

Gun Violence in Chicago Since 2000



LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Are the city's prevention tactics working?

→ Abstract ←

The goal of this project was to discover patterns in gun violence across Chicago during the 21st century. As members of generation Z, the members of this group have grown up with rampant gun violence around them, from school shootings to mass shootings in public areas. Now living in Chicago, we wanted to study the impacts of gun violence in our city, and what those in power were doing to reduce and prevent it. By correlating our findings with a timeline of when different prevention tactics, such as amendments to the city's gun laws as well as its contract with ShotSpotter, now called SoundThinking. From our analysis we have found that, though Chicago is one of the most restrictive cities regarding guns, the prevention measures in place still do not prevent or deter incidents of gun violence. More drastic prevention tactics need to be considered by those in power.

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→ Introduction ←

The city of Chicago has been grappling with gun violence for decades, with devastating consequences for its residents. In this poster, we will present the findings of our investigation into gun violence trends in Chicago since 2000. By analyzing data sourced from the Chicago Data Portal, we aimed to identify what neighborhoods and demographics were most impacted by gun violence, as well as analyze the effectiveness of current prevention or reduction tactics that the city has in place. Our research sheds light on the impact of gun violence in the city and looks into whether prevention tactics are working as intended.

→ Resources ←

Chicago Data Portal:

- Violence Reduction - Victims of Homicides and Non-Fatal Shootings
- Violence Reduction - Shotspotter Alerts
- Violence Reduction - Aggregated Victim Demographics
- Crimes From 2001 to Present

→ Gun Violence Prevention ←

June 2010: Chicago's handgun ban was ruled to be unconstitutional in *McDonald v Chicago*

July 2010: Chicago Firearms Permit requirement was put into effect

July 2012: Chicago City Council amended the city's primary gun law, Unlawful Use of Weapons, to permanently bar those with violent felonies from obtaining a handgun permit

September 2013: Chicago City Council repealed the law requiring city-issues firearm owners permit

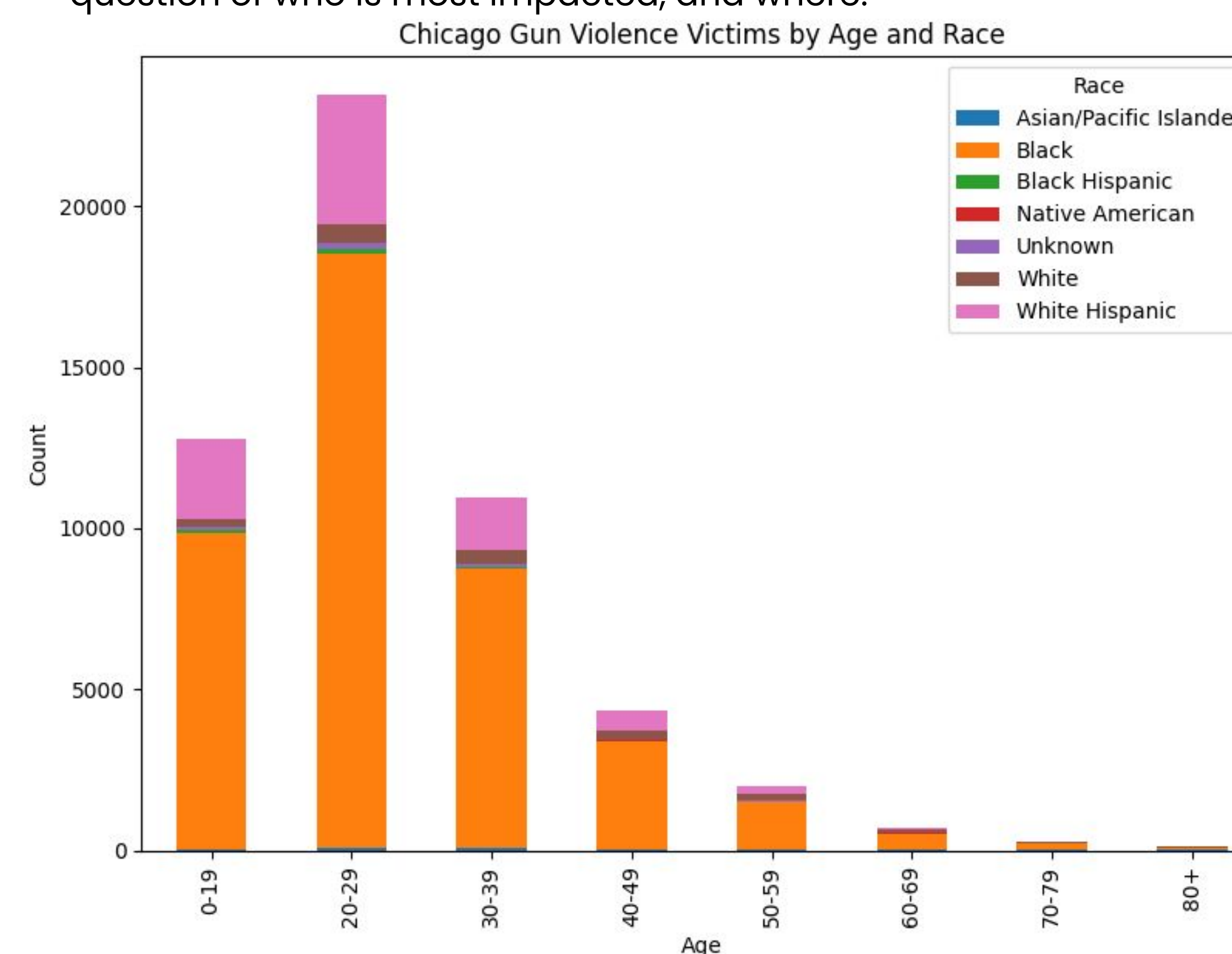
August 2018: A 3 year contract with ShotSpotter was purchased by Chicago

2019: City of Chicago banned "assault weapons" such as certain semi-automatic rifles and "ghost" guns

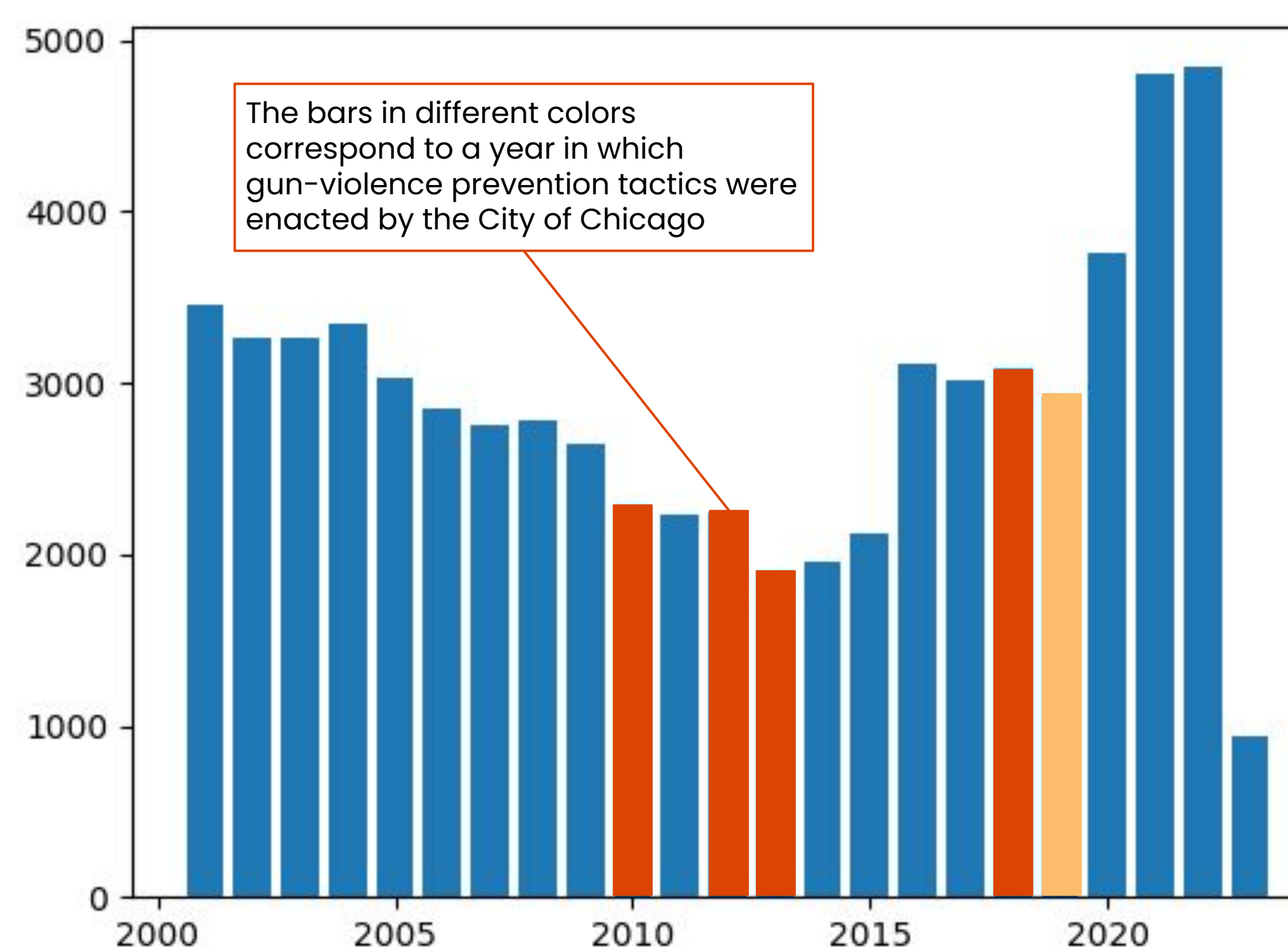
→ Summary of Results ←

Who is impacted by gun violence in Chicago?

Through our analysis, we were able to answer the question of who is most impacted, and where.



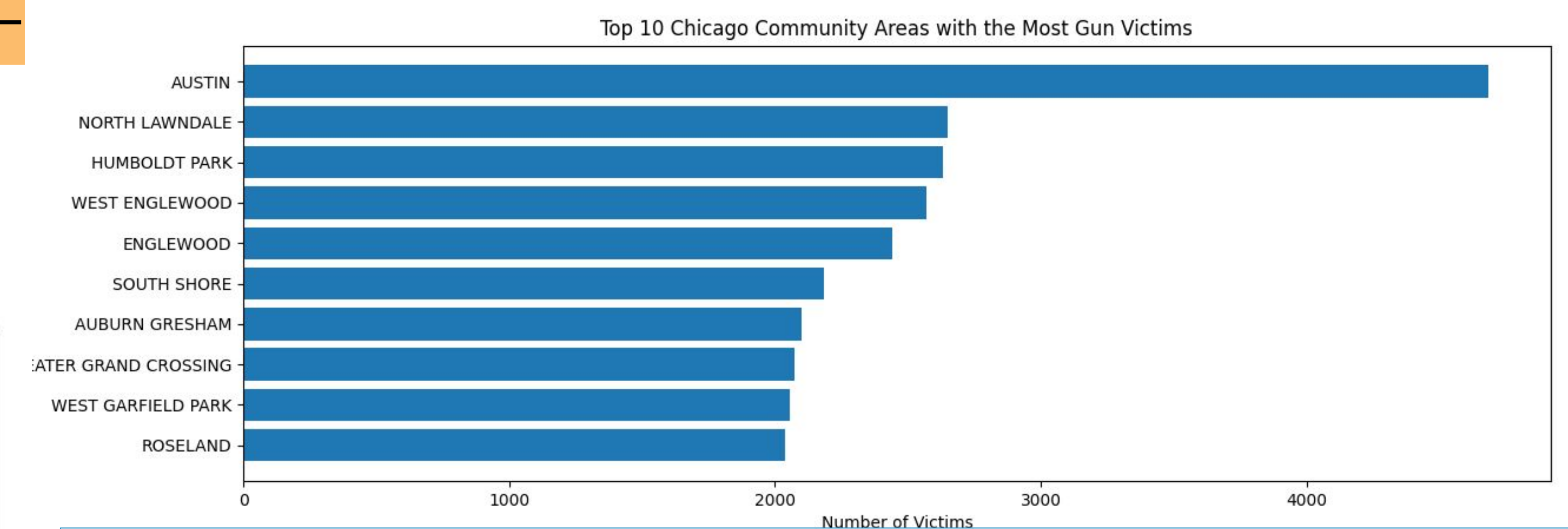
Aggravated Crimes Involving a Firearm Since 2001



This bar chart displays the number of aggravated crimes committed with a gun, showing a decrease in crime since 2001, with the colored bars indicating legislation enacted. From the graph we can see that this sort of crime was on a downward trend before the overturning of Chicago's ban on handguns. The bar highlighted in yellow, the year Chicago began their contract with ShotSpotter, is highlighted because despite the city investing in a service in an effort to reduce gun violence, the city saw its largest spike in the 3 full years that followed

→ Conclusion ←

In conclusion, it is clear which type of people are most affected by Chicago's violence epidemic. The city's Black and Hispanic residents in historically redlined neighborhoods are disproportionately affected compared to white victims in the city's North-side neighborhoods. Despite enacting various laws and policies since 2000 to curb the violence issue, crimes involving firearms have been steeply climbing in the last 8 years. With the new, progressive administration starting this year we can only hope that new measures are put in place to curb violence and keep young people off the street. However, only by engaging directly with the people most likely to shoot and be shot can real progress be made through violence interruption and conflict resolution. This is why it is important to support organizations like Chicago CRED and the Institute for Nonviolence Chicago to help Chicagoans break the deadly cycle of gun violence.

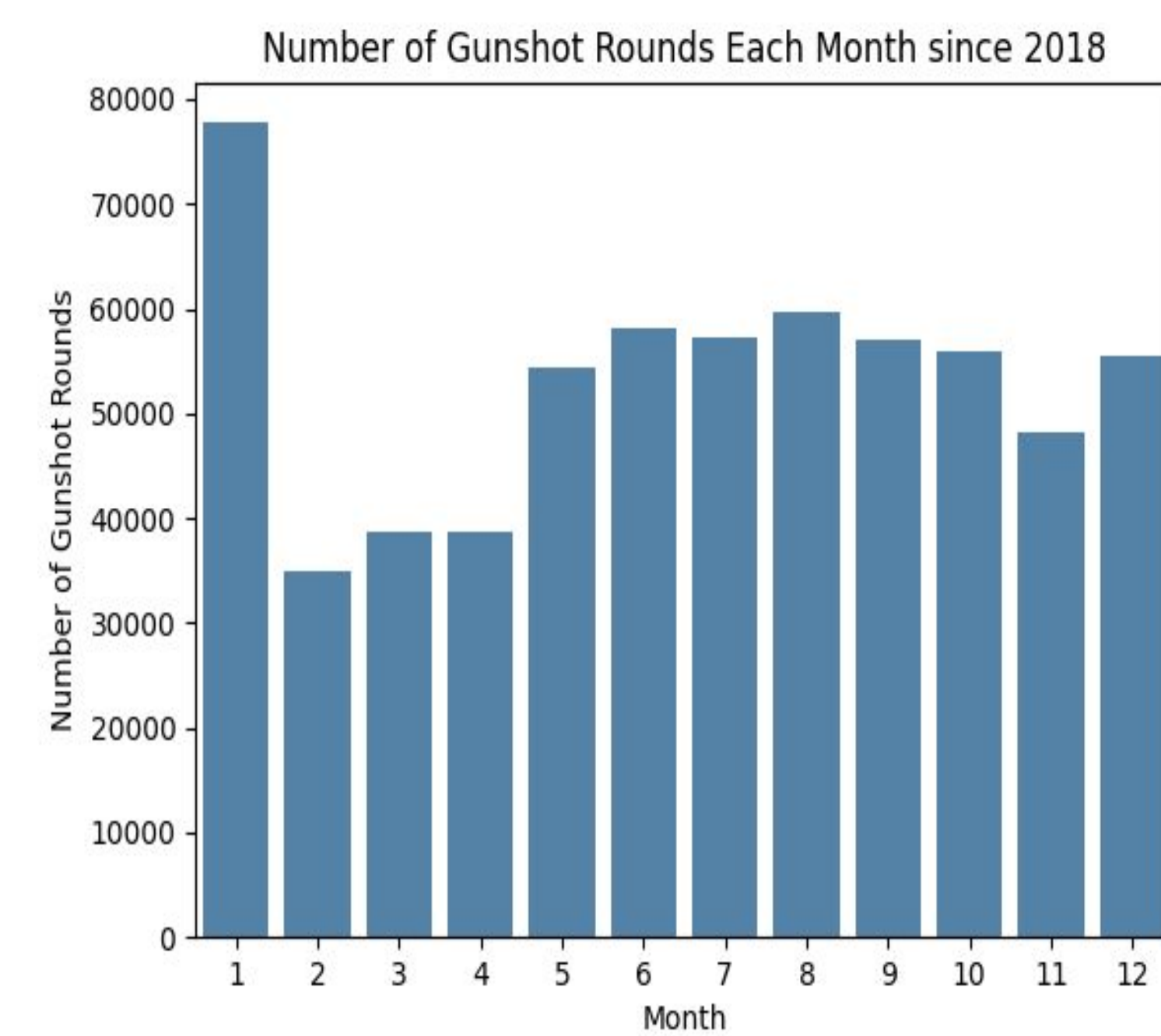


This bar chart above shows the neighborhoods with the most gun violence victims since 2000. Although Austin, a west-side neighborhood, is clearly the most dangerous, it should be noted that it is one of the city's largest neighborhoods, by population and size. Chicago is one of the most segregated cities in the country, and Black and Hispanic people have historically been placed there due to racially restrictive housing covenants in the early 20th century known as redlining and still affects the city today.

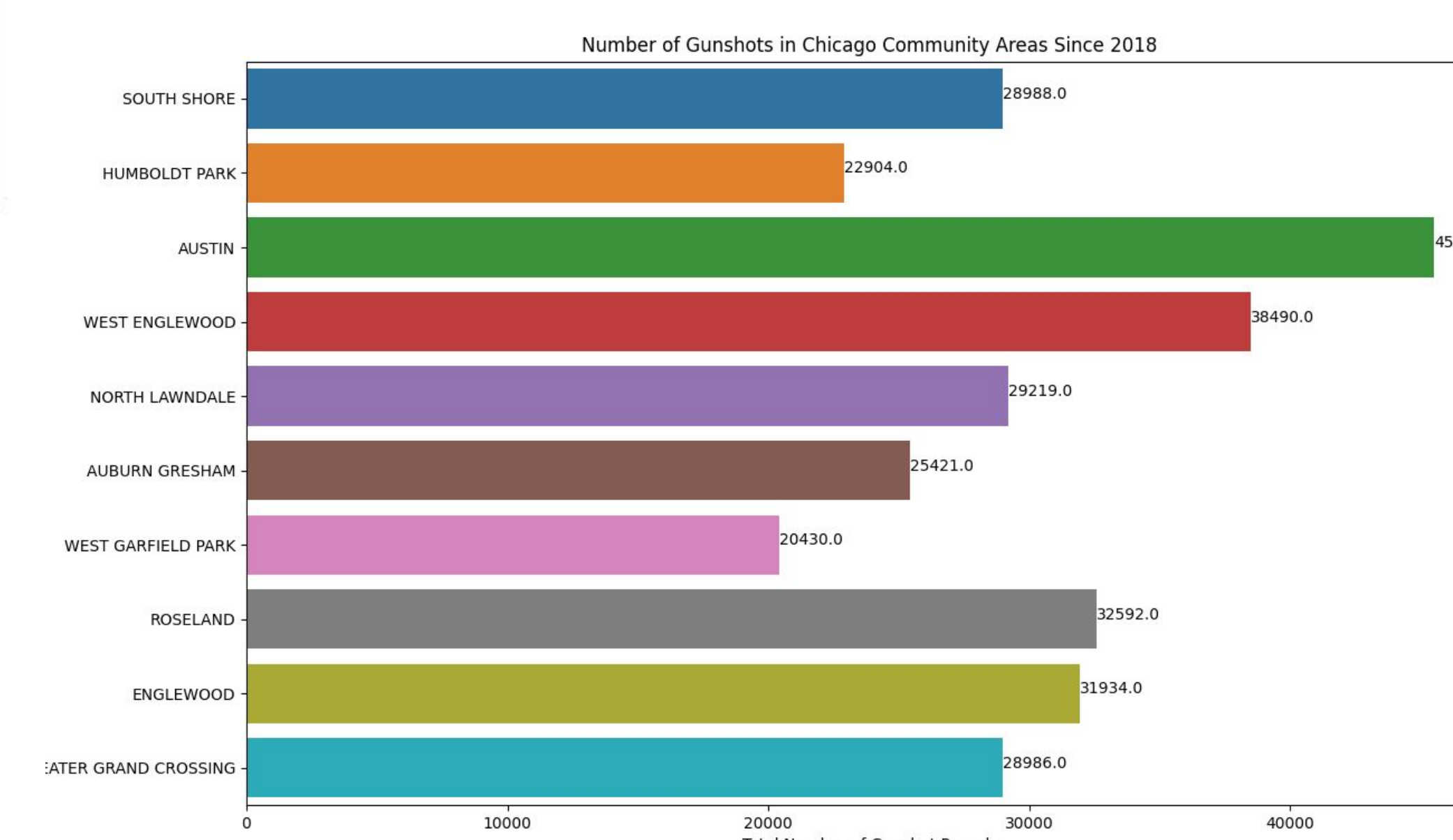
The chart on the left shows all Chicago gun violence victims since 2000, grouped by age and race. Victim's with age marked as 'unknown' have been omitted. Overall, young, Black victims are disproportionately overrepresented when it comes to gun violence. These victimizations are often found in the city's poorer neighborhoods in the South and West sides of the city.

Analyzing prevention tactics, are they working?

Legislation that was passed in Chicago in an effort to reduce gun violence seems to not be as successful as the city may have hoped..



This bar chart shows how January has actually come to be the most dangerous time of the year since 2018, with gun violence taking dramatic turnarounds the following month (making February the month with the least gunshots). Despite the implementation of Shotspotter, it looks like the number of gunshot rounds is higher than the number of aggravated crimes involving a firearm since 2018 with the ratio being around 17,600 crimes out of almost 80,000 gunshots being fired in January alone. This makes sense since most crime may include more than 1 shot being fired, but the ratio is still large, thus making these findings very interesting. Perhaps not all crimes don't involve the shot of a firearm, while some may involve multiple shots fired. This would be interesting to research more.



This bar chart shows that despite the implementation of shotspotter, the data proves that Austin still remains as the #1 Chicago community that has the most gun violence. Along with this, other communities have gotten worse as Roseland is no longer at number 10, but rather West Garfield Park has the least number of gunshots when compared to the rest of the communities (at 20,430 gunshots fired since 2018). Communities such as West Englewood have also gotten worse in comparison to other communities as it is now #2 on the list with the most shots fired.