

**From:** Reimels, Elizabeth (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/DVP)  
**Sent:** Thu, 2 Sep 2021 20:36:00 +0000  
**To:** Mercy, James (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/DVP); Dahlberg, Linda L. (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/DVP); Simon, Thomas (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/DVP)  
**Subject:** FW: Correction Needed: CDC's Firearm Violence Prevention fact sheet.

FYI, [REDACTED] We can discuss off-line at our next leadership meeting. Stay tuned. -Beth

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**From:** Reimels, Elizabeth (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/DVP)  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 2, 2021 4:33 PM  
**To:** Lee, Kinzie (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <[REDACTED]>; Watkins, Jacqueline (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <[REDACTED]>; Hulkower, Rachel (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** RE: Correction Needed: CDC's Firearm Violence Prevention fact sheet.

Hey! Please send this to Deb Houry and let her decide how she wants to handle. She has offered to have a call with Mr. Hughes [REDACTED] Thanks!

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**From:** Lee, Kinzie (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 2, 2021 4:21 PM  
**To:** Watkins, Jacqueline (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <[REDACTED]>; Reimels, Elizabeth (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/DVP) <[REDACTED]>; Hulkower, Rachel (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** FW: Correction Needed: CDC's Firearm Violence Prevention fact sheet.

Hello!

Just received this response back, may be worthwhile for us to talk more about this as I [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

- Kinzie

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**From:** Devin Hughes <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 2, 2021 4:03 PM  
**To:** Po Murray <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** Lee, Kinzie (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re: Correction Needed: CDC's Firearm Violence Prevention fact sheet.

Hi Kinzie,

Thank you for your response.

While I appreciate you taking the time to review and respond to my comments, I respectfully disagree with your assertion that: "The methodology used to capture defensive gun violence by the Gun Violence Archive represents a very small subset of people who have used guns defensively, and does not include individuals who might

have used guns defensively, but not reported this use to law enforcement. e.g. a person who comes to the front porch with a gun to deter a stranger from trespassing on his/her property and then doesn't think anything of it when the stranger leaves the property."

This claim of "a very small subset" is factually inaccurate according to the very surveys cited to produce the range of defense gun uses on your fact sheet. The results produced by both the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and Dr. Gary Kleck's surveys indicate that police were informed about the alleged DGU in more than 60% of cases. Specifically, respondents to Kleck's survey, which found 2.5 million DGUs annually, indicate that police were informed of or found out about 64.2% of the respondents' alleged DGUs. This indicates empirical evidence of 1,605,000 DGUs should exist annually. Yet police and media reports collected by the Gun Violence Archive find fewer than 2,000 verified DGUs. Even assuming that only the 23.9% of cases where shots were fired (according to Kleck's survey) are recorded, that would still mean 597,500 cases, yet empirical evidence for only 0.3% of those actually exists.

Given that both the NCVS and small private surveys such as Kleck's explicitly reject the conclusion that "a very small subset" of people report DGUs to the police, this means one of two things:

1. The data from NCVS and Kleck's surveys is entirely wrong about people reporting incidents to the police, and it is in reality a small subset. This would inherently mean that if the surveys are wrong about such a large percentage of their respondents, there is no reason to treat the rest of the surveys' claims as accurate; or
2. The data from NCVS and Kleck's surveys is correct that more than 60% of people with a DGU report the incident to the police. If that reporting percentage is correct, then GVA should be capturing the majority of overall DGUs, which in turn means that the overall DGU numbers produced by NCVS and Kleck are vast overestimates.

Unless one suggests that GVA misses more than 90% of DGUs that are reported to the police -- even though no other researcher or organization has found more verified DGUs than GVA -- it is clear that the CDC Factsheet is citing inaccurate information.

These facts, along with the substantial academic literature pointing out the extreme risk of false positives outweighing false negatives in surveys of statistically rare events (a problem that is not exclusive to the topic of DGUs), should be sufficient to demonstrate the need for further contextualization. [Additional research](#) demonstrates that Kleck's surveys produce criminologically impossible results, and [similar surveys](#) indicate that a majority of self-reported DGUs in such surveys are likely illegal (and therefore not beneficial to society). Without acknowledging the sizable problems with survey-based DGU estimates, the DGU numbers alone are likely to promote a misleading narrative about the dangers versus benefits of firearm ownership.

I would strongly urge the CDC to consider revising the factsheet to add further context, or at the very least removing the DGU section until better data emerges. I would be more than happy to meet virtually to further discuss the research surrounding DGUs and how best to correct the misinformation in the Factsheet.



Best,  
Devin

On Thu, Sep 2, 2021 at 11:53 AM Po Murray <po@murray.com> > wrote:  
Hi Kinzie,  
Thank you so much for your quick response. I am copying Devin on this email so that he can respond.  
Best Regards,  
Po Murray  
Chairwoman, Newtown Action Alliance & Newtown Action Alliance Foundation  
[NewtownAction.org](http://NewtownAction.org)  
P.O. Box 3325, Newtown CT 06470  
203-512-1778



On Thu, Sep 2, 2021 at 10:59 AM Lee, Kinzie (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) <kinzie.lee@cdc.gov> > wrote:  
Good morning, Po,

Thank you for reaching out to me, we always appreciate feedback and insight into how partners and other organizations are responding to our web-content. After connecting with a few folks internally it looks like we've received a few similar requests from other avenues as well.

We've done an internal review of the materials and CDC's fact sheet does note that estimates of defensive gun use vary depending on the data source, questions asked, populations studied, timeframes, and other factors related to the design of studies. Estimates from the Gun Violence Archive represent another data source and estimates based on that source will also vary from other estimates, especially from population-based surveys that gather information that may not ever be reported to official sources like law enforcement. The methodology used to capture defensive gun violence by the Gun Violence Archive represents a very small subset of people who have used guns defensively, and does not include individuals who might have used guns defensively, but not reported this use to law enforcement. e.g. a person who comes to the front porch with a gun to deter a stranger from trespassing on his/her property and then doesn't think anything of it when the stranger leaves the property.

After review and considering the number of studies and estimates used for this range in the fact sheet, our SME's have decided that an update is not warranted at this time. Please let me know if you have any additional questions that isn't addressed by this response.

Regards,  
Kinzie

S. Kinzie Lee, MPH | CDR, U.S. Public Health Service  
Lead, Strategic Partnerships  
Office of Policy and Partnerships | National Center for Injury Prevention and Control  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## CDC's Injury Center

Preventing Injuries and Violence  
Through Science and Action



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**From:** Po Murray < >  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 1, 2021 8:03 AM  
**To:** Lee, Kinzie (CDC/DDNID/NCIPC/OD) < >; Devin Hughes < >  
**Subject:** Correction Needed: CDC's Firearm Violence Prevention fact sheet.

Hi Kinzie,

Senator Durbin's office gave me your contact information. Devin Hughes from GVPedia and I wanted to connect with you to see if you could help us correct the misinformation on the CDC's firearm violence prevention fact sheet.

Is there a time next week you can meet with us via Zoom to discuss?

Thanks so much.

Best Regards,  
Po Murray  
Chairwoman, Newtown Action Alliance & Newtown Action Alliance Foundation  
[NewtownAction.org](http://NewtownAction.org)  
P.O. Box 3325, Newtown CT 06470



Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Devin Hughes < (b)(6) >  
**Date:** August 6, 2021 at 2:44:30 PM EDT  
**To:** Po Murray < >  
**Subject:** Fwd: Defensive gun use numbers in the Firearm Violence Prevention fact sheet