

Handguns are most used weapon in school shootings carried out by teens

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In school shootings executed by 262 adolescents in the United States from 1990 through 2016, handguns were the most used weapon, and most firearms were obtained via theft from relatives, according to a

study published online Nov. 27 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Brent R. Klein, Ph.D., from the University of South Carolina in Columbia, and colleagues conducted a cross-sectional study to analyze 253 [school shootings](#) executed by 262 [adolescents](#) in the United States from Jan. 1, 1990, to Dec. 31, 2016, using data from The American School Shooting Study.

The researchers found that handguns were the most used weapon in school shootings in adjusted analyses (85.5 percent). In terms of power, firearms were mainly lower or moderate (37.0 and 39.7 percent, respectively). The guns were primarily obtained from adolescents' relatives, friends or acquaintances, the illegal market, strangers or persons who were shot, and licensed dealers (41.8, 22.0, 29.6, 4.7, and 1.9 percent, respectively). Overall, 82.1 percent of the firearms were acquired via theft from [relatives](#).

"The study highlights the need for comprehensive strategies, including better firearm safety practices at home, legal measures, and community education, to address the multifaceted issue of school shootings," the authors write.

"Ultimately, this study supports policies encouraging secure firearm storage in households and limiting adolescents' access to firearms through legislative measures, educational campaigns, or public health initiatives."

More information: Brent R. Klein et al, Characteristics and Obtainment Methods of Firearms Used in Adolescent School Shootings, *JAMA Pediatrics* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2023.5093](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2023.5093)

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