple constituent groups include jobs/job training programs and mentoring programs.

Table 5 Top three thing that should be done in Durham to assist gang involved individuals

Gang-involved individuals	Community residents	Community leaders	School personnel	Youth-serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
Youth programs/ recreation 85.0%	Gang prevention/ intervention 26.2%	Youth programs/ recreation 57.7%	Mentoring programs 36.9%	Gang prevention/ Intervention 54.8%	Increased law enforcement 43.8%
Gang prevention/ intervention 57.5%	Jobs/job training programs 24.7%	Gang prevention/ intervention 50.0%	Youth programs/ recreation 33.4%	Youth programs/ recreation 52.4%	Gang prevention/ intervention 38.9%
Mentoring programs 52.5%	Increased law enforcement 23.9%	Jobs/job training programs 42.3%	Better access to mental health services 30.1%	Jobs/job training programs 47.6%	Court/criminal justice programs 34.0%

Key finding 3: What is keeping young people in gangs? What must be addressed to help gang-involved individuals exit gangs?

Research indicates that young people who join gangs become disconnected from mainstream pursuits. Gang involved individuals in Durham have difficulty exiting gangs because of high rates of school dropout, unemployment/underemployment, substance use, gang activity in the neighborhood, and a need to replace the social and emotional needs currently met by their gang.

Forty gang involved individuals from the 8 most active gangs in Durham were interviewed for this report. 33 actively associate with gangs, and of these individuals, 28 are active gang members. The youngest individuals interviewed were between 14-17 and the oldest were between 41-45. These individuals were asked at what age they began associating with a gang and what age they joined a gang (not all reported joining a gang). Because individuals were asked to designate their age within a range (to protect the confidentiality of interview subjects), it is not possible to calculate the exact length of their gang association/membership. However, using the bottom age in the range, a minimum length of time that individuals have associated or belonged to a gang is reported on Tables 6 and 7, p. 19.

Table 6. Minimum length of time the individuals who reported being active gang members or associates have associated with a gang (n=33)

# years	# individuals	% individuals
1	2	6.1%
2 to 4	5	15.2%
5 to 10	15	45.5%
11 to 15	6	18.2%
16 to 20	3	9.1%
21+	2	6.1%
	33	100.0%

Table 7. Minimum length of time the individuals who reported they are active gang members have been a member of the gang (n=28)

# years	# individuals	% individuals
1	3	10.7%
2 to 4	6	21.4%
5 to 10	14	50.0%
11 to 20	3	10.7%
21+	2	7.1%
Total	28	100.0%

The minimum length of gang association and/or membership reported by individuals was around 1 year and the longest length of gang association and/or membership was around 29 years. Most individuals who indicated that they are either active gang or active gang associates indicated that they had associated with the gang (45.5%) or belonged to the gang (50.0%) for 5 to 10 years. A high percentage (33.4%) of these individuals reported a minimum association with gangs of 11 or more years. A significant percentage (17.8%) of active gang members reported belonging to the gang for 11 or more years.

Gang involved individuals reported a high level of disengagement from mainstream pursuits. Almost two-thirds of interview participants ages 18+ (63.9%) reported having less than a high school diploma or GED and half (50.0%) had completed less than 10th grade in school. Two thirds of interview participants (65.0%) were unemployed at the time of the interview. However, this data may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews were conducted between August and October 2021. Only 20% of interview participants reported being employed for 30+ hours per week and most of these individuals reported working in lower wage jobs (service industry, delivery driver and warehouse workers). While interview participants were not asked about their own involvement in crime, over 90% reported knowing someone personally who was involved in serious criminal activity up to aggravated assault and homicide. Gang-involved individuals also reported a high rate of drug use, 92.5% reported using marijuana and 37.5% reported using illegal prescription medication. While this interview did not ask for information about mental health diagnoses, the high rate of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) experienced by individuals suggests that these individuals may also experience mental health issues at higher rates than the overall population. These factors: Low educational attainment, lack of work experience, trauma exposure, potential criminal justice involvement, and regular drug use may also inhibit these individuals from achieving mainstream economic success.

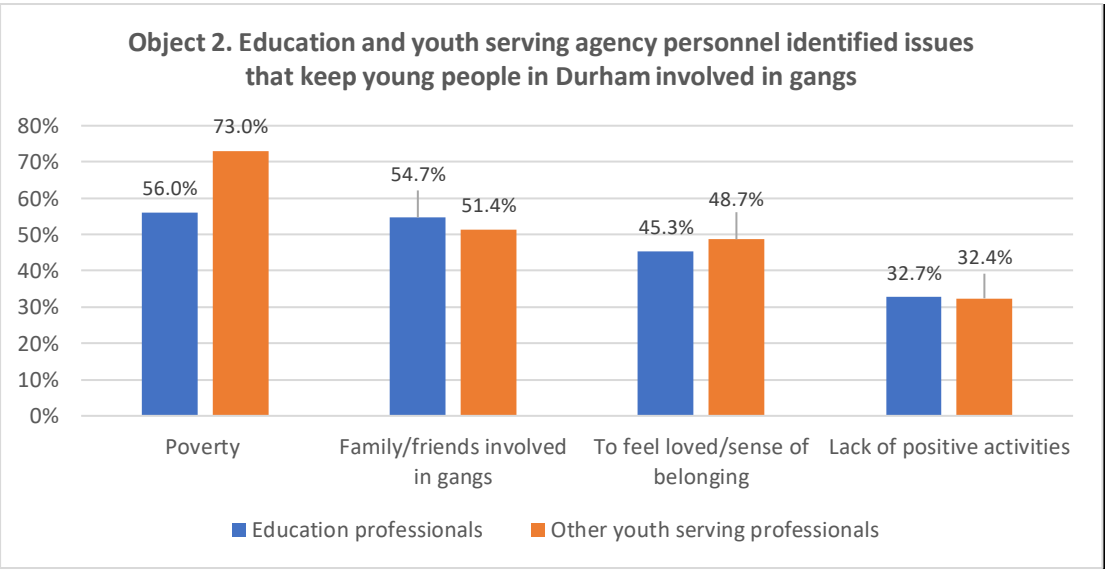
Further, these individuals report a high degree of social and emotional connection to the gang. Most (85.0%) reported having a family member involved in gangs and these individuals reported 74 family members involved in gangs, including brothers, fathers, uncles, cousins, relationship partners, and children/nephews. Over one-third of interview participants (35.5%) indicated that there was no process for them to join the gang because they already had family members in the gang. Interview participants also reported a high level of agreement with statements designed to show their level of emotional connection to the gang:

- 95.0% of participants agree or strongly agree that their gang is like a family
- 92.5% of participants agree or strongly agree that members of their gang provide support and loyalty for each other
- 92.5% of participants agree or strongly agree that being a member of their gang makes them feel like they belong
- 87.5% of participants agree or strongly agree that their gang protects them

Gang involved individuals also reported on the significant role that gangs play in their neighborhood. All (100.0%) reported that gangs are active in their neighborhood and 70.0% of the 34 individuals who report they are current or former gang members stated that they joined the gang because it is part of their neighborhood culture. Further, the movements of these individuals are constrained because of their gang ties. Most individuals (80%) also indicated that there are areas in Durham that they cannot go because of their gang ties.

When asked if they would ever leave the gang, 60.6 percent of the respondents who are active gang members said that they do not know and one third (33.3%) said no. When asked what kind of support might help them leave the gang, the top response (47.2%) was move out of the neighborhood, followed by finding a job (33.3%).

Adult professionals from the fields of education, youth services and public safety were asked what barriers might keep young people involved in gangs. Top responses included poverty, family/friends involved in gangs, to feel loved/sense of belonging, and lack of positive activities (Object 2).



The information described above indicates that services should be comprehensive, intensive, and neighborhood-based and should provide gang-involved individuals with support to address multiple areas of need:

- Thinking patterns caused by long-term gang association
- Educational deficits

- Unemployment/underemployment
- Substance use
- Mental health issues
- Criminal justice history and/or involvement
- Provide significant emotional and social support.
- Changing the neighborhood culture to make joining a gang less appealing to neighborhood youth

Key finding 4: How is this issue affecting the wider community? What should motivate policymakers to address the problem?

People who live and work in Durham experience the gang issue very differently depending on their role and location. In some neighborhoods, gangs are deeply imbedded in the neighborhood's culture which plays a key role in the decision to join a gang in Durham. Other neighborhoods experience gang issues indirectly. However, surveys across constituency groups indicates that the widespread nature of gang activity and community violence in Durham reduces quality of life for residents across the community.

Community residents were asked about their feelings of safety and their views on gang activity at the neighborhood level. All constituency groups (gang-involved individuals, community residents, community leaders, school personnel, youth-serving agency personnel, and public safety personnel) were asked about the effects of gangs in the community.

It is clear from the responses within and across groups that the effects of gangs and violence on people who live and work in Durham can be very different based on where they live or work. Responses are split between residents who experience serious ramifications of local gang issues, including shootings and murders in their neighborhood, and residents who do not experience gang activity in their neighborhood but are concerned about being affected by gang activity in other areas of the community.

About one fifth of community survey respondents (22.9%) reported that gangs are highly active in their neighborhood (rated a 7 to 10 on a 10-point scale) and another one-fifth of residents (22.7%) reported a moderate level of gang activity in their neighborhood (rated a 4 to 6 on a 10-point scale). Almost one third of residents (29.8%) reported low to no gang activity in their neighborhood (1 on 10-point scale) and 16.5% reported low levels of gang activity (2 or 3 on 10-point scale). The race of the survey respondent affected the likelihood of residents reporting low or high levels of gang activity in their neighborhood. Black (38%) and multiracial respondents (39%) were more likely to report high levels of gang activity in their neighborhood, while white respondents (61%) were more likely to report low levels of gang activity in their neighborhood.

Over half of community residents overall (52.5%) reported that they feel very safe (rated 7 to 10 on a 10-point scale), compared with 45% of Black residents. Half of Black residents (51%) reported feeling lower levels of safety (rated 1 to 6 on a 10-point-scale) compared to 36% of White respondents.

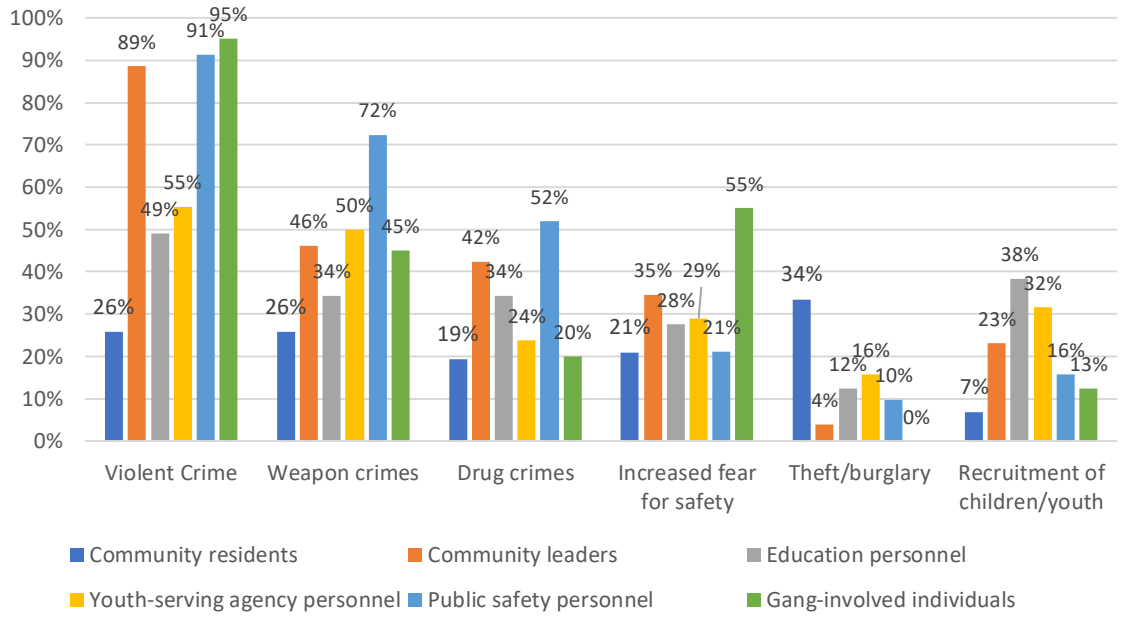
Community residents were asked to identify their top concerns in their neighborhood. Almost half of all respondents (46.2%) reported that their top concern in their neighborhood is theft/burglary. A much smaller percentage (27.9%) of community residents reported that gang activity is one of their top three concerns and 26.4% of residents reported that violent crime is one of their top concerns in their neighborhood.

When this data is disaggregated by race, however, the differences between racial groups are stark. The top three neighborhood concerns of Black residents are lack of activities for children (38.9%), gang activity (34.9%), and violent crime (29.4%). The top three neighborhood concerns of White residents are theft/burglary (56.7%), violent crime (25.9%) and other concerns (36.0%) that ranged from traffic violations, lack of sidewalks and trash pickup to shootings.

Residents were also asked how the neighborhood has responded to gang activity. One in five respondents (19.2%) reported that the neighborhood response was "fear." In contrast, 14.1% of respondents said that they do not know how the neighborhood has responded and 9.8% of respondents reported that there is no gang activity in their neighborhood. One resident explained that in their neighborhood, the responses by neighbors are: 'fear, moving away, depression, anxiety, inability to leave the house, insomnia, decreased work performance." Other respondents who are more indirectly affected by gang activity in their neighborhood note that the overall level of violence in the community causes them to choose other areas to spend time in: "We have begun to shop in other areas than northern Durham, traveling to Roxboro, Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and the Brier Creek area for our shopping needs."

Across all constituency groups, significant percentages of respondents indicate that violent crime and weapon crimes are top issues caused by gangs in Durham (Object 3).

Object 3. Top issues caused by gangs across different constituent groups in Durham



Key finding 5: How well is the current response to gangs working? What should be done differently in the future?

All constituency groups that participated in this study described low levels of satisfaction with the current response to gangs and identified specific deficits that have caused this dissatisfaction. These issues include a failure to address the underlying conditions that give rise to gangs, a lack of awareness about the current responses to gangs across constituency groups, lack of information about the results of current strategies, and concerns about criminal justice policies.

Very low percentages of the constituencies that participated in this assessment report indicated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the current response to gangs (Table 8).

Table 8. Percentage of respondents reporting they are satisfied or very satisfied with the current response to gangs

Community resident	Community leaders	School personnel	Youth serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
10.2%	7.7%	3.0%	10.8%	10.1%

Participants in this assessment were asked about their reasons for satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the current response. These reasons varied across constituency groups. More detailed descriptions of these responses are included in Section 5. Key reasons for dissatisfaction are described below:

Ongoing level of violence:

All constituency groups, including gang-involved individuals, expressed concerns about violent crime and weapon crimes in Durham (Table 9). In fact, high percentages of every constituency group listed violent crime as a top issue caused by gangs. Significant percentages of survey respondents in 4 of the 6 constituency groups also listed weapon crimes as one of the top three issues caused by gangs. A substantial percentage of gang-involved individuals listed increased fear for safety as a top three issue.

Table 9. Top three issues caused by gangs cross group analysis

Gang-involved individuals	Community residents	Community leaders	School personnel	Youth-serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
Violent crimes 95.0%	Burglary/theft 33.5%	Violent crimes 88.5%	Violent crimes 49.0%	Violent crimes 55.3%	Violent crimes 91.4%
Increased fear for safety 55.0%	Violent crime 25.0%	Weapon crimes 46.2%	Recruitment of children/youth 38.3%	Weapon crimes 50.0%	Weapon crimes 72.4%
Weapon crimes 45.0%	Weapon crimes 25.0%	Drug crimes 42.3%	Drug crimes/ weapon crimes 34.3%	Recruitment of children/youth 31.6%	Drug crimes 51.9%

When asked for their reasons for satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the current response, 32.3% of community residents who provided a response (n=275) indicated that they are dissatisfied with the current level of shootings and violence in Durham. Another significant percentage (16%) indicated that they are dissatisfied because gang activity is increasing. When asked this same question, one community leader reported dissatisfaction "because the shooting has not stopped." One in ten school/youth-serving

agency personnel indicated that they were aware of children and youths' connections to violence and weapon possession, with one education professional noting: "Students have died as the result of what are assumed to be gang-related situations." Public safety personnel were dissatisfied with perceived failures on the part of the criminal justice system, prosecutor's office, city leaders, and public safety agencies themselves to respond effectively to violence, gun crimes, and gang activity.

Not aware of/do not know about the current response

Across some constituency groups, there was a low level of knowledge about and/or participation in current initiatives. When asked to identify current gang reduction strategies, a high percentage (64.9%) of the 309 community residents who responded to this question were either unaware of current activities or believed that nothing/very little was being done. When asked if they were familiar with programs by name, residents demonstrated more familiarity with some programs, but only 11% of community residents reported that they or a family member had participated in or received services from one of the named programs.

Almost half of the school personnel (46.8%) indicated that they are not aware of the current response to gangs. Community leaders were aware of most programs, but fewer than half of community leaders were familiar with the Durham I-Team or Police Explorer Post. While most leaders had participated with Bull City United, Project BUILD, the GRSSC, and Criminal Justice Resource Center, fewer than half of leaders reported that they had participated with My Brother's Keeper, Police Athletic League, I-Team, and Police Explorer Post. Most concerning, gang-involved individuals reported low levels of awareness and participation in many programs. Only 28.6% of gang-involved individuals were familiar with Project BUILD and less than 20% of these individuals were familiar with the Criminal Justice Resource Center, the Durham Reentry Initiative, My Brother's Keeper, Durham I-Team, Police Explorer Post or Police Athletic League. While 42.9% of gang-involved individuals reported participating with Bull City United, only 25% of gang-involved individuals reported participating in Project BUILD, and fewer than 20% of individuals had participated in the other initiatives.

Concerns about the criminal justice/public safety systems

Respondents from among the community resident, community leader, school personnel, youth-serving agency personnel and public safety personnel constituencies all expressed concerns about criminal justice and public safety systems. A significant percentage of community residents indicated that police are underfunded or not supported (10.5%) and an equivalent number identified an insufficient court/prosecution response to crime (9.5%) as a reason for their dissatisfaction. A few community leaders indicated there is a need for more emphasis on arrest/prosecution of violent crime involved individuals, with one leader noting that "there is a need to prosecute the most violent folks so that the group/gang lifestyle becomes less glamorous."

School and youth-serving agency personnel were mixed in their views on the criminal justice /public safety systems. Some respondents felt that these systems should be doing more to arrest and prosecute gang-involved individuals. Others indicated that police officers should be redirected away from low level offenses and focus more on violent crime and high-ranking criminals. Public safety professionals expressed a high level of concern in this area. Many respondents described that a failure to pursue serious sanctions for violence-involved individuals is contributing to community-level violence. Some public safety professionals reported that they do not feel supported by community leaders. Others indicated

that public safety agencies need to resume or expand more focused and specialized investigations and enforcement activities and increase coordination between public safety agencies to address violent crime.

Current programs are ineffective/outcomes not being reported

Across constituency groups, many respondents indicated that they believe that the current response to gangs is ineffective or that the results of current efforts are not being reported. A significant percentage of community residents who provided a written response indicated that current efforts are ineffective (12.4%) and several specifically indicated that they had not seen any evaluation/reporting of outcomes from the current response. One community resident who reported participating in at least one of the current initiatives/programs indicated that: "I wish funding for programs would result in city sharing about effectiveness of programs."

Among the community leaders, several leaders indicated that they could not provide feedback on the current response to gangs because they have not seen any outcomes reported on the current response. One leader noted: "I'm unable to speak to the effectiveness of any of the aforementioned initiatives. I'm unaware of their performance targets and whether they're being met." School and youth-serving agency personnel also indicated that they were unaware of the existing gang strategy or programs. Less than half of gang-involved individuals interviewed for this report indicated they had received services from Bull City United, though all receiving services reported the services were somewhat/very effective. One-fourth of interview participants received services from Project BUILD and 17.2% of interview participants rated services as somewhat/very effective. Less than one in five (17.9%) reported receiving services from the Criminal Justice Resource Center and 7.1% reported that these services were somewhat/very effective. One in five (17.9%) received services from the Durham Reentry Initiative and all reported the services were somewhat/very effective.

Address underlying social conditions that give rise to gangs and provide youth with alternatives

Across constituency groups, respondents reported a need to address underlying causes of gang activity such as poverty, unemployment, low educational attainment, and lack of positive alternatives to gangs. The most selected neighborhood concern for Black community residents was lack of positive alternatives for youth in their neighborhood. School and youth-serving agency personnel highlighted a need to provide youth with more positive alternatives, provide residents with living-wage employment, address underlying conditions such as poverty, and ensure that education addresses residents' economic needs. Several community leaders reported that more needs to be done to address factors that contribute to youth joining gangs. One noted: "Need earlier intervention. Need more resources and services for children and families. Need to address economic mobility/poverty and change trajectory by exposing, preparing and connecting youth to good paying jobs in Durham." Public safety professionals indicated there is a need to increase/improve prevention and intervention activities and address underlying social conditions such as poverty, unemployment, and housing instability.

Recommendations

Recommendations are customized to the needs identified in Durham through this community gang assessment and incorporate current research on evidence-based gang and violence reduction programs and strategies as well as best practices identified in other communities.

Recommendation 1: Implement intensive, place-based strategies to address underlying social conditions that increase the vulnerability of children and youth in the most violence affected census tracts to gang involvement

While Durham is currently using a neighborhood-based violence reduction public health model (Cure Violence /Bull City United) and a county-wide implementation of the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model (Project BUILD), there is a need to supplement these activities with supportive place-based approaches directed at the most acutely affected neighborhoods that intensively address the underlying social conditions in the affected neighborhoods that give rise to gangs. Strategies must address the combined effects of:

- High levels of violence exposure
- Extreme poverty
- Low educational attainment
- The strains that these conditions place on children and parents in disrupted family structures.

Residents in the highly affected neighborhoods need support in multiple areas, including mental health support, access to medical care, employment assistance, adult-focused educational programs, and prosocial activities with emotionally engaged and supportive adults for children and youth during hours when parents may be unavailable. Without addressing these underlying conditions, the success of violence reduction and gang intervention activities will be limited.

The Durham Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee has a structure for convening agencies around these topics Agency leaders should identify which of the identified risk factors and community-level issues are most within their capacity to address. The GRSSC should also identify if there are agencies missing from the GRSSC whose involvement is necessary to address the identified risk factors and community issues.

Ideally, the GRSSC might convene working groups of managers who oversee programs relevant to future prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry activities to identify collaborative solutions that can be implemented to address the problems identified. Rather than working in organizational silos, it might be helpful to convene these working groups with a concentration on specific populations across professional fields:

- **Individuals at greatest risk for violence involvement** –A risk criteria for individuals who are at highest risk of involvement in community/street level violence has been identified by the Cure Violence model and is currently utilized by Bull City United:
    - Gun carrying
    - Recently released from incarceration

- Recently injured in gun violence
- Family member recently injured in gun violence
- Involved in street activity including gang involvement, shootings, street robberies, etc.

An overview of all risk factors related to violence is found on the National Gang Center's Strategic Planning Tool: https://nationalgangcenter.ojp.gov/spt/Programs/139.
Many of the organizations who are currently involved with this population and should be involved in planning future coordinated activities include Durham Police Department, the Durham County District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, NCDPS Community Corrections, Bull City United, Project BUILD, Durham Reentry Initiative, and the I-Team.

- **Youth at high risk of gang involvement and young people who are already involved in gangs** – Risk factors specific to gang involvement in Durham were identified in Key Finding 2. Organizations who are currently involved with this population include Durham Police Department, Durham County Sheriff's Office (school resource officers), Project BUILD, Bull City United, Durham Public Schools, the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, NCDPS Community Corrections and Juvenile Court personnel and JCPC-funded community-based agencies.

- **Baseline community risk factors and prevention activities**- identified in Key Finding 1 – Organizations who are currently involved in these issues include Durham Public Schools, Durham County Department of Public Health, Durham County Department of Human Services, Durham Office on Youth, Alliance Behavioral Health, Durham Housing Authority, Durham Neighborhood Improvement Services, and others.

A framework for planning a more robust and intensive implementation of the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model can be found in Section 3 of *The OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: Planning for Implementation,* which can be found online: https://nationalgangcenter.ojp.gov/comprehensive-gang-model/implementation-manual (National Gang Center, 2009). The GRSSC should utilize this framework for planning and implementation as a best practice for creating a more comprehensive strategy to address local gang and violence issues.

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Recommendation 2: Implement comprehensive, intensive, and neighborhood-based service delivery specifically for gang-involved individuals in the highest violence neighborhoods.

Services for gang-involved individuals must be comprehensive in scope and address the numerous deficits and barriers to mainstream participation experienced by gang-involved individuals. They must also be relationship based and assist these individuals with replacing the social and emotional support provided by gang-involvement. While the Cure Violence model provides a methodology for engaging and assisting the highest risk individuals, current Cure Violence strategies being implemented in Durham must be supported by appropriate employment, educational, mental health, substance use, and address the thinking patterns of individuals involved in gangs. An overview of current research on gang desistance and strategies for helping individuals successfully disengage from the criminal aspects of gang life is found in in the Resources section of this report (p. 248).

Recommendation 3: Because of the high level of gang exposure/involvement and youth risk exposure locally, Durham policymakers should expand available gang prevention and intervention programming, localize these services in the most violence/gang affected census tracts, and prioritize these services for children and youth who are at the highest level of risk of involvement in violence and gangs

The North Carolina Assessment of Risk is a validated risk assessment tool that is currently used by Juvenile Crime Prevention Council funded community-based agencies statewide. Youth experiencing accumulations of risk in the areas described in Key Finding #2 should be prioritized for service delivery, particularly youth residing in highly violence affected sections of the community with family members involved in gangs, as these were key factors in the decisions by gang involved individuals interviewed for this report to associate with or join a gang. More widespread use of a risk assessment tool that prioritizes risk factors for involvement in delinquency, which is also predictive of vulnerability for joining a gang, would provide youth-serving agencies with a means to measure the level of risk that youth in their programs. Regularly administering these risk assessments more widely would also provide a means for policymakers to ensure that service delivery is being directed to young people that are the most at risk of becoming involved in gangs.

This strategy has been utilized successfully in both Los Angeles and Boston to provide a comprehensive framework of youth service agencies and ensure that local children and youth with the highest risk exposure in the most acutely affected neighborhoods receive expedited access to appropriate services and support (see Resources, p. 248)

Recommendation 4: More regularly collect and report data that reflects the progress of the community's gang violence reduction efforts.

Policymakers need access to at least annual reporting of current data that can be utilized to properly direct intensive responses to the areas of the community most acutely affected by gangs and violence. Goal setting by local policymakers should be focused on reducing the numbers of violent crimes in the most acutely affected neighborhoods and achieving reductions in neighborhood level risk exposure identified in Key Finding 1.

Violent crimes by census tract and Violent crimes per 100k people by census tract - Violent crime in the selected census tracts comprises most of the violent crime citywide, so significant reductions at the neighborhood level will represent an overall reduction in violent crime in Durham. Reductions in neighborhood level violence are also necessary to engage prevention partners who can help to address social conditions that increase youth vulnerability to delinquency and gangs.

Aggregate reporting on gang involvement

While the current methodology utilized by Durham Police Department to identify gang member-involved crime (comparing known suspects and victims in crimes to gang intelligence files) avoids over-identifying gang-involved crime in Durham, it is also potentially inhibited in its reliability and usefulness by its reliance on intelligence data collected by Durham Police Department, which was unavailable for inclusion in this report. Without examining the characteristics of aggregate data collected on individuals indexed as gang members, it is impossible to ensure that interventions are directed appropriately.

Based on the data that was provided for this report, suspects in violent crimes flagged as gang member-involved are disproportionately Black and male: 100% of known homicide suspects indexed as gang members are Black; 99% of known suspects in aggravated assaults indexed as gang members are Black. While White known suspects in homicides comprised 15.5% of all known homicide suspects, they comprised 0.0% of suspects in gang-member involved homicides. White known suspects in aggravated assaults comprise 17.2% of all known aggravated assault suspects, but 1% of known suspects indexed as gang members.

Youth Risk and Behavior Survey – The questions utilized in Durham County in 2015, 2017 and 2019 were selected from a group of questions that are compiled for this national survey by the Centers for Disease Control. Durham policymakers should review YRBS surveys utilized in other areas of NC to identify if there are questions in that group which would be more useful for planning community level violence reduction strategies. An example of a YRBS survey from Cumberland County is provided in Appendix A (p. 249) and includes numerous questions that if included on future YRBS surveys in Durham would provide policymakers with specific and measurable ways to track youth violence exposure efforts.

The GRSSC should also consider implementing specific and standardized performance measures across programs and agencies in Durham for annual reporting to policymakers (see performance measures outlined in detail in Recommendation 5).

Recommendation 5: Institute standardized performance measures to track reductions in violence and improve existing criminogenic social conditions at the census tract level and more regularly report the outcomes attained by gang prevention, intervention and desistance strategies to policymakers and the community at the census tract level.

The suggested performance measures below are in line with current federal performance measures for programs that seek to prevent gang violence and intervene with gang-involved individuals. Not all these performance measures would need to be implemented in Durham but implementing performance measures of this type would ensure that activities undertaken are directed towards solving the specific problems identified in this report. At least some outcome measures below should be tracked and reported to policymakers quarterly and to the public annually.

- Rate of violent person offenses per 100k persons by census tract
- % change over time
- Number of violent person offenses per 100k persons by census tract
- % change over time
- Change in social conditions in the selected census tracts
    - # of distinct individuals from the selected census tracts with low educational attainment who enroll in and complete a high school diploma, GED, or other educational program
    - # of distinct individuals from the selected census tracts who obtain living wage employment
    - # of substantiated child abuse/neglect allegations by census tract
    - Annual poverty rate and rate of children living in poverty and percentage change over time
    - # of distinct individuals served by other social programs in each census tract

- # of key individuals enrolled in school or employed
- # of key individuals (violence and gang involved individuals) reducing gun carrying and gang involvement
- # of violent incidents prevented
- # of mediations conducted
- # of high-risk youth receiving intervention services and completing services by assessed risk level
- # of high-risk youth served by intervention services who achieve measurable outcomes that include enrolling in school, improving school GPA, graduating/completing an educational program, obtaining employment, participating in, and completing in mental health or substance use services
- % of high-risk youth receiving intervention services who are rearrested or incarcerated
- % of high-risk youth receiving interventions who are injured by community-level violence
- # and risk score of moderate-risk youth from the most highly violence affected neighborhoods who are engaged in prevention activities at the census tract level, dosage of services received on average by youth, and measurable outcomes that include improving school behavior, improving school performance, reducing antisocial and/or delinquent behavior, and engaging in mental health or substance use services

Section 1 – Community Description

Key information in this section

- The population of the city of Durham has grown by over 50% since 2000, a rate that exceeds the state's growth of 29.7% during that period.
- Between 2000 and 2020, Durham became less White/Caucasian, less Black/African American, and more diverse overall, with increases in the percentage of the population composed of Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, multiracial and persons from other racial groups.
- Durham County has experienced overall increases in educational attainment and income and decreases in the overall rate of poverty since 2010.
- Durham County's per capita income in 2019 exceeded North Carolina's by 15.0%
- Durham County has huge wealth disparities: The 2019 per capita income in Durham's wealthiest census tract ($85,796) is 7.6 times higher than the per capita income in Durham's poorest neighborhood ($9,943). Per capita income in that census tract increased by approximately $400 since 2010.
- Of 9 census tracts that were investigated in detail by an earlier community gang assessment in 2014, 8 continue to have elevated levels of violent crime and accumulated risk factors. The rate of poverty for all persons remained above 40% for 5 of the 9 census tracts and increased in two tracts. In 2019, the percentage of children living below the poverty level was above 50% in 7 of the 9 census tracts.
- 12 census tracts in Durham were identified during this assessment that experience violent person incidents at a rate that is 2 to 10 times the citywide rate.
- These 12 census tracts also experience elevated levels of concentrated poverty and risk exposure in multiple areas.

Demographic overview

Durham County has the 6th largest population in North Carolina (324,833) and has grown in population size by 45.4% since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). With a population of 283,506 as of April 1, 2020, the City of Durham is the fourth most populous city in North Carolina and the 75th largest city in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). While the population of the state of North Carolina has grown by 29.7% since 2000, the city of Durham and Durham County far outpaced that rate of growth, growing by 51.6% and 45.4% respectively (Table 1.1) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Much of that growth occurred from 2010 to 2020. Population in the city of Durham increased by 24.2% between 2010 and 2020 and population in Durham County grew by 21.4%.

Table 1.1 Population Change in the city of Durham, Durham County and North Carolina since 2000

Localities	2000	2010[1]	% growth since 2000	2020[2]	% growth since 2000	% growth since 2010
City of Durham	187,035	228,330	+22.1%	283,506	+51.6%	+24.2%
Durham County	223,314	267,587	+19.8%	324,833	+45.4%	+21.4%
North Carolina	8,049,303	9,535,483	+18.4%	10,439,388	+29.7%	+9.5%

Durham County and is the 3rd most diverse county in North Carolina, with a diversity index score of 68.9% in the 2020 Census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Between 2010 and 2020, Durham County's diversity score increased by 11.1%. The Diversity Index "shows the probability that two people chosen at random will be from different race and ethnic groups" (Jensen et. Al., 2021). During this period, while the percentage of white residents in Durham County declined by 11.2%, the percentage of White/Caucasian residents increased by 15.8% in the city of Durham.

Table 1.2 Racial and ethnic demographics of the city of Durham, Durham County and North Carolina, 2010 to 2020[3]

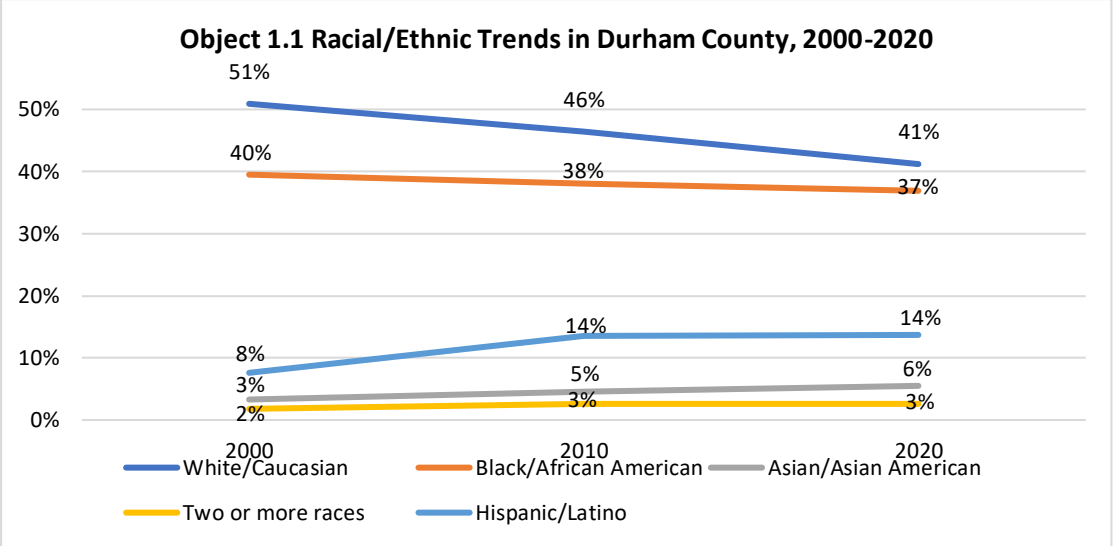
	City of Durham			Durham County			North Carolina		
	2010	2020	Change	2010	2020	Change	2010	2020	Change
White/Caucasian	42.5%	49.2%	+15.8%	46.4%	41.2%	-11.2%	70.6%	62.2%	-11.9%
Black or African American	41.0%	38.7%	-5.6%	38.0%	36.9%	-2.9%	22.2%	20.5%	-7.7%
American Indian and Alaskan Native	0.5%	0.3%	-40.0%	0.5%	0.9%	+80.0%	1.6%	1.2%	-25%
Asian/Asian American	5.1%	5.4%	+5.9%	4.6%	5.5%	+19.6%	3.2%	3.3%	+3.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	<0.1%	n/a	0.1%	0.1%	0	0.1%	0.1%	0%
Two or more races	2.7%	3.2%	+18.5%	2.6%	2.6%	0	2.3%	6.8%	+195.7%
Hispanic or Latinx	14.2%	13.8%	-2.8%	13.5%	13.7%	+1.5%	9.8%	10.7%	+9.2%
Diversity Index Score				66.2%	68.9%	+4.1%	52.1%	57.9%	+11.1%

The percentage of Black/African American residents decreased by 5.6% in the City of Durham and 2.9% in Durham County. The percentage of multiracial residents increased by 19.5% in the City of Durham and the percentage of Asian residents increased by 19.6% in Durham County. The percentage the City of

[1] Population estimate as of April 1, 2010
[2] Population estimate as of April 1, 2020
[3] Figures for April 1, 2010, and April 1, 2020

Durham's population that is of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity decreased by 2.8% while the percentage of the population that is Hispanic/Latino in Durham County increased by 1.5%.

In the past 20 years, the percentage of White/Caucasian residents Durham County decreased from 51% to 41% (Object 1.1) and the percentage of Black/African American residents decreased from 40% to 37% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001, 2011, 2021). The percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents increased from 8% to 14% and the percentage of Asian/Asian American residents increased from 3% to 6%.



From 2010 to 2019, the percentage of the population under age 18 decreased in both the City of Durham (-4.4%) and Durham County (-9.3%), as well as the state of North Carolina (-8.4%) (Table 1.3) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021; U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). The median age in Durham County in 2019 (35.7) is slightly higher than in the city of Durham (34.5), but both are significantly lower than the median age for North Carolina (39.1).

Table 1.3 Age demographics of the City of Durham, Durham County and North Carolina, 2010 to 2020

	City of Durham			Durham County			North Carolina		
	2010	2020	Change	2010	2020	Change	2010	2020	Change
Persons under age 18	22.7%	21.7%	-4.4%	22.5%	20.4%	-9.3%	23.9%	21.9%	-8.4%
Median age in 2019	32.1	34.5	+7.5%	33.2	35.7	+7.5%	37.4	39.1	+4.5%

Between 2010 and 2019, the percentage of the population in Durham County over age 18 that had obtained a high school diploma or higher increased from 86.3% to 88.4% and the percentage of population in North Carolina with at least a high school diploma increased from 84.7% to 88.6% (Table 1.4, p. 33) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). The unemployment rate in Durham County declined from 8.2% in January 2010 to 6.5% in January 2020 (Table 1.4, p. 33) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).

Table 1.4 Educational attainment and income in Durham County and North Carolina, 2010-2020

	Durham County			North Carolina		
	2010	2019/2020	Change	2010	2019/2020	Change
High school graduate or higher (18 and older)[4]	86.3%	88.4%	+2.4%	84.7%	88.6%	+4.6%
Unemployment rate[5]	8.2%	6.5%	-20.7%	11.9%	3.2%	-73.1%
Estimate of median household income[6]	$48,023	$60,958	+26.9%	$43,417	$57,388	+32.2%
Per capita income[7]	$25,824	$35,398	+37.1%	$23,432	$30,783	+31.5%

Median household income in Durham County increased from $48,023 in 2010 to $60,958 in 2019, an increase of 26.9% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 and 2021). Statewide, the median household income increased from $43,417 in 2010 to $57,388 in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Per capita income in Durham increased from $25,824 in 2010 to $35,398 in 2020, an increase of 37.1% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2011). Per capita income statewide increased by a slightly smaller percentage (31.5%), from $23,432 in 2010 to $30,783 in 2020. Durham's per capita income in 2019 was 15% higher than the statewide per capita income.

The poverty rate for all persons in Durham County declined by 6.7% from 2010 to 2020 (Table 1.5). However, the percentage of children living in poverty in Durham County only declined by 0.7%, from 24.2% in 2010 to 23.5% in 2020 (Table 1.5) (U.S. Census Bureau 2011, 2020). Statewide, the percentage of persons living in poverty declined by 2.5% from 2010 to 2020 and the percentage of children living in poverty declined by 5.3%.

Table 1.5 Persons living in poverty in the City of Durham, Durham County, and North Carolina, 2010[8] and 2019[9]

	Durham County			North Carolina		
	2010	2019	Change	2010	2019	Change
All persons living in poverty (2010 and 2019)	18.4%	11.7%	-6.7%	16.1%	13.6%	-2.5%
Children ages 0 to 17 living in poverty (2010 and 2019)	24.2%	23.5%	-0.7%	24.6%	19.3%	-5.3%

While these overall declines in the percentage of persons living in poverty and increases in median income and educational attainment are promising, the countywide data also masks deep pockets of poverty and significant income inequities in Durham as well as exposure to multiple risk factors for gang and violence involvement.

[4] American Community Survey 5-year average (2006-2010, 2015-2019)
[5] Unemployment rate for January 2010 and January 2020
[6] Small area income and poverty estimates 1-year average (2010 and 2019)
[7] American Community Survey 1-year average (2010 and 2019)
[8] American Community Survey 1-year average (2010)
[9] American Community Survey 5-year average (2019)

Examining Durham at the census tract level

Because this community assessment is focused on gang/violence issues in Durham, crime data from Durham Police Department for 2018, 2019, and 2020 was analyzed by census tract. From 2018-2020, Durham Police Department reported a total of 2,724 aggravated assaults and 106 homicides (Table 1.6) (Durham Police Department, 2021). To investigate how these census tracts had changed over time, the number of violent person incidents (aggravated assaults and homicides) were examined. Between 2018 and 2020, three census tracts (9, 10.01 and 22) experienced significant declines in the number of violent person incidents (Table 1.6). Several census tracts experienced increases in the number of violent person incidents that was greater than 40% (1.01, 10.02, 13.04, 17.09, and 18.02). Two census tracts (1.01 and 17.09) experienced increases above 100%.

Table 1.6 Percentage change in number of violent person incidents from 2018-2020

Census tract	Violent person incidents 2018	2019	2020	Percent change
1.01	13	29	38	+192%
9	24	22	19	-21%
10.01	48	53	43	-10%
10.02	53	74	76	+43%
11	56	50	74	+32%
13.01	25	25	30	+20%
13.04	23	22	41	+78%
14	55	54	74	+35%
17.09	38	73	77	+103%
18.02	35	42	60	+71%
22	24	23	10	-58%
23	26	33	31	+19%

To calculate the level of personal violence experienced at the neighborhood level in Durham, the number of aggravated assaults and homicides reported per census tract during 2018-2020 was analyzed by the estimated population numbers from the 2019 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). At the census tract level, small numbers of incidents can cause widely divergent crime rates, so data for all three years was also averaged and the rate per 100k residents was calculated from the 3-year average. This information is reported in detail on Table 1.7 (p. 35) and sorted from highest to lowest by the annual 3-year average rate of incidents per 100k residents.

The census tracts that experienced the greatest rate of increase in the number of violent person incidents were all in the northern part of Durham County (17.09, 1.01, and 10.02) (Object 1.2, p. 37).

It should be noted that while census tracts were organized above by the per capita rate of violent person incidents, tracts varied by the number of violent person incidents over the three-year period. The highest average annual rate of violent person incidents per 100k persons occurred in Census Tract 14 (2544.8).

Table 1.7 Census tracts with the highest average rate of violent person incidents per 100k persons (2018-2020)

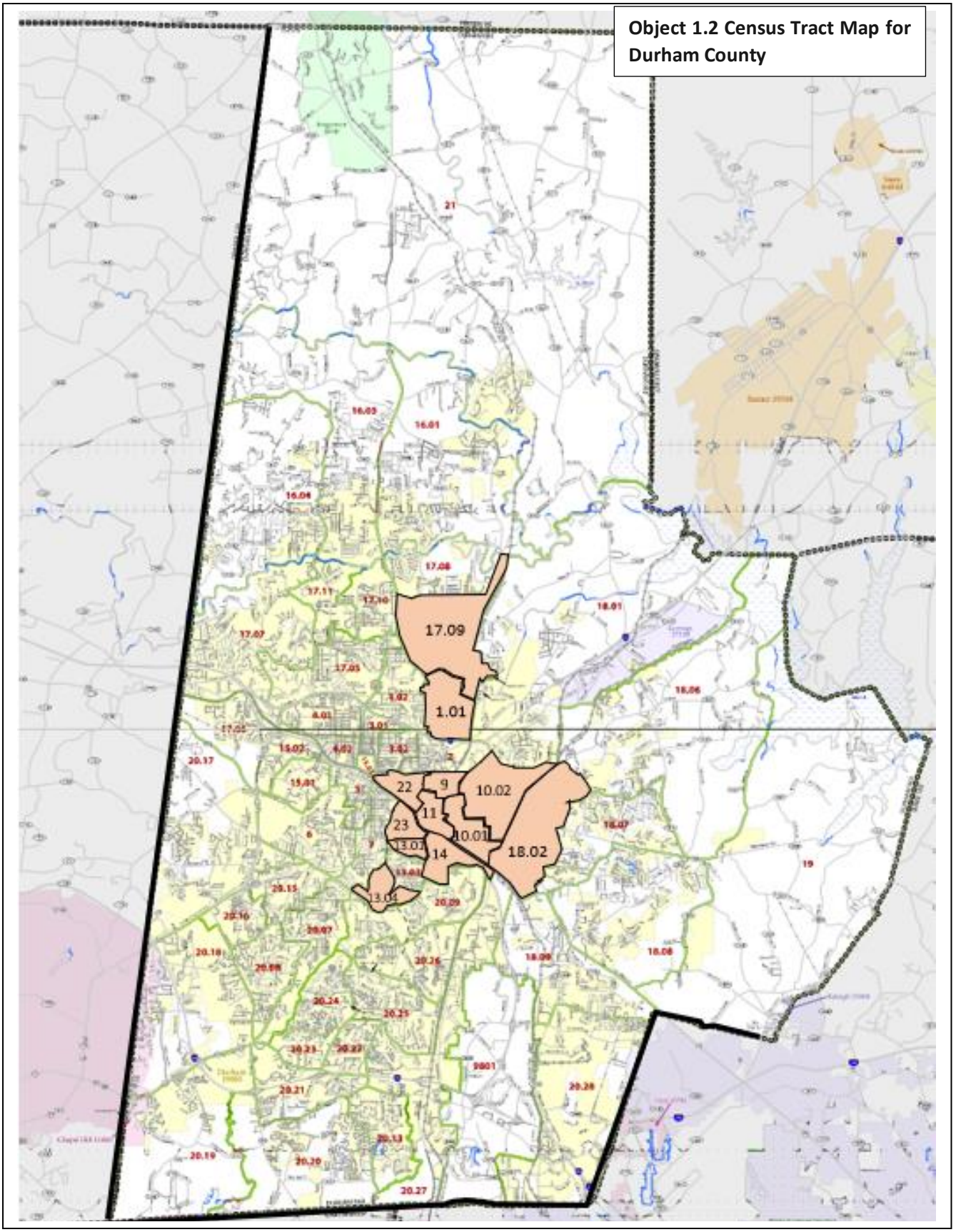
Census Tract	Average number of violent person incidents 2018-2020	Average rate per 100k people
14	61.0	2544.8
13.01	26.7	1929.6
11	60.0	1885.0
23	30.0	1837.1
10.01	47.0	1268.2
9	21.7	1267.1
10.02	67.7	1140.9
22	19.0	908.7
17.09	63.0	904.7
1.01	26.7	846.6
13.04	28.7	840.4
18.02	45.7	562.3
City of Durham	943.3	337.6

The number of aggravated assaults per census tract was significantly different by year over the 3-year period, so the number of aggravated assaults annually for all census tracts is reported on Table 1.8 (p.36). There were nine census tracts that consistently had high rates of aggravated assaults annually, including (in numerical order): 9, 10.01, 10.02, 11, 13.01, 13.04, 14, 17.09, and 23. These census tracts are mapped on Object 1.2, p. 37[10]

[10] U.S. Census Bureau Census Tract Map for Durham County, 2020

Table 1.8 Number and estimated rate of aggravated assaults per 100,000 persons by census tract, 2018-2020

Census Tract	2019 population	Aggravated assaults per 100k persons 2018-2020								
		2018	2018 rate per 100k	2019	2019 rate per 100k	2020	2020 rate per 100k	Total	3-year average	3-year average rate
14	2397	51	2127.7	51	2127.7	72	3003.8	174	58.0	2419.7
13.01	1382	22	1591.9	24	1736.6	28	2026.0	74	24.7	1784.9
11	3183	53	1665.1	49	1539.4	68	2136.3	170	56.7	1780.3
23	1633	26	1592.2	30	1837.1	31	1898.3	87	29.0	1775.9
9	1710	23	1345.0	22	1286.5	18	1052.6	63	21.0	1228.1
10.01	3706	44	1187.3	51	1376.1	41	1106.3	136	45.3	1223.2
10.02	5931	52	876.7	72	1214.0	75	1264.5	199	66.3	1118.4
17.09	6964	37	531.3	71	1019.5	75	1077.0	183	61.0	875.9
22	2091	24	1147.8	21	1004.3	9	430.4	54	18.0	860.8
1.01	3150	11	349.2	29	920.6	37	1174.6	77	25.7	814.8
13.04	3411	22	645.0	21	615.7	37	1084.7	80	26.7	781.8
18.02	8121	35	431.0	40	492.6	54	664.9	129	43.0	529.5
20.09	5052	19	376.1	26	514.6	28	554.2	73	24.3	481.7
17.1	4894	24	490.4	15	306.5	24	490.4	63	21.0	429.1
1.02	4438	16	360.5	14	315.5	27	608.4	57	19.0	428.1
2	3343	15	448.7	12	359.0	15	448.7	42	14.0	418.8
4.01	2900	11	379.3	9	310.3	16	551.7	36	12.0	413.8
13.03	3985	8	200.8	13	326.2	27	677.5	48	16.0	401.5
15.02	5928	23	388.0	24	404.9	23	388.0	70	23.3	393.6
7	3682	18	488.9	13	353.1	12	325.9	43	14.3	389.3
5	4532	14	308.9	19	419.2	19	419.2	52	17.3	382.5
6	5504	22	399.7	13	236.2	21	381.5	56	18.7	339.1
4.02	2337	7	299.5	9	385.1	7	299.5	23	7.7	328.1
17.11	4465	15	335.9	11	246.4	17	380.7	43	14.3	321.0
3.01	2381	11	462.0	6	252.0	5	210.0	22	7.3	308.0
20.26	7296	14	191.9	22	301.5	31	424.9	67	22.3	306.1
20.15	5801	12	206.9	23	396.5	18	310.3	53	17.7	304.5
20.27	10567	23	217.7	22	208.2	40	378.5	85	28.3	268.1
20.16	5304	17	320.5	15	282.8	10	188.5	42	14.0	264.0
17.05	5050	10	198.0	10	198.0	19	376.2	39	13.0	257.4
City of Durham	**279447**	**795**	**284.5**	**885**	**316.7**	**1043**	**373.2**	**2723**	**907.7**	**324.8**



Object 1.2 Census Tract Map for Durham County

High violence census tracts

Durham's 2014 community gang assessment identified 9 census tracts in which residents experienced risk across multiple domains (Stuit, 2014). Some, but not all, of these tracts are included in the detailed analysis section of this report. This section also includes information on census tracts 1.01, 17.09, 18.02, and 22, but does not include analysis on census tract 5 as the rate of aggravated assaults and homicides for census tract 5 was lower than in the areas examined. Emphasis was placed on exploring social conditions in these 12 census tracts because their rate of violent person incidents (aggravated assault and homicides) during 2018-2020, on average, was 2 to 10 times higher than the average for the City of Durham. The 12 census tracts with the highest rates of aggravated assault and homicide per 100k persons are primarily located in the central portion of Durham County (see Object 1.2, p. 37).

Since the last community gang assessment was published in 2014, the city and County of Durham have undertaken several initiatives in these census tracts. However, between 2013 and 2019, poverty increased in census tracts 10.02 and 13.04. The rate of poverty for all persons remained above 40% in 5 of 9 census tracts and above 30% in 6 of 9. Between 2013 and 2019, the percentage of persons 25+ with less than a high school diploma also increased in census tracts 10.01 and 10.02 and remained above 20% for 8 of 9 census tracts. Single headed households also increased in 8 of 9 census tracts and is above 50% in 3 of 9. In 2019, the percentage of children 0-17 living below the poverty line was above 50% in 7 of the 9 census tracts.

Table 1.9 2013 Census tracts by key measures, 2013 and 2019

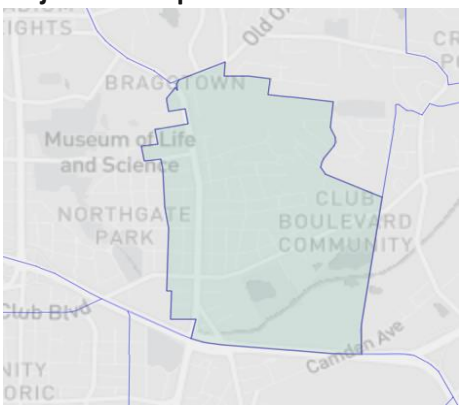
	Population in poverty		Persons 25+ with less than high school diploma		Single-headed households		Children in poverty
2013 tracts	2013	2019	2013	2019	2013	2019	2019
9	58.1%	29%	38.7%	33%	38.1%	46%	54%
10.01	43.7%	31%	38.4%	41.8%	34.2%	47%	40%
10.02	30.8%	55%	35.8%	40.9%	43.1%	57%	73%
11	44.2%	41%	27.6%	26.7%	31.5%	42%	61%
13.01	45.6%	26%	25.3%	20.5%	37.1%	47%	82%
13.04	37.1%	40%	42.0%	30.2%	34.9%	67%	68%
14	58.7%	51%	36.3%	32.4	62.6%	73%	80%
23	59.7%	43%	43.4%	19.7%	35.3%	17%	55%

Census tract 1.01

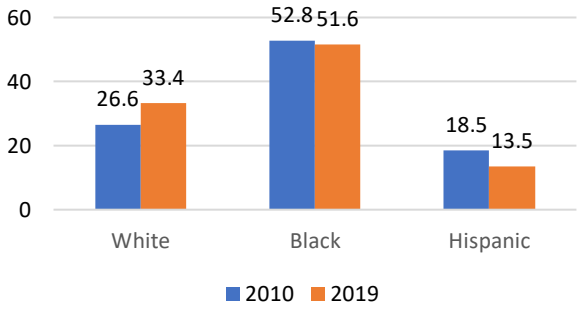
Census tract 1.01 is located north of I-85 and east of Roxboro Road, extending north and south of Club Boulevard (Object 1.3)[11]. This area covers the Durham Housing Authority (DHA) Club Boulevard community. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 3,150 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 37 and 24% of the population is ages 0 to 17. Persons in this tract are 57% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Objects 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7.

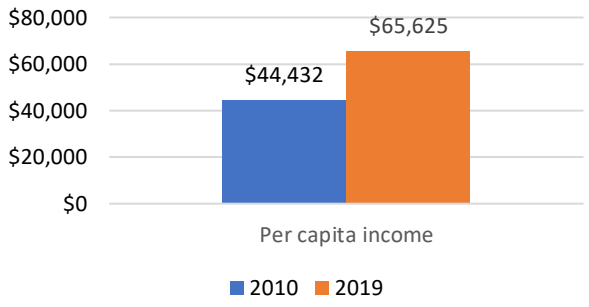
Object 1.3 Map of Census Tract 1.01



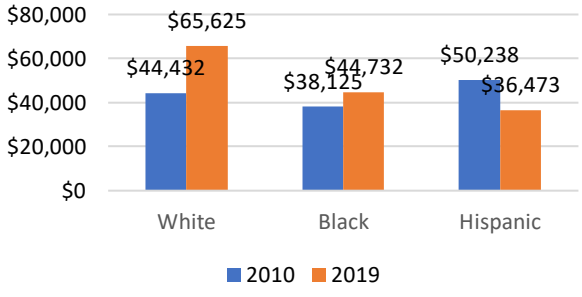
Object 1.4 Census tract 1.01 demographic change 2010 to 2019



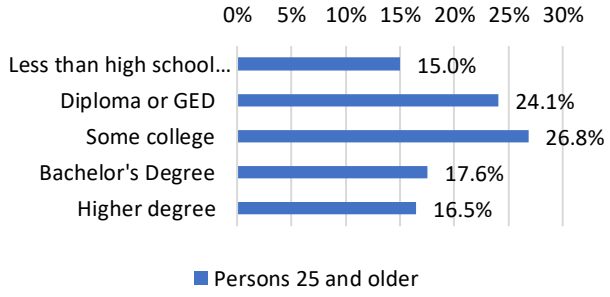
Object 1.5 Per capita income 2011 and 2019



Object 1.6 Census tract 1.01 change in median household income by race



Object 1.7 2019 Census tract educational attainment persons 25+

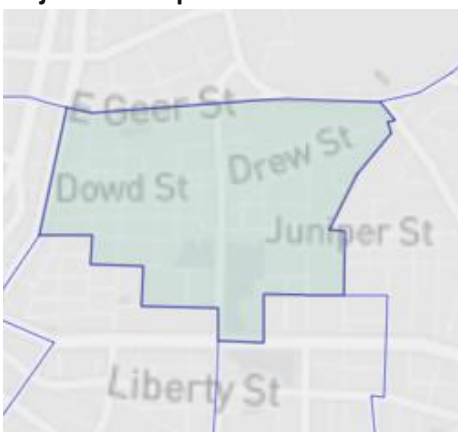


[11] Map from censusreporter.com

Census tract 9

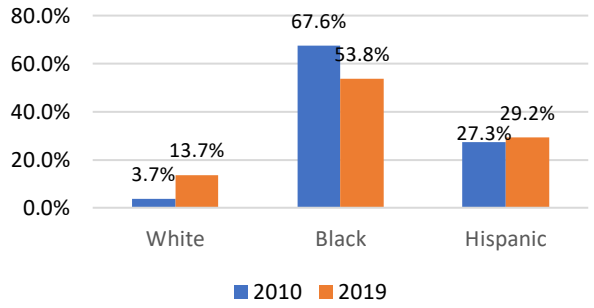
Census tract 9 is located south of Old Oxford Road and west of Dearborn Drive and is bounded on the west by Roxboro Road (Object 1.8)[12]. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 1,710 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

Object 1.8 Map of Census Tract 9

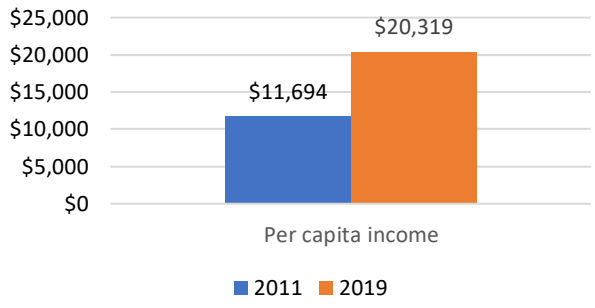


The median age in this census tract is 34.4, children 0 to 17 compose 24% of the population, and persons in this tract are 54% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Objects 1.9, 1.10, 1.11 and 1.12.

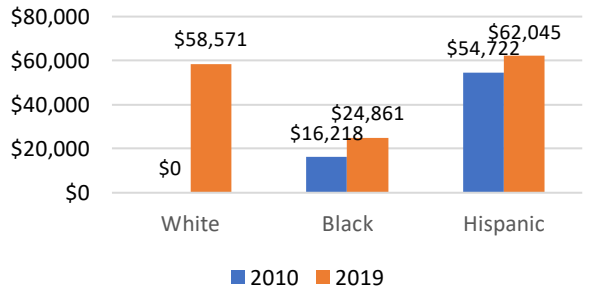
Object 1.9 Census tract 9 demographic change 2010 to 2019



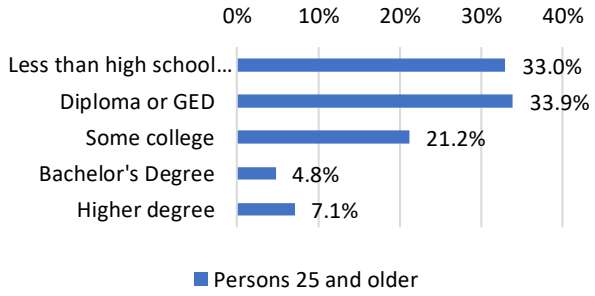
Object 1.10 Per capita income 2011 and 2019



Object 1.11 Census tract 9 change in median household income by race



Object 1.12 2019 Census tract 9 educational attainment persons 25+



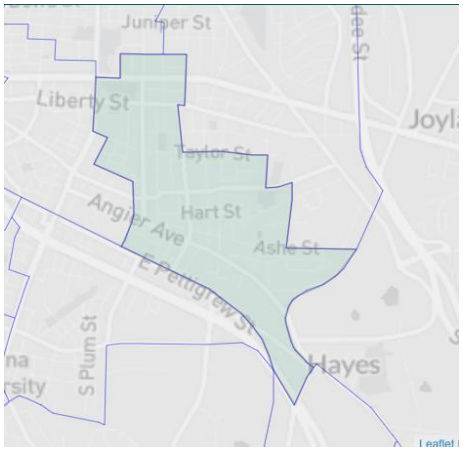
[12] Map from census reporter.com

Census tract 10.01

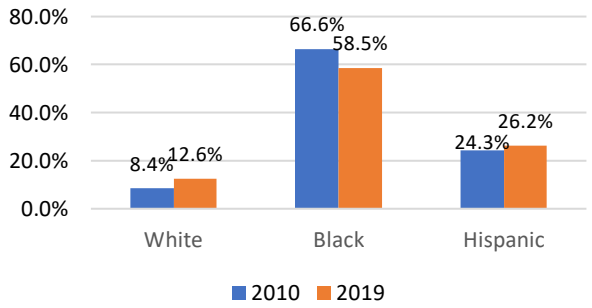
Census tract 10.01 is located directly north of Highway 147 and west of South Hoover Road, extending slightly north of Highway 98 (Object 1.13)[13]. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 3,706 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 32.7, children 0 to 17 compose 30% of the population, and persons in this tract are 53% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Objects 1.14, 1.15, 1.16 and 1.17.

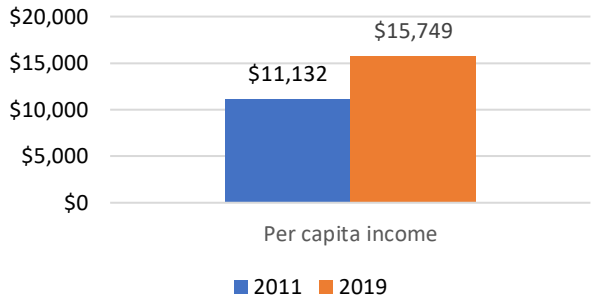
Object 1.13 Map of Census Tract 10.01



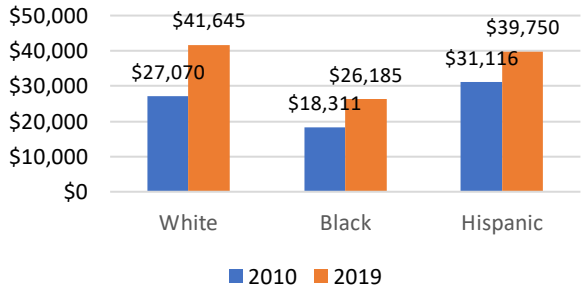
Object 1.14 Census tract 10.01 demographic change 2010 to 2019



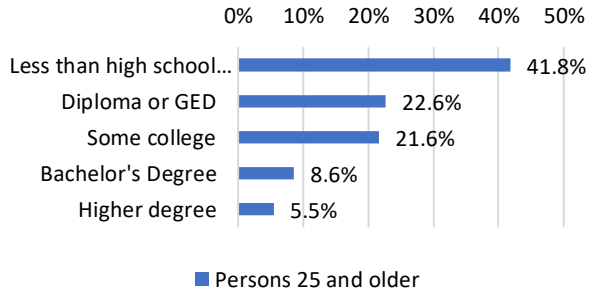
Object 1.15 Per capita income 2011 and 2019



Object 1.16 Census tract 10.01 change in median household income by race



Object 1.17 2019 Census tract 10.01 educational attainment persons 25+



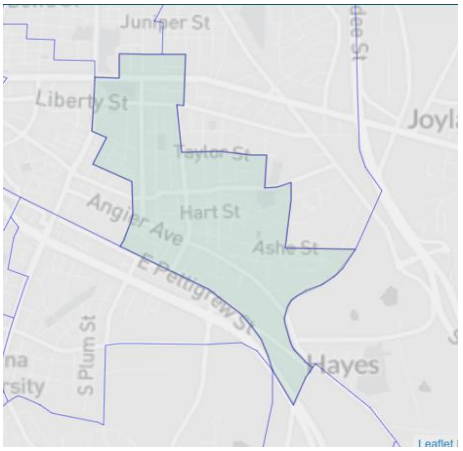
[13] Map from census reporter.com

Census tract 10.02

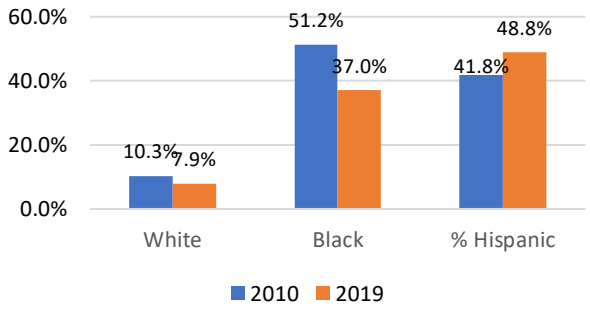
Census tract 10.02 is located south of Old Oxford Road and east of Dearborn Drive (Object 1.18)[14]. This tract runs south to Ashe Street. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 5,931 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 32.7, children 0 to 17 compose 30% of the population, and persons in this tract are 53% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.19, Object 1.20, Object 1.21, and Object 1.22 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

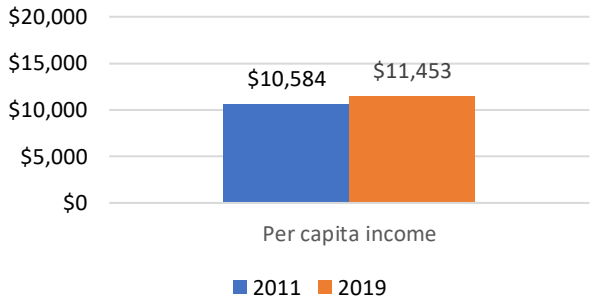
Object 1.18 Map of Census Tract 10.02



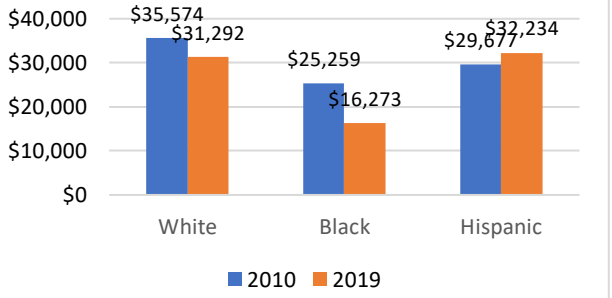
Object 1.19 Census tract 10.02 demographic change 2010 to 2019



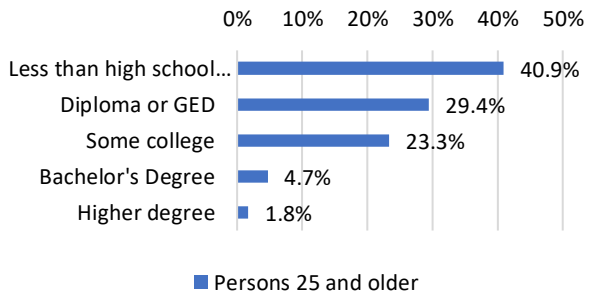
Object 1.20 Per capita income in Census tract 10.02 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.21 Census tract 10.02 change in median household income by race



Object 1.22 2019 Census tract 10.01 educational attainment persons 25+



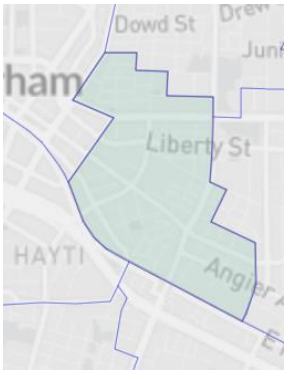
[14] Map from census reporter.com

Census tract 11

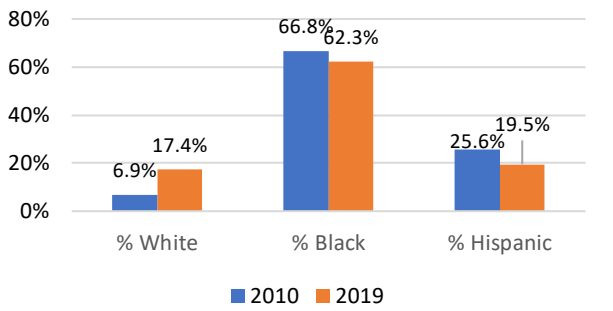
Census tract 11 is located north of Highway 147 and east of Roxboro Road. It extends slightly north of Highway 98 and covers the DHA Liberty Street community (Object 1.23)[15]. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 3,183 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 35.6, children 0 to 17 compose 28% of the population, and persons in this tract are 48% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.23, Object 1.24, Object 1.25, and Object 1.26 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

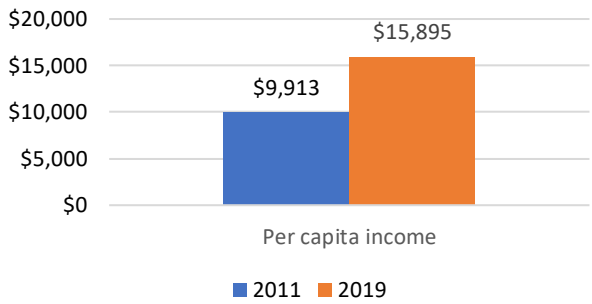
Object 1.23 Map of Census Tract 11



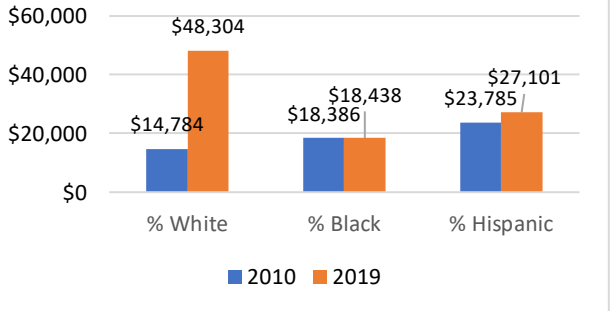
Object 1.23 Census tract 11 demographic change 2010 to 2019



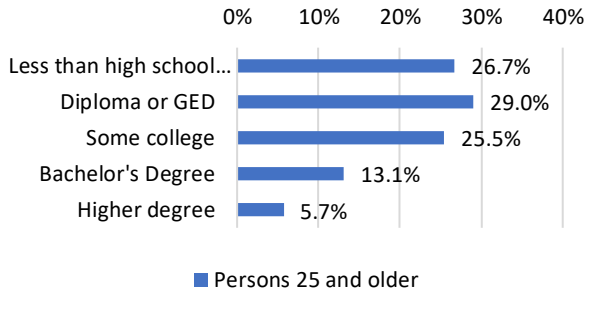
Object 1.24 Per capita income in Census tract 11 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.25 Census tract 11 change in median household income by race



Object 1.26 2019 Census tract 11 educational attainment persons 25+



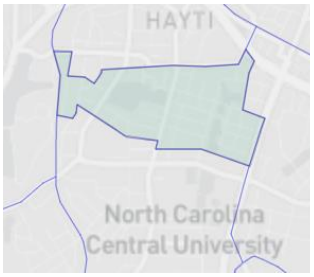
[15] Map from census reporter.com

Census tract 13.01

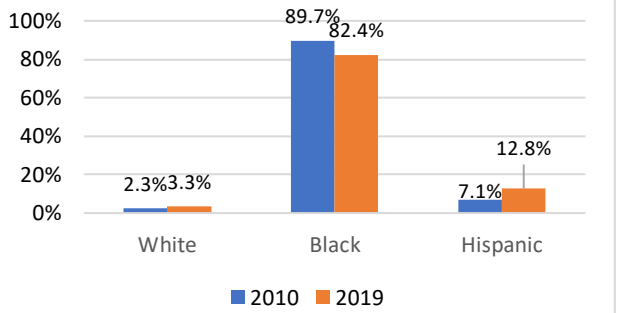
Census tract 13.01 is located south of Highway 147 between South Alston Avenue and Roxboro Street, covering the historic South Side neighborhood of Durham (Object 1.27)[16]. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 1,382 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 34.8, children 0 to 17 compose 25% of the population, and persons in this tract are 56% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.28, Object 1.29, Object 1.30, and Object 1.31 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

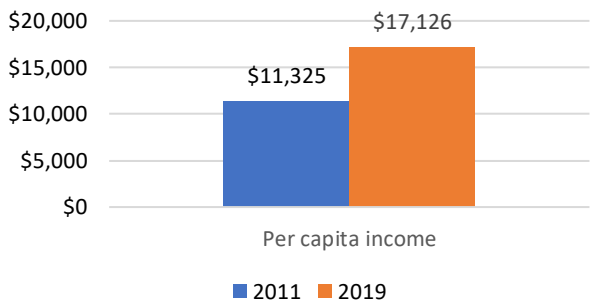
Object 1.27 Map of Census Tract 13.01



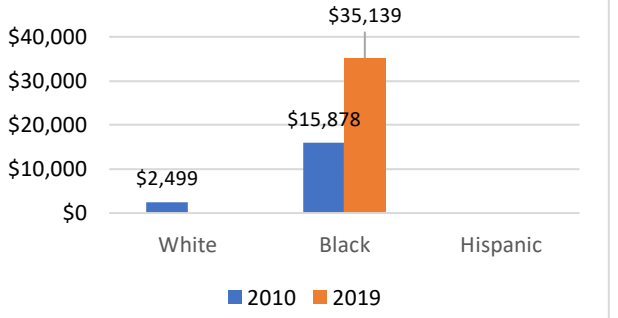
Object 1.28 Census tract 13.01 demographic change 2010 to 2019



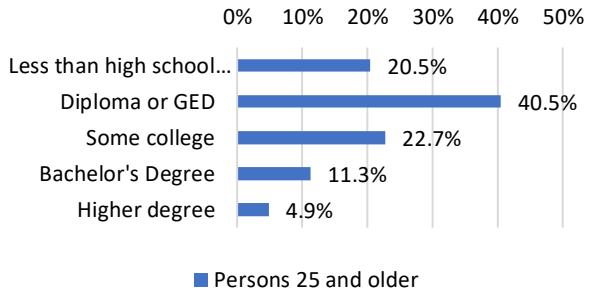
Object 1.29 Per capita income in Census tract 13.01 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.30 Census tract 13.01 change in median household income by race



Object 1.31 2019 Census tract 13.01 educational attainment persons 25+



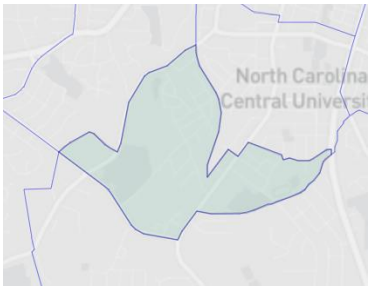
[16] Map from censusreporter.com

Census tract 13.04

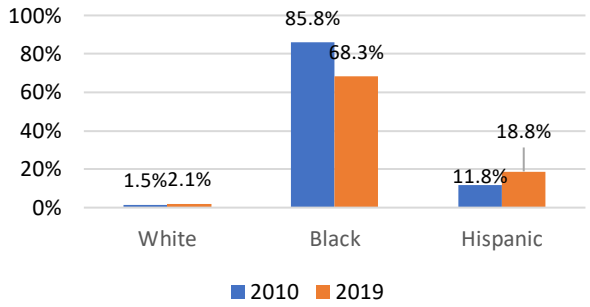
Census tract 13.04 is located south of North Carolina Central University between South Roxboro Street and Fayetteville Street and covers the DHA Cornwallis community (Object 1.32)[17]. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 3,411 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 32.7, children 0 to 17 compose 30% of the population, and persons in this tract are 53% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.33, Object 1.34, Object 1.35, and Object 136 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

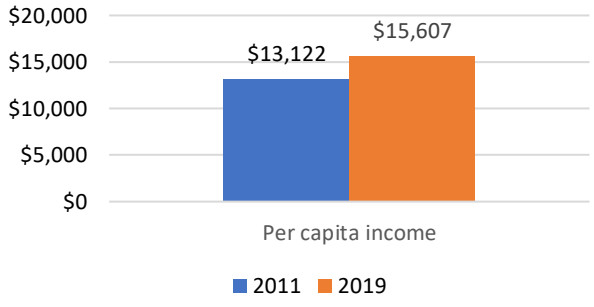
Object 1.32 Map of Census Tract 13.04



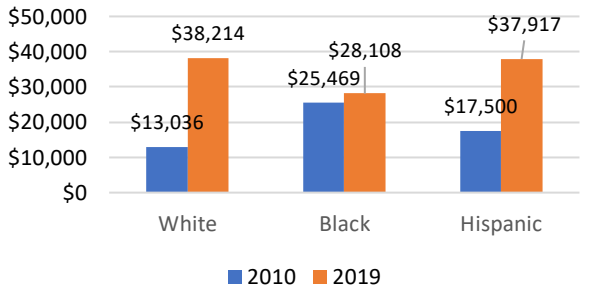
Object 1.33 Census tract 13.04 demographic change 2010 to 2019



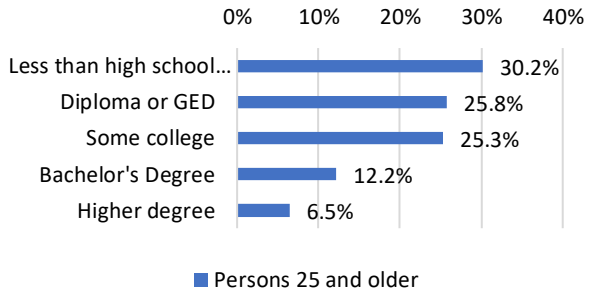
Object 1.34 Per capita income in Census tract 13.04 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.35 Census tract 13.04 change in median household income by race



Object 1.36 2019 Census tract 13.04 educational attainment persons 25+



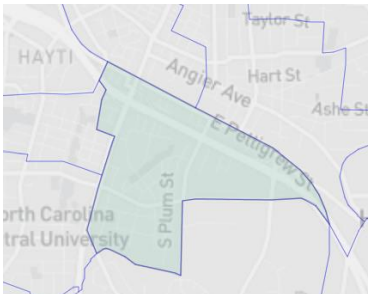
[17] Map from censusreporter.com

Census tract 14

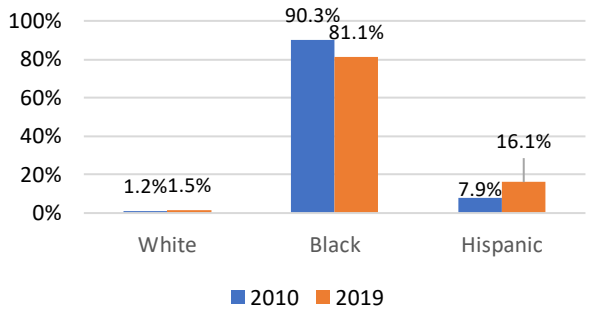
Census tract 14 extends both north and south of Highway 147 to North Pettigrew Street and is bounded on the west by Alston Avenue. This census tract includes the DHA MacDougald Terrace community (Object 1.37)[18].

The median age in this census tract is 29.1, Children 0 to 17 compose 41% of the population, and persons in this tract are 59% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.38, Object 1.39, Object 1.40, and Object 1.41 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

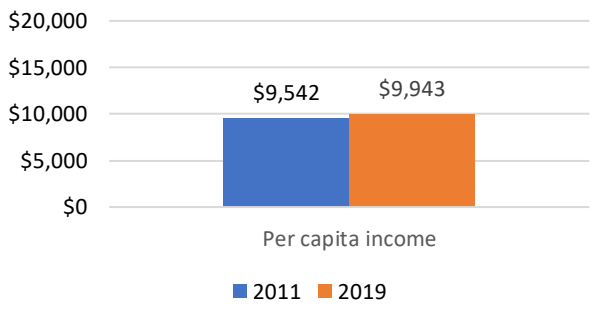
Object 1.37 Map of Census Tract 14



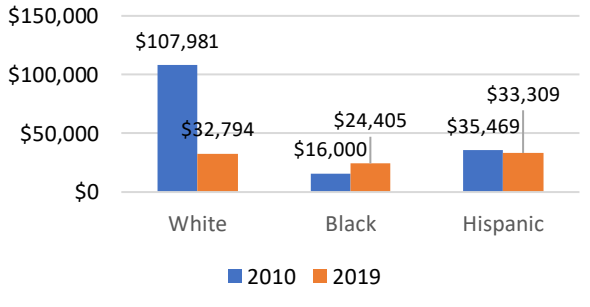
Object 1.38 Census tract 14 demographic change 2010 to 2019



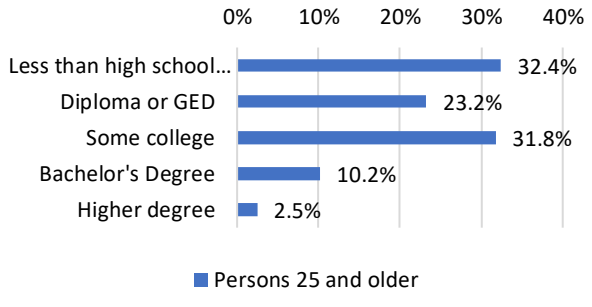
Object 1.39 Per capita income in Census tract 14 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.40 Census tract 14 change in median household income by race



Object 1.41 2019 Census tract 14 educational attainment persons 25+



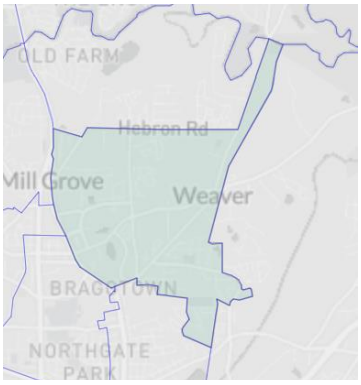
[18] Map from censusreporter.com

Census tract 17.09

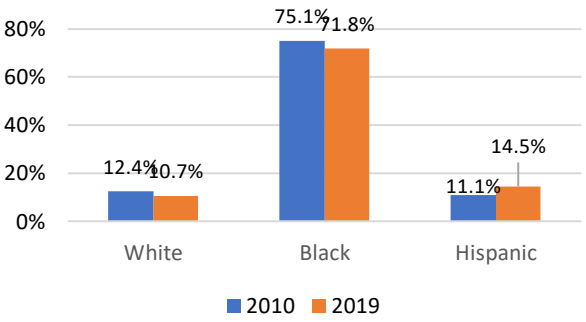
Census tract 17.09 extends north of census tract 1.01 and covers the historic Braggtown neighborhood (Object 1.42)[19]. This area covers the Durham Housing Authority (DHA) Oxford Manor community and had an estimated population of 6,964 in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 34.4, Children 0 to 17 compose 29% of the population, and persons in this tract are 54% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.43, Object 1.44, Object 1.45, and Object 1.46 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

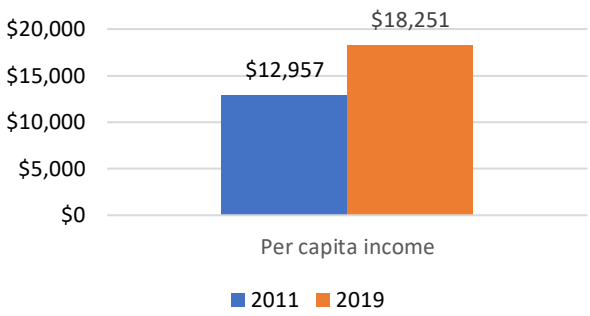
Object 1.42 Map of Census Tract 17.09



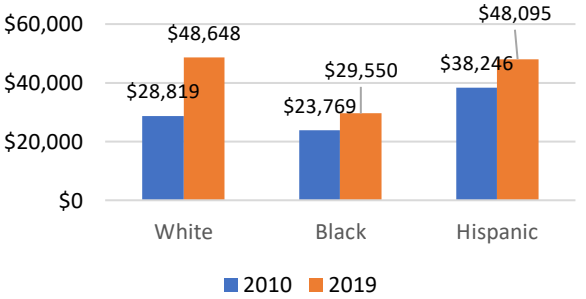
Object 1.43 Census tract 17.09 demographic change 2010 to 2019



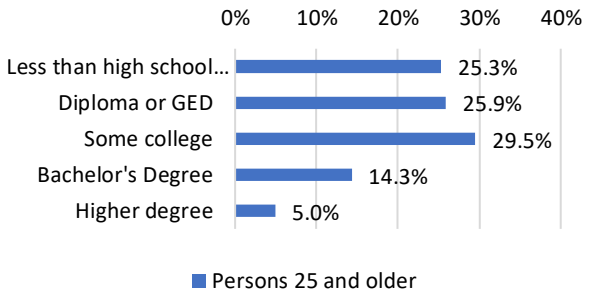
Object 1.44 Per capita income in Census tract 17.09 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.45 Census tract 17.09 change in median household income by race



Object 1.46 2019 Census tract 17.09 educational attainment persons 25+



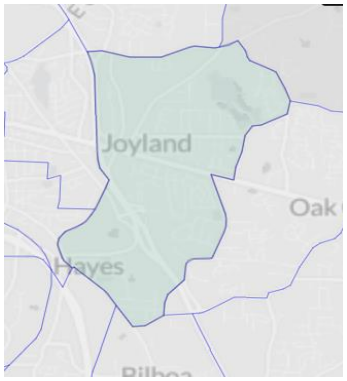
[19] Map from Censusreporter.com

Census tract 18.02

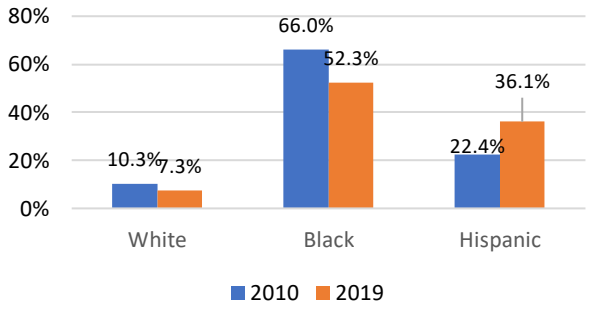
Census tract 18.02 is bounded on the south end by the Southern Railroad Line and South Hoover Road/Highway 70 on the west. It extends north to Cheek Road and east to Clayton and Chandler Roads (Object 1.47)[20]. This census tract covers the DHA Hoover Road community. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 8,121 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

The median age in this census tract is 32.2, Children 0 to 17 compose 34% of the population, and persons in this tract are 57% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.48, Object 1.49, Object 1.50, and Object 1.51 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

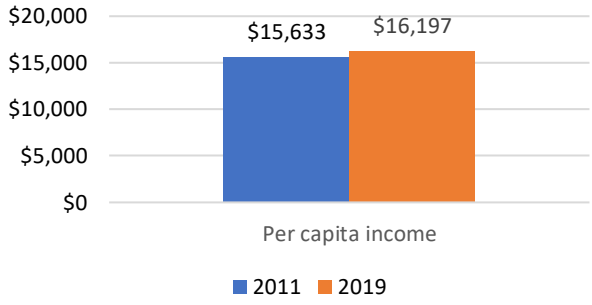
Object 1.47 Map of Census Tract 18.02



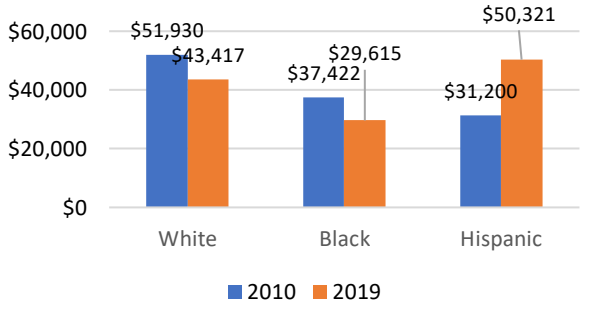
Object 1.48 Census tract 18.02 demographic change 2010 to 2019



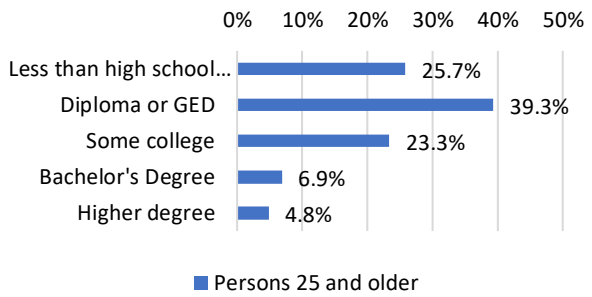
Object 1.49 Per capita income in Census tract 18.02 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.50 Census tract 18.02 change in median household income by race



Object 1.51 2019 Census tract 18.02 educational attainment persons 25+

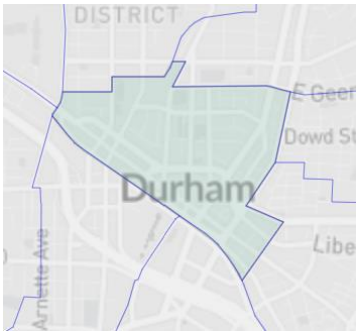


[20] Map from censusreporter.com

Census tract 22

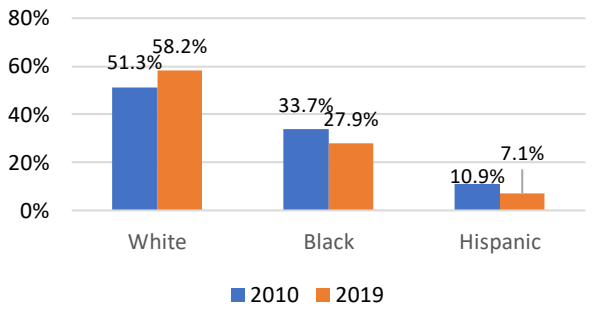
Census tract covers Durham's central business district and is bordered on the south by Highway 147 and on the north by Trinity Avenue (Object 1.52)[21]. It extends west to North Buchanan Boulevard and east to Roxboro Road. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 2,091 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). While this area includes some very affluent sections, it also has a child poverty rate of 32% as of 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

Object 1.52 Map of Census Tract 22

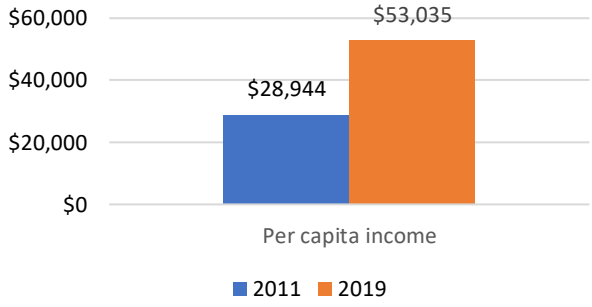


The median age in this census tract is 31.2, Children 0 to 17 compose 8% of the population, and persons in this tract are 48% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.53, Object 1.54, Object 1.55 and Object 1.56 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

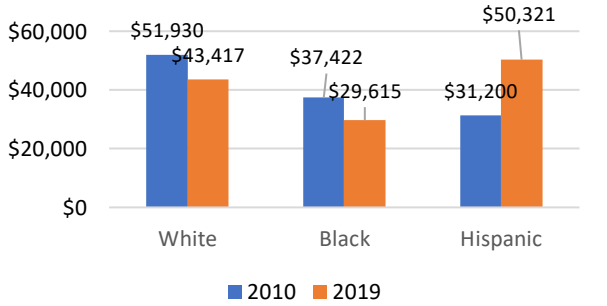
Object 1.53 Census tract 22 demographic change 2010 to 2019



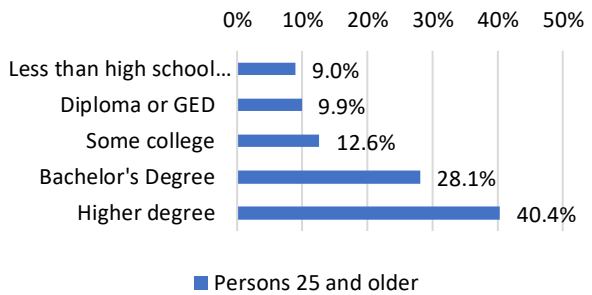
Object 1.54 Per capita income in Census tract 22 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.55 Census tract 22 change in median household income by race



Object 1.56 2019 Census tract 22 educational attainment persons 25+

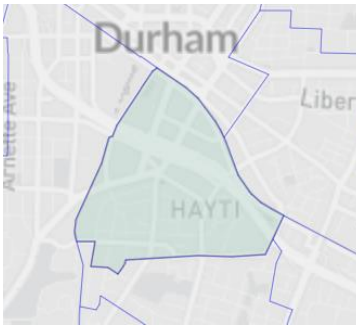


[21] Map from Censusreporter.com

Census tract 23

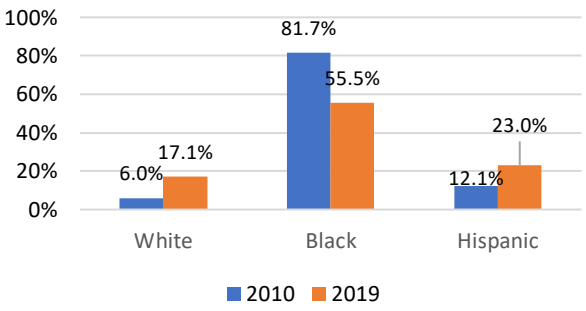
Census tract 23 covers the historic Hayti neighborhood and is bordered on the north by Pettigrew Street and on the east by Elizabeth Street. The western boundary of this tract is South Roxboro Street, and the southern border is Umstead Street (Object 1.57)[22]. This census tract covers the DHA Forest Hills Heights community. The estimated population of this census tract in 2019 was 1,633 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Census tract 23 also covers the Durham County Detention Center, which affects some data categories.

Object 1.57 Map of Census Tract 23

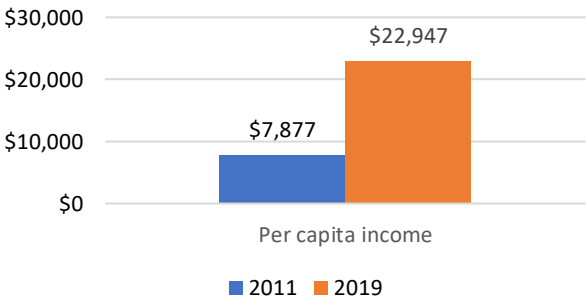


The median age in this census tract is 30, Children 0 to 17 compose 26% of the population, and persons in this tract are 37% female. Racial demographics, economic status and educational attainment of this census tract are detailed on Object 1.58, Object 1.59, Object 1.60, and Object 1.61 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020).

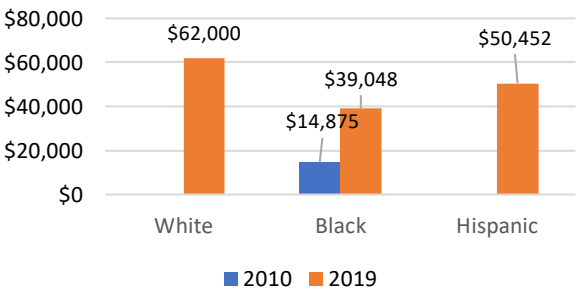
Object 1.58 Census tract 23 demographic change 2010 to 2019



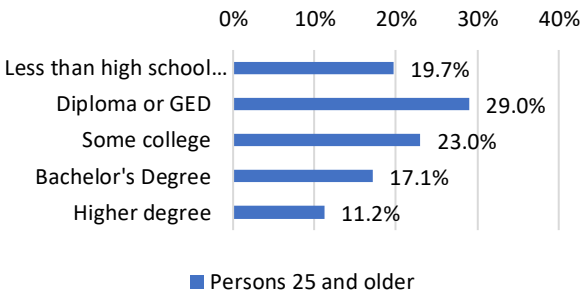
Object 1.59 Per capita income in Census tract 23 in 2011 and 2019



Object 1.60 Census tract 23 change in median household income by race



Object 1.61 2019 Census tract 22 educational attainment persons 25+



[22] Map from Censusreporter.com

Risk exposure

In addition to being exposed to Durham's highest rates of violent person incidents (aggravated assault and homicide) per capita, residents in these twelve census tracts also experience a host of additional risk exposure.

High poverty

These twelve tracts include the census tracts with the lowest per capita income and highest percentage of persons in poverty and children 0-17 in poverty. While some tracts have a mix of economic status, several are home to entrenched and severe poverty.

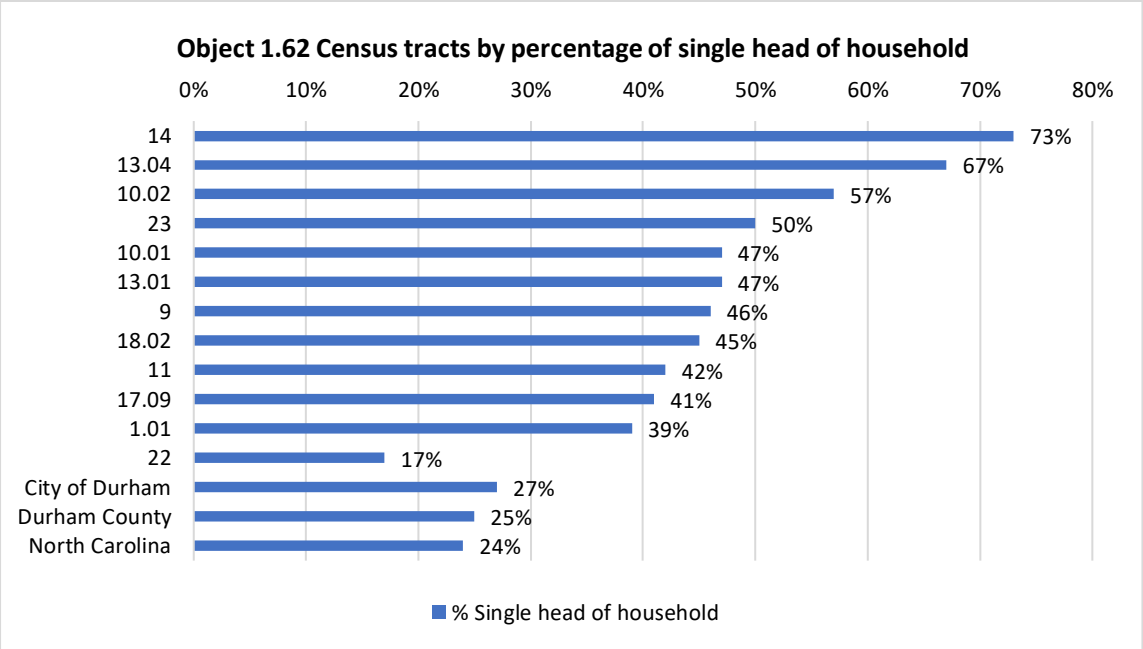
Census tract 14 has the lowest per capita income of any census tract in Durham ($9,943) and 84% of households earn below $50k annually. Eighty percent of children in this tract are below the poverty line. Other tracts with a greater than 50% child poverty rate include 10.02 (73%), 13.04 (61%), 11 (61%), and 17.09 (50%). The per capita income and median household income for each of these census tracts is well below the per capita income and median household income for the City of Durham and Durham County. These census tracts reveal the huge wealth disparity that exists across census tracts in Durham. In the poorest census tract (14), per capita income is 7.6 times lower than in the wealthiest census tract in Durham County.

Table 1.10 Census tracts by economic status

Census Tract/ Location	Per capita income	Median household income	% households below $50k annually	% persons in poverty	% children 0-17 in poverty
14	$9,943	$27,628	84%	51%	80%
10.02	$11,453	$21,107	84%	55%	73%
13.04	$15,670	$30,332	75%	40%	61%
10.01	$15,749	$30,595	74%	31%	40%
11	$15,895	$24,209	76%	41%	61%
18.02	$16,197	$38,741	62%	25%	47%
13.01	$17,126	$31,683	79%	26%	33%
17.09	$18,251	$34,662	72%	33%	50%
9	$20,319	$32,500	66%	29%	45%
23	$22,947	$48,194	51%	17%	12%
22	$28,462	$55,667	37%	29%	48%
City of Durham	$36,045	$65,534	38%	15%	23%
Durham County	$36,195	$65,317	39%	14%	21%
North Carolina	$32,021	$57,341	44%	14%	20%

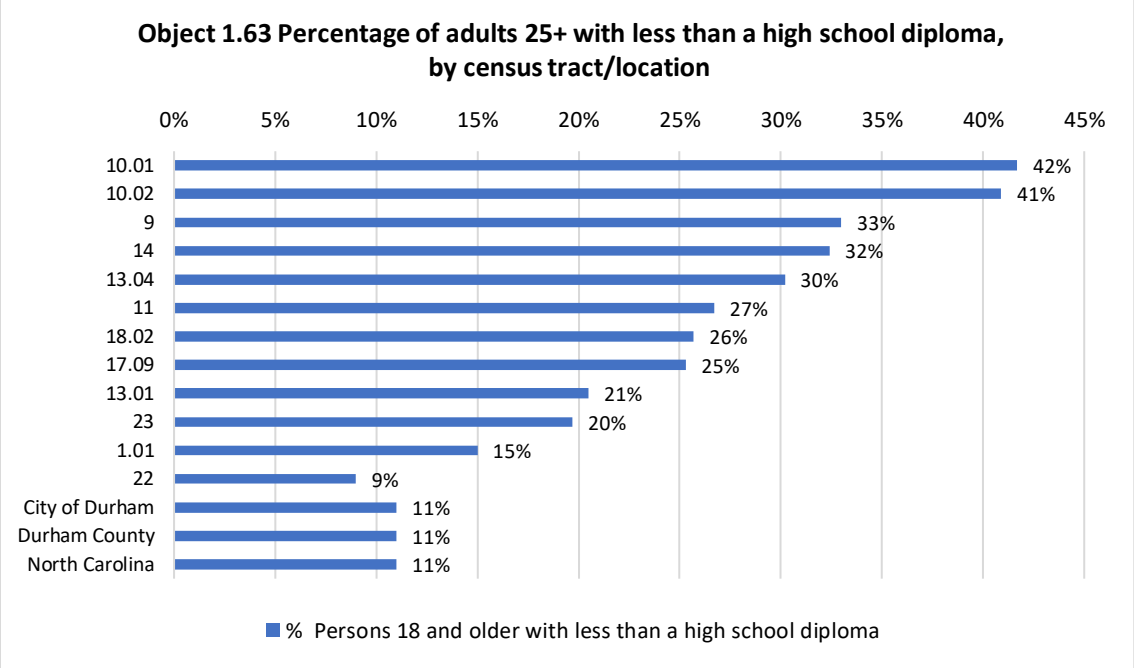
Disrupted family structure

Families in many of the 12 census tracts experience higher than average rates of disruption of the family structure. In Census Tract 14, 73% of households have a single head of household. In 11 of the 12 census tracts, over 40% of households have a single head of household, and 4 census tracts exceed 50%.



Low educational attainment

High percentages of residents in many of the 12 census tracts have less than a high school diploma (age 18 and above). In five census tracts, 30% or more of persons 18+ have less than a high school diploma (Object 1.63) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). In two census tracts (10.02 and 10.01), the rate of adults with less than a high school diploma is over 40%.



Child abuse and neglect

Prior victimization, including childhood maltreatment and neglect, is a risk factor for gang involvement. The 2020 Durham Community Health Assessment compiled by the Durham County Department of Public Health (DCDPH) reports that during FY 2017-18:

> *There were approximately 2,566 children who were investigated for concerns of abuse and neglect." This figure includes "150 children whose cases were substantiated for abuse or neglect (32 abuse and neglect, 29 abuse, 84 neglect, 5 dependency) and 359 children whose cases were not substantiated for abuse or neglect. For the remaining children, 228 were identified as needing services, 831 had services recommended, 906 had no services recommended and 72 had services provided but no longer needed them* (DCDPH, 2021).

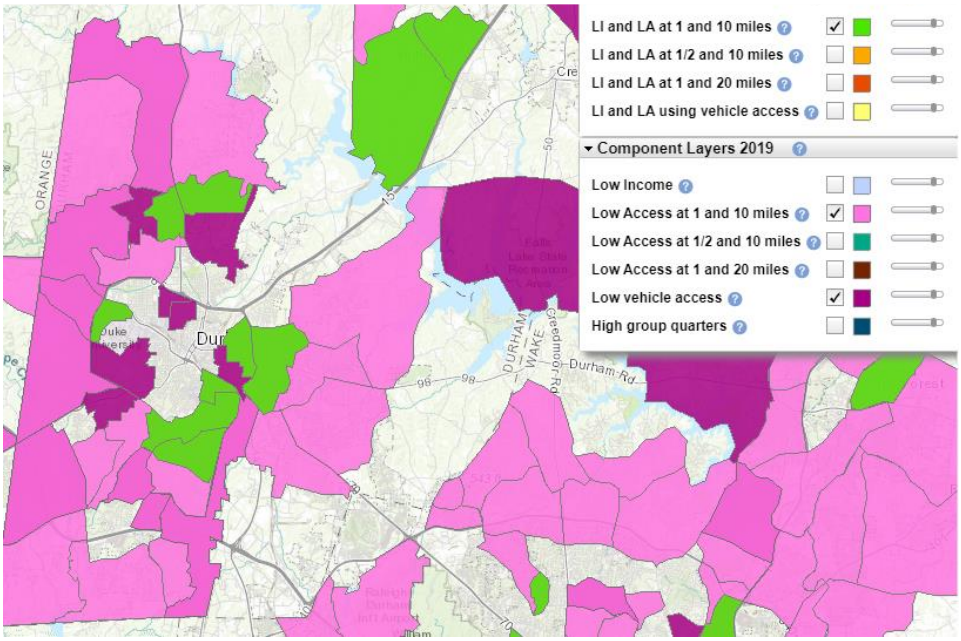
During this same period, "Durham County on average had 414 children in foster care" (DCDPH, 2021).

Lack of food access

One area currently being explored by criminological researchers is the connection between childhood malnutrition and later involvement in criminal behavior. Beaver (2009) notes that one study found that "childhood malnutrition led to neurocognitive deficits and neurocognitive deficits lead to antisocial phenotypes."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture utilizes food access measures and income data from the American Community Survey to compile the Food Access Research Atlas. This Atlas measures the availability of grocery stores along with income data. The USDA defines limited food access as "Limited access to supermarkets, supercenters, grocery stores, or other sources of healthy and affordable food may make it harder for some people to eat a healthy diet in this country" (USDA, 2021). Low-income populations in Durham may also be defined as food insecure, meaning that they have insufficient economic means to ensure consistent nutrition, which can also increase the likelihood of childhood malnutrition

Object 1.64 Census tracts designed low income/low access to food in 2019 by the USDA

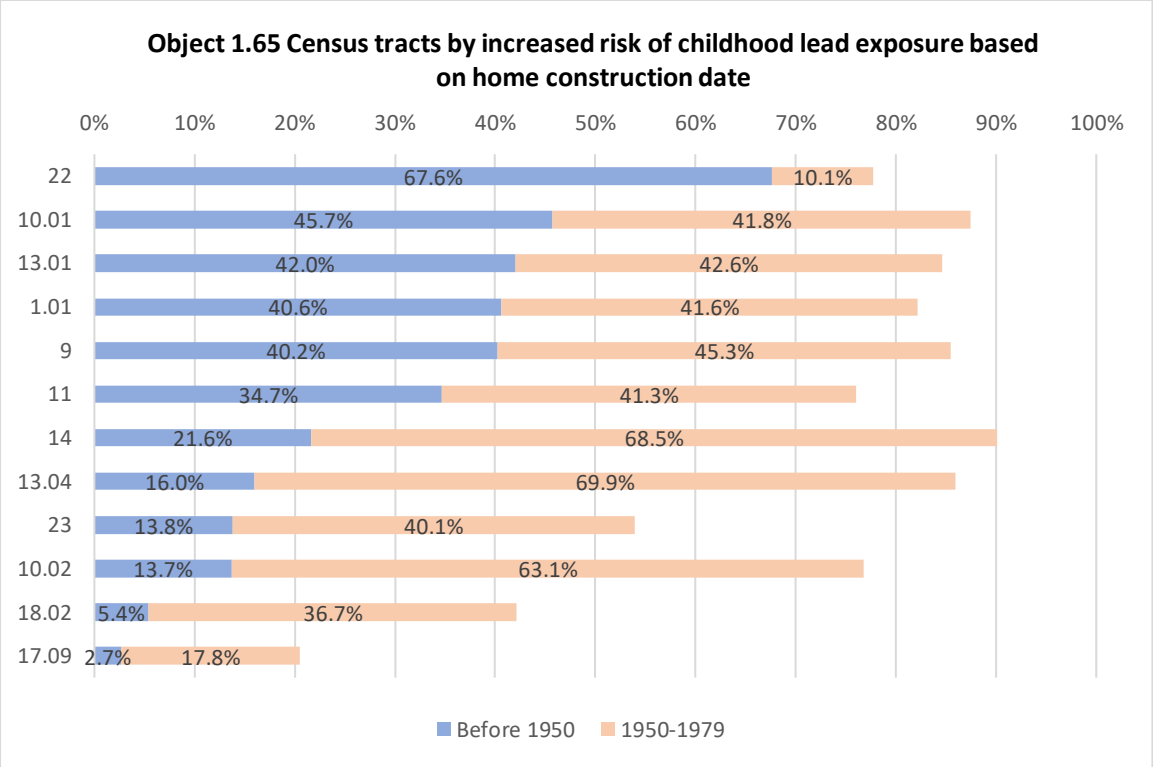


Three of the 12 census tracts examined in detail were identified as both low income and low access: 18.02 10.02 and 14.00 (Object 1.64).

Exposure to environmental toxins

Especially during early childhood, exposure to lead is linked to "criminal arrests, including arrests for violent crimes and juvenile delinquency, including both self-reported delinquency and official delinquency…in general, there is a positive association between exposure to lead and violent crime rates" (Beaver, 2009).

The Centers for Disease Control's National Environmental Health Tracking Network provides a method of identifying census tracts with higher risks of possible lead exposure in the built environment by identifying census tracts with high percentages of dwellings constructed before 1950, and thus more likely to contain lead paint. In 9 of the 12 census tracts examined, more than 70% of dwellings were constructed before 1979, subjecting children in those areas to a greater risk of lead exposure (Object 1.65) (Centers for Disease Control, 2020).



Many of the census tracts examined for this report indicate there is an increased risk of lead exposure for children in those areas. However, the 2020 Durham Community Health Assessment notes that in 2018, only 48.4% of at-risk children were screened for possible lead exposure (DCDPH, 2021). During 2018, 1% of children screened by DCDPH had blood lead levels greater than 5µg/dL, which is the level at which North Carolina State law requires an investigation (DCDPH, 2021).

An unknown number of children and youth in Durham County are exposed to lead and other environmental toxins. During 2020, 280 residents were evacuated from the DHA MacDougald Terrace community due to the deaths of two infants that may have been caused by carbon monoxide poisoning. In the subsequent investigation, Durham Fire Department official inspections:

> *"found six units with elevated carbon monoxide levels and 13 more with gas leaks; in addition, paramedics reported four residents with elevated carbon monoxide levels, two of whom required hospitalization…The residents described hearing rats in their walls and smelling mold in their kitchen cabinets and showers, dealing with rusted windowsills and rickety outside porches that pulled away from their unit's exterior, and witnessing gas leaks repaired with duct tape. Tub faucets couldn't be turned off for days, creating more mold. Paint peeled from their walls and tubs, and ceilings cracked"* (McDonald, 2020).

Subsequent inspections identified a "toxic soup" of "lead, mold and sewage problems" in the complex (McDonald, 2020).

Social vulnerability and racial inequality

It should be noted that none of the factors described in this section, by themselves, are correlated to gang activity and violence. However, there is strong research support for the effects of accumulated risk factors in multiple domains, as is shown in many of these census tracts. Further, these risk factors disproportionately and inequitably affect Black and Hispanic/Latinx children, youth, and families in Durham.

The Centers for Disease Control compiles a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) at the census tract level using 15 factors from U.S. Census Data and the American Community Surveys, including poverty, disability, racial minority status, educational attainment, and other factors (Centers for Disease Control, 2018).

This index is used by local health departments and emergency response professionals to identify areas that may require additional assistance in the event of a disaster or public health crisis. The SVI scores for the 12 selected census tracts for 2018 were collected and are reported on Table 1.11. Black and Hispanic/Latino residents in Durham are disproportionately affected by clustered risk exposure, poverty, and exposure to violent crime.

Table 1.11 Social Vulnerability Index for selected census tracts

Census tract	SVI score	% children 0-17 in poverty	% Black/African American	% Hispanic/ Latino	Average rate of VPO per 100k persons
14	0.98	80%	81%	16%	2544.8
10.01	0.976	40%	58%	26%	1268.2
13.04	0.95	61%	68%	19%	840.4
18.02	0.935	47%	52%	36%	562.3
10.02	0.932	73%	37%	49%	1140.9
11	0.931	61%	62%	20%	1885.0
17.09	0.921	50%	72%	14%	899.9
13.01	0.874	33%	82%	13%	1929.6
1.01	0.851	48%	52%	14%	846.6
23	0.846	12%	55%	23%	1837.1
900	0.82	45%	54%	29%	1267.1

Section 2 – Youth Risk Exposure and Experiences[23]

Key information in this section

- Youth in Durham experience elevated risk in numerous domains. Court-involved juveniles experience higher levels of risk exposure and gang-involved individuals experience the highest levels of risk exposure.
- In 2019, 30% of high school students and 19% of middle school students in Durham reported gang activity in their school; 40% of Black high school students reported gang activity in their school
- Durham youth referred to the juvenile courts are 3.1 times more likely to be identified as gang members or gang associates than court-involved juveniles statewide.
- Durham high school students report current use of marijuana at a higher rate (26%) than other students in North Carolina (22%).
- Court-involved juveniles in Durham are 1.25 times more likely to be classified as high risk compared to court-involved juveniles statewide.
- Court-involved juveniles in Durham are twice as likely as youth statewide to have prior runaway status (44% versus 23%).
- In 2019, 32% of Durham middle schoolers and 35% of Durham high school students reported experiencing 2+ weeks of depression.
- Between 2019 and 2020, the number of Durham County youth referred to Juvenile Crime Prevention Council-funded agencies by juvenile court counselors decreased by 66.4%.
- 44% of children 0-17 in Durham live in single parent homes.
- In 2019, the rate of infant mortality for Black infants in Durham was nine times higher than for white infants.
- The percentage of court-involved juveniles in Durham with prior findings of neglect is 47% higher than the state average.
- In 2018-19, only 37% of Durham Public Schools 3rd through 8th graders and 27% of 9th through 12th graders scored college or career proficient on end of grade exams.
- In 2019-20, the rate of short-term suspensions for Black students in Durham Public Schools was 7.4 times higher than the rate of short-term suspension for white students.

[23] Different youth-serving agencies in Durham refer to children and youth differently. The North Carolina Judicial Branch and the North Carolina Department of Public Safety Division of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, which include the Juvenile Court, use "juvenile." Durham Public Schools uses "students" to refer to children or youth. Other youth-serving agencies use children, youth or children and youth. This report uses the terminology of each agency when referencing that agency's data.

This section covers the exposure of youth in Durham to social and systemic conditions that may affect their quality of life and make them more vulnerable to become involved in gangs. Durham's Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee opted not to conduct a localized youth survey for this gang assessment report due to the COVID-19 pandemic and because of the availability of existing youth risk exposure assessment data from several agencies.

Information presented in this section includes youth systemic and self-reported data collected and reported by organizations as shown on Table 2.1. Data was collected for the most recent time periods available and was collected over time when possible. Comparison data for other comparable counties or the state of NC are also provided for context.

Table 2.1 Sources of information on youth risk exposure in Durham

Source of information	Type of information	Years collected
Durham County Health Department	North Carolina Youth Risk and Behavior Survey	2015, 2017, 2019
Durham County Health Department	Durham County Community Health Assessment	2020
Durham Public Schools	Short-Term Suspension Data Long-Term Suspension Data	2017-18, 2016-17 (school calendar years)
Durham Public Schools	District Subgroup Composite Report	2020-21
North Carolina Department of Public Safety	County Juvenile Court Databooks	2018, 2019, 2020
North Carolina Department of Public Safety	Risk factor data for juvenile court-involved juveniles	2020, 2021
Durham Office on Youth	Durham Youth Listening Project	2020
North Carolina School Report Cards	Durham Public Schools District Profile	2019-2020 (school calendar year)
North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics	North Carolina Leading Causes of Death Vol. 2	2018, 2019
Southern Coalition for Social Justice	Racial Equity Report Cards	2018, 2019
Kids Count Data Center	Children and youth demographic data	2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

NC Healthy Schools conducts the statewide Youth Risk Behavior Study (NC YRBS) every two years during odd-numbered years (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), n.d.). This survey/risk assessment is conducted statewide in the school setting with youth in grades 6 through 12, and "helps to assess behaviors in youth that impact their health now and in the future. Topics include violence, personal safety, physical activity, nutrition, mental health, tobacco, drugs and alcohol, protective factors and sexual behavior questions" (NCDPI, n.d.). A more detailed methodology of the 2019 NC YRBS is found in Appendix B, p. 250.

North Carolina Department of Public Safety – Juvenile Court Services court counselors conduct an extensive risk and needs assessment with youth referred to the juvenile court for delinquency, using the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument™ (YASI). "Court Counselors began using the YASI at intake on January 01, 2021, as the primary assessment tool, meaning every youth processed at intake receives

the YASI." (Crews, 2022). The YASI screening tool replaced the North Carolina Assessment of Risk (NCAR) for youth referred to the court, but "programs are still using the NCAR with non-court-involved juveniles" to assess for risk factor exposure and service needs (Crews, 2022).

Beginning in 2019, the City of Durham's Office on Youth launched the Durham Youth Listening Project, which entailed working "in partnership with our youth ambassadors, community partners, and project consultants to do community outreach and host many listening sessions" (City of Durham Office on Youth, n.d.). These listening sessions involved "hundreds of young people, their caregivers, and people who work with and support youth. The project prioritized the voices of youth of color; LGBTQ+ youth; immigrant/migrant youth; youth who are not working and not in school; and youth who have experienced economic hardships, houselessness and interactions with law enforcement" (City of Durham Office on Youth, n.d.). Relevant information from the report that was compiled from those listening sessions is included topically in this section.

Why Youth Join Gangs: An Overview of Risk Factor Research and Findings

Research suggests that joining a gang is a complex decision that involves multiple negative conditions that "push" youth into gangs, as well as perceived positive opportunities that "pull" youth into gangs (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996). These pushes and pulls are called "risk factors." Risk factors are the characteristics, traits or behaviors of an individual that make it more likely that the individual will join a gang.

In prevention and intervention research, many diverse studies have identified a host of risk factors for delinquency that also may increase the level of risk that a young person may join a gang. These risk factors occur in five domains:

- **Individual** – Attitudes, personality traits and individual behaviors
- **Family** – Family structure, dynamics and relationships
- **School** – School structure, rules, interactions and climate
- **Peer** – Activities and attitudes of friends and close associates
- **Community** – Characteristics and traits of the immediate community in which the youth lives and goes about daily activities

It is important to recognize that risk factors have a cumulative effect, particularly when found in multiple domains of a youth's life. Most youth in Durham will never join a gang. Many youths may experience some degree of exposure to risk factors but will have enough individual resilience and external protective factors to overcome that risk and live a productive life. However, the more exposure to risk factors youth experiences in different domains of his/her life, the greater his/her odds of joining a gang or engaging in other behaviors such as crime, violence, substance abuse, etc.

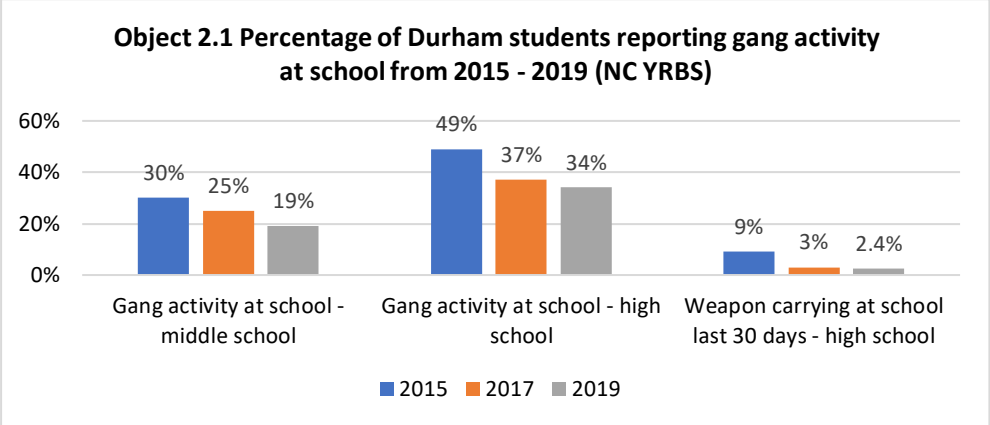
Researchers have learned that an accumulation of risk factors in multiple domains increases the risk of gang joining. In one large-scale study, youth who experienced risk factors across all domains were forty times more likely to join a gang than those with risk in just one domain (Howell, 2010).

In one large-scale study, youth who experienced risk factors across all five domains of risk were 40 times more likely to join a gang than those with risk in just one domain.

Durham youth gang involvement/association with delinquent peers

The North Carolina Youth Risk and Behavior Survey (NC YRBS) asks about the presence of gang activity in the youth's school and is administered to randomly selected youth from 6th grade to 12th grade in Durham Public Schools (DCDPH, 2021). Since January 1, 2021, the YASI inventory has been administered by trained court counselors to youth referred to the Durham County Juvenile Court between the ages of 6 and 17 (Crews, 2022) and asks juveniles about their involvement with gangs.

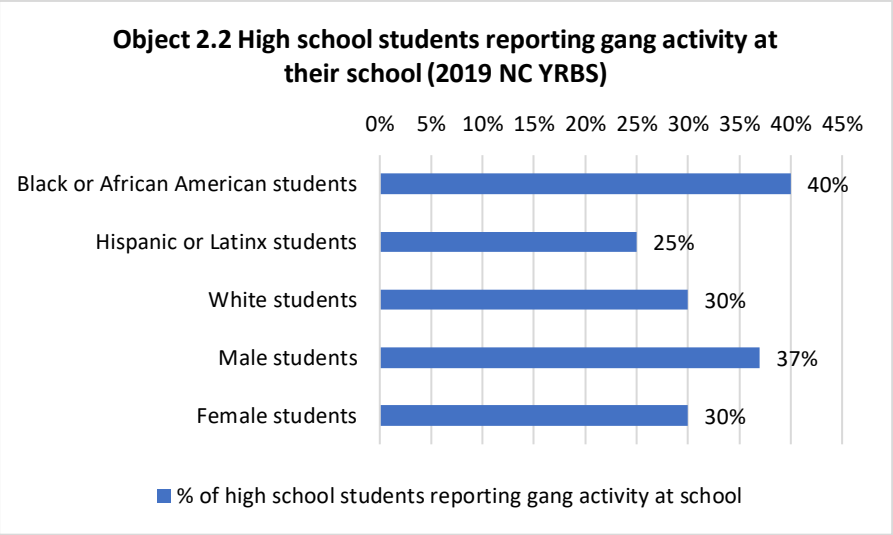
About one in five Durham middle school students[24] (19%) and about one-third of high school students (34%) reported gang activity at their school (Object 2.1) (DCDPH 2017, 2019, 2021). This represents a substantial decline from the percentage of student's reporting gang activity at their school in 2015.



A very small percentage of Durham high school students (2.4%) reported that they had carried a weapon (gun, knife or club) at school in the prior 30 days. This figure represents a marked decline from 9% of students reporting they had carried a weapon in the prior 30 days in the 2015 NC YRBS (DCDPH, 2017, 2019, 2021).

The percentage of Durham high school students reporting gang activity at their school in 2019 varied by race and gender. Black/African American students (40%) and male students (37%) were most likely to report gang activity at their school (DCDPH, 2021).

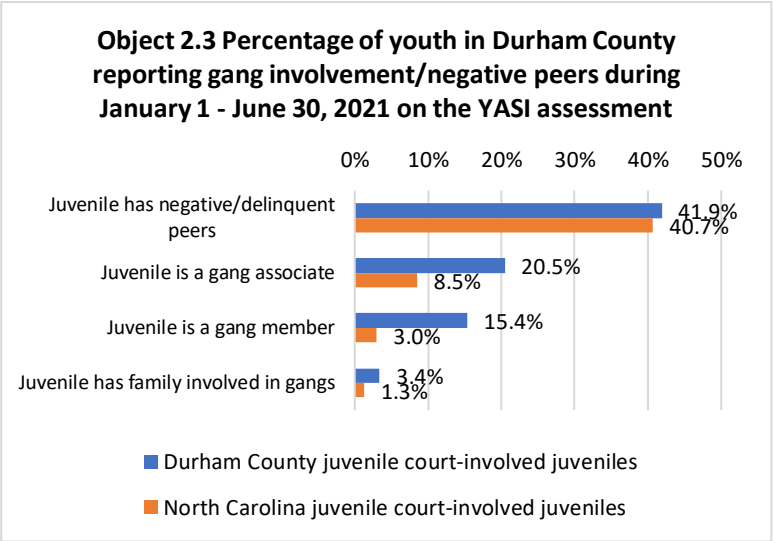
[24] The term students is used in this report when discussing NC YRBS statistical data as it is used in NC YRBS reporting.



It is important to note that most Durham Public School students in both middle school and high school did not report gang activity at school in 2019 on the NC YRBS survey.

Durham County juveniles[25] referred to the Juvenile Court for delinquency report comparable levels of association with negative/delinquent peers (41.9%) to all North Carolina juveniles (40.7%) (Object 2.3) (NCDPS, 2022). However, Durham County juveniles report a higher level of gang involvement than all North Carolina juveniles.

Over one in five Durham County juveniles referred to the juvenile court (20.5%) report they associate with a gang, which is 2.4 times higher than the percentage reported by juvenile court-involved juveniles in North Carolina (3.0%) (Object 2.4) (NCDPS, 2022). Similarly, 15.4% of Durham County juveniles report they are a gang member, which is 5.13 times higher than all North Carolina juveniles (3.0%). Juveniles in Durham County also report higher levels of family gang involvement (3.4%) compared to the statewide percentage of all juveniles (1.3%) (NCDPS, 2022).



[25] The term juveniles is used in this report as is it is used in NCDPS statistical data

This data suggests that Durham County youth who become involved in criminal/delinquent activity report the same level of association with negative/delinquent peers as their peers around the state of North Carolina, but those peers are more likely to be gang-involved in Durham County.

Individual risk factors

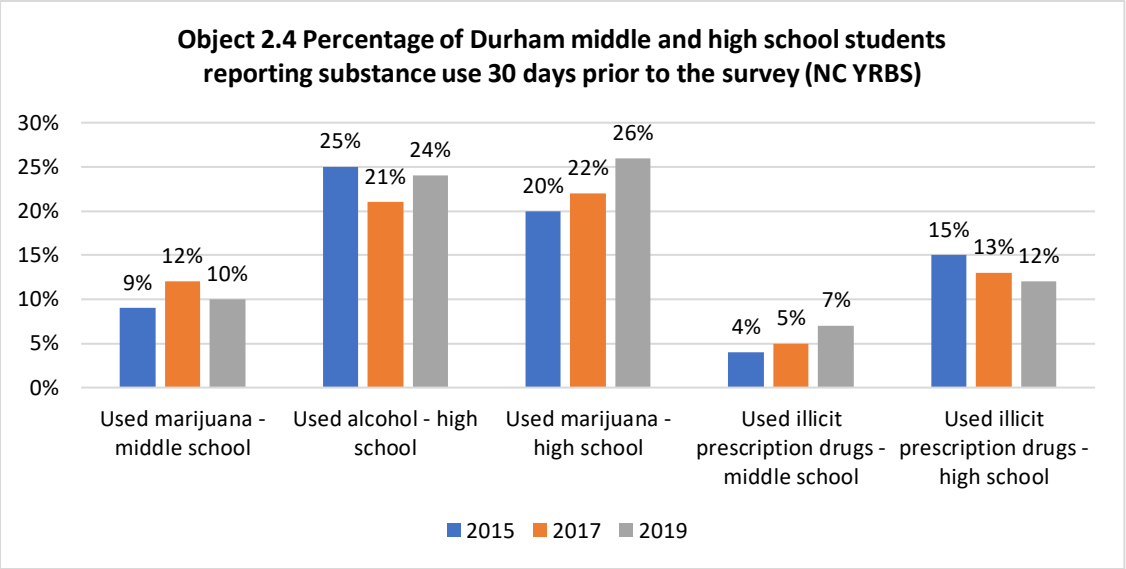
Individual level risk factors are an Individual's personality traits and behaviors that increase the individual's likelihood of becoming involved in a gang. Individual risk factors identified as predictive of gang involvement include substance use (including trying marijuana), involvement in self-reported violent activities such as fighting, externalizing behavior, positive attitudes towards delinquency, poor refusal skills, hyperactivity, problem behaviors (impulsivity, aggressiveness), negative life events, and victimization/trauma (including exposure to violence) (Hill, Howell, Hawkins, and Battin-Pearson, 1999; Klein and Maxson, 2010).

Substance use

Research indicates that there is a correlation between substance use and gang involvement: "Youth who engage in delinquent activities, specifically illicit alcohol and drug use, are more likely to join gangs and that, as a result of gang involvement, youth are more likely to use illicit drugs and alcohol" (Youth.gov, n.d.). NC YRBS survey data from 2015, 2017 and 2019 indicates that significant percentages of youth in Durham reported use of substances between 2015 and 2019 (DCDPH, 2017, 2019, 2021). Students in middle school and high school were asked to report on substances they had used in the month prior to the survey.

Self-reported recent marijuana use (30 days prior to the survey) remained consistent for middle schoolers between 2015 and 2019, from 9% in 2015 to 10% in 2019 (Object 2.4, p. 62). High school students reporting recent marijuana use increased from 20% in 2015 to 26% in 2019. Middle school students reporting recent use of illegally obtained prescription medication increased from 4% in 2015 to 7% in 2019. High school students reporting recent use of illegally obtained prescription medication decreased from 15% in 2015 to 12% in 2019. From 2015 to 2019, the percentage of Durham high school students reporting recent marijuana use surpassed the percentage of high school students reporting recent alcohol use (DCDPH, 2017, 2019, 2021).

Over half of Durham County juveniles referred to the juvenile court (52%) report using drugs and/or alcohol, which is 45.5% higher than the statewide average (35.8%) (NCDPS, 2022).



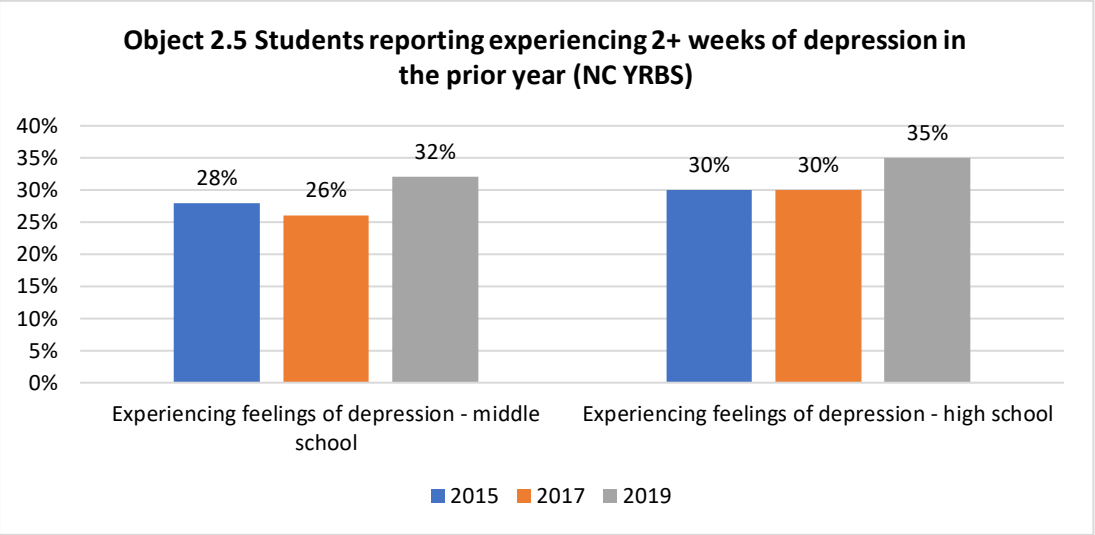
Mental Health

Current research is examining mental and behavioral health conditions as a correlate for gang involvement. Howell (2010) notes that "evidence suggests that certain mental health problems in young people increase their risk of joining a gang. These problems include conduct disorders, externalizing behaviors, hyperactivity, and depression." There is strong evidence connecting exposure to violence with the development of mental and behavioral health conditions, with the age of exposure affecting the types of mental health symptoms that are developed. Exposure to violence in childhood results in the development of internalizing behaviors, including anxiety, while exposure to violence results in development of externalizing behaviors such as aggression and early involvement in delinquent conduct (MacFarlane, 2019). Both delinquency and aggression are strongly supported in longitudinal research as risk factors for gang involvement (Klein and Maxson, 2010). Higher rates of marijuana use are also correlated with higher rates of mental illness (Frisman-Osbey, 2020) and increased percentages of youth in Durham reported using marijuana in the past 30 days (Object 2.4).

Involvement in gangs has also been shown to increase youth exposure to violence and potentially worsen youths' mental health issues. Frisman-Osbey and Wood (2020) note that Peterson et al. (2004) identify how adolescent gang members aged between 12 and 16 years are more likely to experience violent victimization, including serious violence, before, during, and after gang involvement compared with non-gang youth. Recent studies examining the correlation between mental health diagnoses and gang involvement have found that youth gang members are diagnosed with specific types of mental health problems, including antisocial personality disorder, conduct disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and anxiety at higher rates than non-involved youth (MacFarlane, 2019).

The NC YRBS captures data on student self-reported mental health issues. On the 2019 NC YRBS survey, students are asked if they have experienced depression, defined as "feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing usual activities." During 2019, 32% of middle school students and 35% of high school students in Durham reported experiencing feelings of depression for two or more weeks affecting their ability to participate in usual activities. Student self-

reports of depression increased from 2015 to 2019, from 28% of middle schoolers reporting 2+ weeks of depression in 2015 to 32% reporting in 2019 (Object 2.5).

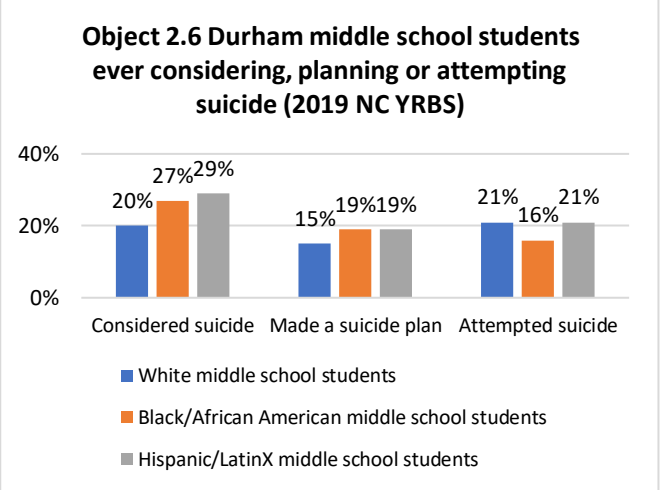


Thirty percent of high school students reported experiencing 2+ weeks of depression in 2015 compared to 35% of high school students in 2019 (DCDPH, 2021). Hispanic/LatinX (39%) and Black/African American (31%) youth in Durham also reported experiencing depression at higher rates in Durham than white youth (23%) during 2019 (DCDPS, 2021).

A key finding from the Youth Listening Project convened by the City of Durham's Office on Youth specifically addressed violence exposure affecting the mental health of Durham youth and the need for more access to mental health resources to help youth:

> *Young people feel an overwhelming need for mental health support to help them survive the experiences with which they are faced. They shared that there are not enough mental health resources to address the many pressures they feel. These pressures include violence, bullying, and discrimination, among others* (City of Durham Office on Youth, 2020).

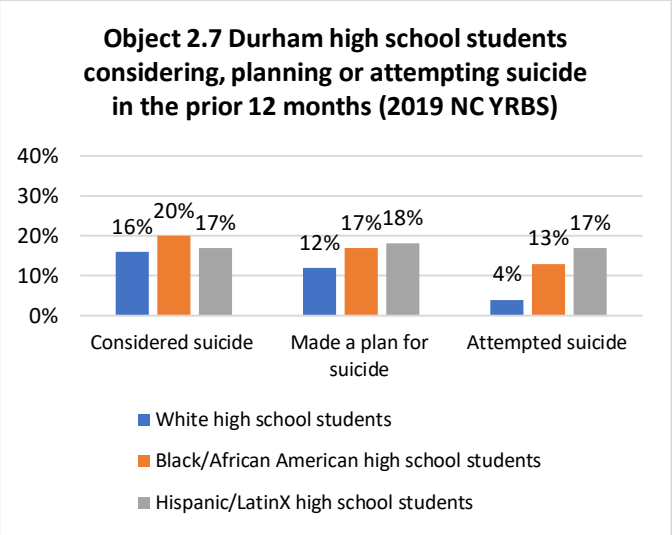
The NC YRBS also surveys youth on suicidal ideation and attempted suicide. Significant percentages of Durham youth in both middle school and high school reported thinking about suicide, making a suicide plan, and attempting suicide. More than a quarter of middle school youth (27%) reported that they had "considered committing suicide at some time during their lifetime" and one in five high school youth (19%) "reported that they considered committing suicide during the 12 months



leading up to the [NC YRBS] survey (Object 2.6, p. 63). (DCDPH, 2021).

Black/African American (27%) and Hispanic/LatinX (29%) middle school students were significantly more likely than White middle school students to report that they had ever considered suicide Black/African American and Hispanic/LatinX students were also more likely to report they had ever made a suicide plan. However, White (21%) and Hispanic/LatinX (21%) middle school students were more likely than Black/African American (16%) students to report ever attempting suicide (Object 2.6, p. 63)(DCDPH, 2021).

Black/African American high school students (20%) were more likely to report considering suicide in the past 12 months compared to White (16%) and Hispanic/LatinX (17%) high school students (Object 2.7). However, Black/African American (17%) and Hispanic/LatinX (18%) high school students were more likely to report planning for suicide in the past 12 months than White high school students (12%). Black/African American students (13%) were 3.3 times more likely than White students (4%) to report a suicide attempt in the prior 12 months and Hispanic/LatinX high school students were 4.2 times more likely to report a suicide attempt in the prior 12 months than White high school students (DCDPH, 2021).



Current research has also identified a correlation between suicidal ideation, attempted suicide, and gang involvement. MacFarlane (2019) notes: "Those in gangs were eight times more likely to have attempted suicide than non-violent individuals who were not in gangs (Coid et al. 2013). Although not a mental health condition per se, suicidal tendencies tend to reflect underlying psychiatric morbidities such as depression, anxiety and psychosis."

Delinquency and problem behaviors

A meta-analysis conducted by Malcolm Klein Ph.D. and Cheryl Maxson Ph.D. found that one of the strongest predictors of gang involvement is problem behaviors such as reactivity, impulsivity, and aggression, as well as early involvement in delinquent behavior (Klein and Maxson, 2010). Howell (2010) notes that "Children whose antisocial behavior consistently worsens are most likely to join gangs. These behaviors include early involvement in delinquency, aggression, violence (without a weapon), alcohol or drug use, early dating, and precocious sexual activity."

Juveniles referred to the juvenile court in Durham County for delinquency complaints are assessed by juvenile court counselors at intake. 40.2% of court-involved juveniles in Durham County were classified as high risk, compared to 17.7% of youth referred to the juvenile court statewide (NCDPS, 2022).

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety releases an annual Databook that includes information on yearly referrals to the juvenile court for a range of criminal and/or delinquent behavior (described in Table 2.2). Felony offense classes range from the most violent crimes (Class A - E) and decrease in severity through Class F - I. Misdemeanor incidents are less severe than felony incidents but still include some categories of violent/aggressive behavior (Class A1 to 2). The NCDPS Databooks also include numbers of youth by county who are referred for delinquency (including truancy) and status incidents (behaviors that are age-regulated such as smoking and alcohol possession).

Table 2.2 Description of North Carolina classification of felonies and misdemeanors

Violent Class A – E Incidents		Serious Class F – I Incidents		Misdemeanors	
Class	**Description**	**Class**	**Description**	**Class**	**Description**
A	First-Degree Murder	F	Involuntary Manslaughter Assault Inflicting Serious Bodily Injury Assault With a Deadly Weapon on Government Officer or Employee	A1	Assault Inflicting Serious Injury or Using a Deadly Weapon Assault on a Female Assault on a Child Under 12 Years of Age
B1	Second-Degree Murder First-Degree Forcible Rape	G	Second-Degree Burglary Second-Degree Arson Common Law Robbery	1	Breaking or Entering Buildings Larceny of Property (worth $1,000 or less) Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle Worthless Checks for $2,000 or Less (closed account)
B2	Second-Degree Murder	H	Assault by Strangulation Habitual Misdemeanor Assault Breaking or Entering Buildings (w/felonious intent) Fraudulently Setting Fire to Dwelling Houses Possessing Stolen Goods Larceny of Property (worth more than $1,000)		
C	Second-Degree Forcible Rape Second-Degree Forcible Sexual -Offense Assault With a Deadly Weapon -With Intent to Kill or Inflicting Serious Injury			2	Simple Assault and Battery Financial Transaction Card Fraud First-Degree Trespass Willful and Wanton Injury to Personal Property Indecent Exposure
D	Voluntary manslaughter First-Degree Burglary First-Degree Arson Armed Robbery	I	Breaking or Entering Motor Vehicles Financial Transaction Card Theft Forgery of Notes, Checks and Securities Uttering Forged Paper or Instrument	3	Concealment of merchandise in merchandise establishments Worthless check for $2000 or less Second Degree Trespass Failure to Return Rental Property Intoxicated and Disruptive in Public
E	Sexual Activity by a Substitute Parent or Guardian Assault With a Deadly Weapon Inflicting Serious Injury Assault With a Deadly Weapon With Intent to Kill				

The annual NCDPS Databooks also include information on disposition (outcomes) of juvenile incidents including sentencing to secure confinement in the Youth Development Center, sentencing to community-based and residential alternatives to secure confinement, and referrals to Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) funded programs.

Data from the NCDPS 2018, 2019 and 2020 Databooks was collected for the 6 counties with the largest youth populations (ages 6-17) in North Carolina (including Durham County). These counties provide a basis for comparison and are reported below. The six counties include (in order of youth population size):

- Wake County
- Mecklenburg County
- Guilford County
- Forsythe County
- Cumberland County
- Durham County

Of the six counties, Durham County had the lowest youth population as of 2020 (48,208) and Wake County had the highest youth population (176,668) in 2020 (NCDPS, 2021). During the period from 2018-2020, all 6 counties reported substantial increases in the number of juveniles charged with Violent (Class A-E) Incidents and Serious (Class F-I) Incidents.

This increase in charges filed in the juvenile court in all six counties is attributable to a change in the NC state statute in 2017. Until 2017, North Carolina was one of only two states in the U.S. that automatically charged 16 and 17-year-olds as adults for all crimes, including misdemeanor incidents. However, during the 2017 North Carolina legislative session, the statutory age adulthood was amended to 18 for nonviolent incidents (Session Law 2017-57) (Powell, 2017). Effective December 1, 2019, 16- and 17-year-olds charged with nonviolent incidents were no longer automatically transferred to the district (adult) courts. However, at present, 16- and 17-year-olds who are charged with violent crimes are not covered by this statutory change. Instead, a different process is followed:

> *In certain situations, transfer to adult court is mandatory. If a juvenile court judge finds probable cause that a juvenile who is 13 or older committed a Class A felony, such as first-degree murder, the judge must transfer the case to adult criminal court without a transfer hearing. Additionally, a 16- or 17-year-old, who is alleged to have committed a Class A, B1, B2, C, D, E, F, or G felony, must be transferred to adult criminal court without a transfer hearing, if either of the following occurs: (1) a juvenile court judge finds probable cause for the offense; or (2) a prosecutor obtains an indictment (North Carolina Judicial Branch, n.d.).*

The data covered in this section indicates that the change in statute for misdemeanor incidents that took effect in 2019 is also affecting how Violent (Class A-E) Incidents and Serious (Class F-I) incidents are being charged in local counties.

NOTE: As of 1/28/22, officials from NCDPS and the Durham County District Attorney's Office are questioning the accuracy of the 2020 Data Book information for Durham County. State NCDPS personnel, however, have confirmed the accuracy of this data.

Violent (Class A – E) Incidents

During the period from 2018-2020, all 6 counties examined for this report experienced marked increases in the number of juveniles charged with Class A-E violent crimes in juvenile court. These increases ranged from +28.3% in Forsythe County to a high of +410.3% in Durham County (Table 2.3) (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021).

Table 2.3 Violent (Class A-E) incidents charged annually in the juvenile court, by county (2018-2020)

County	2020 youth population	Violent Class A – E Incidents Charged Annually			% change	
		2018	2019	2020	2018-2020	Total
Wake	176,668	53	31	69	+30.2%	153
Mecklenburg	172,921	182	211	274	+50.5%	667
Guilford	79,059	67	115	133	+98.5%	315
Forsyth	59,890	53	34	68	+28.3%	155
Cumberland	57,015	84	34	143	+69.0%	261
Durham	48,208	29	17	148	+410.3%	194

To compare crimes across counties with varying populations, rates per 1,000 juveniles were created for reporting fields using the juvenile population between the ages of 6 and 17 in each county annually. In 2018 and 2019, Durham County had among the lowest rates of Violent Class A – E felonies charged per 1,000 juveniles ages 6 to 17. However, in 2020, Durham County had the highest rate of Violent Class A – E felonies charged per 1,000 juveniles ages 6 to 17. In fact, Durham's rate of 3.07 Violent Class A – E incidents charged per 1,000 juveniles was 22.3% higher than the next highest county (Cumberland) and 687.2% higher than neighboring Wake County's rate of Class A – E incidents charged per 1,000 juveniles (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021).

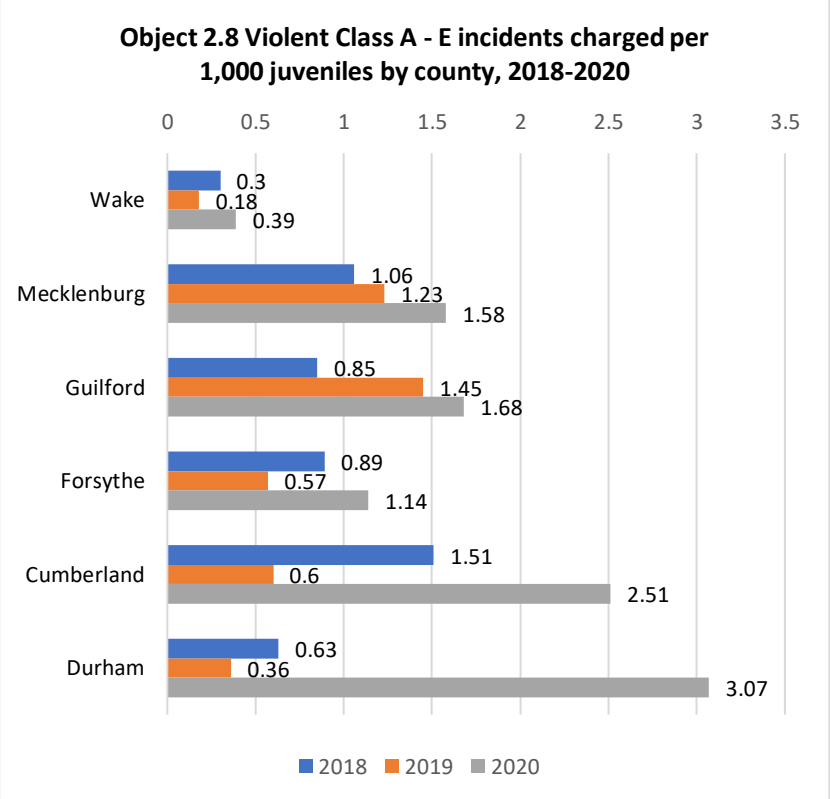


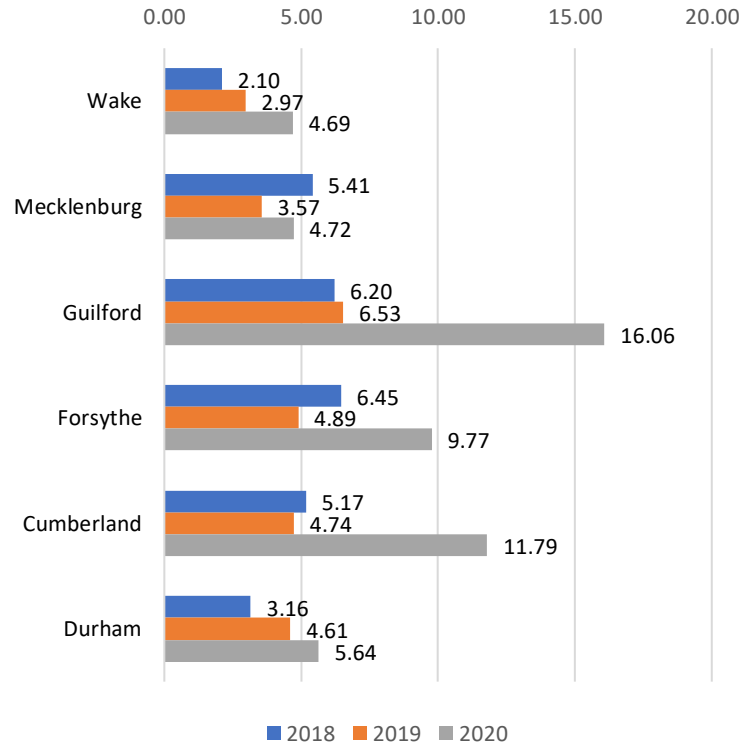
Table 2.4 Serious Class F – I incidents charged annually in the juvenile court, by county (2018-2020)

County	2020 youth population	Serious Class F – I Incidents charged annually 2018	2019	2020	% change 2018-2020	Total
Wake	176,668	372	525	829	+122.8%	1726
Mecklenburg	172,921	928	614	817	-12.0%	2359
Guilford	79,059	491	517	1,270	+158.7%	2278
Forsyth	59,890	386	293	585	+51.6%	1264
Cumberland	57,015	288	268	672	+133.3%	1228
Durham	48,208	145	217	272	+87.6%	634

Serious Class F – I Incidents

Serious Class F – I incidents include Manslaughter; Assault Inflicting Serious Bodily Injury; 2nd Degree Burglary and Arson; Common Law Robbery; Larceny Over $1,000 and Vehicle Burglary. During the period examined, all counties except Mecklenburg County experienced substantial increases in the number of Serious Class F – I incidents charged in the juvenile court. The largest increase occurred in Guilford County, where the number of incidents charged increased by +158.7% (Table 2.4). (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021). Durham County's increase of +87.6% is the second lowest percentage of increase in the 6 counties, and Durham's number of Serious Class F – I incidents charged was the lowest in all 6 counties during all three years (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021).

Object 2.9 Serious Class F - I incidents charged per 1000 juveniles ages 6 to 17 by county, 2018-2020



To compare crimes across counties with varying populations, rates per 1,000 juveniles were created for reporting fields using the juvenile population between the ages of 6 and 17 in each county annually. Durham's rate of Serious Class F – I

incidents charged per 1000 juveniles increased from 3.16 to 5.64 between 2018 and 2020. The highest rate of Serious Class F – I incidents charged per 1000 juveniles occurred in Guilford county with a rate of 16.06 (Object 2.9) (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021).

Misdemeanor incidents

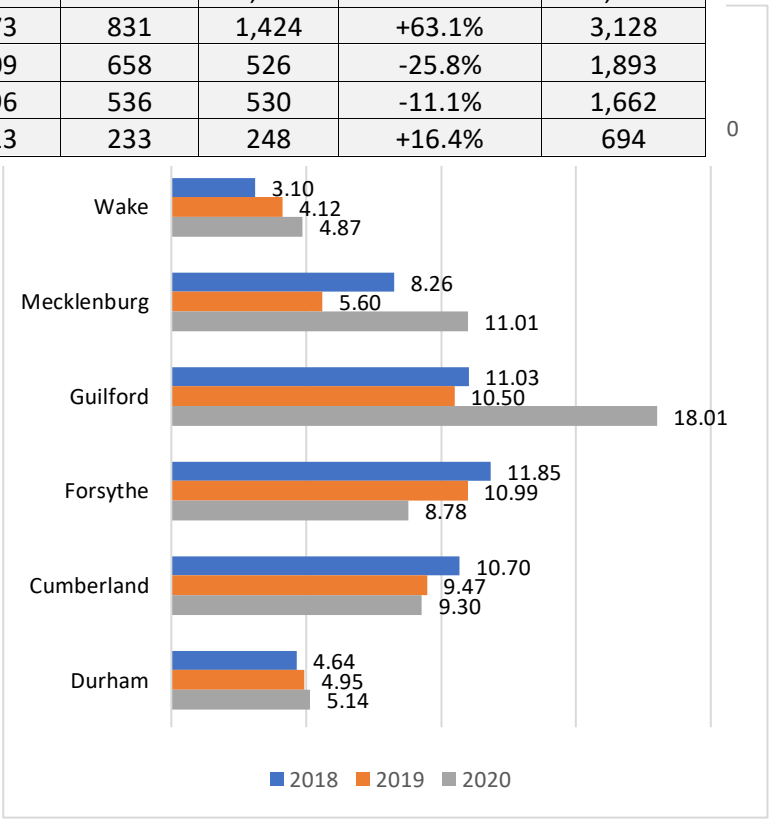
Misdemeaor incidents include Assault With Serious Bodily Injury, Assault on a Female, Larceny Under $1,000, Breaking and Entering Into a Building, Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle, Simple Assault and a variety of financial incidents. During the period examined, all counties except Forsyth and Cumberland experienced increases in the number of incidents charged in the juvenile court.

The largest increase occurred in Guilford County, where the number of incidents charged increased by +63.1% (Table 2.5) (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021). Durham County's increase of +16.4% is the lowest percentage of increase in the 6 counties. Forsyth County experienced a significant decline in these cases (25.8%). Durham's number of Misdemeanor incidents charged was the lowest in all 6 counties by a substantial margin (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021).

Table 2.5 Misdemeanor incidents charged annually in the juvenile court, by county (2018-2020)

County	2020 youth population	Misdemeanor incidents charged annually 2018	2019	2020	% change 2018-2020	Total
Wake	176,668	549	730	860	+56.6%	2,139
Mecklenburg	172,921	1,417	963	1,904	+34.4%	4,284
Guilford	79,059	873	831	1,424	+63.1%	3,128
Forsyth	59,890	709	658	526	-25.8%	1,893
Cumberland	57,015	596	536	530	-11.1%	1,662
Durham	48,208	213	233	248	+16.4%	694

To compare crimes across counties with varying populations, rates per 1,000 juveniles were created for reporting fields using the juvenile population between the ages of 6 and 17 in each county annually. Durham's rate of Misdemeanor incidents charged per 1000 juveniles increased slightly from 4.64 to 5.14 between 2018 and 2020. The highest rate of Misdemeanor incidents charged per 1000 juveniles occurred in Guilford county with a rate of 18.01 (Object 2.10) (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021).



The NCDPS Databooks also report juvenile court dispositions and services provided to court-involved juveniles by county and year (Table 2.6) (NCDPS, 2019, 2020, 2021). Data on the number of Violent Class A-E incidents annually is also included on this table for context. Durham County experienced a drastic decline in the number of youths receiving JCPC services during 2020, from 868 in 2018 and 1028 in 2019 to 385 in 2020. During the period from 2018-2020, while 194 Violent Class A-E incidents were referred to the juvenile court in Durham County, only 3 juveniles were sentenced to secure incarceration in the Youth Development Center (YDC). Further, while the number of Violent Class A-E incidents increased in 2020, the number of juveniles admitted to detention, sentenced to the YDC, served by JCPC agencies, and admitted to community and residential alternatives declined.

Table 2.6. Violent incidents and youth dispositions for the six counties with the largest youth population, 2018 to 2019

	2018					2019					2020				
County	Violent (Class A-E) Incidents	Detention Admissions	YDC	JCPC Youth Served	Community & Residential Alternatives	Violent (Class A-E) Incidents	Detention Admissions	YDC	JCPC Youth Served	Community & Residential Alternatives	Violent (Class A-E) Incidents	Detention Admissions	YDC	JCPC Youth Served	Community & Residential Alternatives
Wake	53	98	4	1,665	87	31	119	6	1,516	77	69	119	7	1,128	64
Mecklenburg	182	403	29	1,007	102	211	301	23	685	69	274	335	4	639	47
Guilford	67	172	22	1,979	51	115	232	14	1,973	46	133	202	17	1,864	60
Forsyth	53	91	9	457	45	34	93	4	481	43	68	106	2	430	35
Cumberland	84	194	25	639	57	34	138	10	573	57	143	167	7	692	45
Durham	29	87	2	868	38	17	89	1	1,028	29	148	71	0	345	20

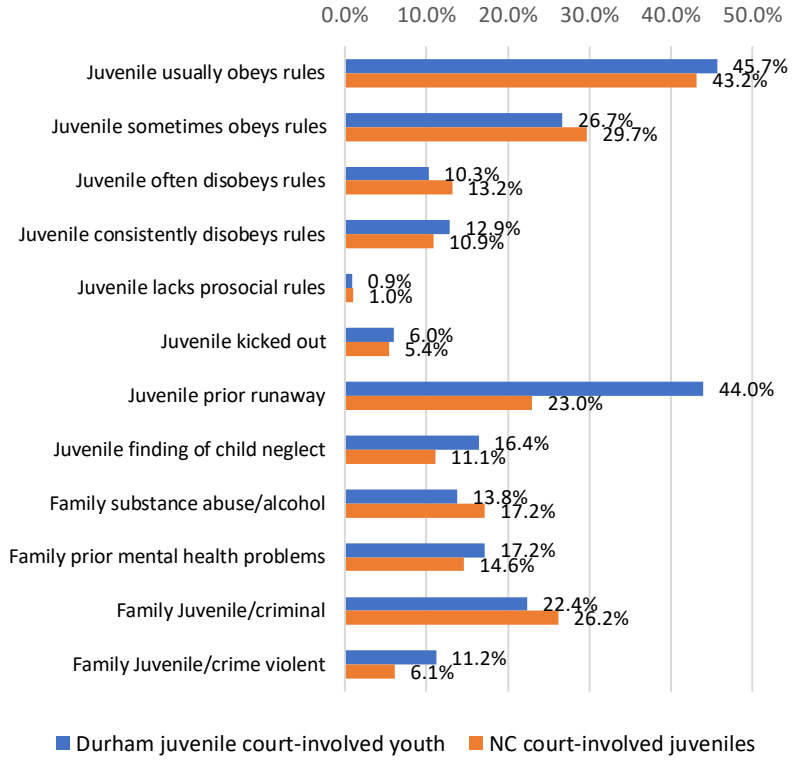
Family risk factors

Family risk factor data for court-involved juveniles in Durham is reported from the YASI risk assessment instrument administered by juvenile court counselors during intake of juveniles referred to the juvenile court for delinquency complaints and incidents. Other risk factor data was collected from the Kids Count Data Center administered by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Because the YASI system was implemented in January 2021, data included in this report is only for January 1, 2021 – June 30, 2021. Data for court-involved juveniles statewide is used as a basis for comparison to show areas of risk in which youth in Durham are experiencing elevated exposure.

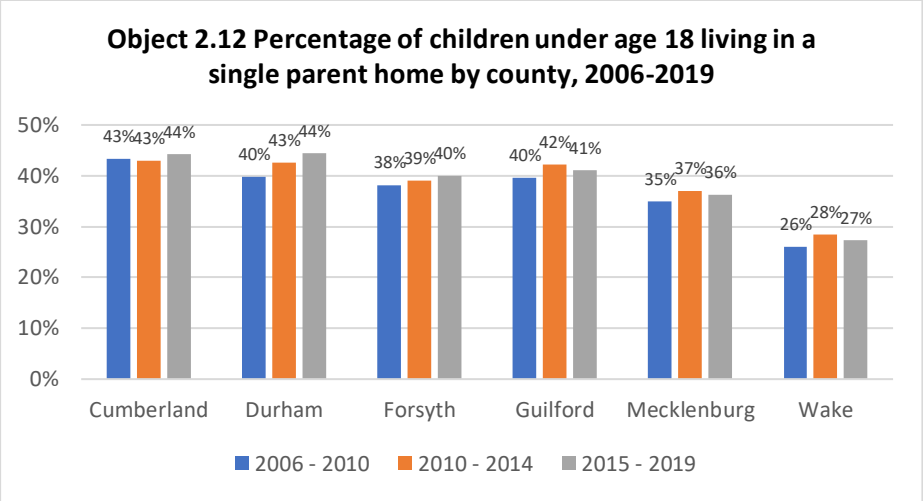
Court-involved juveniles and their families/guardians are more likely to report that the juvenile usually obeys rules (45.7%) compared to their statewide counterparts. They are more likely to experience child neglect (16.4%) and have family involvement in violent crime (11.2%) (Object 2.11) (NCDPS, 2022). Court-involved juveniles in Durham are significantly more likely (44.0%) than their statewide counterparts (23.0%) to have prior runaway status.

Object 2.11 Family characteristics of court-involved juveniles in Durham and North Carolina (YASI)



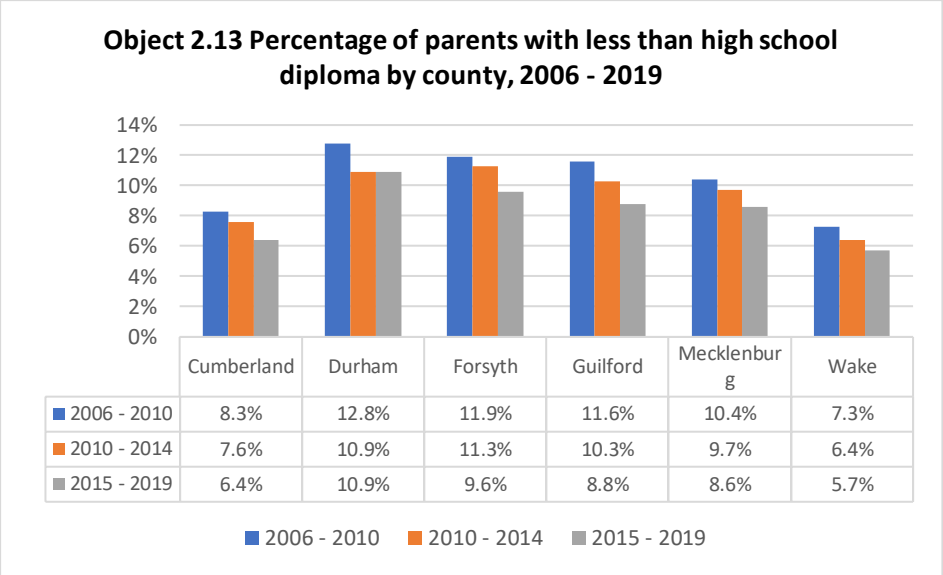
Disrupted family structure

Disrupted family structure is one of several family-level risk factors that can cause increased vulnerability to gangs for youth. "Early on, weaknesses in family structure (e.g., a single-parent household, multiple family transitions, or caretaker changes), poverty, and general financial stress are potent risk factors" (Howell, 2010). Of the six counties in North Carolina with the largest juvenile populations, Durham County (44%) and Cumberland County (44%) have the highest percentage of single parent homes (Object 2.12, p. 73) (Kids Count, 2021). The percentage of single parent homes in Durham increased from 40% in the period from 2006-2010 to 44% in the period from 2015-2019.



Low parent educational attainment

Low parent educational attainment can compromise the ability of parents to encourage their children's growth and development and can also affect their children's attitudes towards school (Howell, 2010). Between 2006, the percentage of parents with less than a high school diploma decreased from 12.8% in Durham County to 10.9% (Object 2.13) (Kids Count, 2021). However, Durham's percentage of parents with less than a high school diploma remains the highest among the 6 counties with the highest population of youth in North Carolina.

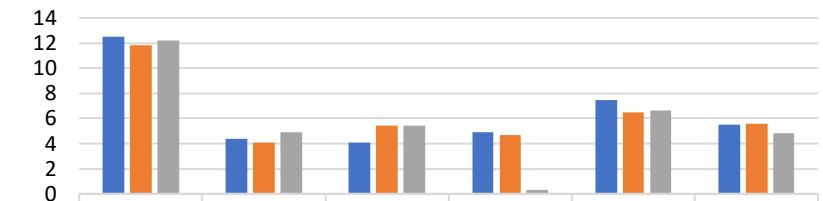


	Cumberland	Durham	Forsyth	Guilford	Mecklenburg	Wake
2006 - 2010	8.3%	12.8%	11.9%	11.6%	10.4%	7.3%
2010 - 2014	7.6%	10.9%	11.3%	10.3%	9.7%	6.4%
2015 - 2019	6.4%	10.9%	9.6%	8.8%	8.6%	5.7%

Abuse and neglect

Data on substantiated child abuse and neglect reports was collected for the six counties with the largest population of children under age 18. Cumberland County has the highest rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect reports in 2018 per 1,000 children (12.2) (Object 2.14, p. 74) (Kids Count, 2021). Durham had the third highest rate of substantiated child abuse and neglect reports per 1,000 juveniles among the six counties (4.9 per 1,000 children). This also represents a significant increase from 2017 (Kids Count, 2021).

Object 2.14 Substantiated child abuse reports per 1,000 children under age 18



	Cumberland County	Durham	Forsyth	Guilford	Mecklenburg	Wake
2016	12.5	4.4	4.1	4.9	7.5	5.5
2017	11.8	4.1	5.4	4.7	6.5	5.6
2018	12.2	4.9	5.4	0.3	6.6	4.8

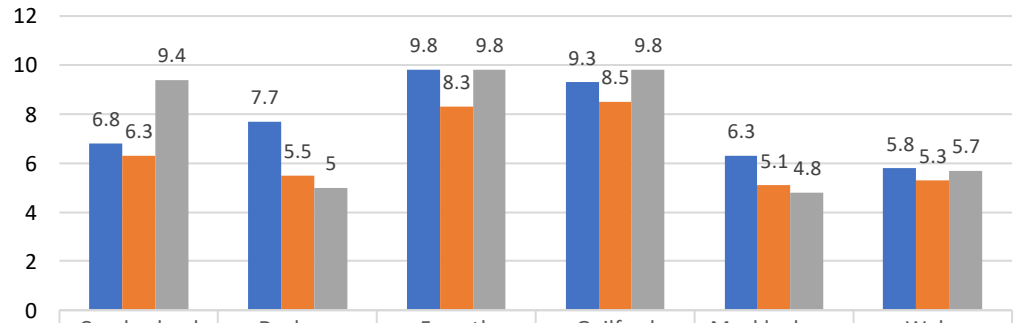
2016 2017 2018

For Durham youth referred to the Juvenile Court during the first six months of 2021, 13.8% reported family substance abuse; 17.2% reported family mental health issues; 10.3% report physical victimization; and 16.4% of youth had a finding of child neglect (NCDPS, 2021).

Data on the infant mortality rate for Durham County was also collected as an indicator of child exposure to maltreatment and neglect, as well as exposure to early childhood risk factors such as malnutrition, exposure to toxins, and access to healthcare that can affect child development and later involvement in delinquency/crime (Kubik, Docherty, and Boxer, 2019; Beaver, 2009).

The infant mortality rate is defined as "the number and rate per 1,000 live births of children who died before their first birthday (Kids Count (2021). The overall rate of infant mortality in Durham County increased from 5.0 to 7.7 between 2017 and 2019 (Kids Count, 2021), which was the second highest rate of infant mortality per 1,000 live births among the 6 counties.

Object 2.15 Infant mortality rate by county per 1,000 lives births, 2017-2019



	Cumberland	Durham	Forsyth	Guilford	Mecklenburg	Wake
2019	6.8	7.7	9.8	9.3	6.3	5.8
2018	6.3	5.5	8.3	8.5	5.1	5.3
2017	9.4	5	9.8	9.8	4.8	5.7

2019 2018 2017

Infant mortality was significantly higher for Black/African American infants than for white non-Hispanic and Hispanic infants. In fact, the rate of Black/African American (non-Hispanic) infant mortality in 2019 (18) was 9.5 times higher than the rate of White (non-Hispanic) infant mortality (1.9) in 2019 (Table 2.7) (Kids Count, 2021). The rate of Hispanic (all races) infant mortality during 2019 (3.1) was a substantial decline from 2018 (8.9). Both Black/African American and Hispanic infant mortality was higher than White infant mortality for all 3 years examined for this report.

Table 2.7 Infant mortality rate in Durham per 1,000 live births

Race	Data Type	2017	2018	2019
White (non-Hispanic)	Number	4	3	3
	Rate	2.5	1.8	1.9
Black/African American (non-Hispanic)	Number	12	10	24
	Rate	8.8	7.3	18
Hispanic (all races)	Number	5	8	3
	Rate	5.4	8.9	3.1
All other races	Number	0	2	2
Total	Number	21	23	32
	Rate	5.0	5.5	7.7

It is important to note that no single risk factor is by itself predictive of later gang involvement. Accumulation of risk factor exposure in multiple domains increases the likelihood of later involvement in criminal activity and gangs. However, risk factors are also interconnected. Childhood maltreatment is an adverse childhood experience/trauma exposure that can affect long-term health outcomes, including the development of mental health and behavioral issues.

School risk factors

Once children begin school, they can potentially experience a host of additional risk factors beyond their individual and family level risk exposure. Risk factors that have been found to be significant for delinquency and gang involvement include low school performance, low commitment to school, and low levels of emotional connection to the school (Howell, 2010). Events such as school suspension/expulsion can affect both school performance and connection to the school, as well as serving as a negative life event. It is important to note that school-based risk factors that negatively affect youth tend to cluster in some schools. Howell (2010) notes that: "Poorly functioning schools with high levels of student and teacher victimization, large student-teacher ratios, poor academic quality, poor school climates, and high rates of social sanctions (e.g., suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to juvenile court) hold a greater percentage of students who form and join gangs."

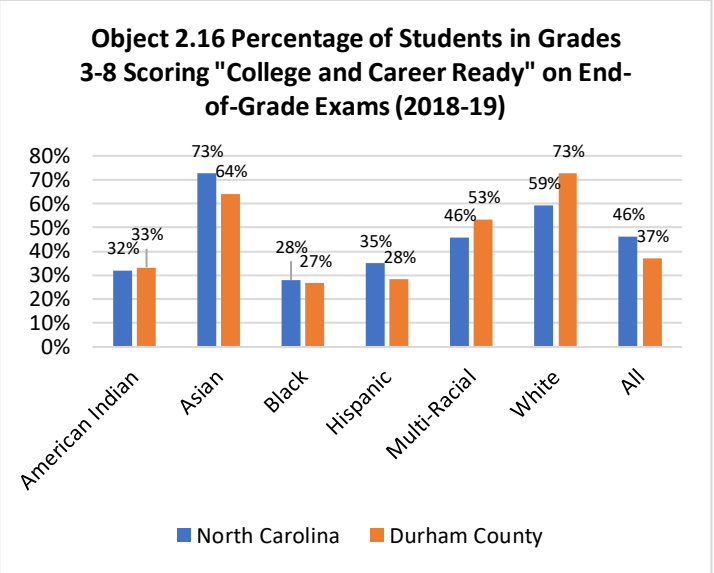
Some of the most useful comparative data is collected by the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, which issues annual Racial Equity Report Cards for North Carolina and individual school districts.

Low school performance

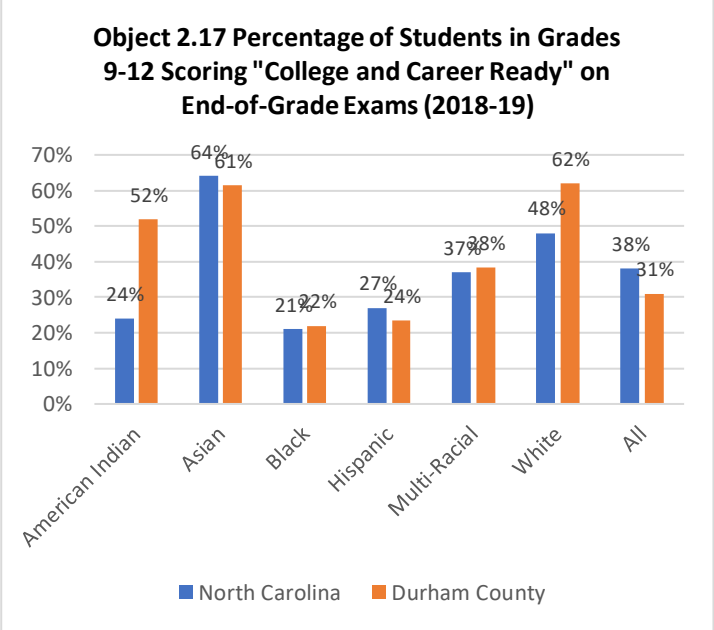
Martinez, Tost, Wilfred and Hilgert (2014) note that "Early academic failure is associated with delinquency and gang membership. Middle school students who joined gangs did not perform well in elementary school, had a weak attachment to teachers, and a low attachment to and involvement in school."

Data from 2018-19 is utilized for this report as these years were unaffected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which presented abnormal conditions for both instruction and testing.

Elementary and middle school data on student performance indicates that in 2018-19 students in Durham County schools scored lower, on average, than students around the state on the end of grade exams. Only 37% of Durham County 3rd through 8th graders scored "College and Career Ready" on end-of-grade exams in 2018-19 (Object 2.16) (Southern Coalition for Social Justice, 2020).[26] Only 27% of Black students scored "College and Career Ready" during 2018-19, compared to 73% of White students.



Less than a third of Durham County students in grades 9-12 scored "College and Career Ready" on end-of-grade exams during 2018-19 (Object 2.17) (Southern Coalition for Social Justice, 2020). The percentage of Black high school students scoring "College and Career Ready" was 22%, compared to 62% of White high school students.

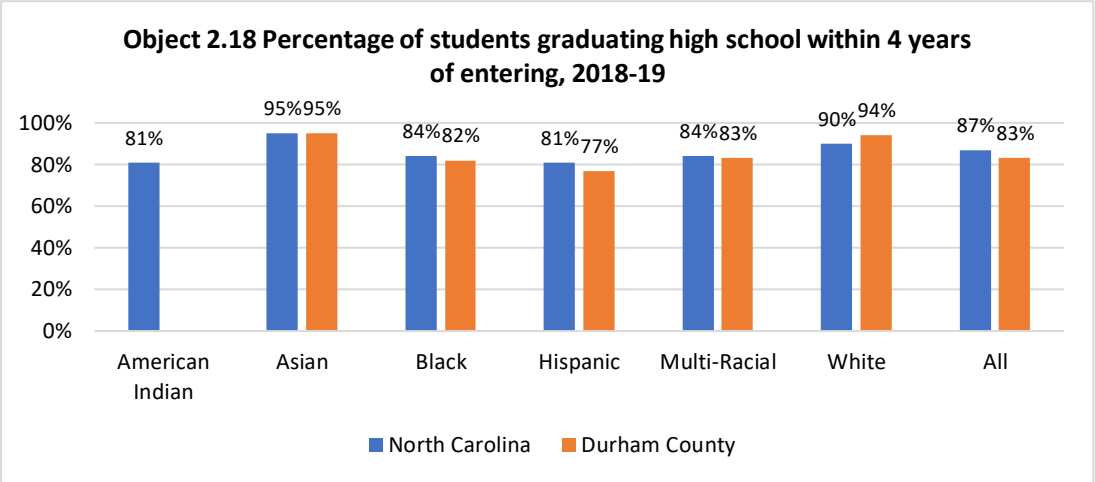


The School Year 2018-19 Durham County Racial Equity Report Card compiled by the Southern Coalition for Social Justice notes:

> *While standardized test scores are not a reliable measure of true ability for all students, they serve as the basis for many important decisions (e.g., course placement, grade promotion, identification as academically or intellectually gifted). Thus, low test scores can negatively impact a student's overall academic opportunities and outcomes* (Southern Coalition for Social Justice, 2020).

[26] Racial categories utilized are from the original source document from the Southern Coalition for Social Justice.

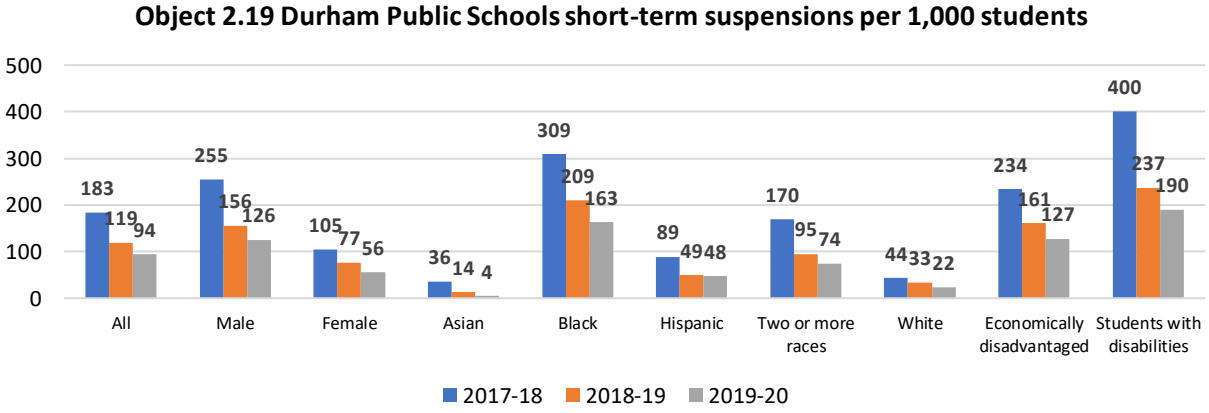
Durham County students achieved an 83% graduation rate within 4 years of entering high school (Object 2.18) (Southern Coalition for Social Justice, 2020). This is slightly below the state average. The graduation rate varies by race of students, with 82% of Black students and 77% of Hispanic students graduating on time, compared to 94% of White students.



School suspensions, bullying, referrals to law enforcement and arrests

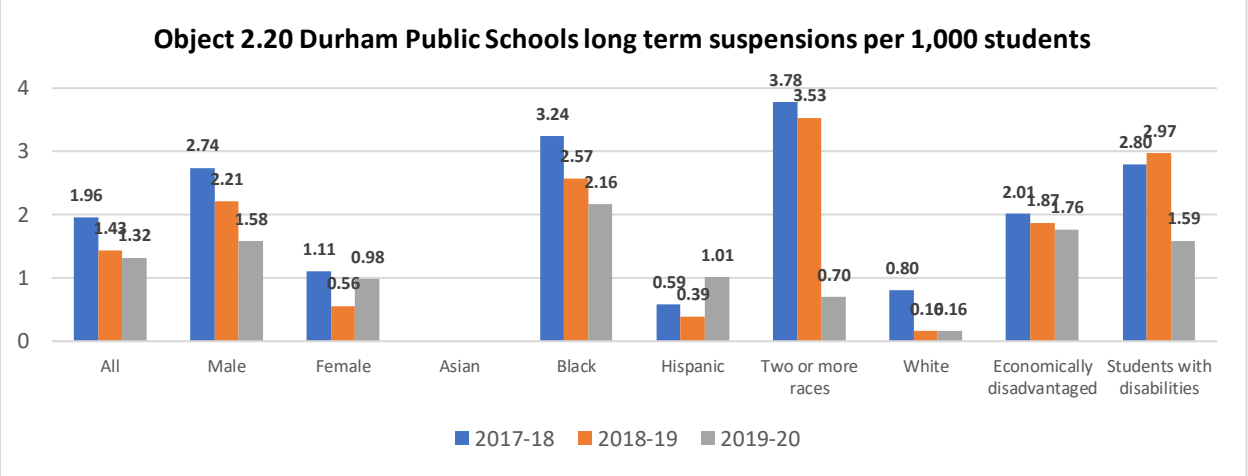
School suspensions negatively affect student connection to the school, student academic performance, and are predictive of delinquency and gang membership (Widowson, Garduno and Fisher, 2020). Data on short- and long-term suspensions for Durham Public School students was collected for school years 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20 from North Carolina School Report Cards, which reports data annually on performance and equity issues. Data for school suspensions is reported by rate per 1,000 students.

While school suspension data for Durham Public Schools clearly shows a downward trend during this period, racial and economic disparities exist in both short-term and long-term suspensions during this period (Object 2.19). A rate of 309 suspensions per 1,000 black students was reported in 2017-18, but this rate decreased to 163 by 2019-20 (North Carolina School Report Cards, 2019, 2020, 2021). However, the rate of short-term suspensions for black students is still 7.4 times higher than the short-term rate for white students. Students with disabilities experience the highest rate of short-term suspensions across all groups during this period.



The rate of long-term suspensions for students in Durham Public Schools also declined overall from 2017-18 to 2019-20 (Object 2.20). However, the rate of long-term suspensions for female and Hispanic students increased from 2018-19 to 2019-20 (North Carolina School Report Cards, 2019, 2020, 2021). Black students in 2019-20 had the highest rate of long-term suspensions for any subgroup of students (2.16 per 1,000 students), and this rate is 13.5 times higher than the rate of long-term suspensions for White students.

Rates of bullying, referrals to law enforcement, arrest and criminal acts were collected for Durham Public



Schools for 2019-2020 from North Carolina Schools Report Cards. From 2017-18 to 2019-20, the rate of referrals to law enforcement and criminal acts in Durham Public schools per 1,000 students decreased substantially (Object 2.21) (NC School Report Cards, 2019, 2020, 2021). Referrals to law enforcement per 1,000 students decreased from 19.67 to 9.11. Criminal acts per 1,000 students decreased from 12.6 to 6.78. The rate of arrest in 2019-20 was lower than in 2017-18 but higher than in 2018-19.

This data was also examined for 2019-20 by subgroup. The rate of bullying/harassment for all students in 2019-2020 was 3.96 per 1,000 students. The rate of bullying/harassment for Black students (6.25) is three

Table 2.8 Acts of bullying, referrals to law enforcement, arrest, and criminal acts per 1,000 students (2019-2020)

	Bullying and harassment	Referrals to law enforcement	Arrest	Criminal acts
All students	3.96	9.11	0.06	6.78
Male	4.98	12.19	0.06	9.38
Female	2.69	5.44	0.06	3.73
Asian	2.89	4.34	0.0	1.45
Black	6.25	12.64	0.07	9.05
Hispanic	2.01	7.86	0.09	6.40
Two or more races	2.78	9.73	0.00	7.64
White	2.05	2.68	0.00	1.89
Economically disadvantaged	4.38	10.98	0.06	7.51
Students with disabilities	8.14	13.10	0.20	10.32

times higher than for White students (2.05) and the rate of referrals to law enforcement is 4.7 times higher. The rate of arrest per 1,000 students is 0.00 for White students, 0.07 for Black students, and 0.09 for Hispanic students (Table 2.8)(NC School Report Cards, 2020).

School risk factors of delinquency-involved youth

Data from the YASI is reported for January 1 – June 30, 2021 (NCDPS, 2021). Court-involved juveniles show high levels of school risk factors. One third of court-involved juveniles (33.0%) had more than 5 full day unexcused absences, and one-fourth (25.5%) reported failing most classes (Table 2.9).

While the YASI assessment has very little data on school behavior for the period utilized for this report, the Discrete Risk and Needs Assessment conducted with juveniles referred to the juvenile court indicates that between July 31 and December 31, 2020, 64.5% of youth were assessed as having serious school behavior problems and 10.5% were assessed as having moderate behavior problems (NCDPS, 2021).

Table 2.9 School risk factors for juvenile court-involved juveniles in Durham

Risk factor	% of youth
Dropped out	5.7%
Failing some classes	7.5%
Failing most classes	25.5%
More than 5 full-day unexcused absences	33.0%

While no data was identified to measure the academic proficiency of juvenile court-involved juveniles, other than self-reported responses to the YASI, academic achievement data was collected for Lakeview Secondary School, "an alternative program designed for students in grades 6-12 who have a history of chronic misbehavior and/or have received long-term suspension" (Durham Public Schools, n.d.). This data indicates that less than 5% of youth at Lakeview score proficient on end of grade exams (Table 2.10) (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2021).

Table 2.10 Durham Public Schools students scoring proficient on end of grade exams during 2020-21

School	% students scoring proficient
Creative Studies	34.0%
Durham School of the Arts	57.9%
Early College	83.8%
Hillside	17.0%
Hillside New Tech	33.1%
Jordan	32.8%
Lakeview	<5%
Northern	21.6%
Performance Learning Center	<5%
Southern	15.5%

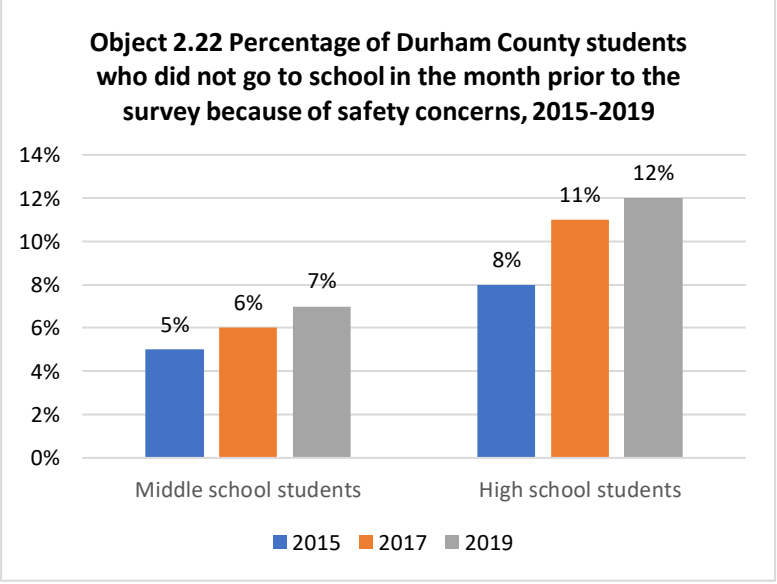
Feeling unsafe at school

Howell (2010) notes: "Feeling unsafe at school may also predict gang involvement (Gottfredson and Gottfredson, 2001; Vigil, 1993). Students who feel vulnerable at school may seek protection in the gang."

The NC YRBS survey tracks students' perceptions of safety at school. In 2019, 12% of high school students and 7% of middle school students missed school in the month prior to the NC YRBS survey due to safety concerns (Object 2.22)(DCDPH, 2017, 2019, 20210. This reflects an increase in students feeling safety concerns sufficient to miss school in both age groups since 2015.

Youth who participated in the Durham Youth Listening Project specifically addressed safety concerns in school:

They shared that they do not feel safe at school. They said this was because of the presence of school resource officers, the threat of school and the shooters, they adults with at interact schools. their youth Many



participants said that seeing law enforcement in their schools and communities made them worry about what could happen to them. They worried that they might be pulled

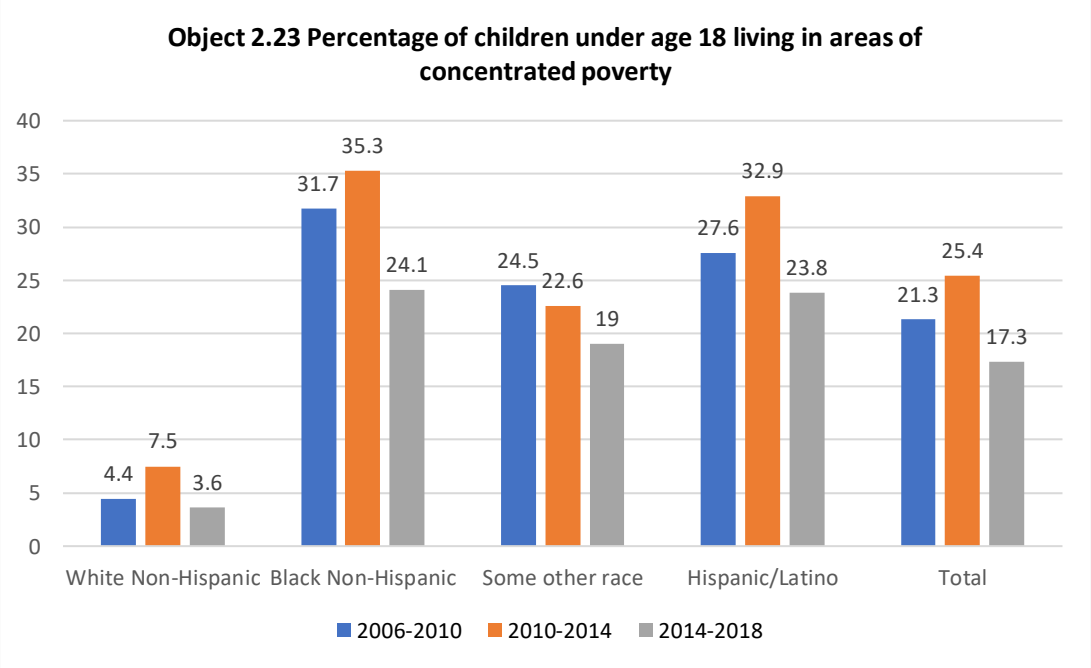
into the criminal legal system unfairly. Because of all of these conditions, youth do not feel that government is there to protect them (City of Durham Office on Youth, 2021).

Community risk factors

The National Gang Center (2020) notes that:

> *As children grow older and venture outward from their families, they are more and more influenced by community conditions. The key factors include residence in a disadvantaged neighborhood, lots of neighborhood youth in trouble, and a ready availability and use of drugs. Availability of firearms also may be an important community variable*.

Demographic data indicates that substantial percentages of youth in Durham reside in disadvantaged communities with concentrated poverty. While the percentage of youth residing in areas of concentrated poverty declined from 2006 to 2018, the American Community Survey 5-year estimates indicate that between 2014 and 2018, about one-fourth of black children (24.1%) and Hispanic/Latino children (23.8%) resided in an area of concentrated poverty (Object 2.23) (Kids Count Data Center, 2020). Between 2014 and 2018, it is estimated that Black children were 6.7 times and Hispanic/Latino children were 6.6 times more likely to reside in an area of concentrated poverty than White non-Hispanic children in Durham.



Detailed information on neighborhood level violent crime is presented in Section 1 and Section 4. Data on availability of drugs and firearms is more difficult to access at the neighborhood or county level. However, youth who participated in the DOY Youth Listening Project specifically mentioned safety concerns in Durham and that these safety concerns related both to weapon availability/crime and economic pressures that are pushing families out of their neighborhoods:

> *Safety concerns shared by young people included guns, gangs, and violence in schools. Several young people who do not feel safe in Durham mentioned the need to carry weapons. Many of them also felt that they do not have many adults to trust…Participants also shared that because of Durham's growth, many neighborhoods are changing. For many longtime residents, the changes have made it harder to afford living in Durham. Several participants said they do not feel safe because they have been evicted, or are always concerned about being evicted* (DOY, 2021).

One possibility that should be explored by policymakers is whether economic pressures are pushing children and families out of their neighborhoods, thus potentially affecting the percentage of children living in areas of concentrated poverty

Section 3 – Perceptions of gang-involved Individuals

Key information in this section

- 40 individuals from 8 different gangs were interviewed for this report.
- Of the individuals interviewed, 17.5% characterized themselves as a leader in their gang, 32.5% identified as a shot caller, 27.5% identified as a soldier, and 15% identified as a gang associate.
- 90% of individuals reported that someone is shot in their neighborhood at least monthly, 80% reported that someone is robbed at least monthly.
- 72.5% of individuals interviewed have children.
- 85% of interviewed individuals reported that they have gang-involved family members.
- 80% of interview participants had dropped out of school at least once. The most common grade these individuals dropped out was in 10th grade.
- 65% of individuals interviewed were unemployed at the time of the interview.
- 100% of individuals reported gangs active in their neighborhood; 80% reported there are areas of Durham that they cannot go because of gang activity.
- 95% of individuals interviewed reported that one of the top three issues caused by gangs is violent crime.
- 70% of individuals joined a gang because it is part of their neighborhood culture; 62.5% joined a gang because a family member was in the gang.
- The most common age these individuals began associating with the gang was 12. The most common age they began joining a gang was 13 or 14.
- 95% of interview participants reported that their gang is like a family to them.
- 55% of the individuals interviewed had 5 or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). This is 3.4 times higher than the national average in the CDC Keiser ACEs study.
- 42.5% of individuals interviewed reported being stabbed or shot in the past year.
- 90% of individuals reported it would be very easy to get a handgun; 87.5% of individuals reported it would be very easy to get an assault weapon.
- 90% of interview participants knew someone personally who had injured or killed someone.

Overview and interview methodology

A total of forty interviews were conducted with gang-involved individuals ranging in age from 14 to 43. Because of their familiarity with gangs and gang-involved individuals in Durham, David Johnson and Charles Johnson from Bull City United selected interview participants and conducted the interviews. The interviews were conducted with members of the largest and most active gangs in Durham, including Bloods (9Trey Bloods), Crips (8Trey Crips, Rolling 100s Crips, Rolling 60s Crips), Latin Kings (People Nation), 8AM (hybrid/local), O-Block/FLP (hybrid/local), and Brothers of the Struggle (BOSS) (Folk Nation) (Table 3.1). Efforts were made to interview individuals who reside in neighborhoods across Durham County, are involved with a variety of different gangs, and are demographically like known suspects in violent crimes in Durham (Table 3.2).

Table 3.1 Gang affiliation of interview participants

9Trey Bloods
8Trey Crips
Rolling 100s Crips
Rolling 60s Crips
Latin Kings
8AM
O-Block/FLP
BOSS

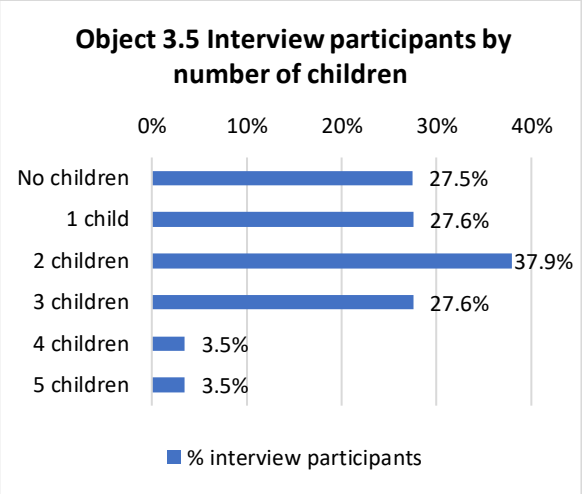
One interview participant stated that he/she is not involved in gangs and another individual did not respond to this question; however, both provided their reasons for joining a gang and other responses that indicate that they are involved in some way in gangs, so their responses were included in this report section Of the other individuals who were interviewed, 28 (70.0%) reported that they are currently involved in a gang and 5 (12.5%) reported that they are former gang members. An additional five individuals reported that they associate with gangs (12.5%). Individuals interviewed were affiliated with eight different gangs (Table 3.1). The interviews were lengthy and included 82 questions; several questions included multiple components and open-ended responses. Interviewers received training from Michelle Young Consulting and the interviews used a consistent structure to ensure consistency of responses.

Table 3.2 Demographic characteristics of interviewed individuals

Demographic characteristics	% Interview participants
Gender	
Male	80.0%
Female	17.5%
Other	2.5%
Race/ethnicity	
Black/African American	74.8%
Hispanic/Latinx	16.1%
White/Caucasian	9.1%
Age	
14 to 17	10.0%
18 to 20	22.5%
21 to 25	22.5%
26 to 30	17.5%
31 to 35	12.5%
36 to 40	10.0%
41 to 45	5.0%

Questions were asked to assess the individual's exposure to risk in the following domains: family, school, neighborhood, peers, and individual characteristics, as these are the areas that have most commonly been assessed during studies of risk factor exposure and gang joining. Interviews were conducted face to face in either the community or in the offices of Bull City United. Individuals who participated in these interviews were given a $25 Visa gift card to compensate them for their time. Each interview took approximately 45-60 minutes. Interviewers asked the questions reported in this section and recorded the interview participants' answers in a secure online database. Interviewers took care to protect the identity of individuals interviewed for this report. The author of this report utilized aggregated data reporting to ensure that responses by individual interview participants are not

identifiable. The information in this section is primarily anecdotal, self-report data based on the experiences and perceptions of the individuals.

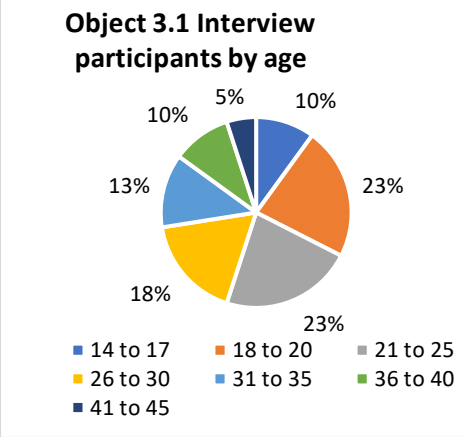


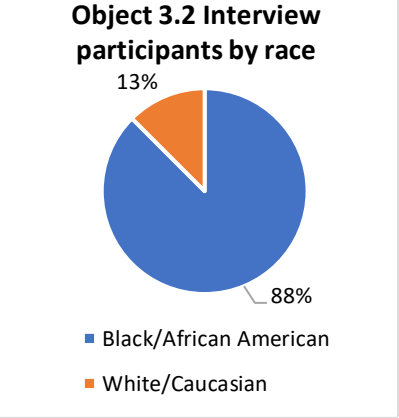
Demographic characteristics of interviewed

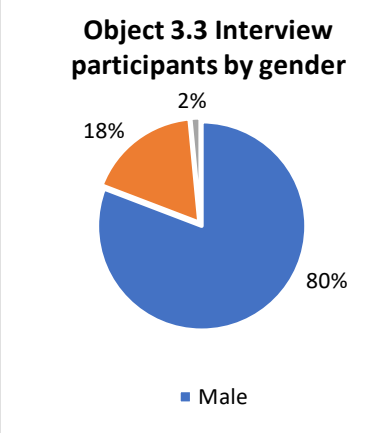
- The youngest participants were between 14 -17 and the oldest were between 41-45.
- 46% of interview participants were between the ages of 18 and 25. (Object 3.1)

individuals

- 80% of interview participants are male (Object 3.3).
- 18% of interview participants are female.
- 2% of interview participants are other/nonbinary.





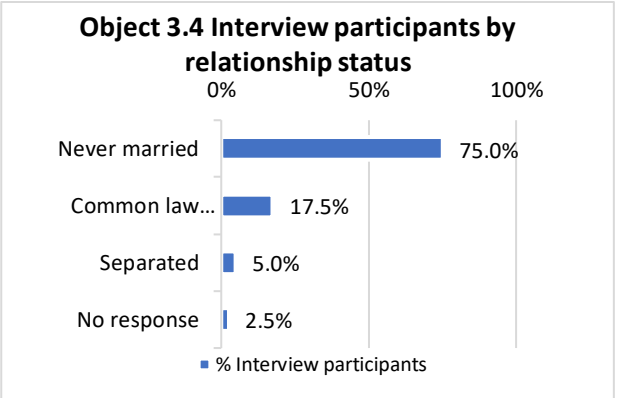


Family characteristics and experiences

Interviewers asked participants numerous questions about their family structure and family risk factor exposure to identify family risk and protective factors that can help Durham identify future activities that can be undertaken in this area to prevent gang involvement.

Most interview participants report that they have never been married (Object 3.4) but most also report that they have one or more children. Three-fourths of interview participants (75%) have never married, one in five (18%) are in a common law relationship, and 5% are separated. Three percent did not respond.

Three-fourths (72.5%) of interview participants have biological children (Object 3.5). The average number of children reported was 2.17. The largest



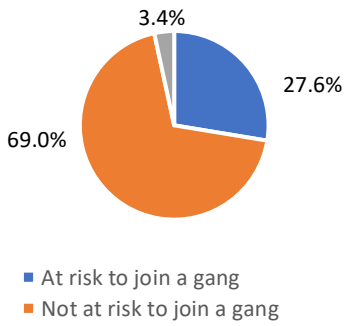
number of children reported by any interview participant is five.
Interview participants with children were asked if they believe that their children are at risk to join a gang.

Most participants with children (n=29) did not believe that their own gang membership posed any particular risk to their children. Most (69.0%) indicated that they do not believe their children are at risk of joining a (Object 3.6). A little more than one-fourth of participants (27.6%) reported that they believe their children are at risk of joining a gang, and 3.4% reported that they do not know if their children are at risk to join a gang.

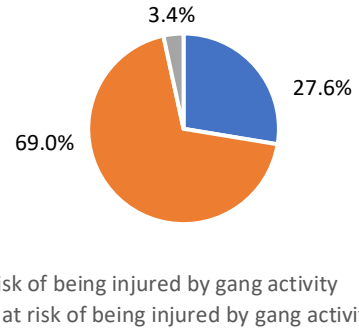
Interview participants with children were also asked if they thought their children could be injured because of gang activity. Again, most interview participants did not believe their children are at risk of being injured by gang activity (65.5%) (Object 3.7). A little less than one third of interview participants (34.5%) believed that their children are at risk of being injured by gang activity.

Interview participants were also asked to think about and discuss their experiences with family they grew up in (in some cases, interview participants are still residing with parent(s) or family members). Some family experiences are covered in the ACEs section later in this section (p. 103).

Object 3.6 Participant responses to "do you think your children are at risk to join a gang?"



Object 3.7 Participant responses to "do you think your children are at risk of being injured by gang activity?"



Family gang involvement

Interviewers asked participants if they had family members involved in gangs and were also asked to specify which family members were gang-involved (by family role).

Most interview participants (85.0%) reported gang-involved family members. A little more than one-fourth of participants (27.5%) reported three or more family members involved in gangs, 42.5% reported two family members involved in gangs and 10.0% reported one family member involved in gangs.

Table 3.3 Number of individuals reporting specific family members involved in a gang

Family relationship	#	%
Brother(s)	28	37.8%
Uncle(s)	16	21.6%
Cousin(s)	15	20.3%
Father	7	9.5%
Sister	3	4.1%
Son	2	2.7%
Boyfriend	2	2.7%
Nephew	1	1.4%

Of the thirty-four individuals who reported family gang involvement, two-thirds (67.5%) reported that they had a brother/brothers involved in a gang (Table 3.3). Sixteen (47.1%) reported that they had an uncle in the gang and 13 (38.2%) and three individuals noted they had more than one cousin involved in a gang. One in five (20%), reported that their father is involved in a gang. Other family members identified included sister, son, boyfriend, and nephew. This data suggests that prevention and intervention activities should also be focused on the siblings and family members of gang-involved individuals.

Interviewers asked participants: "What do you like best about your family?" to assess positive aspects of their family life. Over half (52.5%) of participants expressed that their family is close, connected, loving, strong and loyal to one another, which represents a significant protective factor. Twelve participants (30.0%), did not respond to this question or responded "nothing" or "I do not know." Two participants noted that they like how big their families are and two noted "it's all I've got." Other responses included "we can talk to each other and "we cook."

Interviewers asked participants: "What is one thing that you would change about your family if you could?" Over one-third of participants (35.0%) stated that they would not change anything about their family or had no response to the question. Seven participants (17.5%) stated that they would like their family to have more money. Other responses included:
"Move away from violent areas"

- "Get my mom off drugs"
- "Get them out of prison"
- "For us to get together more"
- "I wish it didn't take tragedy to bring us together"
- "Wish it was bigger"
- "Wish my father was still alive"
- "Our skin"

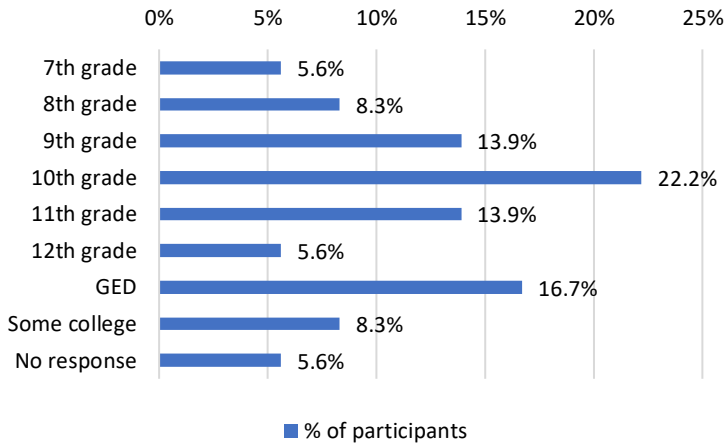
Educational experiences

Interviewers asked participants about their educational experiences to identify school-based risk factors that should be prioritized in Durham's gang prevention and intervention strategies. Of the forty participants, 38 (95%) were not attending school. Of the interview participants who are aged 14 to 17, 75% were not attending school at the time of the interview.

Interviewers asked participants the highest grade completed. Responses were segregated by age, with 14- to 17- year-olds and 18- to 45-year-olds analyzed separately. Two-thirds of interview participants 18+ (63.9%) exited the school system before 12th grade, and 13.9% exited the school system before starting high school (Object 3.8).

The most common year for individuals in this age group to leave school was after completing the 10th grade, and one in five (22.2%) participants exited the school system after that year. A little less than one-fourth of interview participants (22.3%) completed either a high school diploma or a Graduate Equivalent Diploma (GED). A little less than one in ten (8.3%) completed at least some college.

Object 3.8 Highest grade completed by percent of participants ages 18 to 45



All individuals ages 14 to 17 indicated they had left school/dropped out. Two individuals in this age group left school after the 9th grade and one left after 7th grade. One individual in this age group dropped out of school but later returned to school.

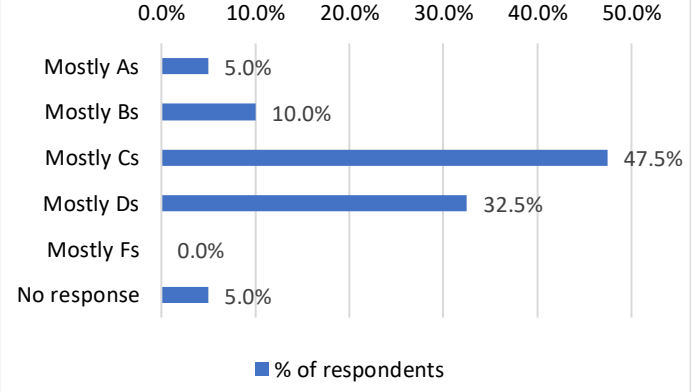
This data indicates that educational support and reengagement, as well as access to educational opportunities for adult learners, may be pivotal to helping individuals who are involved in gangs.

Academic performance

Interviewers asked participants to self-report on their academic performance at school. This question measures the interview participants' perceptions of their academic performance (grades of individuals who participated in this study were not collected for confidentiality reasons). While almost one-third of participants (32.5%) reported having mostly below average grades ("Mostly Ds"), the majority of participants (47.5%) reported having average academic success ("Mostly Cs") (Object 3.9).

Some participants (15.0%) reported having above average grades ("Mostly As" or "Mostly Bs"). No interview participants reported having mostly failing grades. This data suggests that many interview participants may have left school for reasons other than academic failure.

Object 3.9 Interview participants perceptions of their school grades, by percent of participants



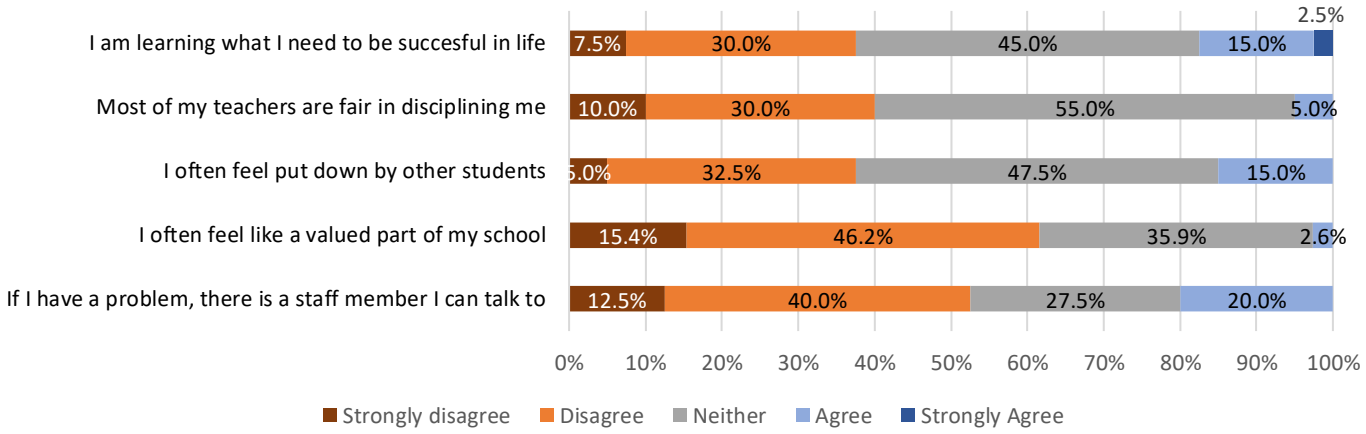
School attachment and engagement

Interview participants were also asked to recollect and assess their experiences with the educational system by expressing agreement/disagreement with statements designed to measure school bonding, attachment, and perceived value. The statements included:

- I am learning what I need to be successful in life (value of education)
- Most of my teachers are fair in disciplining me (fairness)
- I often feel put down by other students (bullying/negative peer experiences)
- I often feel like a valued part of my school (sense of belonging)
- If I have a problem, there is a staff member I can talk to (support)

While most interview participants did not report strongly negative perceptions of their experiences at school, very few reported positive perceptions of their school experiences (Object 3.10). Only 2.6% percent of interview participants reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that they often felt like a valued part of their school. Only 5.0% agreed or strongly agreed that most teachers were fair in disciplining them. One in five (20.0%) agreed that there was a staff member at school that they could talk to if they had a problem and 17.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they were learning what they need to be successful in life. However, most participants did not report that they were put down by other students, with only 15.0% expressing agreement with that statement.

Object 3.10 Percentage of participants expressing agreement/disagreement with statements about the educational environment when they attended school



The low level of perceived school attachment by gang-involved individuals indicates there is a need for improvement in ensuring students feel supported, engaged, and fairly treated during their educational pursuits; particularly youth who are exposed to high levels of risk.

School drop-out

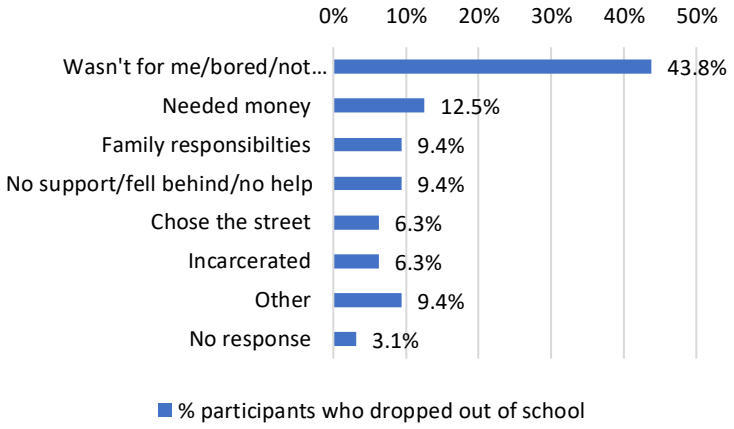
Most interview participants (80.0%) reported that they had dropped out of school at least once and this figure included 100.0% of participants between the ages of 14 and 17. Interviewers also asked participants

why they decided to drop out of school. Responses are grouped by topic and analyzed. Most interview participants who reported dropped out of school (32 of 40 individuals) stated that they did so because they were bored, not interested, or did not feel like school was for them (45.2%) (Object 3.11)

Several participants (12.5%) reported that they left school because they needed money. Others indicated that they had family responsibilities, including a child (9.4%). Participants also indicated that they fell behind in school or had no support or help with school (9.4%).

Two participants (6.3%) stated that they chose the street (i.e., gang life) over school. Other responses included COVID, moved out of the area and "kept getting in trouble."

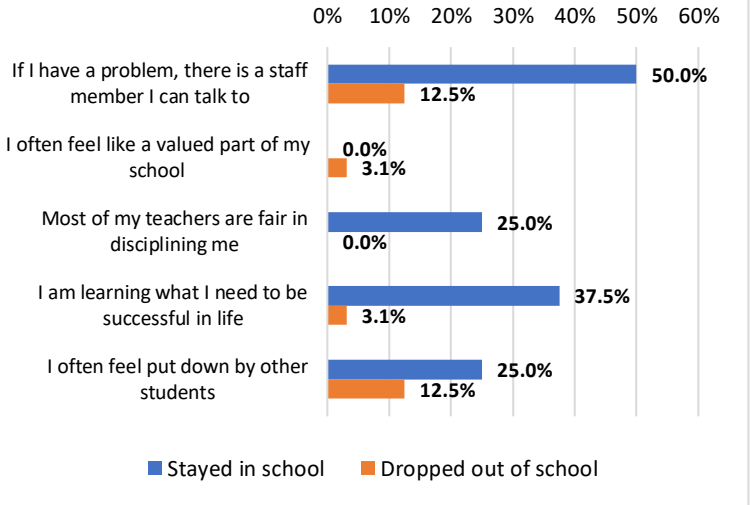
Object 3.11 Participants' reasons for dropping out of school (32 participants)



Of the individuals who reported dropping out of school, 50.0% reported that their grades were mostly Cs and 40.6% indicated that their grades were mostly Ds. Only 3.5% of the individuals who had dropped out of school indicated that they earned mostly As or mostly Bs. Perceived academic success does seem to be correlated with staying in school, at least with this group of individuals.

For individuals who dropped out of school, the learning environment also appears to be correlated with lower levels of perceived support, engagement, and fairness. Responses of interview participants who dropped out of school were compared with those who stayed in school. Participants who stayed in school were significantly more likely to report that they had a staff member they could talk to about a problem, that teachers were fair in disciplining them, and they are learning what they need to be successful in life (Object 3.12). Interview participants who stayed in school were also more likely to report that they often felt put down by other students. Both groups were unlikely to report feeling like a valued part of their school.

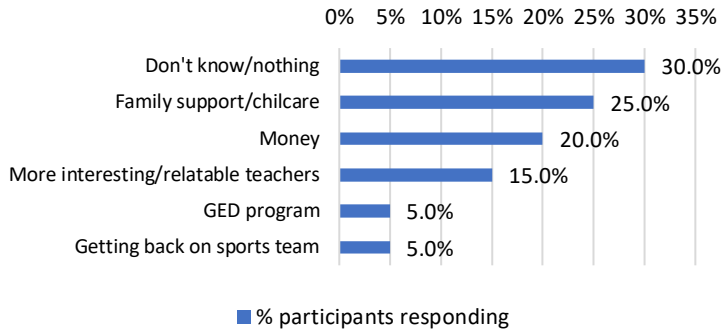
Object 3.12 Interview participants' feelings about the learning environment by whether they stayed in school or dropped out of school



Interview participants who reported dropping out were also asked if they ever returned to school. Of those who had dropped out, 84.4% reported that they had not returned to school. Interviewers asked participants who had not returned to school: "What would have helped you return to school?" (Object 3.13). Their answers were sorted by category and reported.

Most responses to this question fell into the category of nothing/do not know. However, one-fourth of responses (25.0%) indicated that support from parents and/or childcare would have helped them return to school. One-fifth of responses (20.0%) indicated that money/financial support would have helped them return to school. A few responses (15.0%) indicated that if school were more interesting or teachers were more relatable that this would have helped them return to school.

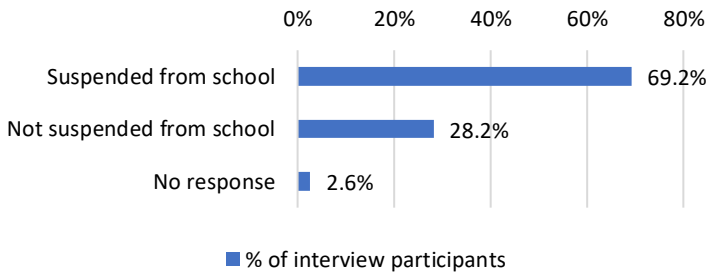
Object 3.13 Responses to "What would have helped you return to school" by percentage of respondents



School suspensions

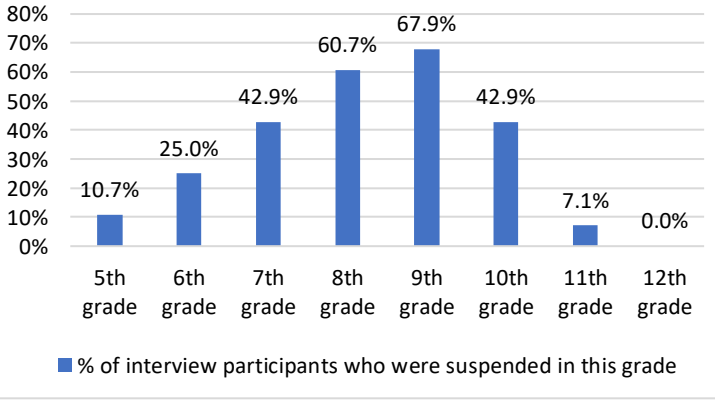
A little more than two-thirds of participants (69.2%) reported that they had been suspended from school at least once (Object 3.14). There was no statistically significant difference between interview participants who dropped out and those who remained in school regarding the likelihood of suspension.

Object 3.14 Percentage of interview participants who have ever been suspended from school



Interviewers asked participants to identify the grades during which they were suspended. Participants could select all that applied. The most common grades for interview participants to report they were suspended was 9th grade (67.9%) and 8th grade (60.7%) (Object 3.15). No participants reported being suspended prior to 5th grade or after 11th grade.

Object 3.15 Percent of suspended interview participants who were suspended in this grade

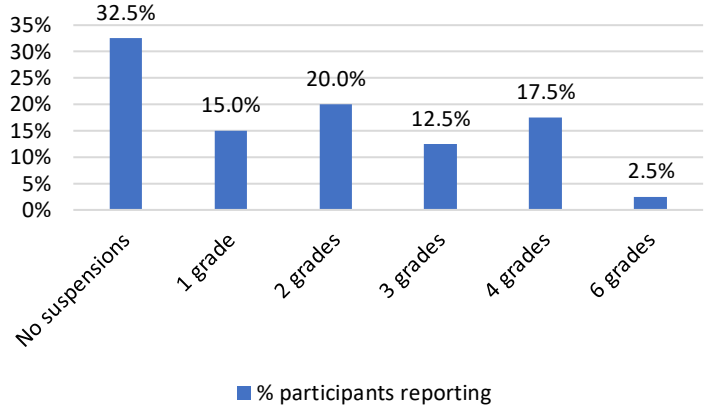


The low rate of suspensions in grades 11 and 12 appears to be correlated to the

fact that 80.0% of the interview participants had already dropped out of school before completing 12th grade. This data was also analyzed by the number of grades in which participants reported being suspended.

About one-third of interview participants (32.5%) reported no suspensions or did not respond to the question (Object 3.16). However, over half of all interview participants (52.5%) reported being suspended during 2 or more grades and one in five (20.0%) reported being suspended in 4 or more grades.

Object 3.16 Interview participants by number of grades they were suspended in

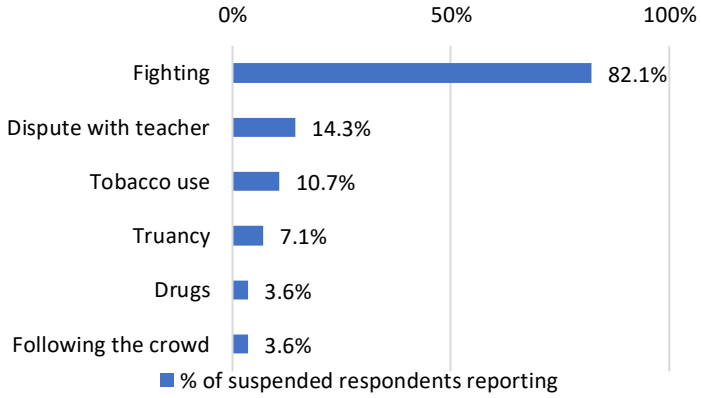


Interviewers asked participants why these suspensions occurred, and 28 participants provided custom responses, which were sorted and analyzed. Five participants provided multiple reasons for suspensions

The most common response was for fighting (82.1%) (Object 3.17). The second most common response was a dispute with a teacher (several interview participants specified use of profanity) (14.3%). Interview participants also cited tobacco use, truancy/skipping classes, and drug use on campus as reasons for suspensions. One respondent noted that they were "following the crowd."

This data indicates that youth involved in fights at school should be screened for intervention services as a means of identifying youth earlier in the process of joining a gang and disengaging from school.

Object 3.17 Suspended interview participants by reason(s) for suspension



Employment

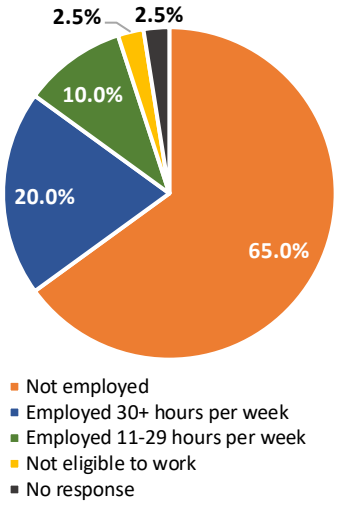
Interviewers asked participants about their work history. Because the interviews occurred during September/ October 2021, it is possible that the COVID-19 pandemic affected the employment status of these individuals. One in five participants (20.0%) was employed between 30 to 40 hours per week and 10.0% were employed part-time (11 to 29 hours per week) (Object 3.18).

Half of all participants (50.0%) reported that they had been employed at some point. However, at the time of the interview, two-thirds of interview participants were unemployed (65.0%).

Interview participants who reported dropping out of school were also more likely to report being unemployed. Three-fourths of interview participants who had dropped out of school reported that they were unemployed (75.0%). One respondent was too young to work legally and another other chose not to respond.

Interviewers asked participants the type of work they currently do as well as the type of work they would like to do. Participants reported working in a variety of fields, typically in entry-level lower wage jobs.

Object 3.18 Interview participants by current employment status



Their future employment goals were more specific. Two participants reported that they would like to own their own business at some point. Other future goals included more skilled employment in healthcare, human services, culinary and construction. Four participants did not have any clear future goals. This data suggests that employment and training services need to be included in service delivery for gang-involved individuals. As stated by one respondent,

the work also needs to pay a living wage.

Table 3.4 Interview participants' current employment versus desired future employment

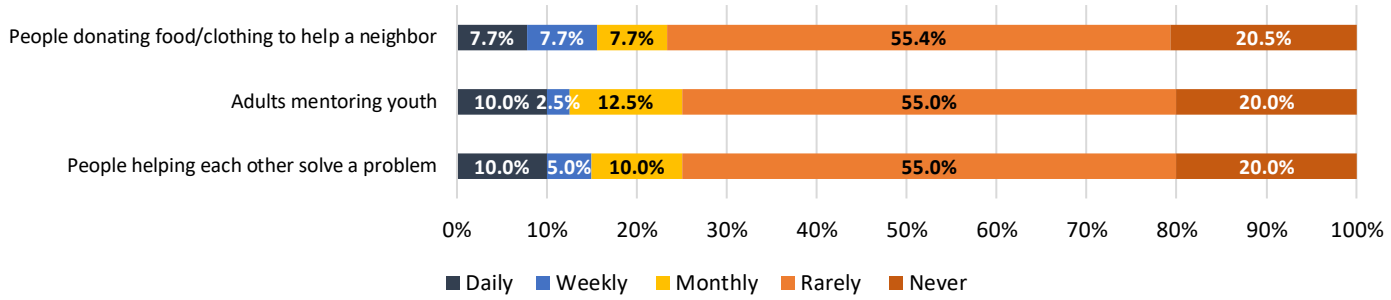
Current employment	Desired future employment
Hotel worker	Entrepreneur (2)
Delivery driver	Human services (2)
Building trades (2)	Interpreter
Healthcare	Healthcare
Human services	Chef/cook
Tattooing	Construction/building trades
Side work/hustle (3)	Anything making decent money
	Rapper
	Do not know (4)

Neighborhood conditions

Interviewers asked participants about the climate of their neighborhood to assess neighborhood level risk and protective factor exposure. The answers to these questions reflect the individuals' recollections and perceptions so this data may not be completely accurate. However, these responses do indicate that many of the gang-involved individuals who were interviewed believe that criminal activity, including serious and violent crimes, occur in their neighborhood on at least a monthly basis.

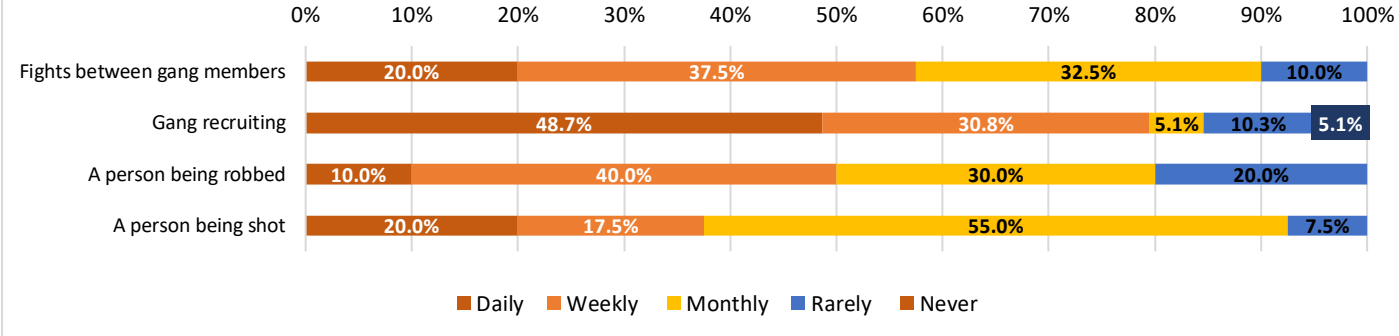
Interviewers asked participants about the frequency of both positive and negative behaviors in their neighborhood. About one-fourth of participants (23.1%) reported that people donated food/clothing to help a neighbor in their neighborhood at least monthly. Similarly, one fourth (25.0%) reported that adults mentored youth in their neighborhood at least monthly and 25.0% reported that people helped each other solve a problem at least monthly.

Object 3.19 Percentage of participants reporting the frequency of positive activities occurring in their neighborhood



Many interview participants report negative incidents occurring at least weekly in their neighborhood. More than half (57.5%) report at least weekly fights between gang members (Object 4.20) and 79.5% report daily or weekly gang recruiting in their neighborhood. One half (50.0%) report that a person is robbed in their neighborhood at least weekly and over one third (37.5%) report a shooting in their neighborhood at least weekly.

Object 3.20 Percentage of participants reporting the frequency of negative activities occurring in their neighborhood



Interviewers asked participants to respond to "What do you like best about your neighborhood?" and "What is one thing you would change about your neighborhood?" These open-ended questions were designed so interview participants could provide a custom response. These responses were grouped and analyzed.

More than half of participants who responded to this question noted that they do not like anything about their neighborhood (Table 3.5). One-fourth stated that the community is close and protective of one another. A little less than one in ten (7.1%) noted that they like the presence of the gang in their neighborhood. One participant noted that his neighborhood was "okay besides the gang down the street." Interview participants also identified aspects of their neighborhood that they would like to change.

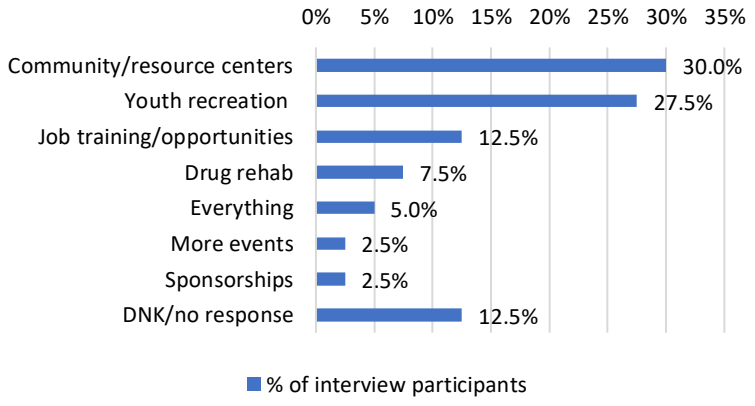
One in five (20.0%) would like to see less violence/gang activity. Others (16.7%) noted that they would like to see more activities for youth. A small number of participants indicated that they would like to change everything about their neighborhood (13.3%) or reduce poverty (13.3%). One in ten would like to see the neighborhood fixed up. Other responses included address drug addiction/drug addicts, concerns about gentrification forcing people to move, and a desire for more diversity in the neighborhood.

Table 3.5 Interview participants responses to "What I like best about my neighborhood" and "What I would like to change about my neighborhood

Like best about my neighborhood		Would like to change	
*28 responses		*30 responses	
Nothing	57.1%	Violence/gang activity	20.0%
Community is close knit	25.0%	More activities for youth	16.7%
Gang presence	7.1%	Everything	13.3%
Grew up here	7.1%	Poverty	13.3%
Cultural similarities	3.6%	Nothing/do not know	10.0%
Other	3.6%	Fix up the neighborhood/ houses	10.0%
		Drug addiction/drug addicts	6.7%
		Gentrification	7.4%
		Other	3.7

Interview participants were also asked to identify the resources/activities that they would like to see in their neighborhood. Almost one-third of participants (30.0%) stated that they would like to see community centers or resource centers in the neighborhood (Object 3.21). A little more than one-fourth would like to see more/better recreational activities/spaces to keep children and youth engaged. About one in ten (12.5%) cited the need for job training and job connection

Object 3.21 Interview participants' responses to "What resources/activities would you like to see in your neighborhood?"



resources at the neighborhood level. Other participants suggested more drug rehab/treatment options, more events, and sponsorships. A few participants stated that they would like to see all resources/everything in their neighborhood.

In a related question, interviewers asked participants if they personally would be willing to create safe spaces in their neighborhood. Over half of participants (52.5%) said that they would be willing to do this. A smaller percentage (45%) stated that they did not know if they would be willing to do this. Only one respondent answered no to this question.

Gangs in the neighborhood

Interviewers asked participants if gangs are present in their neighborhoods. They were further asked if there are areas inside and outside their neighborhood where they cannot go because of their gang ties. All participants agreed that gangs are present in their neighborhood and significant percentages of participants noted that the gang presence in certain areas restricts their movements around the community (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 Percentage of interview participants agreeing with the following statements

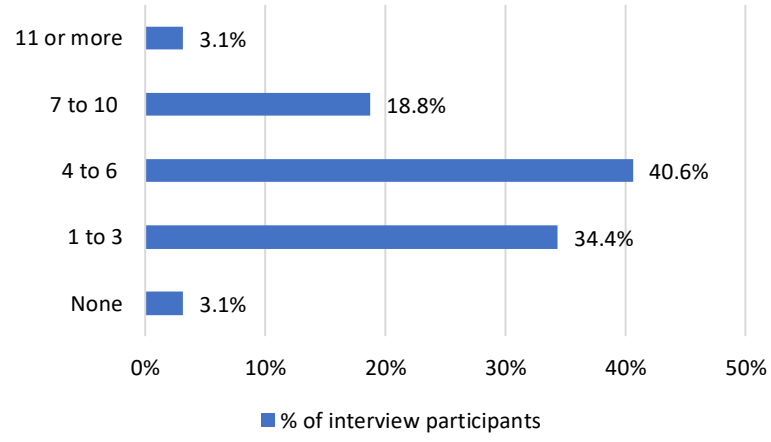
Gangs are present in my neighborhood	**100.0%**
There are areas I cannot go in my neighborhood because of my gang ties	**20.0%**
There are areas I cannot go outside of my neighborhood because of my gang ties	**80.0%**

Presence of supportive adults

To gauge interview participants' access to protective factors such as supportive adults, interviewers asked participants "How many adults do you know that you would feel comfortable talking to about something important?" While all forty participants responded to this question, only 32 responded with a numerical answer that could be analyzed. The largest percentage of participants (40.6%) reported that they have 4-6 adults that they could talk to, followed by about one third of participants (34.4) who reported that they have 1 to 3 adults they can talk to about something important (Object 3.22). Most (90.0%) of interview participants report that they have family members that they can talk to about important issues.

Participants also were asked to name, by role, up to three adults who had a positive influence on their life and 24 participants responded to this question. Interview participants who responded to this question named 1.9 adults on average. The types of adults named as being a positive influence were wide ranging, including assistant principal, barber, boss, boyfriend, caseworker, counselor, manger, and even specifically named individuals. The most frequently

Object 3.22 Number of adults I could talk to about something important by percentage of participants (n=32)



identified adults who had a positive influence included mothers (33.3% of participants), coaches (29.2% of participants), grandmothers (20.9%), teachers (20.9%) and neighbors (16.7%) (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7 Adults who have had a positive influence on my life by number and percentage of participants

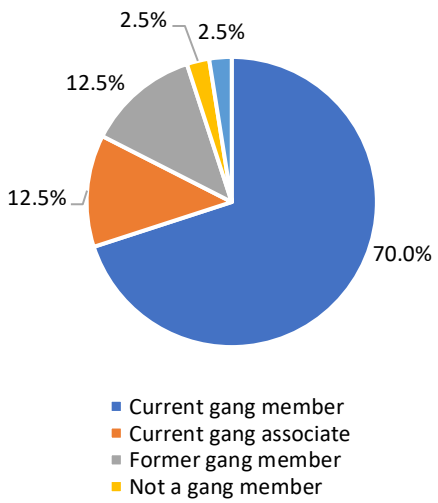
Type of adult	#	%	Type of adult	#	%
Assistant principal	1	4.2%	Friend	1	4.2%
Barber	1	4.2%	Grandma	5	20.8%
Boss	1	4.2%	Manager	1	4.2%
Boyfriend	1	4.2%	Mentor	1	4.2%
Brother	2	8.3%	Mom	8	33.3%
"Buzzy"	1	4.2%	Neighbor	4	16.7%
Caseworker	1	4.2%	Sister	1	4.2%
Coach	7	29.2%	Teacher	5	20.8%
Counselor	1	4.2%	Uncle	2	8.3%
"Face"	1	4.2%	**Total adults named**	**45**	**n/a**

No interview participants named their father, though two participants did identify their uncles as having a positive influence on their life. The responses to this question suggest that Durham's response to gangs should enlist not only case workers and social workers, but also members of the community who have frequent contact with young people they live and work with and can be a positive influence on their lives.

Gang involvement and perceptions of gang issues in Durham

Interviewers asked participants a series of questions about their personal involvement in gangs and their beliefs about gang issues in Durham. Interviewers asked participants if they are current gang members. More than two-thirds of the individuals interviewed (70.0%) report that they are a current gang member (Object 3.23). A little more than one in ten (12.5%) report they are a former gang member and 12.5% report that they are gang associates. Two participants (5.0%) stated that they are not a gang member or did not respond to this question. However, all forty interview participants described their reasons for joining a gang in subsequent questions.

Object 3.23 Interview participants by level of gang affiliation



Gang role

Interview participants were also asked to describe their role in their gang. Based on the interviewers' knowledge of gangs in Durham, interviewers used the following definitions of gang roles (Table 3.8).

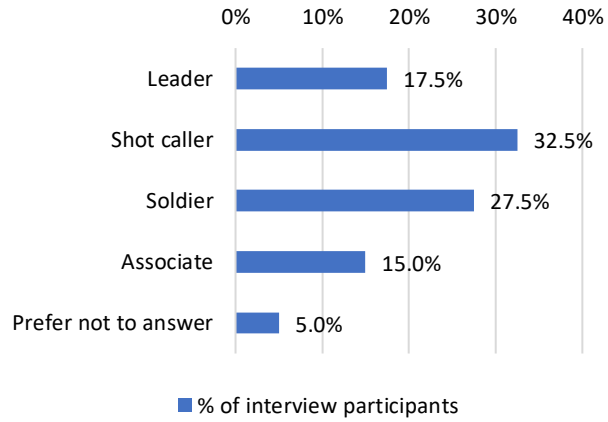
Table 3.8 Gang roles in Durham

Leader	One or more individuals who have full control over the entire gang, make decisions, and are consulted when major actions are going to be undertaken. The leader(s) typically control the day-to-day functions of the gang
Shot Caller	Shot callers are highly influential in determining the actions of the gang. Shot callers often control the actions of a specific faction of the gang but still answer to the leader(s)
Soldier	Lowest ranking members of the gang. These individuals serve as messengers, lookouts, drug holders, drug sellers, and other lower-level jobs performed within the gang. Most soldiers have access to a firearm which is used to commit violent crime on behalf of the gang
Associate	Align themselves with and regularly associate with a gang (often in their neighborhood) and sometimes contribute to the operation of the gang

Interview participants identified themselves by role. The largest percentage of interview participants (32.5%) characterized themselves as shot callers (Object 3.24). A little more than one fourth of participants identified themselves as soldiers in the gang (27.5%) and a little less than one in five participants identified themselves as a gang leader (17.5%). Another 15.0% of participants stated that they associate regularly with the gang.

It should be noted that some individuals may not be comfortable fully disclosing their role in the gang in an interview of this type. Five percent of participants declined to answer this question.

Object 3.24 Interview participants by role in the gang



Joining the gang

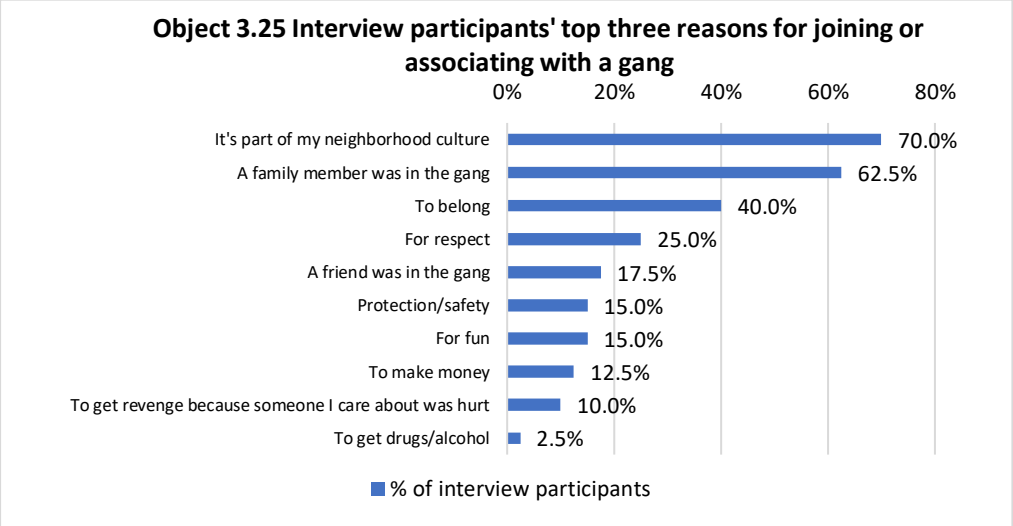
The interview also explored participants' reasons for joining/associating with a gang, the ages at which they began associating with gangs and joined a gang, the process for joining a gang, and the perceived positives of gang life.

Reasons for joining the gang

Joining a gang can be a complex decision with multiple factors. Interviewers asked participants to identify their top three reasons for joining or associating with a gang. Not all participants selected three reasons. On average, participants selected 2.7 responses.

- 70.0% of participants reported that they joined a gang because “it is part of the culture of my neighborhood” (Object 3.25).
- 62.5% of participants reported that they joined/associated with a gang because “a family member was in the gang”
- 40.0% of participants reported that they joined/associated with a gang “to belong”
- One-fourth of participants (25.0%) reported that they joined/associated with a gang “for respect.”

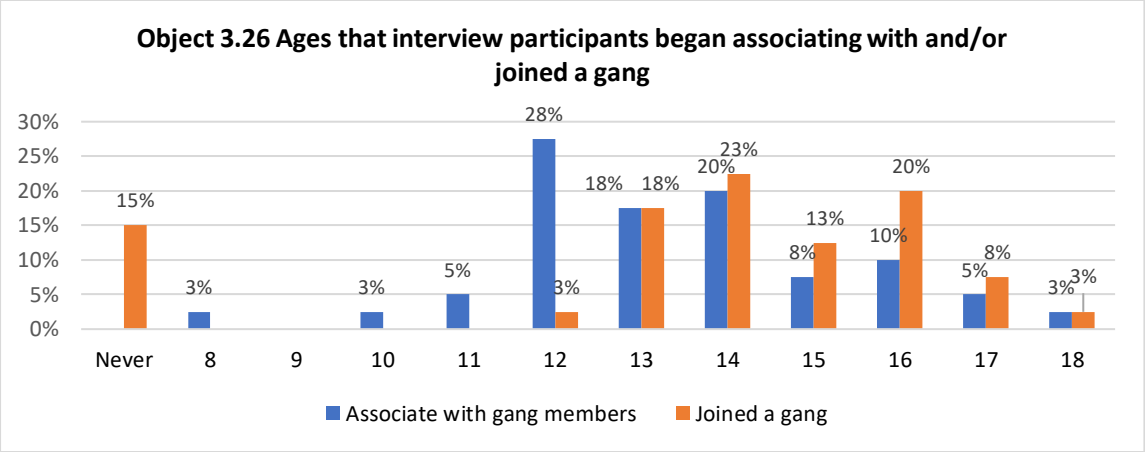
Less common responses included “a friend was in the gang” (17.5%), “for protection or to feel safe” (15.0%), “for fun (15.0%) and “to make money” (12.5%).



These responses suggest that neighborhood and family ties are by far the most influential factor in individuals’ decisions to join a gang in Durham. It also suggests that employment or recreational programs by themselves would be insufficient to prevent gang joining or to assist individuals with leaving gangs. Effective programming in Durham should ideally be neighborhood-based and focused on changing the neighborhood culture, along with directing prevention and intervention activities to young people with gang-involved family members.

When they joined the gang

Interviewers asked participants when they first began to associate with gang members and when/if they joined a gang. All participants reported associating with gangs, but 15.0% of interview participants reported that they never joined a gang. The most common age that participants reported that they began associating with a gang was 12 (27.5%) (Object 3.26). The ages at which gang joining began for most interview participants was ages 13 or 14 (40.0%) with another significant spike at age 16 (20.0%).



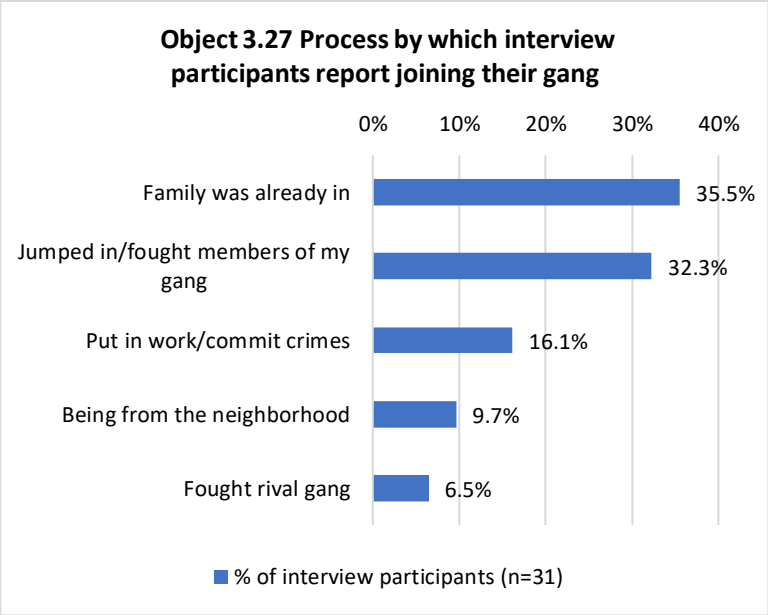
How they joined the gang

Interviewers asked participants about their personal process for joining a gang. Nine respondents did not provide a direct answer to this question and their responses were excluded from the analysis. Thirty-one responses were sorted and analyzed by type. Five primary types of responses emerged:

- "Jumped in" – Fought members of the gang I was joining
- "Blessed in" – Family members were already in the gang and vouched for the individual
- "Put in work" – Engaged in criminal activity on behalf of the gang I joined, ranging from working as a lookout to committing acts of violence against other gangs
- Fought rival gang member(s)
- Being from the neighborhood where the gang is active

Participants' responses support the influential role that families play in the decision to join a gang in Durham.

Over one-third (35.5%) of respondents report that a family member was already in the gang and facilitated their joining (Object 3.27. A third (32.3%) of the individuals who report they are gang involved indicate that they were "jumped in."



Another common response was that the individual "put in work" for the gang" (16.1%). Most responses did not specify the type of criminal activity that the individual committed on behalf of the gang. These answers also indicate the significance of the connection between gangs and neighborhood culture. One in ten participants (9.7%) indicated that being

from the neighborhood was how they joined the gang. Two respondents (6.5%) stated that they fought rival gang members to join the gang.

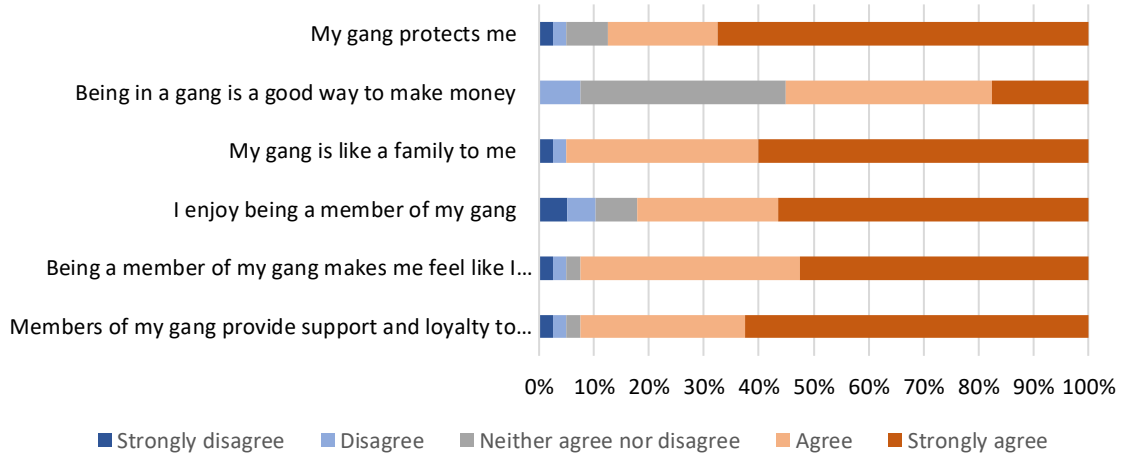
Perceived positives of gang membership

Gang joining has been described by researchers as a process of pushes and pulls. Negative circumstances may push young people into gangs while perceived positives pull them into the gang (Decker and Van Winkle, 1996; Arciaga-Young and Gonzalez, 2013). To measure the perceived positives of gang involvement in Durham, Interviewers asked participants about their emotional and financial connections to their gangs. Interviewers asked participants to respond to the following statements:

- My gang protects me
- Being in a gang is a good way to make money
- My gang is like a family to me
- I enjoy being a member of my gang
- Being a member of my gang makes me feel like I belong
- Members of my gang provide support and loyalty to each other

Participants expressed high levels of agreement/strong agreement with perceived positives of gang membership (Object 3.28).

Object 3.28 Perceived positives provided by the gang by interview participants' level of agreement with them



- 95.0% of participants agree or strongly agree that their gang is like a family
- 92.5% of participants agree or strongly agree that members of their gang provide support and loyalty for each other
- 92.5% of participants agree or strongly agree that being a member of their gang makes them feel like they belong
- 87.5% of participants agree or strongly agree that their gang protects them
- 82.0% of participants agree or strongly agree that they enjoy being a member of their gang

- 55.0% of participants agree or strongly agree that being in a gang is a good way to make money

Participants were most likely to express strong agreement with the belief that their gang protects them (67.5%), members of their gang provide support/loyalty to each other (62.5%), and their gang is like a family (60.0%). The elevated level of agreement with "my gang is like a family to me" correlates to the high percentage of individuals interviewed who have family members in the gang discussed earlier in this section (Object 3.25, p. 101).

Gangs in Durham provide an elevated level of perceived support and protection to members of the gang. Any interventions with gang-involved individuals will need to identify ways in which that support could be replaced by alternative means. One relative weakness of gangs in Durham is that many members do not perceive the gang as a conduit to financial success. Alternative employment programs with a strong degree of social support might be effective in helping to replace the gang.

Leaving the gang

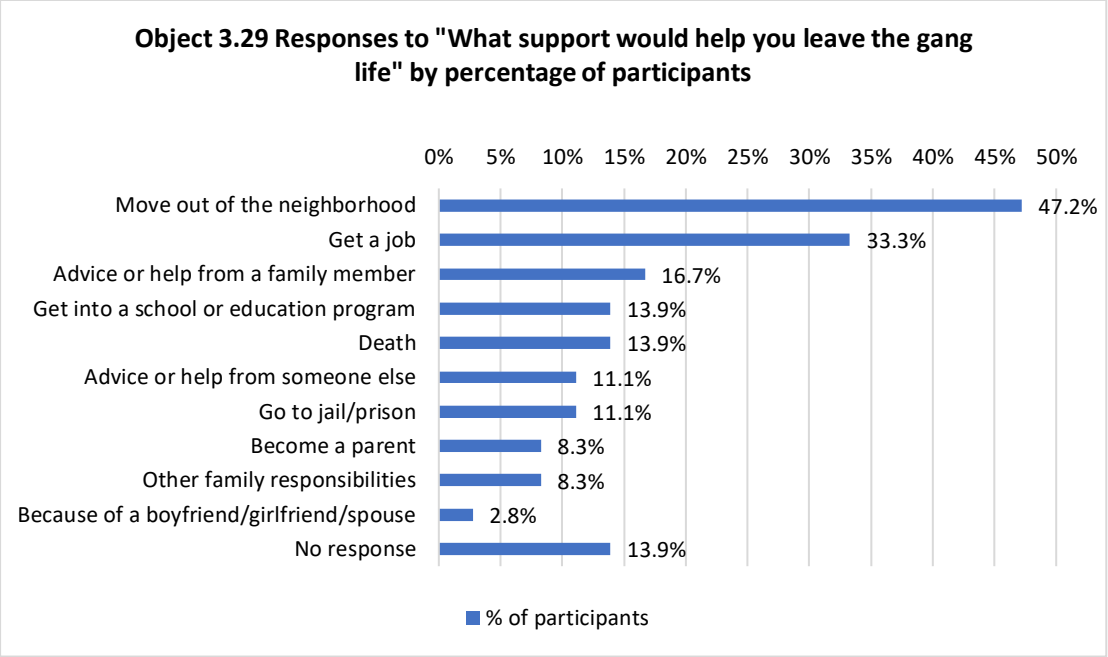
Interviewers asked participants if they believe they will ever leave the gang. Only 5% of participants said that they will leave the gang and 7.5% of participants reported that they had already done so. Half of respondents (50.0%) reported that they do not know if they will leave and 27.5% of participants reported that they will not leave.

Table 3.9 Interview participants' responses to "Do you think you will ever leave the gang life?"

Yes	5.0%
Do not know	50.0%
No	27.5%
Former gang member	7.5%
Not a gang member	5.0%
No response	5.0%

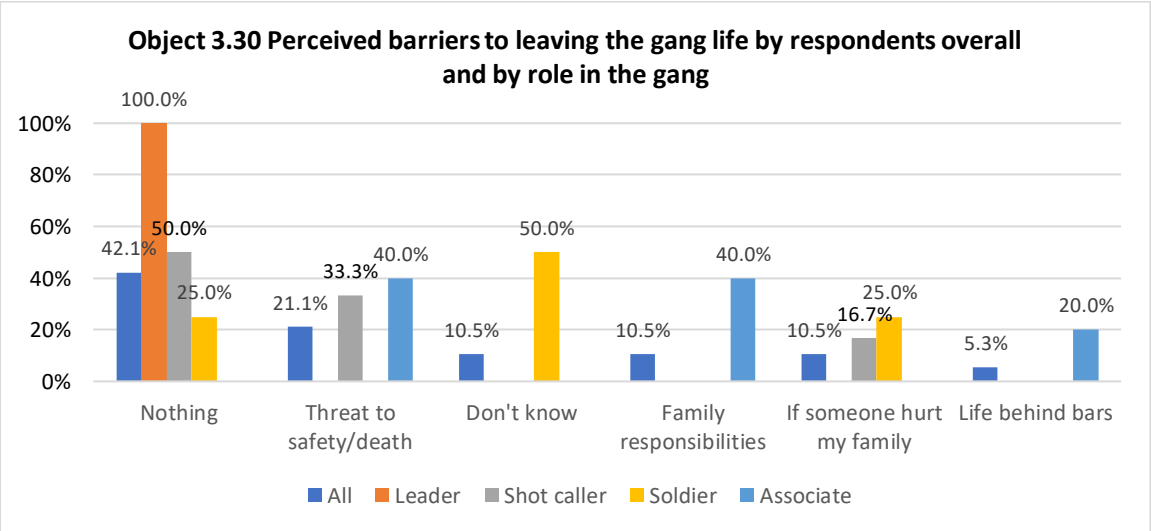
To provide input on the types of support or assistance that might be needed to help individuals leave the gang life, Interviewers asked participants what help or assistance might facilitate this process. Participants could choose from a variety of responses or create their own custom response.

Half of interview participants (47.2%) stated that moving out of the neighborhood would help them leave the gang life (Object 3.29, p.103). One third of participants (33.3%) noted that getting a job would help them leave the gang. Other top choices included advice or help from a family member (16.7%), get into a school or education program (13.9%) or death (13.9%). It is worth nothing that only one in ten interview participants (11.1%) stated that advice or help from someone else would help them leave the gang life. One fourth of respondents (25.0%) stated that death or prison would be the way they left the gang life.



This data speaks to the strong neighborhood culture that supports gang life in Durham as well as the perceived need for financial income that the gang cannot meet for many individuals. These responses also suggest that gang members above who stated that they will not or do not know if they will ever leave the gang may select these answers because they lack the assistance required to leave the gang.

Interviewers asked participants "What would stop you from leaving the gang life?" and twenty interview participants provided custom responses to this open-ended question. Overall, 42.1% of respondents to this question stated that nothing would keep them from leaving the gang life if they wanted to (Object 3.30). However, when this data was examined by the individual's stated rank in the gang, the perceived barriers to leaving the gang were quite different across different gang ranks.



Lower gang rank was correlated to greater perceived risk to leaving the gang in more areas of the individual's life. All gang leaders (100.0%) who responded to this question stated that nothing would stop them from leaving the gang life, compared to 50.0% of shot callers, 25.0% of soldiers and 0.0% of associates (Object 3.30). However, 33.3% of shot callers and 40.0% of associates perceived a personal safety risk to leaving the gang.

A similar percentage of associates (40.0%) also perceived family responsibilities/relationships as a barrier to leaving the gang life and 20.0% of associates were concerned about being incarcerated without gang ties. Soldiers in the gang were most likely to say that they did not know what might keep them in the gang (50.0%) or to say that nothing would keep them in the gang if they wanted to leave (25.0%) or that they might stay if a rival gang hurt a family member (25.0%).

This data involves only a few respondents which can skew the data analysis, but it is notable that the higher the rank in the gang, the greater the individual's perceived freedom to leave the gang at will. Five respondents to this question reported that they are no longer involved in the gang. This number included two leaders, one shot caller, one associate, and one individual who did not provide his/her gang rank. This data suggests gang leaders can and do leave the gang.

Some interview participants have already separated from gang life and these individuals were asked what helped them leave the gang life. Desistance research suggests that most gang members leave because of a combination of factors: positive life circumstances pull them away from gang and they are also pushed away from the gang as they experience negative consequences and decide to do something else (Arciaga Young and Gonzalez, 2013).

The responses of individuals who separated from the gang are provided below, by category. Most responses related to the individual being pulled toward positive life events and growth. Individuals also pointed to being pushed away from gangs by related negative experiences, such as spending time in prison.

Table 3.10 Interview participants' responses to "What helped you leave the gang life?"

Children/family responsibilities	Personal maturity	Negative effects of gang life
My children	Getting older and maturing	Spending time in prison
Got tired of leaving my family	Growth within myself	
Seeing what the gang lifestyle was doing to my family		

Trauma exposure

Early exposure to trauma is correlated to negative health and mental health outcomes over the life course. One test developed to measure exposure to trauma, the Adverse Childhood Experiences quiz, is comprised of ten questions (see Appendix C, p. 251) which measure exposure to adverse experiences in the areas of abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction prior to the age of 18.

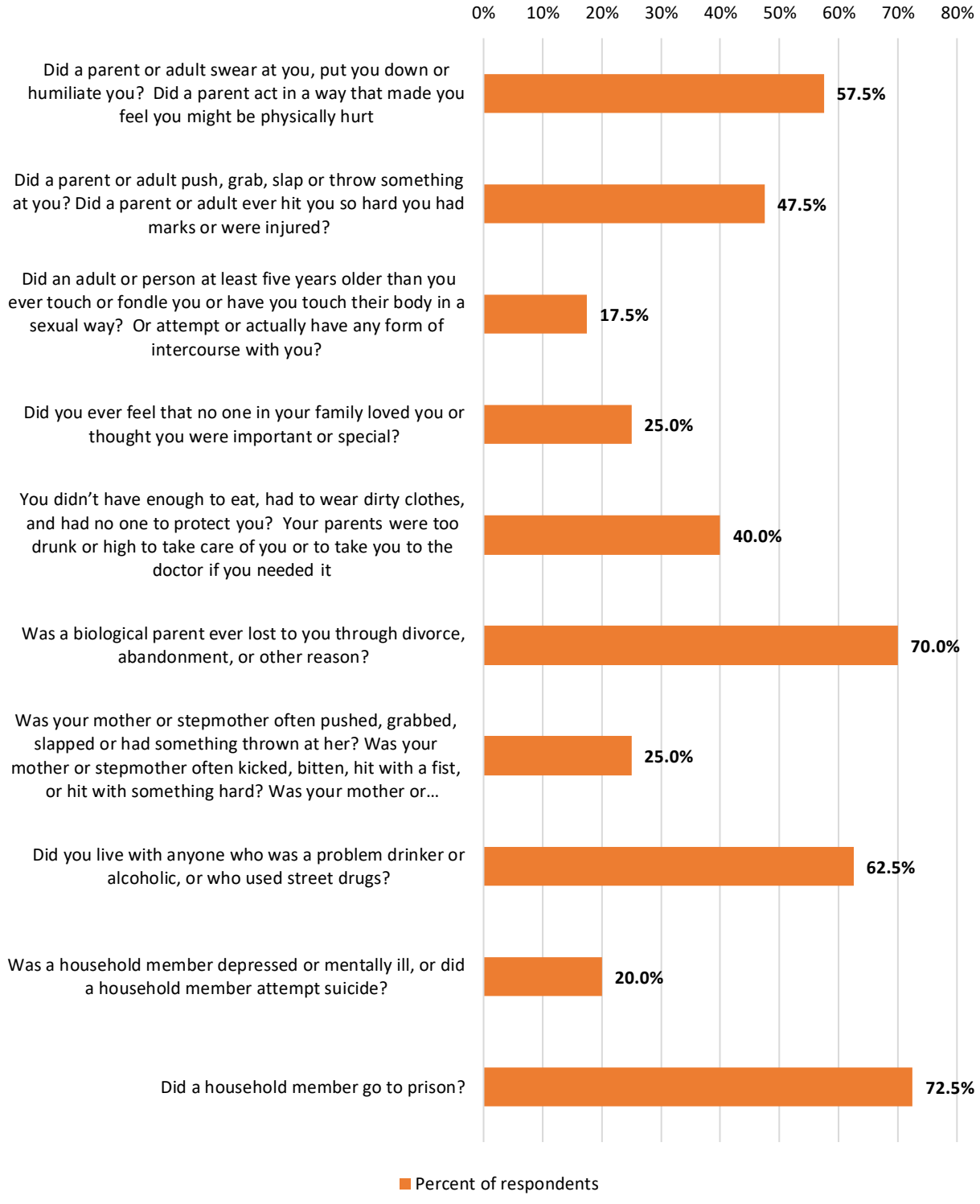
Exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)

A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Kaiser found "a graded dose response between ACEs and negative health and well-being outcomes across the life course" (Centers for Disease Control, 2016). Higher ACE scores are directly correlated with a wide range of health and behavioral/mental health issues. For instance, an ACE score of 7 increased the odds that an individual would attempt suicide by thirty-one times compared to a person with an ACE score of zero (Dube et. al, 2001). While researchers have not studied ACE scores in relation to gang joining, studies using the ACE instrument have found that ACE exposure is correlated to higher rates of smoking, drug use, heavy alcohol use, poor educational and employment outcomes, incarceration, and involvement in violence both as a perpetrator and victim (Baglivio, et. al., 2015).

To identify health and mental health resources needed in Durham to serve gang-involved individuals, the ACEs quiz was administered to interview participants as part of the interview. Interview participants were most likely to report trauma exposure specific to a family member going to prison (72.5%); or loss of a parent through divorce, abandonment, or death (70.0%) (Object 3.31, p. 106). Over half of interview participants (57.5%) reported exposure to verbal abuse and 47.5% reported exposure to physical abuse by a parent or other adult.

Two thirds of participants reported living with someone who was a problem drinker, alcoholic, or used street drugs (62.5%). Interview participants were least likely to report sexual abuse/assault, but one in five participants (17.5%) were exposed to sexual abuse or assault before age 18.

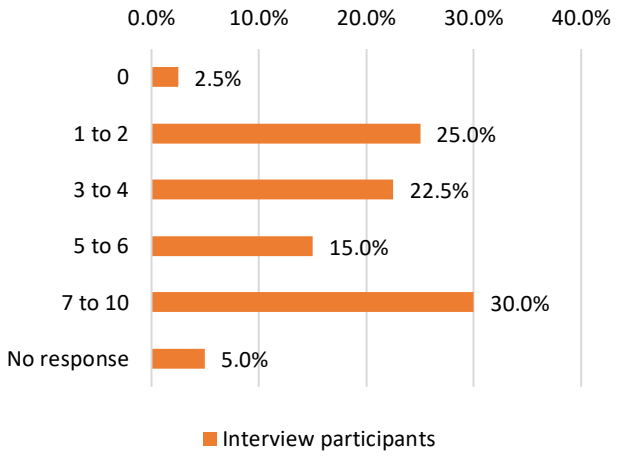
Object 3.31 Percentage of interview participants by specific adverse childhood experiences



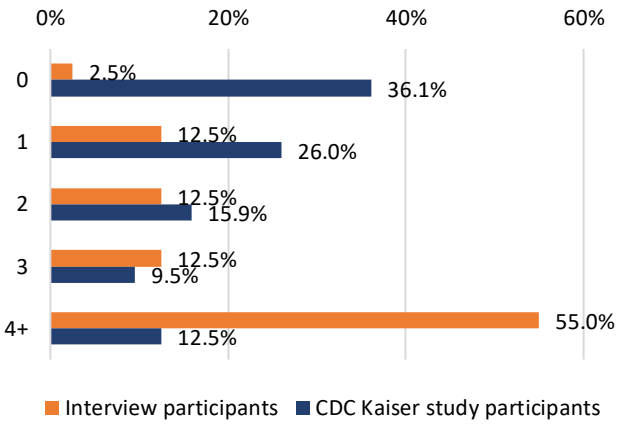
Gang involved individuals in Durham experience high levels of ACEs exposure

Interview participants' responses to the ACEs quiz were scored using the standard methodology for the quiz (1 point per yes answer). Half of interview participants (45.0%) reported exposure to 5+ ACEs and almost one-third of participants (30.0%) reported exposure to 7 to 10 ACEs (Object 3.32). Interview participants' ACE scores were compared with the prevalence of ACE exposure among the CDC-Kaiser ACE study sample group. While less than one fourth (22%) of the CDC-Kaiser ACE Study sample group reported an ACE score of 3 or above, 67.5% of interview participants reported an ACE score of three or above (Object 3.33). Kaiser Study participants were also 14.4 times more likely to report zero ACES exposure compared to interview participants.

Object 3.32 Adverse Childhood Exposure quiz scores of interview participants



Object 3.33 Adverse Childhood Exposure quiz scores of interview participants and CDC Kaiser Study participants



The elevated level of exposure to adverse childhood experiences by interview participants suggests that gang-involved individuals in Durham are much more at risk for long-term behavioral, mental health and other health risks and that intervention with these individuals would require access to both types of healthcare services. Research also suggests that individuals experiencing behavior problems related to ACE exposure are more prone to school suspension/expulsion, drop-out, and difficulties maintaining employment, so any strategies undertaken to support gang-involved individuals in Durham would need to provide extensive support for employment and educational strategies.

Current exposure to violence

Interview participants also report elevated levels of current exposure to violence. A sizable percentage of participants (42.5%) reported being stabbed or shot in the past year. One in four participants (25.0%) reported being assaulted or beaten. One in five participants (20.0%) were victims of a robbery and 20.0% of participants reported being assaulted or beaten in the past year by someone who lives in their house.

Table 3.11 Percentage of interview participants reporting exposure to violence in the past year

Exposure to violence in the past year	% Participants reporting
Stabbed or shot	42.5%
Assaulted or beaten in the past year	25.0%
Assaulted or beaten in the past year by someone who lives in your house	20.0%
Robbed in the past year	20.0%

Substance use and criminal involvement

Interviewers asked participants about their involvement with high-risk behavior and criminal involvement to assess the scope of gang involvement in these activities locally. Questions addressed drug and alcohol use, access to drugs/firearms, criminal involvement of their peers and interactions with law enforcement. Interviewers asked participants if they have used both legal and illegal substances in the past year.

Substance use

By far, the most common substance used by interview participants was weed (92.5%), followed by liquor (62.5%) (Table 3.12). Over one-third stated that they had used illegally obtained prescription drugs in the past year and 15.0% reported using cocaine. A small percentage (5.0%) reported that they did not use substances in the past year.

Table 3.12 Substance use reported by interview participants in the past year

Substance used	% Reporting
Weed	92.5%
Liquor	62.5%
Illegally obtained prescription drugs	37.5%
Beer/wine	17.5%
Cocaine	15.0%
Crack	2.5%
Do not use substances	5.0%

Participants also reported high frequency of substance use. Most participants reported using substances at least daily during the past month (87.5%), with two-thirds of participants (62.5%) reporting that they use substances more than once a day.

Table 3.13 Frequency of substance use during the month prior to the interview by percentage of participants

More than once a day	Daily	Several times a week	Once a week or less	None
62.5%	25.0%	5.0%	2.5%	5.0%

Accessibility of guns and drugs

To gauge the accessibility of firearms and illegal drugs with the interview participants, they were asked how easy it would be to obtain specific items. Most participants (90.0%) reported that it would be quite easy to obtain a handgun and 87.5% reported that it would be very easy to get an assault weapon. It is notable that participants reported a greater level of access to an assault weapon than to the illegal drugs.

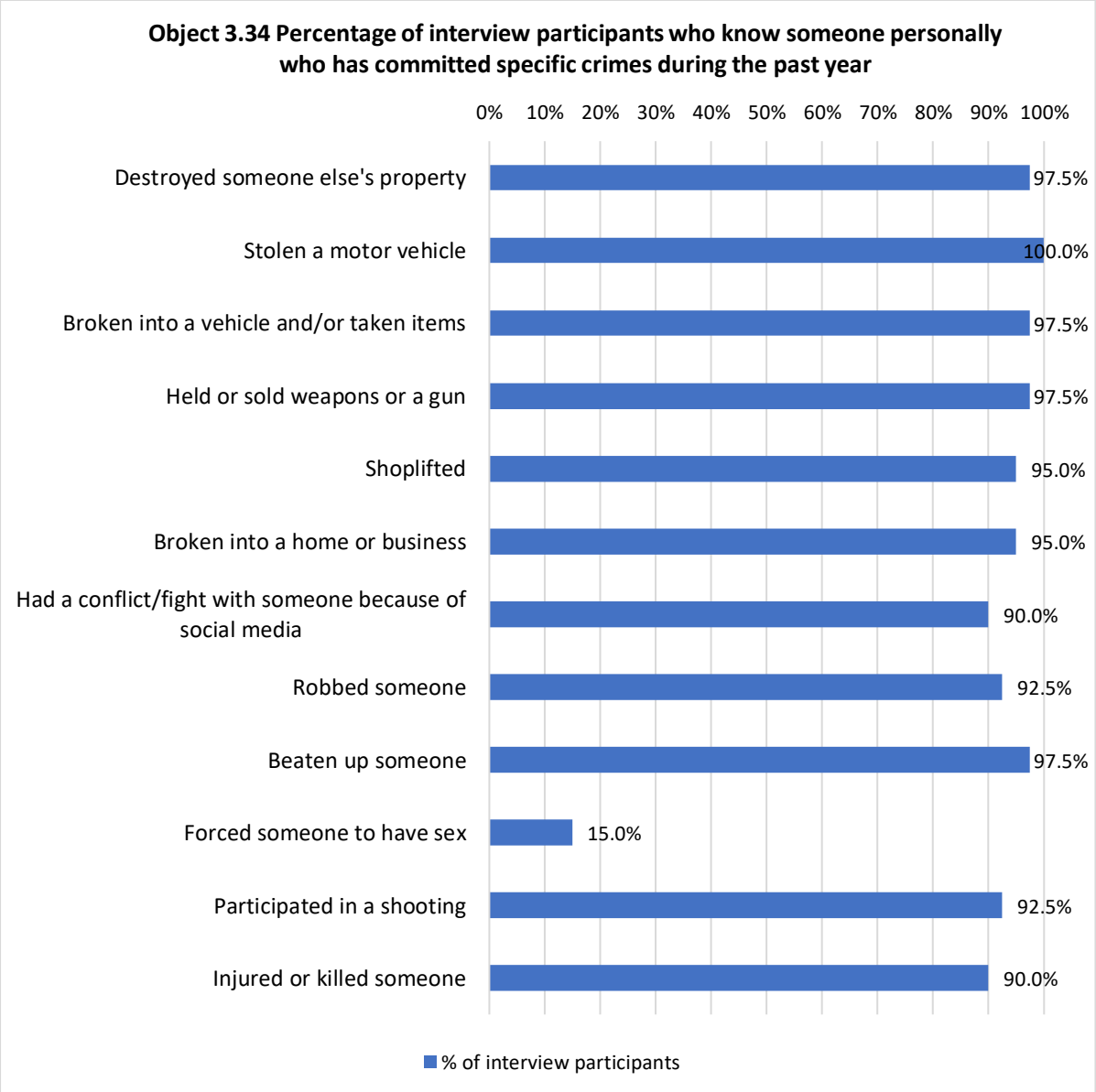
Table 3.14 Percentage of interview participants reporting that it would be very easy to obtain the following items

A handgun	An assault weapon	Cocaine, crack, or heroin	Opiates	Methamphetamine
90.0%	87.5%	85.0%	80.0%	80.0%

Criminal involvement of peers

Interview participants were also asked if they know someone personally who has committed a variety of crimes, ranging from misdemeanors to felonies. This question was structured to avoid interview participants discussing personal involvement in crimes while still obtaining information about the level of gang involvement in diverse types of criminal activity. All interview participants responded to this question, which suggests an elevated level of trust in the interviewers.

Most interview participants reported knowing someone personally who committed crimes in the year prior to the interview, with the highest rates of affirmative responses in the categories of destruction of property, vehicle burglaries, and held or sold weapons or a gun (97.5%) (Object 3.34). The responses to the last category correlates to the high degree of access to firearms that interview participants reported in an earlier question. Most respondents also reported knowing someone personally involved in a violent crime, including committed a shooting (92.5%) or injured/killed someone (90.0%). Most (90% or more) participants indicated that they know someone who committed a violent crime other than rape.



This peaks to how involved gangs in Durham are in violent crime, and this is the case for all gangs represented in this study.

Role of social media in gang interactions in Durham

To learn more about factors affecting gang-involved criminal activity, interviewers asked participants about specific aspects of criminal activity, including the role of social media in conflicts between local gangs. Interview participants were split on whether social media plays a role in gang conflicts in Durham, with half of respondents reporting that it does not play a role (47.5%) and 45.0% of respondents stating that it does (Table 3.15). This data was examined by age of interview participants and there was no statistically significant difference by age.

Table 3.15 Responses to "Does social media play a role in how you interact with your other gang or rival gangs?" by percentage of responses

Yes	45.0%
No	47.5%
No response	7.5%
Total	**100.0%**

A follow-up question asked participants what role social media plays, and their responses included:

- "Intensifying the beef" between gangs
- "More arguments with other gangs"
- "Lets you know what the other gang is doing"
- "Just seeing what everyone is saying"
- Talking/communication
- "Everyone wants to be popular"

These responses suggest that social media may worsen conflicts between local gangs and provide gang members with an internal form of communication and socialization.

Motives for committing violent crimes

Interviewers asked participants why members of their gang might rob or kill someone. Thirty-three participants provided a response to the question: "Why would members of your gang rob someone?" and some participants provided more than one answer. A financial motive was the most common response for committing a robbery. Most participants identified money as a reason that a member of their gang would rob someone (84.8%), followed by drugs (27.3%). Money and drugs were linked in a quarter of responses (24.0%) (Table 3.16).

Table 3.16 Interview participants' perceptions of why members of their gang might rob or kill someone by percentage of responses

Why would members of your gang rob someone? (n=33)		Why would members of your gang kill someone? (n=32)	
Money	84.8%	Disrespect	33.3%
Drugs	27.3%	Revenge/retaliation	24.2%
Get what they do not have	9.1%	Protection/In response to a threat	24.2%
Guns	6.1%	Money	3.0%
Revenge set-up	6.1%	Disloyalty	3.0%
Jewelry	3.0%	Other	12.1%

"To get what they don't have" or a similar answer was provided by 9.1% of participants, and 6.1% of participants mentioned obtaining a gun as a motive to rob someone. A small percentage (6.1%) of participants mentioned revenge as a reason that a member of their gang might rob someone.

In contrast, the thirty-two interview participants who responded to the question: "Why would members of your gang kill someone" were more likely to believe that members of their gang might commit serious violence because of behavior they observed from rival gang members or a belief that the other group poses a threat or has caused harm to the gang/gang members. The most common reason mentioned by interview participants was because someone was showing disrespect to the individual or the gang (33.3%). Revenge/retaliation was mentioned by a quarter of participants (24.2%), along with protection of self/the group from a perceived threat (24.2%). Money and disloyalty were also mentioned by 3.1% of participants. Motives other than these comprised 12.1% of responses, and included:

- "If we got problems with someone"
- "If they see the opposite side"
- "Anything"
- "Messing with them"

These responses, along with the 33.3% of responses that mentioned disrespect, suggest that many gangs/gang members in Durham have a low threshold of tolerance for rival gangs and may even shoot on sight (i.e., "if they see the opposite side").

In summary, based on the responses of the individuals interviewed, gang-involved robberies appear to be driven by the desire or need for money; shootings and murders appear to be driven much more by the desire for respect, retaliation, and protection.

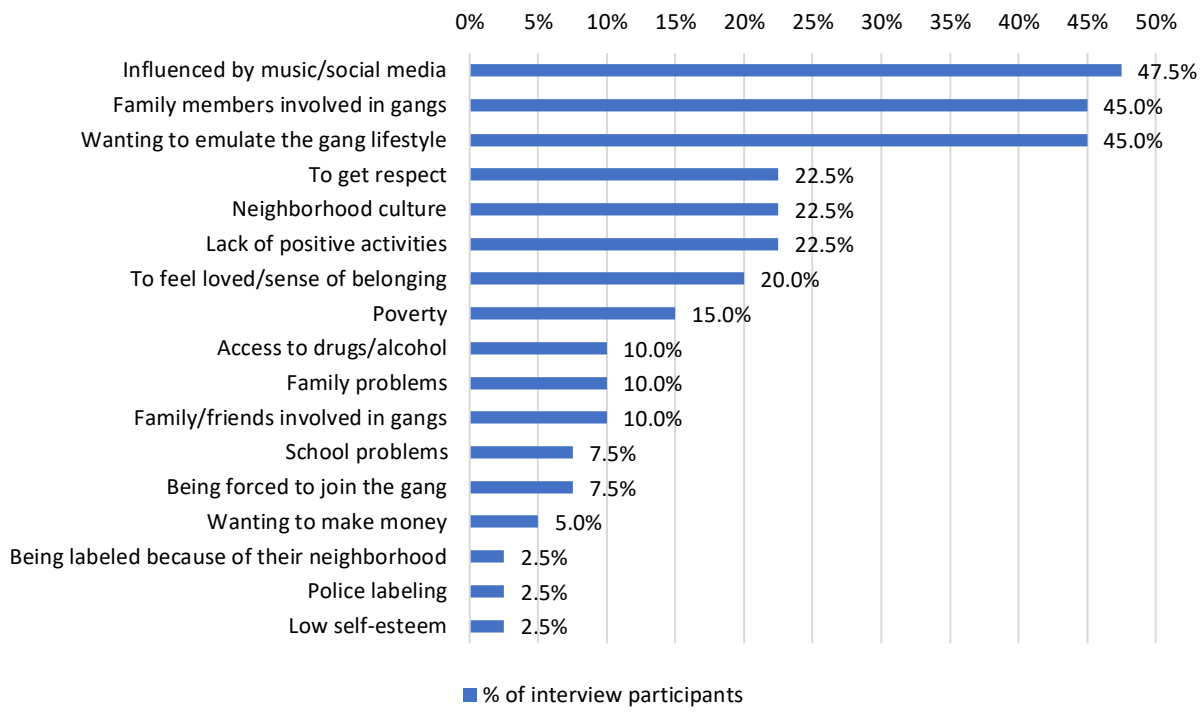
Interview participants' recommendations about future gang prevention/intervention strategies and activities

Interview participants were asked a series of questions to obtain their opinions about current factors causing youth to join gangs in Durham, and to identify their opinions about viable future activities and solutions.

Why youth in Durham join gangs

Interviewers asked participants "What are the top 3 factors that you have observed that influence young people to join a gang?" Participants were most likely to indicate that young people were influenced by music/social media (47.5%), family members involved in gangs (45.0%), and wanting to emulate the gang lifestyle (45.0%) (Object 3.35, p. 112). This data is different from what participants reported as their own primary reasons for joining a gang.

Object 3.35 Top three factors that participants have observed that influence young people to join a gang

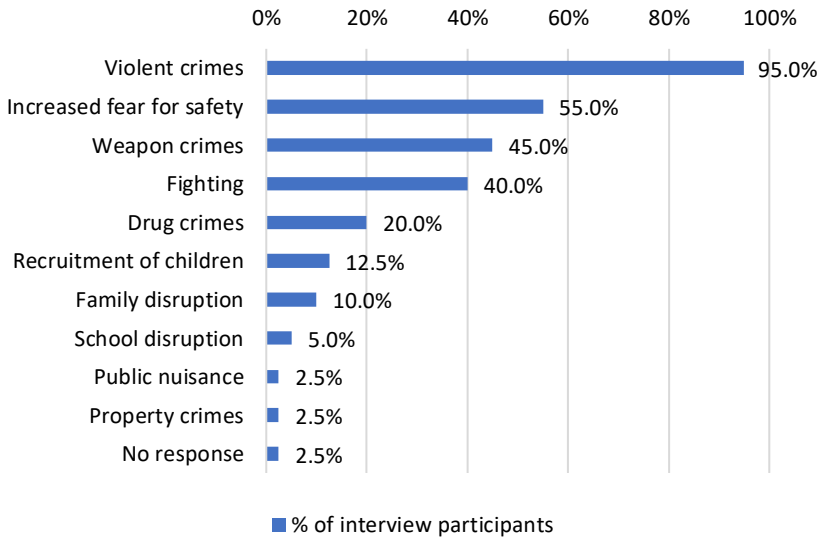


Issues caused by gangs in Durham

Interviewers asked participants what they believe are the top three problems caused by gangs in Durham. Most participants reported that the top problem caused by gangs in Durham is violent crime (95.0%), followed by increased fear for safety (55.0%), weapons crime (45.0%), and fighting (40.0%) (Object 3.36).

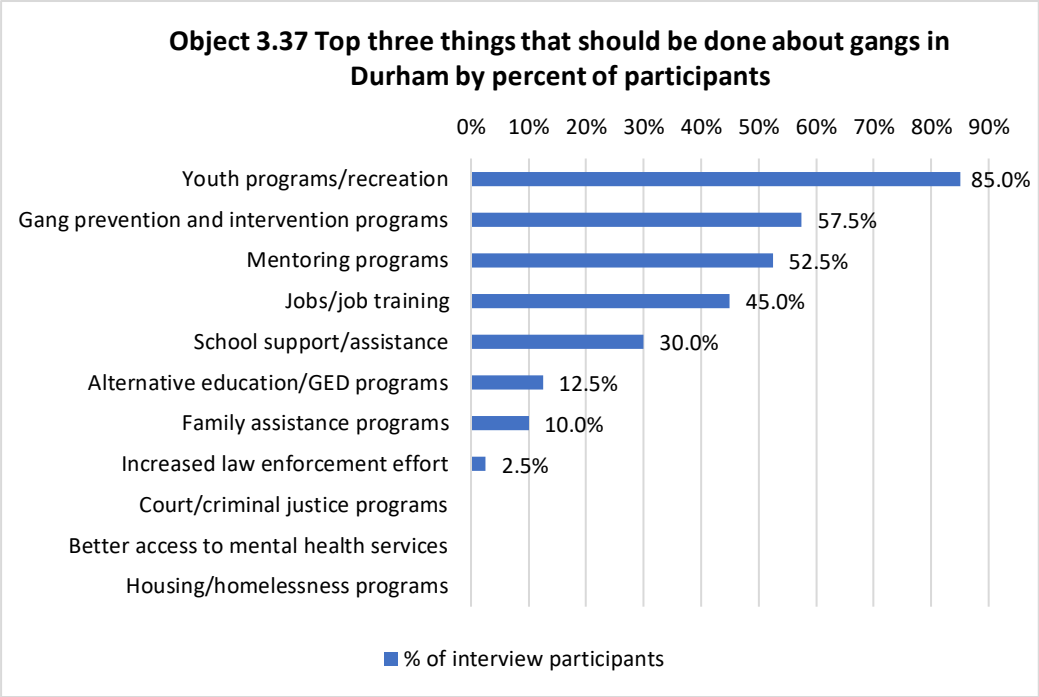
It is notable that gang-involved individuals mentioned violent crime, fear for safety and weapon crimes as top concerns, while also reporting that gangs are active in these crimes and have a high degree of access to weapons.

Object 3.36 Top three problems caused by gangs in Durham by percentage of interview participants



What should be done about gang issues in Durham?

Interviewers asked particiants to identify their top three responses to what should be done about gang issues in Durham. By far, the top response was youth programs and recreation (85.0%), followed by gang prevention and intervention programs (55.0%), mentoring programs (52.5%), and jobs/job training (45.0%) (Object 3.37).



Interview participants' prior efforts to change the activities of their own gang

Interviewers asked participants if they have any experience with trying to change the violent or criminal aspects of their gang and to describe any results of those actions. Thirty-three participants responded to this question. Most (87.9%) had not tried to change the violent or criminal aspects of their gang. Four individuals reported that they had tried to work on this issue with the gang. Their responses are as follows:

- "Yes, hard to get the younger generation to listen"
- "Yes, I was listened to"
- "Yes, violence brings police attention"

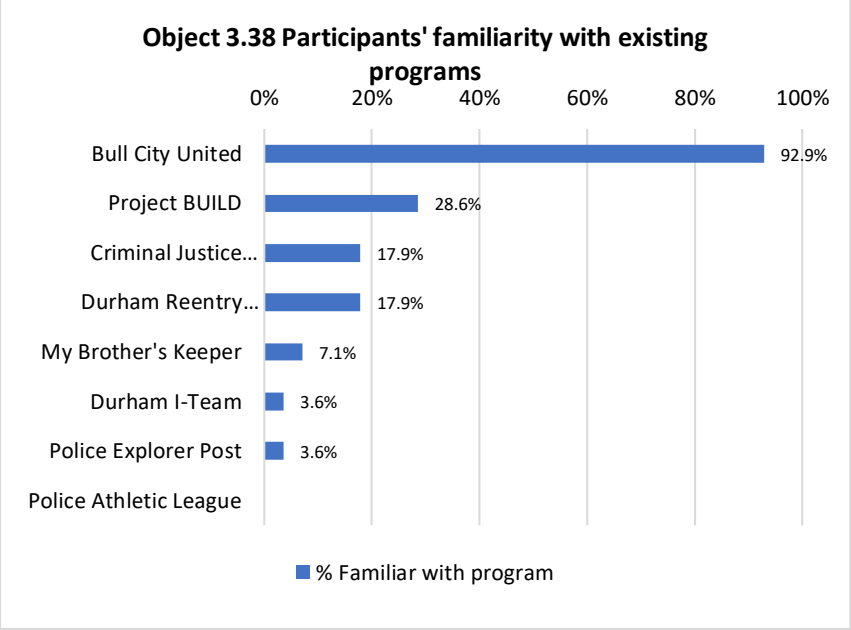
Interview participants' awareness and opinions of current programs

Interviewers asked participants if they have any experience with intervention programs that provide services to gang-involved individuals in Durham. Twenty-eight participants responded to this question.

Awareness of existing programs

Most participants are familiar with Bull City United, which makes sense because the interviews were conducted by individuals who work for Bull City United (Object 3.38).

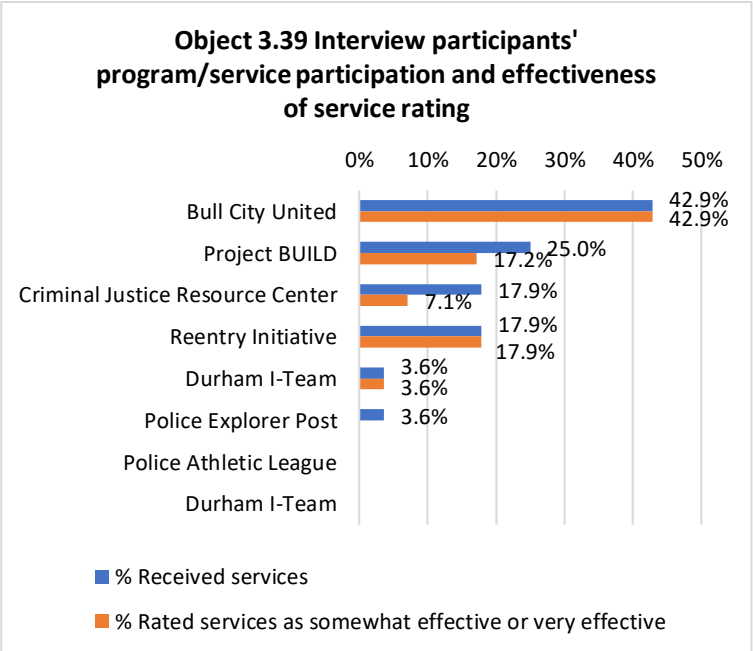
A third of participants (28.6%) were familiar with Project BUILD and about one in five (17.9%) are familiar with Criminal Justice Resource Center. No interview participants reported that they are familiar with the Police Athletic League. This data suggests that most programs that are directed towards the population of gang-involved individuals need to strengthen their outreach to individuals involved in gangs.



Effectiveness of current programs

Interviewers asked participants to identify programs they had received direct services from and to rate the effectiveness of these services. Less than half of all interview participants (42.9%) reported receiving services from Bull City United and all reported the services were somewhat/very effective (Object 3.39). One-fourth of interview participants received services from Project BUILD and 17.2% of interview participants rated services as somewhat/very effective.

Less than one in five (17.9%) reported receiving services from the Criminal



Justice Resource Center and 7.1% reported that these services were somewhat/very effective.

One in five (17.9%) received services from the Durham Reentry Initiative and all reported the services were somewhat/very effective. No interview participants reported that Police Explorer Post was somewhat/very effective.

What works?

Interviewers asked participants what aspects of the services they received helped them and thirteen participants provided a response to this question. These responses are mapped on Table 3.17 to identify the specific services identified and how the participant rated them.

Table 3.17 Participants' feedback about services and service rating of service (4= highest, 1=lowest)

How did these services help you?	Project BUILD	Bull City United	Criminal Justice Resource Center	Durham I-Team	Durham Reentry Initiative
Leaders to talk to		4			
Mentoring of sons	3	4			
Helped me get a job & mediate issues between my neighborhood & another		4	1		3
Mediated a conflict		4			
Homie talked with me and mentioned a change can happen		4			
Help reach to other people I know	4	4	4	4	4
Help me get through the court system		4			
Picking me up when I got in trouble at school	3				
Get a job		4			3
Squashed a beef		4			
Got some of my friends jobs	3		3		
Different mind set	2	4			
In every way	1		3		

Final thoughts

Last, interviewers asked participants if there was any additional feedback that they want to provide to Durham leaders. Only four participants had additional comments. Participants' feedback is shown below.

"Do more."
"Help the community."
"We need more for the youths."
"Help the people."

Section 4 – Police Incident Report Data

Important information in this section

- Homicides in Durham increased by 12.1% between 2018 and 2020. The percentage of homicides in which known suspects or victims are indexed as gang members decreased from 51.5% to 24.3%.
- Aggravated assaults in Durham increased by 36% from 2018-2020; the percentage of aggravated assaults in which known suspects or victims are indexed as gang members was 13.1% on average.
- Robberies in Durham decreased by 9.5% from 2018-2020; the percentage of robberies in which known suspects or victims are indexed as gang members was 8.1%.
- Aggravated assaults in Durham increased by 75.7% between April 2020 and May 2020.
- The average number of firearm-involved aggravated assaults and homicides per month in Durham increased by 46% between 2019 and 2020.
- Most firearm involved aggravated assaults and homicides in 2018-2020 occurred between 6 p.m. and midnight.
- During 2020, District 5's rate of homicides and aggravated assaults per 100k persons is 1.8 times higher than the citywide average. District 1's rate of homicides and aggravated assaults per 100k persons in 2020 is 41.8% higher than the citywide average.
- Over the 3-year period, most gang member involved homicides occurred in District 4 (38.9%).
- Firearms were used by 85.4% of known suspects in homicides during 2018-2020. Suspects who used a firearm to commit homicide were most likely to be Black, male, and aged 18 to 29.
- All known suspects in homicides between 2018-2020 who were indexed as gang members are Black. These suspects represent 52.4% of all known suspects in homicides during this period.
- Gang-involved known suspects in homicides during 2018-2020 were most likely to be between ages 18 and 28.
- 99% of gang-indexed known suspects in aggravated assaults during 2018-2020 are Black/African American, 1% are Hispanic, 82% are male, and 80.2% were between ages 18 and 34.
- 86.1% of known suspects in aggravated assaults during 2018-2020 that involved a firearm are Black and 84.5% are male. 65% are between the ages of 18 and 34. Known suspects in 18.6 % of aggravated assaults involving a firearm during 2018-2020 were between the ages of 11 and 18.
- Of 4,079 victims of aggravated assault in 2018-2020 (not all were physically injured), 71.8% were Black. 21.5% of victims in aggravated assaults or homicides during 2018-2020 were indexed as gang members.

Overview of analysis

This section of the report seeks to provide available information on gang activity and the role of gangs in violent crime in Durham. Analysis for this section was conducted using police incident report data from 2018-2020, provided by Jason Schiess, Director, Analytical Services Unit and Mary Roberts, Supervisor, Crime Analysis Unit, Durham Police Department.

Data sets utilized:

- Police incident report data for homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery for January 2018 – December 2020 (Schiess and Roberts, 2021)
- Victim and known suspect data for January 2018 – December 2020 (Schiess and Roberts, 2021)

Offense categories selected for this analysis include:

- Homicide
- Aggravated Assault
- Robbery

These crime categories were chosen based on guidance from *OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem* (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), 2009).

Rationale for selecting these offense categories

Homicide and aggravated assault are frequently very similar in motive and method. A person who shoots or stabs another person is often trying to seriously injure or kill the victim. The primary difference between these charges is in the severity of injuries caused and the weapon(s) used. If the victim is fatally injured, the offense is typically charged as a murder or homicide. If the victim is seriously injured, but not killed, the offense is often charged as an aggravated assault, depending on the severity of injuries and aggravating factors in the commission of the offense.

Whether victims of these violent incidents are killed or injured is affected by many factors beyond intent, including access to medical care, the location on the body where injuries are sustained, and the type of force/weapon used. However these crimes spring from similar motives and are committed in similar ways. There are many more aggravated assaults annually in most communities than there are homicides, so analysis of aggravated assaults allows for drawing conclusions about violent crime in a community with a larger and more consistent data set.

These violent person incidents are also much more likely to be classified in police information management systems as gang-involved or gang-related incidents than property or drug crimes. There is typically a victim or witness statement attached to the initial report, as well, which provides evidence that can be used by law enforcement officers to classify an incident as gang-related or involved. Robbery is another violent person offense in in which physical force or a weapon may be used to obtain another person's money or property. In some cases, an individual may seek to commit a robbery, cause serious physical harm or death in the commission of that crime, and be charged with both robbery and aggravated assault or homicide depending on the severity of injuries.

This report also examines the demographics of suspects and victims in these violent crimes. This analysis will assist policymakers to identify populations that should be prioritized for intervention and suppression activities to reduce gang member involved violence.

Overall Violent Crime in Durham

Overall violent crime by category is examined in this section to identify a baseline level of violence in Durham over the past 3 years (2018-2020). Where available, crimes are analyzed by gang-related versus non-gang-related characteristics. However, it should be noted that--per Durham Police Department--only a small percentage of crimes in many categories are flagged as gang-involved.

Durham Police Department uses a two-step process to index incidents as gang member involved. According to Jason Schiess, "each incident, every listed victim and known suspect is assessed for any alerts related to gang validation. In summary, the Durham Police Department has used a *member-based* criteria for measuring gang crime, rather than *motive-based*. Rather than assessing motive, which is inconsistent and lacks a clear definition, a crime incident is classified as gang related if one or more victims and/or suspects are validated gang members at the time the data is generated. This has been our adopted methodology for many years" (Schiess, 2021).

This methodology is in line with *The OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem*, which recommends using a member-based rather than motive-based strategy for indexing crimes for the purpose of a conducting a comprehensive gang assessment (OJJDP, 2009, p. 22). One limitation of this methodology is that it only captures incidents in which the known suspect has been indexed in the police gang intelligence system as a gang member. One caveat regarding this report is that Durham Police Department did not provide any gang intelligence data for this report, so this data could not be reviewed or analyzed.

A prior community gang assessment was conducted in 2013-14. Data on violent crime in 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 was collected for that report. That data is reported below in comparison with the numbers of violent crime that occurred during 2018-2020.

Table 4.1 Comparison of violent crime by category for 2009-12 and 2018-20

Offense	2009	2010	2011	2012		2018	2019	2020	Average	Change
Homicide	21	23	27	21	23	33	36	37	35.3	+53.5%
Aggravated assault	801	877	919	1005	900.5	795	885	1043	907.7	+0.8%
Robbery	716	877	701	621	728.8	718	612	612	647.3	-11.2%

While crimes overall remained consistent, between the two time periods, these two time periods also experienced rapid population growth. The population in the city of Durham grew by 24.2%, from 228,386 in 2010 to 283,506 in 2019. So, while the city of Durham added an estimated 55,000 residents, the number of overall violent crime in these three categories remained similar.

To determine if crime per capita has changed, the average number of incidents in each category in the earlier period were averaged and measured against the city of Durham's population in 2010 and 2019. When examined per capita, while homicides increased by 23.4%, the rate of aggravated assaults during this period declined by 18.8% and the rate of robbery declined by 28.5%. Overall, crimes in the three

categories, per capita, declined by 22.5% per 100,000 persons (Table 4.2) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 and 2021, Schiess and Roberts, 2021, Stuit, 2014).

Table 4.2 Violent crimes per capita in the selected categories between 2009-12 and 2018-20

Crime category	2009-2012 rate per 100k persons1	2018-2020 rate per 100k persons	Percent change
Homicide	10.7	12.5	+23.4%
Aggravated assault	394.3	320.2	-18.8%
Robbery	319.1	228.3	-28.5%
Total	723.4	560.9	-22.5%

Gang involvement in serious/violent crimes

Between 2018 and 2020, homicides in Durham increased slightly (+12.1%) from 33 in 2018 to 37 in 2020 (Table 4.3). Aggravated assaults increased by 31.2%, from 795 to 1043 from 2018-2020 (Table 4.4). Robberies declined by 14.8% between 2018 and 2020, from 718 to 612 (Table 4.5, p. 120). On average, 35.0% of homicides, 13.1% of aggravated assaults and 8.1% of robberies were classified by Durham Police Department as gang member involved between 2018 and 2020 (Table 4.3, Table 4.4, and Table 4.5)

Table 4.3 Homicides by gang member involvement, 2018-2020

	Gang Member Involved		Not Gang Member Involved		Total
Year	#	%	#	%	#
2018	17	51.5%	16	48.5%	33
2019	10	29.4%	24	70.6%	34
2020	9	24.3%	28	75.7%	37
Total	**36**	**35.0%**	**67**	**65.0%**	**103**

The percentage of homicides in which the victim or suspect was indexed as a gang member declined from 2018-2020, from 51.5% in 2018 to 24.3% in 2020 (Table 4.3).

Table 4.4 Aggravated assaults by gang involvement, 2018-2020

Year	Gang Member Involved		Not Gang Member Involved		Total
Year	#	%	#	%	#
2018	126	15.8%	669	84.2%	795
2019	97	11.0%	788	89.0%	885
2020	133	12.8%	910	87.2%	1043
Total	**356**	**13.1%**	**2367**	**86.9%**	**2723**

While the number of aggravated assaults between 2018 and 2020 increased substantially (31.2%), the percentage of aggravated assaults in which a suspect or victim was indexed as a gang member declined slightly from 15.8% in 2018 to 12.8% in 2020 (Table 4.4). The number of aggravated assaults in which a suspect or victim was indexed as a gang member increased slightly from 2018-2020 but did not keep pace with the rate of increase in all aggravated assaults.

The number of robberies in Durham decreased between 2018 and 2020 (-14.7%) and the percentage of robberies in which a suspect or victim was indexed as a gang member also decreased from 10.9% in 2018 to 5.4% in 2020 (Table 4.5). It is unclear why the level gang member involvement declined in all three crime categories. Durham Police Department did not identify any changes in report requirements or methodologies that would account for this change.

Table 4.5 Robberies by gang member involvement, 2018-2020

	Gang Member Involved		Not Gang Member Involved		Total
Year	#	%	#	%	#
2018	78	10.9%	640	89.1%	718
2019	46	7.5%	566	92.5%	612
2020	33	5.4%	579	94.6%	612
Total	**157**	**8.1%**	**1785**	**91.9%**	**1942**

How violent crime in Durham compares with violent crime in other large NC cities

To understand how violent crime in Durham compares to other cities in North Carolina, data was collected from the 2019 Crime in the United States report, compiled annually by the Federal Bureau of Investigation based on reporting of local law enforcement agencies in the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system. UCR data for the five largest cities in North Carolina, including Charlotte, Raleigh, Greensboro, Durham, and Fayetteville was accessed and analyzed by violent crimes per 100,000 people[27] to set a standard for comparison across cities with different population sizes (Table 4.6)

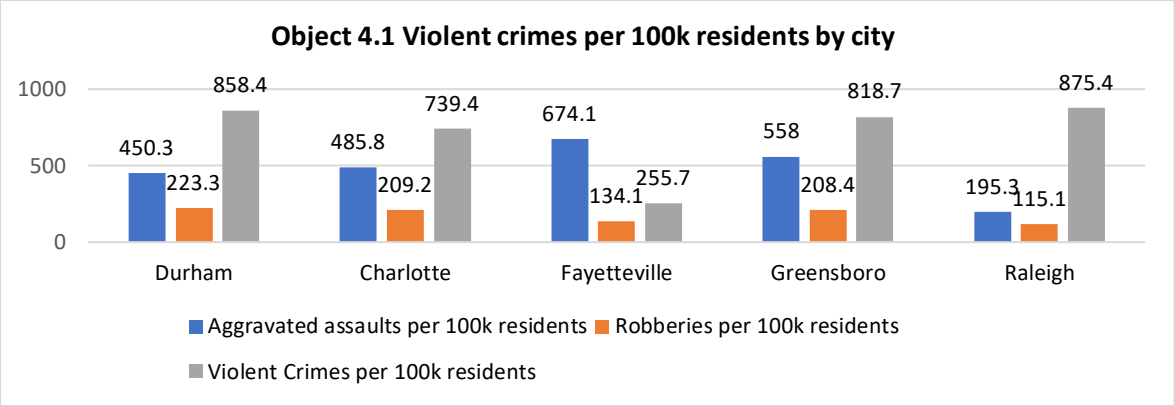
Table 4.6 Incidents per 100,000 people by city

	Durham		Charlotte		Raleigh		Greensboro		Fayetteville	
Population	280,282	n/a	944,260	n/a	477,828	n/a	298,025	n/a	209,614	n/a
Crime categories	Total Incidents	Rate	Total Incidents	Rate	Total Incidents	Rate	Total Incidents	Rate	Total Incidents	Rate
Violent crime[1]	2406	858.4	6982	739.4	1222	255.7	2440	818.7	1835	875.4
Homicide	37	13.2	103	10.9	29	6.1	43	14.4	24	11.4
Robbery	626	223.3	1975	209.2	550	115.1	621	208.4	281	134.1
Aggravated Assault	1262	450.3	4587	485.8	933	195.3	1663	558.0	1413	674.1

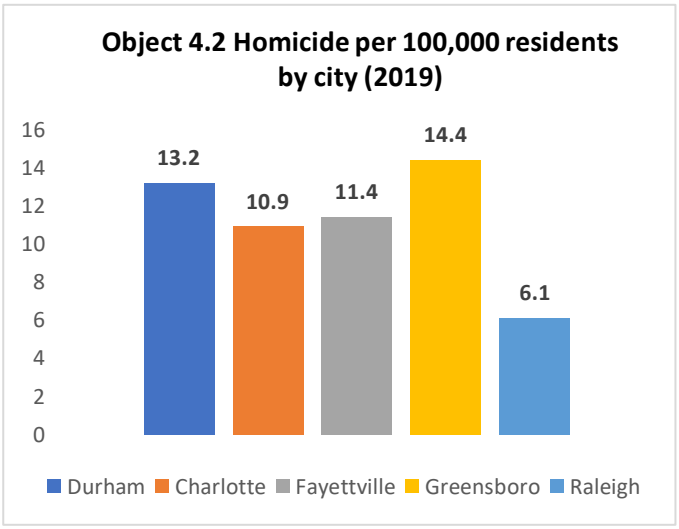
Reported UCR crimes for Raleigh appeared to be missing a substantial number of incidents, so 2019 crime data for Raleigh was also collected from a local report compiled by the City of Raleigh (City of Raleigh, 2021). Durham is the fourth largest city in North Carolina but has the second highest violent crime rate among large cities with a population over 200,000, at 858.4 violent crimes per 100,000 people, behind Fayetteville, which reported a violent crime rate of 875.4 during 2019 (Object 4.1) (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2021; City of Raleigh, 2021).

Similarly, Durham has the second highest homicide rate among the five cities, at 13.2 during 2019, behind Greensboro with a rate of 14.4 homicides per 100,000 people (Object 4.2). Durham's rate of robberies per 100,000 people (223.3) is the highest of the five cities examined. However, Durham's rate of aggravated assaults is the 4th lowest among the large cities examined and lags significantly behind Fayetteville and Greensboro (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2020, Raleigh Police Department, 2021).

[27] Violent crime categories captured in this data include homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, and rape.



This data suggests that while the annual rate of violent crime in Durham has stayed high during the past three years, the violent crime rate in Durham is comparable to other large cities in North Carolina, with only robbery and homicide as outliers. One inconsistency in this data is that Durham's rate of homicides is the second highest in the state, while Durham's rate of aggravated assaults is the second lowest (Object 4.2). This difference between the crime categories of aggravated assault and homicide may be affected by many factors, including access to emergency medical care.

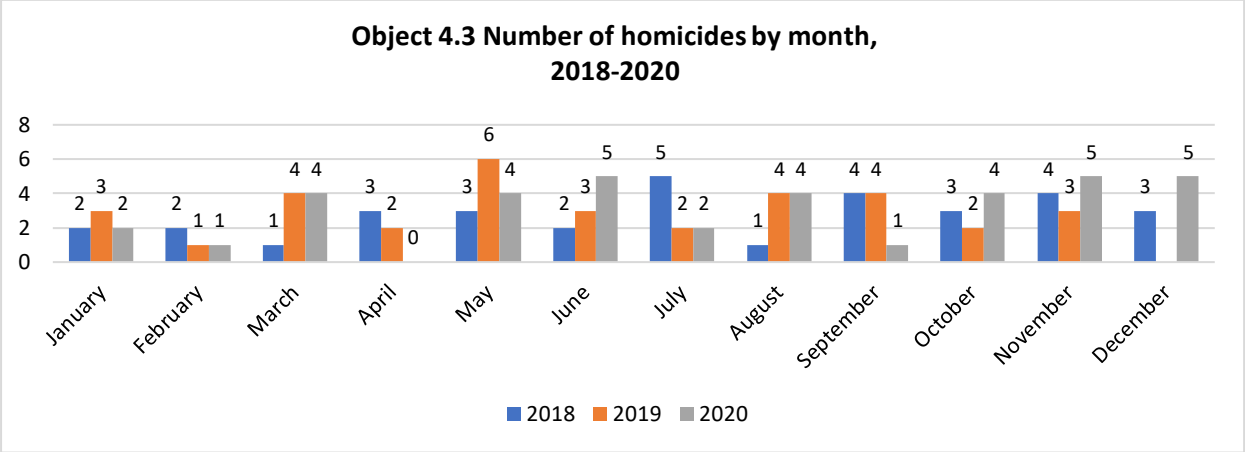


When do violent crimes occur?

This analysis is useful for identifying when violence is most likely to occur in Durham, by type of violence, which can be used to guide efforts to reduce violent incidents. Some evidence-based models, including the Cure Violence model currently implemented in Durham, recommend using this type of analysis to identify when violence interrupters and other gang intervention personnel should be working in the community. As shown in the data below, this data tends to change over time, so it is important to conduct this type of analysis regularly (at minimum every 12 months). Police incident report data from Durham Police Department was analyzed by month, day of the week, and time of day for 2018-2020 to identify trends.

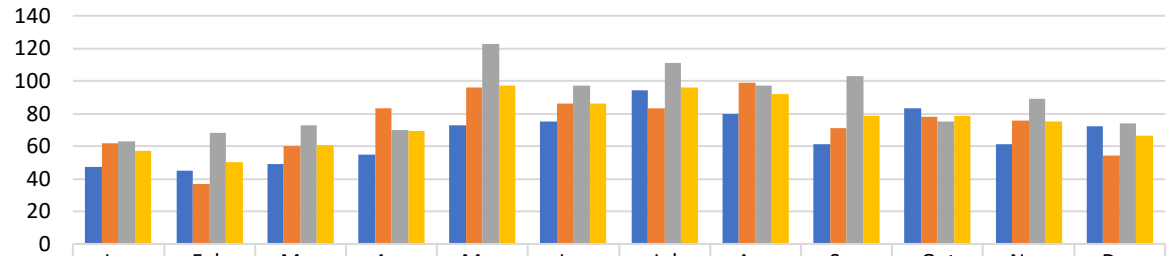
Violent crimes by month 2018-2020 and type of offense

The largest number of homicides during the three-year period occurred during May 2019 with a secondary spike during July 2018, and June, November and December 2020 (Object 4.3). However, this analysis is affected by the relatively low number of homicides by month (2.9 on average between 2018-2020). In 2020, the largest number of homicides occurred during June, November, and December.



Aggravated assaults during this period were more common during warmer months (Object 4.4, p. 123). The highest point for 2018 was during July, while the highest point in 2019 was in August and May. During 2020, aggravated assaults peaked during May and July, with aggravated assaults in September also running higher than any prior year. Aggravated assaults were least likely to occur during January/February across all three years. The highest point of all three years was reached during May of 2020, shortly after the COVI D-19 shutdown.

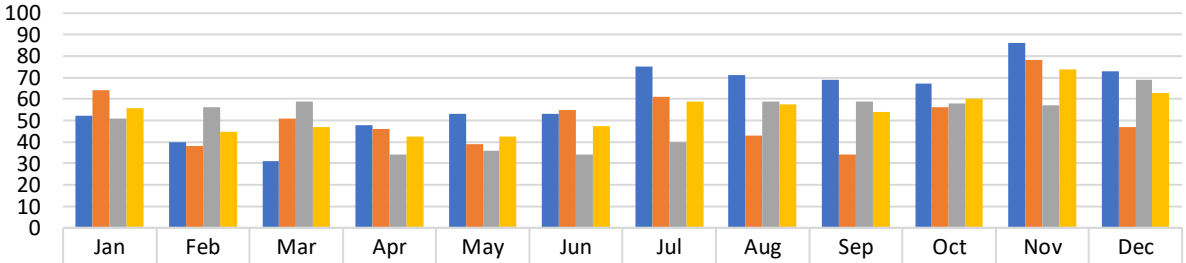
Object 4.4 Number of aggravated assaults in Durham by month, 2018-2020



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2018	47	45	49	55	73	75	94	80	61	83	61	72
2019	62	37	60	83	96	86	83	99	71	78	76	54
2020	63	68	73	70	123	97	111	97	103	75	89	74
3 year average	57.3	50.0	60.7	69.3	97.3	86.0	96.0	92.0	78.3	78.7	75.3	66.7

In 2018 and 2019, the largest number of robberies occurred during November (Object 4.5). In 2020, the largest number of robberies occurred during December. One item of note: while aggravated assaults and homicides increased from 2019 to 2020, robberies decreased by 14.8% during this same time period.

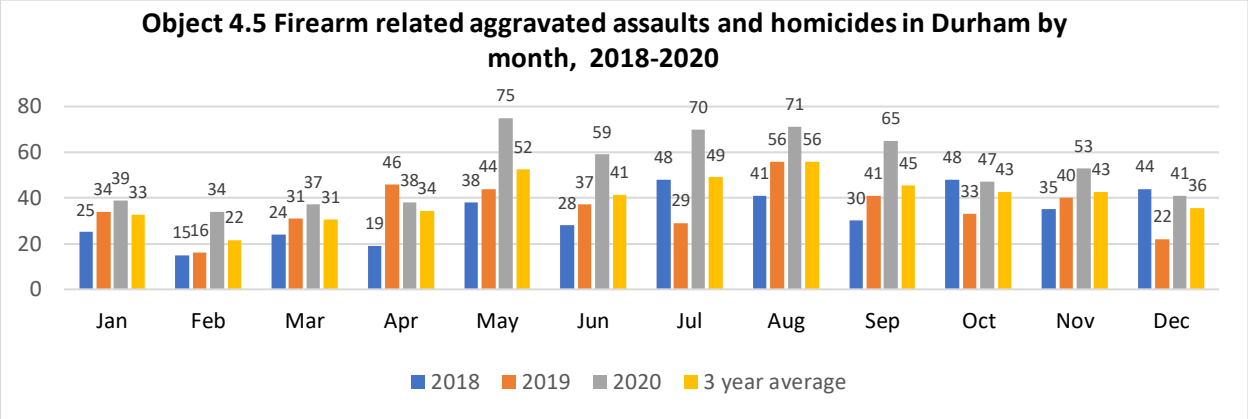
Object 4.5 Number of robberies in Durham by month, 2018-2020



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2018	52	40	31	48	53	53	75	71	69	67	86	73
2019	64	38	51	46	39	55	61	43	34	56	78	47
2020	51	56	59	34	36	34	40	59	59	58	57	69
3 year average	55.7	44.7	47.0	42.7	42.7	47.3	58.7	57.7	54.0	60.3	73.7	63.0

Homicides and aggravated assaults involving a firearm increased dramatically in May 2020. Homicides and aggravated assaults involving a firearm (i.e. shootings and murders) were and analyzed by month. During 2018, the average number of firearm-related aggravated assaults and homicides per month was 32.9; during 2019, the average per month was 35.8. The average number of shootings/murders per month increased drastically in 2020, to 52.4 shootings per month. The largest increase during all three years occurred from April 2020 to May 2020, when shootings/murders increased by 97% (Object 4.5)

Shootings/murders remained at their highest point in the three year period, until December, 2020, when they again decreased. These figures might be explained by factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic



such as unemployment and school closures, mental health factors connected to the COIVD shutdowns, lack of access to resources as organizations shut down physical locations, or civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic continued through the entirety of 2020, so does not provide an explanation for the decline in shootings/murders in October, 2020. Another possible explanation is the shutdown of youth services and programs in the end of March 2020, including Project BUILD and Bull City United, Durham County's gang/violence intervention programs. Project BUILD and Bull City United personnel were redirected from gang/violence responsibilities to focus on pandemic-related activities, including contact tracing. These programs resumed normal operations in the beginning of October, 2020.

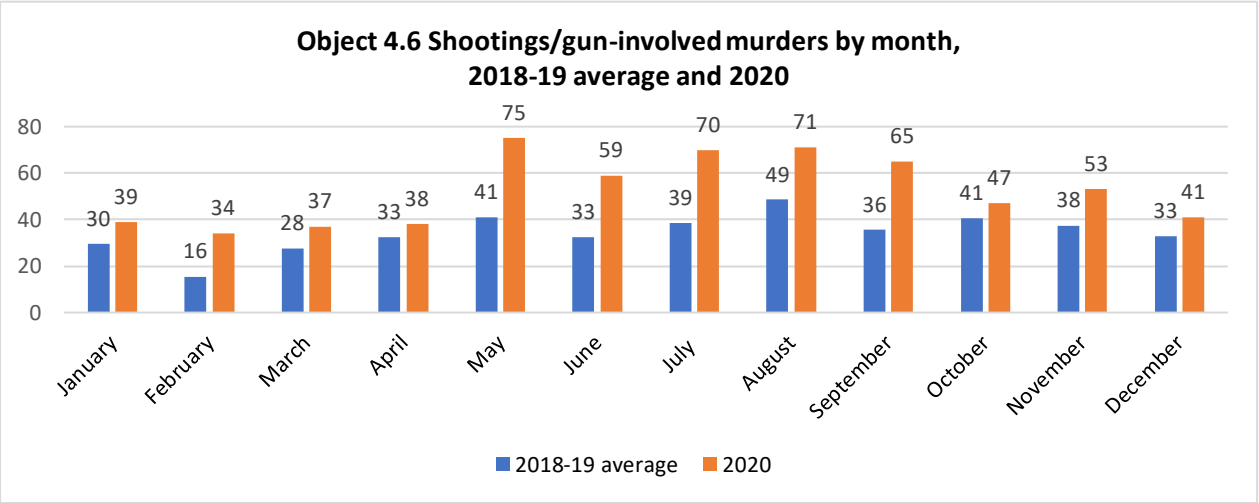
During the months of 2020 that these programs were non-operational, the average number of shootings per month was 59.3 During the months of 2020 that these programs were operational, the average number of shootings per month was 42.8 (Jan-March and Oct-Dec).

Table 4.7 Average monthly shootings/firearm murders by month during 2020

Time period	Jan – March	April – Sept	Oct – Dec
Average monthly shootings	36.7	59.3	47
Total shootings	**110**	**378**	**141**

During the treated months (January-March and October-December), there were 251 shootings/gun-involved murders. During the untreated months, there were 378 shootings/gun-involved murders, an increase of 50.6%. It is possible that other factors, including factors related to the COVID pandemic and civil unrest connected to the murder of George Floyd may have contributed to this change and further study is required before any firm conclusions can be reached.

Shootings during the non-operational months were also significantly higher than the average number of shootings during those months in 2018-2019 (Object 4.6). This graphic shows quite visibly how much shootings and murders increased during May 2020 compared to the average of May 2018 and 2019.


Object 4.6 Shootings/gun-involved murders by month, 2018-19 average and 2020
80
60
40
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16
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28
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33
38
41
75
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33
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January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December
2018-19 average
2020

Violent crimes by day of week and type of offense during 2018-2020

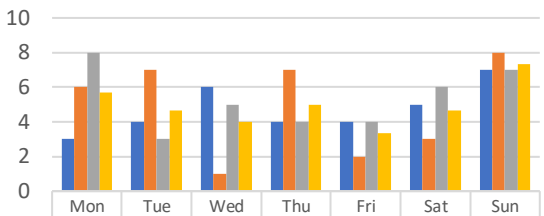
Homicides happened on every day of the week from 2018-2020 but were highest on Sundays on average (Object 4.7). However, during 2020, homicides were most common on Mondays. The relatively low number of homicides annually affects this analysis.

Aggravated assaults occurred with some regularity on every day of the week in Durham but on average were highest on Sunday and Monday (Object 4.8). During 2020, aggravated assaults were highest on Monday and Friday.

Firearm-involved homicides and aggravated assaults were segregated from the data to identify any trends (Object 4.10). Shootings/firearm-involved murders were most likely to occur on Monday and Friday during 2020, and on Sunday/Monday during 2019. During 2018, these shootings/ murders were most common on Tuesday and Thursday.

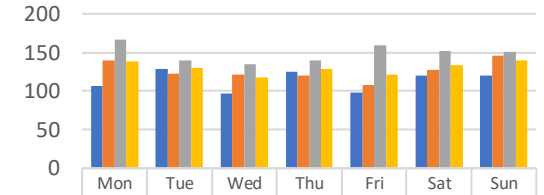
Robberies, in contrast, were most common on Saturday and Sunday on average (Object 4.10). During 2020, they were most common on Monday and Friday.

Object 4.7 Homicides by day of week, 2018-2020



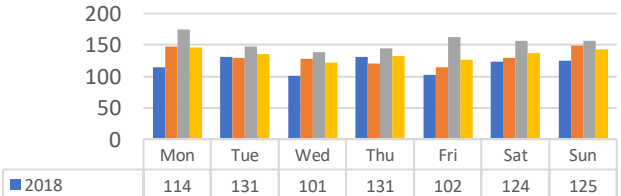
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
2018	3	4	6	4	4	5	7
2019	6	7	1	7	2	3	8
2020	8	3	5	4	4	6	7
3 Year average	6	5	4	5	3	5	7

Object 4.8 Aggravated assaults by day of week, 2018-2020



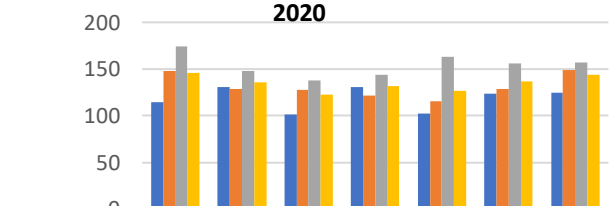
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
2018	107	128	97	125	98	120	120
2019	140	123	121	120	108	127	146
2020	167	140	135	139	159	152	151
3 Year average	138	130	118	128	122	133	139

Object 4.9 Firearm-involved aggravated assaults and homicides by day of week, 2018-2020



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
2018	114	131	101	131	102	124	125
2019	148	129	128	121	115	129	149
2020	174	148	138	144	163	156	157
3 Year average	145	136	122	132	127	136	144

Object 4.10 Robberies by day of week, 2018-2020



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
2018	114	131	101	131	102	124	125
2019	148	129	128	121	115	129	149
2020	174	148	138	144	163	156	157
3 Year average	145	136	122	132	127	136	144

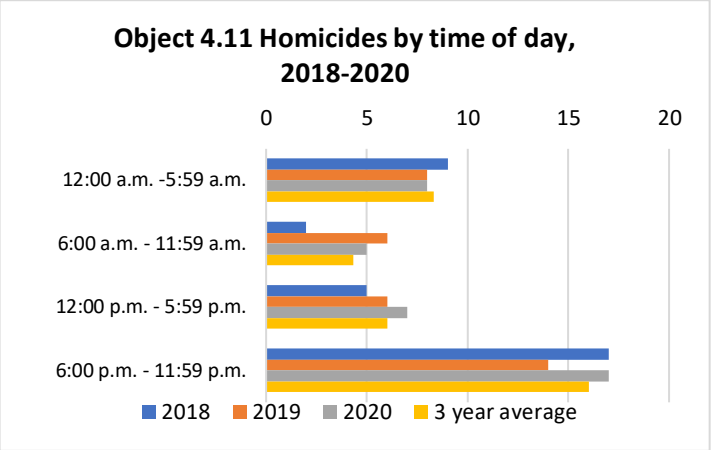
Violent incidents by time of day and type of offense during 2018-2020

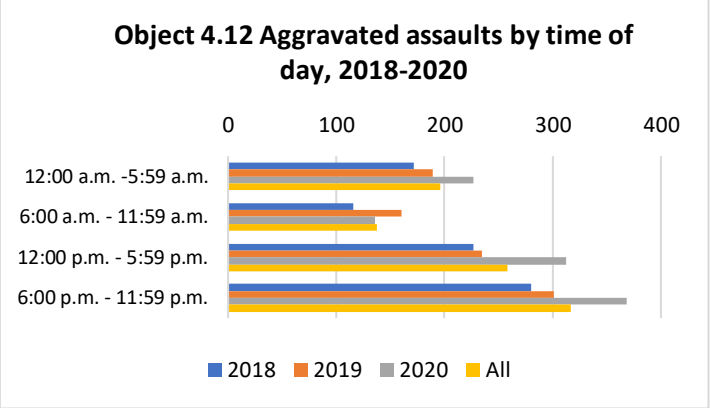
Between 2018 and 2020, most homicides occurred primarily between 6 p.m. and midnight, with the second most common time between midnight and 6 a.m. (Object 4.11)

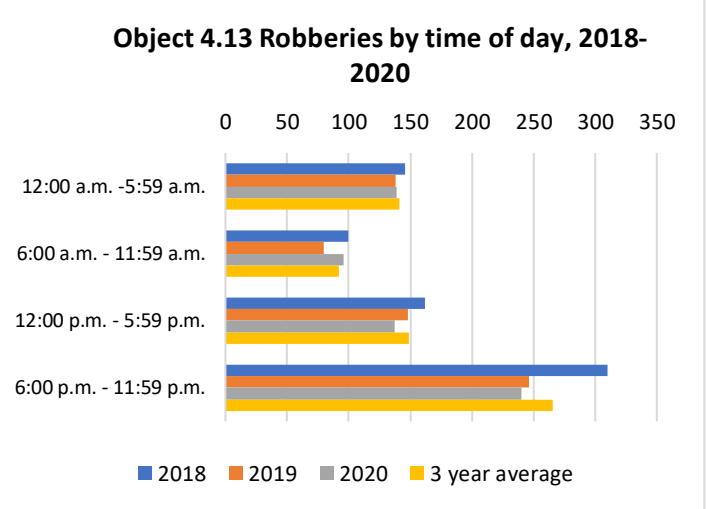
Most aggravated assaults occurred between 6:00 p.m. and 11:59 p.m., with a significant number also occurring between 12:00 p.m. and 5:59 p.m. and a smaller number between 12:00 a.m. and 5:59 a.m. (Object 4.12).

Homicide and aggravated assaults are very similar crimes that vary only in the level of injury sustained by the victim of the crime. It is unclear why there is such significant variance between the times when homicides and aggravated assaults occurred during all three years, particularly during 2020.

Robberies between 2018 and 2020 occurred most often between 6 p.m. and 11:59 p.m., with large numbers also occurring between 12 p.m. and 5:59 p.m. and 12:00 a.m. and 5:59 a.m. (Object 4.13)





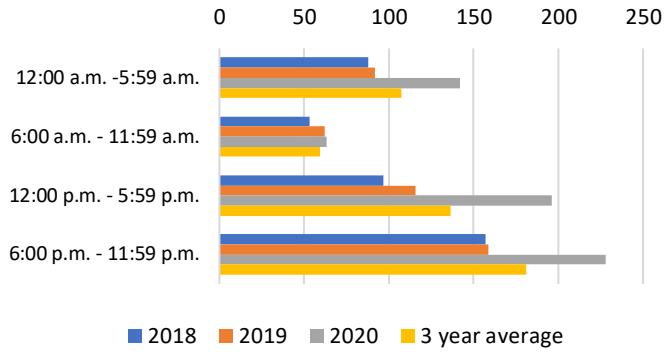


Firearm-involved aggravated assaults and homicides occurred most often between 6 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. in all three years (Object 4.14, p. 128). These crimes occurred least frequently between 6 a.m. and 11:59

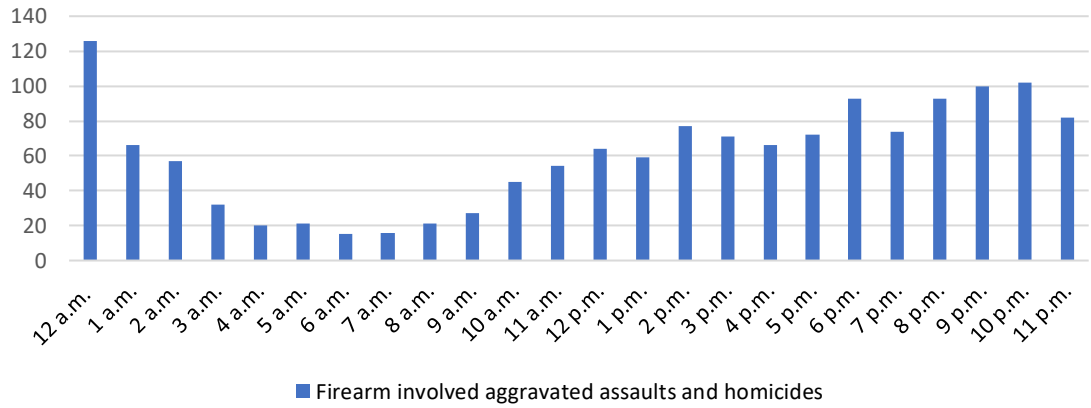
a.m. This chart also shows clearly the much larger number of aggravated assaults and murders/nonnegligent manslaughters occurring during 2020 in comparison to 2018 and 2019.

The three-year average of gun-involved shootings and homicides were analyzed by hour of day (Object 4.15). This day of week and time of day analysis suggests that gun violence intervention activities should potentially be scheduled Thursday – Monday from 6 p.m. – 1 a.m. to attain maximum effectiveness.

Object 4.14 Firearm involved aggravated assaults and homicides by time of day, 2018-2020



Object 4.15 Firearm-involved aggravated assaults and homicides by hour of day between 2018 and 2020 (3 year average)



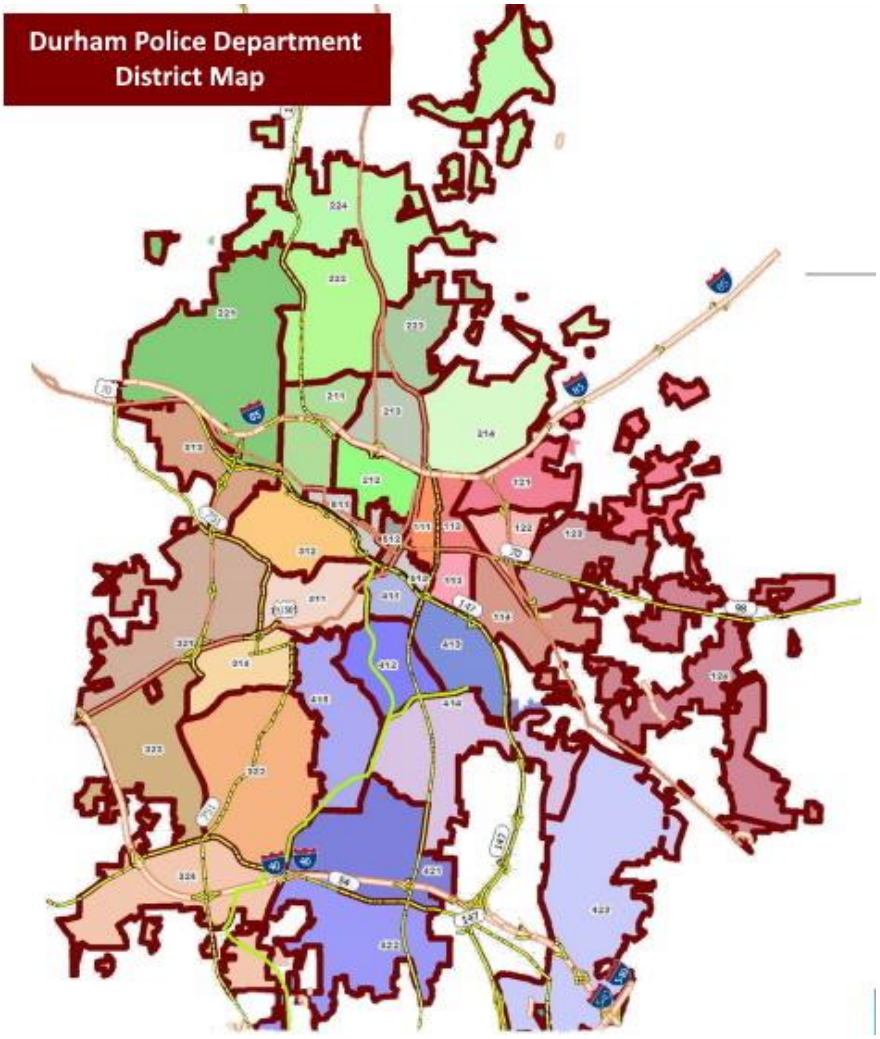
Where do violent crimes occur?

Crimes were analyzed by districts and are reported in this section by year and location. Durham Police Department has five geographic regions:

District 1: East Durham
District 2: North Durham
District 3: West Durham
District 4: South Durham
District 5: Central business district

Between 2018 and 2020, every district in Durham experienced homicides, aggravated assaults, and robberies. However, these incidents were not distributed evenly across districts. Violent person incidents (aggravated assaults and homicides) and robberies were examined by police district and the rate of incidents per 100k persons was calculated (Table 4.8).

Object 4.16 Durham Police Department District Map



Violent crimes by type and police district during 2018-2020

Districts 1 and 4 experienced significantly higher rates of violent person incidents per 100k persons during 2020. The rate of robberies per 100k persons was highest in District 5 and District 4.

Table 4.8 2020 rate of violent person incidents and robberies by police district

	2020 Population	# Violent Person Incidents	Rate per 100k persons	# Robberies	Rate per 100k persons
District 1	51,647	279	540.2	116	224.6
District 2	67,244	274	407.5	164	243.9
District 3	79,671	133	166.9	120	150.6
District 4	76,257	335	439.3	179	234.7
District 5	8,687	59	679.2	33	379.9
City of Durham	283,506	1080	380.9	612	215.9

Violent incidents by police district and gang member involvement during 2018-2020

During the 3-year period, over one-third of murders (33.7%) and 38.9% of gang-involved murders occurred in District 4 (Table 4.9). Between 2019 and 2020, District 1 experienced a large increase in homicides (+150.0%). District 3 (West Durham) experienced a large increase in homicides between 2018 and 2019 (+100%) and then a very sharp decline in 2020 (-87.5%).

Table 4.9 Homicides by police district and gang involvement, 2018-2020

	2018				2019				2020				Total			
	Gang-involved		All		Gang-involved		All		Gang-involved		All		Gang-involved		All	
District	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
District 1	5	29.4%	7	21.2%	1	10.0%	6	17.6%	3	33.3%	15	40.5%	9	25.0%	28	26.9%
District 2	4	23.5%	8	24.2%	1	10.0%	6	17.6%	3	33.3%	7	18.9%	8	22.2%	21	20.2%
District 3	2	11.8%	4	12.1%	1	10.0%	8	23.5%	0	0.0%	1	2.7%	3	8.3%	13	12.5%
District 4	5	29.4%	12	36.4%	6	60.0%	11	32.4%	3	33.3%	12	32.4%	14	38.9%	35	33.7%
District 5	1	5.9%	2	6.1%	1	10.0%	3	8.8%	0	0.0%	2	5.4%	2	5.6%	7	6.7%
Total	**17**	**100.0%**	**33**	**100.0%**	**10**	**100.0%**	**34**	**100.0%**	**9**	**100.0%**	**37**	**100.0%**	**36**	**100.0%**	**104**	**100.0%**

Aggravated assaults for 2018-2020 were analyzed by district and level of gang-involvement (Table 4.10). Overall, only 13.1% of aggravated assaults were classified as gang member involved. However, there were wide disparities in the districts where gang-involved aggravated assaults occurred. From 2018-2020, 28.6% of aggravated assaults occurred in District 4 and 27.1% occurred in District 1. Of these, 29.5% of aggravated assaults in District 4 and 29.2% of aggravated assaults in District 1 involved suspects or victims indexed as gang members. In contrast, only 4.8% of aggravated assaults involving suspects or victims indexed as gang members occurred in District 5 (Central Business District).

Table 4.10 Aggravated assaults by police district and gang member involvement

	2018				2019				2020				Total			
	Gang member involved		All		Gang member involved		All		Gang member involved		All		Gang member involved		All	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
District 1	42	33.3%	215	27.0%	23	23.7%	259	29.3%	39	29.3%	264	25.3%	104	29.2%	738	27.1%
District 2	25	19.8%	171	21.5%	25	25.8%	206	23.3%	31	23.3%	267	25.6%	81	22.8%	644	23.7%
District 3	18	14.3%	139	17.5%	15	15.5%	126	14.2%	16	12.0%	132	12.7%	49	13.8%	397	14.6%
District 4	35	27.8%	216	27.2%	28	28.9%	240	27.1%	42	31.6%	323	31.0%	105	29.5%	779	28.6%
District 5	6	4.8%	54	6.8%	6	6.2%	54	6.1%	5	3.8%	57	5.5%	17	4.8%	165	6.1%
Total	**126**	**100.0%**	**795**	**100.0%**	**97**	**100.0%**	**885**	**100.0%**	**133**	**100.0%**	**1043**	**100.0%**	**356**	**100.0%**	**2723**	**100.0%**

Maps of violent incidents by gang member involvement and firearm use

A combination of aggravated assaults and homicides were mapped by involvement of suspects or victims indexed as gang members (Object 4.17, p. 131). Between 2018 and 2020, Durham County experienced aggravated assaults and homicides in all areas of the county, including in rural areas.

Many aggravated assaults and homicides involving suspects or victims indexed as gang members occurred in urban neighborhoods, but all police districts experienced incidents involving suspects or victims indexed as gang members. To further understand this issue in the context of the low percentages of aggravated assaults attributed to gang members, proportionally to homicides, firearm-involved person incidents were also examined.

Object 4.17 Aggravated assaults and homicides from 2018 – 2020 with gang member involvement

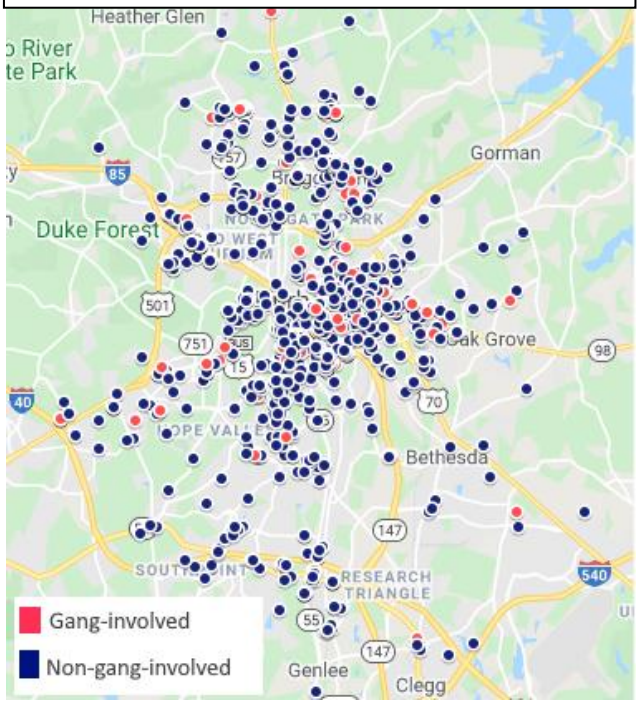
Analysis conducted for this report indicates that aggravated assaults involving a suspect or victim indexed as a gang member were much more likely to involve a firearm: 71.9% involved a firearm, compared to only 46.9% of non-gang involved assaults (Table 4.10). Firearm usage by known suspects in aggravated assaults classified as gang-involved ranged from a low of 61.9% in 2019 to a high of 78.2% in 2020. Firearm usage by known suspects in crimes that were not classified as gang-involved also increased from 41.3% in 2018 to 54.2% in 2020.

Table 4.11 Aggravated assaults by involvement of known gang member and firearm use

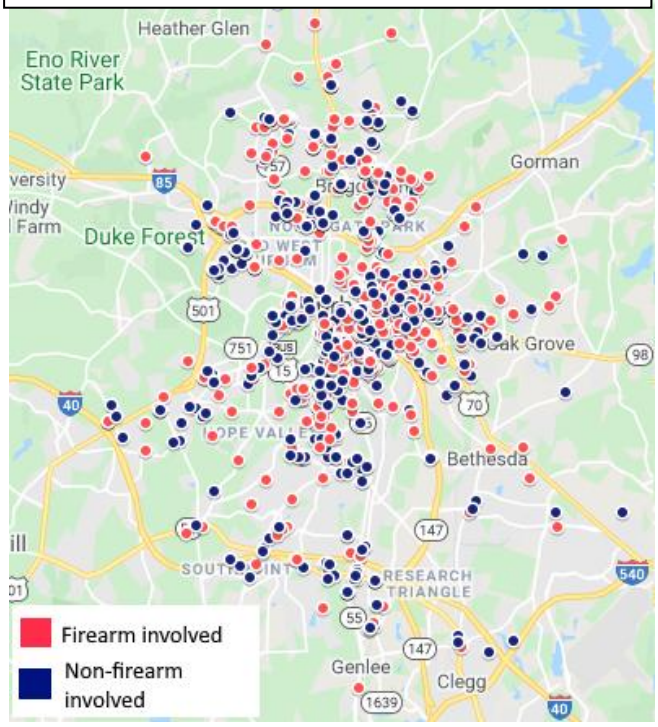
	2018		2019		2020		Total	
Known gang member/firearm involved	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No gang/firearm	276	41.3%	340	43.1%	493	54.2%	1109	46.9%
No gang/No firearm	393	58.7%	448	56.9%	417	45.8%	1258	53.1%
All non-gang-involved	669	100.0%	788	100.0%	910	100.0%	2367	100.0%
Gang/firearm	92	73.0%	60	61.9%	104	78.2%	256	71.9%
Gang/no firearm	34	27.0%	37	38.1%	29	21.8%	100	28.1%
All gang-involved	126	100.0%	97	100.0%	133	100.0%	356	100.0%

Gang member involved aggravated assaults represent a significantly lower percentage of aggravated assaults overall (13.1%) compared to homicides classified as gang member involved (35.0%). Gang member involved aggravated assaults were mapped in Object 4.18 and aggravated assaults involving use of a firearm are mapped on Object 4.19. Each of the firearm-involved incidents is a shooting of either a person or an occupied dwelling or vehicle.

Object 4.18 2020 Aggravated assault by gang involvement 2018-2020



Object 4.19 2020 Aggravated assault by firearm involvement 2018-2020



It should not be assumed that all shooting incidents are gang-involved, but this map of firearm-involved aggravated assaults (Object 4.19, p. 132) indicates that Durham has a substantial gun violence issue spread throughout the county.

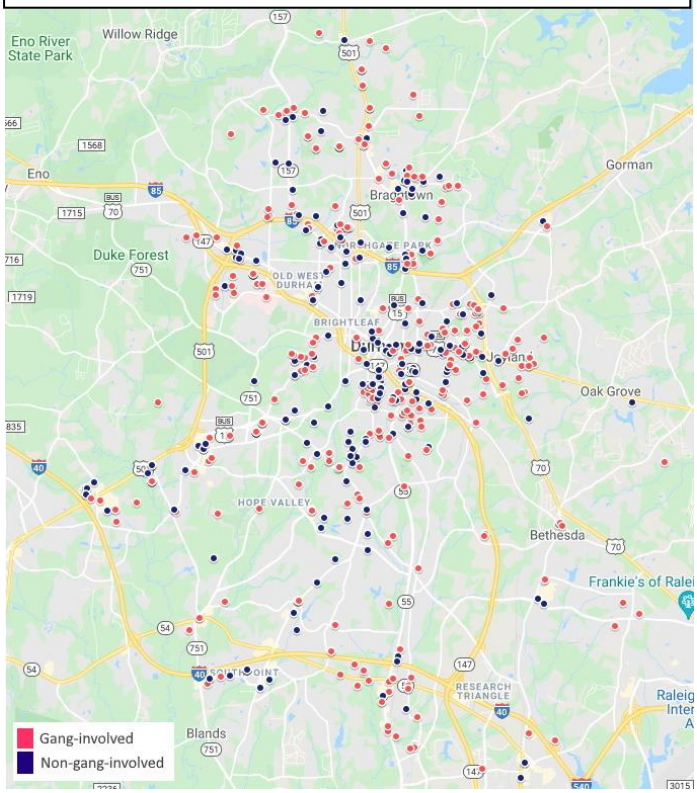
Robberies were also mapped for 2018-2020 to show the geographic locations of gang-involved robberies during this period (Object 4.20). On average, only a low percentage of robberies (8.1%) were classified as gang member involved (Table 4.11). Three categories of robberies were analyzed for this report: bank robbery, commercial robbery, and robbery of an individual.

Table 4.11 Robberies by involvement of known gang member and firearm use		
No gang/no firearm	700	39.2%
No gang/firearm	1084	60.8%
All non-gang-involved	1784	100.0%
Gang involved/no firearm	39	24.8%
Gang-involved/firearm	118	75.2%
Total gang-involved	157	100.0%

The maps indicate that robberies in Durham tend to cluster in high population areas and commercial areas. However, they are also found even in residential neighborhoods and rural areas of the county. Because reported gang involvement was low (8.1%), firearm usage in robberies classified as gang involved were also analyzed. As found in aggravated assault cases, gang-involved robberies were much likely to involve firearm use (+23.7%). For that reason, robberies were mapped for both gang involvement (Object 4.20) and firearm use (Object 4.21).

Again, it cannot be assumed that firearm related robberies are gang-involved, but these maps demonstrate widespread usage of firearms in person-related incidents. Firearm usage in robberies is common throughout Durham County, although less common in the western portion of the county.

Object 4.20 Robberies by gang involvement 2018-2020



Demographics of suspects in violent crimes

Data on characteristics of 10,527 known suspects who committed crimes during 2018-2020 were analyzed by the percentage who are indexed as gang members (Table 4.12). Overall, 1,144 known suspects, representing 10.9% of all known suspects were arrested for crimes committed during 2018-2020. The percentage of known suspects in gang-involved crimes varied by crime category, from 52.4% of all persons arrested for homicide (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter) to 0% of persons arrested for aggravated assault with a sexual motive and homicide (negligent manslaughter). This section will focus on suspects who are indexed as gang members and arrested for crimes for which they represent the highest percentage of overall known suspects: homicide (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter), robbery (all types) and aggravated assault.

Table 4.12 All known suspects by gang involvement

	Known Gang member		Non-gang member		All Known suspects
Offense	#	%	#	%	#
Aggravated assault	294	16.1%	1532	83.9%	1826
Aggravated assault with sexual motive	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1
Arson	2	2.6%	74	97.4%	76
Burglary	157	11.8%	1172	88.2%	1329
Homicide – Negligent manslaughter	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1
Homicide – Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	54	52.4%	49	47.6%	103
Larceny - All	426	7.0%	5673	93.0%	6099
Robbery - Bank	3	15.0%	17	85.0%	20
Robbery - Commercial	36	20.6%	139	79.4%	175
Robbery – Individual	167	25.1%	498	74.9%	665
Sex offense - All	5	2.2%	227	97.8%	232
Total	**1144**	**10.9%**	**9383**	**89.1%**	**10527**

It is important to note that the percentage of known suspects who are indexed as gang members is higher than the percentage of incidents in which a suspect or victim is indexed as a gang member (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 Police incidents and known suspects in gang-involved crimes, by percentage of total

Crime category	% Incidents classified as gang member involved	% Known suspects indexed as gang members
Aggravated assault	13.1%	16.1%
Homicide	35.0%	52.4%
Robbery	8.1%	24.0%

Demographics of known suspects in violent crimes by offense type during 2018-2020

Demographics of known suspects in violent crime were analyzed by crime category for the period of 2018-2020.

Demographics of known suspects in homicides by gang involvement and firearm use

During this 3-year period, there were 103 persons arrested for 66 homicide incidents. Demographics for known suspects in homicides who are indexed as gang members are different from individuals who are

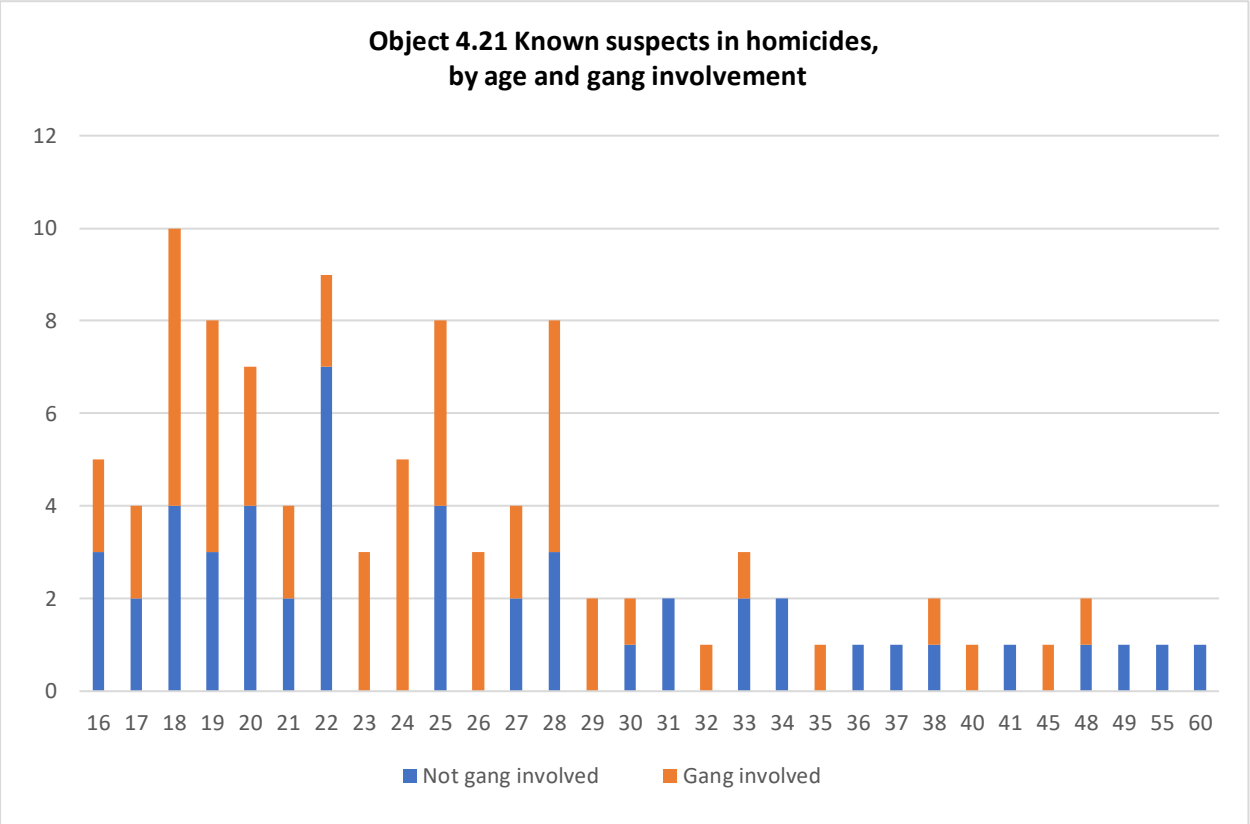
not. Two thirds (67.3%) of known suspects who in homicides who are not indexed as gang members are Black, compared to 100.0% of known suspects indexed as gang members (Table 4.14). There are no white known suspects in homicides between 2018 and 2020 indexed as gang members. Nine known homicide suspects between 2018 and 2020 are of Hispanic ethnicity, and none of these individuals were indexed as gang members. For 2018-2020 incidents, the number of female known suspects indexed as gang members was equal to female suspects who are not.

Table 4.14 Known suspects in homicides 2018-2020, by demographic traits and gang involvement

	Not gang involved		Gang involved		Total	
Demographic trait	#	%	#	%	#	%
Race						
Black	33	67.3%	54	100.0%	87	84.5%
White	16	32.7%	0	0.0%	16	15.5%
Total	49	100.0%	54	100.0%	103	100.0%
Ethnicity*						
Hispanic	9	19.6%	0	0.0%	9	9.2%
Non-Hispanic	37	80.4%	51	98.1%	88	89.8%
Unknown	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	1	1.0%
Total	46	100.0%	52	100.0%	98	100.0%
Gender						
Female	3	6.1%	3	5.6%	6	5.8%
Male	46	93.9%	51	94.4%	97	94.2%
Total	49	100.0%	54	100.0%	103	100.0%
Age						
16 to 17	5	10.2%	4	7.4%	9	8.7%
18 to 20	11	22.4%	14	25.9%	25	24.3%
21 to 24	9	18.4%	12	22.2%	21	20.4%
25 to 29	9	18.4%	16	29.6%	25	24.3%
30 to 34	7	14.3%	3	5.6%	10	9.7%
35 to 39	3	6.1%	2	3.7%	5	4.9%
40 to 44	1	2.0%	1	1.9%	2	1.9%
45 to 49	2	4.1%	2	3.7%	4	3.9%
50 to 60	2	4.1%	0	0.0%	2	1.9%
Total	49	100.0%	54	100.0%	103	100.0%

*Ethnicity was missing on 5 individuals

About three-fourths of known suspects in homicides during 2018-2020 were between the ages of 18 and 29, and of these individuals, 59.2% were indexed as gang members. Peak ages for known suspects indexed as gang members and involved in homicides between 2018-2020 are between 18 and 28, with the highest level at age 18 (Object 4.21). The most common ages for known suspects in homicides who are not indexed as gang members are between age 18 and 25, peaking at age 22.



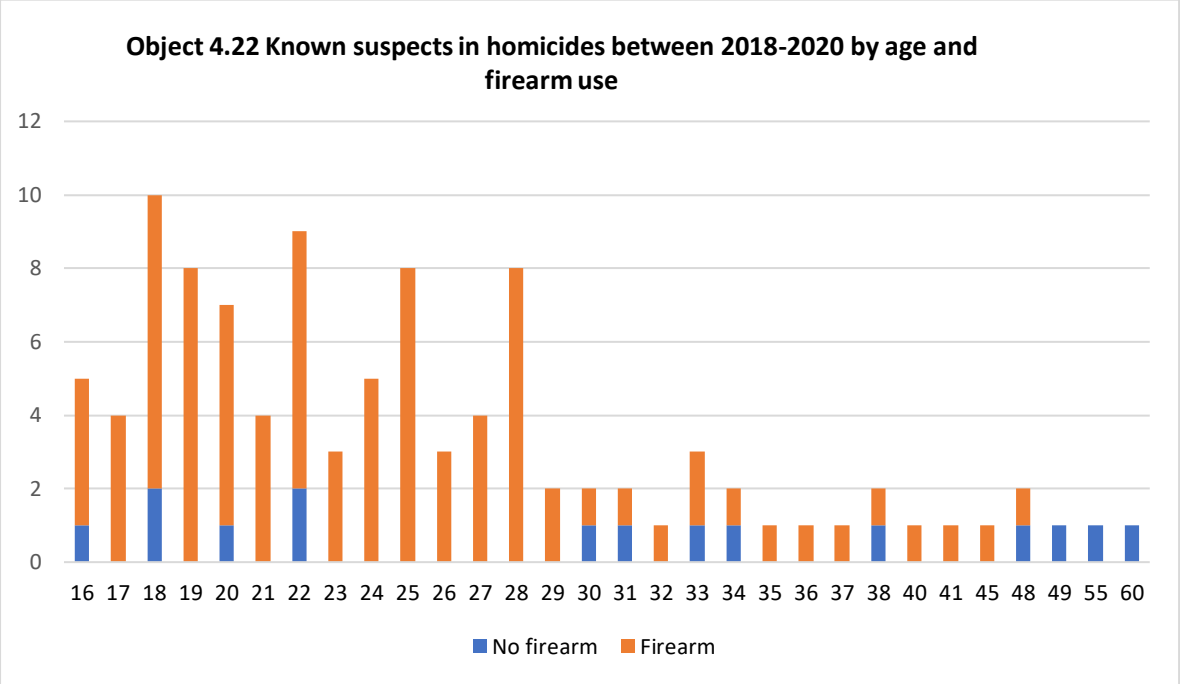
Firearms were used by 85.4% of known suspects in homicides between 2018-2020 (Table 4.15). Known suspects in homicides who used a firearm were more likely to be black (88.6%), Hispanic (9.6%), male (95.5%), and between the ages of 16 to 29 (85.2%). Almost three-fourths (71.8%) of persons arrested for a firearm involved homicide were between the ages of 16 and 29.

Table 4.15 Characteristics of known suspects in homicides 2018-2020 by firearm use

	Firearm		No firearm		Total	
Demographic trait	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
Race						
Black/African American	78	88.6%	9	60.0%	87	84.5%
White/Caucasian	10	11.4%	6	40.0%	16	15.5%
Total	88	100.0%	15	100.0%	103	100.0%
Ethnicity*						
Hispanic	8	9.6%	1	6.7%	9	9.2%
Non-Hispanic	74	89.2%	14	93.3%	88	89.8%
Unknown	1	1.2%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%
Total	83	100.0%	15	100.0%	98	100.0%
Gender						
Female	4	4.5%	2	13.3%	6	5.8%
Male	84	95.5%	13	86.7%	97	94.2%
Total	49	100.0%	54	100.0%	103	100.0%
Age						
16 to 17	8	9.1%	1	6.7%	9	8.7%
18 to 20	22	25.0%	3	20.0%	25	24.3%
21 to 24	19	21.6%	2	13.3%	21	20.4%
25 to 29	25	28.4%	0	0.0%	25	24.3%
30 to 34	6	6.8%	4	26.7%	10	9.7%
35 to 39	4	4.5%	1	6.7%	5	4.9%
40 to 44	2	2.3%	0	0.0%	2	1.9%
45 to 49	2	2.3%	2	13.3%	4	3.9%
50 to 60	0	0.0%	2	13.3%	2	1.9%
Total	88	100.0%	15	100.0%	103	100.0%

*Ethnicity was missing for 5 individuals

Firearm use by known suspects in homicides was pervasive in Durham between 2018 and 2020 and particularly high between the ages of 16 to 28 (Object 4.22).



Demographics of known suspects in aggravated assaults by gang involvement and firearm use

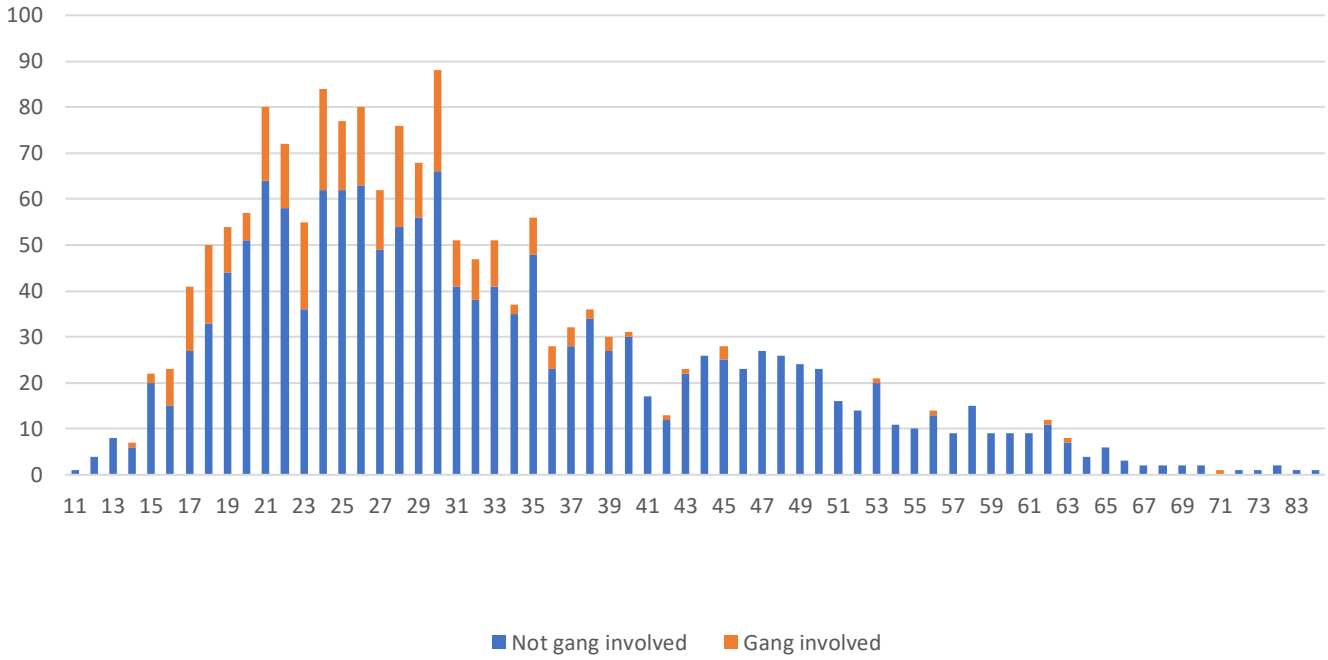
Between 2018 and 2020, 1,827 known subjects were identified in 1,564 aggravated assault incidents. Known suspects in aggravated assaults were between the ages of 11 and 91. A little less than a third of known suspects in aggravated assaults were female (31.9%) and 82.2% were Black (Table 4.16). About one in ten (9.0%) are Hispanic. About one in 8 (16.1%) were indexed as gang members. Known suspects in aggravated assaults who are indexed as gang members are likely to be black (99.0%), non-Hispanic (98.6%) and male (82.0%) compared to individuals arrested in non-gang-involved aggravated assaults (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16 Characteristics of known suspects in aggravated assaults 2018-2020 by gang involved and not gang involved

	Not a gang member		Gang member		Total	
Demographic trait	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
Race						
Asian	5	0.3%	0	0.0%	5	0.3%
Black	1208	79.0%	291	99.0%	1499	82.2%
Indigenous	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%
Unknown	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%
White	310	20.3%	3	1.0%	313	17.2%
Total	**1529**	**100.0%**	**294**	**100.0%**	**1823**	**100.0%**
Ethnicity*						
Hispanic	153	10.5%	4	1.4%	157	9.0%
Non-Hispanic	1304	89.3%	283	98.6%	1587	90.8%
Unknown	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%
Total	**1460**	**100.0%**	**287**	**100.0%**	**1747**	**100.0%**
Gender						
Female	529	34.6%	53	18.0%	582	31.9%
Male	1001	65.4%	241	82.0%	1242	68.1%
Total	**1530**	**100.0%**	**294**	**100.0%**	**1824**	**100.0%**
Age						
11 to 14	19	1.2%	1	0.3%	20	1.1%
15 to 17	62	4.1%	24	8.2%	86	4.7%
18 to 20	128	8.4%	33	11.2%	161	8.8%
21 to 24	220	14.4%	71	24.1%	291	16.0%
25 to 29	284	18.6%	79	26.9%	363	19.9%
30 to 34	221	14.5%	53	18.0%	274	15.0%
35 to 39	160	10.5%	22	7.5%	182	10.0%
40 to 44	107	7.0%	3	1.0%	110	6.0%
45 to 49	125	8.2%	3	1.0%	128	7.0%
50 to 59	140	9.2%	2	0.7%	142	7.8%
60 to 69	63	4.1%	3	1.0%	66	3.6%
Total	**1529**	**100.0%**	**294**	**100.0%**	**1823**	**100.0%**

Known suspects in aggravated assaults who are indexed as gang members are most likely to be between the ages of 17 and 33 (Object 4.23).

Object 4.23 Known suspects in aggravated assaults, 2018-2020, by age and gang involvement



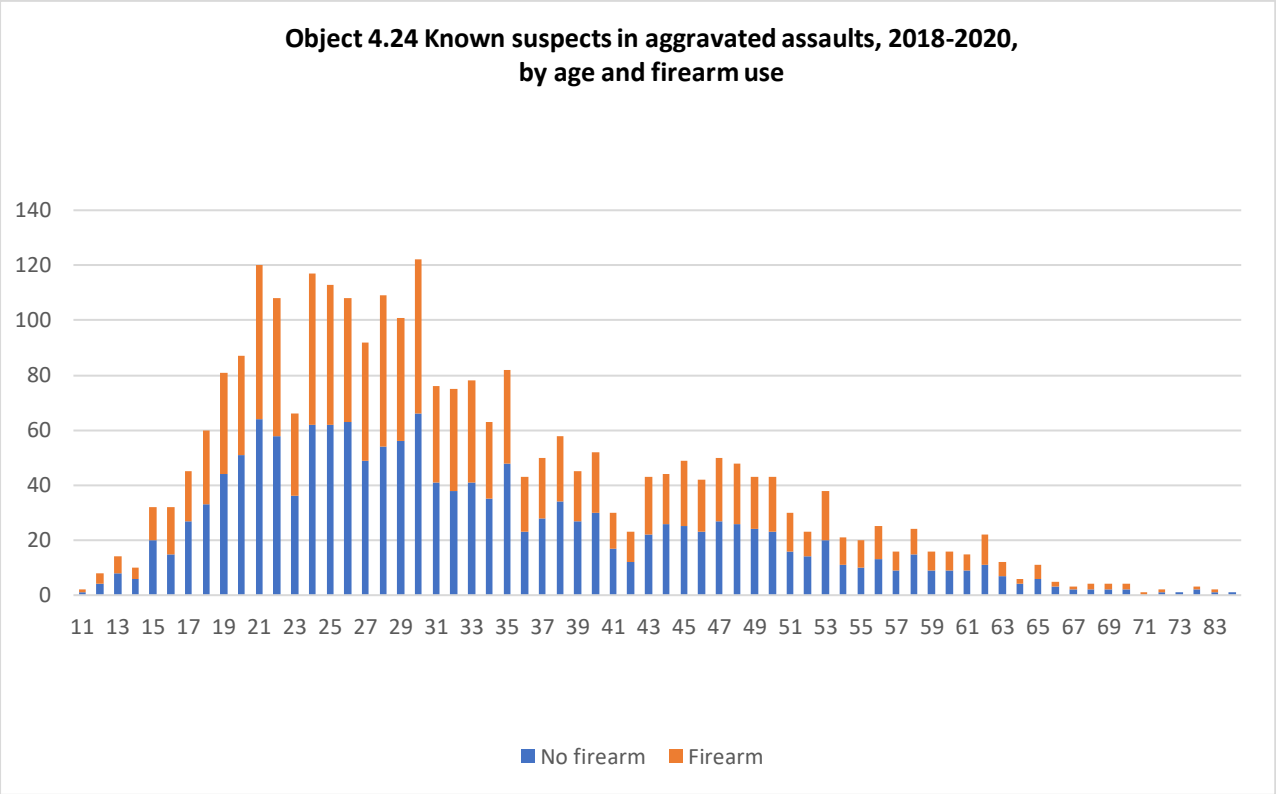
Firearms were used by 30.7% of known suspects in incidents of aggravated assault between 2018-2020. However, 32.2% of Black known suspects used firearms to commit aggravated assault, compared to 24.2% of White known suspects (Table 4.17). Male known suspects were more likely to use firearms (38.2%) than females (13.7%). Younger known suspects in aggravated assaults were more likely to use firearms.

Table 4.17 Known suspects in aggravated assaults 2018-2020 by firearm use

	Firearm		No firearm		Total	
Demographic trait	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
Race						
Asian	1	0.2%	4	0.3%	5	0.3%
African American/Black	483	86.1%	1016	80.5%	1499	82.2%
Indigenous	1	0.2%	2	0.2%	3	0.2%
Unknown	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	3	0.2%
White/Caucasian	76	13.5%	237	18.8%	313	17.2%
Total	561	100.0	1262	100.0%	1823	100.0%
Ethnicity*						
Hispanic	36	6.6%	121	10.0%	157	9.0%
Non-Hispanic	507	93.4%	1080	89.7%	1587	90.8%
Unknown	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	3	0.2%
Total	543	100.0%	1204	100.0%	1747	100.0%
Gender						
Female	87	15.5%	495	39.2%	582	31.9%
Male	474	84.5%	768	60.8%	1242	68.1%
Total	561	100.0%	1263	100.0%	1824	100.0%
Age						
11 to 14	5	0.9%	15	1.2%	20	1.1%
15 to 17	39	6.9%	47	3.7%	86	4.7%
18 to 20	61	10.8%	100	7.9%	161	8.8%
21 to 24	100	17.8%	191	15.2%	291	16.0%
25 to 29	124	22.0%	239	19.0%	363	19.9%
30 to 34	81	14.4%	193	15.3%	274	15.0%
35 to 39	64	11.4%	118	9.4%	182	10.0%
40 to 44	25	4.4%	85	6.7%	110	6.0%
45 to 49	21	3.7%	107	8.5%	128	7.0%
50 to 59	26	4.6%	116	9.2%	142	7.8%
60+	`7	3.0%	49	3.9%	66	3.6%
Total	563	100.0%	1260	100.0%	1863	100.0%

*Ethnicity was missing for 5 individuals

Almost half (45.3%) of known suspects between the ages of 15 to 17 used a firearm as did 37.9% of known suspects between the ages of 18 and 20 (Object 4.26).



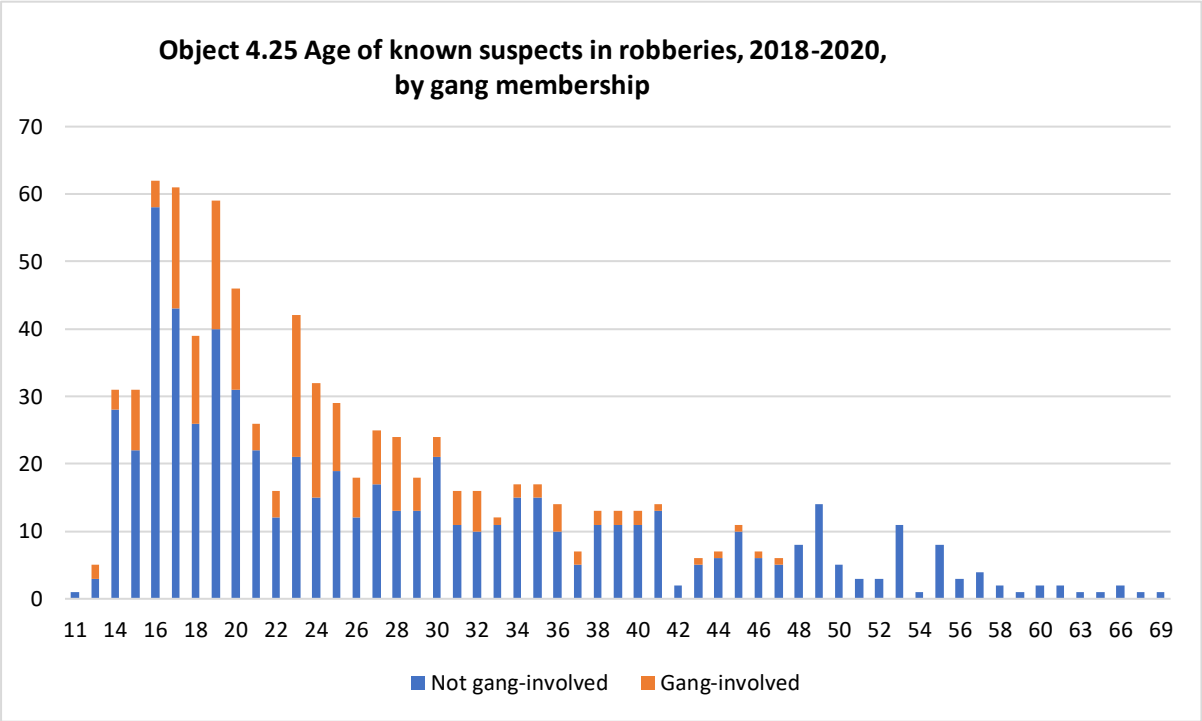
Between 2018 and 2020, 860 individuals were arrested in 1942 robberies. Characteristics of known suspects were analyzed along with gang involvement in robberies. Of individuals arrested in robberies, almost one fourth were arrested in a gang-involved robbery (24.0%) (Table 4.18). Over one fourth of Black known suspects (27.1%) were arrested in a gang-involved robbery, compared to only 6.9% of white known suspects. Over one-fourth of known suspects were males (25.8%) in gang-involved robberies, compared to 14.5% of females. Known suspects in gang-involved robberies were more likely to be young, with the highest percentage of known suspects in a gang-involved crime between the ages of 18 to 20 (32.6%), 21 to 24 (39.7%), and 25 to 29 (35.1%).

Table 4.18 Known suspects in robberies 2018-2020 by known gang member

	Gang involved		Not gang involved		Total	
Demographic trait	#	%	#	%	#	%
Race						
Black	531	81.4%	197	95.6%	728	84.8%
White	121	18.6%	9	4.4%	130	15.2%
Total	652	100.0%	206	100.0%	858	100.0%
Ethnicity*						
Hispanic	54	8.7%	5	2.5%	9	1.1%
Non-Hispanic	566	91.3%	193	95.1%	88	10.7%
Unknown	0	0.0%	5	2.5%	1	0.1%
Total	620	100.0%	203	100.0%	823	100.0%
Gender						
Female	118	6.1%	20	5.6%	138	5.8%
Male	536	93.9%	186	94.4%	722	94.2%
Total	654	100.0%	206	100.0%	860	100.0%
Age						
11 to 14	32	4.9%	5	2.4%	37	4.3%
15 to 17	123	19.0%	31	15.0%	154	18.1%
18 to 20	97	15.0%	47	22.8%	144	16.9%
21 to 24	70	10.8%	46	22.3%	116	13.6%
25 to 29	74	11.4%	40	19.4%	114	13.4%
30 to 34	68	10.5%	17	8.3%	85	10.0%
35 to 39	52	8.0%	12	5.8%	64	7.5%
40 to 44	37	5.7%	5	2.4%	42	4.9%
45 to 49	43	6.6%	3	1.5%	46	5.4%
50 to 59	41	6.3%	0	0.0%	41	4.8%
60+	10	1.5%	0	0.0%	10	1.2%
Total	647	100.0%	206	100.0%	853	100.0%

*Ethnicity was missing for 5 individuals

The largest percentage of known suspects in gang-involved robberies were between the ages of 17 and 29 (Object 4.25).



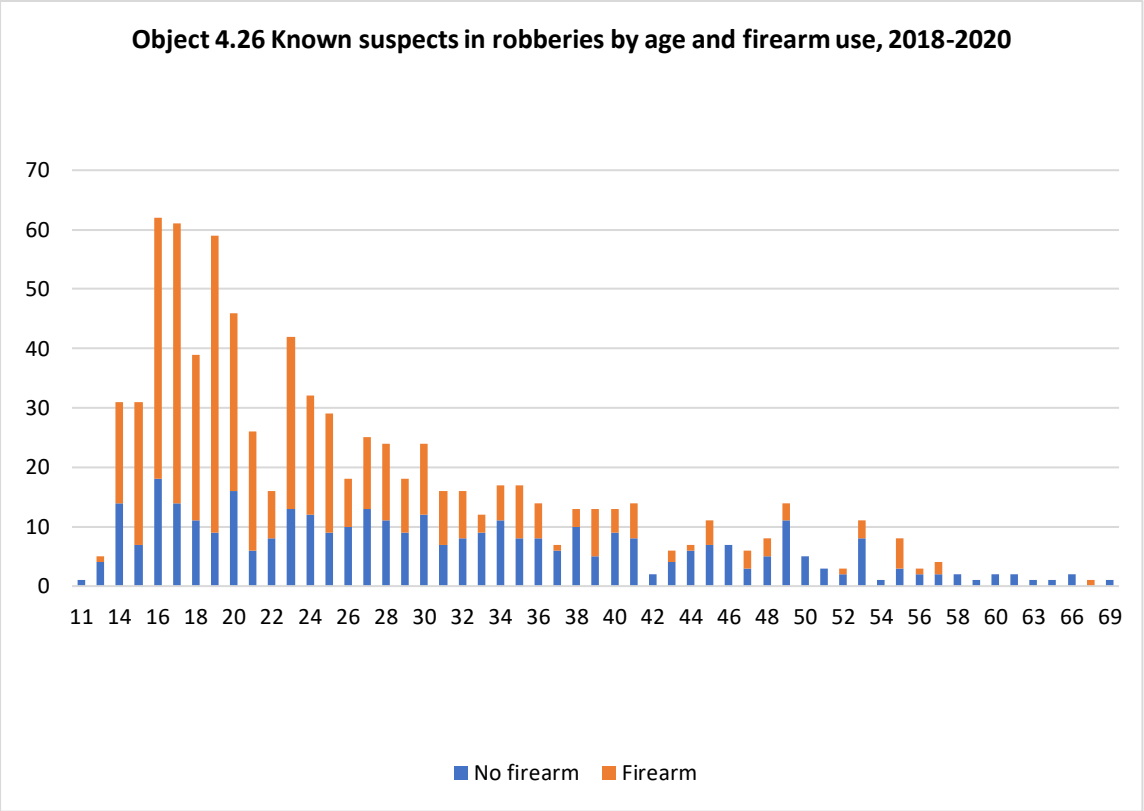
Known suspects in robberies during 2018-2020 by gang membership and firearm use

Of all known robbery suspects in 2018-2020, more than half (56.3%) used a firearm. Black known suspects were more likely to use a firearm (58.8%) than white known suspects (43.1%) (Table 4.19). Hispanic known suspects were more likely to use a firearm (61.0%) versus non-Hispanic known suspects (56.0%). Male known suspects were more likely to use a firearm (60.5%) compared to female known suspects (34.8%).

Table 4.19 Known suspects in robberies 2018-2020 by firearm use

	No firearm		Firearm		Total	
Demographic trait	#	%	#	%	#	%
Race						
Black	428	88.4%	300	80.2%	728	84.8%
White	56	11.6%	74	19.8%	130	15.2%
Total	484	100.0%	374	100.0%	858	100.0%
Ethnicity*						
Hispanic	36	7.7%	23	6.4%	59	7.2%
Non-Hispanic	425	91.2%	334	93.6%	759	92.2%
Unknown	5	1.1%	0	0.0%	5	0.6%
Total	466	100.0%	357	100.0%	823	100.0%
Gender						
Female	48	9.9%	90	24.0%	138	16.0%
Male	437	90.1%	285	76.0%	722	84.0%
Total	485	100.0%	375	100.0%	860	100.0%
Age						
11 to 14	18	3.7%	19	5.1%	37	4.3%
15 to 17	115	23.8%	39	10.6%	154	18.1%
18 to 20	108	22.3%	36	9.8%	144	16.9%
21 to 24	77	15.9%	39	10.6%	116	13.6%
25 to 29	62	12.8%	52	14.1%	114	13.4%
30 to 34	38	7.9%	47	12.7%	85	10.0%
35 to 39	27	5.6%	37	10.0%	64	7.5%
40 to 44	13	2.7%	29	7.9%	42	4.9%
45 to 49	13	2.7%	33	8.9%	46	5.4%
50 to 59	12	2.5%	29	7.9%	41	4.8%
60+	1	0.2%	9	2.4%	10	1.2%
Total	484	100.0%	369	100.0%	853	100.0%

Proportion of firearm usage was highest with younger known suspects and decreased with age (Object 4.26)



Victims in violent incidents

There were 2,827 reported incidents of aggravated assault and homicide in Durham between 2018-2020 with 5,016 victims. Included in these crime categories are crimes such as shooting into an occupied dwelling and shooting into a vehicle. In these cases, every person present in the dwelling or vehicle is counted as a victim, whether they are injured or killed. Most incidents of aggravated assault (63.0%) and homicide (60.6%) during 2018-2020 had only one victim (Table 4.20). About one-fifth of all homicides (18.3%) and aggravated assaults (20.0%) had two victims. About one in six homicides (16.3%) and 14.6% of aggravated assault incidents had 3 to 6 victims present at the scene. About 4.8% of homicides and 2.4% of aggravated assaults had 7 or more victims present at the incident (Table 4.21)

Table 4.20 Homicides by number of victims present, 2018-2020*

# Of victims*	#	%
1 victim	63	60.6%
2 victims	19	18.3%
3 victims	9	8.7%
4 victims	2	1.9%
5 victims	4	3.8%
6 victims	2	1.9%
7 victims	2	1.9%
8 victims	1	1.0%
9 victims	2	1.9%
Total	**104**	**100.0%**

*Number of victims present at the scene, not all were fatally injured

Table 4.21 Aggravated assaults by number of victims present, 2018-2020*

# victims*	# Incidents	Percentage
1 victim	1716	63.0%
2 victims	544	20.0%
3 victims	208	7.6%
4 victims	106	3.9%
5 victims	58	2.1%
6 victims	26	1.0%
7 victims	21	0.8%
8 victims	17	0.6%
9 victims	11	0.4%
10+ victims	17	0.6%
Total	**2724**	**100.0%**

*Number of victims present at the scene, not all were injured

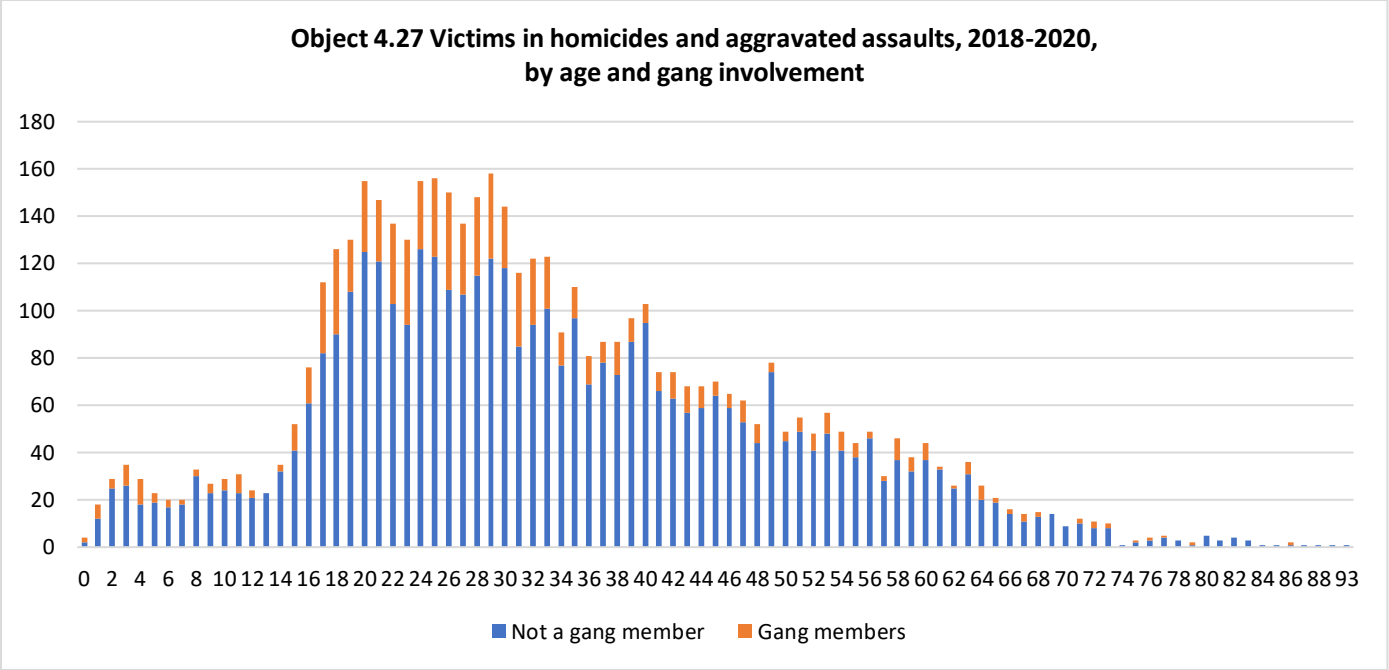
Victims in homicides and aggravated assaults were analyzed by demographic characteristics and gang member involvement in the incident. Gang members were involved in homicides and aggravated assaults as both victims and known suspects. Gang members were involved in 17.1% of aggravated assaults and homicides between 2018 and 2020 (Table 4.22, p. 148).

Table 4.22 Victims in aggravated assaults and homicides, 2018-2020, by gang involvement

	Not a gang member		Gang member		Total	
Demographic trait	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
Race*						
Asian	29	0.7%	3	0.3%	32	0.6%
Black/African American	2928	71.8%	778	88.7%	3706	74.8%
Indigenous	18	0.4%	1	0.1%	19	0.4%
Unknown	31	0.8%	2	0.2%	33	0.7%
White	1073	26.3%	93	10.6%	1166	23.5%
Total	4079	100.0%	877	100.0%	4956	100.0%
Ethnicity*						
Hispanic	558	14.5%	51	6.2%	609	13.0%
Non-Hispanic	3272	85.1%	768	93.1%	4040	86.5%
Unknown	15	0.4%	6	0.7%	21	0.4%
Total	3845	100.0%	825	100.0%	4670	100.0%
Gender						
Female	1963	48.1%	351	40.0%	2314	46.7%
Male	2116	51.9%	526	60.0%	2642	53.3%
Total	4079	100.0%	877	100.0%	4956	100.0%
Age						
0	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.0%
1 to 10	212	5.2%	51	5.8%	263	5.3%
11 to 14	99	2.4%	14	1.6%	113	2.3%
15 to 17	184	4.5%	56	6.4%	240	4.8%
18 to 20	323	7.9%	88	10.1%	411	8.3%
21 to 24	444	10.9%	125	14.3%	569	11.5%
25 to 29	576	14.1%	173	19.8%	749	15.1%
30 to 34	475	11.6%	121	13.9%	596	12.0%
35 to 39	404	9.9%	58	6.6%	462	9.3%
40 to 44	340	8.3%	47	5.4%	387	7.8%
45 to 49	294	7.2%	33	3.8%	327	6.6%
50 to 59	405	9.9%	60	6.9%	465	9.4%
60 to 69	217	5.3%	29	3.3%	246	5.0%
70+	71	1.7%	12	1.4%	83	1.7%
BB	31	0.8%	6	0.7%	37	0.7%
NB	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
Total	4078	100.0%	873	100.0%	4951	100.0%

Victims in gang member involved homicides and aggravated assaults differed significantly from other victims of these crimes. Victims of gang member involved homicides and aggravated assaults were more likely to be Black (88.7%), more likely to be non-Hispanic (93.1%), and more likely to be male (60.0%).

Over half (58.1%) of victims in gang member involved aggravated assaults and homicides were between the ages of 18 and 34. Victims in gang member involved crimes ranged in age from 1 to 86 years of age (Object 4.27).



Victim/known suspect crossover

Data on 5,995 unique victims and known suspects involved in aggravated assaults and homicides during 2018-2020 was analyzed for this report. This analysis identified the existence of crossover between victims and known suspects involved in these crimes during this 3-year period. The most instances of homicide and aggravated assault that an individual was involved in was eight (3 as known suspect, 5 as victim) (Table 4.23).

Table 4.23 Victim/known suspects by number of involvements in incidents of homicide and aggravated assault, 2018-2020

	Victims and known suspects in all homicides and aggravated assaults		Victims/known suspects in gang member involved homicides and aggravated assaults		
# Incidents	# Individuals	% All incidents	# Individuals	% Gang incidents	% All incidents
8 incidents	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
7 incidents	2	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
6 incidents	5	0.1%	1	0.1%	20.0%
5 incidents	11	0.2%	5	0.5%	45.5%
4 incidents	44	0.7%	9	0.9%	20.5%
3 incidents	108	1.8%	23	2.2%	21.3%
2 incidents	605	10.1%	118	11.3%	19.5%
1 incident	5219	87.1%	884	85.0%	16.9%
Total	5995	100.0%	1040	100.0%	17.3%

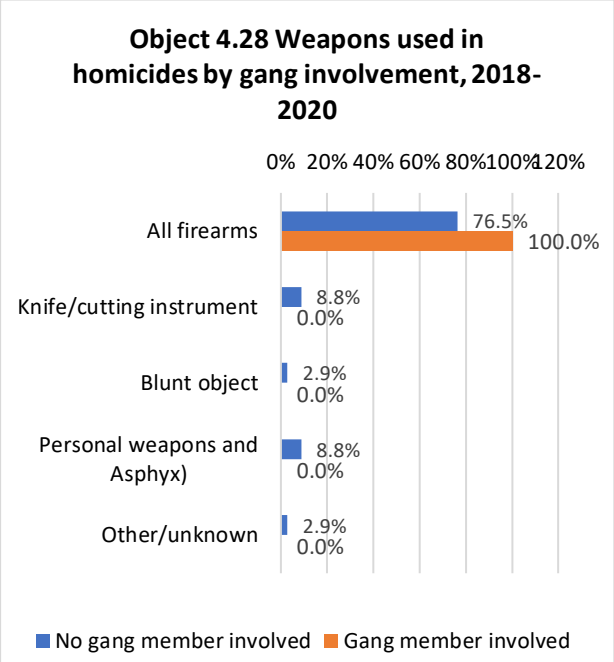
This data was also examined by instances in which individuals indexed as gang members were involved as a known suspect or victim in a violent offense. There were 1,040 unique known suspects and victims in gang member involved homicides and aggravated assaults between 2018-2020 (Table 4.23). Victims and known suspects in gang member involved homicides and aggravated assaults were slightly more likely to be involved as victims or known suspects in more than one incident of serious violence (homicide or aggravated assault) (15.0%). The most instances an individual was involved in a gang member involved homicide or aggravated assault was 6 (3 as victim, 3 as known suspect).

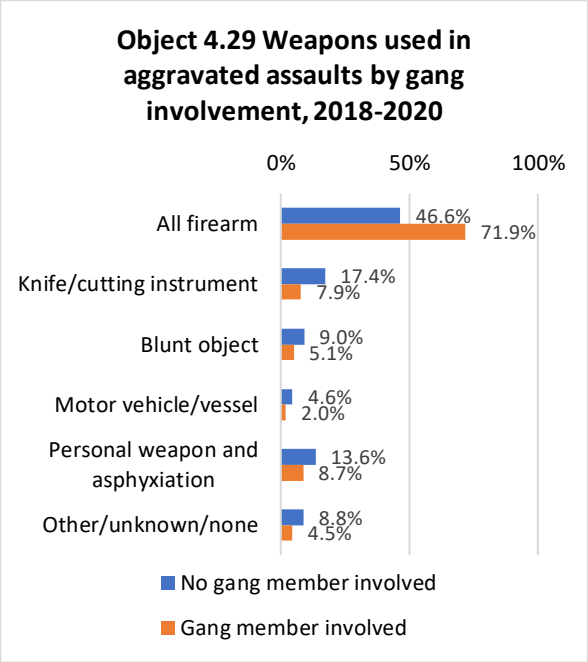
This likelihood of gang involvement in multiple incidents increased by the number of incidents involved. For instance, although individuals involved in gang-involved incidents of homicide and aggravated assault only represented 17.3% of all known suspects and victims in these crimes, they represented 45.5% of individuals involved in 5 incidents, 20.5% of individuals involved in 4 incidents and 21.3% of individuals involved in 3 incidents. Individuals involved in gang member involved homicides and aggravated assaults were slightly less likely to be involved in only one incident, compared to all victims.

Weapons used in violent crimes during 2018-2020

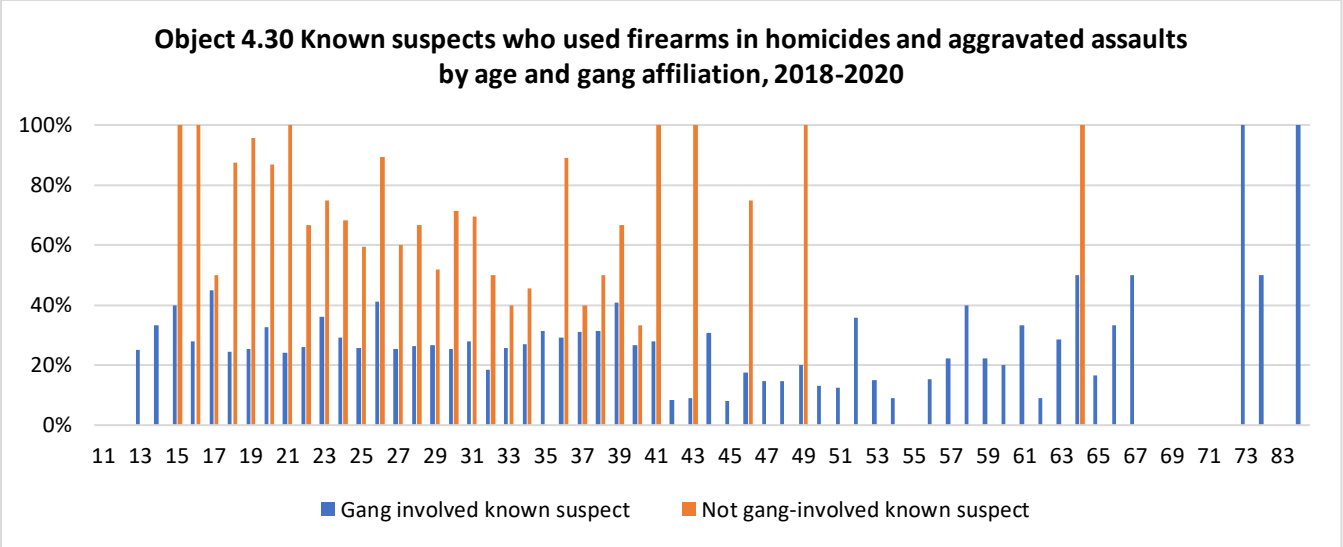
Homicides and aggravated assaults were analyzed by type of weapon used. Detailed information on weapons used is collected by the Durham Police Department in police incident reports.

Significantly more homicides in Durham are committed using a firearm compared to aggravated assaults, which speaks to the lethality of firearm use compared to other types of weapons (Object 4.28, Object 4.29). A firearm was used in 100.0% of homicides with gang involvement and 76.% of homicides without gang member involvement. The most common type of firearm used in homicides in Durham was a handgun (gang involved 50.0%, non-gang involved 51.5%).





Known suspects indexed as gang members who involved homicides and aggravated assaults were prolific users of firearms. This issue was examined by age, and this trend held true well into the late 40s (Object 4.30, p. 152). It is not clear whether known suspects in gang-involved crimes have greater access to firearms and are more likely to use these firearms in the commission of a violent person offense, or if use of a firearm is more likely to result in an offense being classified as gang involved.


Object 4.30 Known suspects who used firearms in homicides and aggravated assaults by age and gang affiliation, 2018-2020
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
11 13 15 17 19 21 23 25 27 29 31 33 35 37 39 41 43 45 47 49 51 53 55 57 59 61 63 65 67 69 71 73 83
Gang involved known suspect
Not gang-involved known suspect

Chapter 5 – Community Perceptions

Important information in this section

- 481 community residents, 26 community leaders, 458 school personnel, 42 youth-serving agency personnel, and 342 public safety personnel participated in this study.
- 40.5% of parents who responded to this survey do not feel safe allowing their children to play outside in their neighborhood.
- While only 12.9% of parents overall felt their children were at risk of joining a gang, 59% of Black parents reported their children are at risk of joining a gang.
- 73.8% of parents indicated that their children are at risk of being injured by gang activity.
- 26.4% of community residents said that violent crime is one of the top three concerns in their neighborhood.
- 22.9% of residents reported that gangs are highly active in their neighborhoods.
- 32.4% of residents reported that gang activity in their neighborhood has increased in the past 3 years.
- 100.0% of youth-serving agency personnel, 78.8% of school personnel and 82.3% of public safety officers report that youth they interact with are exposed to community level violence.
- 71% of school personnel, 85.7% of youth-serving agency personnel and 75.2% of public safety personnel report that youth they interact with are exposed to violence in their home.
- 71.4% of school personnel, 85.7% of agency personnel and 76.3% of public safety personnel report that youth they interact with have parents who are absent, addicted or in other ways unable to help their children.
- Responses about why youth join gangs are mixed across constituency groups, but gang-involved individuals, community residents, youth-serving agency personnel and public safety personnel all indicated that having family/friends involved in gangs is one of the top three reasons that youth join gangs in Durham.
- All constituency groups, including gang-involved individuals, reported that involvement in violent crime is one of the top 3 issues caused by gangs in Durham.
- Weapon crimes were named as a top three issue caused by gangs in Durham by all constituency groups.
- 5 of 6 constituency groups (excluding school personnel) listed gang prevention and intervention as one of the top three things that should be done about gangs in Durham.
- Other top responses across constituency groups as top three things that should be done about gangs included youth programs/recreation, jobs/job training, mentoring programs, and increased law enforcement activity.
- All constituency groups reported low levels of satisfaction with the current response to gangs.
- Reasons cited for low levels of satisfaction with the current response to gangs by all constituency groups included a lack of consequences for criminal activity, a lack of information about what is being done, and a lack of evaluation/reporting outcomes of current strategies.

Community perceptions overview

This section discusses the perceptions and experiences of people who live and work in Durham. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, online surveys were used to gather feedback from community residents, community leaders, school personnel, youth-serving agency personnel, and public safety personnel. Separate surveys were administered to each of these groups and tailored to the specific realm of experience of each group responding to the survey by the members of the Assessment Work Group.

Because of the amount of information collected. this section of the report is divided topically:

- Community resident surveys – Pages 154 to 187)
- Community leader surveys – Pages 188 to 198
- Youth-serving agency personnel surveys – Pages 199 to 217
- Public safety personnel surveys – Pages 218 to 236
- Comparative analysis – Pages 237 to 246

Community resident surveys

This survey asks respondents to describe their experiences with gang activity in their neighborhood, if any, and report on how gang activity in Durham is affecting their quality of life and the wellbeing of their children. The survey utilized a template developed by the National Gang Center to support implementation of the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model (National Gang Center, 2009), and a team of advisors made modifications to address local conditions in Durham.

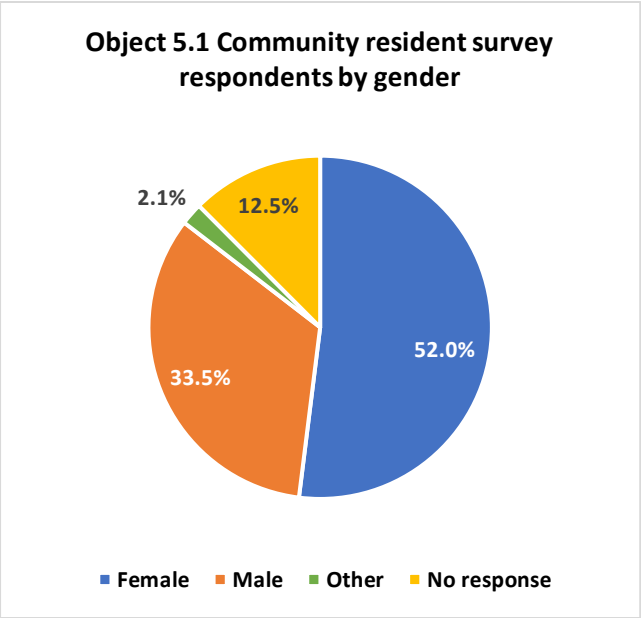
Survey methodology

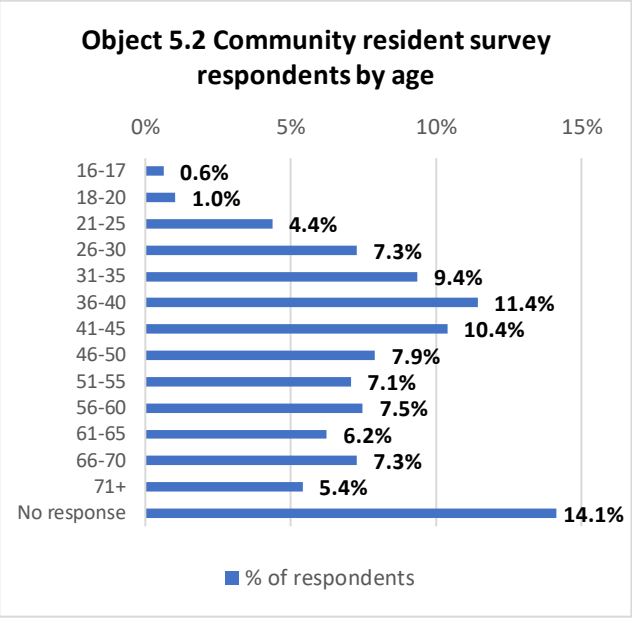
The community resident survey was administered anonymously using an online platform (Survey Monkey) and was promoted by the City of Durham and Durham County using social media, as well as media coverage generated by press releases from Durham County. A total of 1,561 responses to the Community Resident Survey were received overall. However, perhaps because of extensive media coverage of the Community Gang Assessment, 69.2% community resident survey responses came from individuals who reside outside of Durham County area or entered numerous duplicate responses, indicating that the data was completed utilizing automated 1-button macro computer programs. Best practices for survey data cleaning were used to remove duplicate/macro responses, including a hand review of text responses, a timeframe review of responses, and the IP addresses of survey completers. Only the surveys of individuals who report that they reside in Durham County, who took more than 4 minutes to complete the survey, and whose IP address indicates that they reside in the United States are included in this analysis (481 total surveys).

Demographics and geographic locations of survey respondents

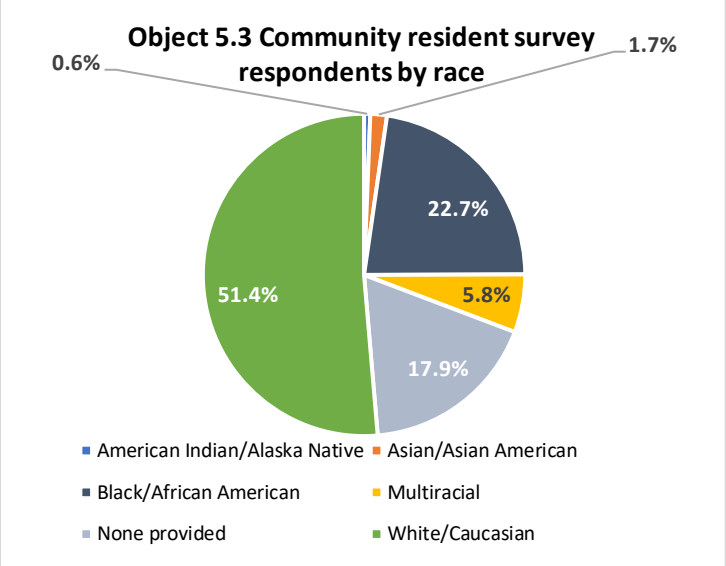
To ensure geographic and demographic dissemination of the survey, respondents were asked about their area of residence (by zip code) and their demographic characteristics.

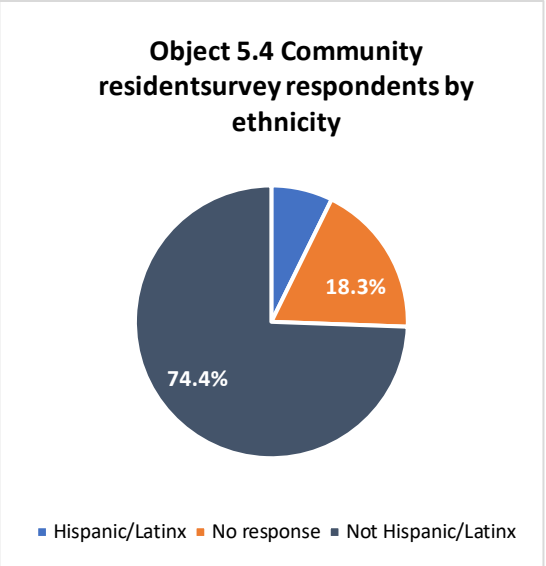
Survey respondents are most likely to be female (52.0%) (Object 5.1), between ages 31 to 45 (31.2%) (Object 5.2), and White/Caucasian (51.4%) (Object 5.3). Age of respondents ranges from 16 to 87, with the largest category of respondents between age 36 and 40 (11.4%) (Object 5.2).





Over half of survey respondents (51.4%) are White/Caucasian and 22.7% of respondents are Black/African American. A little less than one in ten (7.3%) respondents reported they are Hispanic/Latinx.





Significant percentages of survey respondents did not provide demographic data for this survey (Table 5.1). Percentages of respondents who did not provide demographic data ranged from 10.6% of respondents who did not provide their ZIP Code to 18.3% of respondents who did not provide ethnicity data.

Table 5.1 Percent of respondents who did not provide demographic data

Demographic trait	% no response
Age	14.1%
Gender	12.5%
Race	17.9%
Ethnicity	18.3%
ZIP Code	10.6%

A comparison of Durham County demographics versus the demographics of survey respondents is provided in Table 5.2. Comparison data is drawn from U.S. Census population estimates for 2019. Based on reported demographic data, survey respondents are more heavily multiracial and less likely to be American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, White/Caucasian, Hispanic/Latinx, male and under age 18.

Table 5.2 Comparison of Durham County demographics and community resident survey respondents

Demographic characteristic	Durham County demographics*	Survey demographics
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.9%	0.6%
Asian/Asian American	5.5%	1.7%
Black/African American	36.9%	22.7%
Multiracial	2.6%	5.8%
White/Caucasian	54.0%	51.4%
No race reported	n/a	17.9%
Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity	13.7%	7.3%
No ethnicity reported	n/a	18.3%
Female	52.3%	52.0%
Male	47.7%	33.5%
Other gender	n/a	2.1%
No gender reported	n/a	12.5%
Under 18 years old	20.6%	0.6%
18 to 64 years old	64.0%	60.0%
65 and older	13.6%	14.3%
No age reported	n/a	14.10%

*U.S. Census Bureau, 2020; author's elaboration

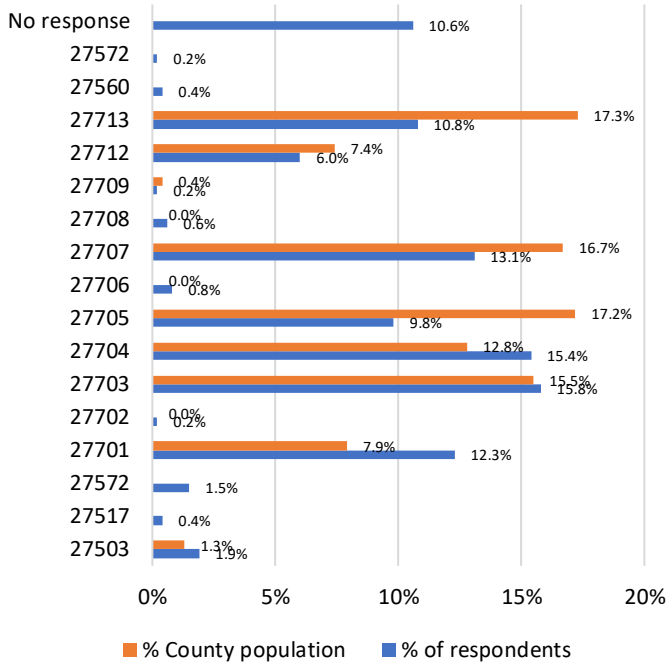
This survey was targeted to adults, so it is unsurprising that few individuals under age 18 participated in the survey. Because of the large percentage of respondents who opted not to provide demographic information, it is impossible to determine how closely the demographics of survey respondents match the demographic composition of Durham County residents.

Survey respondents were asked to provide their zip code to assess the geographic distribution of the survey. The largest percentages of respondents are from 27704 (15.4%), 27703 (15.8%), 27707 (13.1%), and 27701 (12.3%) (Object 5.5, p. 157). Proportion of county population by ZIP code was also included for ZIP codes where the entire population resides in Durham County (some ZIP code regions primarily cover surrounding counties) (U.S. Postal Service, 2021; U.S. Census, 2019) to show proportional survey distribution. Survey distribution was overrepresented for 27701 and 27704, and underrepresented for 27705, 27707, 27712 and 27713.

Care should be taken when interpreting the community resident survey data because this data does not comprise a representative sample of residents. The data does, however, provide insights into the experiences of many residents, as well as their perceptions and beliefs about the issue of gangs in Durham. The information from this survey should be taken in context with other data collected for this report as perception data can be affected by many factors, including media coverage and existing beliefs/biases.

Most survey respondents have lived in Durham for more than 6 years (72.6%) (Object 5.6). Almost 90% of respondents (87.8%) to the community resident survey report living in Durham for 3 or more years.

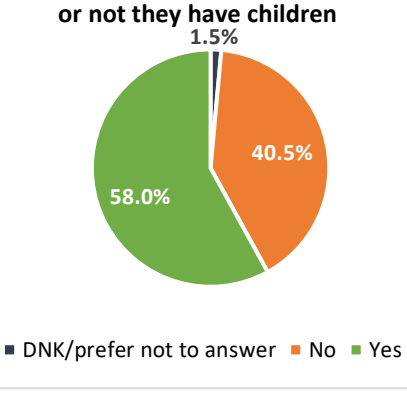
Object 5.5 Respondents and proportion of county population by ZIP code



Parent perceptions about children's safety, risk of joining a gang, or being injured by a gang

Specific questions were directed at community residents with children to assess the effects of gang issues in the community on parents and children in Durham. Over half of survey participants reported they have children (58.0%) A total of 279 survey respondents reported that they have children and were asked subsequent questions about their children's safety and opportunities for involvement in positive activities.

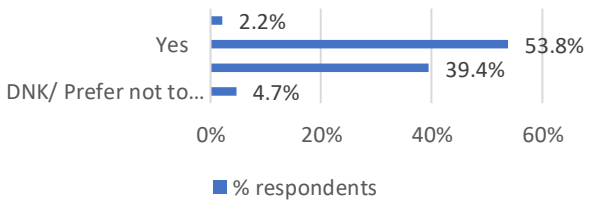
Object 5.7 Community resident survey respondents by whether or not they have children



Do you feel safe letting your child play outside in your neighborhood? (279 responses)

Survey respondents with children were asked about their feelings of safety about allowing their children to play outside in their neighborhood. A little more than half of respondents (53.8%) reported that they feel safe allowing their children to play outside and 39.4% of respondents reported that they do not feel safe allowing their children to play outside in their neighborhood (Object 5.8). Respondents were asked a follow-up question about their reasons for their answer to this question. This question was asked open-ended so respondents could respond in their own words.

Object 5.8 Parent responses to whether they feel safe letting their child play outside in their neighborhood



Of the 279 parents who responded to this question, 54 parents (19.3% of all parents) wrote a custom answer to the question about why they do/do not feel safe allowing their child to play outside in their neighborhood. Of those who provided custom responses, most parents reported that they do not feel safe allowing their children to play outside.

The custom responses were sorted and are analyzed on Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Responses for why I feel safe/do not feel safe letting my child play outside in my neighborhood (n=54)

Reasons provided for feeling safe/not feeling safe	# Respondents to this question	% Respondents to this question
Feel safe	13	24.1%
Do not feel safe	41	75.9%
Shootings/gun violence	27	50.0%
Gang activity	10	18.5%
Traffic/street racing/speeding	5	9.3%
Other	6	11.1%
Total responses	54*	100.0%

*These parents only represent 19.3% of all parents who responded to the question of whether they feel safe allowing their children to play outside in their neighborhood

Thirteen parents described that they feel safe allowing their children to play outside in their neighborhood. The most common reasons that parents reported they do not feel safe allowing their children to play outside in their neighborhood include shootings/gun violence in or near their neighborhood (27 parents) and gang activity (10 parents). A few parents also described high levels of traffic, speeding cars, and street racing through their neighborhood as reasons that it is not safe for their children to play outside. Other reasons given were:

- The people in my community
- Sex offenders
- Child kidnapping
- The police
- Open drug sales
- Lack of consequences in the system for violent offenders

One respondent explained that "My neighbor sells drugs out of his home and the trunk of his car right in front of house. and his food business." Another respondent described "constant shootings on the corner of our neighborhood." One parent provided a very detailed response:

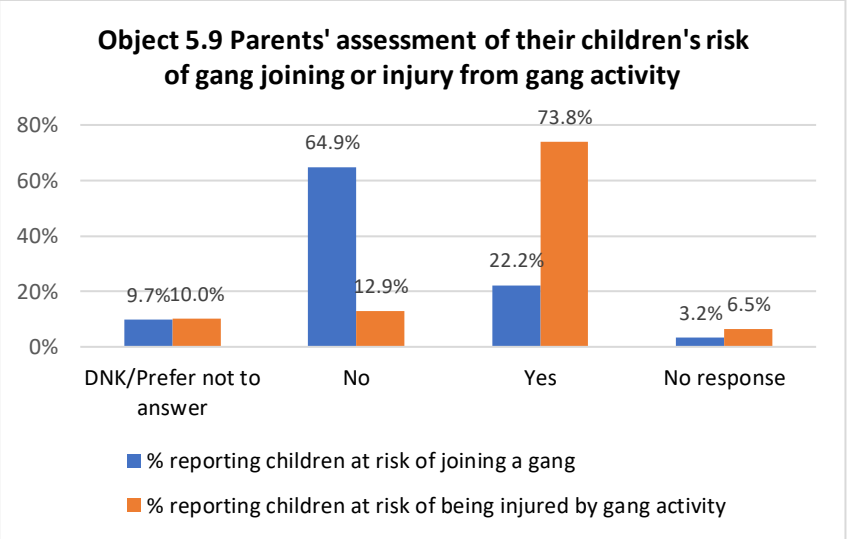
> *Duke Street has street racing to deal with almost every night. It would be nice to walk to the Science Museum and Northgate Park, but it is dangerous with gangs shooting out of their car windows. Killing here is terrifying for mothers. I have never lived in a neighborhood anywhere that scares me like Durham. I bought my house and was excited about revitalization. Now, I cannot trust crossing the street. We have a group of cars that race anywhere from an hour to two hours a night. It is not unusual to be woken up an hour*

after you go to sleep. There is also a motorcycle gang that drive every Sunday through our streets on two wheels. If I drove my car that way I would be arrested. Why can they be allowed to do this? I suggest the National Guard come in and help us take back our streets. I do not expect the police to be able to do it all, but I do expect the city to do something. I want my neighborhood back again. Please help us to feel free again. I fear my children to be in my front yard alone.

Respondents' feelings of being unsafe in their home and/or neighborhood and of being forced to stay inside their home and restrict their movements around the community or neighborhood for safety reasons is a consistent theme in the responses by community residents to numerous questions in this survey.

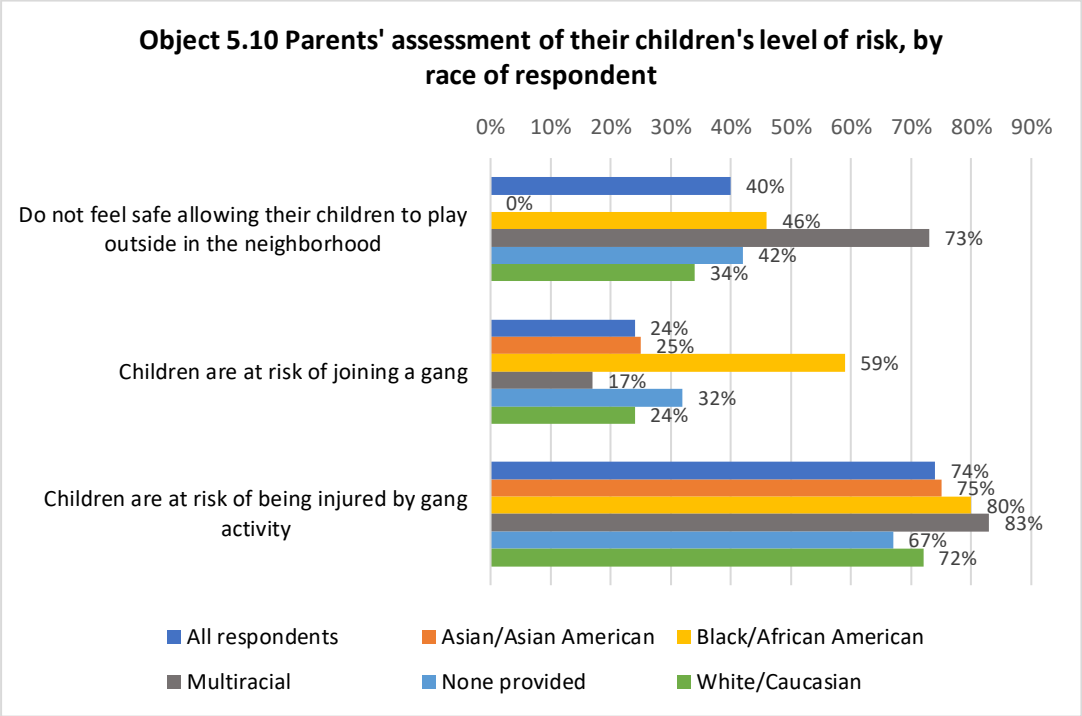
Do you think your child is at risk of joining a gang? (165 responses)
Do you think your child is at risk of being injured by gang activity? (164 responses)

Respondents with children were asked to assess their children's risk of joining a gang or being injured by gang activity (Object 5.9). Most parents reported that their children are not at risk of joining a gang (64.9%), although 22.2% of parents report they believe their children are at risk of joining a gang. Nearly three-fourths of parents (73.8%) report they believe that their children are at risk of being injured by gang activity in Durham.



This data was examined by the race of survey respondents. Because there are a relatively low number of Asian/Asian American (6) and multiracial respondents (15) who report that they are parents, the data can show large variations for these subgroups.

About 59.1% of respondents with children responded to the question about their children being at risk to join a gang and 58.8% of respondents with children answered the question about their children being at risk of injury because of gang activity (Object 5.10).



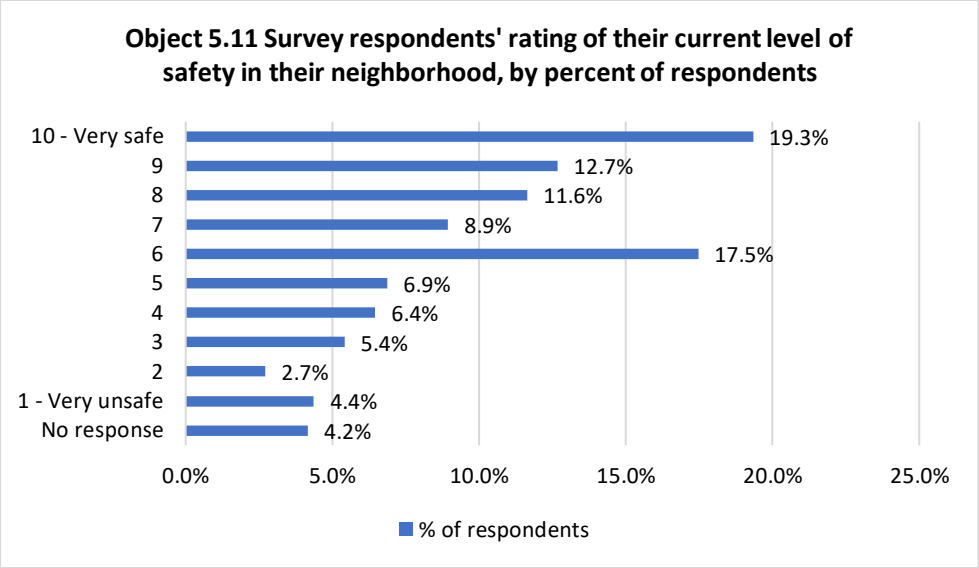
Significant percentages of parents in all parent groups reported feeling their children are at risk of being injured by gang activity. Multiracial parents (73.3%) were the of all parent groups to report they do not feel safe allowing their children to play outside in their neighborhood compared to 40.3% of all respondents.

Black parents are the most likely to report that their children are at risk of joining a gang (59.3%), compared to 24.4% of all parents. Black parents (79.7%) and multiracial parents (83.3%) were more likely to report that their children are at risk of being injured by gang activity, compared to 74.4% of all parents.

Neighborhood safety and concerns

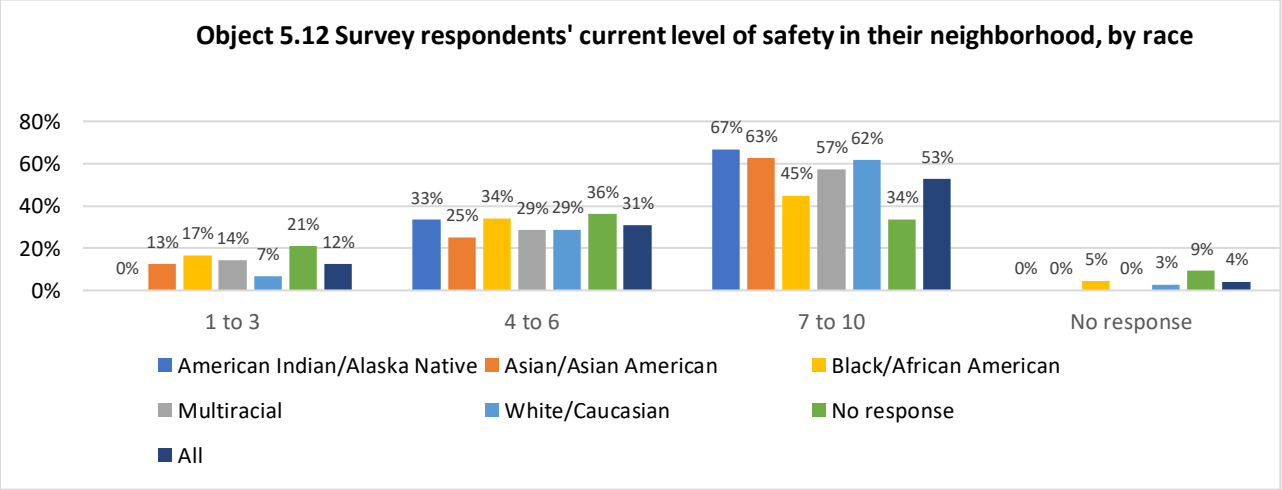
How safe do you currently feel in your neighborhood (481 responses)

Survey participants were asked to score their current level of perceived safety in their neighborhood on a numerical scale from very unsafe (1) to very safe (10). Respondents were most likely to rate their neighborhood as very safe (19.3%) and midway between safe and unsafe (17.5%) (Object 5.11, p. 161).

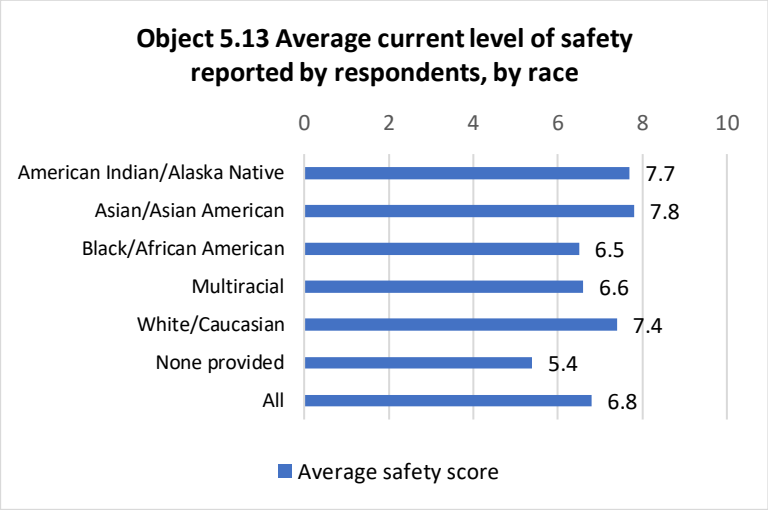


Racial disparities were identified in reported levels of safety in the neighborhood (Object 5.12). Survey respondents who did not report their race are the most likely to report low level of safety (1 to 3) (21%). A significant percentage of Black/ African American respondents (17%) also reported a low perceived safety level (1 to 3).

Black/African American respondents and respondents who did not provide their race also reported feeling high levels of safety levels (7 to 10) at lower rates than other population groups.

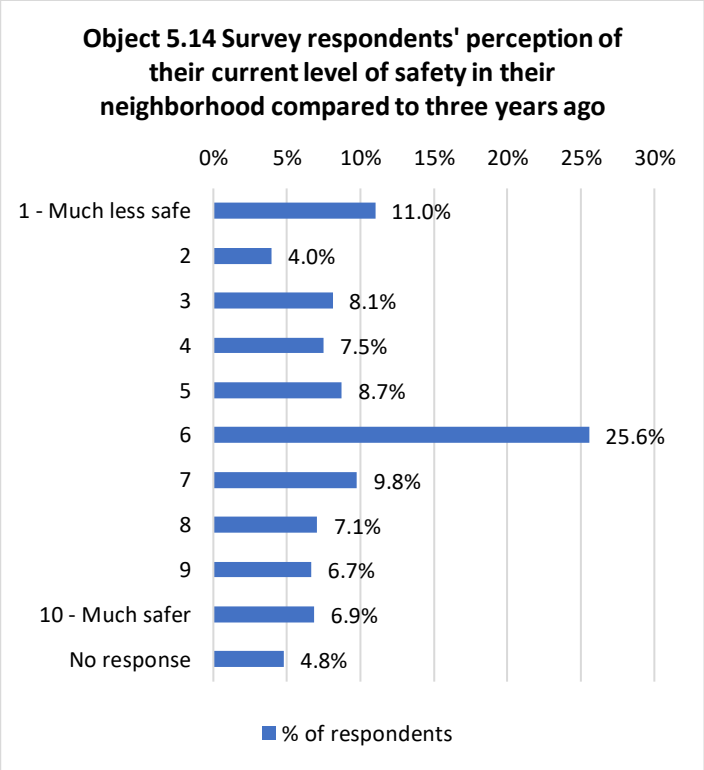


Safety scores were averaged by race and there were substantive differences across different racial groups overall (Object 5.13). Respondents who did not report their race were the least likely group to report feeling very safe and also reported safety scores that are 20.6% below the average score for all respondents. Black/African American respondents reported safety scores that are 12.1% lower than White/Caucasian respondents and 4.6% lower than all groups on average.



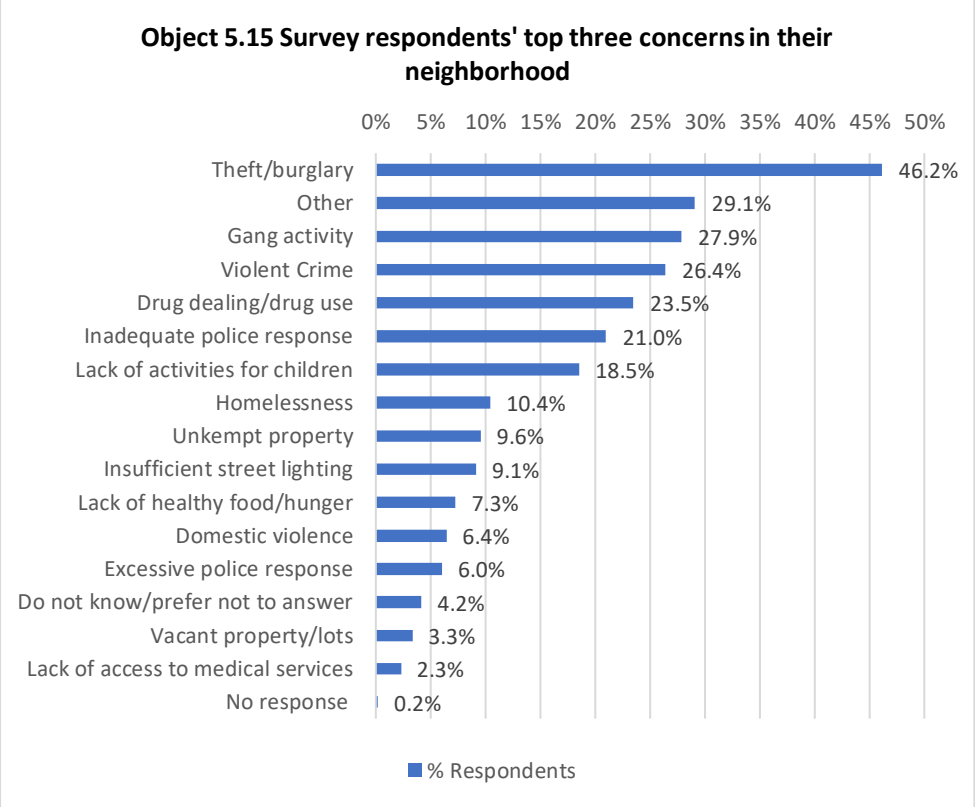
Do you feel safer in your neighborhood than you did 3 years ago? (481 responses)

Respondents were asked to score their current level of safety in their neighborhood in comparison to three years ago, on a 10-point scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing much less safe and 10 representing much safer. Over 1 in 10 respondents (11.0%) reported that they are currently much less safe in their neighborhood than they were 3 years ago. One fourth of respondents (25.6%) reported that levels of safety in their neighborhood are about the same.



What are your top three concerns in your neighborhood? (481 responses)

Respondents were provided with a list of concerns and could also draft a custom response. This question requires respondents to prioritize concerns by limiting them to three responses. Most respondents (46.2%) report that theft/burglary is one of the top three concerns in their neighborhood (Object 5.15). Respondents could also provide a custom response, and 140 respondents gave custom responses. These responses are analyzed and reported below. Gang activity is cited as a top three concern by 27.9% of respondents and 26.4% of respondents report that violent crime is a top three concern in their neighborhood.



Custom responses to this question are analyzed and reported below.

Speeding/traffic (34 responses)

Traffic and speeding in their neighborhood was identified as a significant issue of concern in their neighborhood by 33 respondents, including references to reckless driving and cars going at a high rate of speed. One respondent described "dangerous vehicles/driving associated with known gang entities." Numerous respondents (19) specifically described street racing of cars, dirt bikes, motorcycles, and ATVs in their neighborhood. Numerous respondents reported issues with groups of dirt bike and ATV riders on city streets, including: "Gangs riding dirt bikes and quads on city streets ignoring rules of the road and disrespect for community safety."

Shootings/drive-by shootings (28 responses)

Respondents report shootings at specific locations in their neighborhood, including one respondent who describes "the convenience store across the street has had several shootings." One respondent

mentioned “kids shooting randomly as they drive by.” Other respondents report hearing frequent gunshots from adjacent neighborhoods, including “gunshots at all hours of the night.” One respondent explained: “Drive-by shootings just outside our neighborhood are very concerning. Random shootings outside businesses. I've never lived this close to shootings.”

Lack of police presence/accountability for law breakers (12 responses)
Respondents report issues related to lack of police presence in their neighborhood, lack of follow-up on crimes by law enforcement, and failure of courts and the district attorney to provide consequences for individuals who break the law. Some described frustrations with city leaders cutting police positions: “Cutting police positions. Lack of respect for police at City leadership level.” One respondent notes “Police can’t respond on time because they are understaffed and underloved.” Another respondent describes “Lack of adequate late night police presence” in their neighborhood. Respondents also report failure by law enforcement officers to follow-up on reported crimes and frustration with a lack of accountability for individuals who break the law. One respondent states: “I've lived in Durham for 3 years and my truck has been broken into twice... I'm sick of these dirtbags. It's a game of catch and release with a slap on the wrist by the prosecutor.”

Theft (10 responses)
Survey respondents report thefts from sheds, bicycle theft, car burglaries, and postal theft from mailboxes and porches.

Suspicious people in the neighborhood/panhandlers (8 responses)
Survey respondents report people walking around the neighborhood late at night, suspicious “house to house salespeople,” people panhandling door to door in the neighborhood, and “people casing the neighborhood (driving thru, posing as door-to-door business, etc.).”

No concerns in my neighborhood (7 responses)
A few respondents reported that they do not have any current concerns in their neighborhood.

Guns (5 responses)
Respondents report issues with guns, including young people brandishing guns in the neighborhood.

Lack of activities for youth (5 responses)
A few respondents specified that while there are activities for children in their neighborhood, there is a lack of safe/prosocial activities for youth. One respondent notes: “Teenagers need space to be active. Everything is geared toward elementary age children.” Another respondent explains, “The youth need career training.”

Trash (4 responses)
A few respondents noted concerns with trash/garbage in the street and neighborhood. One notes: “On city portions of streets, weeds not cut down, trash on streets.”

Concerns with police department actions (4 responses)
Four respondents reported concerns about police behavior and perceived harassment. One respondent explains: “I often see police cars pulling into an apartment complex near my house. While I am unsure

whether the police response is "excessive", I can say it is often, and I sometimes wonder about it." One respondent notes:

> *"BAD cops can be worse than ordinary criminals; the department makes complaints and complainants GO AWAY, & cops often treat the innocent like criminals & even laugh at victims and criminals laugh at both Steve Erkle-type innocent victims & at stupid cops who can't tell the difference. After decades of kids being treated like criminals by street cops & SROs 'teenagers are all criminals' and 'all animals' it's no surprise we have alienated so many kids..."*

Lack of sidewalks (3 responses)
Three respondents reported concerns with lack of sidewalks in the neighborhood and noted that it is difficult/dangerous for neighborhood residents to walk places or exercise without sidewalks.

Harassment/victimization of women (3 responses)
A few respondents described harassment/victimization of women in their neighborhood. One explains, "We have had incidents of men from outside the neighborhood driving through and verbally harassing women walking." Another explains, "On Woodcroft Parkway you have that VERY large apt complex. Do you know how much crime is there? You even had a young woman kidnapped from there two years ago never to be seen again….What are you doing about it?"

Abandoned cars (3 responses)
Survey respondents noted concerns with abandoned vehicles that are "permanently parked on the street and "Parked cars that don't move and we don't know who they belong to**."**

Fireworks (2 responses)
Two respondents specifically identified frequent/illegal fireworks being set off in the neighborhood as a concern.

Other concerns (19 responses)
Other concerns cited by respondents include:

- "Racist neighbors"
- Graffiti
- Truancy
- Bullying
- "Increased rental units"
- "Too many connecting neighborhoods"
- "Criminal element passing through to Duke Park is present at Duke Park"
- "Have to avoid Horton road and take longer route to get to places. Concerned about safety going to businesses around guess and Horton intersection."
- Too much street lighting/light pollution
- Drugs in schools and lack of meaningful response to this issue
- "No neighborhood unity"
- Failure of city manager to hire police chief in a timely manner
- Sex offenders

- "I would consider violent crime, excessive police response, and lack of activities as top concerns generally."

Neighborhood concerns by race/ethnicity of respondent

Considerable variance in neighborhood concerns exists across respondents by racial group. The top concern for White/Caucasian respondents (57.6%), American Indian/Alaskan Native respondents (66.7%), multiracial respondents (39.3%), Asian/Asian American respondents (37.5%) and respondents who did not provide their race (43.0%) is theft/burglary (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Top three concerns in my neighborhood, by race of respondent

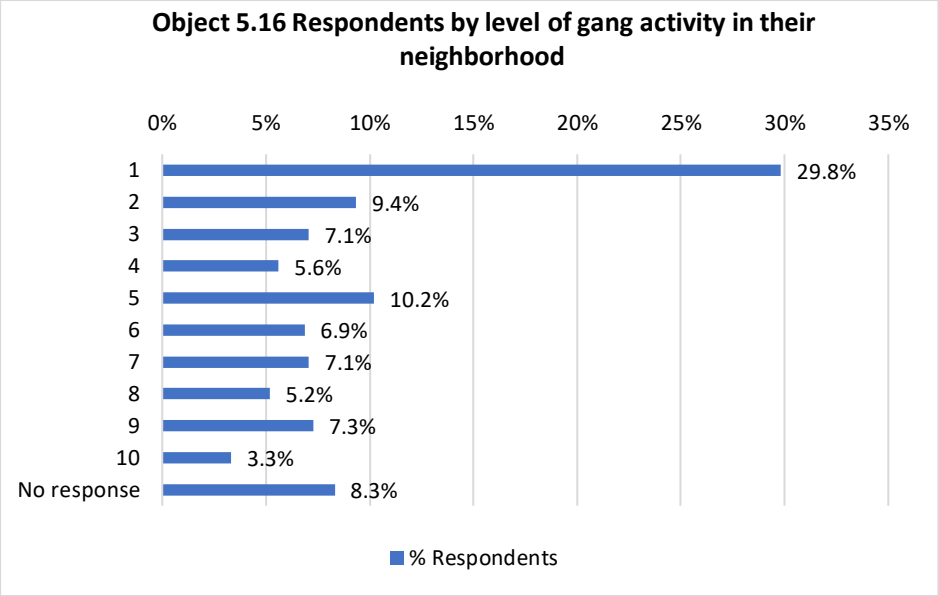
Top 3 concerns in the neighborhood	American Indian/ Alaska Native		Asian/Asian American		Black/African American		Multiracial		No race provided		White/Caucasian		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Unemployment	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	12.8%	1	3.6%	3	3.5%	12	4.9%	30	6.2%
Violent crime	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	32	29.4%	8	28.6%	23	26.7%	64	25.9%	127	26.4%
Gang activity	1	33.3%	3	37.5%	38	34.9%	7	25.0%	31	36.0%	54	21.9%	134	27.9%
Loud music	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	4.6%	1	3.6%	5	5.8%	18	7.3%	29	6.0%
Theft/burglary	2	66.7%	3	37.5%	29	26.6%	11	39.3%	37	43.0%	140	56.7%	222	46.2%
Domestic violence	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	5	4.6%	1	3.6%	14	16.3%	10	4.0%	31	6.4%
Vacant property/lots	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	2.8%	2	7.1%	4	4.7%	7	2.8%	16	3.3%
Drug dealing/drug use	1	33.3%	2	25.0%	28	25.7%	9	32.1%	31	36.0%	42	17.0%	113	23.5%
Inadequate police response	*0*	0.0%	2	25.0%	12	11.0%	7	25.0%	25	29.1%	55	22.3%	101	21.0%
Homelessness	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	9	8.3%	5	17.9%	6	7.0%	28	11.3%	50	10.4%
Excessive police response	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	3	2.8%	2	7.1%	8	9.3%	14	5.7%	29	6.0%
Lack of healthy food/hunger	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	6	5.5%	8	28.6%	11	12.8%	9	3.6%	35	7.3%
Unkempt property	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	7	6.4%	2	7.1%	7	8.1%	28	11.3%	46	9.6%
Lack of activities for children	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	42	38.5%	6	21.4%	16	18.6%	23	9.3%	89	18.5%
Lack of access to medical services	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	3	2.8%	1	3.6%	2	2.3%	4	1.6%	11	2.3%
Insufficient street lighting	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	13	11.9%	1	3.6%	5	5.8%	24	9.7%	44	9.1%
DNK/prefer not to answer	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	7.3%	0	0.0%	1	1.2%	11	4.5%	20	4.2%
Other	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	22	20.2%	8	28.6%	20	23.3%	89	36.0%	140	29.1%
All respondents	**3**		**8**		**109**		**28**		**86**		**247**		**481**	**1**

In contrast, theft/burglary was not in the top responses by Black/African American respondents, who were more likely to identify lack of activities for children (38.5%) as their top concern in their neighborhood. Gang activity was also a top concern for significant numbers of Asian American respondents (37.5%), Black/African American respondents (34.9%), and respondents who did not provide their race (36.0%). Violent crime and drug dealing/drug use were also identified by respondents across racial groups as top concerns in their neighborhood. This data suggests that different racial groups in Durham may experience different concerns and issues in their neighborhoods.

Gangs in my neighborhood

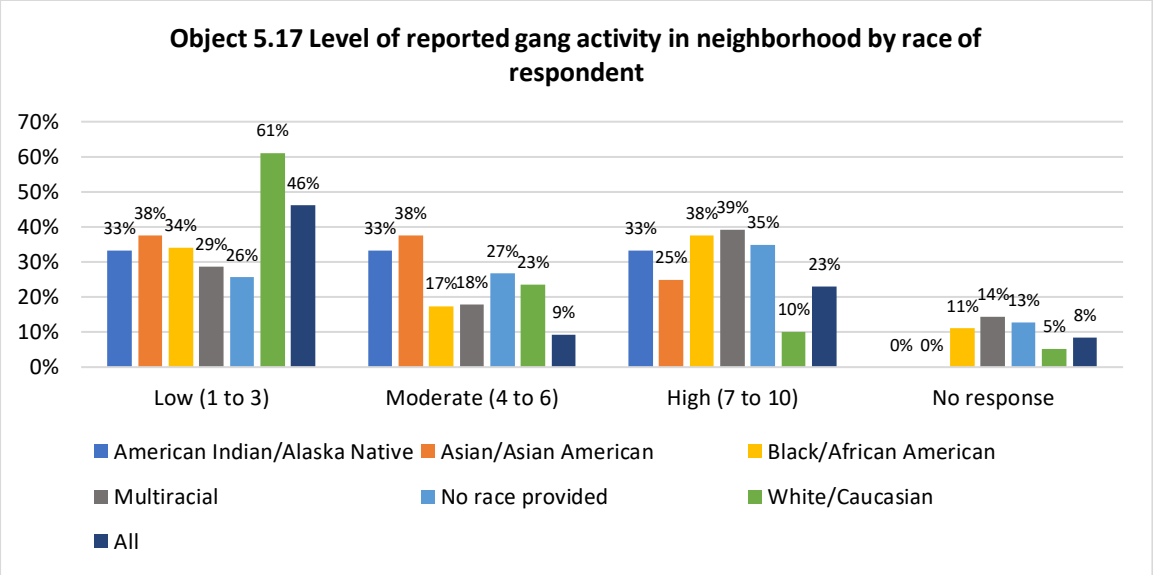
How active are gangs in your neighborhood? (481 responses)

Respondents were asked to score the level of gang activity in their neighborhood on a 10-point scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing the lowest level of activity and 10 representing the highest level of activity. Most respondents (29.8%) reported low to no gang activity in their neighborhood (Object 5.16). One in five respondents (22.9%) report that gangs are more active in their community (level 7 to 10). One in ten survey participants did not respond to this question (8.3%).



Racial disparities in reported neighborhood level of gang activity

This data was analyzed by race and significant disparities exist between racial groups (Object 5.17, p. 168). Most White/Caucasian respondents (61%) report living in an area with low levels of gang activity (between 1 and 3). Only about one third of American Indian/Alaska native respondents (33%), 38% of Asian/Asian American respondents, 34% of Black/African American respondents, 29% of multiracial respondents and 26% of respondents who did not report their race indicate they live in a neighborhood with low levels of gang activity. Similarly, over one third of Black/African American respondents (38%), multiracial respondents (39%) and respondents who did not report their race (35%) report living in a neighborhood with high levels of gang activity.



Zip code variances in level of gang activity

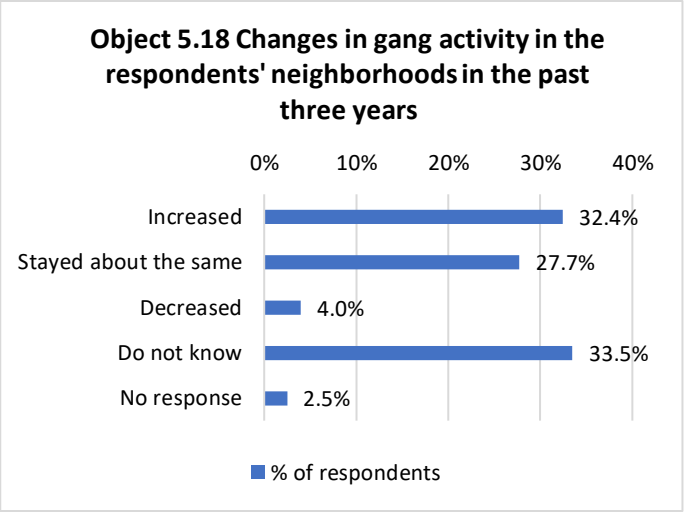
To explore this issue further, this data was examined by ZIP Code. Of 481 survey respondents overall, 395 individuals responded to this question and also provided their ZIP Code. Of these respondents, 26.6% reported high levels (7 to 10) of gang activity in their neighborhood (Table 5.5). This data was highly variable by ZIP Code. No respondents from ZIP Codes 27517, 27702, and 27560 reported high levels of gang activity in their neighborhood. While there were few respondents in ZIP Codes 27709 and 27708, these areas had the highest percentage of respondents reporting high levels of gang activity. ZIP Code 27709 is located in Research Triangle Park and ZIP Code 27708 covers Duke University.

Table 5.5 Respondents reporting high levels of gang activity by ZIP Code

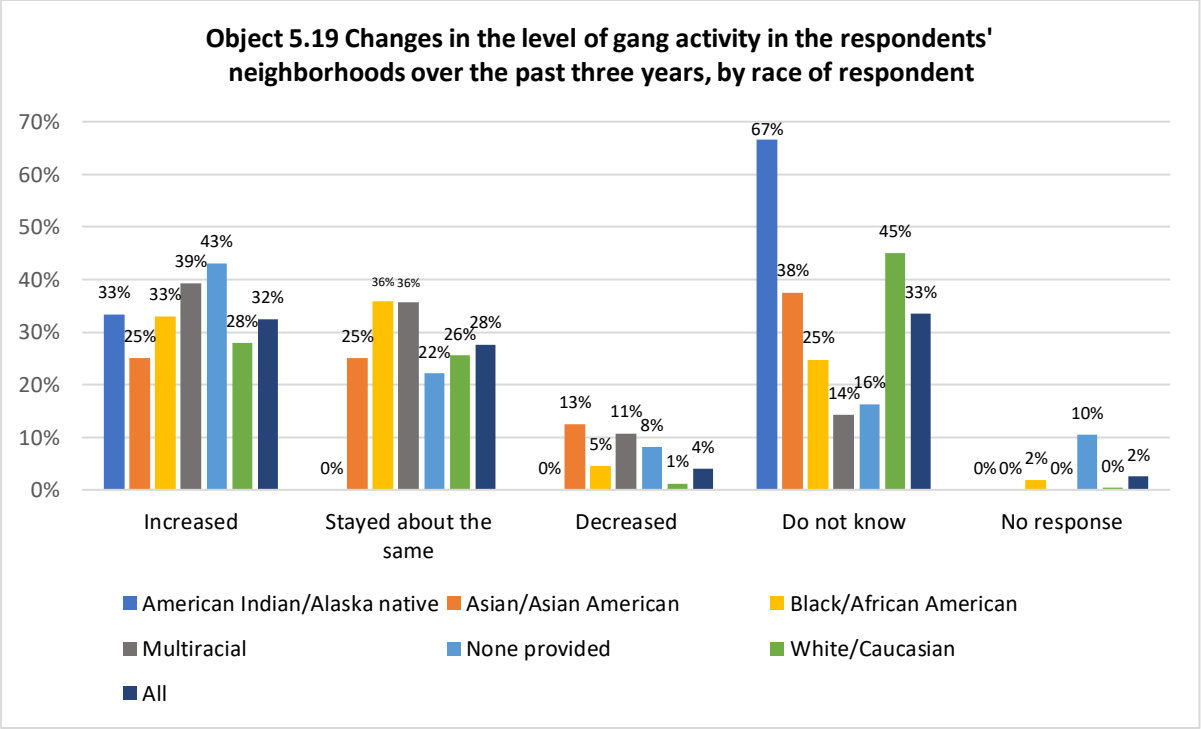
ZIP code	Total respondents	% reporting high levels of gang activity
27709	1	100.0%
27708	3	66.7%
27701	53	43.4%
27252	7	42.9%
27503	8	37.5%
27707	59	32.2%
27703	71	31.0%
27704	65	27.7%
27706	4	25.0%
27705	46	13.0%
27713	47	12.8%
27712	27	3.7%
27517	2	0.0%
27702	1	0.0%
27560	1	0.0%
All	395	26.6%

Has gang activity in your neighborhood increased, decreased, or stayed about the same in the past three years? (481 responses)

Survey respondents were asked to compare the current level of gang activity in their neighborhood over the past three years, and whether it has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same. More than one-third of respondents (33.5%) report that they do not know whether the level of gang activity has changed in their neighborhood (Object 5.18). Almost one third of respondents (32.4%) report that gang activity in their neighborhood has increased over the past 3 years. Only 4.0% of respondents report that gang activity in their neighborhood has decreased.

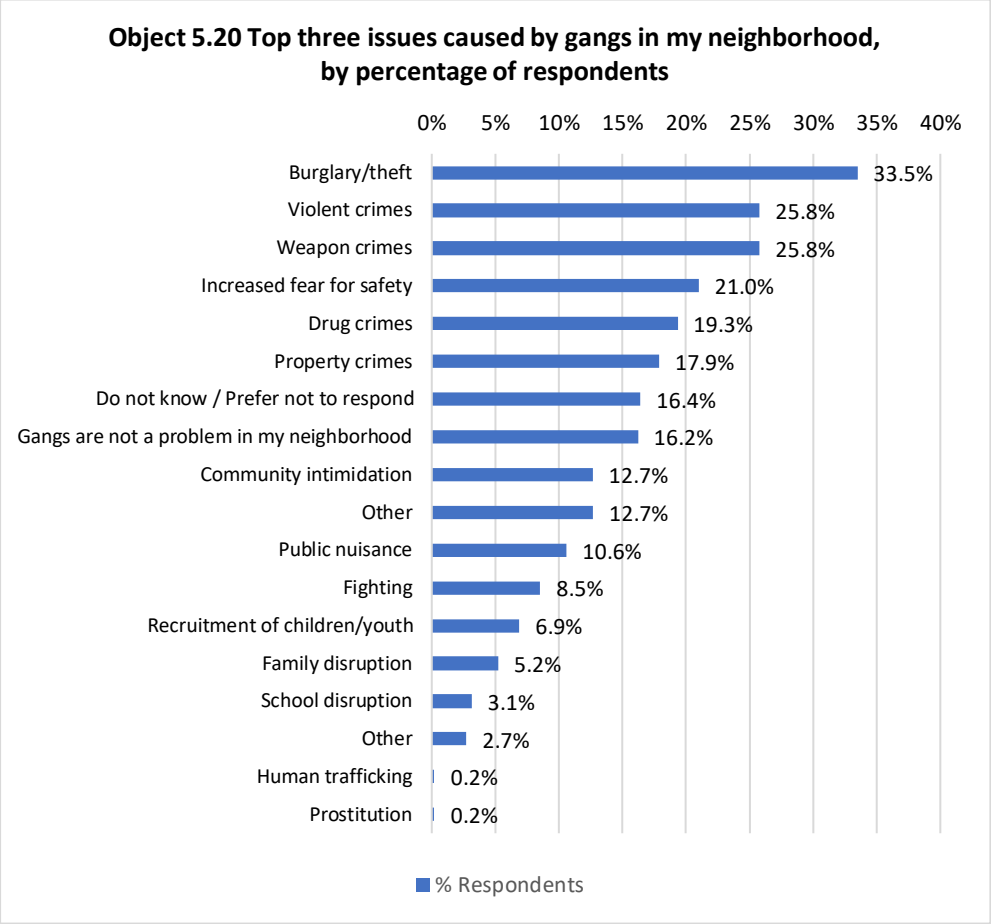


When this data is disaggregated and examined by racial groups, responses diverge widely. Individuals who did not provide racial information are the most likely to report that gang activity in their neighborhood has increased (43%) (Object 5.19). Approximately one-third of American Indian/Alaska native respondents (33%), Black/African American respondents (33%), and multiracial respondents (39%) report that gang activity in their neighborhood has increased over the past three years. Two-thirds of American Indian/Alaska native respondents (67%) and 45% of white respondents report that they do not know if gang activity in their neighborhood has changed.



What are the top three issues caused by gangs in your neighborhood? (481 responses)
Respondents were provided with a list of issues caused by gangs and could also write their own custom responses. This question requires respondents to prioritize concerns by limiting the respondent to three choices.

The top issue caused by gangs in their neighborhood reported by respondents is burglary/theft (33.5%), followed by violent crimes (25.8%) and weapon crimes (25.8%) (Object 5.20). A significant percentage of respondents (16.4%) reported that they do not know what issues are caused by gangs in their neighborhood and 16.2% of respondents reported that gangs are not a problem in their neighborhood.



Custom responses to this question were sorted and analyzed by topic.

Shootings/drive-by shootings/gunshots (15 responses)
Respondents report that shootings, drive-by shootings, and gunshots are a top problem caused by gangs in their neighborhood. One respondent notes: "Constant gunfire and drug dealing are a problem in my neighborhood." Others note that while shootings do not occur in their neighborhood, "It's not our neighborhood, per se, it's everywhere we move in Durham. Shots from vehicles are a reality & concern any time of day, any day of the week, for no real reason. There's no way to prepare or prevent."

Not sure if criminal activity in my neighborhood is related to gangs (10 responses)
Some respondents noted that they see criminal activity in their neighborhood but are unsure if this crime is related to gangs. One explains, "I can't say for certain that theft, burglary, property damage and vehicle accidents in the area are correlated with gangs, but those are the tangible things I see."

Speeding cars/dirt bikes/ATVs (5 responses)
A few respondents report that vehicles speeding through their neighborhood and street racing are the top activities caused by gangs in their neighborhood. One respondent describes: "Dirt bike gangs creating moving roadblocks, driving out in front of cars. Street racing on both sides of the road. Drive-by shootings."

Gang activity in adjacent neighborhoods (4 responses)
A few respondents described gang activities in nearby neighborhoods that affect their neighborhood. One explains, "I don't see gang related activity in Stephens Woods, but I hear of it in surrounding areas. We have had break ins (homes & cars) and I have had my windows broken. I have friends who live in other parts of Durham (Thelma & Dearborn) who are afraid to let their kids go outside because of gangs."

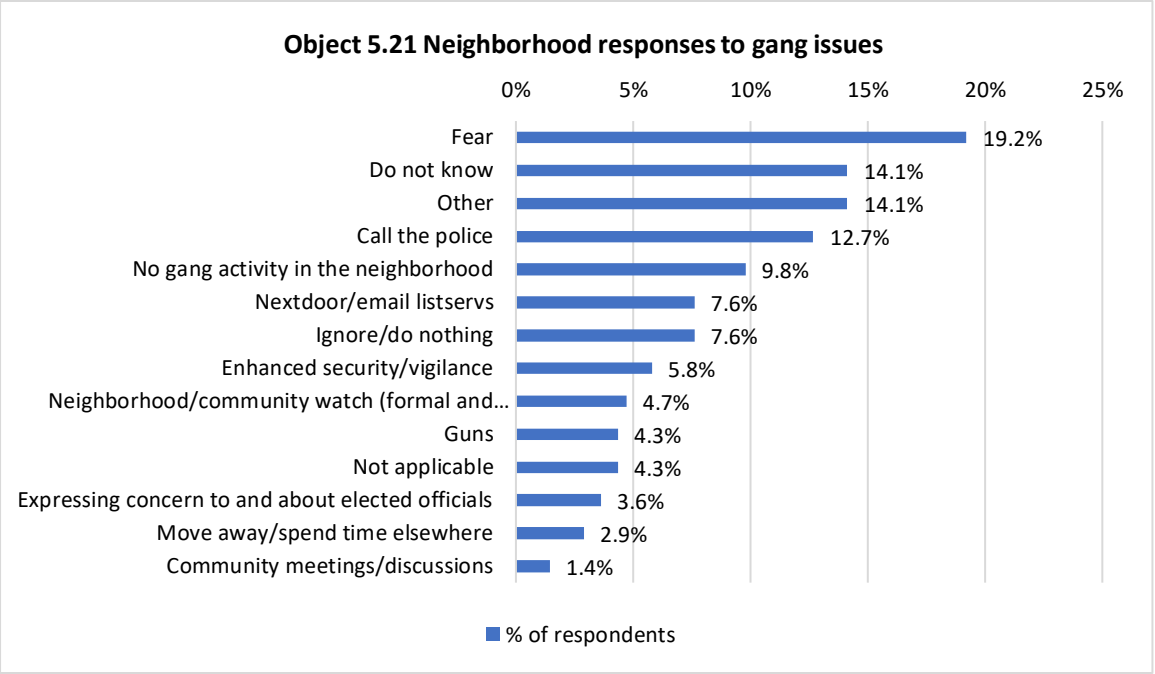
All issues are a concern (4 responses)
A few respondents noted that gangs are responsible for many of the issues named in the questionnaire and that it is impossible to identify only 3 responses.

Other responses

- Police are being constrained from enforcing the law
- There are no consequences for gang members who commit crimes
- "Calling the Youth gangs is an excuse for the lack of resources in our communities. No housing or trade instruction."
- "Gangs are not the problem, lack of access to resources and opportunities are. No one wants to join a gang when they have many other promising opportunities to be self-sufficient and to have meaningful community and safety. We need to look at the conditions of those joining gangs and get at the root causes. Poverty, systemic racism, lack of funding for schools are all potential root causes."
- "There are gangs over here, but the police laugh and play with them knowing their mo…lock them up for a few years it will change…
- "The police are the worst gang."
- "I prefer to use the word brotherhoods – they can come and disrupt anyone's neighborhood at any given time if they see someone, they have had social media beef with."

How have people in your neighborhood responded to gang activity? (276 responses)
This question was asked as an open-ended question and respondents were given the option to provide their own custom response. These responses were sorted and analyzed.

The top answer was survey respondents was fear/being afraid, cited by 19.2% of respondents (Object 5.21). These answers are described in more detail below. Many respondents provided complex answers that fit into multiple categories.



Fear (53 responses)

The top response by survey participants to this question is that people in their neighborhood respond to gang activity with fear. Respondents reported that they "live in fear." 28 responses in this category specifically mention that residents stay inside their homes, avoid going outside after dark, and restrict their movements around the community out of fear. One notes that residents "Cower in their homes, don't go out at night." Another notes that residents experience "fear, moving away, depression, anxiety, inability to leave the house, insomnia, decreased work performance" because of gang activity in their neighborhood. One respondent explains: "People in my neighborhood are frightened. They are scared to go out at night, they barricade themselves in their homes, they are not able to enjoy their freedom."

Call the police (35 responses)

Many respondents report that neighbors contact the police to report gang activity. Respondents described reporting crimes to police but expressed frustration that the district attorney does not hold people accountable for committing crimes: "They're all pissed, and they've all called 911 multiple times. They all understand the DA is to blame for being soft on crime." Some respondents expressed frustration that police have not been responsive when crimes are reported. One respondent reports: "We called about gunshots in our area three times, and police only came once." Another respondent notes:

> *Tried to call the police but the police presence is virtually non-existent until after a shooting occurs. This may not be a politically correct opinion, but I think regular police patrol and presence would be incredibly helpful in my neighborhood. Having a police car drive up and down the street multiple times a day would do a lot of good in my opinion. Otherwise, neighbors are just scared to call the police and be considered "snitches".*

Ignore/do nothing (34 responses)
Many respondents noted that people in their neighborhood ignore gang activity, look the other way, or do nothing. One notes that gang issues in their neighborhood are "mostly ignored. They wait for the police to do something, then we discuss defunding police. Lots of confusion." Others report that there is "no organized response" to gangs in their neighborhood.

Nextdoor/listservs (21 responses)
Many respondents reported that they use the website Nextdoor or email listservs to communicate in their neighborhood about criminal and gang activity.

Enhanced security measures/vigilance (16 responses)
Numerous respondents described that they have purchased security systems and/or cameras, installed outside lighting, put up privacy fences, strengthened door locks, and are more vigilant about safety. One notes: "Guns. Lighting increased. Video cameras. Support for each other. Reduce time outdoors at night."

Neighborhood/community watch (formal and informal) (13 responses)
Respondents reported that their neighborhood has formal neighborhood watch programs or informal community watches where people keep an eye and report to each other about criminal/suspicious activity.

Guns (11 responses)
Several respondents reported that they have purchased firearms for protection. One notes: "Everybody now has security systems and guns to protect themselves."

Expressing concern about elected officials (10 responses)
Numerous respondents reported that their neighbors have complained/discussed the policies of elected officials, including city council members and the district attorney and expressed unhappiness with the "defund the police" movement.

Move away/spend time elsewhere (8 responses)
Several respondents report that they or their neighbors have moved away from high crime neighborhoods. One notes: "Many with the means to leave have moved away from the neighborhood, either to more stable neighborhoods in Durham or to surrounding communities. The gun violence has divided the community in terms of calls for interaction and communication with the police." Others report that they now go outside of Durham for shopping and other activities because of concerns about gang activity: "We have begun to shop in other areas than northern Durham, traveling to Roxboro, Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and the Brier Creek area for our shopping needs."

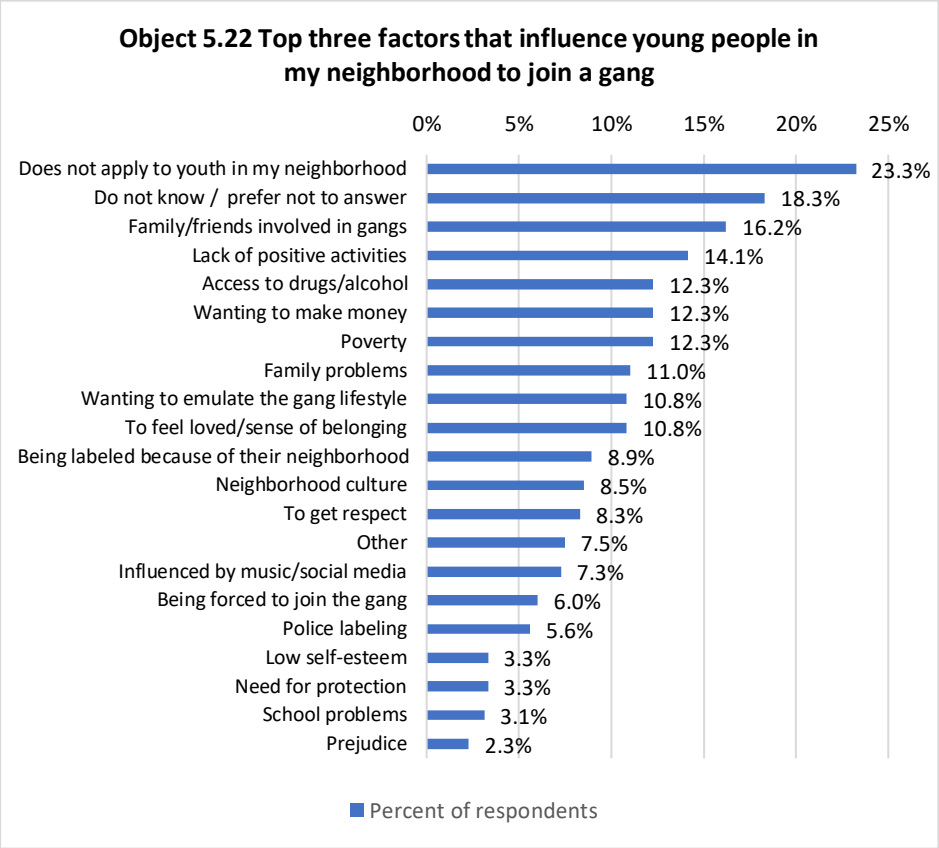
Community meetings/discussions (4 responses)
Several respondents described that their neighborhood has held discussions and/or community meetings regarding gang activity.

Other responses
- "Depression, anxiety, drug use"
- "Inviting police to join community meetings"

- "Very unhappy with local elected leaders and the current district attorney"
- Participating in Bull City United activities
- "Just so it's not at my house…because these parents also know…make them accountable. Until they are 18 years old it's the parent responsibility anyway"
- "I'm not sure if there is gang activity. I would like to know how to recognize and identify.

What are the top three factors you have observed that influence young people in your neighborhood to join a gang? (476 responses)

Respondents were provided with a list of factors that might influence young people to join a gang and could also write their own custom responses. This question requires respondents to prioritize factors by limiting the respondent to three choices. Top responses suggested a low level of information about gangs in their neighborhood by respondents (Object 5.22).



Almost one fourth of all respondents (23.3%) report that youth in their neighborhood are not involved in gangs and almost one in five (18.3%) report that they do not know why young people in their neighborhood join gangs. Other top responses include family friends involved in gangs (16.2%), lack of positive activities (14.1%), access to drugs/alcohol (12.3%), wanting to make money (12.3%) and poverty (12.3%).

Other responses were sorted and analyzed. Some responses are complex and fit into multiple categories.

Family issues (10 responses)
Some respondents specified family issues that caused youth in their neighborhood to become involved in gangs. Respondents stated that absent fathers, "lack of love and parenting," and "Low quality to wholly absent parenting" are factors in youth joining gangs.

All the above (3 responses)
A few respondents noted that all the factors listed in this question are factors in youth joining gangs.

Other responses:

- Lack of consequences for misbehavior
- Lack of social support
- Admiration of gang members
- To survive
- For self-protection
- Lack of respect for authority
- Gentrification and unstable housing situations
- Economic oppression
- Wanting to be accepted by the wrong crowd
- Alienated by law enforcement treatment
- Systemic racism

Racial disparities in reasons youth in the neighborhood join gangs

Responses to this question were disaggregated and examined by respondents' race (Table 5.6). Top responses were quite variable across racial groups. The top responses for Black/African American respondents are "Lack of positive activities" (25.7%), "Wanting to make money" (19.3%), and "Does not apply to youth in my neighborhood" (18.3%). Multiracial respondents reported that top reasons are "Lack of positive activities" (28.6%) and "Poverty" (28.6%).

Table 5.6 Factors that influence youth in my neighborhood to join gangs, by race of respondent

Factors that influence youth to joing gangs	American Indian/Alaska Native		Asian/Pacific Islander		Black/African American		Multiracial		No race provided		White /Caucasian		Total	
Access to drugs/alcohol	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	8.3%	3	10.7%	46	66.7%	1	0.4%	59	12.4%
To get respect	1	33.3%	2	25.0%	15	13.8%	4	14.3%	3	4.3%	15	6.1%	40	8.4%
Wanting to make money	2	66.7%	0	0.0%	21	19.3%	5	17.9%	11	15.9%	20	8.1%	59	12.4%
Influenced by music/social media	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12	11.0%	3	10.7%	7	10.1%	13	5.3%	35	7.4%
Wanting to emulate the gang lifestyle	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	13	11.9%	5	17.9%	11	15.9%	22	8.9%	52	10.9%
To feel loved/sense of belonging	1	33.3%	2	25.0%	16	14.7%	4	14.3%	7	10.1%	22	8.9%	52	10.9%
Poverty	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	12.8%	8	28.6%	15	21.7%	22	8.9%	59	12.4%
School problems	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	3	2.8%	2	7.1%	2	2.9%	6	2.4%	15	3.2%
Being forced to join the gang	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	6	5.5%	1	3.6%	15	21.7%	6	2.4%	29	6.1%
Being labeled because of their neighborhoo	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	16	14.7%	5	17.9%	13	18.8%	7	2.8%	43	9.0%
Police labeling	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	13	11.9%	4	14.3%	3	4.3%	5	2.0%	27	5.7%
Family problems	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	12.8%	6	21.4%	9	13.0%	24	9.7%	53	11.1%
Lack of positive activities	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	28	25.7%	8	28.6%	11	15.9%	19	7.7%	68	14.3%
Neighborhood culture	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	4.6%	3	10.7%	14	20.3%	19	7.7%	41	8.6%
Low self-esteem	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	6.4%	0	0.0%	4	5.8%	5	2.0%	16	3.4%
Need for protection	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	3.7%	0	0.0%	3	4.3%	9	3.6%	16	3.4%
Prejudice	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.9%	1	3.6%	5	7.2%	4	1.6%	11	2.3%
Do not know / prefer not to answer	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	15	13.8%	3	10.7%	5	7.2%	64	25.9%	88	18.5%
Family/friends involved in gangs	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	19	17.4%	5	17.9%	16	23.2%	36	14.6%	78	16.4%
Does not apply to youth in my neighborhoo	0	0.0%	2	25.0%	20	18.3%	3	10.7%	8	11.6%	85	34.4%	112	23.5%
Total respondents	3		8		109		28		69		247		476	

Top choices from White/Caucasian respondents are

- Does not apply to youth in my neighborhood (34.4%),
- Do not know/prefer not to respond" (25.9%), and
- Family/friends involved in the gang" (14.6%).

Asian/Asian American respondents chose:

- To get respect (25.0%),
- To feel loved/sense of belonging" (25.0%), and
- Does not apply to youth in my neighborhood (25.0%).

American Indian/Alaska native respondents report chose wanting to make money (66.7%) as their top response.

Respondents who did not provide their race cited:

- Access to drugs/alcohol (66.7%),
- Family/friends involved in gangs (23.2%),
- Poverty" (21.7%), and
- Being forced to join a gang" (21.7%).

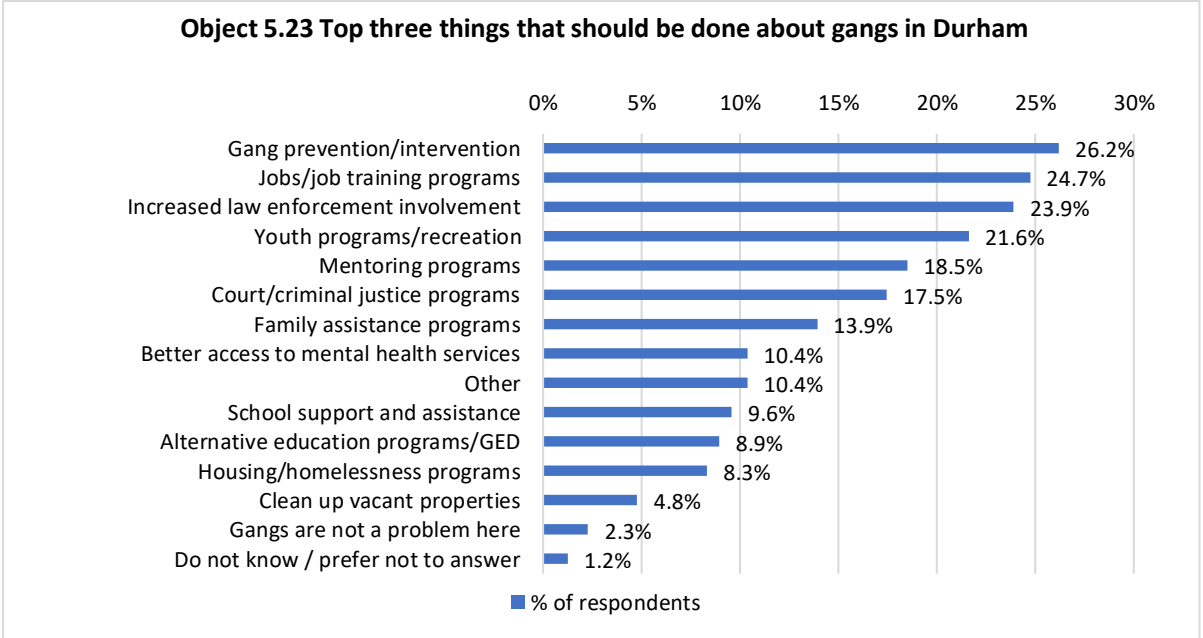
What should be done about gangs in Durham?

Community residents were asked to provide input on strategies that they would like to see implemented in Durham to address gangs

Top three things that should be done about gangs/gang activity in Durham (481 responses)

Respondents were provided with a list of strategies to respond to gangs in Durham and could also write their own custom responses. This question requires respondents to prioritize responses by limiting the respondent to three choices. Top responses are gang prevention and intervention (26.2%), jobs/job training programs (24.7%), and increased law enforcement involvement (23.9%) (Object 5.23).

Object 5.23 Top three things that should be done about gangs in Durham



Other responses were sorted and analyzed.

Stricter sentences and penalties (22 responses)
Some respondents reported that there is a need for stricter sentences and penalties for criminal conduct. Respondents noted that there is a need for "increased prosecution of gang crime," and "heightened consequences in the court system." One noted that "many times the criminal is back on the streets before the arresting officer gets off their shift. Until the justice system enforces the law, crime will continue to escalate, and innocent people will be hurt." Another respondent stated that

> *Stricter law/bail policies by the current DA, judges, and lobby for more resources for the courts provided by the state. Increase morale of our police officers, via leadership from the new chief, and more importantly via FULL support from the city council for staffing and other police resources. (ref. routine Taser maintenance request denied) *Accept trial from Shot Spotter and access for purchase, if applicable. More federal cooperation from the US Marshalls, ATF, FBI, etc., to prosecute violent offenders with Federal Sentences. Last police chief indicated a lot of these violent crimes are committed by a few violent repeat offenders…Durham has a reputation for being soft on violent crime due to lenient treatment by the DA, and some judges. Low bail lets repeat offenders continue their violent assaults. Highlight arrests for violent crimes. Citizens read reports of car shootouts in broad daylight, but do not read arrests reports and prosecution of same.*

Increased enforcement activities (9 respondents)
A few respondents suggested that specific police activities are needed, including "law enforcement who specializes in gangs and their behavior" and "targeted law enforcement programs to remove illegal guns from our streets." One respondent suggested more aggressive suppression tactics, including "zero tolerance. Search and frisk. Deport illegals. Throw the book at anyone caught with an illegal/unregistered/stolen weapon." Another respondent suggested that the community should "quit giving gang members a free pass. Got rid of Lopez but we did not have those problems. Pay police officers a living wage You know where the problem areas are. Gangs are not afraid of getting in trouble they know they won't. Everyone is so afraid of targeting the black and brown. But that is where the problem is. Neighborhoods can't have it both ways."

Elected officials should do more (5 respondents)
A few respondents suggested that the city council and district attorney should be more involved in the gang issue. One respondent noted:

> *City Council's lack of support led to our chief leaving. We need a chief and a Mayor/City Council with a more positive approach to police training to stop the problems, but we need more police outreach and neighborhood outreach. I have seen people, even the Chancellor of NCCU, get a cold shoulder when they ask City Council to stop shooting in their neighborhoods. We need a good informant program with follow up.*

Education reform (3 respondents)
Three respondents suggested educational changes including expanding "apprenticeship programs to learn skilled trades in construction," "education reform," and rezoning schools so students can attend their neighborhood school within walking distance.

Other responses

Other responses include:

- "If it is allowed, police should go to housing authority properties and do identification checks when they see young men standing around outside to make sure they live there because that is what makes the neighborhood unsafe for those that live there when someone sees them and start to shooting. That will be a trespassing charge."
- "Someone or somebody--preferably from the peer group--has to guide teens through a multitude of problems, past/present/anticipated."
- "Don't give a million-dollar budget to a known leader of a national gang. Do your research."
- "Got to know how to connect with them."
- "Instead of gentrification if EVERYTHING provide more affordable housing...and not 'projects.'"
- "We need food and money. The assets the other kids have in their neighborhoods and that belong to their families, we do not have, resulting in us making our own 'street corps' to live."
- "It all starts in the home. Educating parents and children is vital. Programs to reinforce the importance of an education, for children whose parents can't do so, need to take place."

Responses to this question were also analyzed by the race of respondents. The top responses varied across racial group and are reported on Table 5.7 on page 179.

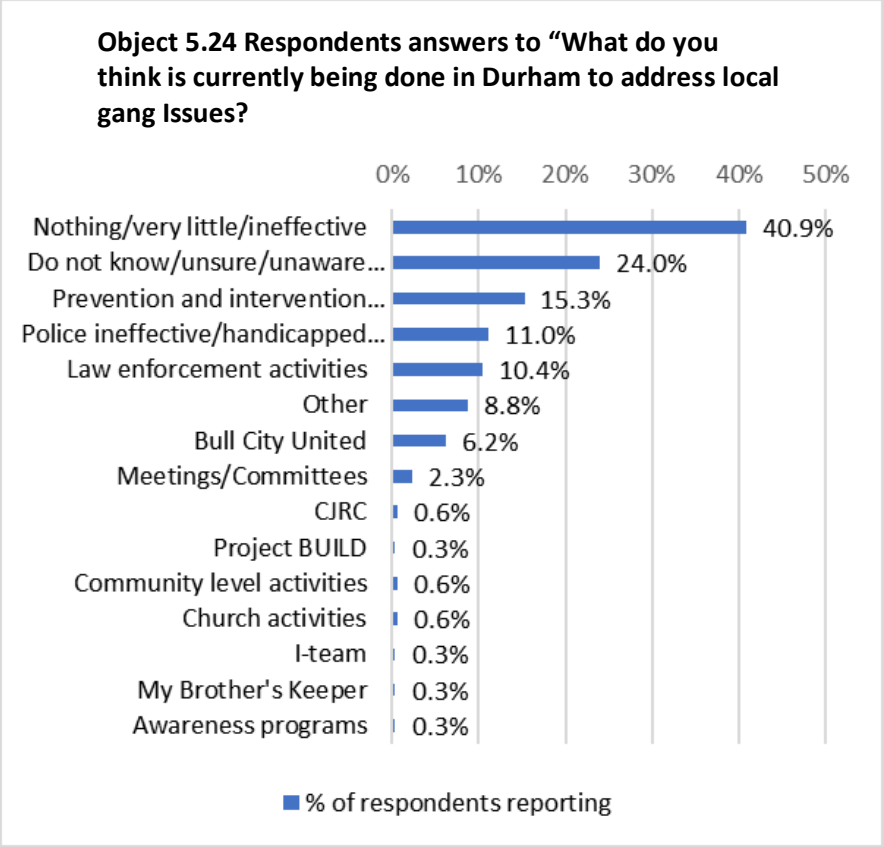
Table 5.7 Top three things that should be done about gangs, by race of respondent

	American Indian/Alaskan Native		Asian/Asian American		Black/African American		Multiracial		None provided		White/Caucasian		Total	
Top 3 responses	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Gang prevention/intervention	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	36	33.0%	6	21.4%	9	10.5%	73	29.6%	126	26.2%
Jobs/job training programs	0	0.0%	2	25.0%	37	33.9%	8	28.6%	11	12.8%	61	24.7%	119	24.7%
Increased law enforcement involvement	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	16	14.7%	10	35.7%	19	22.1%	68	27.5%	115	23.9%
Youth programs/recreation	1	33.3%	2	25.0%	40	36.7%	7	25.0%	4	4.7%	50	20.2%	104	21.6%
Mentoring programs	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	24	22.0%	3	10.7%	5	5.8%	55	22.3%	89	18.5%
Court/criminal justice programs	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	17	15.6%	6	21.4%	13	15.1%	47	19.0%	84	17.5%
Family assistance programs	1	33.3%	1	12.5%	22	20.2%	3	10.7%	2	2.3%	38	15.4%	67	13.9%
Better access to mental health services	1	33.3%	3	37.5%	17	15.6%	3	10.7%	2	2.3%	24	9.7%	50	10.4%
Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	6.4%	5	17.9%	7	8.1%	31	12.6%	50	10.4%
School support and assistance	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	14	12.8%	3	10.7%	4	4.7%	24	9.7%	46	9.6%
Alternative education programs/GED	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	14	12.8%	5	17.9%	5	5.8%	18	7.3%	43	8.9%
Housing/homelessness programs	2	66.7%	1	12.5%	7	6.4%	3	10.7%	5	5.8%	22	8.9%	40	8.3%
Clean up vacant properties	0	0.0%	1	12.5%	2	1.8%	4	14.3%	6	7.0%	10	4.0%	23	4.8%
Gangs are not a problem here	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	3.7%	2	7.1%	2	2.3%	3	1.2%	11	2.3%
Do not know / prefer not to answer	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	3.5%	3	1.2%	6	1.2%
All respondents	3	100.0%	8	100.0%	109	100.0%	28	100.0%	86	100.0%	247	100.0%	481	100.0%

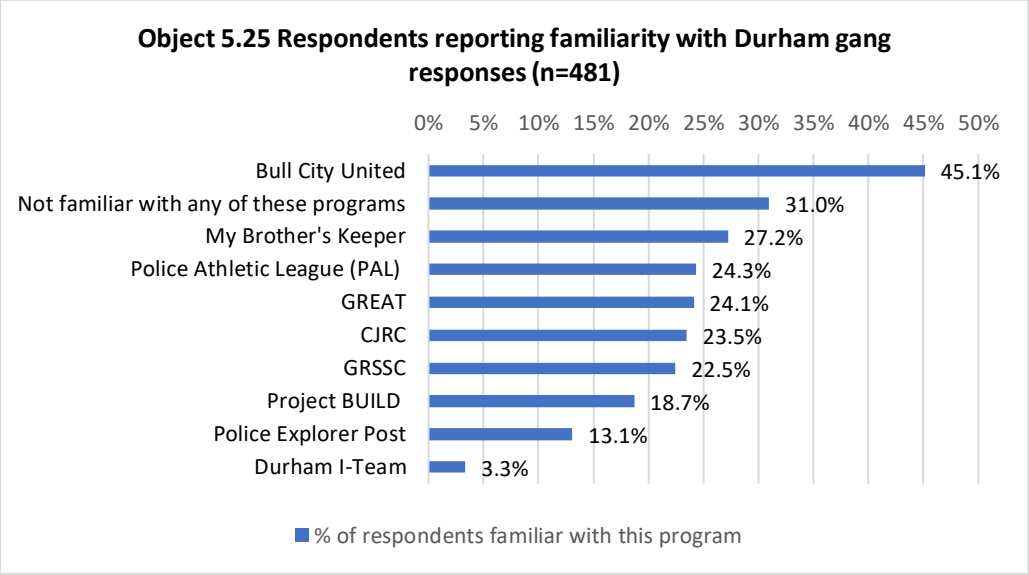
Community residents' perceptions of current strategies

Community residents were asked a series of questions about existing strategies to identify their level of awareness of current strategies, their current assessment of those strategies' effectiveness, and their current satisfaction with the current response to gangs.

What do you believe is currently being done in Durham to assist with local gang issues? (309 responses) Respondents formulated their own custom responses to this open-ended question and responses were sorted, analyzed, and are reported on Object 5.24. Almost two-thirds of respondents (64.9%) report that nothing/very little is being done or that they do not know what is being done. About one in six respondents (15.3%) reported that they are aware of prevention/intervention activities. Over one in ten respondents (11.0%) reported that they believe the police are being constrained from performing their duties by political leaders. A significant percentage of respondents (10.4%) reported on law enforcement activities targeting gangs. A small percentage of respondents (8.8%) reported on other activities such as non-profit/non-governmental responses, neighborhood activities, or faith-based activities. Very small percentages of respondents identified any of Durham's current gang responses, with Bull City United the most recognizable of these responses (6.2%).

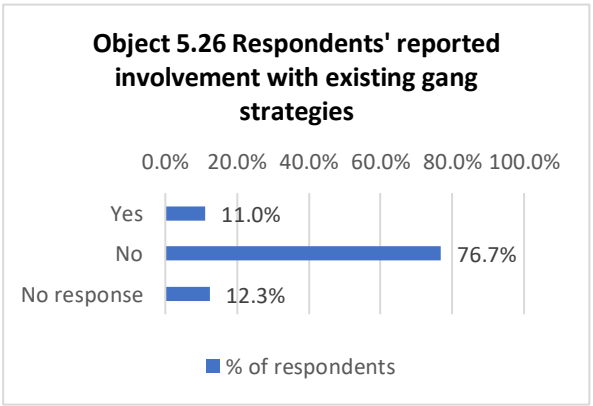


Local gang/violence initiatives that residents are familiar with. (481 respondents)
Survey respondents were provided with a list of current gang activities/strategies being implemented in Durham and asked to mark the activities that they are familiar with (Object 5.25). Respondents were most likely to report familiarity with Bull City United (45.1%). The second most common response was "Not familiar with any of these programs" (31.0%).

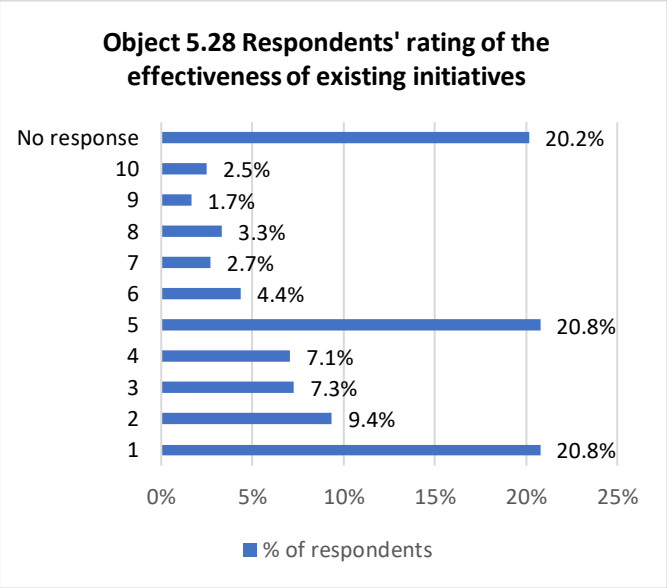


Around one-fourth of respondents reported familiarity with My Brother's Keeper (27.2%), Police Athletic League (24.3%), G.R.E.A.T. (24.1%), Criminal Justice Resource Center (CJRC) (23.5%), and the Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee (GRSSC) (22.5%).

Have you or a family member received help from or participated in any of these initiatives/activities? (481 respondents)
A little more than one in ten respondents (11.0%) reported that they or their families had received help from or participated in these existing activities (Object 5.26). Over three-fourths of respondents reported no involvement or participation with existing initiatives.



How well do you think these programs/initiatives are working? (481 respondents)
Respondents were asked to rate the existing initiatives on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very ineffective and 10 being very effective. Respondents reported low levels of effectiveness for the initiatives (Object 5.28). The average rating by respondents is 3.7 (384 responses). One in five respondents did not answer this question. The most common ratings by respondents are 1 (20.8%) and 5 (20.8%). A majority of respondents (44.6%) rated the effectiveness of existing initiatives at 4 or lower.



If you or family members have participated in these initiatives, is there anything you would change or improve about these initiatives/activities? (27 responses)
Responses to this question fell into several categories. Several respondents reported that existing programs/initiatives need additional funding: "Probably need some other options and need more funding for the current initiatives." Several respondents reported that they would not change anything about the existing initiatives. One respondent stated, "They are trying, and I appreciate that." Another noted, "Because of them, our city is getting better." Additional comments included:

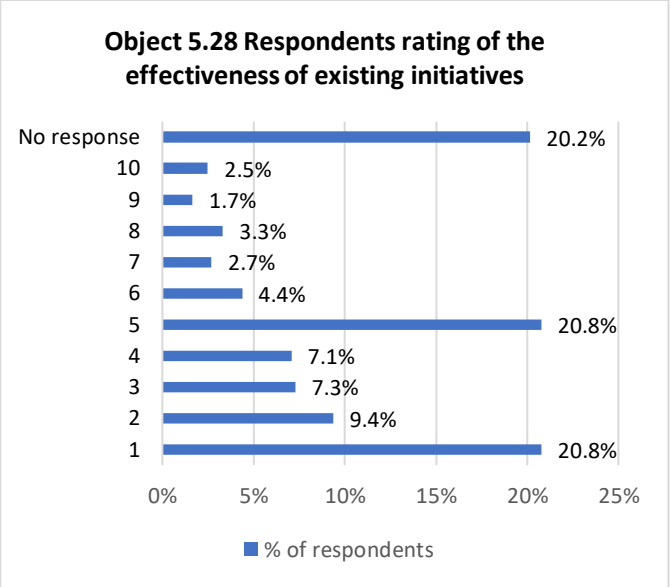
- "Consistency is a HUGE problem and once the gangs get the kids it's no turning them back"
- "Continue funding with appropriate oversight to ensure fidelity."
- "I wish funding for programs would result in city sharing about effectiveness of programs."

A few respondents suggested that current initiatives should be defunded or are ineffective. One noted:

> *I have witnessed or taken part in every one of these 'interventions.' I would not vote a dollar of funding to BCU or MBK if I were a politician. I would work with CJRC to make them less institutional, so justice-involved people trusted them more and engaged on a deeper level. I would greatly increase funding for food, housing, jobs, and mental health/SUD that interrupt and disrupt the systems that shatter our communities of color over and over again.*

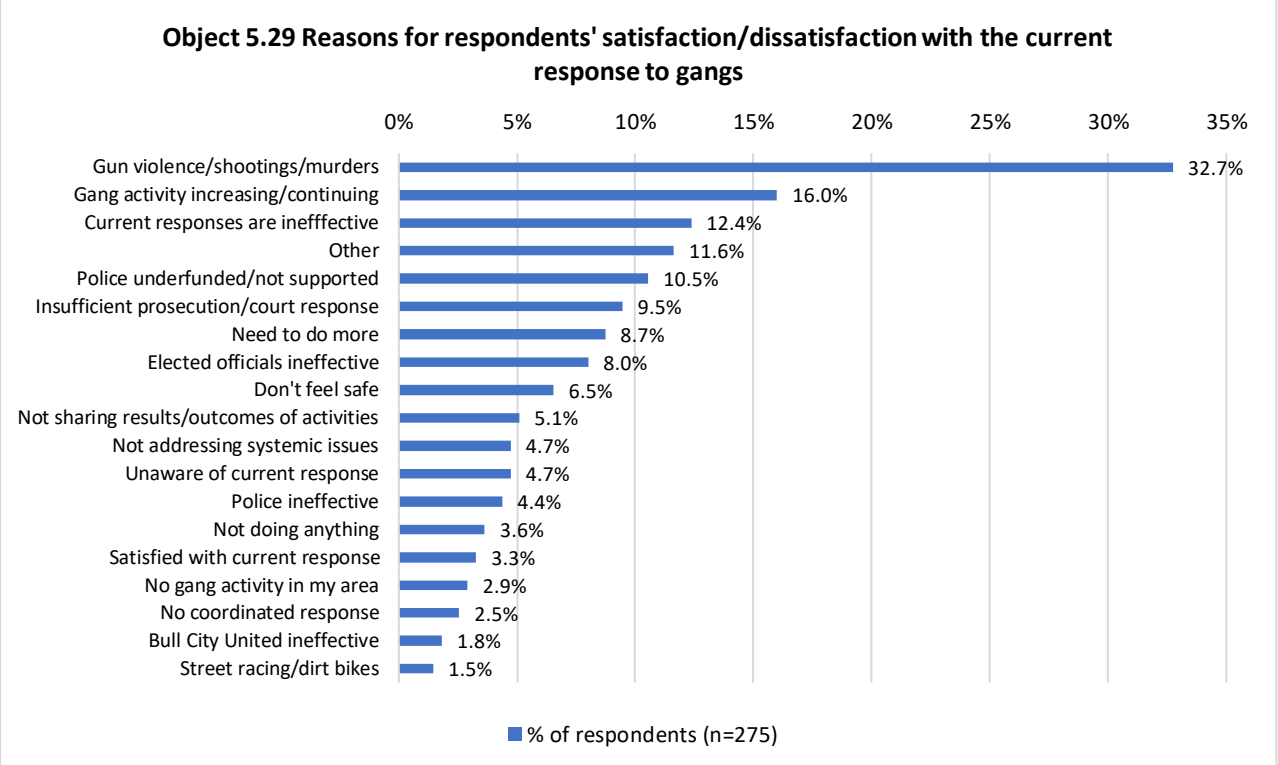
How satisfied are you with the current response to gangs in Durham? (481 respondents)

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the current response to gangs in Durham on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 10 being very satisfied (Object 5.28). Respondents reported low levels of satisfaction with the current response to gangs, with only 10.2% of respondents reporting a satisfaction level of 7 or higher.



What are the reasons for your satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the current response to gangs? (275 responses)

Respondents were asked to provide a reason for their satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the current response. This question was a custom response field where respondents could write their own answer. Many respondents provided complex answers with multiple topics/thoughts; these responses were indexed by every category in which they applied. The most frequent answers provided by respondents include gun violence/shootings/murders (32.7%), gang activity increasing/continuing (16.0%), and the current responses are ineffective (12.4%) (Object 5.29). Responses in these categories are described in more detail below.



Gun violence/shootings/murders (90 respondents)

By far, the most common reason for dissatisfaction provided by respondents was a perception of increased/continuing gun violence, including shootings and murder. Respondents described that they hear gunshots in their neighborhood or have been at close proximity to shootings: "murders on my street and in front of my house. Constant shootings and gun shots in my neighborhood." Others noted that while they do not experience shootings in their neighborhood, gun violence makes them feel unsafe. One respondent stated, "I am afraid to be out driving in our streets. Innocent victims are being shot all over the city." Several noted that while they do not have direct knowledge of shootings, the regular reports of shootings in Durham are concerning: "Seems like gang activity and violent crime have increased over the pandemic, here as elsewhere. Not informed enough to have valid input."

Gang activity increasing/continuing (44 respondents)

Respondents also mentioned that gang activity and gang violence appear to be increasing in recent years. One noted that, "Gang violence is on the rise and while my neighborhood isn't high risk, drive by shootings are everywhere and I see no real action being taken. Or if there is, there is no noticeable improvement." Another noted, "In the 11 years living here, gang activity dropped but seems to have steadily increased in the past couple of years based on the gun violence statistics shared publicly." Several respondents indicated that while they do not know very much about gangs, they are concerned about the level of gang activity in Durham: "Still too much gang activity in the news. Not in my neighborhood, but in other parts of Durham."

Current responses are ineffective (34 respondents)

Numerous respondents reported dissatisfaction with current strategies because crime levels in Durham remain high. One noted "Because they don't appear to be effective, as evidenced by open gang activity (shootings) in the street." Another stated, "Crime is getting worse, and we will sell our property and move to Cary or other areas with low crime." Respondents pointed to issues with theft and violent crime as signs that gang strategies are ineffective. One respondent expressed that "I see no improvement. I am more fearful than ever and if I could afford to relocate out of Durham I would do so immediately."

Police are underfunded/not supported (29 respondents)

Some respondents expressed concerns that police officers are being constrained from enforcing the laws because of budget shortfalls, the "defund the police" movement, and by policies that require officers to obtain written consent to search vehicles. One noted that:

> *I do not believe there is enough support from our city council to provide officers with the tools and staff to combat the violence, gangs, and guns in Durham. I fully support community outreach programs, but they must be accompanied with law enforcement. We need more good officers on staff that are part of or familiar with the communities they are policing.*

A few respondents reported a belief that Durham Police Department has insufficient personnel to address gang issues: " We know that the police department is understaffed. Even 911 isn't properly staffed."

Insufficient prosecution/court response (26 respondents)

Some respondents specifically addressed concerns with the current district attorney's policies around prosecution and bail. One expressed dissatisfaction with the "Lack of consequences and often the

"revolving door" of people being charged, sentenced, released then continuing criminal activities." Another noted: "Our district attorney is more concerned about lowering the crime rate through ignoring crime than actually creating meaningful change. It doesn't matter who's perpetuating the crime those responsible need to be locked up, regardless of what the woke optics look like." Other respondents also expressed concerns about judges: "The lack of punishment carried out by the courts. The police can arrest someone 100 times for the same crime, but these liberal courts aren't going to do anything about it."

Need to do more about gangs (24 responses)
Respondents indicated that they believe that Durham should do more to prevent youth gang involvement and gang-related crime. One respondent noted: "I picked middle of the road, but I am concerned that the increase in gun violence and larceny may be due to not enough prevention and police presence." Another respondent stated that "I would like to see more investment in things like BCU, Project BUILD, job placement, and youth activities." Another explained, "The programs we do have do not have the adequate resources to help out on a large scale."

Elected officials are ineffective (22 responses)
Some respondents described frustration with the current response to gangs by policymakers. These respondents focused primarily on the relationship between the city council and Durham Police Department. One respondent noted that "City council does not allow DPD to pursue offenders and allows the activity to continue. City Council ran off a great police chief who wanted to reduce violent crimes." Other respondents noted that they want to see local elected officials take a more active role in responding to gang issues: "I don't see the Mayor, City Council nor police chief doing anything but talking while little innocent kids are being shot and senior citizens can't sit on their porch because of shootings nor walk in the communities."

Do not feel safe in the community (18 respondents)
Several respondents expressed feeling unsafe in their neighborhood and the wider Durham community. One explained that "I don't experience much in the area where I live. I hear a lot on the news though. I would like for the whole city to be safer, not just certain, high rent districts." Another respondent described feeling "It's becoming more and more dangerous to live here."

Failure to report results of current initiatives (14 respondents)
Some respondents described concerns that while Durham has numerous gang initiatives, the outcomes of these initiatives are not readily accessible to residents. One respondent explained: "I understand that there are people on the frontlines doing good work; however, doesn't feel like it's working. If there is progress, people need to hear about it." Another expressed it is "not clear whether programs in place are effective."

Need to address systemic issues (13 respondents)
Several respondents suggested that Durham needs to focus more on root/systemic causes of gangs such as poverty, unstable housing, gentrification, inequity and racism. One respondent explained, "Durham needs to address the systemic racism and societal inequities that perpetuate gang existence." Another respondent noted that gangs are a symptom of larger social issues: "I think when things run smoothly and equitably gangs should not be an issue. Fire ants do not make nests in healthy soil but in the sandy, depleted soil. Gangs fill in a gap in society for young people."

Unaware of current response (13 respondents)
Some respondents explained that they are unable to rate the current response because they are not familiar with current activities. One respondent stated: "I don't know how well they are working if I have never heard of any of them."

Police are ineffective (12 respondents)
Some respondents were critical of the current law enforcement response to gangs, indicating that police do not respond to calls for service, solve crimes, make arrests or respond effectively to gang activity. One noted: "The police seem to be unable or unwilling to enforce laws and criminals have taken over the city." Another respondent cited concerns with "the number of shootings, slow response time by police, low solve rate for incidents, weak DA."

Nothing is being done (10 respondents)
A few respondents reported that nothing is being done to address gangs. One noted that Durham's gang response is "a lot of talking and no actions taken. I don't think you all care because it's not happening in your neighborhoods."

Satisfied with current response (9 respondents)
A few respondents reported that they are happy with the current gang response. One respondent noted: "There has been a sustained effort for decades to address gangs and gang violence. I am proud that Durham has continued to try and find innovative ways to address the issue." Another reported that efforts are paying off: "Because of them, our city is getting better and better."

No gang activity in my area (8 respondents)
A few respondents noted that gang activity does not occur in their neighborhood. One noted that, "I'm satisfied as gang activity seems to be low in my neighborhood, HOWEVER, in Durham as a whole, perhaps more could be done."

Lack of coordinated response (7 respondents)
Respondents reported concerns that there is a lack of coordination between agencies in responding to the gang issue. One respondent described that "It doesn't seem like there is a coordinated response to support affected communities or deter gang activity." Another respondent noted that coordination needs to occur across agencies: "If gang activity is on the rise, there is probably not enough coordination between the police, the community, the schools, the health services and (maybe) churches." One respondent stated a concern is "Too many groups talking about the problem with no coordinated, research-based, comprehensive long-term approach."

Bull City United ineffective (5 respondents)
A few respondents expressed concerns that the Bull City United program is ineffective. One respondent noted that "Everything seems scattershot and ineffective. Bull City United seems to be the place we are placing all of our eggs and yet it's not even advertised the open 18 positions the city/county are funding. Just seems emblematic of the disjointed response we have in our community."

Street racing/dirt bikes (4 respondents)
Four respondents articulated concerns about ongoing issues with street racing and "dirt bike gangs," and a lack of police response to these issues. One respondent noted: "The frequency of street racing and gunfire without police response is disturbing. "

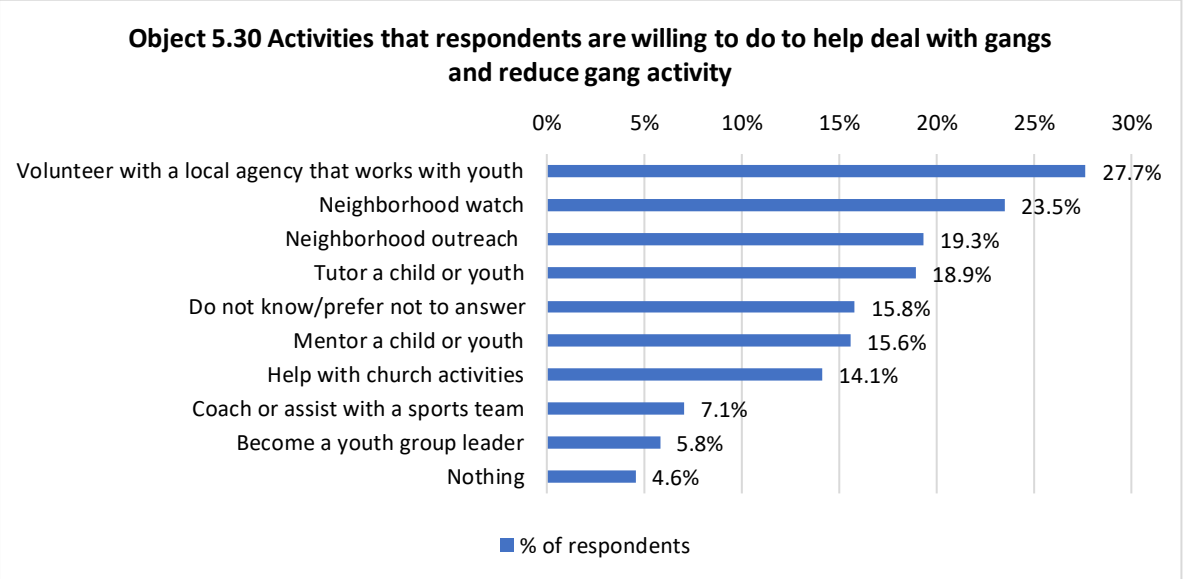
Other responses

Some responses did not fit into the categories utilized and are listed below.

- "Communities need to work with the police; police need to stop profiling and assuming ALL black and brown young men are up to no good; & stop police brutality; police all the same, white, black, brown."
- "A lot of these young people are exposed to what life can be like outside of that community. There needs to be earlier intervention and programs in school that promote a positive lifestyle. For some people, this life is all they know."
- "Give them a chance"
- "The police gang unit needs more resources."
- "I think these individuals has lot they need to talk about with a Peer Support Specialist, and they are looking for support in the wrong place."
- "It's just not GANGS, and we need to be clear that being a member of a gang is not criminal, Criminal behavior IS!!!! It is the behavior that needs to be prosecuted. Restorative justice might be reinstituted to help mitigate the long-term effects put on innocent victims. A bigger question is why incarcerate someone long term when re-education/behavior modification would be more effective and cost less....if the person committing the crime changes THEIR behavior with verification."
- "Knowing Durham and the conversation/budget allocation around crime and policing, I imagine we're overspending on ineffective police-led initiatives rather than addressing the root causes."

Question: What are you willing to do to help deal with gangs and reduce gang activity in Durham? (481 respondents)

Respondents were provided with a list of volunteer activities and were asked which activities they might participate in to assist with reducing gang activity in Durham. The most common response was to volunteer with a local agency that works with youth (27.7%), participate in neighborhood watch (23.5%), or do neighborhood outreach (19.3%) (Object 5.30). Only 4.6% of respondents reported that they would do nothing. This suggests that Durham residents are willing to be engaged in helping to address local gang issues.



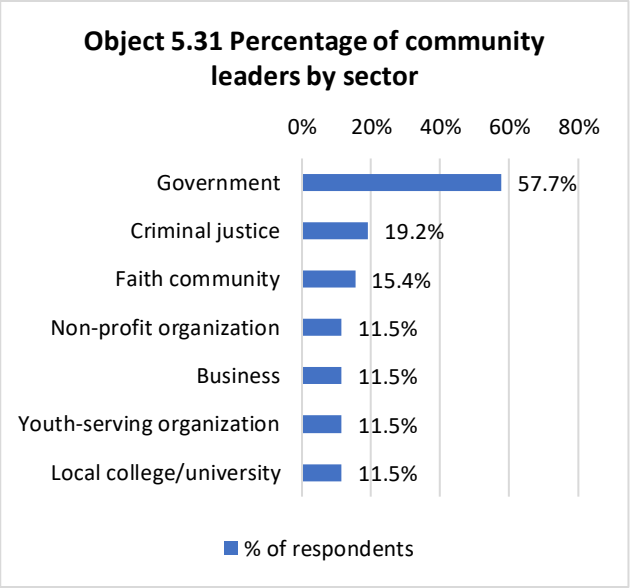
Community leader surveys

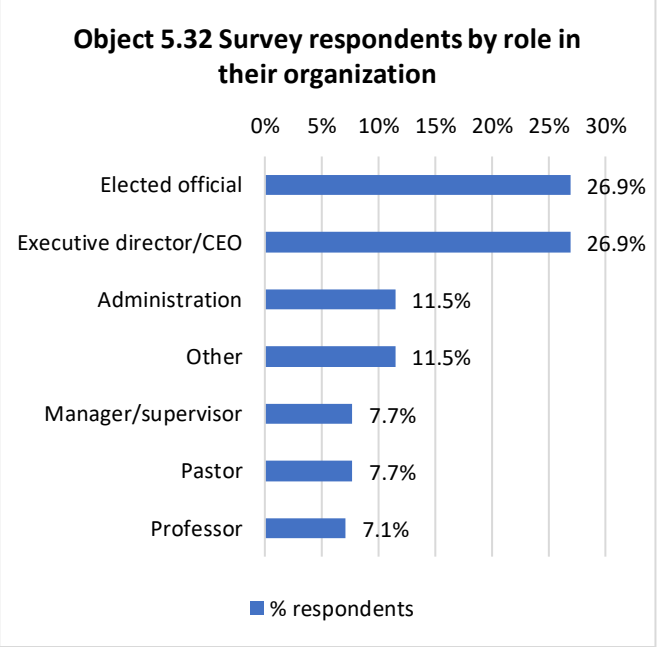
Members of the Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee, a governing board that oversees Durham's anti-gang efforts were surveyed for this report along with other key leaders identified by Jim Stuit, Gang Reduction Strategy Manager, and local elected officials (county commission, city council and mayor). The survey was conducted anonymously on the Survey Monkey platform. Twenty-six individuals responded to the online survey, which was comprised of twenty-five questions.

About the survey respondents and the organizations/agencies they lead

Survey respondents represented multiple sectors of the community, with the majority (57.7%) from governmental organizations (Object 5.31). Agencies/organizations represented include:

- Christian Assembly Church
- City of Durham
- DeWhit Facility Services
- Durham Children's initiative
- Durham County Commission
- Durham County Department of Public Health
- Durham County Government
- Durham County Sheriff's Office
- Durham County Youth Home
- Durham Ministers in Prayer
- Durham Police Department
- Durham Public Schools
- North Carolina Central University (NCCU)
- North Carolina Department of Public Safety – Community Corrections
- U.S. Attorney's Office – Middle District of NC
- West End Community Foundation



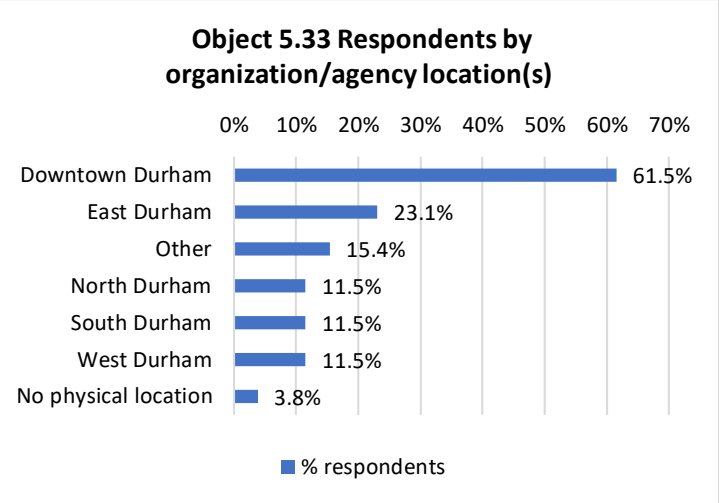


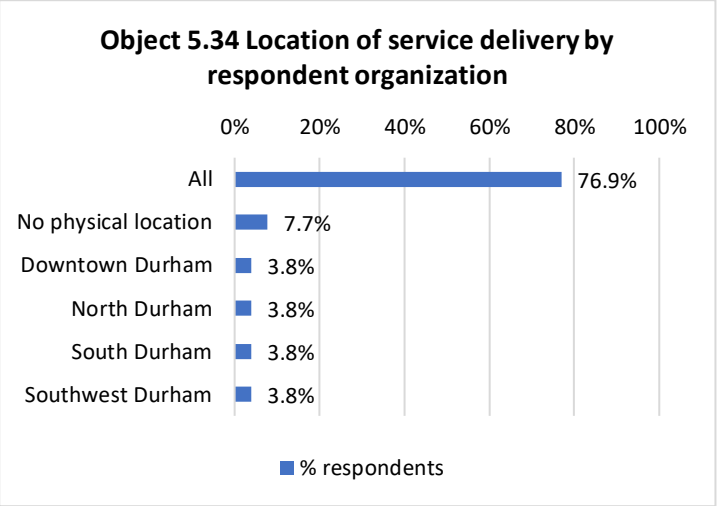
Survey respondents primarily serve in leadership roles in their organizations, with one-fourth serving as an elected official 26.9%), one-fourth as executive director (26.9%) and 11.5% in administration (Object 5.32). One in ten respondents (11.5%) report serving in another role, which includes board officer, student representative, and Project Safe Neighborhoods Coordinator.

Respondents were asked to describe the location of their organization/agency and could select all relevant options or provide a custom option.

Over half of all respondents (61.5%) report their organization/agency is in Downtown Durham, followed by 23.1% of respondents reporting their organization is in East Durham and 15.4% reporting another location (Object 5.33). Other locations reported include all of Durham, multiple offices, Southwest Durham, and Greensboro.

Respondents were also asked where their organization provides services. Three-fourths of respondents (76.9%) report providing services throughout Durham, while 7.7% reported that they have no physical location (Object 5.34). Small percentages of respondents report providing services only in specific neighborhoods.



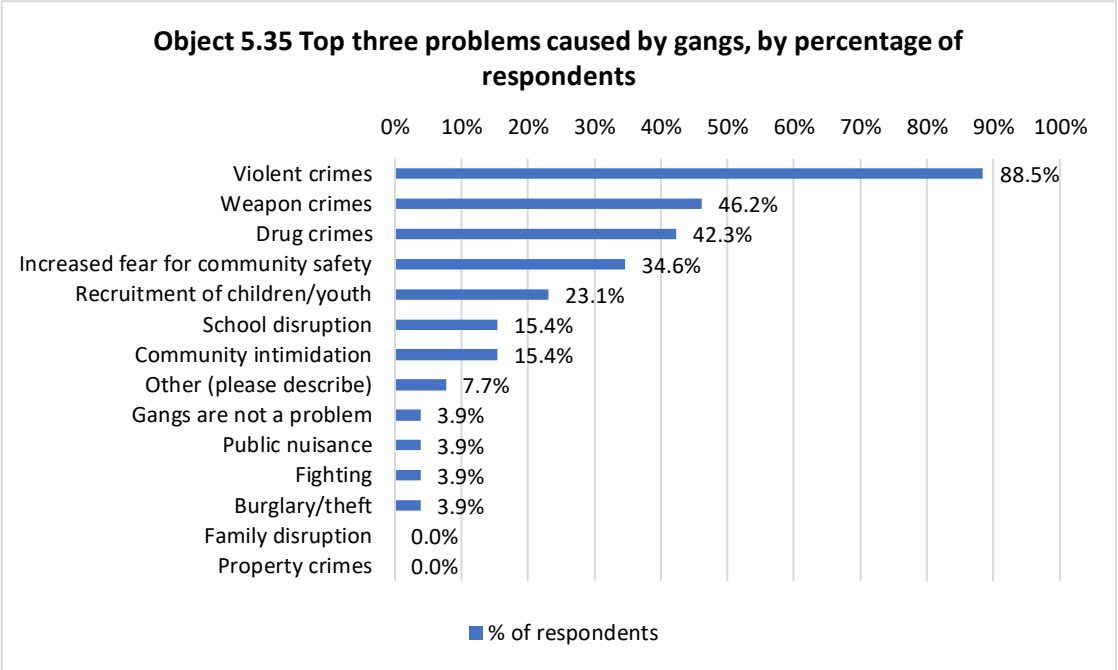


Community leaders' perceptions of gang activity in Durham

Do you think gangs are active in Durham? If so, please pick the top three problems, if any, that gangs present in Durham.

Survey participants were asked if they believe that gangs are active in Durham, and if so, to identify the top three problems caused by gangs in Durham. Respondents could select up to three answers and/or provide custom responses to this question. All survey respondents reported that they think gangs are active in Durham.

Most respondents (88.5%) report that violent crimes are one of the top three problems caused by gangs, followed by 46.2% who selected weapon crimes and 42.3% of respondents who selected drug crimes (Object 5.35). Increased fear for community safety was selected by more than a third of respondents (34.6%).



Two respondents provided custom answers:

- "All of the above in our housing communities"
- "Internalized oppression that is reinforced by white supremacy."

In the past three years, has gang activity in Durham increased, stayed the same, or decreased? (25 respondents)

Most community leaders responding to this survey (72.0%) report that gang activity has increased in the past three years. About one-fourth of respondents (24.0%) report that it has stayed the same and 4% of respondents responded that they do not know/prefer not to answer.

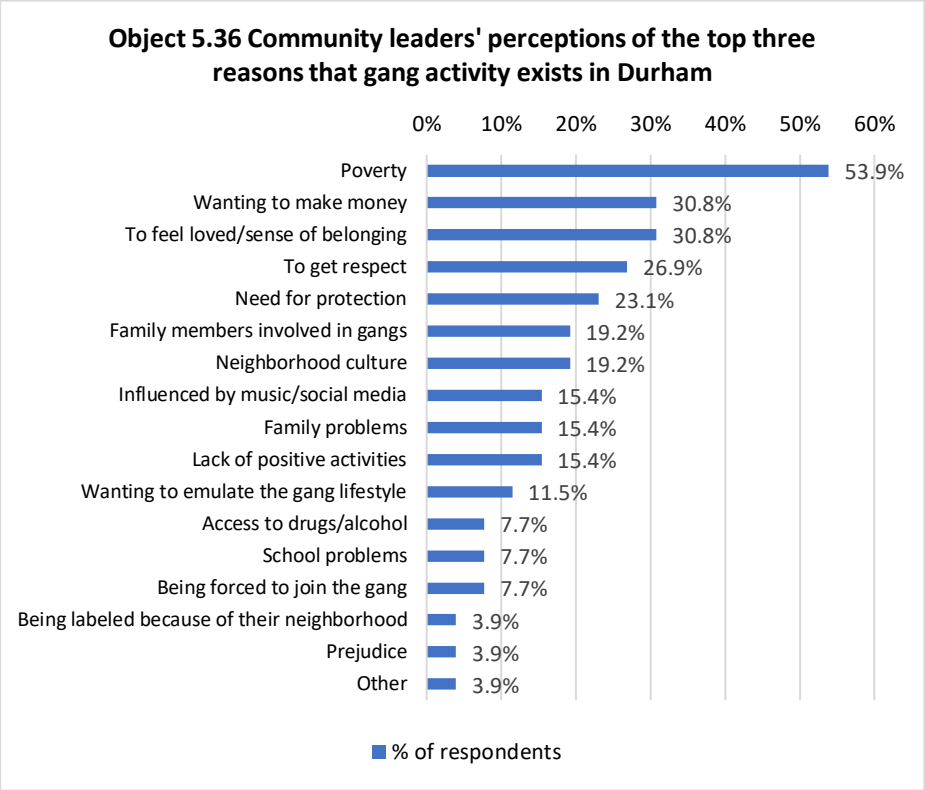
Have you had any personal interaction with a/any gang member(s) from Durham in the past year? (26 respondents)

Half of the community leaders who participated in the survey (50.0%) have interacted personally with a/any gang member(s) from Durham in the past year. A smaller percentage, 42.3% reported that they had not interacted with a/any gang member(s) in the past year and 7.7% did not know/prefer not to answer.

Community leaders' opinions about reasons for gang activity in Durham. (26 respondents)

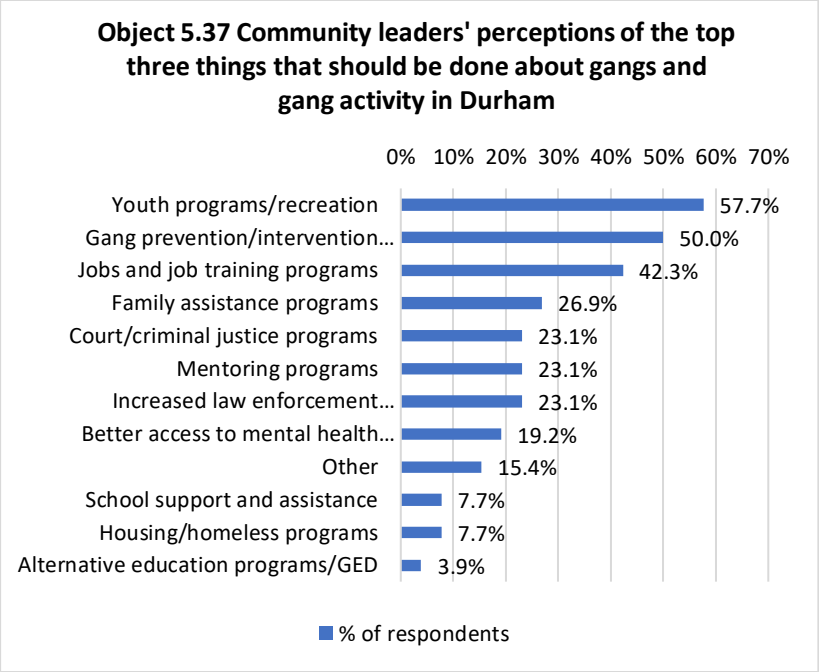
Gangs are complex and have many contributing factors in local areas. To obtain consensus responses, community leaders were asked to identify the top three causes so that they could address multiple factors. More than half of community leaders (53.9%) selected poverty, followed by "wanting make

money" (30.8%) and "to feel loved/sense of belonging (30.8%) (Object 5.36). Respondents could also provide a custom answer to this question, and one community leader reported that one of the top three reasons that gang activity exists in Durham is "access to guns."



What should be done about gangs in Durham? (**26 respondents)**

Survey respondents were provided with a list of activities and were asked to select their top three choices and/or provide a custom response. The top response by community leaders was youth programs/recreation (57.7%), followed by gang prevention/intervention (50.0%), jobs/job training programs (42.3%) and family assistance programs (26.9%) (Object 5.37, p. 192).

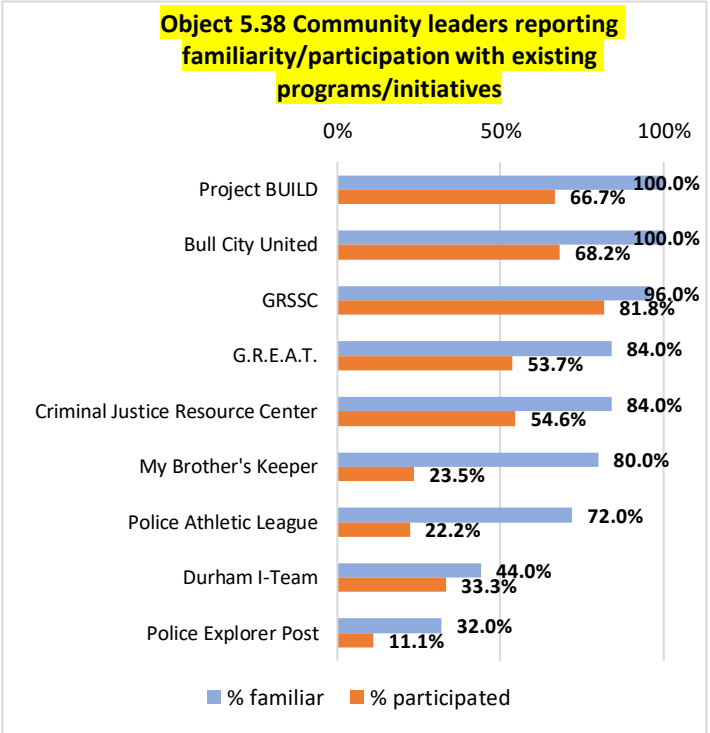


Custom responses provided by community leaders include:

- Targeted law enforcement against leaders, shooters
- Early intervention - elementary school - programming to make youth and their families aware of gangs and how to make wise choices
- Expansion of existing programs
- We need to reinstitute CAT Team and make more of the repeat offenders serve more time.

Community leaders' familiarity with participation in and satisfaction with existing programs/initiatives. (25 responses)

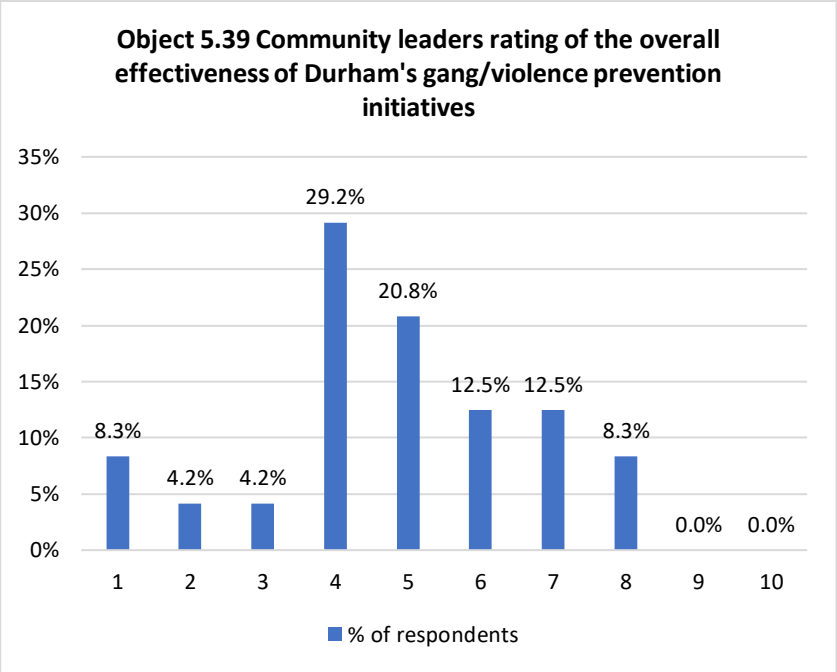
Community leaders were asked about their familiarity and participation with local gang/violence prevention initiatives and expressed a high degree of familiarity with many programs (Object 5.38). Community leaders were most likely to report that they were familiar with Project BUILD (100.0%), Bull City United (100.0%), the Gang Reduction Strategy Steering Committee (GRSSC) (96.0%), Gang Resistance education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) (84.0%) and the Criminal Justice Resource Center (84.0%). Respondents were least familiar with the Police Explorer Post (32.0% and the Durham I-Team (44.0%).



Community leaders who responded to the survey were most likely to have participated with the GRSSC (81.8%), Bull City United (68.2%), Project BUILD (66.7%), and the Criminal Justice Resource Center (54.6%). Fewer than one-fourth of community leaders reported participating with the Police Athletic League (22.2%) and Police Explorer Post (11.1%). The prominent level of involvement with the GRSSC is likely because this survey was sent primarily to active and former members of the GRSSC.

How well do you think these initiatives are working overall? Do you have any comments about any specific initiatives? (24 responses)

Respondents were asked to rate the overall community response on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 representing very ineffective and 10 representing very effective. The most common rating of the effectiveness of local initiatives by community leaders is a 4 (29.2%) and the average rating provided by respondents is a 5, suggesting that many community leaders only consider current initiatives to be moderately effective (Object 5.39).



Community leaders were asked if they had any feedback about specific programs and thirteen survey participants provided a response to this question. These include:

- "None of them address poverty or wealth building"
- "Overall, I think we have a lot of resources and there has been important work and progress, but we still have to do more"
- "All are worthwhile, but together they are not solving the problem"
- "Depends on program. Some are very effective like Project Build and CJRC. Others are not, like MBK"
- "Bull City United efforts MUST be linked with law enforcement intelligence and data"
- "Expand Project Build/Bull City United"
- "I'm unable to speak to the effectiveness of any of the aforementioned initiatives. I'm unaware of their performance targets and whether they're being met"
- "Bull City United is useless and a complete waste of resources. CJRC and Project BUILD have done really good work. I wish the others were better known"
- "Police Athletic League should partner with Bull Baseball and Church League, since City can get more funding than these Non-Profit groups"
- "Keep working and speaking to community and youth"
- "Those that I participated in are great programs. Staff are hard-working and dedicated to their mission"

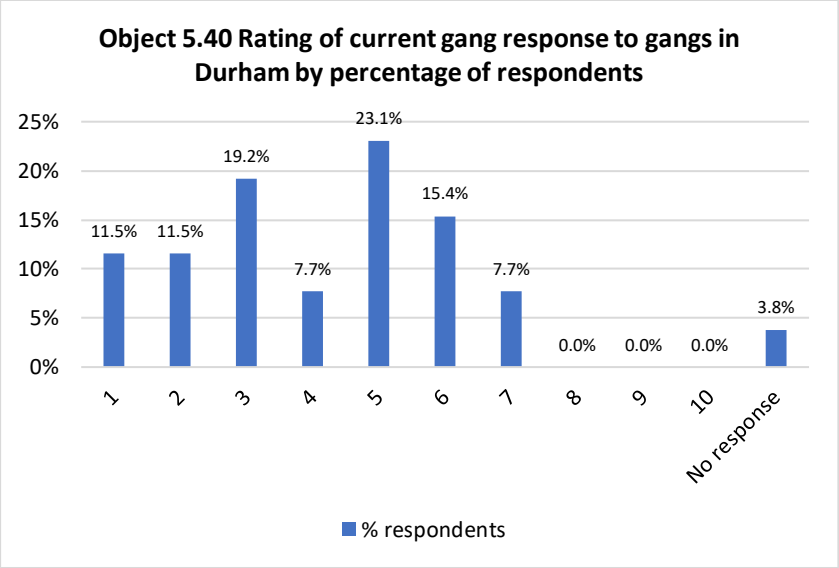
What could be done differently in the future to address gangs?

Community leaders were asked how existing gang/violence preventions should be changed. Answers fell into a few categories: Expansion of funding/services/programs, increased coordination between programs, and increased evaluation and outcome reporting of existing efforts. Responses are reported in detail below:

- "Connect more community rooted messengers and additional funding sources"
- "There needs to be better mapping of what each program is doing and better coordination between organizations including government agencies
- "MORE youth programming, violence interrupters. More job training with jobs at the end"
- "All programs need to have adequate support and resources. Transparent processes and policies that are shared with public. Performance measures and outcomes also reported to public on regular basis. All programs should be tied in directly to education to jobs pipeline in Durham - via DPS, community organizations like Step UP, government agencies like Workforce Development Board/OEWD and Durham Tech programs like Bull's Initiative and Back to Work Initiative. We need case management/peer support/mentoring/wrap around support for each person at risk of joining gang. Intervention programs need to be identifying these children and youth when first misdemeanors or problems are taking place. Put in place necessary family support, academic and financial support. Mental health and substance use support for child/family to address issues early"
- "We must look at the younger siblings of group/gang members and their children and put them in our very best pre-school after school summer programming"
- "More funds for programming within DPS; Bull City United and fidelity to the model; better coordination of services; more multi-generational support models"
- "Spreading more awareness in the community/ schools about them"
- "Have more of them. More food justice initiatives"
- "Eliminate Bull City United"
- "With people from Durham City/County"
- "Do not know until I see evaluations with metrics"

How satisfied are you with the current response to gangs in Durham? (25 responses)

This question was designed to ask community leaders to rate their satisfaction level with the current response to gangs in Durham on a 10-point scale, with 1 representing very dissatisfied and 10 representing very satisfied. The average rating by community leaders is 3.9. The most common response (23.1% of respondents) is a 5 (Object 5.40, p. 195). Over forty percent of respondents (42.2%) rated the current response at 3 or below. The highest rating by any respondents is 7 (7.7%) and no respondents rated the current response at 8 or higher.



What are the reasons for your satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the current response to gangs? (20 responses)

Community leaders were asked to explain their rating of the current response to gangs. Common responses included that the community needs to be doing more, that existing programs need to be more effective, and that elected officials need to be more effective in all aspects of the response, from prevention to prosecution of violence-involved individuals. Responses are reported below.

- "Lack of coordination or support from elected leaders"
- "Many of the programs are working well and well run. Others are not. Need earlier intervention. Need more resources and services for children and families. Need to address economic mobility/poverty and change trajectory by exposing, preparing and connecting youth to good paying jobs in Durham"
- "The gang reduction strategy coordinator is strong ... has identified many issues that face Durham and other urban areas in NC and nationwide I am dissatisfied because we have not shown the collective resolve to take back the streets, not satisfied because the shooting has not stopped"
- "We must have greater effectiveness in reducing gang membership and crime"
- "There are not enough personnel"
- "We need more youth programs, and a strategy for Black Boys"
- "I'm not quite sure if there is much of a current positive response to gangs"
- "Need a focused deterrence program"
- "Durham's response seems more reactive instead of proactive"
- "Lack of prosecution"
- "Most are dis-disillusioned and don't believe there is a gang problem. Most believe giving them jobs is the answer and it is not. They receive more money from producing rap videos and selling drugs. As well as most not understanding individuals' motivations to be in gangs"
- "Primarily because of our local elected officials. They just do not care. Useless or worse. Some of them actually hinder Law Enforcement, Courts, and community-based initiatives. Gang

members know there are no consequences to violence and that the courts are a revolving door. Worse, they know elected officials are hypocrites with no regard to human life"

- "Doing same thing getting same response"
- "More needs to be done. More focus on violent offenders"
- "I think we can always learn and improve upon what we do with knowledge. We must be adaptable as we know more about gangs in our community and immediately respond to the changes"
- "Gangs continue to be involved in most of the violent crime in the City with very little progress toward reversing the activity and the continuity of gang activity"
- "I think there should be greater accountability"
- "More buy in from government"

What is your program/agency currently doing to assist with local gang issues?
What can your program/agency do better or differently to assist with local gang issues?
What support/resources would help your organization/agency better serve gang-involved individuals?
(13 responses)

Community leaders were asked to describe their current response to local gang issues, what they believe their agency or program could do better, and what support/resources would help the organization/agency better serve gang-involved individuals. Fifteen community leaders responded to this question and their responses are mapped on Table 5.8. These are related questions, so the responses are reported in sequence.

Table 5.8 Agency leader responses regarding what their program/agency is currently doing, could do better or differently, and what support/resources would help

What my program/agency is current doing to assist with local gang issues	What my program/agency could do better or differently to assist with local gang issues	What support/resources would help my organization/agency better serve gang-involved individuals
We have 3 federal prosecutors working in Durham	We would like to blend prosecution strategy with the Project SAFE Neighborhoods strategy that emphasizes 1) community outreach and engagement 2) implementation of evidence-based prevention and intervention programming 3) utilizes strategic law enforcement proven methods such as weekly "shooting meetings" that discuss cases and prioritize investigations of groups or violent offenders and 4) regularly measure the results of our efforts	A full embracement of the Project SAFE Neighborhoods Strategy, Durham has unbelievable resources, the ability to capture and analyze data, the executive leadership & regularly occurring meeting schedules to advance strategies, the Local Reentry Council, the criminal justice resource center, sophisticated investigative techniques & capability by law enforcement and talented & motivated officers (at least the cross sworn federal task force officers I have seen are talented)

Provide local funds for many of the agencies or programs	Increase financial support, convening power for partner collaboration	Resources on evidence-based models in similar communities; resources on approaches that work and do not involve armed law enforcement
City of Durham is doing many of the programs.	We can invest more in youth programs.	City of Durham is doing many of the programs.
Provide research / academic perspective to the GRS	Yes - Universities/Colleges can always do more as it relates to community outreach.	More communication with community partners, vice versa.
Spending money	Encourage employees to become engaged in the work.	No response
No response	More staff to address current problems.	More staff. Criminal convictions for the individuals committing violent incidents.
Our business provides employment with good wages to gang involved individuals. Our church works with neighborhood child and youth after school programs and families in gang involved communities.	I wish we knew how to motivate and engage others in the work. We try and lead by example.	City and County Government elected officials doing their job and caring about all of our citizens. Support for law enforcement and oversight of the criminal justice system to effectively remove violent offenders from the streets. Allow nonprofits, business, and religious organizations to fully participate with government as partners in this effort without hindering and restricting their activities.
Nothing because we have enough of Agency. We do not need more just need the ones we have to do what their objectives are.	We need Law Enforcement to be better partners.	Nothing because we have enough of Agency. We do not need more just need the ones we have to do what their objectives are.
We interact with community and are involved with committees to better Durham County. Also, staff are active and visual in community until COVID. Also assist DPD when asked about specific offenders and their information and actively being involved.	We always assist when we are asked and actively involved. We referred offenders to treatments and focus on CBI. Staff are also trained to assist with offenders' behavior such as EBP, Carey guides and other tools etc. We had specialized SRG officers and received training for SRG offenders.	Continue to have open communication with different agencies.
We allow the local agencies access to our population for engagement, intervention, and prevention strategies.	Not sure.	Additional education on gangs. Gangs ten years ago are different from today. The organization is open to having programs visit and speak with our detained youth.
No response	The Durham Children's Initiative would need to be advised and counseled as to how we could assist.	Knowledge and advice
Providing financial investments in most programs listed in 15.	Investigation and clearance of violent crimes perpetuated by gangs.	Financial resources
Provide research assistance/insight and students to help initiatives.	My colleagues need to be more involved with the community.	More partnerships from community partners with the university.

Additional thoughts/opinions that would be useful to include in Durham's Comprehensive Gang Assessment? (5 responses)

As a closing question, community leaders were asked to articulate any additional feedback. Five leaders provided responses to this question:

- "Durham's problem is in the lack of early childhood supports that lead to underserved and unnerved youth who are making their own way with a lot of negative guidance and little community building"
- "We need comprehensive gun reform and there needs to be active intense pressure put on state leaders to change laws in North Carolina"
- "There are tons of resources available in Durham, many folks who want to work with the kids. However, there is a need to prosecute the most violent folks so that the group/gang lifestyle becomes less glamorous. Durham has the pieces to make PSN work but needs the leadership to embrace the strategy and maintain fidelity to the proven evidence-based model for 2 years without moving on to the next crisis. All these great programs and efforts need to be integrated into one overall strategy (such as PSN) that concentrates on stopping violent crime"
- "By the end of the assessment, implement evidence-based policy/programs"
- "Until we have a change in the current slate of elected officials in Durham and the depraved indifference to human life that fuels the social power that keeps them in office, unfortunately I don't see much changing"

Youth-serving agency surveys

Personnel working for child- and youth-serving agencies, including public, private and charter schools, were surveyed for this report. A total of 578 individuals responded to this survey. Surveys were only included in this analysis however, if respondents affirmatively consented to take part (question 1) and proceeded beyond question 3 (ages served). This section covers data from 500 surveys that met these criteria. These 500 respondents include 458 education professionals and 42 youth-serving professionals from the field of youth intervention, juvenile justice, and other youth-serving agencies.

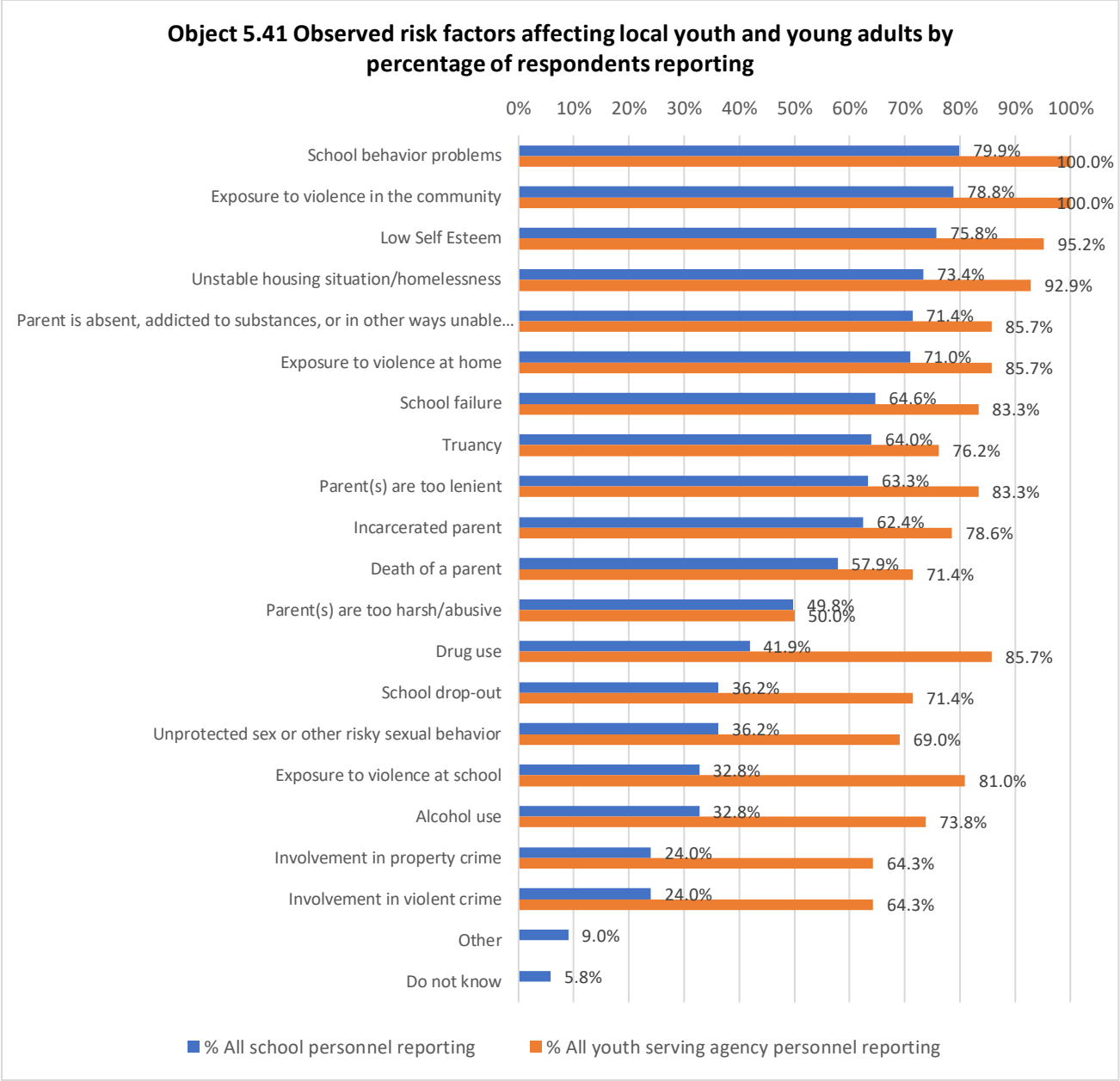
Survey participants were asked if they live in Durham and over two-thirds of respondents (69.4%) reported that they live in Durham and less than one-third (30.7%) reported residing outside of Durham. 4 survey participants did not respond to this question.

Most respondents reported working in education (91.6%) while 5.0% of respondents worked in direct services with children and youth (prevention, intervention, mental health, etc.) and 2.6% of respondents worked in juvenile justice. An additional 0.8% of respondents worked in some other field.

Risk exposure of children and youth served by schools and youth-serving agencies

What risk factors/at-risk behaviors are you aware of in the youth or young adults that you interact with through your job? (498 responses)

Youth serving personnel reported a wide range of risk exposure by the youth/young adults that they interact with (Object 5.41, p. 200). This data was disaggregated by field and reported below. While school personnel and youth serving agency personnel agreed on the top four risk factors to which youth they work with are exposed, youth serving agency personnel as a whole were more likely to report youth risk exposure in all areas. About 4 in 5 school personnel reported school behavior problems in the youth that they serve, compared to 100.0% of youth-serving agency personnel. Similarly, while 78.8% of school personnel reported that students they work with are exposed to community level violence, 100.0% of youth serving agency personnel reported this risk factor exposure.



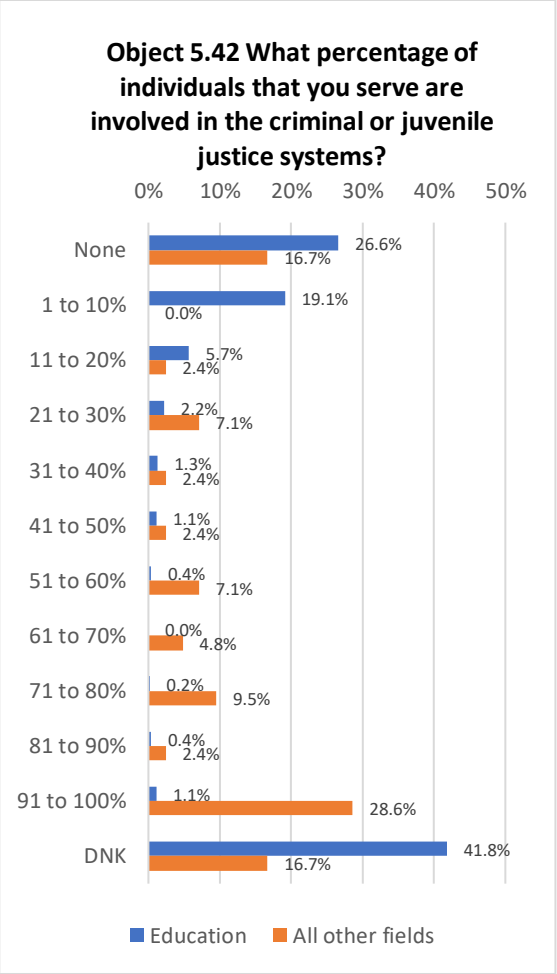
Many school personnel respondents (9.0%) added custom responses to this question. These responses were categorized and reported (Table 5.1). The most common custom responses include mental health issues (2.4% of total responses), other family risk factors (2.2% of all responses), and poverty/food insecurity (1.6%) (Table 5.9, p. 201).

Table 5.9 Other risk exposure observed by school personnel respondents

Risk exposure	% of respondents	Description
Mental health issues	2.4%	• Child and parent mental health issues and mental disabilities • Trauma exposure including witnessing violent crimes • Lack of hope • Identity crisis
Other family risk factors	2.2%	• Parents neglecting the child/youth or leaving them to raise themselves • Parents with substance use or mental health issues • Single parents/divorced families • Parents who are unable to provide for the child's basic needs.
Poverty and food insecurity	1.6%	• Lack of access to basic needs, including food instability • Housing transience • Lack of clothing and other essentials
Other	1.2%	• Racism • Social media influences • Health issues • Kids do not get enough sleep • No foundation
Academic risk factors	1.0%	• Low academic stamina • Academic deficits • Harsh school discipline • Prioritizing high performing students over students with deficits
Immigration issues	0.8%	• Student separated from parents due to immigration issues • Language barriers • Trauma exposure during immigration process
Peer risk factors	0.8%	• Bullying • Negative peer influences
Community risk factors	0.8%	• Housing transience due to gentrification • Lack of role models in the community • Lack of other alternatives in the community

Percentage of children/youth involved in the criminal justice system (498 responses)

Responses were segregated by field of work, with education analyzed separately from youth intervention, juvenile justice, and other fields (Object 5.42). Respondents who worked in education were most likely to report that they do not know the justice status of individuals that they serve (41.8%) or that these individuals had no justice involvement (26.6%). Respondents who work in the other categories report that working with higher percentages of children/youth involved in the justice system, with over half of respondents (52.4%) reporting that more than half of the children/youth that they work with are involved in the criminal or juvenile justice systems.



Agency personnel awareness of and interactions with gang activity in Durham

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions to provide more information about gang involved youth in Durham and the interactions of agency personnel with these youth.

Do you believe that gangs are active in Durham? (450 respondents)

Of the individuals who responded to the question, most (89.1%) reported they believe gangs are active in Durham (Table 5.10). Education personnel were slightly less likely to report that they believe gangs are active in Durham (88.9%) compared to professionals from youth-serving fields (94.9%). Education personnel were also slightly more likely to report that they do not know if gangs are active in Durham (9.0%) versus professionals in other fields (5.1%).

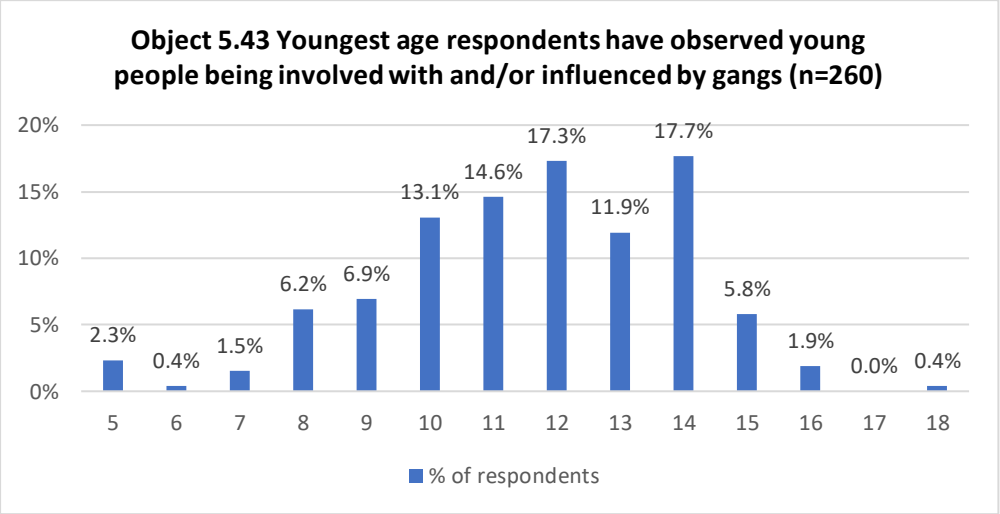
Table 5.10 Percentage of respondents reporting that they believe that gangs are active in Durham

Response	% respondents
Yes	89.1%
No	0.7%
Do not know	8.7%
No response/prefer not to answer	1.6%
Total	**100.0%**

Ages that children/youth are involved with or influenced by gangs in Durham

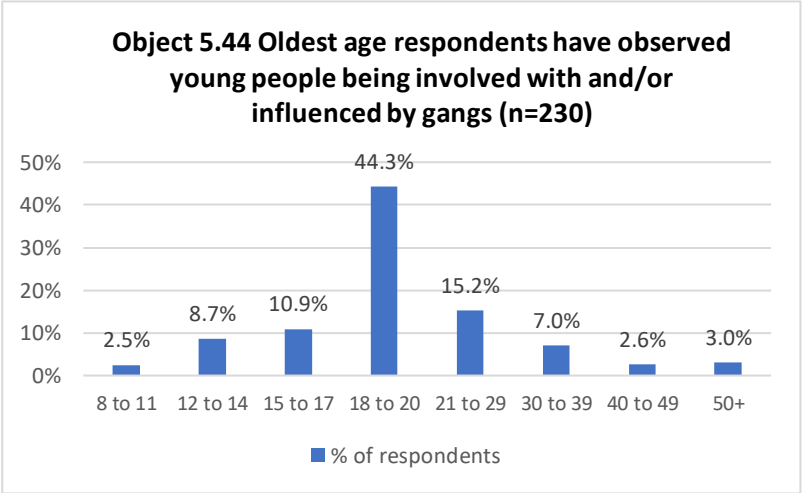
Respondents were asked to supply the youngest and oldest ages they had observed children/youth being involved in gangs. 260 respondents provided a numerical response to the question of the youngest age they had observed young people being involved with or influenced by gangs and 230 respondents provided a numerical response to the oldest age. The respondents' ability to respond to this question could be affected by many factors, including their knowledge of young people's gang involvement and the age group they serve. Responses to this question ranged from a low of 5 to a high of 18, with an average age of 11.1.

Three fourths of respondents (74.6%) reported that the youngest youth they had observed being involved with or influenced by a gang were between ages 10 and 14 (Object 5.43). A significant percentage of respondents (17.3%) reported that they had observed children between the ages of 5 and 9 being involved with/influenced by gangs.



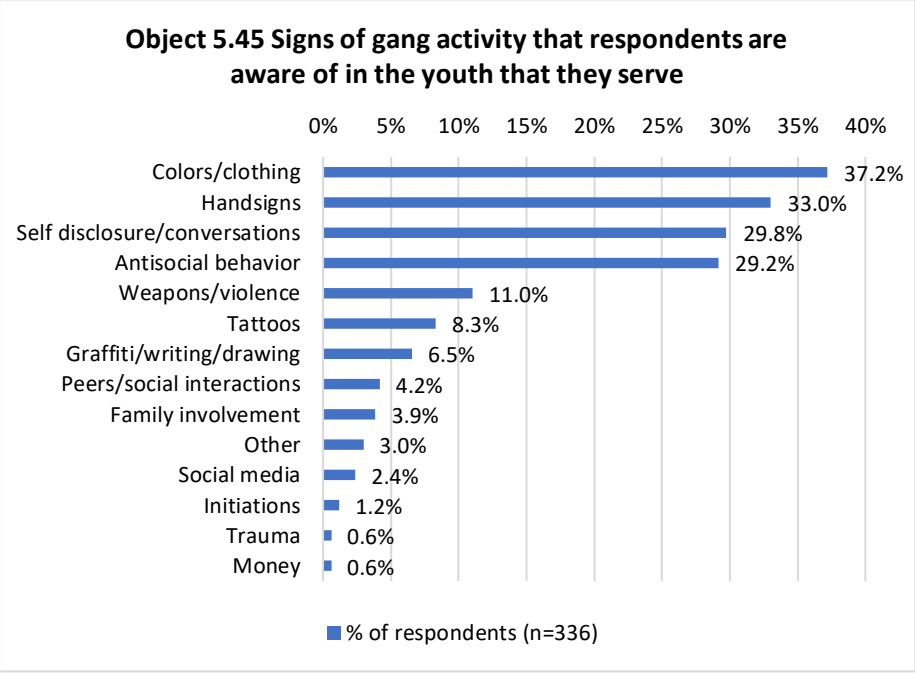
Survey participants were also asked to identify the oldest age at which they had observed young people being involved in or influenced by gangs. 230 participants responded to this question. Responses ranged from a low of 8 to a high of 60, with an average age of 20.2.

Most respondents (44.3%) reported that the oldest age they had observed young people involved with or influenced by gangs was between 18 and 20 (Object 5.44). Again, it is important to note that this reporting may be influenced by the age group served by the respondents and their awareness of individuals' gang involvement.



A significant percentage of respondents reported gang involvement lasting into the 20s (15.2%) and 12.6% of respondents reported gang involvement/influence extending into ages 30 and above. For respondents who reported both a youngest and an oldest age, the average range between youngest and oldest was 9.1 years, with respondents reporting a range of 0 to 48 years. This data indicates that young people in Durham are influenced by/involved in gangs at a relatively young age and may remain influenced by/involved in gangs for a decade or longer, with some individuals remaining involved for much of their life.

What signs of gang activity are you aware of in the young people you serve? (331 responses)
This open-ended question requires respondents to formulate their own custom answer. 331 survey participants responded to the question, providing a total of 574 responses (most respondents provided more than one answer). These answers were sorted and analyzed (Object 5.45). The most common response was gang-related colors/clothing (37.2%), followed by gang hand-signs and handshakes (33.0%), self-disclosure and/or overheard conversations (29.8%), and antisocial behavior (29.2%). These answers are described in detail by topic.



Gang colors/clothing (125 responses)
Responses in this category described use of colors and gang insignia on clothing and hats, as well as bandannas (rags, flags). Respondents described young people "wearing certain color hats," "flying gang colors" (i.e., brandishing a colored bandana or other colored item that is representative of the gang), and refusing to wear other colors.

Handsigns and handshakes (100 responses)
Respondents stated that they had observed students and other youth using gang hand-signs, hand-gestures, and handshakes that are associated with specific gangs, as well as stacking hand-signs (i.e., quickly flashing hand-signs in a specific order to spell out a gang name or some other significant phrase.

Self-disclosure/overheard conversations (100 responses)

Survey respondents reported overhearing children/youth talking about gang affiliation, gang incidents/violence in their neighborhood, family gang ties, and involvement in gang-related criminal activity. Many respondents also reported children/youth using gang slang or referencing the names of specific gangs or neighborhoods. One respondent noted: [gang] "Initiation calls coming out of the elementary children's mouth - says to me that they are being exposed or how else would they know them?" Many respondents also reported that children/youth openly disclose gang ties. One described these interactions:

> *"Students have told me about their activities. I have heard firsthand stories about gang initiation fights, seen examples of students being arrested for carrying drugs, had several parents tell me they do not feel safe to leave their child home alone."*

Antisocial behavior (98 responses)

Respondents described a wide range of behaviors that they feel are signs of gang activity in children/youth with whom they work. Some reported activities were school-focused, such as truancy, skipping classes, bullying, fighting, gang recruitment, using cell phones in class to conduct drug transactions, and disrespect/aggression towards adults. Respondents reported knowledge of children/youth engaging in drug use, drug selling, vandalism, destruction of property, theft, stealing, burglary, and other criminal behavior, both in school and in the community. Several respondents reported young people bringing plastic guns to school or pointing their fingers at other students in a gun shape as a threat. Comments in this area were particularly relevant and detailed:

- "Students asked to complete tasks. Students used as lookouts. Students wanting to emulate gang members"
- "Peer pressure, disconnected in class/with peers. Change in attitude, behavior, or clothing"
- "Fascinated with criminal or violent behavior"
- "Fighting in school settings/near schools based on gangs; 'gang fights' as it's referred to by students"
- "Bruises, frequently missing class, withdrawn or dismissive behavior, outbursts of anger, sleeping during class carrying multiple cell phones, aggressive language including towards their romantic partners, fear and/or guilt/shame (obviously these same signs are present in many students not involved in gang activities, but these are common signs, especially when combined, that I've noticed in students I later find are involved in gang activity)"
- "Young female students leave home early to join older boyfriends. Young females are used to find victims (usually other students) so that their 'friends' can jump the student outside school"
- "Fighting, planning criminal activities outside of school, drug selling and using, stealing, vandalism"
- "Truancy, visible communication among groups of students (particularly male students), reports from family members, continuous court involvement"
- "Wanting to fight students who maybe older than them or younger than them whom they know from their community who may are from a different gang affiliation"

Weapons/violence (37 responses)
A little more than 10% of respondents reported being aware of children/youths' connections to violence and weapon possession both at school and in the community. Respondents reported that they are aware of children/youth showing photos of themselves with guns, targeting other children/youth for violence, possessing guns and other weapons, and involved in violent crimes, including armed robbery, carjacking, shootings, and murder.

Some comments were quite detailed:

- "Targeting individual students in the school. Gun fights near school campuses involving our students"
- "Students have died as the result of what are assumed to be gang-related situations"
- "Bringing weapons to school as a part of initiation"

Tattoos (28 responses)
Many respondents reported that they are aware of or have seen visible gang tattoos, body markings, and other insignia of gang affiliation on the bodies of children/youth with whom they work.

Graffiti/writing/drawing gang insignia (22 responses)
Respondents report that children/youth draw, write or graffiti gang insignia and symbols on papers and on objects/buildings.

Peers/social interactions (14 responses)
Respondents report that a sign of gang activity they have observed is the way that youth associate with their peers. Some respondents report that children/youth who they believe are involved in gangs will only associate with specific peer groups and refuse to associate or work with others.

Family involvement (13 responses)
Respondents stated that they were aware of family gang affiliations including "Adult caretakers wearing gang colors/tattoos," youth "talk of older siblings in gang activity," and "a history of family gang involvement." One respondent notes: "My kids are really too young to participate but what I do see is trauma symptoms related to fear, violence, sexual abuse, unregulated emotions in adults and older siblings."

Social media/music (8 responses)
Survey participants report they are aware of children/youth social media activity related to gangs and "students listening to local musical artists backed by and associated with gang activity locally."

Initiations (4 responses)
Several respondents report knowledge of children/youth involvement in gang initiations and rituals.

Trauma (2 responses)
Two respondents describe trauma exposure by children/youth because of gang activity, including "effects of gang violence on siblings of students I teach."

Money (2 responses)
Respondents report access too and flaunting of unexplained money by children/youth. One describes youth as "having cash in their pockets that they reveal surreptitiously."

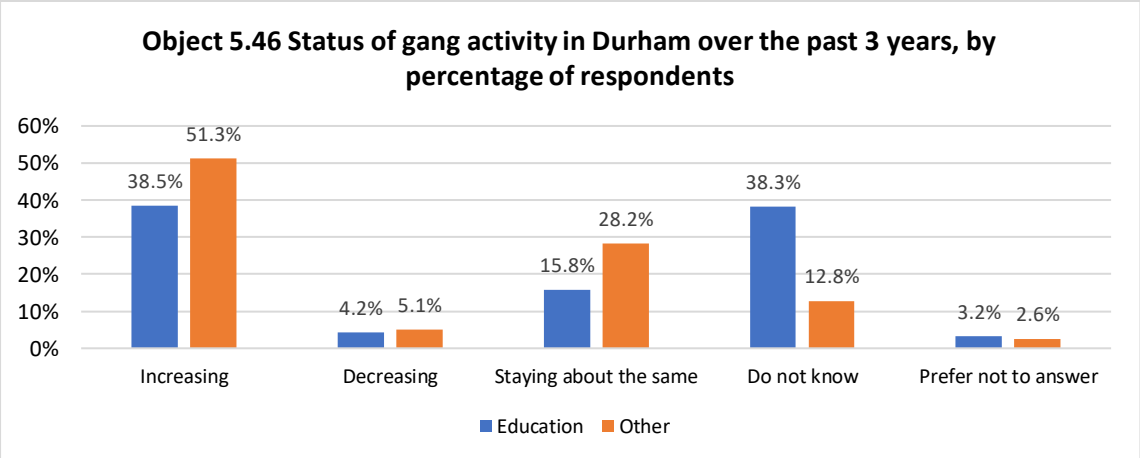
Other (10 responses)
Other responses include:

- Brotherhood/sisterhood
- Refusal to participate in certain events due to being around students from other gangs/neighborhoods,
- Marking neighborhoods
- Informed by school resource officer
- I am not sure about this school year, but in the past years I served this age, a child was tired during the day and grumpy. The child was not sleeping well at night.
- I know students are unwilling to come to school due to previous gang affiliations or current ones.
- Varies from person to person

One respondent notes:

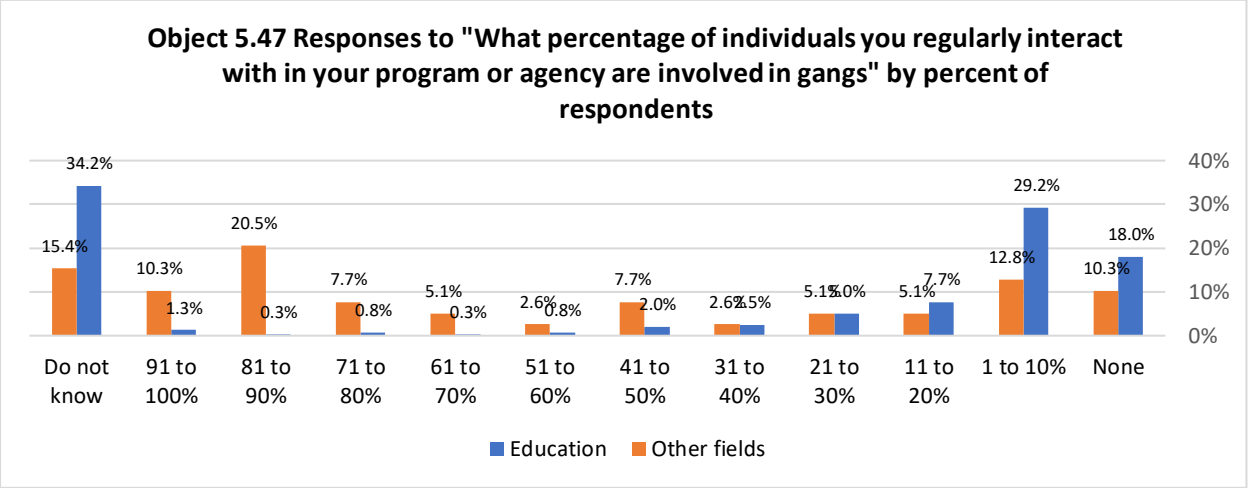
> *There are so many. Hanging out with adult gang members and being picked up by adult gang members from the sidewalk just beyond the school. Dating adult gang members. Tattoos, wearing colors, throwing signs, hanging with gang members in school, fighting rival gangs or simply snarling at them when they walk by, hyper awareness of any gang activity in the building, writing gang symbols on hands, arms, and notebooks, tagging up furniture and walls, listening to certain songs and bands who are associated with particular gangs, wearing only red (or blue) shoelaces, on and on and on.*

Do you believe gang activity in Durham is increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same compared to three years ago? (445 responses)
Responses were disaggregated and reported by field. 406 education professionals and 39 other youth development professionals responded to this question (Object 5.46). Other youth professionals were much more likely to report that gang activity has increased (51.3%) or stayed about the same over the past 3 years (28.2%). Education professionals were equally split between believing that gang activity has increased (38.5%) and reporting they do not know status of gang activity in Durham compared to three years ago. (38.3%).



Of the individuals that you regularly interact with in your program/agency, what percentage do you think are involved in gangs? (441 responses)

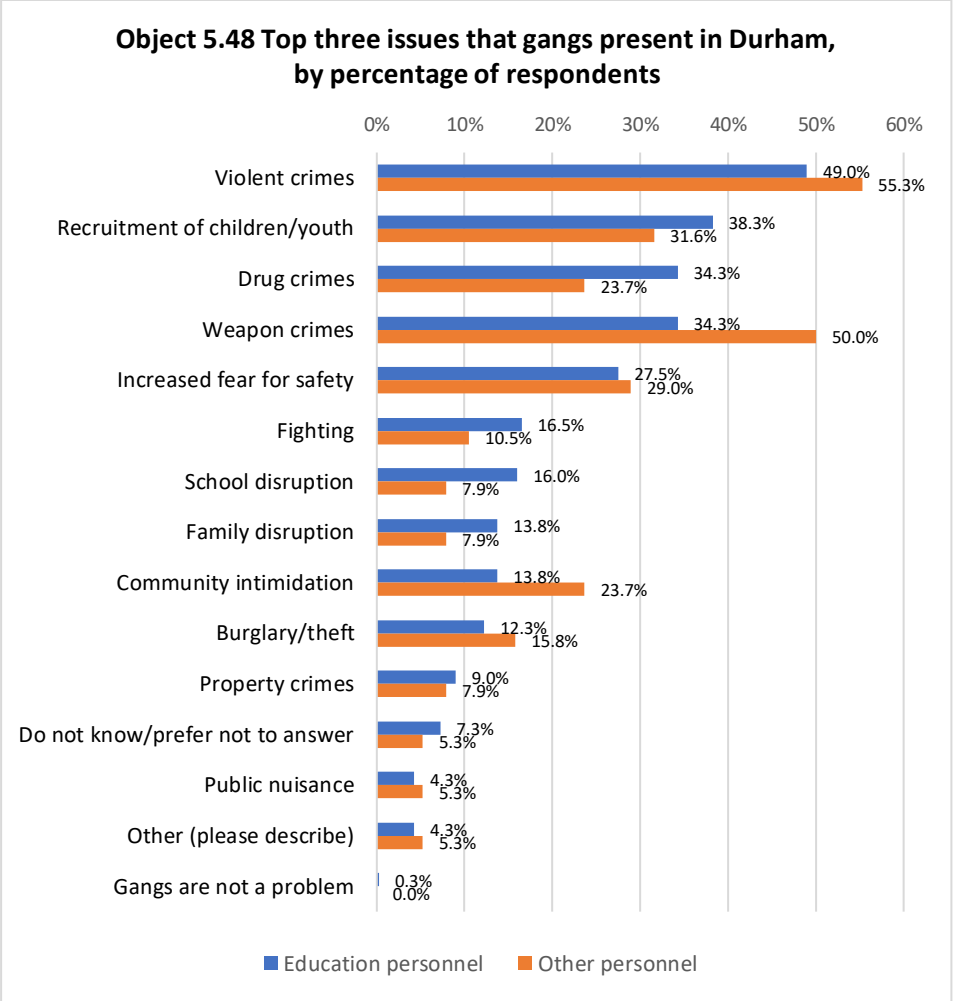
Responses were segregated by agency type for this question. 401 education personnel and 39 personnel from other agencies responded to this question. School personnel were most likely to respond that they do not know (34.2%), none (18.0%), or 1 to 10% (29.2%) (Object 5.47)



Other agency personnel were more likely to respond that 81 to 100% of individuals they interact with are involved in gangs (30.8%), do not know (15.4%) or 1 to 10% (12.8%). This data is affected by the work performed by the agency personnel who responded to this survey, including juvenile court counselors and gang intervention personnel.

Top three issues that you believe gangs present in Durham (439 responses)

Responses were segregated by field for reporting as answers varied substantially. 400 education professionals and 39 professionals from other youth development fields responded to this question. The top responses for educators are violent crimes (49.0%), recruitment of children/youth (38.3%), drug crimes (34.3%), and weapon crimes (34.3%) (Object 5.48, p. 209). The top responses for other professionals are violent crimes (55.3%), weapon crimes (50.0%), recruitment of children/youth (31.6%), increased fear for safety (29.0%) and community intimidation (23.7%). Differences in responses are due to the differing professional composition of the two groups and exposure to different aspects of youth behavior resulting from these professional experiences.

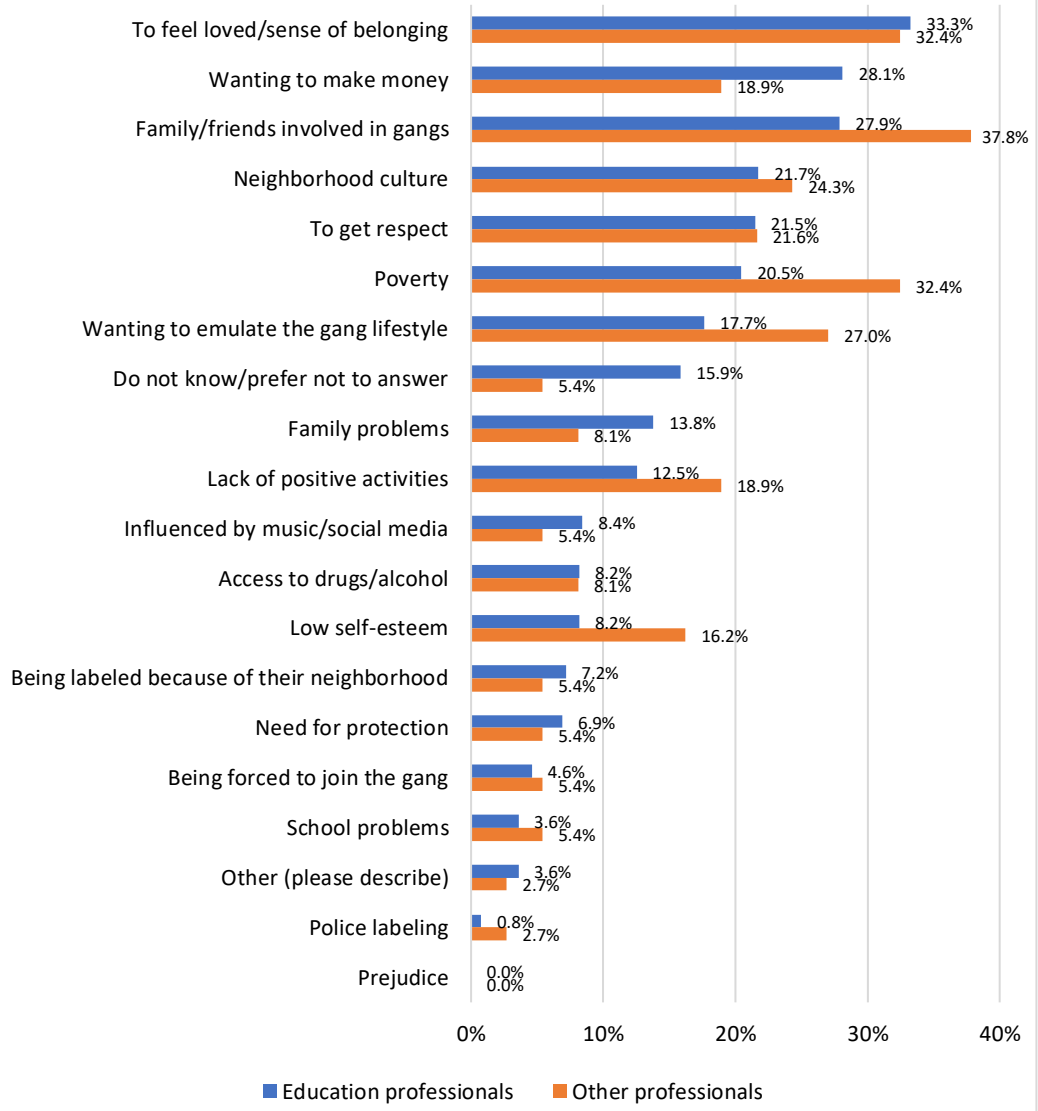


Top three factors that you have observed that influence young people in Durham to join a gang (429 responses)

Responses to this question were segregated by professional field. As with several other questions covered in this section, responses varied between education professionals and other youth-serving professionals. 391 education professionals and 38 youth serving professionals from other fields responded to this question.

The top responses from education professionals are to feel loved/sense of belonging (33.3%), wanting to make money (28.1%), and family/friends involved in the gang (27.9%) (Object 5.49, p. 210). Top responses from youth serving professionals from other fields are family/friends involved in gangs (37.8%), poverty (32.4%), to feel loved/sense of belonging (32.4%) and wanting to emulate the gang culture (27.0%).

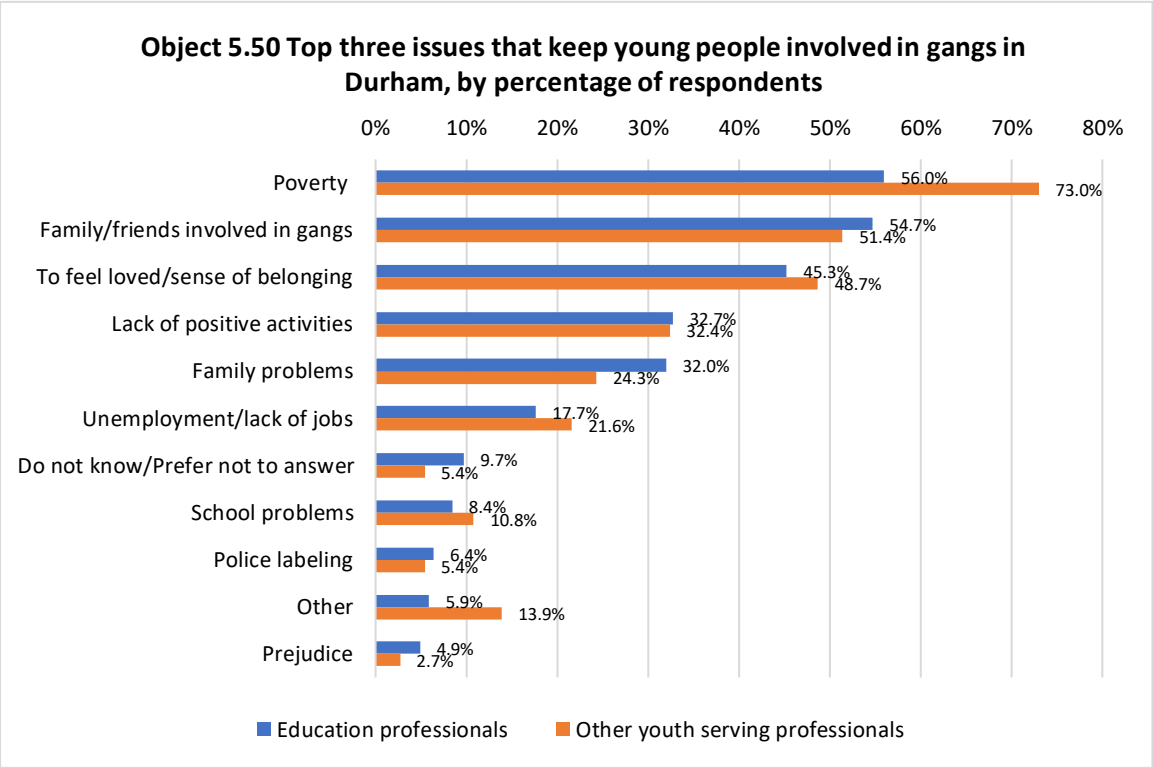
Object 5.49 Top three factors observed that influence young people in Durham to join a gang, by percentage of respondents



Respondents could provide their own custom answer, and other responses given were:

- "Wanting to buy nice things or be given nice things like good shoes, warm clothes"
- "Family structure not intact (no stability); 'family' is fluid; adults in/out of the home; Absence of fathers; little to no parenting"
- "Needing more loving and consistent parental involvement"
- "The top factor, in my opinion, is proximity to gangs and gang activity. This may seem obvious, but most kids get involved in gangs because of a family tradition of gang involvement (older brother, uncle, father) or because they are exposed to gang activity in their neighborhoods and schools. They do not go looking for the gang life. If they are submerged in it at home or at school, they are likely to get involved"

What are the top three issues that keep young people involved in gangs in Durham? (429 respondents) Responses to this question were segregated by professional field. 391 education professionals and 38 professionals from other youth-serving agencies responded to this question (Object 5.50) The top responses from education professionals are poverty (56.0%), family/friends involved in the gang (54.7%), and to feel loved/sense of belonging (45.3%). Top responses from other youth serving professionals are poverty (73.0%), family/friends involved in the gang (51.4%), and to feel loved/sense of belonging (48.7%).



Respondents could provide their own custom answer, and 5.9% of education professionals and 13.9% of other youth-serving agency professionals provided custom responses. These responses were categorized by topic:

Youth fear life outside the gang or retaliation from the gang for leaving (7 responses)
Respondents noted that youth may fear the consequences of leaving the gang from the gang itself, and may also fear life outside the gang, including the loss of the gang's perceived protection from rivals. One respondent explains that fear keeps youth involved in gangs: "For many that is all they know and have been told if they leave, they will be unprotected and vulnerable."

Perceived positives of gang life keep youth involved (6 responses)
Respondents noted that young people involved in gangs perceive that the gang offers them access to both physical and emotional needs. These include status and identity; power and respect; and access to drugs, guns, and money. One respondent notes that gangs provide youth with the opportunity to feel power and agency "where their self-image is one of being without agency/disempowered, disempowered family, neighborhood, community, etc."

Lack of opportunity to engage in more positive pursuits (3 responses)
Respondents explained that a criminal background may keep youth from pursuing employment and educational opportunities, that youth may lack access to or be unaware of opportunities, and that the community and leaders have not prioritized providing opportunities for youth to leave the gang life. One respondent notes that this lack of opportunity exists because of "Lack of investment in the community and people by our local and state governments"

Lack of consequences for gang involvement (2 responses)
Two respondents noted that the current criminal justice system does not hold youth accountable for negative behaviors. One explains: "Family, community, and political leadership that refuses to address or strongly denounce these issues**."**

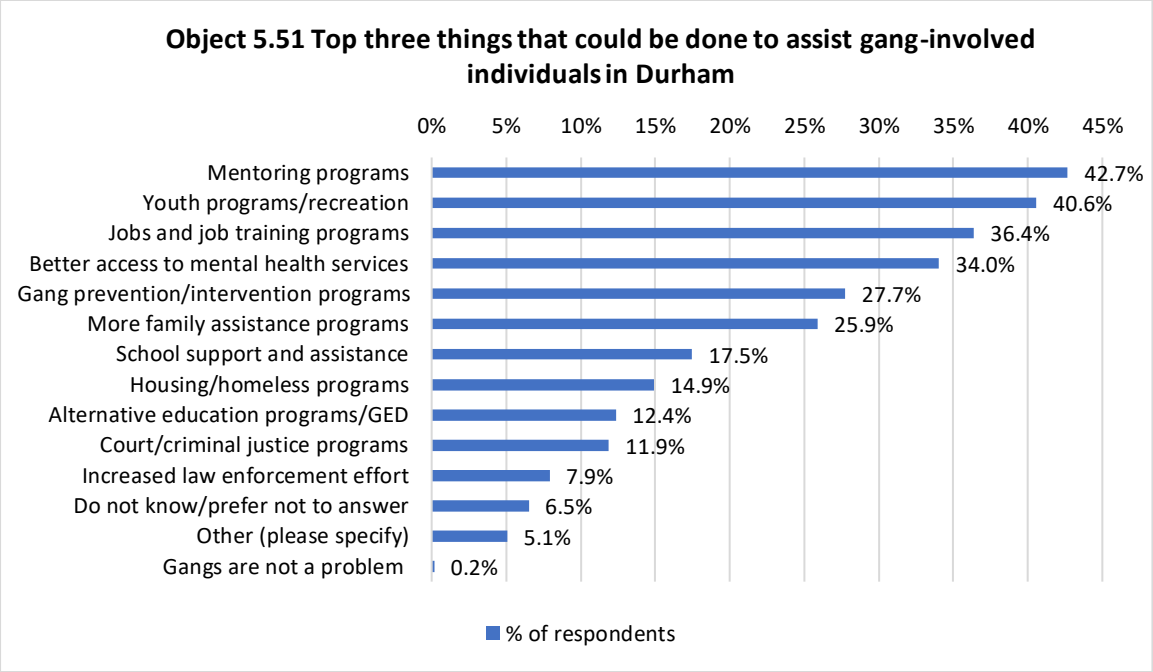
Other reasons (3 responses)
Respondents also noted that family dysfunction, mental health issues, and labeling within systems and the wider community keeps young people involved in gangs.

What should be done about gangs and what is the level of satisfaction with the current response
Respondents were asked to provide their opinions about future activities to assist gang involved individuals in Durham and to rate and describe their level of satisfaction with the current response. They were also asked to describe what their agency is currently doing, what could be done in the future, and what would help increase their agency's current level of effectiveness at assisting gang-involved individuals.

Top three things that could be done to assist gang-involved individuals in Durham (429 responses)
Responses to this question were limited to three to help respondents prioritize activities. Respondents identified mentoring programs (42.7%), youth programs/recreation (40.6%), jobs and job training programs (36.4%), better access to mental health services (34.0%) and gang prevention/intervention programs (27.7%) (Object 5.51, p. 213)

Responses of juvenile court counselors to this question were segregated (n=13) because these individuals are likely to work with both gang and criminal justice involved young people. The top priorities of professionals in juvenile justice are:

- Youth programs/recreation (61.5%)
- Gang prevention/intervention programs (53.9%)
- Jobs/job training programs (46.2%)



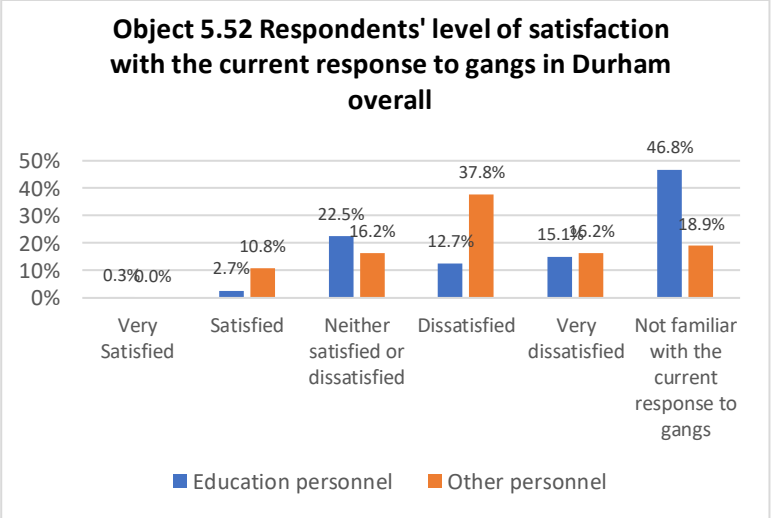
Youth prevention/intervention professionals' responses were also segregated (n=10). The top three priorities of professionals in this area are:

- Youth programs/recreation (60.0%)
- Gang prevention/intervention programs (60.0%)
- Jobs/job training programs (40.0%)
- Better access to mental health services (40.0%)

It should be noted that several of the respondents from the field of youth prevention/intervention work in gang intervention, which may affect their response to this question.

How satisfied are you with the current response to gangs in Durham overall? (416 responses)

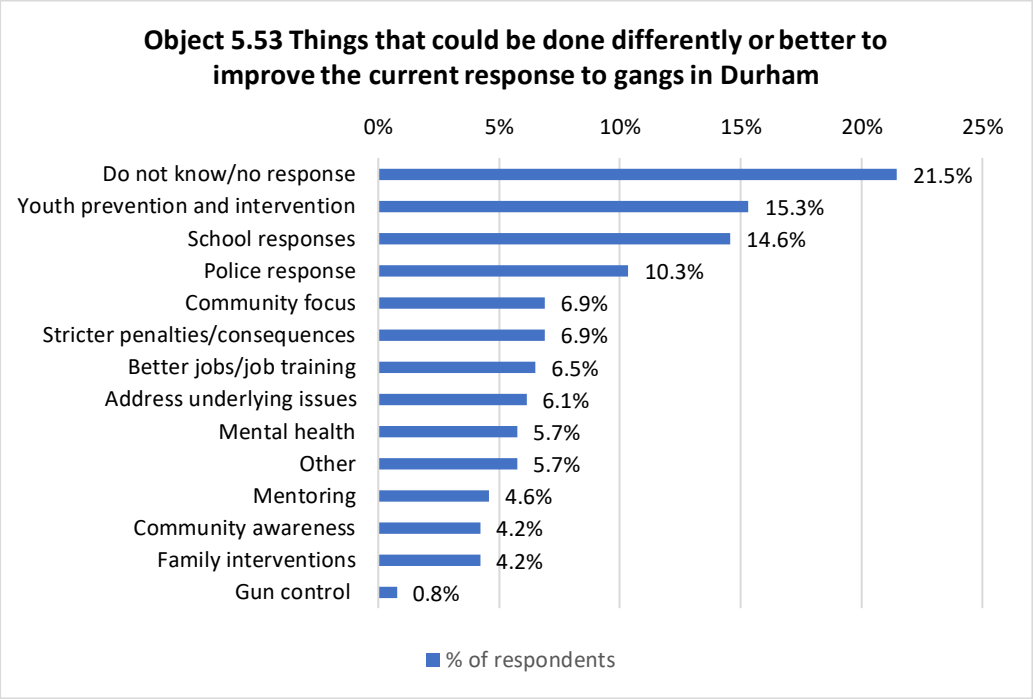
378 education professionals and 38 other youth-serving professionals responded to this question. Because they were quite different overall, responses to this question are segregated by profession. Neither group were likely to report that they are very satisfied or satisfied with the current response to gangs (Object 5.52).



Only 3% of education personnel and 10.8% of other youth serving agency personnel reported that they are very satisfied or satisfied with the current response. Most education personnel (46.8%) report that they are not familiar with the current response to gangs (compared to 18.9% of other youth serving agency personnel). In contrast, 54% of other agency personnel report they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the current response to gangs.

What do you think could be done differently or better to improve the current response to gangs in Durham? (261 responses)

This open-ended question requires respondents to formulate their own custom answer. These answers are analyzed and reported below (Object 5.53). The top response was do not know/no response (21.5%). Some respondents expressed that they do not know what is currently being done and thus could not respond to the question. Other top responses addressed youth prevention and intervention (15.3%), school responses (14.6%) and police responses (10.3%).



Youth prevention and intervention (40 responses)

Responses in this area addressed the need for more prosocial activities for youth, the need for safe and fun places for youth to go, the need for earlier intervention with children and youth, and the need for more gang intervention services for youth. One respondent notes that there is a need for: "More afterschool and summer programs specifically for high school students. More male mentors for our middle and high school students."

School responses (38 responses)

Respondents addressed a wide range of specific actions that could be taken in the learning environment to improve the overall response to gangs

- More school social workers

- "Implement more dropout prevention programs. Train these kids in with a skill/trade to ensure that they will be able to earn a living"
- "Improve alternate education to create good non-college-based jobs. Provide better early education/ free preschool. Provide non-school based parent education"
- "Gang Education--Where did it go?"
- "Reduce class size, provide quality intramural sports and arts and crafts. In high school, bring back the trades"
- "More access to mental health services, counseling, and mentors in schools - less SROs and intimidation"
- "Increase spending for education. Provide evidence-based academic support to students far below grade level and at risk for dropping out. Provide evidence-based reading intervention to prevent illiteracy among Durham youth"
- "Increased involvement in ensuring students are in school and parents are held accountable for frequent absences"
- "Schools need to communicate with each other to discuss fights and hang activity to make others aware"
- "A gang support worker needs to be at the alternative school in Durham, high risk schools grades k-12"
- "All kids need access to school, get the busses running right"

Police activities (27 responses)
Respondents had a mix of suggestions to improve Durham's current police response. Many respondents suggested that there was a need for more funding for police officers, more respect for police officers, and more policing activity in the community to get criminals off the streets. One respondent noted that there is a need for "more law enforcement solely to deal with gangs."

Other respondents felt that Durham's police response should be changed or redirected. Some respondents suggested that there is a need for more community policing and positive engagement with the community and youth. Other respondents noted that there should be less emphasis by the police on low-level incidents and more emphasis on serious incidents: "Spend less policing resources on low level and move up the chain. How can everyone in District 4 know who brings in the dope, but those same individuals are free to go about their daily lives in broad daylight?"

Community engagement/focus (18 responses)
Respondents addressed the need for community agencies to be more rooted in the community, a need for more school/community/faith/family/police partnerships, a need to listen more to the needs of the community, and a need to direct more resources to highly affected neighborhoods. One respondent noted: "Politicians and school Superintendent team need to be a part of the low-income communities through presence."

Stricter penalties/consequences (18 responses)
Respondents stated that the criminal justice system should hold people accountable for gang-related crimes, there is a need for stricter laws/penalties, and that school system and parents should hold

students accountable for disciplinary infractions. One respondent noted that the system should "Remove troublemakers and help those that want help."

Jobs/job training/living wage (17 responses)
Respondents addressed that there is a need for expanded job readiness training, training in the trades, leading to better jobs that pay a living wage. Two respondents addressed the need for higher wages overall. One respondent explained that Durham should "offer affordable housing, job training, and livable wages so people can have a dignified lifestyle instead of resorting to violence because they feel hopeless about life."

Address underlying issues (15 responses)
Several respondents mentioned that gangs are a symptom of larger underlying and systemic issues including poverty and racism, and that the response to gangs could be improved by addressing these issues. One respondent noted,

> *"Low-income people of color need access to quality living spaces, education, and resources for their health and wellbeing. Lack of access to these resources are what create cycles of violence in our community. Rather than make these programs into what they need to be, the city dumps money into police. The city budget for 2020-21 has 7 mil for affordable housing, and about 70 mil for police. The city needs to prioritize funding social programs rather than prioritizing law enforcement spending."*

Mental health services (15 responses)
Respondents suggested that expanded access to mental health services, including in the learning environment, would improve the community's overall response to gangs. One respondent explained that there is a need for "more mental health services that are more easily accessible."

Mentoring (12 responses)
Respondents specifically identified increased mentoring access as important to improving the community response to gangs.

Community awareness (12 responses)
In parallel to the many respondents who are not familiar with the community's gang response, several respondents suggested that there is a need for increased community education and awareness about gangs, more media coverage of gang efforts, and more information to be provided to the community and agency partners about the resources available to help gang-involved individuals. One respondent emphasized: "MAKE MORE PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT GANG ACTIVITY MAKE THE PUBLIC AND THE GANGS AWARE THAT THERE IS HELP."

Family interventions (11 responses)
Respondents suggested a need for more family support programs, more family educational programs, and more accountability for parents who do not fulfill their responsibilities, particularly for the parents of truant students.

Work directly with gangs (8 responses)
Respondents identified a perceived need to engage gang-involved individual to better understand their needs, to hire formerly gang-involved individuals to help people exit gangs, and a need for "conversations with the gangs to find out what motivates them to join and involve themselves in criminal behavior."

Gun control (2 responses)
Two respondents specifically addressed a need to reduce the availability of firearms in Durham.

Other (15 responses)
Other responses included:

- "Stop pretending that gangs do not exist."
- "Provide the children with role models that are wealthy, successful, willing to get these children a head start"
- "Stop labeling"
- "One on one interactions"
- "Programs to address drug use"
- "Invest in our human resources"
- "I think if POC had access to the mainstream economy that they would have less use for 'black market' work"
- "I am not aware of the extent to which gangs are responsible for violence in our community, but I do know that our students are dealing with a lot of stress and trauma related to violence and shootings around them. I believe the solutions presented in this survey are all good places to start in addressing these problems."

Public safety surveys

Public safety personnel from Durham Police Department, Durham County Sheriff's Office and the North Carolina Department of public safety were surveyed online using the surveymonkey.com website. These surveys were anonymous and voluntary. Public safety agencies sent out emails agency-wide requesting personnel to respond to the survey.

Who responded to the survey?

342 public safety professionals responded to a voluntary online survey that was conducted to supplement the data available on gangs from Durham Police Department. Responses were anonymous and the survey was disseminated to personnel of three agencies that operate in Durham County:

- Durham Police Department (DPD)
- Durham County Sheriff's Office (DCSO)
- North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS)

Percentage of respondents varied by agency. Most (93.5%) of NCDPS personnel, 30.8% of Durham Police Department officers, and an unknown percentage of DCSO personnel responded to the survey (Table 5.11).

Table 5.11 Public Safety Survey respondents by agency

Agency	Total personnel*	Survey respondents	% Total population
DPD	474	146	30.8%
DCSO	Not provided	135	Not provided
NCDPS	62	58	93.5%
Did not respond	n/a	2	n/a
Total		**342**	

*As of June 30, 2021

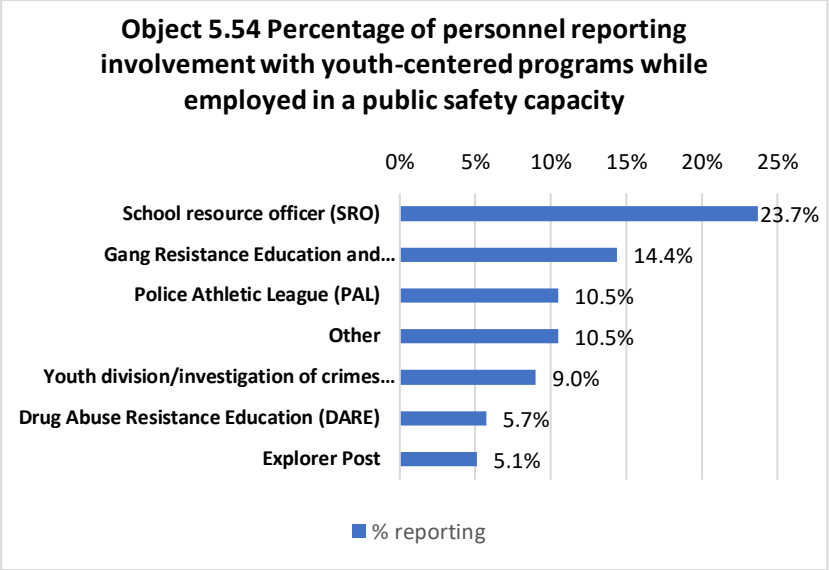
Public safety personnel engagement with and observations about youth in Durham

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions to describe their level of interaction with local youth and their observations about issues affecting youth in Durham.

What youth-centered programs have you worked with while employed in a public safety capacity?

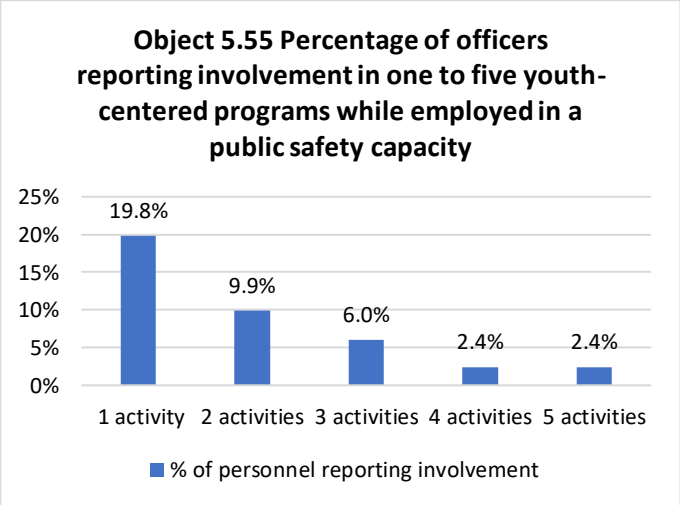
(334 responses)

A high percentage of respondents (40.7%) reported working in some capacity with youth (Object 5.54, p. 219). DCSO personnel (48.1%) were the most likely to report involvement in a youth-focused activity, followed by DPD (44.4%) and NCDPS personnel (15.6%). One likely reason for this disparity is that DPD and DCSO have active youth engagement programs; NCDPS personnel specialize in supervising adult offenders.



The most common youth involvement by officers was as a School Resource Officer (23.7%), followed by Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) officer (14.4%). One in five (20.7%) officers reported involvement with more than one youth-focused activity (Object 5.55), with more than 10.8% of respondents reported working with 3 or more youth-centered programs. In addition to involvement in public safety youth engagement programs, officers reported involvement with the following programs:

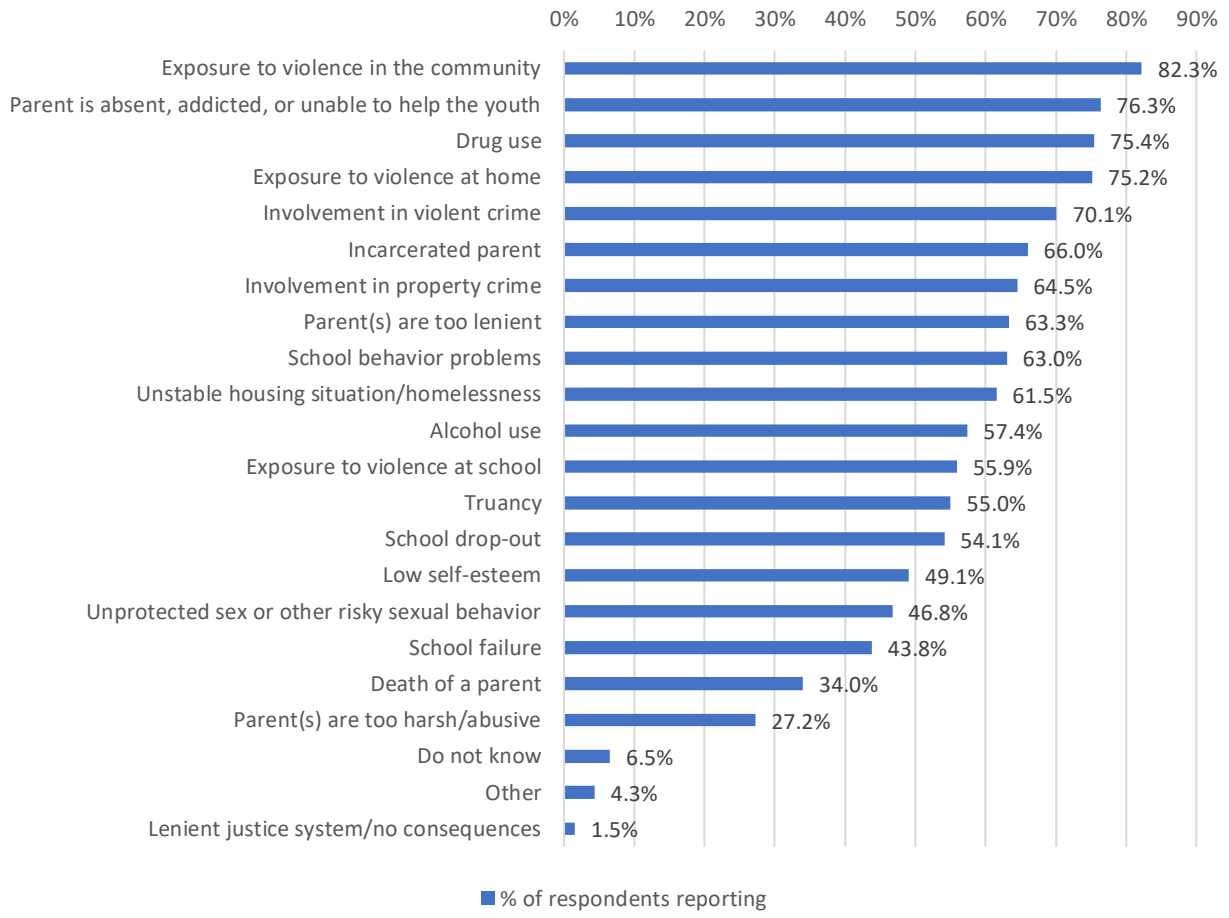
- CHOICES program
- Project BUILD
- Teen Court
- Shop with a Cop
- READ program
- Impaired Driving Education Program
- Numerous non-governmental, faith-based, and civic organizations working with youth.



What risk factors/at-risk behaviors have you observed in the youth or young adults that you interact with through your job? (338 respondents)

The most common risk factor reported by respondents is exposure to violence in the community (82.3%); followed by parent is absent, addicted to substances, or in other ways unable to help the youth (76.3%). (Object 5.56, p. 220). Other top risk factors reported by respondents include drug use (75.4%), and exposure to violence at home (75.2%), and involvement in violent crime (70.1%).

Object 5.56 Percentage of respondents reporting risk factors/high risk behaviors in the youth they regularly interact with



Respondents were able to write their own responses to this question. Two respondents described young parents, i.e., "children having children" as a risk factor they had observed, noting that these children lack guidance from parents. Several respondents described the justice system itself as a risk factor, noting that the system is too lenient and does not provide consequences for youth who are involved in it. One respondent expanded on this idea and stated there is "no continued evaluation after completing/taken off of juvenile monitoring programs." Other risk factors noted by respondents included youth experiencing victimization, youth lack of employability ("no skills"), parental inattentiveness, and "heavy use of social media." One respondent described youth facing many factors, including mental health issues, noting:

> *While working in the schools, I have witnessed all the above while also noticing the behaviors of depression as they feel they have no one to help them in life. Due to this, many of the children even as low as freshman become involved in gang activity.*

Public safety personnel interactions with gangs/gang-involved individuals and observations

Public safety personnel were asked a series of questions to describe their interactions and observations about gang involved individuals in Durham.

Do you believe gangs are active in Durham? (341 respondents)

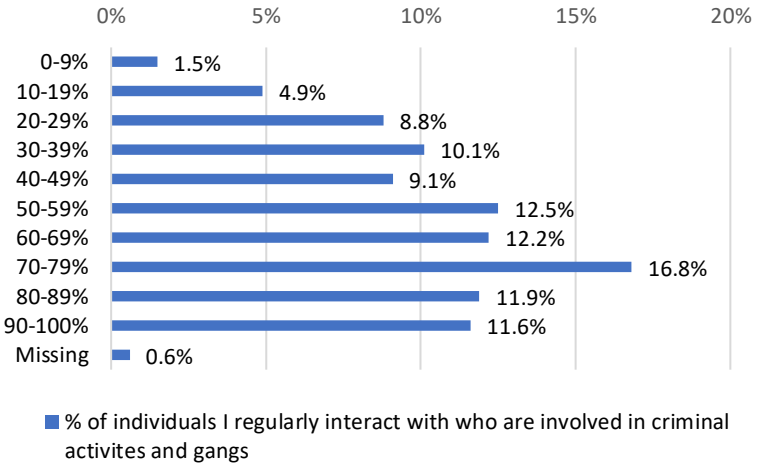
Most respondents reported that they believe that gangs are active in Durham (99.1%). One respondent (0.3%) answered no to this question and two respondents (0.6%) reported that they do not know.

Of the individuals involved in criminal activity that you regularly interact with in your professional capacity, what percentage do you believe are involved in gangs? (328 respondents)

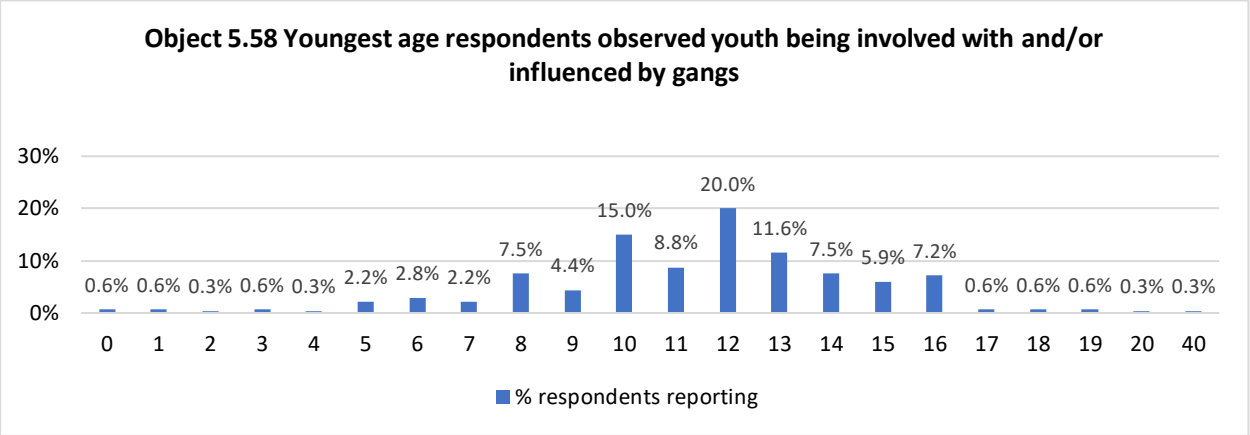
This question asked respondents to estimate the percentage of individuals involved in criminal activity that they regularly interact with in their professional capacity who are also involved in gangs. The largest percentage of respondents (41.5%) reported that they believed that 50-79% of criminally involved individuals they interacted with are also involved in gangs (Object 5.57).

Respondents from DPD were also significantly more likely to report higher percentages of believed gang involvement. Over half of DPD respondents (52.5%) report that of the criminally involved individuals they regularly interact with they believe between 70% and 100% are also involved in gangs. The most common range of believed gang involvement reported by DCSO respondents was 50-59% (16.4% of respondents reporting), compared to 70-79% for DPD and NCDPS respondents (20.6% of DPD officers and 20.7% of NCDPS officers reporting).

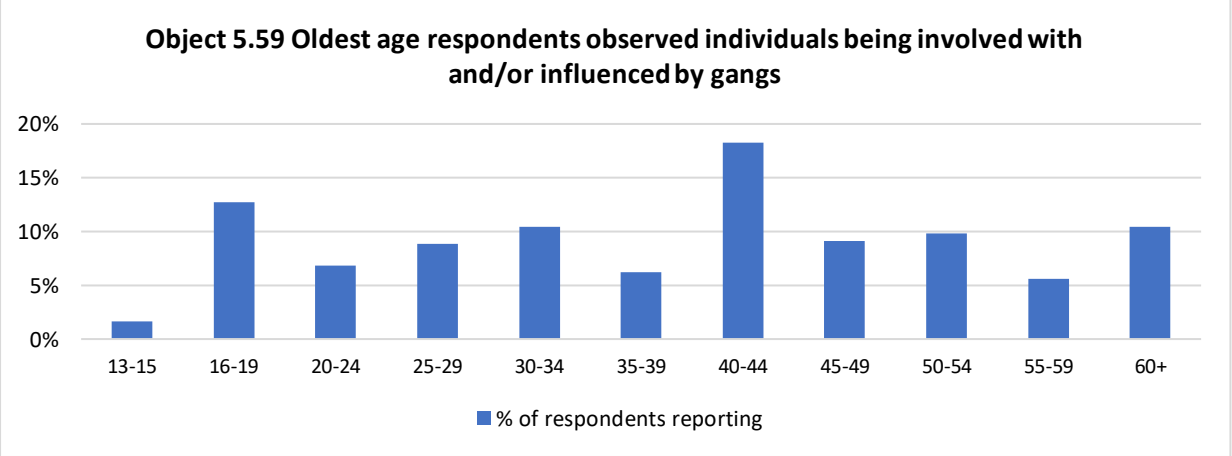
Object 5.57 Percentage of individuals respondents regularly interact with who are involved in criminal activity and gangs



What ages have you observed young people being involved with and/or influenced by gangs?
The range of ages at which respondents reported young people being involved with and/or influenced gangs was between 0 and 40. Over half (55.3%) of respondents reported ages 10-13 as the youngest age they had observed young people being involved with/influenced by gangs (Object 5.58).



Respondents were also asked to identify the oldest age at which they had involved individuals being involved with and/or influenced by gangs. A total of 309 respondents answered this question and responses ranged from 13 to 99. The average age for all responses was 37.8. The largest percentage (18.3%) of responses were between the ages of 40 and 44 (Object 5.59). Interestingly, 14.3% of respondents reported that the oldest age they had observed individuals being involved with and/or influenced by gangs was under the age of 19 and 10.5% of respondents reported that they had observed individuals being involved with or influenced by gangs at 60+ years of age.



Do you believe gang activity is increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same in Durham compared to three years ago? (341 responses)

Most respondents (83.3%) reported that they believe gang activity in Durham is increasing compared to three years ago. Over one in ten (11.1%) reported that gang activity is staying about the same, 0.6% of respondents reported that gang activity is decreasing, and 5.0% of respondents reported that they do not

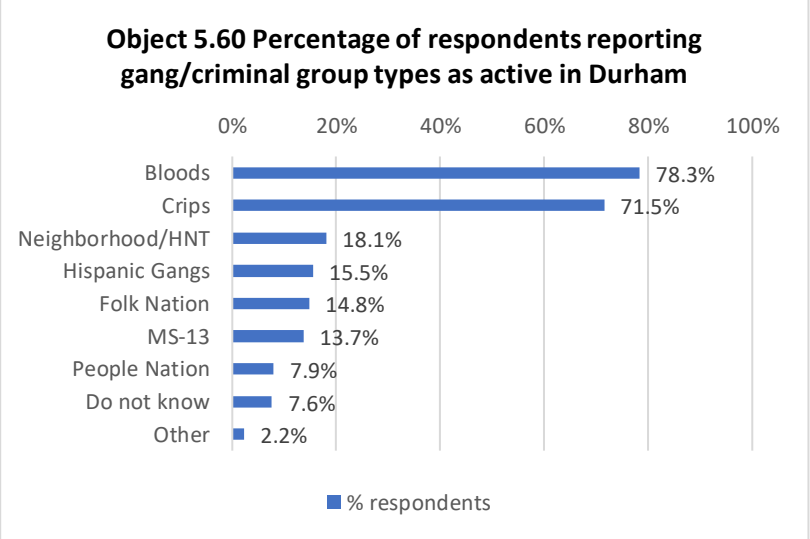
know. One in six respondents (16%) reported that they believe that gang activity has stayed about the same. A small percentage (5%) reported that they believe that gang activity has decreased.

Which gangs do you believe are the most active in Durham? (277 responses)
Respondents reported a wide variety of active gangs and criminal/ideological groups in Durham. Affiliations reported by respondents as active in Durham included Bloods; Crips; People Nation; Folk Nation; Hispanic gangs; neighborhood gangs; hybrid and non-traditional gangs (HNT); and other criminal/ideological groups that included white supremacists, Hell's Angels, and neo-Nazis.
These gangs/groups were grouped by affiliation/type and reported on Table 5.11.

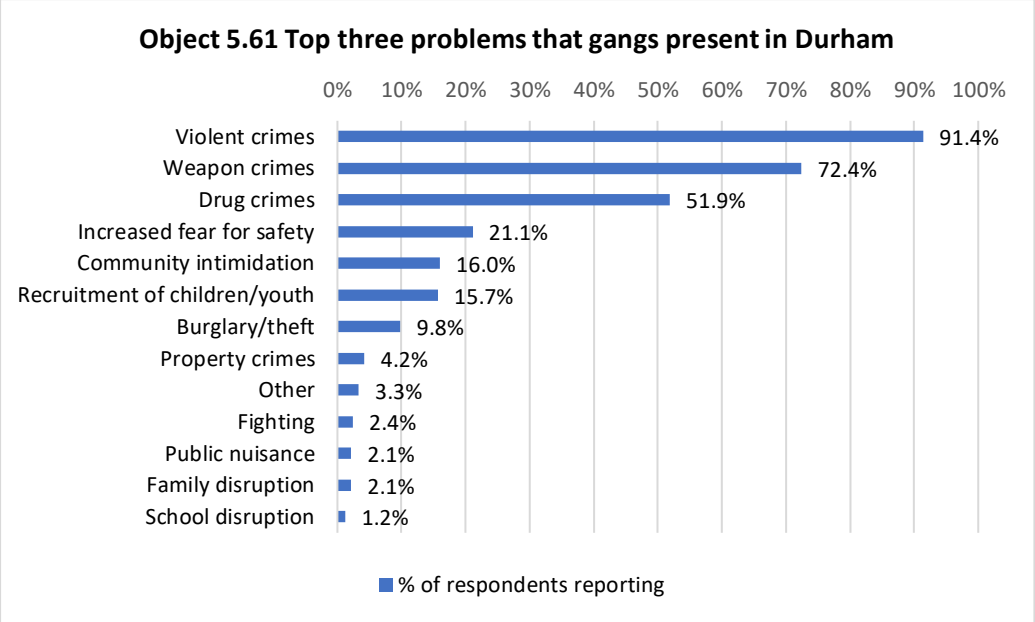
Table 5.11 Respondents' reported active gangs by affiliation/type

Bloods	Crips	People Nation	Folk Nation	Hispanic Gangs	Neighborhood/ HNT	Other
9-Tre Bloods Lines: -Bentwood Omega Line -East Durham Bloods -Southside Omega Line	8-Tre Crips Subsets: -8-3 Babies -Far west -Northwest - -	Latin Kings	Gangster Disciples	MS-13	8 a.m.	White Supremacists/ Neo-Nazis
	Rolling 30s Crips	Vice Lords	Black Disciples	Sureños	O-Block (Food Lion Projects/FLP)	Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club
	Rolling 60s Crips			Norteños	Get Rich Cartel	
	Rolling 100s Crips			Brown Pride Locos	30 Boyz	
	600 Boyz				700 Dowd Clique	
	900 Main Street				23 Clique	
					YSM	

Respondents were most likely to note that Blood and Crip gangs were active in Durham (Object 5.60). Blood-affiliated sets were reported as active by 78.3% of all respondents. Crips sets were reported as active by 71.5% of respondents. Less than one-third of respondents (29.2%) reported active Hispanic gangs.

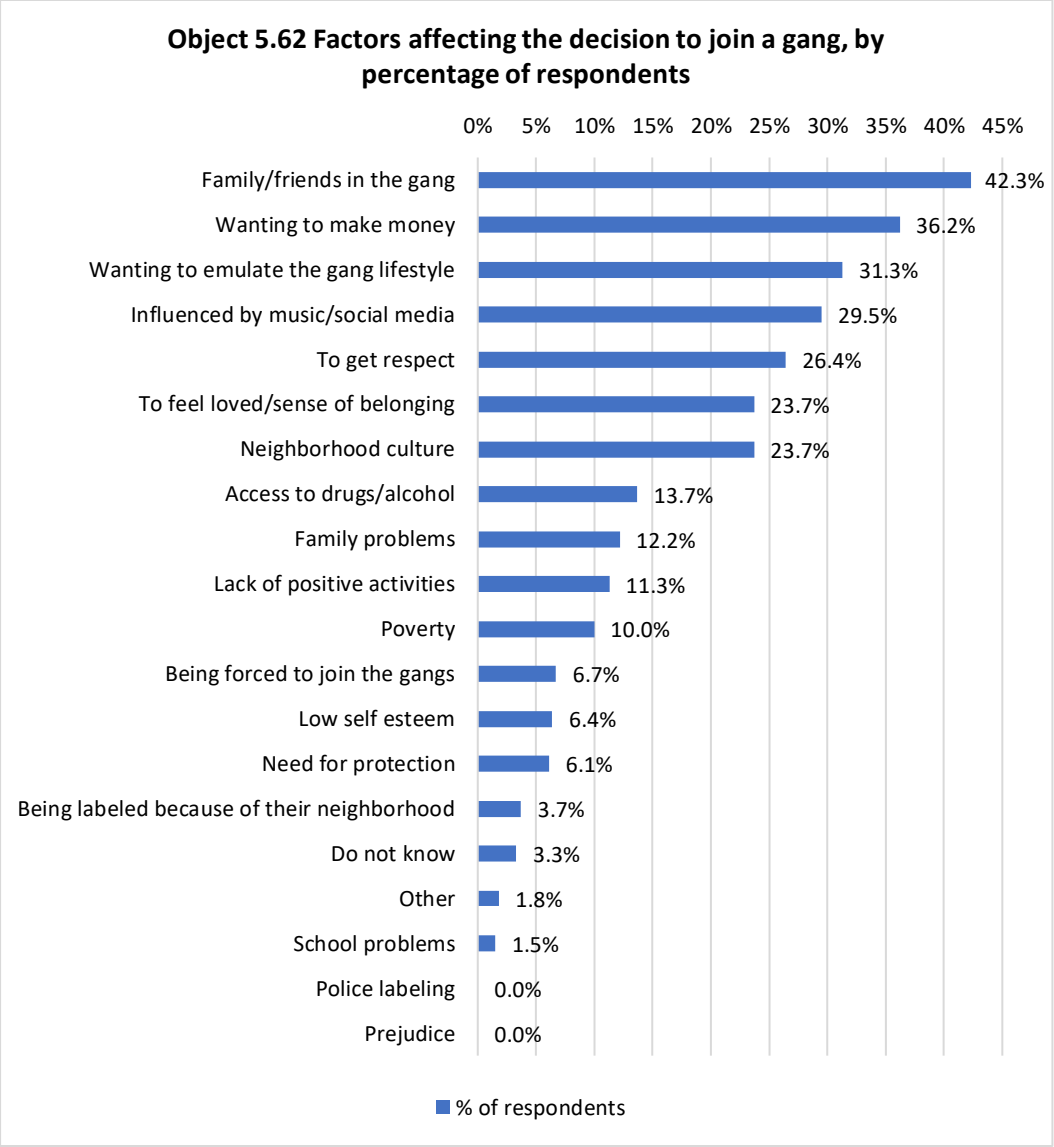


Top three problems that gangs present in Durham? (337 responses)
Respondents were provided with a list of likely problems caused by gangs in Durham and were asked to prioritize these problems by limiting themselves to the top three options. Respondents overwhelmingly (91.4%) selected violent crimes as one of the top three problems that gangs present in Durham (Object 5.61). Almost three-fourths of respondents (72.4%) chose weapon crimes as one of the top three problems, and over half (51.9%) selected drug crimes. Respondents could also enter a custom answer to this question, and 3.3% of respondents provided a custom answer.



Six respondents noted that all the listed problems are caused by gangs in Durham. One respondent explained: “It's all related. These groups seize power by banding together. Once they have power, the peer pressure brings recruits, and the criminal options are seemingly endless.” Another described that the problems are interconnected: “They are all related and can cause another to happen. For example, drug crimes may be the reason for an increase in violent/weapon crimes, etc., which then causes an increased fear for safety and intimidation and so on.” Two respondents identified concerns about innocent bystanders being caught in the crossfire of gang shootings. One respondent described denial by city leaders: “City does not acknowledge that there is a heavy presence of gangs within the communities that people stay in.”

Top three factors that influence young people in Durham to join a gang (329 responses)
Survey respondents were asked to identify the top three factors that they have observed influencing young people’s decisions to join a gang. Survey respondents were provided with a list of 18 risk factors and could also create a custom response to this question. The top response was “family/friends in the gang” (42.3%), followed by “wanting to make money” (36.2%) and wanting to emulate the gang lifestyle (31.3%) (Object 5.62, p. 225).



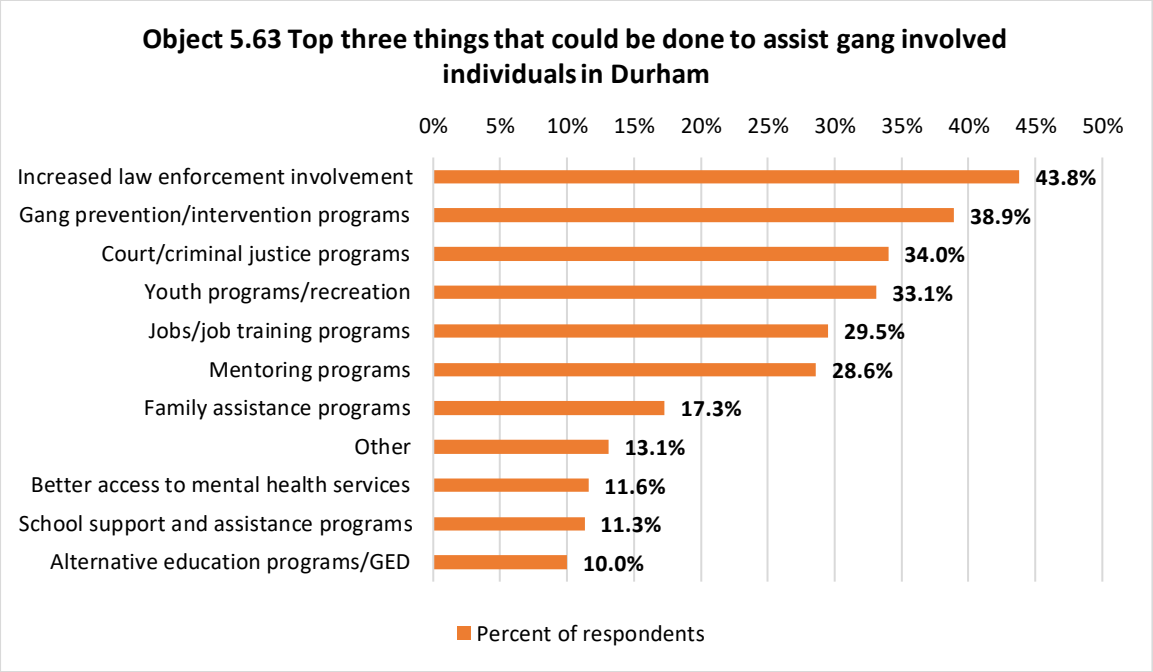
A small percentage of respondents (1.8%) provided a custom response. These included bullying, lack of good parenting/single parent homes, and ineffective City Council/District Attorney. One respondent noted that "it's very much a combination of many of these factors."

Future recommended activities and level of satisfaction with current response

Public safety officers were asked to use their knowledge and experiences to provide feedback on current activities and make recommendations about future activities.

The top three things that could be done to assist gang-involved individuals in Durham (329 responses)

Survey respondents were asked to identify the top three things that could be done to assist gang-involved individuals in Durham. Survey respondents were provided with eleven answers or could write a custom response and were limited to three or fewer responses to this question to identify priority actions. The top three choices by respondents included increased law enforcement involvement (43.8%), gang prevention/intervention programs (38.9%), and court/criminal justice programs (34.0%) (Object 5.63, p. 226).



Numerous respondents (13.1%) provided custom responses to this question.

Home and family issues

Several respondents identified family issues, such as absent fathers, which are necessary to assist individuals involved in gangs. One respondent explained:

> *A culture shift in the community is needed before any outside sources can do anything. The biggest issue is no fathers in the home. Young men crave role models, gangs provide that along with the drugs, the adrenalin rush, and status with a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves.*

Provide alternatives to gangs

One respondent noted that programs need to provide a high value alternative to gangs: "any program or assistance would need to be presented in a way that would look better to them than the gang life, better helping them to not get involved or be able to safely get them out of gang affiliation." Another respondent explained that interventions must occur with the entire community:

> *You have to address/mentor entire neighborhoods. you can address one kid and one family all day long but what happens when you leave and that kid must go back home to the neighborhood of violence, where it is eat or be eaten? You have to address the entire area and that might mean sending some OG's to jail forever if it means saving the youth and future.*

Failures of the criminal justice system

A significant concern for many respondents was a perceived failure on the part of the criminal justice system to hold individuals accountable for participating in crimes. Twenty-four respondents (7.3%)

specifically mentioned a failure on the part of the district attorney/criminal justice system to prosecute gang-involved individuals for serious crimes. One respondent explained this in detail:

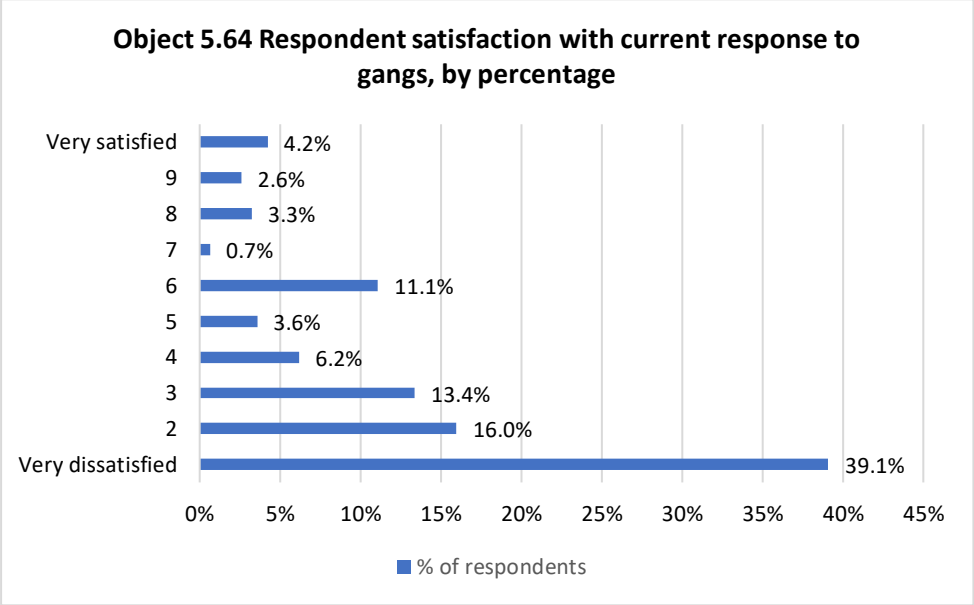
> *Repeat violent offenders who are validated gang members need to be prosecuted under the gang enhancements provided by state and federal law. Without this, gang members have no fear of losing money, status, territory, or influence. If gang members are incarcerated, all of their communications are recorded, further aiding documentation of rank and file of the gangs, tactics used by the gangs, and preeminent violent activities.*

Need for increased funding for law enforcement

Several respondents identified a need for increased funding for law enforcement, expansion of proactive policing strategies, increased numbers of officers assigned to the specialized gang unit, and greater respect for law enforcement. One officer noted the need for "a city council that values the safety of the community."

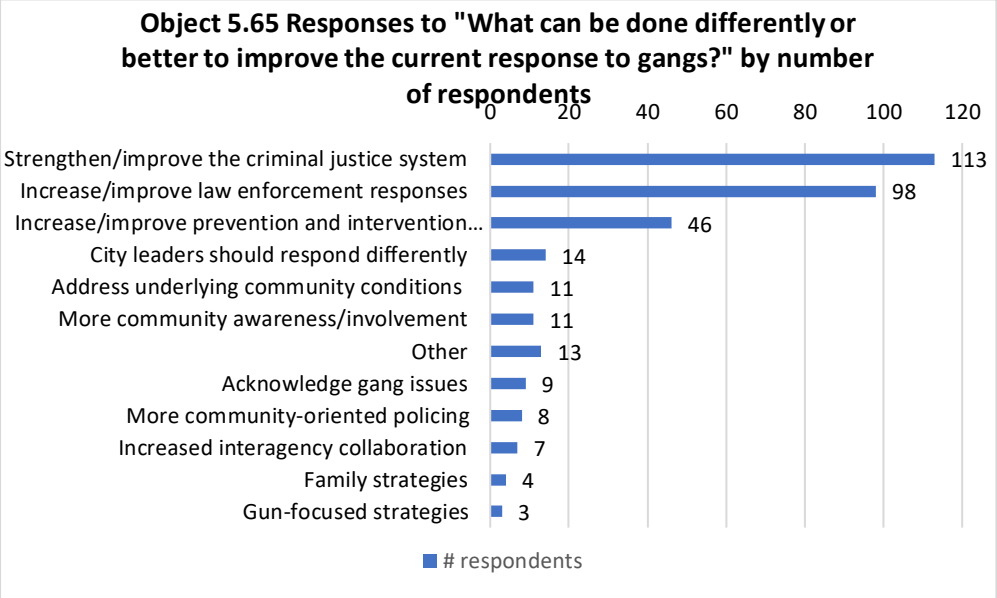
How satisfied are you with the current response to gangs in Durham? (165 responses)

This question was asked as a sliding scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing very dissatisfied and 10 representing very satisfied. The average rating by respondents was 3.2. Most respondents (39.1%) rated their satisfaction as a 1 (very dissatisfied) (Object 5.64). Almost three-fourths of respondents (68.5%) rated their satisfaction at a 3 or lower. Only 10.1% of respondents rated their level of satisfaction at an 8 or higher.



Question: What do you think could be done differently or better to improve the current response to gangs? (256 responses)

This open-ended question asked respondents to provide their own custom answers. The responses were reviewed, sorted, and organized topically. Responses were wide-ranging but were primarily within 14 categories (Object 5.65). These categories will be described in detail below. Numerous respondents provided complex answers which fell into multiple categories and these responses were tabulated in all applicable categories.



Strengthen/improve the criminal justice system, prosecution and/or sentencing of gang-involved individuals (113 responses)

Responses in this topic were focused on ensuring that gang-involved individuals who commit crimes are held accountable in the criminal justice system. Of these responses, a sizable percentage (45.1%) mentioned issues with prosecution/the district attorney specifically. Feedback in this area suggested stricter sentencing for gang-involved crimes, the need for judges to hold gang-involved defendants accountable, the need for increased staffing in this system, and the need for prosecution to take a more active role in aggressively prosecuting violent offenders. One respondent, whose comments are representative of comments in this category, notes:

> *Prosecute those with gang involvement with the laws we already have, Durham does not prosecute which leads to increased violence through repeat offenders. They are emboldened by the lack of punishment and lack of policing due to the political climate.*

Increase/improve enforcement responses (98 responses)

About 38.0% of individuals who responded to this question with a custom answer described a need for increased law enforcement activity relating to gang-related crimes and hot spots in the community. Many respondents noted the need to resume or expand specialized investigations and enforcement activities such as the gang unit, housing units, and High Enforcement Abatement Team (HEAT). Numerous responses discussed the need for additional staffing and funding for law enforcement agencies,

strengthening/increasing staffing for the gang unit, increasing intelligence collection on gangs, and more use of proactive policing strategies (most did not specifically define proactive strategies). Many respondents stated that law enforcement officers are being constrained from doing their jobs by political concerns. A common comment was "let the police be the police." Several respondents suggested that the city council/police department should revisit the policy requiring written consent for search. One respondent noted:

> *Generally, in the city we ought to stop seeing police as the problem and recognize that aggressive, pro-active law enforcement is critical to countering the problems created by gangs. Many lay people do not understand this, mistaking that policing is aggressive towards youth. It is not; it should be aggressive towards violent crime, drugs, crime in general, and that gang stranglehold on our communities. One early step towards this would be rescinding the city council's and police department's mandate for written consent to search. This would encourage traffic stops and thereby seizures of illegal firearms and drugs. Leaving it in place discourages and decreases these.*

Increase/improve prevention and intervention responses (46 responses)
About one in five respondents (17.9%) suggested increasing or enhancing prevention and intervention responses to gangs. Several respondents suggested that the community needs to resume delivery of the G.R.E.A.T. program (a law enforcement-taught gang prevention curriculum). Other common responses highlighted the need for more mentoring for youth, more prevention/intervention programs, more youth recreational opportunities, and more programs for youth involved in the juvenile justice system.
One respondent described the need for multiple safe locations for children and youth to go and participate in positive programming:

> *Kids have no safe place to go when not in school and they are being "supervised" and "mentored" by gang members. We need lots of structured, supervised, and secure places, within walking distance from the kids' homes and schools. They need to be open during the hours when these kids are most vulnerable and left alone due to parents working late or parents who are not supervising their kids in the afternoon. The safe places need to include enrichment programs, homework help, tutoring, healthy meals, classes in art, computers, home economics, etc. They need to be staffed with trained childcare professionals and mentors and secured with police presence and metal detectors. We also need resources for the parents who never learned how to be parents because they did not have a parent to teach them and resources for parents working 2-3 jobs to make ends meet and cannot supervise their kids.*

Address underlying community conditions such as unemployment and inadequate housing (11 responses)
Several respondents described a need for the community to address underlying factors that make community members vulnerable to gang involvement, including a lack of job opportunities that pay a living wage, a lack of training/skills that can help individuals access better jobs, and unstable and unaffordable housing.

One respondent noted: "We…need resources for youth to prevent the appeal of joining a gang. Address the need for financial help to include housing, mental health and ways to help youth get a job/career/education."

Increased community awareness and involvement in the gang issue (11 responses)
Several respondents noted that the community itself needs to be more aware of and involved in addressing local gang issues. One respondent suggested: "Educate the public on the violence and destruction perpetuated by gang members and gang activity and the necessity for law enforcement intervention to lower gang crime rates."

Acknowledge gang issues (9 responses)
Nine respondents stated that the community and/or community leaders should acknowledge that there is a gang problem in Durham. One respondent noted:

> *Acknowledge there is a problem and begin talking about it versus ignoring it and attempting to paper over it. Kids are in gangs and increasingly involved in violent crimes. Policy drives the response to gangs, and we are not going after gangs... they're becoming emboldened.*

More community-oriented policing (8 responses)
Eight respondents suggested there is a need for increased community-oriented policing strategies and for police to engage more actively with the community. One respondent explained: "Educate the public on the violence and destruction perpetuated by gang members and gang activity and the necessity for law enforcement intervention to lower gang crime rates."

Increased interagency collaboration and communication (7 responses)
Respondents pointed to a need for agencies to communicate and collaborate across agency boundaries, including partnerships between local law enforcement agencies and probation/parole, coordination with federal partners, higher levels of communication with the courts, and working more closely with juvenile probation and intervention programs. One respondent noted that law enforcement agencies should establish an "Inter-agency task force: DSO with DPD and include surrounding counties/jurisdictions. Gang members cross jurisdictional lines and the information sharing is necessary. Build a better relationship with the federal district courts to identify key gang leaders and establish a clear investigation and prosecution plan." Another noted: "There should be more communication between the courts, gang prevention programs, police and community partners. This may help build better awareness of the problem and result in more community involvement and program development."

Family strategies (4 respondents)
Four respondents stated that efforts should focus on holding parents accountable to ensure that they care for their children and/or provide parents with support and assistance. One respondent noted: "Also better systems in place where kids aren't left with parents who are drug abusing and involved in crime who can't care for their children which leaves them vulnerable. Also, for parents trying to survive they need resources to help keep their kids in programs to prevent them from being recruited while their parents are working to provide for them."

Gun-focused strategies (3 respondents)
Three respondents noted that Durham agencies need to emphasize stronger enforcement and more stringent laws around gun use and gun violence. One respondent explained:

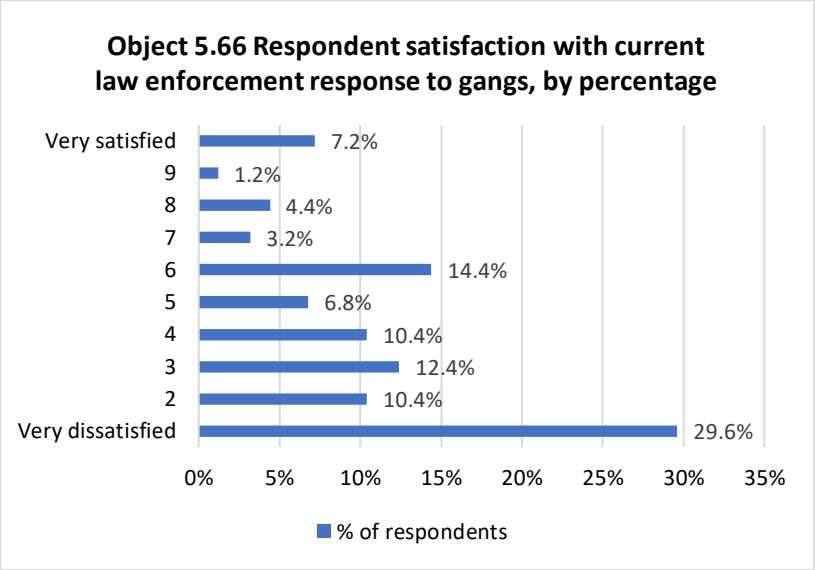
> *DA has to be harder on gun crimes. Shooting in front of the Court House, Durham Bulls Ball Park, Rolling Shootouts, Shootouts in front of News Broadcasters? Really? No fear of the consequences, and they get thrown out or reduced to misdemeanor gun possession. DA has to get tougher on gun crimes. Felons with guns, illegal possession of guns, stolen guns, possessing stolen guns have to be hammered. Shooting up houses, graduation parties, drive by on cars have to be hammered! Not tolerated. I have* had *people from New York and New Jersey tell me they are afraid of the gun violence in Durham!*

Other recommendations (13 responses)
Other recommendations covered wide-ranging areas. One respondent noted that probation/parole cannot change conditions of probation or parole for probationers/parolees even when there are pending charges, and explained that the system has other limitations:

> *Many drug and gun charges get dismissed, that needs to change. Rule 1 in criminal justice is "swift and certain" that would act as a better deterrent instead of allowing them to know that they can get away with their actions/behaviors. More intensive supervision -- increased contacts, better resources. Many gang members have mental health and/or drug issues but are not able to access drug treatment court nor mental health court because of the gang flag, which is understandable but unfair.*

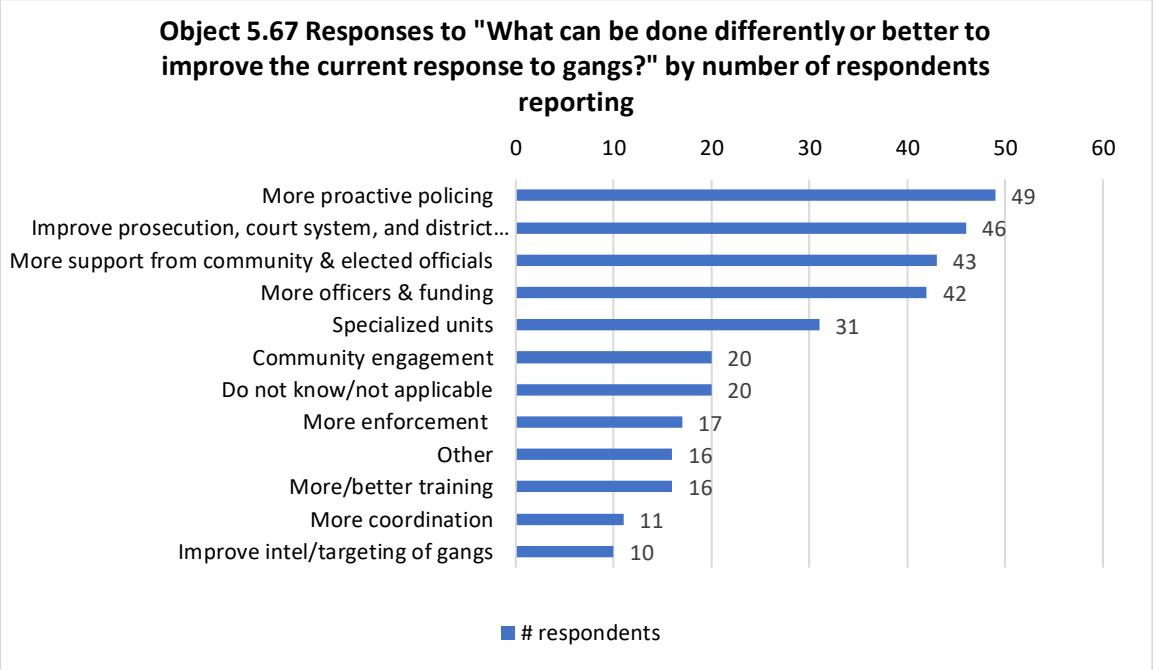
Others noted that it is necessary for the community to work on the root causes of the gang issue. One respondent described a need to provide prevention education to children during the elementary years. Two respondents suggested engaging individuals involved in gangs in dialogue to identify possible solutions. Two respondents expressed discomfort with funding being directed to "active gang members" working for Bull City United, while another noted that Bull City United and Project BUILD were the most effective programs available in Durham County. One respondent urged that the term gang should be avoided by programs. One respondent described a need for anger management and fiscal management classes for community members and suggested that schools should provide hard skills training necessary for employment. This respondent also noted that "Contractors that are granted city or county contracts should be required to take a substantial percentage of these people, train, mentor and provide employment to these individuals."

Question: How satisfied are you with the current law enforcement response to gangs in Durham?
(134 responses)
This question was asked as a sliding scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing very dissatisfied and 10 representing very satisfied. The average rating by respondents was 3.9. The largest percentage of respondents (29.6%) rated their satisfaction as a 1 (very dissatisfied) (Object 5.66, p. 232). Over half of respondents (52.4%) rated their satisfaction at a 3 or lower. About one in ten respondents (12.8%) rated their level of satisfaction at an 8 or higher.



What do you think could be done differently or better to improve the current law enforcement response to gangs in Durham? (256 responses)

This open-ended question asked respondents to provide their own custom answers. The responses were reviewed, sorted, and organized topically. Responses primarily fell into 12 categories (Object 5.67).



Numerous respondents provided complex answers which fell into multiple categories and these responses were tabulated in all applicable categories. These categories will be described in detail below.

More proactive policing (49 responses)
The largest number of respondents to this question (19.1%) reported that more proactive police activities are needed to combat gangs in Durham. While proactive police activities can cover a wide range of potential activities, most respondents were non-specific about the types of proactive strategies they would like to see implemented. Numerous respondents expressed the perception that their ability to implement proactive strategies are being restricted by departmental policies, political leaders, or both. One noted: "City council should advocate for law enforcement to proactively find violent offenders and get illegal guns off of the street." Specific proactive strategies mentioned by respondents in this category included random license checks, enforcing visible traffic infractions, more direct engagement with residents, and targeting known criminal organizations/gangs. One respondent described proactive strategies as follows:

> *Officers need to be proactive in the community. Get out in the areas and conduct vehicle stops, I cannot remember the last time that I was driving in Durham and actually saw a vehicle stop.*

*Improve prosecution, court system, and/or district attorney's office (*46 responses)
Another very common topic addressed by respondents was the need for more consistent prosecution of gang-involved individuals involved in crimes. One in five respondents (18.4%) described concerns with the district attorney's office, prosecution, or the court system in general being too lenient or failing to fully pursue criminal charges. These concerns included low/no bail when charges are filed, a perceived failure to prosecute cases, and a belief that the court system is not holding criminally involved individuals accountable, leading to more crime. One respondent noted: "The court system makes punishment a "revolving door" when law enforcement does locate and remove the problems found in society."

Law enforcement officers need more support from the community and elected officials (43 responses)
Many respondents (16.8%) expressed a belief that law enforcement officers and agencies are not being supported by community leaders and/or residents. Some respondents linked this perceived lack of support with low morale and officers being less inclined to take proactive measures to reduce crime. Some respondents expressed concerns that agencies are being defunded and this is leading to a lack of sufficient officers on the street to protect the community. Others described a belief that they will be written up or punished for taking proactive measures. One respondent stated: "Without support the officers are scared to do their jobs and enforce laws."

More officers/funding are needed (42 responses)
Numerous respondents (16.1%) suggested that additional funding and/or officers are needed to protect the community. Respondents also noted that officers need to be paid at a level that is comparable with officers in surrounding communities. Some respondents noted that it is necessary to increase overall workforce so that officers can be assigned to special investigative and enforcement duties, such as the gang unit or HEAT. One respondent explained:

> *There is an alarming shortage of officers which city council seems to be ignoring. Work on paying officers what they are worth and being competitive with neighboring departments so officers will stop leaving. At this point there are simply not enough officers to do anything differently than what is currently being done, which is clearly not working. If there were more officers employed in this city, it would open up avenues…to directly address the growing gang issue much better than what is currently being done.*

Specialized units (31 responses)
Numerous respondents (11.3%) suggested that there is a need to expand/enhance the existing unit and/or reestablish other specialized units such as a public housing unit, warrant squad, and HEAT. Respondents noted the need for ongoing intelligence collection on criminal groups/gangs and long-term intensive investigations of these organizations, which requires substantial manpower. Respondents suggested improvements to the existing unit, including a greater focus on identifying and tracking gang members and engaging in more proactive strategies designed to disrupt criminal gangs. Some respondents made very detailed recommendations:

> *I believe staffing the Gang Unit with experienced diverse officers would help because of the knowledge and experience they bring with them. The Gang Unit is a very high-profile unit, they need officers in those positions that know what they are doing. Some of those officers are still learning to be the Police...Staffing that unit with officers and a supervisor that has been here less than 3 to 5 years is concerning.*

Another explained:

> *Gang [unit] should spend more time interacting with gangs to id sets, members, and issues. whenever a shooting happens, a gang investigator should respond on call to determine if its gang motivated. For at least 10 days, the victim's gang and the suspect's (or suspected) gang should be targeted to affect the gang's bottom line. By making violence detrimental to profits, gang leadership may deter indiscriminate violence. This model has worked in other jurisdictions*

Community engagement (20 responses)
A little less than one in ten respondents who answered this question (7.8%) suggested that public safety agencies need to be more engaged with the community and/or children and youth. Respondents expressed that there is a need to create stronger relationships with community residents, build better rapport with the community, and interact more with children and youth. Respondents suggested that agencies "start earlier with contact" and offer "more programs that appeal to kids and their families." One respondent noted the multiple benefits to greater connection with the community: "strong relationships in these communities breeds good intel, reduces complaints due to a mutual understanding and a common goal to reduces violence in the community. Officers need to meet these residents, so they know who is who."

More stringent enforcement of laws (17 respondents)
Many respondents described a need for increased enforcement and accountability for individuals involved in criminal activity. Respondents noted that strict enforcement is necessary to disincentivize criminal behavior. One respondent explained: "Law enforcement should be enforcing laws. If they can't do that then there will never be an end to what's happening in Durham."

More/better training (16 respondents)
Numerous respondents suggested additional training for officers in a variety of areas. Respondents identified training on gangs/gang activity, proactive strategies to reduce crime, assisting/intervening with youth, juvenile law, sensitivity/tolerance/empathy, and more training/mentoring for new officers as areas

where training would be valuable. One respondent noted: "Patrol Officers need Durham specific gang training, more training on how to responsibly be proactive, and support from Department leadership."

More coordination (11 respondents)
Several respondents recommended increased coordination between the public safety agencies in Durham County, including DPD, DCSO, NCDPS probation and parole officers, and federal agencies. A few suggested that coordination should also occur between public safety agencies and prevention and intervention agencies. One respondent suggested that there should be a better working relationship between public safety agencies and the district attorney's office, and the need for both fields to better understand each other's work and share information on pivotal gang members. One respondent suggested that Durham County should "assist with logistical matters." Another respondent explained:

> *Let the Gang Unit (DPD), SET Team (DPD), Housing Unit (DPD), SACNarc (DSO), S.E.R.T (DSO), and Strike Team (DSO) conduct joint highly specific operations to find, document, arrest, and charge gang members for all criminal offences to disrupt the organization of the gangs and violent activities.*

Intelligence collection and targeting of gangs and high-crime neighborhoods (10 respondents)
Several respondents pointed to the need to collect more intelligence about gangs and target high crime individuals and neighborhoods. Suggestions included regular monitoring of social media, increased police presence in hot spot areas, and improve tracking of criminal activity in high crime neighborhoods. One respondent suggested that:

> *LE agencies need to start utilizing Gangnet and other resources to document and validate criminal gang members in order to start utilizing the NC Criminal Gang Suppression Act charges and sentence enhancements contained in NCGS Chapter 14 Article 13A; 15A-1340.16E(a); and 15A-1340.16E(b).*

Other (18 responses)
Other responses covered a variety of topics. These suggestions included:

- Addressing the root causes of gangs and gang violence
- Reinstate the G.R.E.A.T. program
- Need support from the juvenile courts because they are too lenient on juveniles
- Keep kids active
- More community accountability
- Grant probation & parole officers their full powers as stated in G.S. 15-205 NC state law to assist all law enforcement officials as needed.
- Saturation patrols
- More education and accountability for officers' actions
- Get rid of the units that cannot prove their workload and reallocate them to patrol, then promote the hard-working officers that want to make a difference in the city
- Be tougher, dig deeper, and show consistency. When offenders know what to expect, that can cause a shift in behavior. Knowing why they do what they do and addressing the root of the problem will go a long way. Mental health problems? Get them active in therapy or some sort of

mentoring. Drug abuse? Get them into structured treatment, not just once a month with TASC. They are unemployed? Get them in with vocational rehab or some sort of job readiness program. If we all attempt to work with them by giving resources to be successful, the crime will go down. The inconsistency between the police, probation, and the DA's office is not doing any good.

Comparative analysis

Several perceptions questions were structured for comparison across survey respondent groups, which include gang member interviews, community resident surveys, community leader surveys, youth-serving agency surveys, and public safety personnel surveys. These questions are explored below.

Top three factors you have observed that influence young people to join gangs

Respondent groups who were asked about this question include community residents, community leaders, agency personnel, public safety personnel and gang-involved individuals.

Gang-involved individuals were more likely to focus on social factors such as youth being influenced by social media/music, family/friend relationships, and youth emulating the gang lifestyle (Table 5.12). Community leaders focused more on larger systemic issues such as poverty. Wanting to make money was mentioned by community leaders, agency personnel and public safety personnel, but was not in the top three reasons listed by community residents or gang-involved individuals. Family/friends involved in gangs was listed by significant percentages of all groups except community leaders.

Gang-involved individuals were also asked about their personal reasons for joining a gang. While gang involved individuals did not list "to feel loved/sense of belonging," as one of the top reasons that youth in the community join gangs, it was cited by 40.0% of gang involved individuals as a reason that they joined a gang (Table 5.12). The top three responses of gang-involved individuals for their personal decision to join/associate with a gang are "Part of neighborhood culture," "Family member/friend was in the gang," and "Wanting to belong."

Table 5.12 Top factors that influence young people to join gangs

Gang-involved individuals	Community residents	Community leaders	School personnel	Youth-serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
Influenced by music/social media 47.5%	Does not apply to youth in my neighborhood 23.3%	Poverty 53.9%	To feel loved/sense of belonging 33.3%	Family/friends involved in gangs 37.8%	Family/friends involved in gangs 42.3%
Family/friends involved in gangs 45.0%	Do not know/prefer not to answer 18.3%	Wanting to make money 30.8%	Wanting to make money 28.1%	To feel loved/sense of belonging 32.4%	Wanting to make money 36.2%
Wanting to emulate the gang lifestyle 45.0%	Family/friends involved in gangs 16.2%	To feel loved/sense of belonging 30.8%	Family/friends involved in gangs 27.9%	Poverty 32.4%	Wanting to emulate the gang lifestyle 31.3%
To get respect/Neighborhood culture/Lack of positive activities 22.5%	Lack of positive activities 14.1%	To get respect 26.9%	Neighborhood culture 21.7%	Wanting to emulate the gang lifestyle 27.0%	Influenced by music/social media 29.5%

Further, 35.0% of gang-involved individuals reported that the way in which they joined the gang was via "family members already in the gang." Decisions to join a gang in Durham are closely tied to family and social relationships and emotional support, as well as gang presence in the neighborhood.

Table 5.13 Gang-involved individuals' top three reasons for joining/associating with gangs

Ranking	Reasons for joining/associating with gangs	% of respondents
1	Part of neighborhood culture	70.0%
2	Family member was in the gang	62.5%
3	Wanting to belong	40.0%

Gang involved individuals also report receiving significant emotional support from their gang at high rates (Table 5.14). This data suggests that programs/strategies focused only on meeting the economic needs of individuals are unlikely to address the more complex set of social and emotional needs that are met by the individual's gang. Further, this data indicates that familial relationships play a substantial role in gang involvement in Durham. This data indicates that gang intervention efforts should focus on specific neighborhoods and individuals with family relationships to gang-involved individuals, such as siblings, cousins, and children.

Table 5.14 Gang-involved individuals reporting social/emotional support provided by the gang

Positive social support provided by the gang	% of respondents reporting that they agree or strongly agree
My gang is like a family	95.0%
Members of my gang provide support and loyalty for each other	92.5%
Being a member of my gang makes me feel like I belong	92.5%

What risk factors/at-risk behaviors are you aware of in the youth or young adults that you interact with through your job?

This question was asked of school personnel, youth-serving agency personnel, and public safety personnel. Top risk factor exposure cited by youth-serving agency and school personnel were similar but higher percentages of youth-serving agency personnel reported observing these risk factors in the youth that they serve.

Exposure to violence in the community was the top risk factor exposure reported by public safety personnel and was also reported by large percentages of both school and youth-serving agency personnel (Table 5.15, p. 293).

Table 5.15 Youth risk factor exposure and at-risk behavior observed by school, youth-serving agency and public safety personnel

School personnel	Youth-serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
School behavior problems 79.9%	School behavior problems 100.0%	Exposure to violence in the community 82.3%
Exposure to violence in the community 78.8%	Exposure to violence in the community 100.0%	Parent is absent, addicted or in other ways unable to help the youth 76.3%
Low self-esteem 75.8%	Low self-esteem 95.2%	Drug use 75.4%
Unstable housing situation/ homelessness 73.4%	Unstable housing situation/ homelessness 92.9%	Exposure to violence at home 75.2%
Parent is absent, addicted or in other ways unable to help the youth 71.4%	Parent is absent, addicted or in other ways unable to help the youth 85.7%	Involvement in violent crime 70.1%
Exposure to violence at home 71.0%	Exposure to violence at home 85.7%	Incarcerated parent 66.0%

Gang-involved individuals were also asked about risk factor exposure and at-risk behaviors. Gang-involved individuals interviewed for this report exposure to risk factors/at-risk behavior in multiple areas. This self-reported data showed many similarities to the risk exposures reported by school, youth-serving agency, and public safety personnel. High percentages of gang-involved individuals reported community-level violence exposure, gang presence in their neighborhood, gang-involved and incarcerated family members, and school drop-out and behavior issues (school suspension) (Table 5.16). Prevention/intervention agencies should prioritize serving young people who are exposed to these risk factors.

Table 5.16 Risk exposure/at-risk behavior reported by gang-involved individuals

Risk factor	% Reporting
Gangs are present in my neighborhood	100.0%
A shooting occurs in my neighborhood at least monthly	92.5%
Used drugs in the past year	92.5%
Gang-involved family members	85.0%
School drop-out	80.0%
Incarcerated family member	72.5%
Absent parent	70.0%
School suspension	69.2%
Unemployed	65.0%
Parent a problem drinker, alcoholic, or used street drugs	62.5%
Exposure to violence at home	57.1%

Top three issues caused by gangs in the community

Every constituent group that participated in this gang assessment was asked to identify the top three issues caused by gangs in the community. Significant percentages of gang-involved individuals, community residents, community leaders, school personnel, youth-serving agency personnel, and public safety personnel identified violent crime as one of the top three issues caused by gangs in Durham. Weapon crimes were identified by all 6 constituent groups as one of the top three issues caused by gangs.

Over half of gang-involved individuals identified increased fear for safety as one of the top three issues caused by gangs (Table 5.17). Drug crimes were identified as a top three issue by community leaders, school personnel, and public safety personnel. Burglary/theft was identified as a top three issue by a substantial percentage of community residents.

Table 5.17 Top three issues caused by gangs cross group analysis

Gang-involved individuals	Community residents	Community leaders	School personnel	Youth-serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
Violent crimes 95.0%	Burglary/theft 33.5%	Violent crimes 88.5%	Violent crimes 49.0%	Violent crimes 55.3%	Violent crimes 91.4%
Increased fear for safety 55.0%	Violent crime 25.0%	Weapon crimes 46.2%	Recruitment of children/youth 38.3%	Weapon crimes 50.0%	Weapon crimes 72.4%
Weapon crimes 45.0%	Weapon crimes 25.0%	Drug crimes 42.3%	Drug crimes/ weapon crimes 34.3%	Recruitment of children/youth 31.6%	Drug crimes 51.9%

Further, gang-involved individuals report elevated levels of victimization, with 42.5% reporting they had been shot/stabbed, 25.0% reporting they had been assaulted or beaten, and 20% reporting they had been robbed in the past year. While indicating that violent crime is one of the top three issues caused by gangs, most gang-involved individuals (87.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that their gang protects them. This data suggests that community violence is a factor that may not only push young people into gangs, but keep them involved in gangs, as the gang is a source of perceived protection/safety in a dangerous neighborhood.

Top three things that should be done about gangs in Durham

Every constituent group that participated in this gang assessment was asked to identify the top three activities that should be done to assist gang involved individuals in Durham. The top response for gang-involved individuals (85.0%) and community leaders (57.7%) is youth programs/recreation (Table 5.18 p. 241). This response was also in the top three responses choses by youth serving agency personnel and school personnel.

The top responses for community residents (26.2%) and youth-serving agency personnel (54.8%) is gang prevention/intervention. Gang prevention/intervention was also in the top three responses for community leaders, gang-involved individuals, and public safety personnel. The top response for public safety personnel was increased law enforcement involvement (43.8%) and this was also a top three response for community residents. The top response for school personnel is mentoring programs (36.9%) and that was also a top three response for gang-involved individuals.

Table 5.18 Top three thing that should be done in Durham to assist gang involved individuals

Gang-involved individuals	Community residents	Community leaders	School personnel	Youth-serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
Youth programs/ recreation 85.0%	Gang prevention/ intervention 26.2%	Youth programs/ recreation 57.7%	Mentoring programs 36.9%	Gang prevention/ Intervention 54.8%	Increased law enforcement 43.8%
Gang prevention/ intervention 57.5%	Jobs/job training programs 24.7%	Gang prevention/ intervention 50.0%	Youth programs/ recreation 33.4%	Youth programs/ recreation 52.4%	Gang prevention/ intervention 38.9%
Mentoring programs 52.5%	Increased law enforcement 23.9%	Jobs/job training programs 42.3%	Better access to mental health services 30.1%	Jobs/job training programs 47.6%	Court/criminal justice programs 34.0%

Gang-involved individuals were asked what supports might help them think about leaving the gang life. The top responses to this question are relocation out of neighborhood (47.2%), getting a job (33.3%) and support/advice from a family member (16.9%) (Table 5.19).

Gang-involved individuals were also asked what would keep them from leaving the gang life (Table 5.19). Most (42.9%) reported that nothing would stop them. One in five (21.1%) reported that a threat to safety/need for protection would keep them from leaving the gang. Family responsibilities (10.5%) and family member injured by gangs (10.5%) were also top responses to this question.

Table 5.19 Interviews with gang involved individuals/formerly gang involved individuals

	What support would help you leave the gang life?	What would keep you from leaving the gang life if you wanted to?
1	Move out of the neighborhood (47.2%)	Nothing (42.9%)
2	Get a job (33.3%)	Threat to safety (21.1%)
3	Support/advice from a family member (16.9%)	Family responsibilities (10.5%) Family member was injured by gangs (10.5%)

This data suggests that the embedded nature of gangs in certain neighborhoods in Durham is a major factor in individuals remaining involved in gangs. One factor that was not addressed by respondents in answering this question is educational attainment. Four in five gang-involved individuals interviewed for this report had dropped out of school (80.0%) (Object 3.11, p. 90) and almost two-thirds of gang-involved individuals exited the school system before beginning grade 12 (Object 3.8, p. 88). Only 22.3% of gang-involved individuals had completed a high school diploma or GED. This low educational attainment could potentially keep many individuals from attaining a living wage in the employment market. Further, while many gang members did not report access to mental health as a support that would help them leave the gang life, 45.0% of gang-involved individuals reported 5 or more adverse childhood experiences/trauma

exposure and 30.0% reported exposure to 7 or more. Longitudinal studies of exposure to adverse childhood experiences indicate that "strong correlations were shown to exist between various ACEs and later symptoms or diagnoses of depressive and anxiety disorders in persons abusing drugs or alcohol" (De Venter, Demyttenaere and Bruffaerts, 2013).

How satisfied are you with the current response to gangs?

Most respondent groups did not report a high level of satisfaction with the current response to gangs, with only around 10% or below of each respondent group reporting they are satisfied or very satisfied with the current response. However, it should be noted that significant percentages of community residents and school personnel reported that they are unaware of the current response to gangs.

Table 5.20 Percentage of respondents reporting they are satisfied or very satisfied with the current response to gangs

Community resident	Community leaders	School personnel	Youth serving agency personnel	Public safety personnel
10.2%	**7.7%**	**3.0%**	**10.8%**	**10.1%**

Risk factors affecting local youth, juvenile court-involved juveniles, and gang-involved individuals.

Risk factors that were identified in the information collected for this report were mapped on a matrix to show the level of risk exposure experienced by each group (Table 5.21, p. 243).

Table 5.21 Risk factors for youth in Durham, juvenile court involved youth in Durham, and gang-involved individuals				
Risk factor	**Overall youth**	**Court-involved juveniles**	**Gang-involved individuals**	**Community residents/youth-serving agency/public safety**
Individual risk factors				
Substance use	26% of HS students report marijuana use in the past 30 days 10% of MS students report marijuana use in the past 30 days (DCDPH, 2021)	52% of court-involved juveniles report using alcohol and/or drugs (NCDPS, 2021)	92.5% of gang-involved individuals report using weed and/or other substances 62.5% of gang involved individuals report using weed more than once a day	75.4% public safety personnel 85.7% of youth serving agency personnel report drug use as a risk factor in youth they serve
Mental health	32% Middle school and 35% of high school students report feeling depressed for 2+ weeks (DCDPH, 2021) 27% middle school students ever considered suicide; 19% of high school students considered suicide in the past 12 months Youth listening sessions: "Young people feel an overwhelming need for mental health support to help them survive the experiences they are faced with."	37.6% mental health issues (YASI) 45% need more mental health assessment (NCDPS, 2020)	75.8% of school personnel and 95.2% of youth serving agency 49.1 of public safety personnel report low self-esteem in the youth they work with	
Victimization, abuse and/or neglect	2566 reports of child abuse/neglect in FY17-18; 150 cases were substantiated; 288 need services; 831 services recommended; Durham County had 414 children in foster care during FY17-18 (DCHA, 2020) Infant mortality rate in Durham County increased from 5 per 1k children to 7 per 1k children between 2017 and 2019 (Kids Count).	13.8% reported family substance abuse; 17.2% reported family mental health issues; 10.3% report physical victimization (YASI, 2021) 16.4% finding of child neglect (YASI, 2021)	47.5% reported experiencing physical abuse before age 18; 57.5% reported experiencing verbal or emotional abuse before age 18; 40% reported neglect before age 18.	2556 children investigated for abuse and neglect; 150 cases substantiated; 228 children in need of services; 831 had services recommended; 414 children in foster care (FY17-18) (DCHA,2020)

Delinquent behavior	n/a	31.6% of youth had 1-3 prior referrals to the juvenile court; 34.2% of youth had 4+ prior referrals to the juvenile court	50% of individuals interviewed self-identified as leaders or shot callers in their gang; reported elevated levels of criminal involvement by their peers	
Gang member or associate		Gang member – 15.4% Gang associate – 20.5% (2021 YASI)	70% current gang member 12.5% current gang associate 12.5% former gang member	n/a
Runaway or kicked out		44.0% prior runaway (YASI, 2021) 56.6% prior runaway (NCAR, 2020)		
Family risk factors				
Family gang involvement		3.4% Family gang involvement 3.4% (YASI, 2021) 7.9% Family court/gang involvement (NCAR, 2020)	85% of gang-involved individuals reported family gang involvement	n/a
Family disruption	44% of children in Durham in single parent household in 2019 (ACS, 2019)		70% lost a parent to divorce, abandonment or some other reason	
Family criminal involvement		42.4% family history of criminal involvement (NCAR, 2020).	72.5% had a family member incarcerated before age 18	
Parent unable to supervise		57% of youth have parents whose parenting skills are marginal; 4% inadequate; 20.4% of parents unable to supervise (NCAR, 2020). 6% kicked out of their home; 23.2% often or usually disobey family rules (YASI, 2021)		71.4% of school personnel 85.7% of youth serving agency personnel 76.3% of public safety personnel report that youth they interact with have parents who are absent, addicted or unable to help the youth

School risk factors				
School behavior problems/suspension	DPS school suspension rate for black students has decreased from 309 per 1k students in 17-18 to 169 per 1k in 19-20; this is still 7x higher than the rate for white students	64.5% of youth have serious school behavior problems; 10.5% moderate problems (2020 DYRNA)	69.2% of gang-involved individuals reported being suspended, 9th grade was the most common year.	79.9% of school personnel 100% of youth serving agency personnel 63% of public safety personnel reported youth they work with experience school behavior problems
Low educational attainment/school drop-out	Only 37% of Durham County 3rd-8th graders and 31% of 9th-12th graders scored "College and Career Ready" on end-of-grade exams in 2018-19. Fewer than 5% of students at Lakeview Alternative School were rated proficient on end of year exams (20-21).	5.7% of court-involved juveniles have dropped out of school (2021 YASI)	100% of gang involved individuals 14-17 report they have dropped out of school 77.6% dropped out of school	8 of 12 key census tracts 25% of adults have less than high school diploma; in two census tracts, over 40% of adults have less than a high school diploma 64.6% of school personnel; 83.3% of youth-serving agency personnel; 43.8% of public safety personnel report school failure as an issue affecting youth they serve 71.4% of youth serving agency personnel and 54.1% of public safety personnel report school dropout is an issue affecting youth
Peer risk factors				
Delinquent peers		41.9% of court-involved juveniles have delinquent peers; 20.5% gang associates; 15.4% gang members (YASI, 2021)	+90% of individuals reported peers involved in criminal behavior ranging from misdemeanors to Class A-E felony crimes.	

Community Risk Factors				
Gangs present in school or neighborhood	34% of high school students reported gang presence at school; 19% of middle schoolers; 40% of black high school students reported gangs present in their school White HS – 30% H/L HS – 25% (DCDPH, 2021) Youth listening sessions: "Other safety concerns shared by young people included guns, gangs, and violence in schools."	n/a	100% of gang-involved individuals report that gangs are present in their neighborhood; 20% report there are areas in their neighborhood that they cannot go because of gangs; 80% report there are areas outside of their neighborhood that they cannot go because of gangs	22.9% of community survey respondents report that gangs are highly active in their neighborhood (7-10) 22.7% reported moderate gang activity (4-6) and 16.5% reported low gang activity (2-3).
High rate of community violence	Youth listening sessions: "Several young people who do not feel safe in Durham mentioned the need to carry weapons." (DOY, 2021)		90% know a peer who injured or killed someone in the past year; 92.5% know a peer who shot someone. 80% reported a person being robbed in their neighborhood at least monthly; 92.5% reported a person being shot in their neighborhood at least monthly	78.8% of school personnel 100% of agency personnel 82.3% of public safety personnel report youth exposure to violence in the community Per capita aggravated assaults and homicides in the 12 census tracts is between 1.5 and 7.5 times higher than the rate citywide.
Age of involvement				
School and youth-serving agency personnel reported primary age of joining gang between 10-14. Public safety personnel reported primary age of joining a gang between age 10-13. Gang member interviews – Most common age they began to associate with gangs is age 12-14. Most common age they joined a gang is age 14-16. Most common age to drop out of school is 10th grade				

Resources

Getting Out of Gangs, Staying Out of Gangs: Gang Intervention and Desistance Strategies (Arciaga Young and Gonzalez, 2013)
https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Content/Documents/Getting-Out-Staying-Out.pdf

City of Boston Framework for Safe Neighborhoods and Innovative Partnerships
https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/document-file-07-2018/2017-violence-prevention-plan.pdf

City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development Comprehensive Strategy Mission: https://www.lagryd.org/mission-comprehensive-strategy.html

OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: Planning for Intervention (OJJDP, 2009).
https://nationalgangcenter.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh331/files/media/document/implementation-manual.pdf

Appendix A

Sample Youth Risk Behavior Survey from Cumberland County School District, NC

(Retrieved from https://www.ccs.k12.nc.us/cms/lib/NC50000603/Centricity/Domain/5033/HS%20Youth%20Risk%20Behavior%20Survey.pdf).

HS Youth Risk Behavior Survey.pdf

Appendix B

NC YRBS Methodology

The most recent YRBS surveys were conducted in 2015, 2017 and 2019. A description of the 2019 YRBS survey methodology was unavailable at the time this report was prepared, but a report on the 2017 YRBS survey, compiled by the Durham County Department of Public Health, in partnership with Durham Public Schools, notes:

> *The Durham County Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a part of a national school-based survey produced by the Centers for Disease Control and administered every other year by the Durham Public Schools…The 2017 Durham County middle school YRBS consisted of 70 questions; the high school YRBS consisted of 99 questions. All questions were designed and validated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). At least two thirds of the questions on each survey must come from the national core set of questions. The remaining one third were selected by a multi-sector team at the State. Surveys were administered on paper* (Durham County Department of Public Health, 2018).

The NC YRBS survey reported in this section was administered only to Durham Public Schools students. Data on private and charter schools is not included (Durham County Department of Public Health, 2018).

Appendix c

Questionnaire from the CDC Keiser Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

Instructions: Below is a list of 10 categories of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). From the list below, please place a checkmark next to each ACE category that you experienced prior to your 18th birthday. Then, please add up the number of categories of ACEs you experienced and put the total number at the bottom.	
Did you feel that you did not have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had no one to protect or take care of you?	Yes ◯
Did you lose a parent through divorce, abandonment, death, or other reason?	Yes ◯
Did you live with anyone who was depressed, mentally ill, or attempted suicide?	Yes ◯
Did you live with anyone who had a problem with drinking or using drugs, including prescription drugs?	Yes ◯
Did your parents or adults in your home ever hit, punch, beat, or threaten to harm each other?	Yes ◯
Did you live with anyone who went to jail or prison?	Yes ◯
Did a parent or adult in your home ever swear at you, insult you, or put you down?	Yes ◯
Did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt you in any way?	Yes ◯
Did you feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were special?	Yes ◯
Did you experience unwanted sexual contact (such as fondling or oral/anal/vaginal intercourse/penetration)?	Yes ◯

(Centers for Disease Control, 2021).

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