0762 **ADOLESCENT HOMICIDE VICTIMS, OFFENDERS
AND CIRCUMSTANCES IN JOHANNESBURG,
SOUTH AFRICA**

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Although homicide is the leading cause of non-natural death for South African adolescents, little is known about

the circumstances surrounding such homicides. This study examines homicides that occurred among adolescents (15–19 years) in Johannesburg during the period 2001–2007, and describes victim and offender characteristics, victim–offender relationships and event characteristics. A typological analysis is presented to identify particular categories of homicides for the purposes of informing appropriate prevention strategies.

A total of 451 adolescent homicides were drawn from the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System which provides information on the victim, external cause of death, time and location of death. Of these cases, 247 (54.8%) were followed up via police case records to obtain information on offenders and homicide circumstances.

Of the 195 cases eligible for analysis, 81.0% of the victims were male and 25.6% tested positive for alcohol. Most of the offenders were male (89.7%), comprising of strangers (41.5%) and acquaintances (30.8%). Homicides typically involved firearms (43.1%) or sharp instruments (40.5%) and occurred in the street (42.1%) or a house (26.2%). Arguments (32.8%) were the most common triggers, followed by revenge (11.3%), robbery (10.8%) and vigilantism (6.2%). Preliminary typological analyses identified three categories of adolescent homicide: (1) male victims killed by strangers during a crime-related event; (2) male victims killed by an acquaintance during an argument; and (3) female victims. The findings call for multiple strategies for combating adolescent homicides.