



AANHPI HERITAGE MONTH 2024 TOOLKIT

Not a Monolith, Not Silent

AANHPI HERITAGE MONTH

May is Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) Heritage Month—a time to discuss, uplift and celebrate AANHPI communities. For Everytown, it is also a time to recognize how gun violence and the gun industry as a whole affect AANHPI people across the country. Understanding these impacts allows for specific learning about what can be done to better support AANHPI communities in the U.S. in May, and every month year-round.

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM BECKY GEORGE

“We dedicate May to reflect on the resilience, beauty, and strength of AANHPI communities, but we also use it as a moment to renew our calls on elected leaders to take meaningful action to disarm hate and save lives. We have deep gratitude for our survivors, volunteers, and students from AANHPI communities who are on the front lines of change. Our movement is committed to fighting against AANHPI hate and violence, and we look forward to a world free from it.”

—Becky George, Chief Movement Building Officer

GUN VIOLENCE IN AANHPI COMMUNITIES

More than 580 Asian American Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) people are killed by guns each year—nearly 2 people each day.¹ Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, violence against the AANHPI community has increased, especially against AANHPI women.

All hate-motivated acts of violence against AANHPI community members are tragic and horrific. In recent years, high-profile hate-motivated violence has garnered national attention. Incidents include:

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death. A yearly average was developed using four years of the most recent available data: 2018 to 2021. Asian/Pacific Islander defined as non-Latinx origin.

- In [March 2021](#), eight people—six of whom were Asian women—were shot and killed at spas in the Atlanta, Georgia, area.
- In [January 2023](#), 11 people were shot and killed and nine others were wounded after a Lunar New Year Festival in Monterey Park, California.
- In [January 2023](#), seven people were shot and killed in a mass shooting in Half Moon Bay, California.

AANHPI communities are not only affected by gun violence motivated by hate.

RISE IN SUICIDE AFFECTING AANHPI GROUPS

Gun violence—in any form—against AANHPI communities demands recognition and solutions. Tragic mass shootings deserve attention when it comes to gun violence against AANHPI communities. It is equally important to know that the majority of gun deaths among U.S. AANHPI populations are by firearm suicide.² Nearly 350 AANHPI people die by gun suicide each year. Young Asians and Pacific Islanders have the second-fastest growing firearm suicide rate of any racial or ethnic group.³ Among veterans, AANHPI individuals have seen [the highest](#) increases in rate of suicide.

AANHPI COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION MEASURES

Gun violence has impacted AANHPI communities in a host of ways. In turn, communities have responded with support for gun violence prevention measures. A [2022 survey](#) of AANHPI voters found that 73% of respondents ranked gun control as an ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ important issue for deciding their vote. Additionally, 77% agreed that the country should have stricter gun safety laws.

SECURE STORAGE – ONE SOLUTION OF MANY

Support for gun violence prevention policy in AANHPI communities is clear. Research has identified specific solutions that can address the gun violence issues communities are facing.

[Secure storage](#) of firearms plays a pivotal role in reducing the risk of gun violence, particularly gun suicide. Millions of responsible gun owners follow recommended storage practices. However, [an estimated 54 percent](#) do not lock all of their guns, let alone store them unloaded, locked, and separate from ammunition. Researchers [estimate](#) that if half of households with children that contain at least one unlocked gun switched to locking all their guns, one-third of youth gun suicides and unintentional deaths could be prevented. This could save an estimated 251 lives in a single year.

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. WONDER Online Database, Underlying Cause of Death. A yearly average was developed using four years of the most recent available data: 2018 to 2021. Asian/Pacific Islander defined as non-Latinx origin.

³ Everytown analysis of CDC, WONDER, Underlying Cause of Death. Rate percentage change: 2012 to 2021. Ages 10–24. AIAN, API, Black and white are defined as non-Latinx origin.

Secure storage is just one of the array of solutions that can help prevent gun violence in AANHPI communities. [Learn more about the evidence-based solutions that can reduce gun violence.](#)

“NOT A MONOLITH”

AANHPI communities are not a monolith. They are diverse, with a range of cultural and linguistic subgroups. As a result, gun violence affects AANHPI communities in different ways.

Unfortunately, much of the research and national datasets fail to collect or disaggregate data by subgroups. Detailing differences amongst subgroups can help better address specific needs. For example, The Trevor Project [conducted a survey](#) in 2020 of young LGBTQ+ AANHPI people. Responses indicated a wide variation among subgroups reporting suicidal ideation.

Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders reported the highest rates of suicidal ideation over the survey period. This was followed by Korean, Filipino, Indian, and Vietnamese youth, respectively. Chinese LGBTQ+ youth reported the lowest rates of suicidal ideation.

AANHPI Heritage Month reminds us that there is a need for engagement and research in culturally oriented gun violence prevention efforts. Both the research and resulting solutions must be inclusive of and linguistically accessible to all AANHPI subgroups.

Gun violence impacts AANHPI communities in complex and wide-ranging ways, and there is a long way to go to bring it to an end. In recognition of this, Everytown is marking AANHPI Heritage Month 2024 with the theme “Not a Monolith, Not Silent.” During May and throughout the year, Everytown is committed to elevating gun safety advocates making changes in their communities and to holding space for survivors of gun violence.