

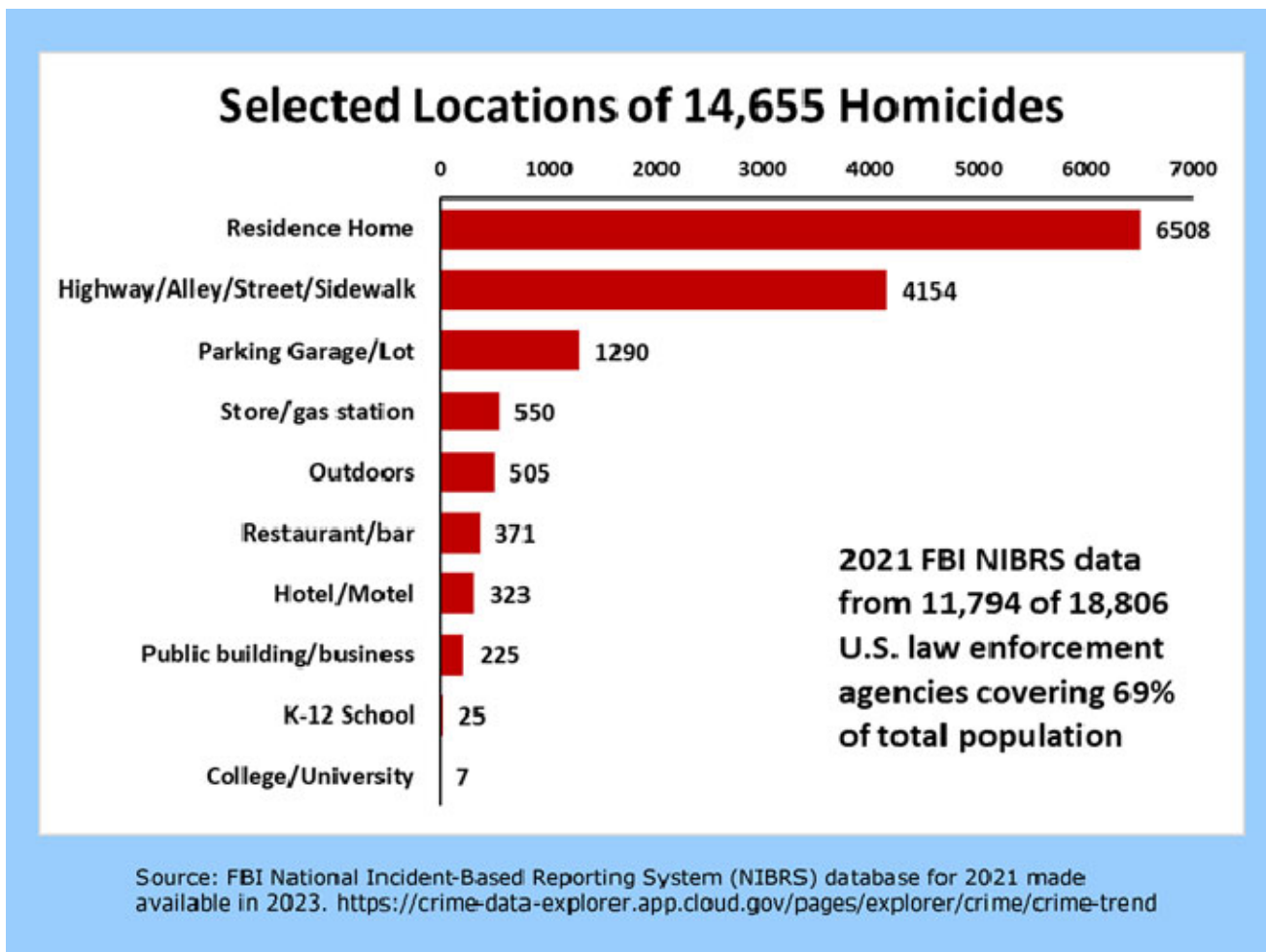
About School Shootings

Recently, Professor Dewey G. Cornell of the School of Education and Human Services at the University of Virginia posted the following on a American Psychological Association listserv.

We are interested in what your thoughts are related to what he is sharing.

The probability of a school shooting is greatly exaggerated by the news media and security companies, so that it has become vividly imprinted in our imagination, making it subject to pernicious availability bias. How easily can each of us call up a fantasy of a classroom shooting? FBI homicide statistics show that, year after year, schools are one of the safest places in any community, and our young people are safer from shootings when they are in a school than when they are in a restaurant, store, parking lot, or almost anywhere else. Most shootings, including mass shootings, occur in residences. CDC statistics show that 98% of homicides of school-age youth occur outside of a school.

As for making our schools into fortresses with metal detectors, gunshot detectors, panic buttons, electronic locks, panic rooms, etc., the school shooting databases (there are many) show that most “school” shootings occur outside of the school building, making those security devices irrelevant. And most of the “shootings” in these databases are not shootings, but reports of someone seeing a gun. Schools are spending billions of dollars annually and subjecting kids to horrifying fantasies triggered by lockdown drills, in a misguided attempt to prepare them for an extraordinarily unlikely event. We need a more objective approach to school safety and more emphasis on prevention than crisis response. Dewey Cornell <https://education.virginia.edu/yvp>



For another perspective, see *How shootings upend US schools – even where there’s no gunfire* <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2024/09/23/school-shootings-threats-georgia/75251476007/>
