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

Key finding 1: At least 12 census tracts/neighborhoods in Durham are currently affected by excessively high rates of serious interpersonal violence (aggravated assault and homicide) that are 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **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 |

For this report, specific types of violent crime (aggravated assault, homicide and robbery were examined at the census tract level and rates of violent offenses per 100k people were calculated (this is a standard measurement of offenses that allows the level of crime to be examined across areas of varying sizes. Examining violence exposure per capita along with other risk factor exposure can provide policymakers with important information on the geographic area of the community that is the most acutely affected by community-level violence. Utilizing this analysis, 12 census tracts were identified that experienced extraordinarily high levels of violent person offenses per 100,000 people between 2018 and 2020.

These 12 census tracts experience violent person offenses (aggravated assault and homicide) at a rate that is between 7.5 and 1.6 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 high levels of violent offenses. 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 offenses (See peach highlights on Table 1).

During 2018-2020, specific violent person offenses (homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery of an individual) in these 12 census tracts comprised a substantial percentage of all of the 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 (typically street-level robberies that are frequently connected to gang activities) (Table 2, p. ). The rate of these offenses (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 people** |
| 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% |  |  |

In addition to high levels of violent crime, the 8 of the 12 census tracts were identified as experiencing high levels of risk factor exposure, and those tracts continue to experience high rates of risk factors including poverty, low educational attainment, disrupted family structures, and children living in poverty (Table 2, p. ). Peach highlights were placed over areas where issues became more acute by census tract between 2013 and 2019.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1 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% |

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

Key finding 2: Young people in Durham experience a high 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 in order to help them?

Key finding 3: 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

Key finding 4: Residents of Durham experience the gang issue very differently depending on their neighborhood. 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, but the widespread nature of gang activity and community violence in Durham reduces quality of life for many residents.

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

Key finding 5: *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.*