



Report

Gun Violence in America: A Survey on Americans' Anxiety

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INTRODUCTION

In the beginning days and weeks of 2023, America has seen over 40 mass shootings and more than **3,800 gun-related deaths, which included more than 20 children.**¹ We ended 2022 with more than **20,000 firearm deaths**² (excluding suicides).

When we measured Americans' anxiety levels in **November 2021 for our inaugural report**³, the numbers told a troubling narrative: collectively, we were carrying around a lot of anxiety. When it came to doing everyday activities, like going to the movies or a sporting event, Americans reported checking exits and having a mental plan in the event of an active shooter.

Twelve months later, the picture is far more bleak.

While we are inundated with stories about how divided Americans are today, when it comes to gun violence, the vast majority (85%) agree it's a problem – and nearly everyone (88%) is anxious about it.

The findings in our second annual report paint a picture of a citizenry that is exhausted and frustrated, and willing to alter their behavior in order to create safer places where they go to learn, work, live and play. Our neighbors and fellow citizens want to be safe when they go to the grocery store, to see a movie, visit a theme park and go to school.

While this report does not offer a solution, it does help us understand the toll gun violence is taking on all Americans, not just those who have been directly affected by it.

It is my hope that with this better understanding, we can begin to work together to find solutions that reduce the amount of violence, lower Americans' anxiety and retain the freedoms and liberties we have come to love in this country.

Peter George

CEO, Evolv Technology



¹ [Gun violence archive](#) (no date) Gun Violence Archive. (Accessed: March 16 2023).

² Brownlee, C. (2022) [Gun violence in 2022, by the numbers](#), The Trace. (Accessed: March 16, 2023).

³ Inaugural Report

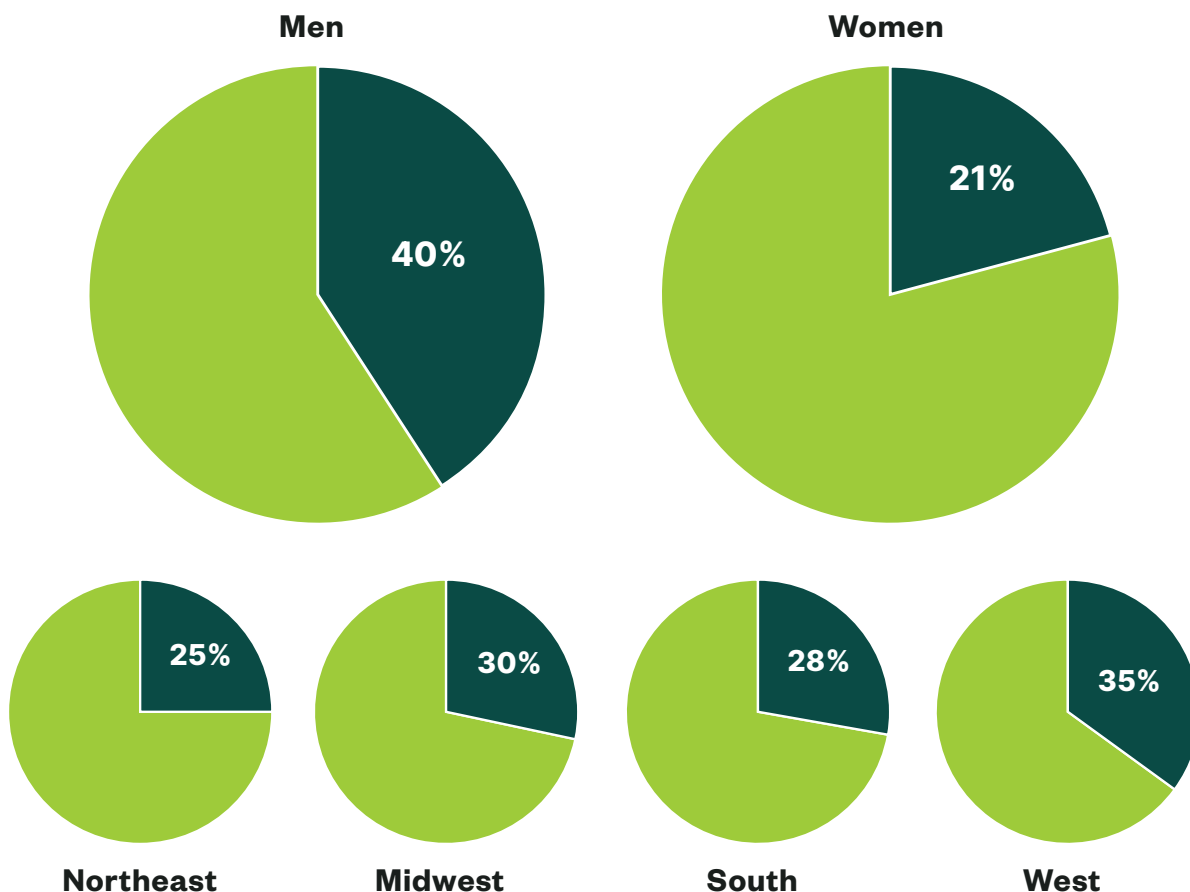
In the U.S., Gun Violence is Widespread

While big U.S. cities like Chicago (**3,561 shooting incidents in 2021**)⁴, often receive the most attention for the number of gun deaths, the reality is, gun violence – and the people affected by it – is pervasive.

According to survey respondents, nearly 3 out of 10 Americans have been in a location where someone unexpectedly opened fire with a gun. Those shootings have taken place in bars/night clubs, large gatherings, grocery stores, schools, malls, workplaces, movie theaters, banks and places of worship.



The findings reveal that unexpected shootings in bars/night clubs, large gatherings, malls, workplaces, movie theaters, banks and places of worship have all increased over 2021 numbers.



⁴ 2021 ends as Chicago's deadliest year in a quarter century (2022) NBC Chicago. NBC Chicago. (Accessed: March 16, 2023).

Americans' anxiety is pervasive

Thirty-six percent (36%) of Americans believe they (or someone they love) are extremely/likely to encounter an active shooter in their lifetime. That is up from 29% in 2021.

A large majority of Americans also believe their chances of encountering an active shooter have increased in 2022: 88%.

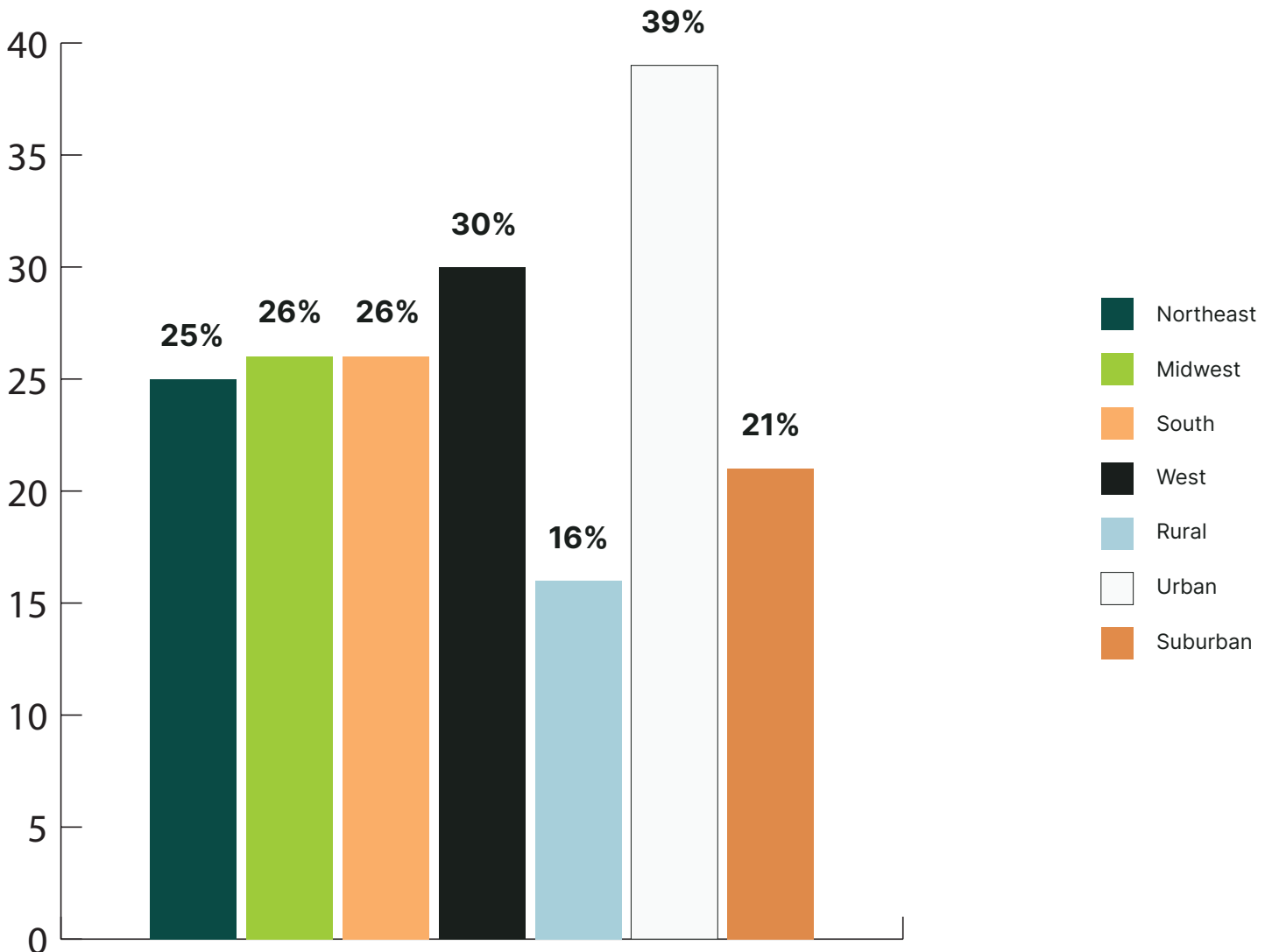
More than 1 out of 4 believe they are at a higher risk of encountering an active shooter based on where they live:



I believe I am more at risk of encountering an active shooter based on..."

- ...where I work: **2 out of 10**
- ...my religious affiliation: **22%**

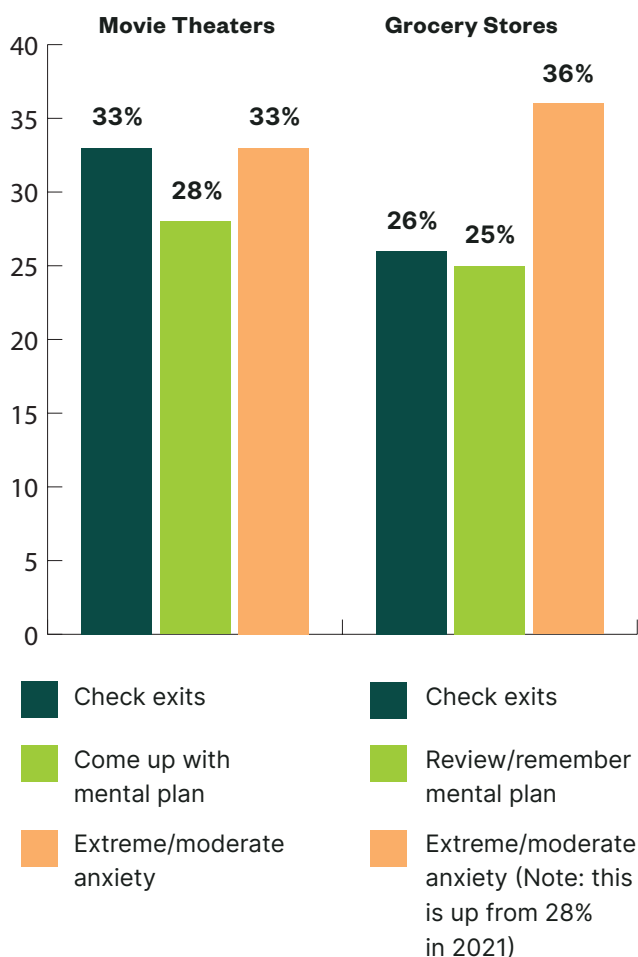
More than half of Americans report being extremely/moderately anxious about gun violence in America – up from 45% in 2021.



Americans' Anxiety Impacts Behavior

According to the American Psychiatric Association, 2 out of 5 Americans rated their mental health as fair or poor at the end of 2022. The top current events that inspire worry? Inflation, recession and gun violence.⁵

At locations that have experienced a high-profile shooting in the past, such as movie theaters, grocery stores and large gatherings, Americans alter their behavior in the following ways:



Fifteen percent (15%) believe large gatherings, such as sporting events and concerts, are at a higher risk of an active shooter – up from 13% in 2021.

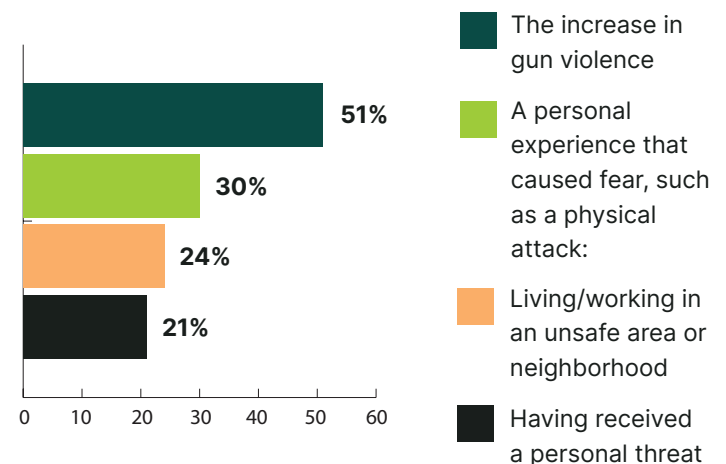
More than 1 in 3 Americans have avoided going somewhere due to fear or anxiety around guns over the past six months.

Nearly 3 out of 10 Americans have thought about moving out of fear of gun violence against themselves or their family. This is up from 12% in 2021

Americans are carrying their guns more frequently

Of the Americans who own a gun and report carrying it with them (versus leaving at home), two-thirds say they are doing so more today than in 2021. Nearly half say that's because of the increase in gun violence in America; they want to be prepared should they encounter an active shooter.

For those who do not own a gun today, 1 out of 5 plan to purchase one. The reasons:



3 out of 4 of those future gun owners plan to carry their new gun with them at least sometimes.

In addition to the mental toll gun violence takes, mass shootings also have an economic impact. MoneyGeek⁶ calculated the total cost of mass shootings to be \$8 billion in 2021 (a 33% increase over 2020).

⁵ Inflation and a recession are top anxiety-inducing current events polled since June (2023) Psychiatry.org - Inflation and a Recession Are Top Anxiety-Inducing Current Events Polled Since June. (Accessed: March 16, 2023).

⁶ Bloom, L.B. (2023) Report ranks America's 15 safest (and most dangerous) cities for 2023, Forbes. Forbes Magazine. (Accessed: March 16, 2023).

The Impact on Parents and Children – and Decisions Around Education

When school shootings like Uvalde happen, and news reports about students bringing guns to school proliferate, Americans with children are particularly anxious about the country's gun violence. In fact, according to **Education Week**⁷, there were 51 school shootings in 2022 that resulted in injuries or deaths – the most in a single year since they began tracking these incidences.

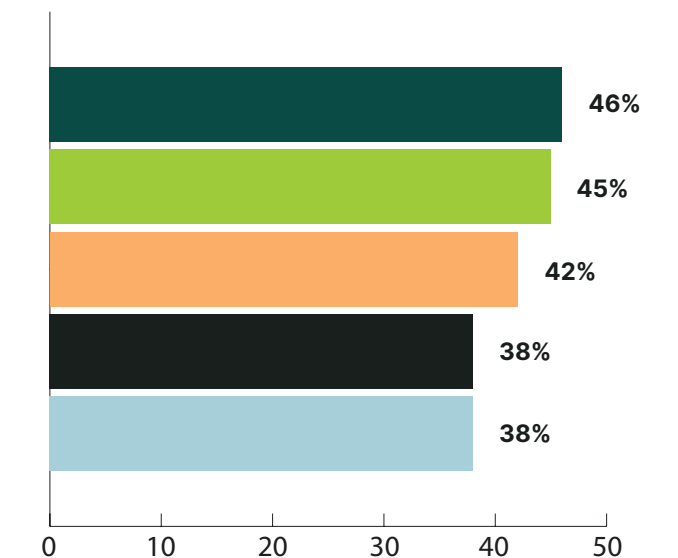
Our research found that 50% of Americans have considered or are considering homeschooling their children out of fear of gun violence at their schools, and one out

of two have purchased or are considering purchasing “gun safety” school materials, like bulletproof backpacks. When asked why they have purchased/are considering purchasing those items, one out of four said it is because their child(ren) asked for it and two-thirds said they believe it will keep their child(ren) safer in the event of an active shooter.

Parents are demanding more from their schools

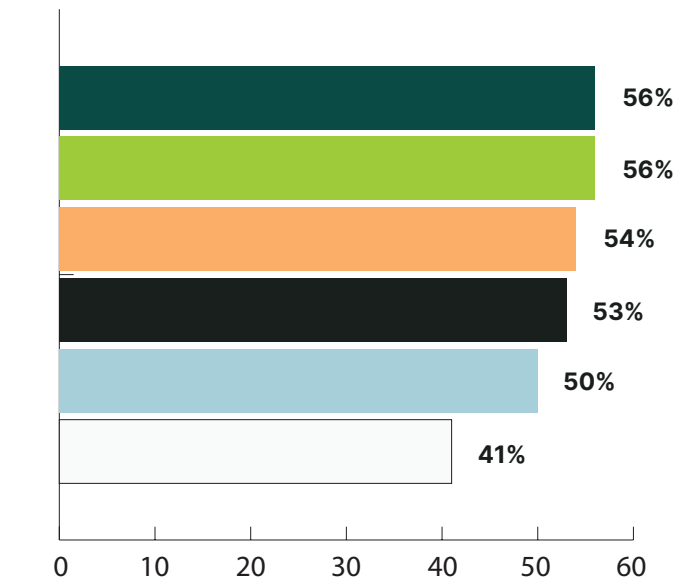
Four out of 10 have asked for or demanded that their children's schools add more security.

The schools' response:



- They are currently reviewing security technologies
- They have added new security technology, such as screening
- They added new security personnel
- They have promised to add new security in the future
- They have added/increased active shooter drills

Here's what kinds of security parents would like to see at their children's schools:



- Have security guards wand kids/people as they enter the building
- Have security guards patrol the school
- Go through weapons detection
- Have backpacks checked
- Keep all doors locked
- Be patted down by a security professional

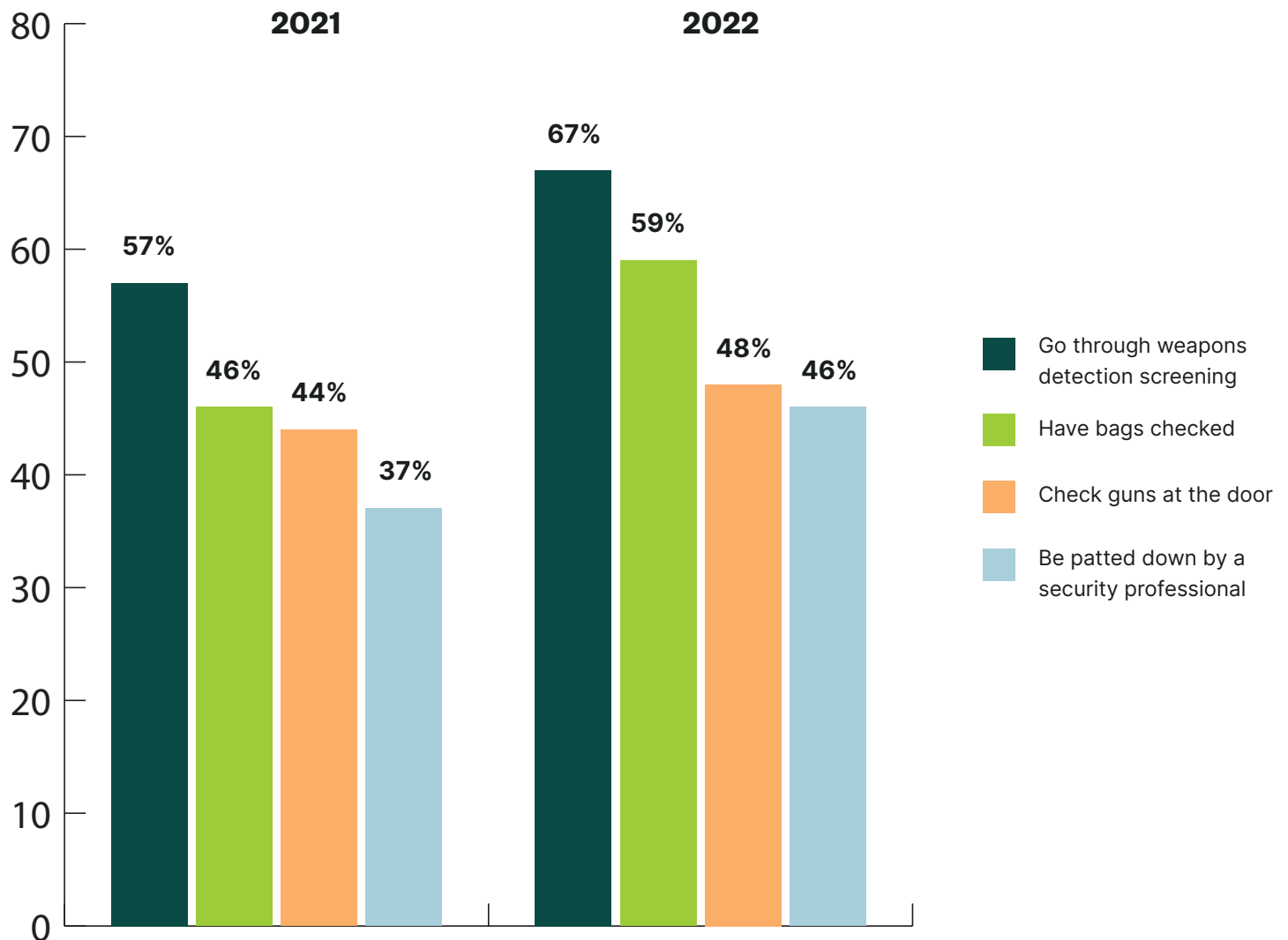
⁷ *School shootings in 2022: How many and where* (2023) Education Week. Education Week. (Accessed: March 16, 2023).

What Americans Will Do for Safety

We learned through this research that Americans want to feel safe, but many currently do not. When only 12% – down from 22% in 2021 – say they would not be willing to go through extra steps to reduce the threat of a mass

shooting at everyday locations, it's clear that organizations of all types — workplaces, large venues, grocery stores, bars and nightclubs, schools and universities — need to be thinking about and re-assessing their physical security strategy and protocols.

When asked what steps they are willing to take at locations such as the grocery store, work or a movie theater, Americans said:



Interestingly, what Americans are willing to do differs based on where they live. For example, people who live in suburban settings are more likely to be willing to go

through weapons detection screening (72%) and have bags checked (63%), while people in urban areas are more willing to check guns at the door (52%) and be patted down by a security professional (48%).

Conclusion

These data paint a grim picture of an American public that is anxious and overwhelmed by the country's epidemic of gun violence. In fact, that anxiety spans political affiliation; Americans across political parties have considered moving out of fear of gun violence: 32% of those identifying as conservative and 29% of those identifying as liberal.

But it doesn't have to be the way.

While, as a country, we haven't been able to land on a solution to keep each other safe yet, it's clear from our research that there is an appetite for change. And that doesn't happen overnight. The first step to creating a new and different path is getting a clear understanding of the one we're on. Combined, our 2021 and 2022 reports reveal that what we're doing – or not doing – is having a measurable, negative impact from coast to coast. By recognizing this, we might be able to come together to identify solutions that make us all safer.

Research Methodology

Evolv Technology commissioned [Equation Research](#) to conduct the survey, which ran from December 7 to December 20 2022. The survey captured responses from a broad distribution of 2,015 adults in the U.S. aged 18 and older.

About Evolv Technology

Evolv Technology (NASDAQ: EVLV) is a leader in weapons detection for security screening, securing the world's most iconic venues and companies. Its mission is enabling a better experience and better security for venues, creating a safer world to work, learn, and play by transforming physical security to make everywhere safer.

For more information, visit www.evolvtechnology.com