



Bryan White &lt;zebrafactcheck@gmail.com&gt;

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## Correction request: Fact check of Chris Murphy May 24, 2022

1 message

**Bryan White** <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>  
To: [truthorometer@politifact.com](mailto:truthorometer@politifact.com)

Wed, Jun 1, 2022 at 6:55 PM

Dear Truth-O-Meter,

[Your May 24, 2022 fact check](#) of Sen. Chris Murphy went badly astray.

Murphy said "Most of these killers tend to be 18, 19 years old."

You gave Murphy a "Mostly True" rating.

But Murphy's statement is hyper-literally false according to your own accounting of the facts (median age for "killers" as treated in the fact check: 16). If one or more of the "killers" was 17 then Murphy's statement cannot be true as a matter of math.

How about using normal interpretation instead of hyper-literal? There, Murphy's claim also counts as false. Remember, in context Murphy's arguing to raise the minimum age for gun purchases from 18 to something higher, such as 21. Because of that context, "killers" aged 17 and below can't help his argument. They're already legally unable to purchase guns in almost all instances. **You should have noted this.**

Your fact check uses a biased interpretation to evaluate Murphy's claim. For PolitiFact, "killers" 18 or 19 or younger prove Murphy's point even though Murphy's hypothetical legislation would not, for the vast majority, in any way affect their ability to legally purchase firearms.

Here's how you fact check Murphy's best argument, badly phrased as it was: Find out what percentage of "killers" were between 18 and 20 when they legally acquired their firearms. That's the reduction the age change might accomplish. Guaranteed it's not "most" of all school shootings. Perhaps those 19 to 20 account for most of the school shooting "killers" aged 19 or over. That's worth fact-checking. It's not what Murphy literally said, but it's worth fact-checking.

Murphy's claim was false the way he phrased it. If words matter, as you claim they do, then there's no justifying the "Mostly True" rating you gave Murphy.

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Sincerely,

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editor  
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