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Youth Firearm-Related Violence

Introduction

The United States has the highest rate of youth firearm-related violence in the industrialized world.¹ Many premature deaths and injuries are related to youth gun violence. During the late 1980's and early 1990's, youth firearm-related violence increased dramatically in the United States. Juvenile gun arrests rose sharply as more teens began to carry guns, and the number of gun homicides committed by juveniles more than doubled. Youth suicides with handguns also increased rapidly during that same time period. Since 1994, however, it appears that the tide may be turning. In recent years, we have seen significant decreases in youth suicides involving guns and in firearm-related homicides involving a juvenile offender. However, much remains to be done. Each year in the United States, many teens still illegally access firearms and harm others and themselves.

Overview

Firearm Access

The Youth Handgun Safety Act of 1994 prohibits possession of handguns by anyone under the age of 18, and under the Gun Control Act of 1968 it is unlawful for federally licensed firearms dealers to sell handguns to persons under 21. Yet, youth appear to have little difficulty in obtaining handguns. In one survey of 7th and 10th graders in Milwaukee and Boston, 42% reported that they could get a gun if they wanted one, and 28% reported having handled a gun without adult knowledge or supervision.² How do teenagers acquire guns? When juvenile offenders in detention centers were interviewed about how they acquired their first gun, 42% indicated that they were given their first gun by a peer, an older youth, or a relative, while 38% purposefully acquired their first gun by borrowing (17%), buying (11%), or stealing (10%). 84% of those who possessed guns said that they had obtained them before they were 15 years old.³

Many youth have access to guns in their homes. A recent study found that 43% of households in the U.S. with children under 18 had at least one gun. 21% of gun owners with children under 18 reported that they stored their weapons loaded, and 9% reported that their weapons were stored loaded and unlocked.⁴ A study looking at the source of weapons involved in self-inflicted and unintentional injuries among youth found that parents owned the guns used in more than half (57%) of the suicides and suicide attempts and in almost one in five (19%) unintentional injuries and deaths by adolescents ages 19 and younger. 90% of guns used in suicide attempts and three-quarters (72%) of guns involved in unintentional injuries were stored in the home of the victim, a relative, or a friend.⁵

Stop youth violence before it starts

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Firearm Carrying and Use

Clearly, one factor that contributes significantly to adolescent gun violence is that gun possession and carrying are common among adolescents, particularly in urban areas. Male teens, in particular, are likely to possess and carry firearms. In a Nationwide survey of high school students in 1999, 9% of male students (and 4.9% of all students) reported carrying a gun at least once in the 30 days preceding the survey.⁶ While still high, this represents a significant decrease since 1993 when 13.7% of male students (and 7.9% of all students) reported having carried a gun in the 30 days preceding the survey.⁷ The main reason given by adolescents for obtaining or carrying guns is self-protection. Research suggests that this explanation is an oversimplification, however. Additional motivational factors for carrying a gun include involvement in delinquent activities, such as drug dealing, and a propensity for aggressive behavior.⁸ It is important to note that adolescent gun carrying has serious consequences even when it does not lead to physical injuries. It increases community members' exposure to intimidation and threats and creates an environment of fear and distrust in communities.

Juvenile arrests for weapons violations increased sharply during the late 1980's and early 1990's before declining in the mid-1990's.⁹ A variety of factors may have contributed to the reduction in youth firearm carrying and use in recent years, including: changes in legislation and law enforcement practices; improvements associated with violence prevention programs; demographic changes; changes in the market for illegal drugs; and the broad economic expansion in the United States.¹⁰ Still, it is important to note that even with the impressive declines, there were still over 37,000 juvenile weapons arrests in the United States in 2000, accounting for 24% of all weapons arrests.¹¹

Firearm-Related Suicide

More youth die from suicide attempts with firearms than any other method. This is true for both males and females, younger and older adolescents, and for all races. Almost 60% of youth suicide deaths in 1999 were firearm-related. The rate of youth suicides involving a firearm increased 38% between 1981 and 1994, and although it declined by 36% from 1994 to 1999, the rate is still much too high. Among young people 10 to 19 years old, there were 1,078 suicides with guns in 1999 - about 3 on average every day of the year.¹² The most common location for the occurrence of firearm suicides by youth is in their homes, and there is a positive association between the accessibility and availability of firearms in the home and the risk for youth suicide. The risk conferred by guns in the home is proportional to the accessibility (e.g., loaded and unsecured firearms) and the number of guns in the home.^{13,14} One study found that guns were twice as likely to be found in the homes of adolescent suicide victims as in the homes of those who attempted suicide and survived.¹⁵ The use of guns in a suicide attempt leads to a fatal outcome 78% to 90% of the time.^{16,17}

Firearm-Related Homicide¹⁸

Along with the increase in the number of youth carrying firearms in the late 1980's and early 1990's came a sharp increase in gun-related homicides. The increased presence of guns meant that disputes once settled by fistfights often escalated to shooting incidents. Between 1985 and 1993, the number of gun-related homicides committed by juveniles nearly quadrupled (increasing from 909 to 3486), with little accompanying growth in non-gun homicides. By 1993, 81% of homicides committed by juveniles involved the use of a gun. In recent years, the number of killings committed by juveniles has decreased dramatically. From 1993 to 1999, the number of homicides by juveniles decreased a remarkable 59%. This decline was attributable almost entirely to a decline in homicides by firearms,

as gun homicides committed by juveniles declined 65% in that time period. The number of gun homicides committed by juveniles is still high, however, accounting for 11% of all gun homicides in 1999 for which the age of the offender is known.

Non-fatal Firearm Crime¹⁹

Firearm-related homicides are just the tip of the iceberg. From 1993 through 1997 there were 3.3 nonfatal gunshot injuries from assault treated in hospital emergency departments for every firearm-related homicide. Because suicide attempts with firearms usually result in death, non-fatal gunshot injuries from suicide attempts were much less likely, with only 0.3 firearm-related attempted suicides for every completed suicide. Just as homicides and suicides decreased from 1993 to 1997, nonfatal firearm injuries from crime declined 39% and firearm injuries from suicide attempts decreased by 45% in that same time period.

Strategies to Reduce Firearm-Related Violence²⁰

In recent years, Federal, State, and local governments have had considerable success in reducing youth firearm violence. They have passed new laws and employed strategies to interrupt sources of illegal guns through gun tracing and monitoring of both licensed and illegal gun dealers and by aggressively prosecuting and sentencing those who sell guns to youth. They have worked to deter illegal possession and carrying of guns by those at risk for violence: using community allies to report illegal gun trafficking; targeting probationers, gang members, and drug traffickers; prosecuting those who possess illegal guns; and imposing strong sanctions on those who are involved in gun violence. They have implemented programs to educate youth, families, and community residents about the dangers and consequences of gun violence. They have also increased and coordinated services and resources for at-risk youth, providing positive opportunities such as tutoring, mentoring, job-training and after-school activities, and educating them about peaceful conflict resolution. Finally, they have mobilized community residents and organizations to work together in their communities to respond to the problem of youth violence.

Federal Responses and Resources

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

www.ed.gov

The mission of the Department of Education is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence for all Americans.

- **Office of Educational Research and Improvement**

www.ed.gov/offices/OERI

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) provides national leadership for educational research and statistics. OERI strives to promote excellence and equity in American education by: conducting research and demonstration projects funded through grants to help improve education; collecting statistics on the status and progress of schools and education throughout the nation; and distributing information and providing technical assistance to those working to improve education.

OERI's [National Center for Education Statistics](http://nces.ed.gov) (<http://nces.ed.gov>), often in collaboration with a number of other Federal agencies, collects surveillance data needed for school violence prevention. For example, NCES collaborated with the Bureau of Justice Statistics to add a special supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey to collect data on aspects of school crime. They also collect data from principals about crimes, firearm use, violent incidents, and policies in their schools using the School Survey on Crime and Safety.

OERI also engages in a number of analyses of program evaluations and disseminates the results. For example, OERI, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program (SDFS), established the [Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools \(SDFS\) Expert Panel](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD/KAD/expert_panel/drug-free.html) (www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ORAD/KAD/expert_panel/drug-free.html). The purpose of the Expert Panel was to oversee a process for identifying and designating as promising and exemplary school-based programs that promoted safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools. Once programs were designated as exemplary or promising, the Department disseminated information about the programs. The Expert Panel initiative was a way of enhancing prevention programming by making schools aware of alternative programs that had proven their effectiveness when judged against rigorous criteria.

- **[Office of Elementary and Secondary Education](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/index.html)**

www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/index.html

The mission of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) is to promote academic excellence, enhance educational opportunities and equity for all of America's children and families, and to improve the quality of teaching and learning by providing leadership, technical assistance and financial support. The OESE's [Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html) (www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/index.html) is the Federal government's primary vehicle for reducing violence and drug, alcohol and tobacco use, through education and prevention activities in our nation's schools. The SDFS program coordinates their efforts with other Education programs, as well as programs conducted by other Federal agencies. Together with other federal agencies, the SDFS program has developed documents such as, "[Safeguarding our Children: An Action Guide](http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/actguide/action_guide.pdf)," (www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/actguide/action_guide.pdf), "[Preventing Youth Hate Crime: A Manual for Schools and Communities](http://www.ed.gov/pubs/HateCrime/start.html)" (www.ed.gov/pubs/HateCrime/start.html), and "[Preventing Juvenile Gun Violence In Schools](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSDFS/actguid/gunfree.html)" (www.ed.gov/offices/OSDFS/actguid/gunfree.html). This program also supports a number of program evaluation activities, including the National Study on School Violence and Violence Prevention. This study is examining the incidence of violence in schools nationally and the effectiveness of approaches to preventing violence in schools, including approaches funded by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program. The Department of Education is working with the National Institute of Justice to coordinate this study with the [National Study of Delinquency Prevention in Schools](http://www.gottfredson.com/national.htm) (www.gottfredson.com/national.htm), funded under an NIJ grant. The SDFS Program also funds the [National Resource Center for Safe Schools](http://www.safetyzone.org) (www.safetyzone.org) and the [National Center for Conflict Resolution Education \(NCCRE\)](http://www.nccre.org) (www.nccre.org).

SDFS also helps local schools and law enforcement agencies accomplish the goals of the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994. Since this law was enacted, all states that receive federal funds for elementary and secondary education require their school districts to expel, for at least one year, any student who brings a firearm to school. This law also requires local education

agencies that receive federal funding to refer to law enforcement agencies all students who bring firearms or other weapons to school. The Department of Education also works in tandem with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to support alternative education programs to ensure that students who are expelled for weapons violations are off the streets and still receive an education.

- [Report on the State Implementation of the Gun-Free Schools Act – School Year 1998-99](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSDFS/GFSA/report_2000/part1.html)
www.ed.gov/offices/OSDFS/GFSA/report_2000/part1.html

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

www.dhhs.gov

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the United States government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves.

Many agencies in the Department of Health and Human Services support programs that can serve as resources for understanding and reducing youth firearm violence. The programs described below are directly concerned with the prevention of firearm-related injuries.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

www.cdc.gov

The mission of the CDC is to promote the health and quality of life of the citizenry of the U.S. by preventing and controlling disease, injury, and disability. In particular, the CDC is committed to reducing and preventing youth violence through a public health approach that focuses on understanding the prevalence of youth violence; identifying risk and protective factors that influence its occurrence; research and program evaluation; and dissemination of information and technical assistance to its constituents.

The CDC is playing a key role in coordinating activities and programs in the Public Health Service of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to prevent firearm-related injuries. In collaboration with the [Consumer Product Safety Commission](http://www.cpsc.gov) (www.cpsc.gov), CDC's [National Center for Injury Prevention and Control](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc) (www.cdc.gov/ncipc) has worked to expand the [National Electronic Injury Surveillance System \(NEISS\)](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/3002.html) (www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/3002.html) in order to collect data on all types and causes of injuries treated in emergency departments, including firearm-related injuries.

Additionally, CDC's [National Center for Health Statistics](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs) (www.cdc.gov/nchs) collects data on firearm mortality through the [National Vital Statistics System](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/mortdata.htm) (www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/dvs/mortdata.htm) and information on gun ownership rates and storage practices through the [National Health Interview Survey](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm) (www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm). The [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/index.htm) (www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/index.htm) collects data on youth weapon carrying through the [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/index.htm) (www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/index.htm).

- **Firearms Injuries and Fatalities**

www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/fafacts.htm

Fact sheet describing CDC activities to prevent firearm-related injuries. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Firearm-Related Injury Surveillance, 1998](#)
www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/firerela.htm
Issue of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine with articles reporting on progress that has been made in the surveillance of firearm-related injuries.
- [Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System \(WISQARS\)](#)
www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars
An interactive database system that provides customized reports of injury-related data. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Nonfatal and Fatal Firearm-Related Injuries - United States, 1993-1997 \(1999\)](#)
www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm4845a1.htm
Article in Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Review, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Firearm Mortality – Fast Stats A to Z](#)
www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/firearms.htm
National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System \(YRBSS\)](#)
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/index.htm
Site providing information about the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System and access to reports, statistical information, and data. Division of Adolescent and School Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Health Resources Services Administration](#)
www.hrsa.gov
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) directs national health programs that improve the Nation's health by assuring equitable access to comprehensive, quality health care for all.
The Health Resources Services Administration's [Maternal and Child Health Bureau \(MCHB\)](#) (www.mchb.hrsa.gov) administers grants to states for maternal and child health. MCHB supports the [Children's Safety Network](#) (www.childrenssafetynetwork.org), which works with states to assist their efforts to prevent childhood injury, including intentional injuries from firearms.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

www.hud.gov

HUD's mission is to ensure a decent, safe, and sanitary home and suitable living environment for every American. To accomplish this, HUD programs focus on: restoring public trust; fighting for fair housing; increasing affordable housing and home ownership; reducing homelessness; promoting jobs and economic opportunity; and empowering people and communities.

As mandated by statute, HUD bears a unique responsibility to ensure that residents of areas assisted by Federal housing funds live in decent and safe neighborhoods. Accordingly, HUD has implemented

several critical anti-crime and anti-violence efforts in public housing. HUD provides funding to Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) under the [Public Housing Drug Elimination Program \(PHDEP\)](#) (www.hud.gov/nofa/suprnofa/sprprt4g.cfm) to support effective safety and security measures to combat drug-related and violent crime, primarily in and around public housing projects with severe crime problems. While direct security costs, such as law enforcement, security personnel, and physical safety improvements, make up a large majority of PHDEP program uses, a significant percentage of funds has been used for prevention efforts. By providing alternatives to violence and opportunities for adolescents, such programs help address the underlying "risk factors" leading to involvement in crime and firearm violence. PHDEP funds have been used to fund the Department's BuyBack America initiative, funding gun buybacks removing tens of thousands of guns from the streets. These efforts also include implementation of the "One Strike and You're Out" provisions that HUD implemented as part of the Housing Opportunity Program Extension Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-120). This law requires public housing authorities to implement strong tenant screening, admissions, and evictions rules that mandate exclusion from public housing and lease termination for persons who engage in criminal activity. HUD has also implemented: the Youth Violence Prevention Program (in conjunction with the CDC), which provides alternatives to violence, focusing on at-risk youth; the Grassroots Youth Intervention Demonstration, helping young people living in public housing avoid involvement with gangs, drugs, and criminal activity; and the [Operation Safe Home](#) (www.usdoj.gov/usao/can/html/operation_safe_home.html) initiative, which coordinates Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and which has confiscated thousands of weapons (primarily firearms) and resulted in over 20,000 arrests.

Finally, HUD has issued a report, "[In The Crossfire: The Impact of Gun Violence on Public Housing Communities](#)" (www.hud.gov/library/bookshelf18/pressrel/crossfir.pdf). This report is the first-ever comprehensive analysis of gun-related violence in public housing communities. Using newly available data from both HUD and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, this report examines the scope and magnitude of gun-related violence in and around public housing. It also addresses many of the costs associated with gun violence—both the financial costs imposed on housing authorities that are struggling to administer effective security measures and the social costs borne by the residents.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

www.usdoj.gov

The Department represents the citizens of the United States in enforcing the law in the public interest and plays a key role in protection against criminals; ensuring healthy competition of business; safeguarding the consumer; enforcing drug, immigration, and naturalization laws; and protecting citizens through effective law enforcement.

- [Fighting Gun Violence and Keeping Guns Away from Criminals and Our Children- 1999](#)
www.usdoj.gov/archive/dag/pubdoc/Gun_Final.pdf

- [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#)

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/welcome.html

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) collects and analyzes statistical data on crime, criminal offenders, crime victims, and the operations of justice systems at all levels of government. It also provides financial and technical support to state statistical agencies and administers special programs that aid state and local governments in improving their criminal history records and information systems and in implementing incident-based reporting systems.

- [Firearms and Crime Statistics](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/guns.htm)
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/guns.htm
- [Homicide Trends in the United States: 1998 Update](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/homtrnd.htm)
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/homtrnd.htm
- [Firearm Injury and Death from Crime, 1993-97](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/fidc9397.htm)
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/fidc9397.htm
- [Criminal Victimization 2000: Changes 1999-2000](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv00.htm)
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cv00.htm
- [Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics - Guns](http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/1995/ind/GUNS.ind.html)
www.albany.edu/sourcebook/1995/ind/GUNS.ind.html
- [National Criminal Justice Reference Service \(NCJRS\)](http://www.ncjrs.org)
www.ncjrs.org
NCJRS is one of the most extensive sources of information on criminal and juvenile justice in the world, providing services to an international community of policymakers and professionals. The clearinghouse provides a wealth of information on youth violence and firearms to agencies, organizations, and individuals, including a comprehensive database of criminal and juvenile justice firearms research, as well as a database of ongoing projects across the country that deter violence and the use of firearms by young people.
- [National Institute of Justice](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij)
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij
The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is the primary research and development arm of the U.S. Department of Justice. NIJ works to develop knowledge to reduce crime, enhance public safety, and improve the administration of justice. NIJ conducts and sponsors basic and applied research into the causes, prevention, and detection of crime; sponsors evaluations of major Federal initiatives; develops new approaches, techniques, systems, and technologies; and collects and disseminates both domestic and international criminal justice information.
NIJ has supported many research projects that have improved our understanding of both the nature of gun violence and the effectiveness of various law enforcement strategies. For example, NIJ has sponsored studies of the illegal acquisition, possession, and use of firearms, as well as trends in gun injury, fatality, and crime. NIJ sponsored studies have also examined illegal firearms markets, sources of guns to juveniles and criminals, and patterns of firearms use and possession by high school students and gang members, and evaluated the effectiveness of various prevention and intervention programs.
- [High School Youths, Weapons, and Violence: A National Survey. National Institute of Justice - 1998](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/172857.pdf)
www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/172857.pdf
- [Youth Violence, Guns, and Illicit Drug Markets. National Institute of Justice - 1996](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/drugmark.pdf)
www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/drugmark.pdf

- [National Evaluation of the Youth Firearms Violence Initiative. National Institute of Justice - 2000](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/184482.pdf)
www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/184482.pdf

- **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)**

www.cops.usdoj.gov

Established under the Public Safety Partnership and Community Policing Act of 1994, COPS has four primary goals: to increase the number of community policing officers on the beat by 100,000; to promote the implementation of department-wide community policing in law enforcement agencies across the country; to help develop an infrastructure that will institutionalize and sustain community policing after Federal funding has ended; and to demonstrate and evaluate the ability of agencies practicing community policing to significantly improve the quality of life by reducing the levels of violence, crime, and disorder in their communities.

The [Youth Firearms Violence Initiative \(YFVI\)](http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles1/nij/184482.txt) (www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles1/nij/184482.txt) was launched in 1995 by COPS. It provided up to \$1 million to the police departments of 10 participating to fund interventions directed at combating the rise of youth firearms violence. The initiative encouraged these jurisdictions to employ community policing approaches to develop or enhance youth-focused programs designed to decrease the number of violent firearms crimes, reduce the number of firearms-related gang offenses, and reduce the number of firearms-related drug offenses.

- **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)**

www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org

The mission of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is to provide national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP accomplishes this by supporting states and local communities in their efforts to develop and implement effective and coordinated prevention and intervention programs and improve the juvenile justice system so that it protects the public safety, holds offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services tailored to those families and juveniles who need them.

OJJDP has supported a broad range of research, educational, and programmatic activities to address the problem of youth gun violence. Through its [Partnerships to Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence Program](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/gun_violence/sect08-h.html) (www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/gun_violence/sect08-h.html), OJJDP has supported numerous innovative programs that break the chain of causation that leads to gun violence. The goal of these partnerships is to increase the effectiveness of existing strategies by enhancing and coordinating prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts and strengthening linkages among community residents, law enforcement personnel, and juvenile justice system professionals.

OJJDP has funded research that addresses different aspects of the gun problem, including: an examination of the interrelationship of guns, violence, drugs, and gangs; studies of youth violence trends and characteristics, focusing specifically on homicides and the use of firearms; and research on juvenile gang involvement, including information on gang members who are homicide perpetrators.

OJJDP also supports program evaluation activities and disseminates the results. For example, in 1998, OJJDP examined over 400 gun violence reduction programs in communities across the country and developed, [Promising Strategies to Reduce Gun Violence](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/presentations/gunviol/contents.html) (www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/presentations/gunviol/contents.html), a report which presents practical information about 60 of these programs that have had a measurable impact on reducing gun violence.

Finally, OJJDP funded the [National Criminal Justice Association](http://www.ncja.org) (www.ncja.org) survey of state handgun laws and ordinances, and convened a broad-based gathering of experts to draft a model youth handgun law. The U.S. Attorney General is using these initiatives to develop a Model Code. Once this code is submitted to Congress, the Department of Justice will work in tandem with political and law enforcement officials from all states and U.S. territories to create and enact tough youth handgun legislation.

- [Reducing Youth Gun Violence: An Overview of Programs and Initiatives - 1996](http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/redyouth.txt)
www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/redyouth.txt
- [Challenging the Myths - OJJDP - 1999 National Report Series](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojjdp/178993.pdf)
www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojjdp/178993.pdf
This Bulletin examines juvenile crime statistics, concludes that recent data do not support the "superpredator" theory and offers alternative theories of recent trends in juvenile crime.
- [Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#178257)
http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#178257
- [Juvenile Arrests, 1999 - OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin, December 2000](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000_12_3/contents.html)
www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000_12_3/contents.html
- [Kids and Guns - OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin, March 2000 - 1999 National Report Series](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000_03_2/contents.html)
www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul2000_03_2/contents.html
- [Fighting Juvenile Gun Violence - OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin, September 2000](http://www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/2000_9_3/contents.html)
www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/2000_9_3/contents.html
- [Promising Strategies To Reduce Gun Violence](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#173950)
http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#173950
- [Gun Use by Male Juveniles: Research and Prevention – OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin, July 2001](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#188992)
http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/violencvictsum.html#188992

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

www.ustreas.gov

The mission of the U.S. Department of the Treasury is to promote prosperous and stable American and world economies; manage the Government's finances; safeguard the U.S. financial systems, protect the nation's leaders, and secure a safe and drug-free America.

- [Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms \(ATF\)](#)

www.atf.gov

The ATF is a law enforcement organization with unique responsibilities dedicated to reducing violent crime, collecting revenue, and protecting the public. ATF enforces the Federal laws and regulations relating to alcohol, tobacco, firearms, explosives and arson by working directly and in cooperation with others.

ATF's National Tracing Center coordinates the [Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative](#) (www.atf.gov/firearms/ycgii/), a national program to disrupt the illegal supply of firearms to juveniles and youth by tracing the guns that are used in crimes. This initiative seeks to assist in identifying, investigating, and arresting illegal suppliers of guns, especially to juveniles and youth. Comprehensive crime gun tracing enables law enforcement to detect patterns of illegal trafficking in guns.

- [Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative: Reducing Youth Gun Violence, Crime Gun Trace Reports \(1999\) National Report](#)
www.atf.gov/firearms/ycgii/1999/index.htm

References

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