



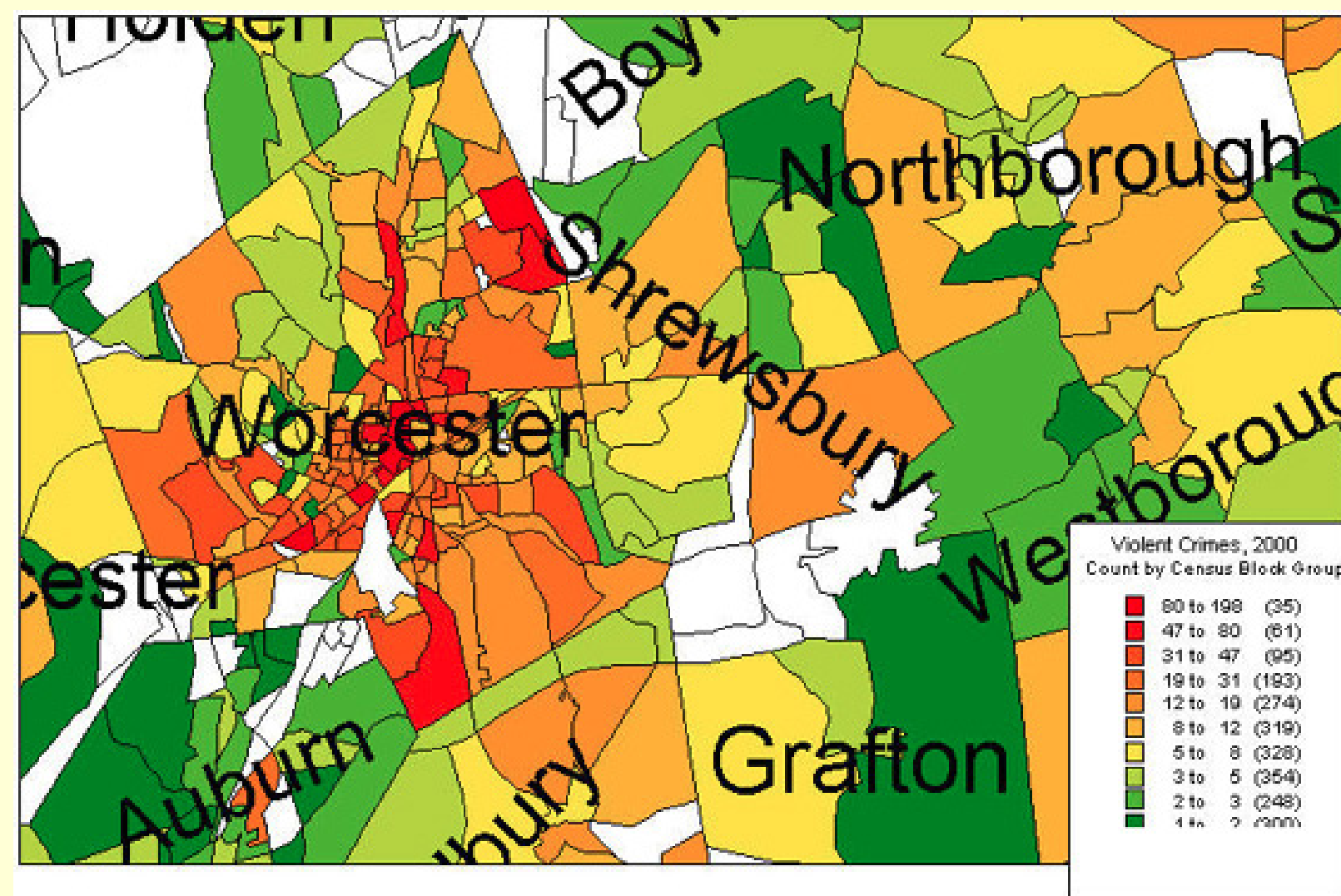
There Are No Accidents: Preventing Youth Gun Violence

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POPULATION OF FOCUS

- Worcester has a rapidly growing population of 181,000 citizens
- Over 25% of this population are under the age of 19
- In 2014, there were 13 victims of gunshots in their teenage years
- The ages of people being caught with guns has been in the 20s and below this year, and based on non-fatal shooting numbers this year, teens are still the victims of the violence. This was part of a trend last year and now appears to be continuing
- Identifying children at risk and referring them to appropriate services are important first steps to reducing youth gun violence



OBJECTIVE

Gun violence is a major concern in the United States. We propose a method of leveraging education to target at-risk youth who may come into the possession and/or be exposed to guns.

"When you see people in their teenage years involved in gun violence, it is problematic because that can be the beginning of a long term problem that needs to be addressed."

---Police Chief Gary Gemme

SERVICE PROJECT SUMMARY

Our Clerkship curriculum is a representation of all of the programs from the UMass Medical School Injury Prevention Department as well as a number of themed days when students met with some of UMass's community partners such as the Worcester Police Department/gang unit, the Worcester Juvenile Court System, the District Attorney's office and South High. Throughout our clerkship, we have learned the importance of education in preventing injury and so-called "accidents." The TEEN RIDE program has already proven to be successful through its 8 years in operation.

Goals

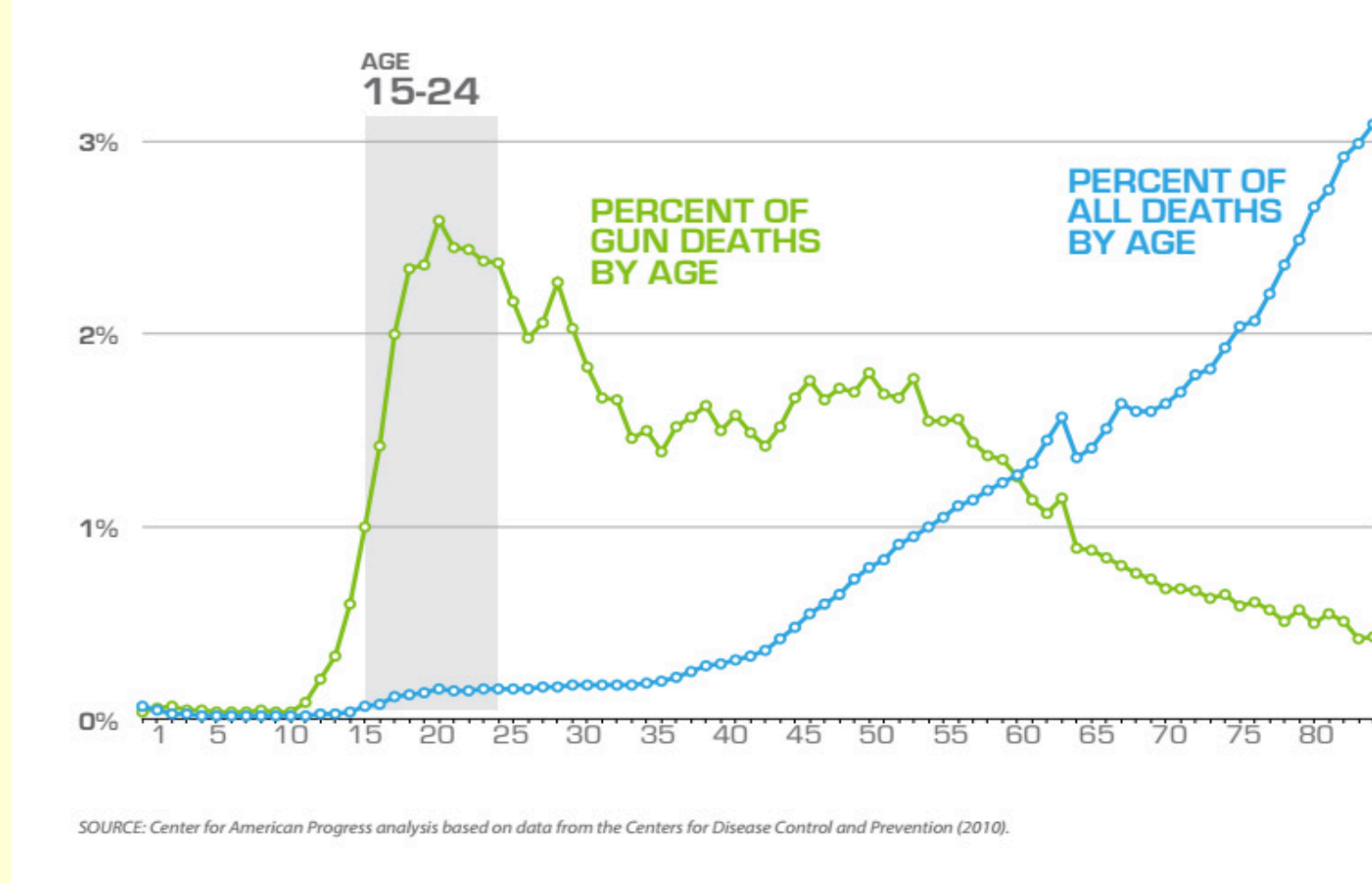
- Examine gang and gun-related violence and gun possession in the Worcester youth population, and understand preventative measures that are in place.
- Propose a program to educate youth on the importance of gun violence and safety.

Progress

- Developing relationships with Worcester County Police Department/gang unit, the Worcester Juvenile court System and District Attorney's office, gun violence prevention groups/individuals including Moms Demand Action and Dr. Michael Hirsh.

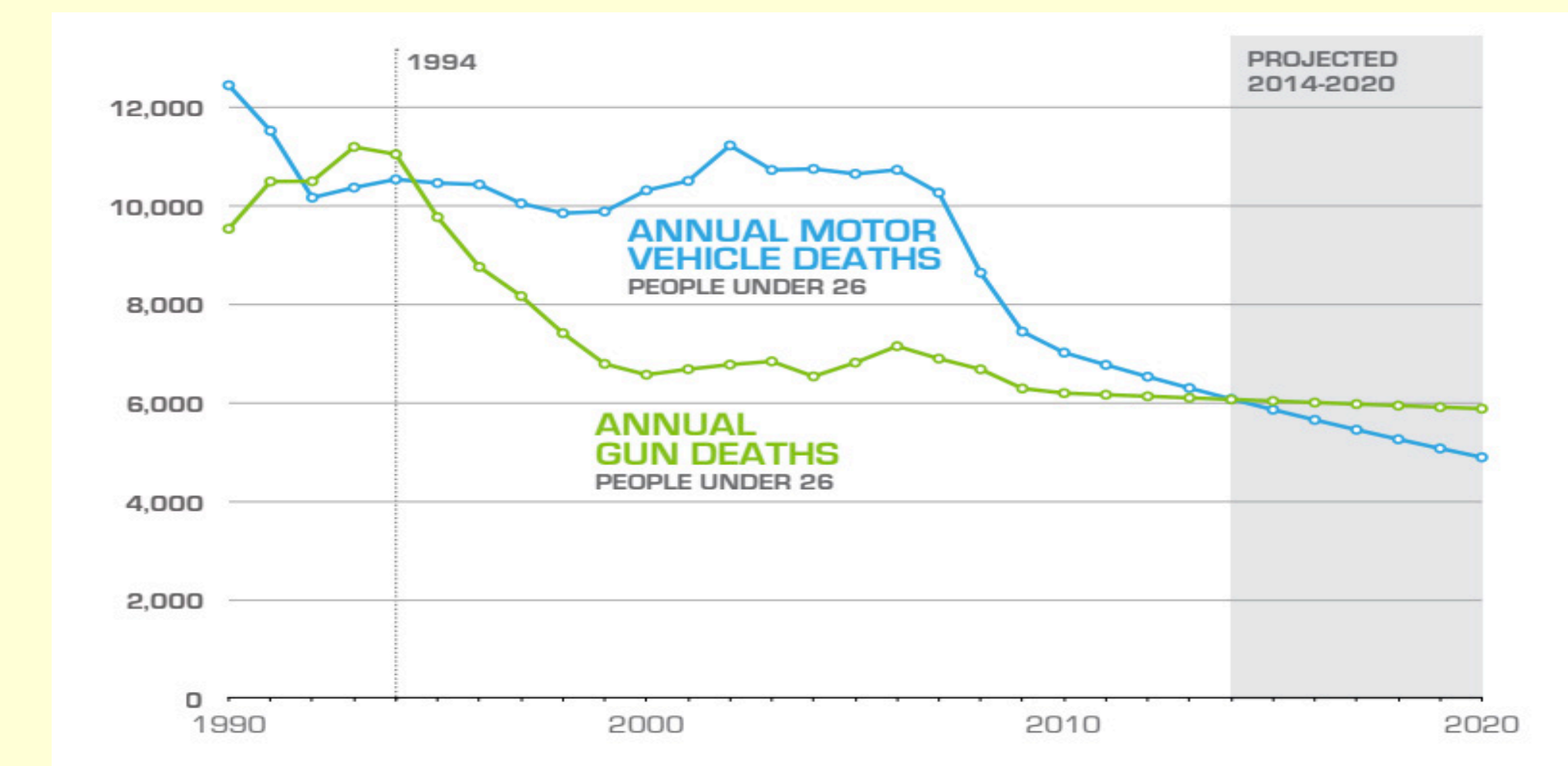
Outcomes

- Proposed a curriculum for gun violence education for teens that incorporates the consequences of gun violence including exposure to the trauma bay, conversations with parents, and talks by public officials, survivors, gang members and those incarcerated for gun violence



KEY POINTS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- All accidents are preventable**, therefore there is no such thing as an accident
- Education is the first line of injury prevention
- The adolescent population should be the primary target for instilling practices to prevent injury
- Gun related deaths are quickly outpacing motor vehicle fatalities
- Safe storage of firearms is an effective, politically neutral method to reduce gun-related deaths
- Integrated community networks are currently under utilized and offer the potential catch risky behavior and offer community beneficial alternatives



REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Esther Borer, Dr. Michael Hirsh, and the countless numbers of community partners working to create a safer Worcester.

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