

# Emergency Department Visits for Violence Among Women of Reproductive Age

## What is ESSENCE?

ESSENCE stands for Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics. It collects data in near real-time from emergency departments (ED) across the state. We use syndromes (collections of symptoms) in ESSENCE to search chief complaint and discharge diagnosis data in order to detect and monitor diseases and conditions. This means of monitoring trends and identifying emerging issues is called syndromic surveillance.

## Purpose of this Report:

The objective of this report is to monitor trends in ED visits for violence among women of reproductive age. It is one of several means of surveillance of risk factors for homicide and suicide deaths among pregnant and postpartum women in Tennessee (TN).

## Notes and Limitations:

All syndromic definitions were developed by CDC. Because perpetrator information is not often included in ED visit data, IPV-related ED visits may be under-estimated. Syndromic surveillance only captures individuals who seek medical care for a condition or injury, and thus only represents a portion of all individuals experiencing these conditions. For this reason, ESSENCE is just one tool in our toolbox to understand these public health issues and to identify opportunities for prevention and intervention.

## For more information:

- [Prevention of Violent Maternal Deaths in TN](#)
- [Maternal Health Innovation in TN](#)
- [Maternal Mortality Review in TN](#)

## Report Contents:

[Intimate Partner Violence](#)

[Sexual Violence](#)

[Suicide Ideation/Attempt](#)

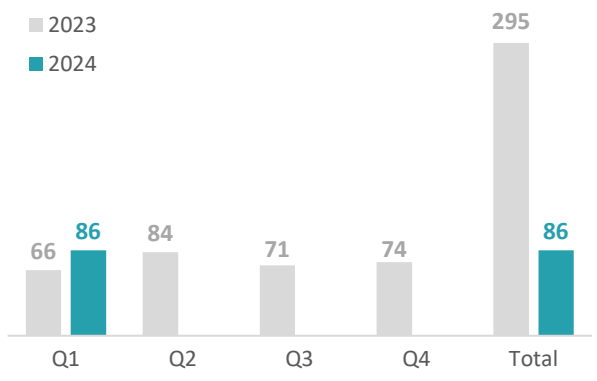
[Firearm Injury](#)



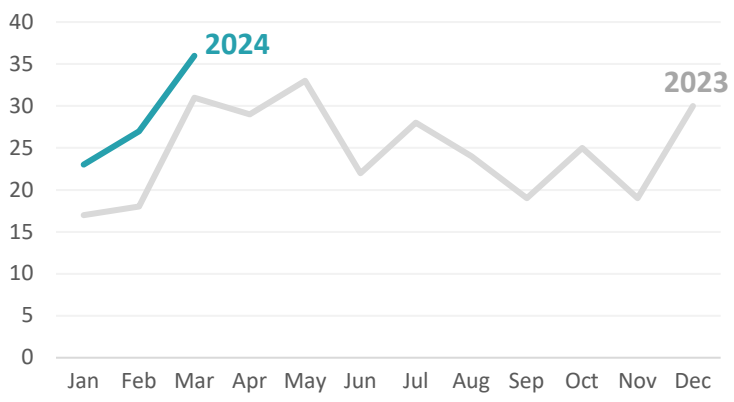
# Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

January – March 2024 (Q1)

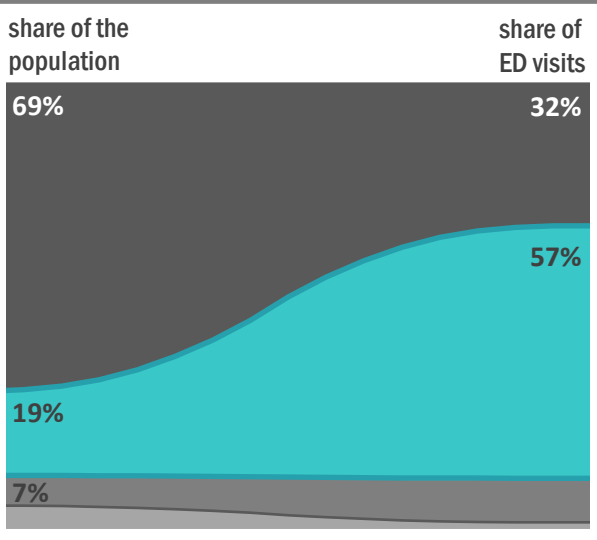
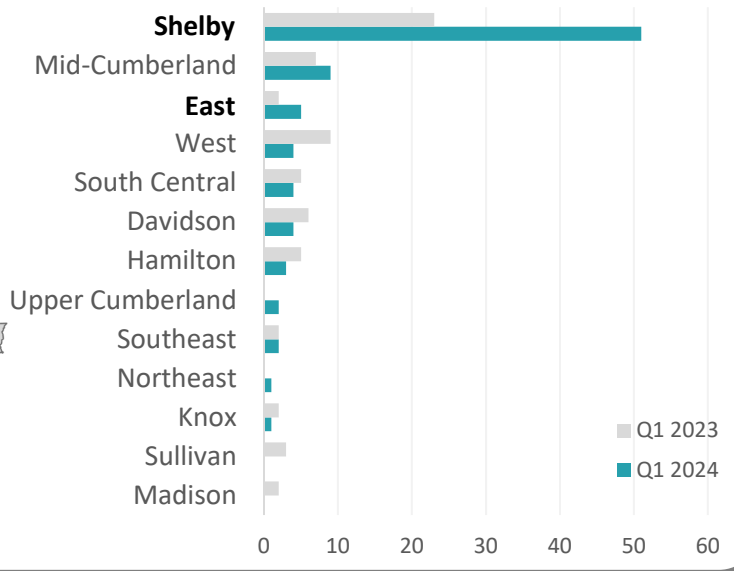
The count of IPV-related ED visits is **30% higher** in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023.



Monthly counts of IPV-related ED visits show a similar trend in Q1 2024 compared to last year.



The number of IPV-related ED visits in Q1 2024 increased in several regions compared to Q1 2023. The largest increases were in the **Shelby** and **East** regions where counts more than doubled. Shelby County continues to have the highest number of IPV-related ED visits.



**Non-Hispanic Black females continue to be overrepresented** in IPV-related ED visits, accounting for 57% of visits while representing just 19% of the population.

When examining IPV-related ED visits by age (data not shown), females in their 20s account for 51% of visits while accounting for just 34% of the population of women of reproductive age.

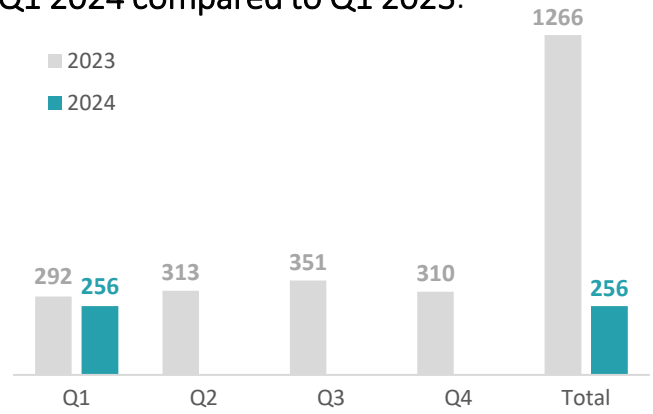
IPV is abuse or aggression in a romantic relationship. “Intimate partner” refers to both current and former spouses and dating partners. Types of IPV include physical and sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression. IPV can range in frequency and severity and even one episode can have a lasting impact.



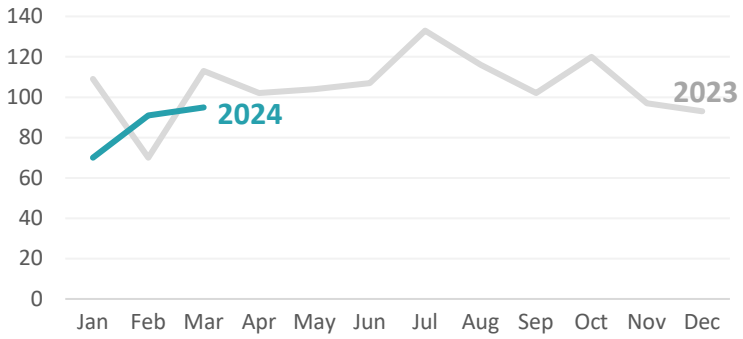
# Sexual Violence (SV)

January – March 2024 (Q1)

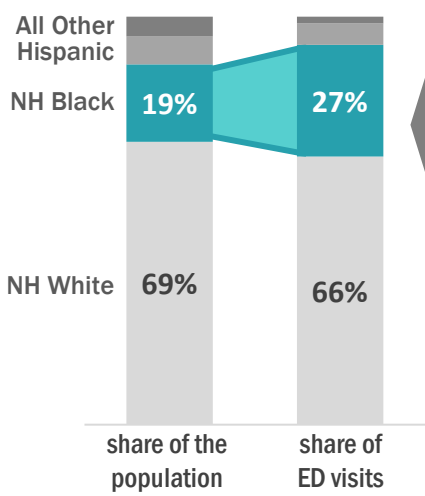
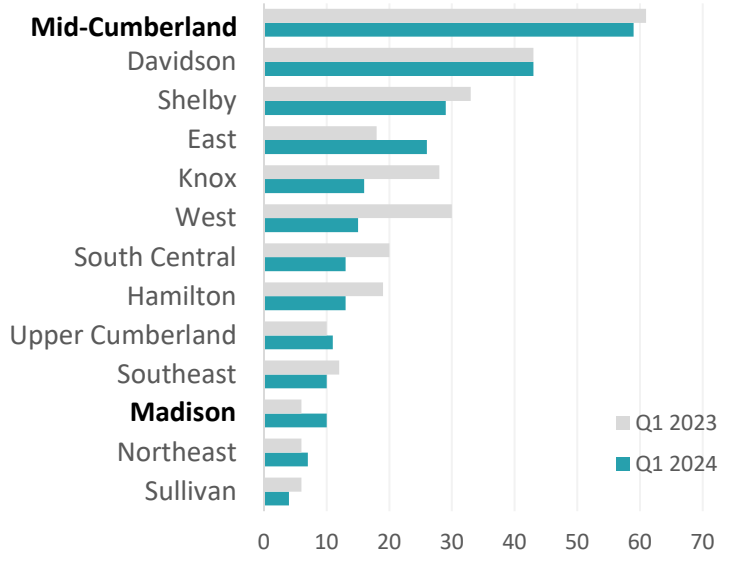
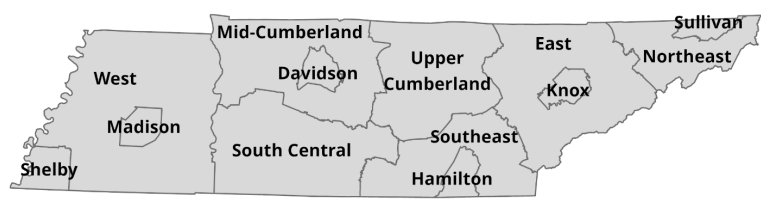
The count of SV-related ED visits is **12% lower** in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023.



Although the total number of SV-related ED visits for Q1 were lower in 2024 vs. 2023, monthly counts are on the rise.

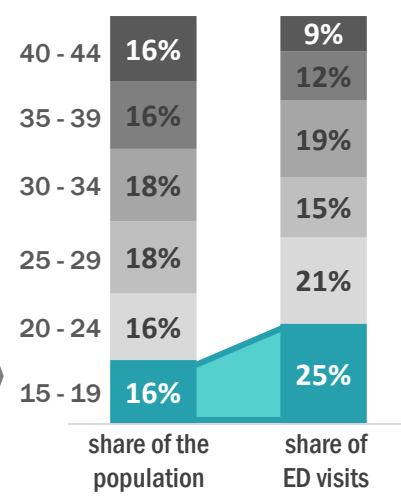


Although state-wide SV-related ED visits decreased in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023, increases were seen in some regions. The largest increase was in **Madison County (67%)**. The **Mid-Cumberland** region continues to have the highest number of SV-related ED visits.



The distribution of SV-related ED visits by race and ethnicity has remained similar in Q1 2024 compared to 2023. However, **non-Hispanic Black females continue to be overrepresented**, accounting for 27% of visits while representing just 19% of the population.

The distribution of SV-related ED visits by age has remained similar in Q1 of 2024 compared to 2023. However, females aged **15-19 are overrepresented**, accounting for 25% of visits while representing just 16% of the population.

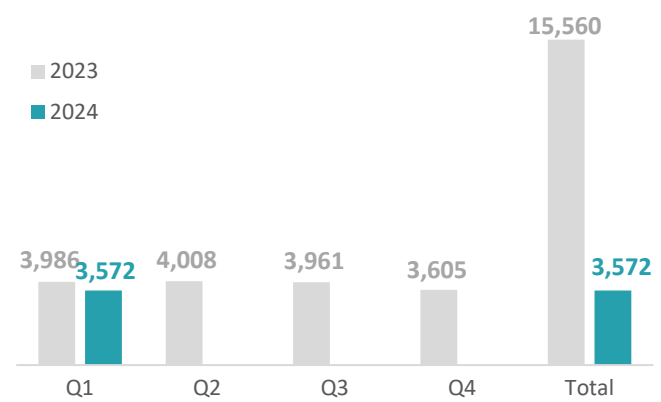


SV is any sexual activity or act in which consent is not obtained or freely given. Types of SV include sexual abuse, coercion, and assault, and rape. SV can occur in person or through technology, such as sharing unsolicited sexual pictures or non-consensual sexting.

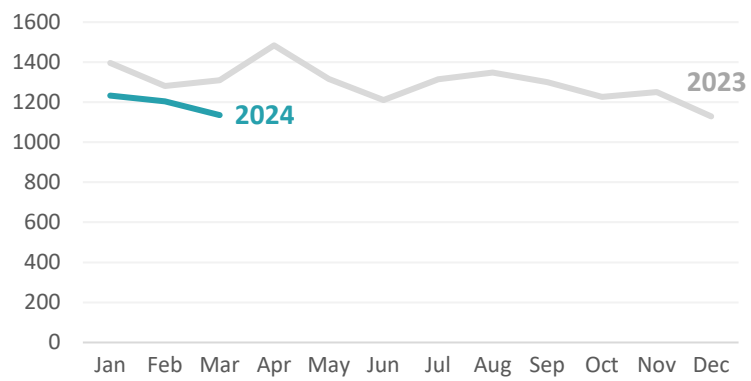
# Suicide Ideation/Attempt (SIA)

January – March 2024 (Q1)

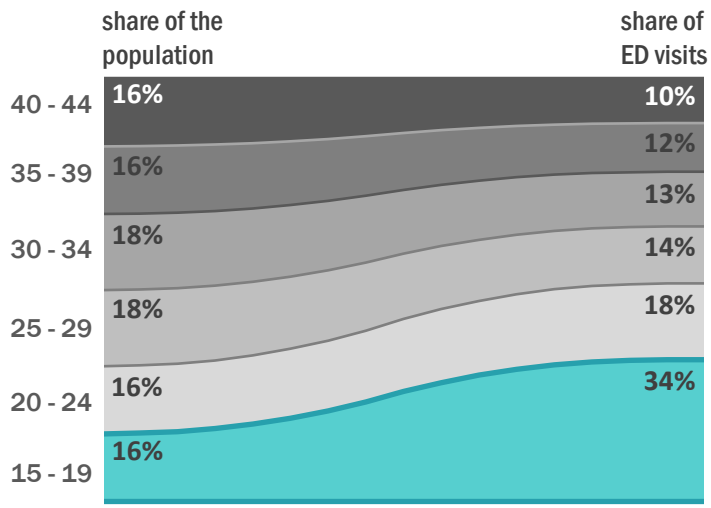
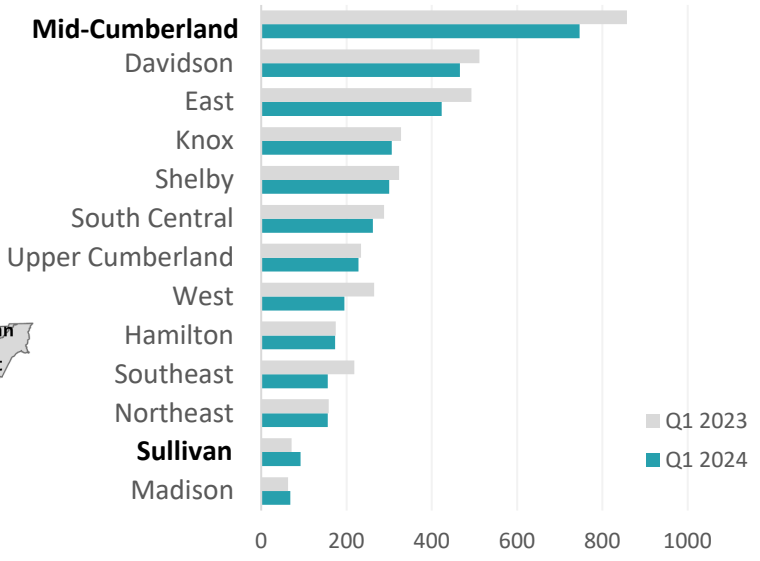
The count of SIA-related ED visits is **10% lower** in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023.



Monthly counts of SIA-related ED visits trended downwards in Q1 2024.



Although Q1 SIA-related ED visits decreased in 2024 compared to 2023 within most regions, **Sullivan** County saw a 30% increase. The **Mid-Cumberland** region continues to have the highest number of SIA-related ED visits.



The distribution of SIA-related ED visits by age has remained similar in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023. However, females aged **15-19 are overrepresented**, accounting for 34% of visits while representing just 16% of the population.

The distribution of SIA-related ED visits by race and ethnicity (data not shown) is similar to the population distribution.

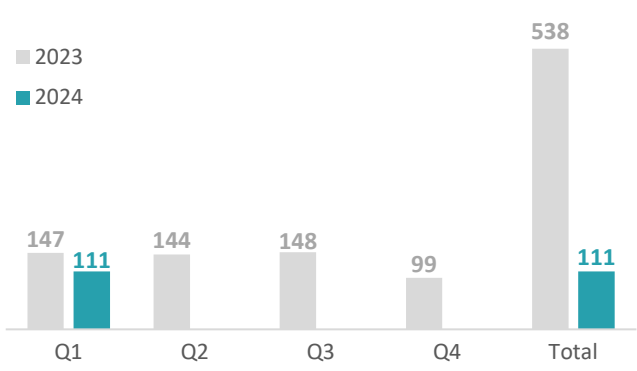
Suicide ideation is a broad term used to describe a range of contemplations, wishes, and preoccupations with death and suicide. Suicide attempt is when an individual harms themselves with the goal of ending their life, but they do not die.



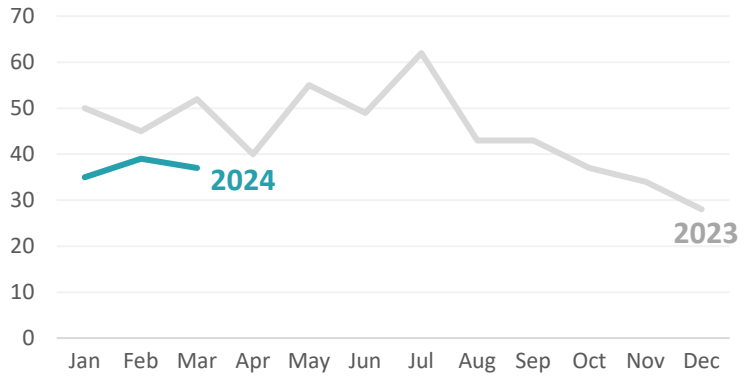
# Firearm Injury (FI)

January – March 2024 (Q1)

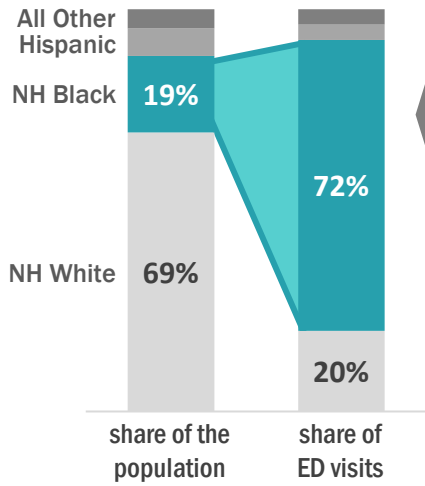
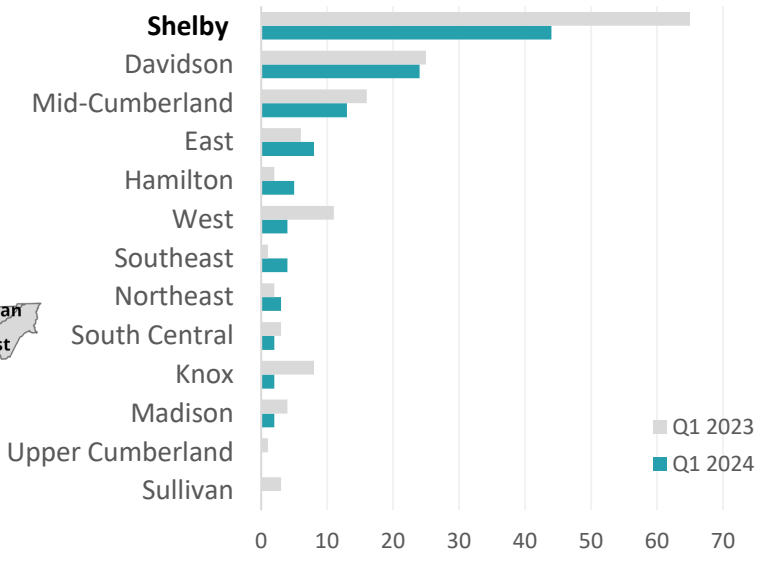
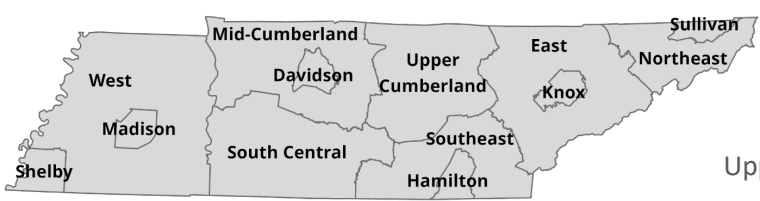
The count of FI-related ED visits is **24% lower** in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023.



Monthly counts of FI-related ED visits were stable in Q1 2024.

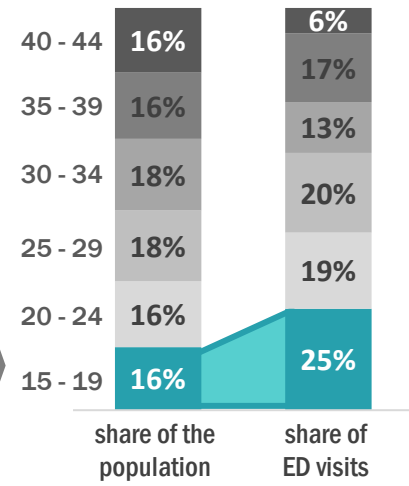


Among TN regions, **Shelby** had the highest number of FI-related ED visits in both Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 but saw a 32% lower count in Q1 2024 compared to the previous year.



The distribution of FI-related ED visits by race and ethnicity was similar in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023. However, **non-Hispanic Black females continue to be overrepresented**, accounting for 72% of visits while representing just 19% of the population.

In 2023, females 20-24 accounted for 25% of FI-related ED visits. However, in Q1 2024, females aged **15-19 are overrepresented**, accounting for 25% of visits while representing just 16% of the population.



FI is a wound from a weapon that uses a powder charge to fire a projectile (e.g. handguns and shotguns). FI can be intentional or unintentional. Some circumstances include mishandling, suicide, assault, or during legal intervention.