



NJ SOPHE - New Jersey Society for Public Health Education

NJ SOPHE is committed to promoting healthy behaviors, healthy communities, and healthy environments through our focus on prevention and public health education.

Reducing Gun Violence in New Jersey: A Public Health Approach

With the rise in school and mass shootings, gun violence has become all too common in the United States. However, gun violence can take many forms: homicide, suicide, nonfatal injuries, and it may be intentional or unintentional.

New Jersey has one of the lowest gun death rates in the country, reflecting that it has some of the strongest gun laws in the nation. However, there are still too many people being injured and dying from preventable firearm incidents. Every time gun violence impacts a person, it also devastates a family, and the whole community suffers.

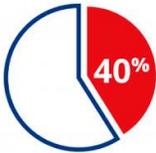
<p>1,849 people are killed or wounded with a gun each year in NJ. (Giffords Law Center)</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Homicide •Suicide •Accidental firearm death •Intentional injury •Accidental Injury •Firearm crimes (robbery & assault) •Intimate partner violence
--	---

Public health and the societal costs of gun violence

Gun violence hits some of our most vulnerable residents the hardest, including children, the elderly, and the mentally ill. In addition, there are racial and ethnic disparities related to gun violence. For instance, black men make up less than 8% of NJ's population, but account for more than 70% of our state's gun homicide victims. (Giffords Law Center)

NJ's gun violence is concentrated in a small number of urban areas, where there is also a lack of employment and declining property values. These avoidable deaths and injuries impose a significant physical, mental, and financial toll on individuals, their families, and communities. (Giffords Law Center)

Furthermore, gun violence results in significant financial costs. The societal costs of firearm injury include work loss, medical/mental health care, emergency transportation, police/criminal justice activities, insurance claims processing, employer costs and decreased quality of life. (APHA)

 <p>3,316 people died from gun violence in NJ between 2010 - 2016, and many more suffered non-fatal gun-related injuries</p>	 <p>Nearly 40% of NJ's intimate partner homicides involve a gun</p>		
 <p>Every 18 hours, someone is killed with a gun in NJ</p>	<p>That's 476 people a year</p>	 <p>The annual cost of gun violence in NJ is \$3.3 Billion</p>	<p>That's \$368 per resident</p>

Public Health Prevention

Gun violence can be prevented through a comprehensive public health approach to stop violence and help keep families and communities safe. A public health approach includes:

- Research about gun violence causes and assessing the effects of current interventions
- Identifying risk factors for gun violence (e.g. poverty and depression) and protective factors that reduce gun violence (e.g. youth access to trusted adults)
- Developing, implementing, and evaluating interventions to reduce risk factors and build resilience
- Strengthening successful evidence-based prevention strategies through partnerships with law enforcement, social services, and community members

What can Legislators do?

Legislators can reduce gun violence by supporting:

- ✓ Funding for surveillance on firearm fatalities
- ✓ Research to better understand the causes of firearm use and appropriate solutions to deter gun violence
- ✓ Gun control legislation that addresses safe storage, child access prevention, open carry prohibition, online firearm sales, extreme risk protective orders (ERPOs), etc.
- ✓ Expanded access to mental health services, substance abuse programs, and intimate partner violence support services
- ✓ Criminal justice reform
- ✓ Initiatives for community and school-based prevention, and preparedness initiatives to prevent gun violence and prepare our communities and schools in the event of an emergency

How can NJ SOPHE help?

Policy	Data Collection	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify evidence-based prevention programs and policies that fit the needs of each community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect data, evidence, and stories to guide communities from awareness to action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop educational materials for legislators, organizations, and community members

About NJ SOPHE

~150 health educators who work across the state in:

- Local and State government
- Community and non-profit agencies
- Health care facilities
- Businesses
- Universities
- Schools

Est. 1984

Providing support to health education professionals for over three decades

Contact Us

www.njsophe.org
info@njsophe.org