



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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**Youthful Offenders Drive Violent Crime**

MEMPHIS, TN – The Memphis Shelby Crime Commission and the University of Memphis Public Safety Institute (PSI) released preliminary data provided by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) showing that over 70 percent of arrests for murders and robberies by the Memphis Police Department (MPD) during the first five months of this year involved persons 24 years of age or younger (70.7 percent of murder arrests and 73.8 percent of robbery arrests).

Almost half (48.9 percent) of arrests for all major violent crimes by MPD involved persons 24 years of age or younger. In addition to murders and robberies, that figure includes arrests for rapes and aggravated assaults.

The TBI preliminary data also shows that, for the same time period, almost 40 percent (39.6 percent) of the reported victims of major violent crime in Memphis were of 24 years of age or younger. However, only about 36 percent of murder victims and 31 percent of reported robbery victims were in this younger age group.

In addition, a study conducted by University of Memphis faculty members reveals that, for the 2014-2016 time period, almost 60 percent (59.4 percent) of those arrested for all major violent crimes involving guns were 24 years of age or younger.

The study indicates that, for that time period, 16.2 percent of violent gun crime arrests were of juvenile offenders (17 years of age or younger) and 43.2 percent were of 18-24 year olds. Of concern is the year-to-year increase in the percentage of juvenile arrests for violent gun crimes, reaching 17.4 percent in 2016.

UofM study was conducted by Drs. James McCutcheon, Bert Burraston, and Amaia Iratzoqui of the UofM's Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice and Dr. Angela Madden of the UofM's PSI.

"Along with resolving law enforcement staffing shortages, implementation of steps in the Operation: Safe Community crime plan dealing with gun violence reduction and reducing the number of guns in the wrong hands are designed to tackle this challenge," said Bill Gibbons, president of the Crime Commission and executive director of the UofM's PSI.

“An important part of the Operation: Safe Community plan that can have a positive impact on the level of youth violence is the Group Violence Intervention initiative,” said District Attorney Amy Weirich. The initiative is patterned after a successful effort in Boston to curb youth gang violence.

“We are seeing an increase in juvenile involvement in violent gun crime. Gun violence prevention, intervention, and suppression are all critical,” said Dr. Madden, research associate professor at the PSI.

Gibbons noted that efforts ranging from mentoring at-risk youth to increasing job opportunities through such efforts as the My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) Alliance can help reduce the number of young Memphians who choose a path of violence. (Over 1,000 African-American youth registered for the recent MBK Alliance Summit in Memphis, with almost 300 being hired on the spot by area employers.)

The Crime Commission and the Public Safety Institute track major violent crime by age as a way of measuring the impact of youth violence steps in the Operation: Safe Community crime plan.

Attached is a more detailed look at the preliminary TBI figures along with comparable figures for 2006, 2011, and 2016.

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**About the Crime Statistics.** The Memphis Shelby Crime Commission and the Public Safety Institute use data reported by local enforcement agencies to TIBRS. TIBRS is the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System, which was developed and is maintained by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation. An incident is defined in TIBRS as “one or more offenses committed by the same offender, or group of offenders acting in concert, at the same time and place.” Reported major violent crime and domestic violence offenses, however, uniquely refer to a victim count versus an incident count. All rates are calculated based on per 100,000 population.

**About the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission ([www.memphiscrime.org](http://www.memphiscrime.org)).** Memphis Shelby Crime Commission is an independent, non-profit 501(c) (3) organization that “quarterbacks” the work of the Operation: Safe Community (OSC) plan and its partners. It is funded through the generous contributions of many private sector donors. Ben Adams, CEO of Baker Donelson law firm, serves as chairman of the board, and Bill Gibbons serves as president of the Commission.

**About Operation: Safe Community ([www.operationsafecommunity.org](http://www.operationsafecommunity.org)).** Launched in 2006, Operation: Safe Community (OSC), spearheaded by the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission, is a community based crime reduction initiative. Operation: Safe Community is chaired by Shelby County District Attorney General Amy Weirich.

**About the Public Safety Institute. [www.memphis.edu/psi/about/](http://www.memphis.edu/psi/about/).** The Public Safety Institute of the University of Memphis is an interdisciplinary part of the university community committed to identifying and advancing best practices in the field of public safety. It is housed in the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy.

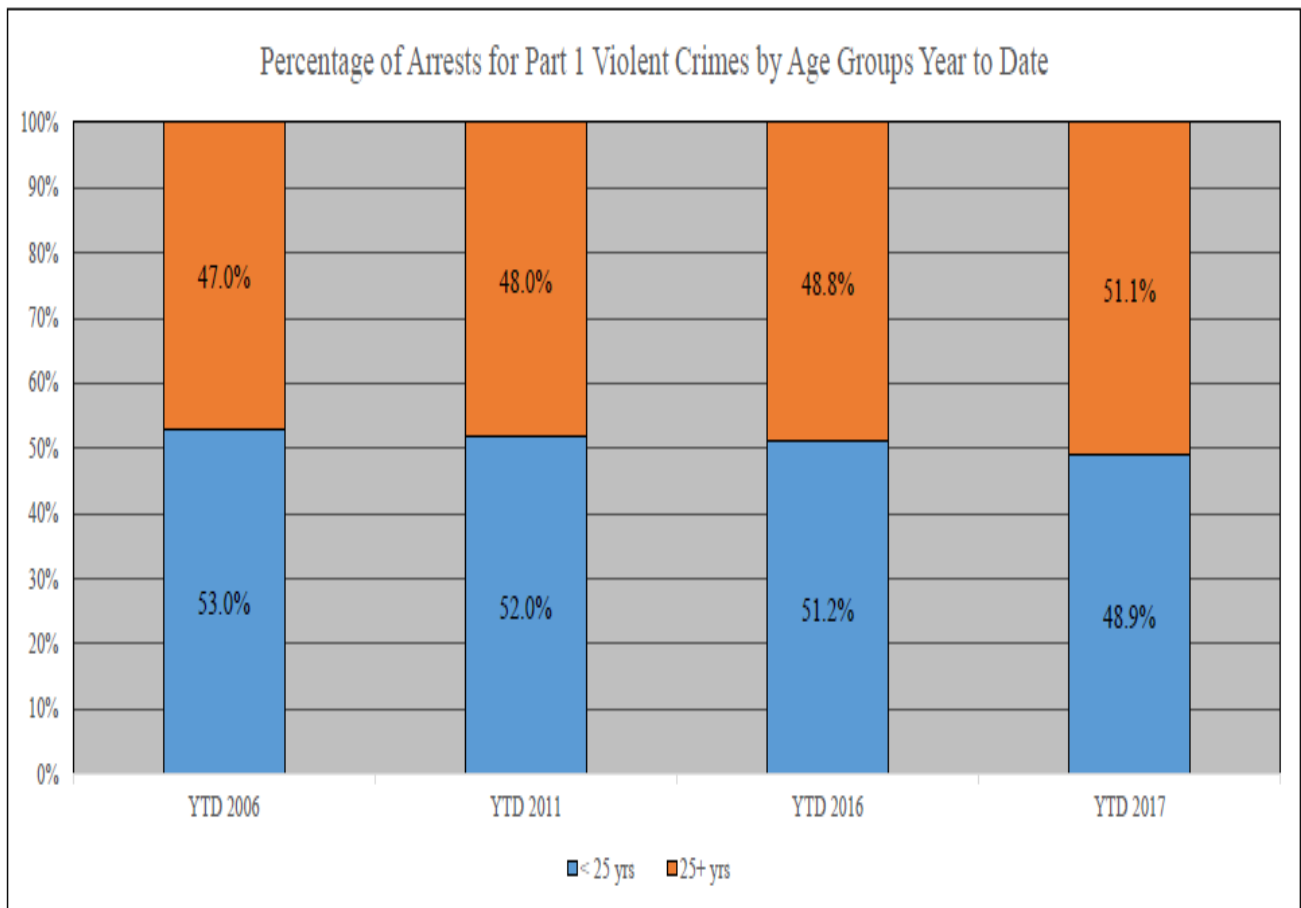
Youth Violence Prevention Plan  
 Memphis Police Department - May 2017  
 Year to Date

Number of Part 1 Violent Crime Arrests  
 Persons 24 years and under

	YTD 2006	YTD 2011	YTD 2016	YTD 2017
Aggravated Assault	245	271	174	250
Murder	29	12	29	29
Rape	10	18	10	13
Robbery	199	228	180	138
Total	483	529	393	430

Percentage of Part 1 Violent Crime Arrests  
 Involving Persons 24 years and under

	YTD 2006	YTD 2011	YTD 2016	YTD 2017
Aggravated Assault	43.1%	42.5%	36.9%	39.9%
Murder	52.7%	41.4%	82.9%	70.7%
Rape	33.3%	41.9%	40.0%	52.0%
Robbery	77.1%	74.0%	76.3%	73.8%
Total	53.0%	52.0%	51.2%	48.9%



Note: Percentages based on known age data, missing and unknown were excluded.  
 Source: TBI 2017

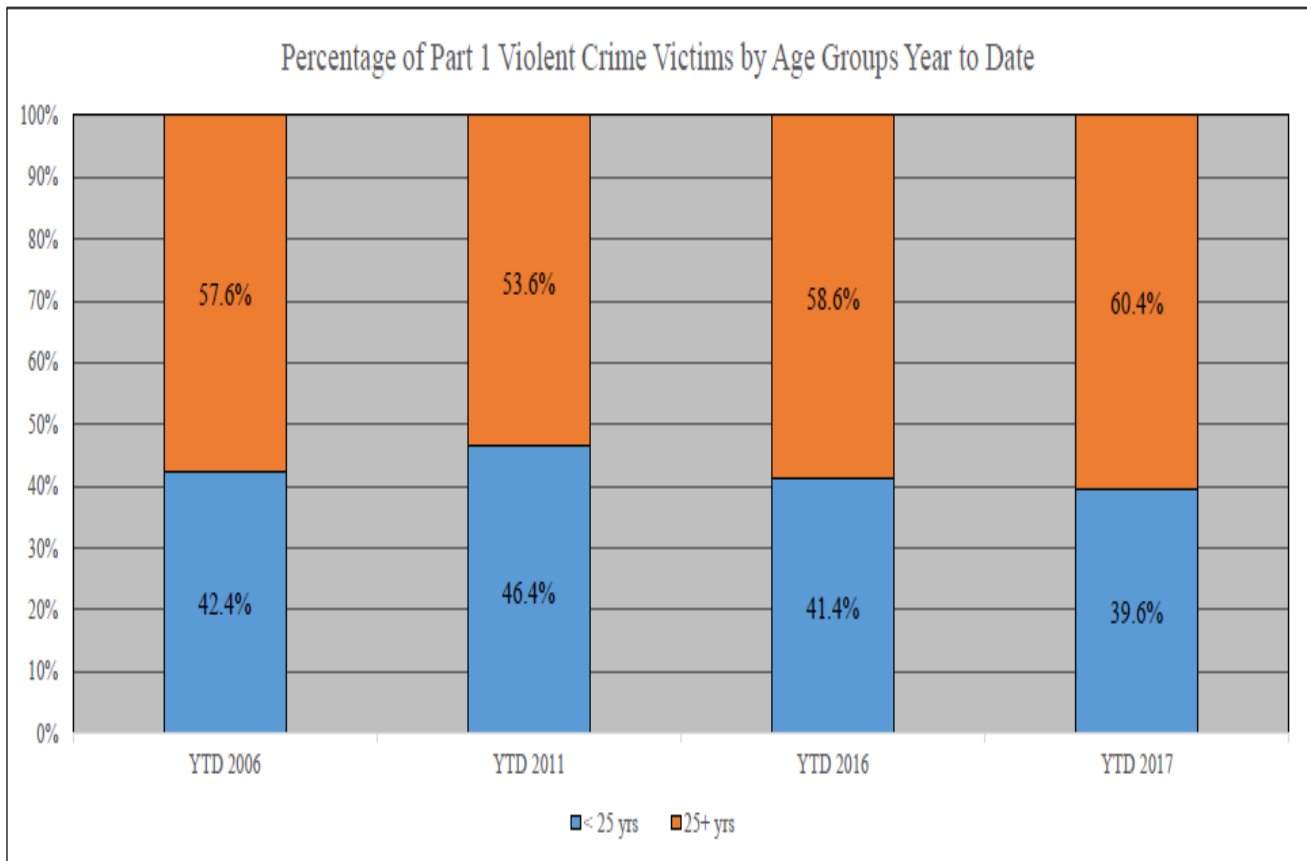
Youth Violence Prevention Plan  
 Memphis Police Department - May 2017  
 Year to Date

Number of Part 1 Violent Crime Victims  
 Age 24 and under

	YTD 2006	YTD 2011	YTD 2016	YTD 2017
Aggravated Assault	1456	1293	1424	1547
Murder	28	11	33	28
Rape	147	178	127	143
Robbery	920	596	553	494
Total	2551	2078	2137	2212

Percentage of Part 1 Violent Crime Victims  
 Age 24 and under

	YTD 2006	YTD 2011	YTD 2016	YTD 2017
Aggravated Assault	46.1%	46.8%	43.7%	42.0%
Murder	43.8%	24.4%	41.8%	36.4%
Rape	69.3%	75.1%	65.1%	62.2%
Robbery	35.6%	41.6%	33.9%	30.9%
Total	42.4%	46.4%	41.4%	39.6%



Note: Percentages based on known age data, missing and unknown were excluded.  
 Source: TBI 2017