

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative

BUILDING COLLECTIVE
MOMENTUM

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024



School of Medicine

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

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The success of this
first year is a
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**unwavering
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A Note From Our Founding Director

Dear Friends,

In the inaugural year of the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative (FIPI), we witnessed the transformative power of innovation, partnership, and dedication. From day one, our team embarked on a collective journey fueled by passion, commitment, and a shared vision for positive change. The success of this first year is a testament to the unwavering collaborative spirit that defines our team of faculty, staff, and students, all committed to reducing firearm injury and death.

The official launch of FIPI as an entity, made possible by the generous support from the University of Colorado School of Medicine, allowed us to come together as educators, researchers, and practitioners to have a greater impact. Our program has become a hub of creativity, where diverse perspectives converge to create solutions that transcend demographic, geographic, and political boundaries. Each faculty member, student, staff member, supporter, and community partner has played a key role in shaping the success story of our inaugural year. It is this collective effort that propels us forward with confidence and momentum, knowing that together, we can progress even further and achieve much more.

We use this one-year anniversary to celebrate specific achievements. Internally, our team has welcomed new staff, created an affiliate network, and recruited incoming faculty. Our research portfolio has grown, with a total of \$12.4 million new research dollars brought in to support collaborative studies on Extreme Risk Protection Order use in Colorado, firearm suicide prevention in individuals with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, post-injury clinics, and the development of the Pause to Protect program for firearm businesses, which includes a national map of firearm storage locations.

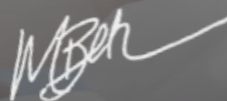
We have continued to foster the growth of the next generation of firearm injury prevention researchers through regular work-in-progress meetings, career mentoring, and pilot grant awards. Notably, FIPI affiliate Maya Haasz, MD received a prestigious National Institutes of Health career development award for her work in adolescent firearm suicide prevention, and two of our doctoral candidates, Leslie Barnard, MPH, and Ginny McCarthy, MPH, MDiv, led high impact publications.

FIPI faculty and staff have been busy supporting communities and practitioners across Colorado and the U.S. with education, training, and technical support, and in 2024 we are excited to be launching a new leadership institute, the Firearm Injury Prevention Leadership Engagement and Development (FIP-LEAD) program. We are proud to note that we have distributed 785 firearm locking devices to firearm owners across the state, and more importantly, we conversed with each recipient about how secure storage can protect our homes and communities.

The growth and accomplishments in our first year serve as a strong starting point for FIPI's next chapter. With this solid foundation, we enthusiastically and confidently look ahead to continued growth, new partnerships, increased impact, and long-term sustainability. We remain committed to our core values: recognition of a common goal of health and security, respect for diversity, consideration of a range of views, and engagement of affected communities and those with lived experience.

Our journey has only just begun. The collective momentum we've built will support us as we reach and push further, inspire change, and make a lasting difference.

Looking ahead,



Emmy Betz, MD, MPH
Founding Director

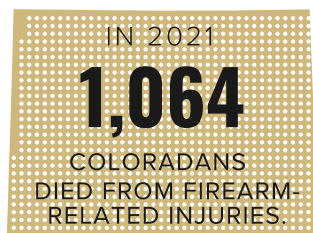


The Purpose Behind Our Work

Due to the complex interplay of social, cultural, and political factors surrounding firearms and firearm-involved harms in the U.S., a collaborative, science-based approach to mitigating this public health crisis is needed.

That is what the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative is committed to.

FIREARM INJURY IS A LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN COLORADO AND ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.



FATAL FIREARM INJURIES REPRESENT ONLY PART OF THE PROBLEM.

ACROSS THE U.S.,
AN ESTIMATED

86,000+

people sustain
non-fatal firearm
injuries each year.



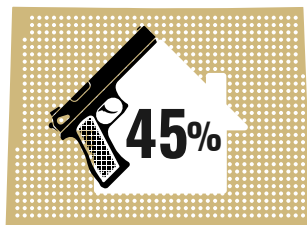
FIREARM-RELATED VIOLENCE
CAN OFTEN LEAD TO ADVERSE



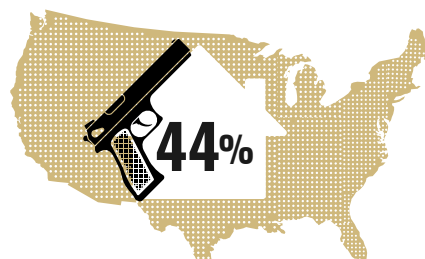
**PSYCHOLOGICAL
OUTCOMES**

among those involved and
communities at large.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, FIREARMS ARE WIDESPREAD IN COLORADO & THE U.S.



OF COLORADO
adults live in a home with a firearm.



OF U.S. ADULTS
live in a home with a firearm.

MISSION

To use collaboration, research, and education to prevent all types of firearm-related injuries, deaths, and other harms in our homes and communities.

VISION

Create a future without firearm-related injuries, deaths, or other harms.

VALUES

Respect for diversity and a consideration of a range of views



Engagement of impacted communities and those with lived experiences



Recognition of a common goal of health and security



OUR CORE AREAS



COLLABORATION

Our vision is only possible through partnership with impacted communities, those with lived experiences, and diverse networks committed to preventing firearm-related injury and death.



EDUCATION & MENTORSHIP

Outstanding education is needed to disseminate promising, effective approaches among affected communities, policy makers, front-line gatekeepers, and the public. Education and mentorship also strengthen and expand the next generation of firearm-injury prevention researchers, practitioners, and professionals.



RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Action-oriented, innovative research, including evaluation, supports the development and dissemination of effective, acceptable approaches to the prevention of firearm-related injury, death, and other harms.

An Overview of Our Inaugural Year

The Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative officially launched in April 2023 with a \$4.5 million commitment from the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

School of Medicine leadership saw the potential of the expertise already present on the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, and we are proud to report on how we have turned that potential into momentum during our first year.

Key Accomplishments



ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH

Hired additional staff and built organizational infrastructure



NEW DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

Administered Colorado's first-ever state representative survey on firearm perceptions and beliefs



NATIONAL REPUTATION

Further established CU Anschutz as a national leader in firearm injury prevention



MENTEE SUPPORT

Developed resources and networks to support students and early career professionals



EXPANDED REACH

Expanded outreach & partnership-building capacity, and increased technical assistance to Colorado and national organizations, clinicians, and government agencies



INVESTIGATOR SUPPORT

Built structures to support investigators interested in advancing the field of firearm injury prevention

OUR MOMENTUM IN NUMBERS

↑ **\$12.4m**

New research funding
awarded to FIPI faculty

↑ **37**

Academic manuscripts
published in peer-
reviewed journals

↑ **57**

Presentations
at local, state, and
national conferences

↑ **35**

**Presentations and
lectures** provided to
the University of
Colorado community

↑ **50**

**Organizations across
the U.S.**
who sought our
support and expertise

↑ **56**

Media mentions
including interviews
with NPR, PBS
Newshour, TIME, and
The Trace

↑ **455**

Newsletter subscribers
who received our monthly
communications

↑ **308**

Webinar participants
across seven FIPI-
hosted events

↑ **298**

New LinkedIn
followers gained

↑ **1,433**

Website visitors from
25 countries

> Collaboration, Partnership, & Outreach



As an initiative, we shape all that we do around our commitment to be a trusted community and national resource for firearms-related injury prevention research and solutions.

Throughout the preceding year, we established and cultivated partnerships with impacted communities, multi-disciplinary organizations and professionals, peer academic institutions, and governmental agencies.

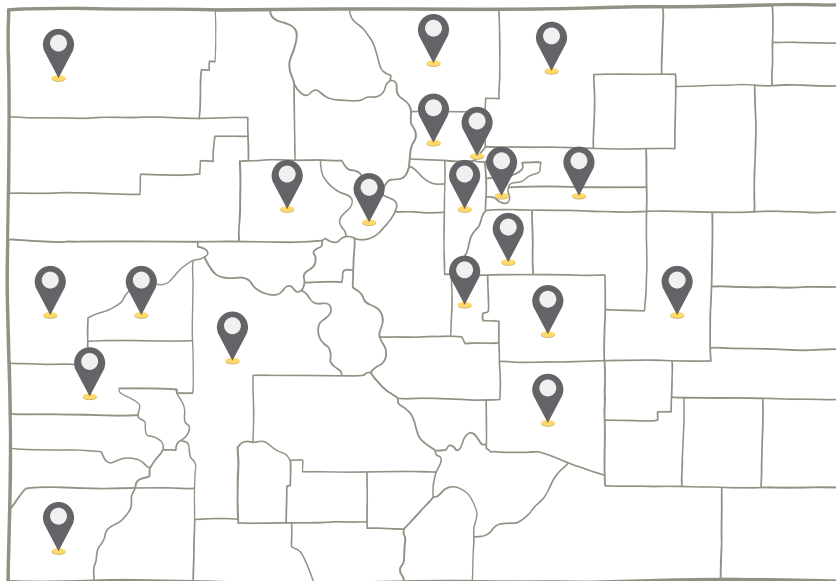
Our collaboration with partners and diverse networks towards a collective goal of protecting our homes and communities from the adverse effects of firearm-related injuries serves as the cornerstone of our work.

COLLABORATING ACROSS COLORADO

Colorado is our home and our community, making our statewide efforts to build collaboration and collective momentum especially important to us. Through strategic partnerships, community engagement, and outreach initiatives, we have worked tirelessly to address the diverse needs and challenges facing Colorado communities so that, as a state, we can reduce all types of firearm-related harms. Over the past year, we have grown our efforts to learn from and support Coloradans from all corners of the state.

Since our launch in April 2023, we have partnered with organizations in 20 counties across Colorado. This includes FIPI representation at 21 events and the provision of FIPI support and expertise to over 50 organizations.

“
Because we approach this work from an apolitical position, FIPI has the unique ability to cultivate statewide collaboration and diverse partnerships, united in a shared purpose. It's exciting to see such innovation bring together research and community expertise to identify relevant solutions.
Re Gupta-Fitzgerald
*Collaboration & Partnerships Coordinator
 Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative*



INTRODUCING OUR FACULTY AFFILIATE NETWORK

To continue collective momentum and to support development and dissemination of innovative approaches to firearm injury prevention, FIPI has established a network of affiliated faculty from across the University of Colorado system. Members range from new and early career faculty to established and senior researchers spanning academic departments and whose work focuses on populations ranging from children to older adults and on settings from hospitals to local businesses.

FIPI is thrilled to support this group in advancing the field and to learn from their work and experience. Together, this group will open doors to new opportunities and further build CU's reputation as a trusted leader in firearm injury prevention.

> **26** FACULTY MEMBERS > **3** CAMPUSES

pediatrics **emergency medicine** **psychiatry**
 neurology **public health** **hospital medicine**
 surgery **behavioral science** **family medicine** **physical medicine**
 criminology **cardiology** **sociology**

SECURE STORAGE EDUCATION WITH COLORADO FIREARM OWNERS

FIPI regularly attends gun shows across the state to raise awareness, provide education, and promote secure storage among firearm-owning communities. During these events, team members and volunteers collect anonymous questionnaires from attendees interested in receiving a free locking device. These questionnaires allow for individualized, one-on-one conversations about the effectiveness of secure storage in preventing firearm suicide, other firearm injuries, and theft.

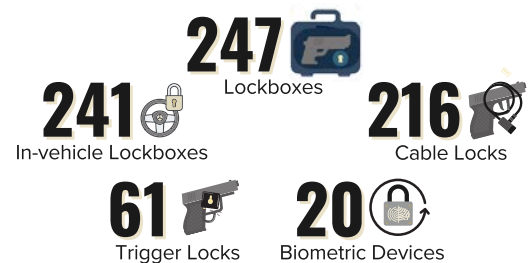
Suicide remains the leading cause of fatal firearm injury in Colorado, with three firearm suicides occurring for every one firearm homicide or accidental death. The general public may not know about the prevalence of suicide, nor that simple preventative behaviors, such as storing firearms with locking devices, can save lives. Given the high lethality of firearms, access - particularly during times of crisis - increases the risk of death.

In our first year of attending these events, we distributed 785 total locking devices to event attendees, the majority of which were lock boxes. Our decision to provide lockboxes was informed by recent research conducted by FIPI affiliates and staff, which made a unique contribution to the field by seeking to understand preferences for different locking device types among firearm owners.

“ I believe that honest and respectful conversations, particularly with a fellow gun owner, can be incredibly powerful in changing beliefs and behaviors...we all have the shared goal of saving lives and protecting people.

Matt Wetenkamp
*Collaboration & Partnerships Coordinator
 Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative*

- > **6** gun shows attended
- > **742** individual conversations with event attendees about the importance of secure storage
- > **785** locking devices distributed, including:



FIPI staff at a local gun show



BUILDING AN ACADEMIC-STATE PARTNERSHIP FOR FIREARM INJURY PREVENTION IN COLORADO

The Colorado Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP), created in 2022 and housed within the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, is tasked with coordinating and promoting effective strategies to reduce firearm injuries, deaths, and related traumas in Colorado.

The complementary nature of OGVP’s and the university’s areas of expertise, influence, and mission led to a partnership between OGVP and faculty and staff from FIPI and the Injury and Violence Prevention Center in the Colorado School of Public Health.

This partnership has been rooted in a public health approach, community engagement, and equity since its inception.

Launching the Colorado Gun Violence Prevention Resource Bank

The launch of Colorado’s first-ever information hub on firearm injury and death in 2024 marked a milestone accomplishment of the partnership.

The Colorado Gun Violence Resource Bank functions as a central repository for research and data, catering to a wide spectrum of users, including the public. Its initial iteration, drafted and prepared by FIPI faculty and staff, compiled a wealth of information and resources including:

- The Colorado Firearm Data Dashboard
- A list of Colorado firearm laws and regulations
- Colorado-specific trends in firearm injuries and deaths
- Summaries of research-informed prevention approaches
- A series of one-pagers addressing frequently asked questions on various firearm topics

Additionally, through this academic-state partnership, FIPI:



Initiated efforts to research implementation of the state’s Secure Storage and Lost and Stolen Firearms laws



Supported the OGVP with evaluation of its programs



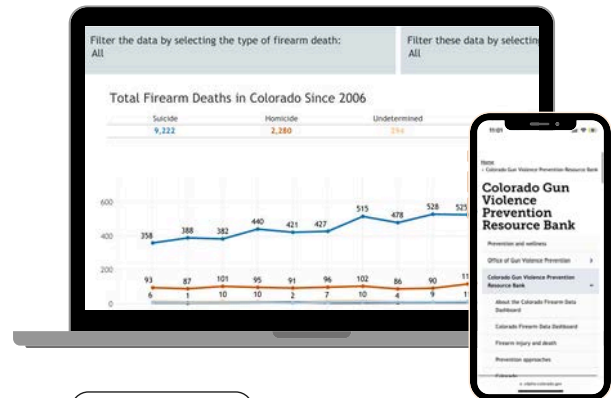
Provided technical assistance to the OGVP’s Gun Violence Prevention Grant Program grantees



Supported statewide community outreach efforts



Administered Colorado’s first state-representative survey on firearm injury prevention



Scan or Screenshot



View the Resource Bank Here

“

This resource bank will prove invaluable to anyone interested in being part of the solution and working to prevent firearm-related harms within their own community.

Jonathan McMillan

Former Director

Colorado Office of Gun Violence Prevention

PARTNERING WITH THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION'S ONLY HOSPITAL-BASED VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

At-risk Intervention and Mentoring (AIM) was established as part of Denver Youth Program's Gang Rescue and Support Project (GRASP), first in partnership with Denver Health (2010) and now with UHealth (2020) and Children's Hospital of Colorado (2023).

The AIM team, with support from FIPI faculty, is at the forefront of establishing and disseminating best practices for hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIPs). AIM's success is the direct result of its outreach workers. They serve as a team of credible messengers who use their lived experiences, certification as Violence Prevention Professionals (VPPs), and training from the National Comadres Network to implement trauma-informed and culturally responsive care. Additionally, AIM is an active member and model site for the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI), the national network of HVIPs.

Looking forward, Denver Youth Program will open the Respect Empowerment Accountability Community Healing (REACH) clinic in early 2024, where AIM, GRASP, and other Denver Youth Program initiatives will provide holistic services to heal the physical, mental, and emotional needs of their clients and the community.

“
Because of the support and someone just being there...getting that confidence of stepping outside of my comfort zone and trying to do something different...you don't really see that where we come from...surrounded by, you know, so much violence...you're not expected to go past even high school.
AIM client

AIM uses a multi-disciplinary, evidence-based public health approach to serve victims of community violence and bridge the gap between the healthcare system and the community.

AFTER A VIOLENT INCIDENT, AIM:



Responds to victims in the hospital at the bedside



Helps patients navigate the healthcare experience and communicate with loved ones



Works to prevent retaliation in the community

AFTER DISCHARGE, AIM:



Provides individualized mentorship and intensive case management to address all the social determinants of health and stop the cycle of violence

760 INDIVIDUALS SERVED > 44 TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE TRAININGS > 30 MONTHLY HEALING CIRCLES FOR CLINICIANS



VPPs with FIPI faculty, staff, and students at the 2023 HAVI conference

BROADENING OUR IMPACT THROUGH NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Our commitment to building collaborative networks does not stop at state boundaries. This past year we were proud to work alongside partners and impacted communities across the country, all with a goal of preventing firearm-related injuries and harms and open to finding solutions despite differences in perspectives and experiences.

From providing technical assistance and capacity-building support to organizations across nine states to leading efforts to bring together diverse stakeholders to generate innovative solutions and ideas around a common interest, we've established ourselves as a key leader in national efforts to reduce firearm harms across the country.

ENCOURAGING CLINICIAN INVOLVEMENT IN FIREARM INJURY PREVENTION

Clinicians play an important role in firearm injury prevention. This includes direct counseling and/or education to patients and families about secure storage and reducing access to firearms particularly for children, adolescents, adults with suicide risk, and older adults with cognitive impairment. For youth and young adults with risk of intimate partner violence or other interpersonal violence, clinicians also play a role in identifying risk and referring to appropriate resources.

In recent years, there has been a growing call for clinicians to be engaged in respectful, context-appropriate counseling and intervention with patients to prevent firearm injuries, and FIPI has supported that call. FIPI faculty and staff engage and lead medical, nursing, and public health organizations, including:

- Academy of Forensic Nursing
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American College of Emergency Physicians
- American College of Surgeons
- American Medical Association
- Veterans Health Administration
- Health Alliance for Violence Intervention
- Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research
- Trauma Center Association of America

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION



In Fall 2023, FIPI Founding Director Emmy Betz, MD, MPH, was elected to the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), highlighting her dedication to firearm injury prevention, community engagement, innovative research, and her patients. She is the sixth faculty member from the CU School of Medicine to receive the honor. This prestigious recognition underscores her significant contributions to medicine and public health as both an emergency physician and public health researcher. It also highlights her ongoing commitment to and passion for science, partnership, and engagement of impacted communities.

In line with this commitment, she continues to support national efforts to expand effective approaches to firearm injury prevention. Notably, she serves as the co-chair for the education workgroup of the new Healthcare Coalition for Firearm Injury Prevention, which brings together dozens of health professional organizations to consolidate educational resources and find common approaches to support patient health and reduce firearm harms.

“

I try to stay aware of my own perspectives and biases and to be open to learning, but also ready to teach. The burden of firearm injury and death in the United States is enormous and can feel impossible to tackle given the complexity of the issues and the political divisiveness. But there's so much we can do when we work together by keeping a common goal in sight.

Emmy Betz, MD, MPH

Founding Director

Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative

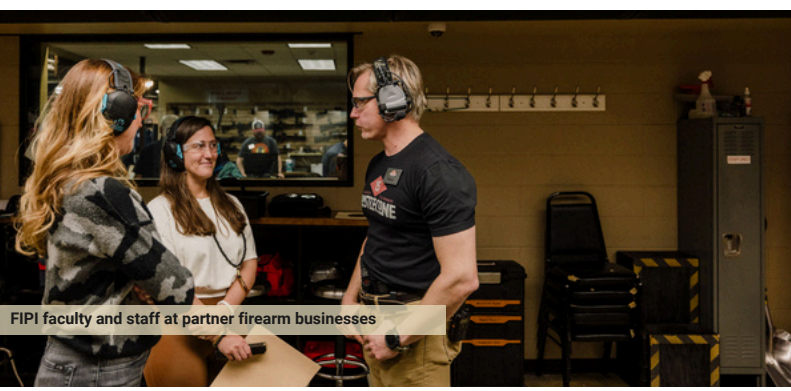


FIPI with community partners based in Missouri

SUPPORTING FIREARM INDUSTRY LEADERS ACROSS THE U.S.

Firearm retailers, shooting ranges, training centers, and other businesses are trusted voices among communities of firearm owners, making them important leaders in the prevention of firearm injuries and deaths. Research supports their potential to influence change, especially as it relates to promoting responsible firearm ownership and secure firearm storage.

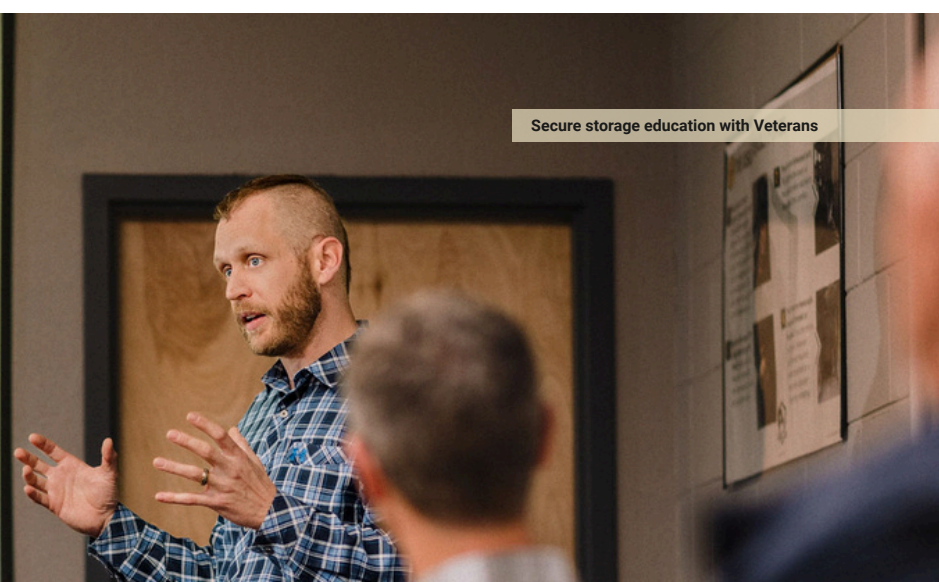
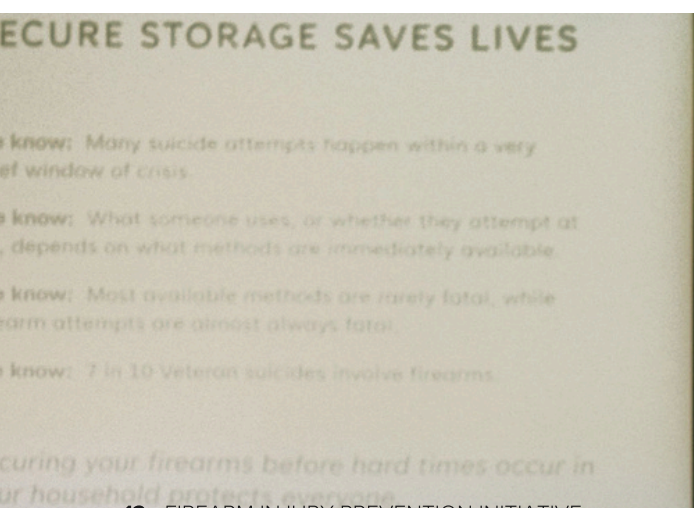
However, we know from partnering with such businesses that there are barriers and ongoing challenges that impact their ability to convert their desire to support their community into effective, sustainable business practices. To support businesses in developing and integrating programs and/or services which encourage secure storage, both at home and on-site, FIPI is excited to now offer regular, virtual "office hours." Twice a month, a team of firearm retail and safety, secure storage, and suicide prevention experts is available to answer questions from and lead discussions with any firearm business owner or operator interested in providing secure storage education or services to customers. We hope this informal setting facilitates opportunities for firearm business to regularly connect, share resources, and support one another in providing services and education to customers and communities throughout the U.S.



FIPI faculty and staff at partner firearm businesses

“ I'm excited to share more with others about what I have learned in my years as an owner of a small business in the firearms industry and as someone who has been actively involved in firearm suicide and injury prevention. We've spent a lot of time fine-tuning processes and working on customer communication surrounding secure storage education and services, and we've seen tangible benefits for our business and for the community we serve.

Jacquelyn Clark
Co-owner of Bristlecone Shooting, Training, & Retail Center
Firearms Industry Partnership Coordinator
University of Colorado School of Medicine



Secure storage education with Veterans

“

Working in partnership with a university gives us an extra bonus. Your time is dedicated to this and you have expertise in the area of firearm injury and violence. You bring a lot of credibility because our people trust in universities and their programs.

Community partner

Hand in Hand Multicultural Center

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY-LED PREVENTION IN MISSOURI

With support from the Missouri Foundation for Health, FIPI serves as an academic partner to two community organizations in Missouri; Hand in Hand Multicultural Center in Springfield and Freeman Health Systems in Joplin. As academic partners, FIPI provides content and methodological expertise to support these organizations in installing and advancing locally informed efforts to address firearm-related harms in their communities.

This past year, FIPI faculty and project team members facilitated 12 in-person and virtual conversations with the community groups to hear and understand perspectives from over 100 community members. The conversations were focused on local firearm culture, firearm-related harms, injury, and potential opportunities to prevent these harms and injuries locally.

THE SECOND ANNUAL MILITARY FIREARM SUICIDE PREVENTION SUMMIT

In September 2023, FIPI hosted the second national summit focused on reducing firearm suicide deaths among U.S. military service members and their families. The event convenes high-level military leaders from the Department of Defense and civilian partners nationwide to discuss current research, programmatic and research needs, creative solutions, and opportunities for synergy across all partner organizations.

The 2023 summit focused on fostering military-civilian partnerships, which prompted FIPI to bring new voices into the conversation, including firearm industry leaders, community organizations, and leaders from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs who share the commitment to saving lives. FIPI co-hosts this event with the CU Anschutz Center for Combat Medicine and Battlefield Research.

“

We need to do a better job at elevating, in our research, the voices of those in the firearm community and those impacted by firearm suicide. Through the focus of this year’s summit on fostering military-civilian partnerships, we are poised to conduct more impactful research to address firearm suicide in the military.

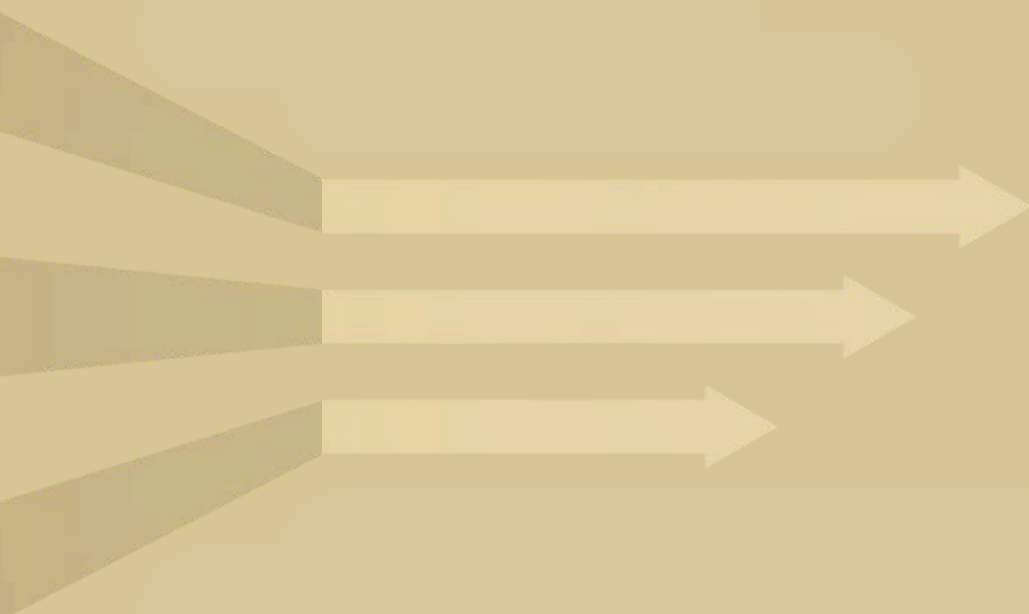
Ian Stanley, PhD

*Military and Veteran Lead
Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative*

2023 Military Firearm Suicide Prevention Summit



> Education & Mentorship



Over the past decade, firearm injury prevention has witnessed a substantial nationwide increase in funding and an increasing desire to advance prevention efforts across various sectors, including research, healthcare, and public health.

With national experts in firearm injury prevention research, education, and clinical care, FIPI is dedicated to accelerating these efforts through guidance, training, and support for the next generation of academic, clinical, and community leaders. Over the last year, we have focused on developing training initiatives and mentorship programs to empower aspiring individuals in their respective fields to lead firearm injury prevention efforts.

MENTORING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FIREARM INJURY PREVENTION RESEARCHERS

The momentum FIPI generates as a national research leader will be carried forward by the next generation of firearm injury prevention researchers, making efforts to educate, train, and support CU students and early career investigators a key element of our mission. Through hands-on experience, tailored guidance, and opportunities for professional development, FIPI aims to foster a supportive environment where emerging passions and talents can thrive and grow.

Our mentorship efforts over the past year focused on developing opportunities to equip students, trainees, and early career professionals with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in their careers and advance the field.

These ongoing efforts include developing mentorship relationships between FIPI faculty and students, hosting regular works-in-progress meetings, establishing early career faculty development seminars, and initiating a program to support medical students completing their Mentored Scholarly Activities (MSA) in the CU School of Medicine. FIPI mentees involved in these efforts have presented academic works at local and national academic conferences, authored high-impact manuscripts, been recognized for their early contributions to the field, and successfully obtained research funding from national agencies and local foundations.

“

There are a lot of obstacles that students, trainees, and early career faculty face when they're thinking about trying out research or other types of academic work for the first time. We know this because we were once there too. At FIPI, we've developed resources and mentorship infrastructure to specifically address those challenges and hopefully recruit the next generation of firearm injury scholars here at home.

Joe Simonetti, MD, MPH

*Director of Mentorship & Education
Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative*



Leslie Barnard, MPH, DrPH(c) presenting the at 2023 Colorado School of Public Health Research Exchange



FIPI staff, faculty, and students at the 2023 Colorado Public Health Roundtable on Firearm-Related Violence Prevention



Ian Stanley, PhD wins first place in the 2023 MHSRS Young Investigators Competition



STUDENT MENTORSHIP

This year, FIPI has established infrastructure to identify and support CU students interested in exploring the field of firearm injury prevention. This support includes matching their interest and skillset with FIPI faculty and ongoing research projects to advance their experience in the field. Fourteen students were matched with FIPI faculty and research projects, including one local high school student, one undergraduate student, and 12 graduate and professional students.

Tiffany Maksimuk

MD Program, University of Colorado School of Medicine



"I have been so lucky to be involved with the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative! My mentor and the FIPI team have taught me so much about becoming a researcher and have supported me in building my research and communication skills every step of the way. It is an honor to get to work with and be inspired by such passionate, dedicated people."

Ginny McCarthy, MPH, MDiv, DrPH(c)

Department of Community & Behavioral Health, Colorado School of Public Health



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- Recipient, Hoffman Firearm Injury & Violence Prevention Scholarship (2023-2024 & 2021-2022)
- Recipient, Rotary Club Public Health Award
- Recipient, Colorado School of Public Health Injury & Violence Prevention Center Student Research Award

"I value diverse perspectives and believe that common ground exists in even the most challenging of circumstances. The ability to invite and prioritize a diversity of perspectives is a privilege and a responsibility of all who hope to reduce firearm injury, and it is a gift to be working with the FIPI team and the broad reach of partnerships that they brings to this work."

Leslie Barnard, MPH, DrPH(c)

Department of Epidemiology, Colorado School of Public Health



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- Recipient, Hoffman Firearm Injury & Violence Prevention Scholarship (2023-2024 & 2021-2022)
- Student Speaker, 2023 Society for the Advancement of Violence and Injury Research Annual Conference
- Top Doctoral Student/Candidate Poster, 2023 Colorado School of Public Health Research Exchange

"The mentorship that I have received being a student working with FIPI has been absolutely invaluable. The connections I have been able to make and opportunities I have been given to develop my skills is extraordinary and has been a highlight of my doctoral experience."

EARLY CAREER MENTORSHIP

FIPI is proud to support early-career researchers, who are pivotal in advancing our mission now and into the future, and who bring diverse perspectives, innovative ideas, and unwavering dedication to our work. Through group meetings and opportunities for peer and senior mentoring, our mentees receive guidance on research projects, grant submissions, and community-engaged work. Witnessing their professional growth and contributions is a source of great pride and inspiration for our organization.

Rachel Kennedy, PhD, MSN, MPH, RN

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Emergency Medicine, CU School of Medicine



RESEARCH INTERESTS

Advocating for survivors of intimate partner and domestic violence, developing translational resources for firearm violence prevention, and using community-engaged methods to give voice to those most impacted by violence

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Forensic Nurse Examiner, University of Colorado Hospital
- Member, Academy of Forensic Nursing

"Working with FIPI has opened up a world of exciting, diverse, and ever-evolving opportunities to expand my own perspective and research, connect with an inspiring network of community and professional leaders, and be a part of a violence prevention initiative that has potential for effective, sustainable change."

Laura Vargas PhD, LMSW, MPA

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, CU School of Medicine



RESEARCH INTERESTS

Mental health impacts of firearm related traumatic exposure among immigrants and Latinx populations, firearm-related violence in Latin America and its links to migration, and trafficking of firearms to Latin America

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Career Development Award, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (2022-2027)
- Advisor, Ad Council Issue Advisory Council for Gun Violence Prevention
- Firearm-Related Harms Equity and Justice Award, 2023 National Research Conference for the Prevention of Firearm-Related Harms

"My work centers collaboration with the immigrant community from Latin America and the Caribbean to raise awareness and advance education about the tremendous toll firearm-related violence has on this community. Through my research I seek to ameliorate the mental health burden and health disparities experienced in this community."

Maya Haasz, MD

Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, CU School of Medicine



RESEARCH INTERESTS

Lethal means safety planning with teens and pediatric firearm injury epidemiology

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Career Development Award, Eunice Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2024-2029)
- Chair, Children's Hospital Colorado Firearm Injury Prevention Working Group
- Executive Member, American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Injury, Violence, and Poisoning Prevention
- Secretary, American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado chapter

"I am committed to developing initiatives that decrease pediatric firearm injury and FIPI has provided me with the resources to make that possible. The mentorship, networking, and peer relationships have been invaluable."

ADVANCING EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE THROUGH EDUCATION

In alignment with our values and commitment to a public health approach to firearm injury prevention, we believe FIPI's research contribution should not end at publishing manuscripts. Reducing the burden of firearm injury in the United States requires that we have influence beyond the pages of academic journals. With this in mind, FIPI efforts emphasize educating health science students and practitioners across fields on why and how to integrate evidence-based approaches into practice settings.

17 LECTURES TO CLINICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON CAMPUS

In nearly every facet of clinical care provided at CU Anschutz - from pediatric and psychiatry clinics to trauma bays - clinicians are working to identify and mitigate firearm injury risk factors and manage the devastating impact of firearm-related injuries. FIPI faculty contribute to the installation of evidence-based practices in these spaces, and often respond to departmental requests for training, resources, and implementation support. FIPI faculty also continually advocate for the inclusion of firearm injury prevention topics in standard curriculum for CU Anschutz programs, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, to equip the next generation of clinicians with the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective prevention leaders.

30 TRAININGS AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PROVIDED TO CLINICIANS AND PRACTITIONERS IN COLORADO

FIPI faculty and staff provide training and technical assistance to organizations and programs across Colorado that offer critical services aimed at preventing firearm injuries and caring for individuals and families in the aftermath of violence. This past year, FIPI supported over 50 organizations in Colorado, including clinical programs, public health agencies, non-profits, student groups, and community-based organizations.

30 TRAININGS AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PROVIDED NATIONALLY

The FIPI educational mission is not limited to local and state efforts. As national leaders in firearm injury prevention, we aim to provide infrastructure and opportunities to build collaboration and accelerate prevention efforts across the country. With that in mind, we offer training and technical assistance to a variety of organizations outside of Colorado.



FIPI convenes practitioners and researchers to identify opportunities for synergy towards common goals



Supporting local impacted communities



Community secure storage education



ANNOUNCING THE FIP-LEAD PROGRAM

Through FIPI’s efforts to support Colorado-based partner organizations, practitioners, and individuals over the past year, we heard a common theme across professional sectors:

Coloradans want to help prevent firearm-related injuries, and are ready to contribute to collaborative efforts that focus on the common desire to save lives.

In response, FIPI is developing the Firearm Injury Prevention Leadership Engagement and Development (FIP-LEAD) program, which will launch in 2024. FIP-LEAD is designed to equip multi-sector leaders in Colorado with the knowledge and skills to advance and engage in collaborative, evidence-based, and locally-driven prevention of firearm injuries, deaths, and other harms.

As a leadership training opportunity for individuals with formal or informal influence in their organizations and communities, FIP-LEAD will give participants an understanding of the epidemiology of firearm injuries, effective prevention and intervention approaches, and skills to lead efforts rooted in respect, collaboration, and cultural responsiveness. Each FIP-LEAD offering will be led by FIPI faculty and staff and tailored to professional sectors such as healthcare and K-12 education.

“

Firearm injury is a complex, multi-faceted problem that cannot be solved with one single solution. There is a role for everyone. True prevention requires action and leadership across a diversity of sectors, all utilizing their unique skills, talents, and influence to save lives.

Jessica Buck-Atkinson, MPH
Program Director
Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative

OUR WEBINAR SERIES

A cornerstone of our education efforts is our nationally-attended webinar series. Through our webinars, we bring together experts from a variety of fields and backgrounds to share best practices and discuss emerging topics in the field. Consistent with our values, the series has a special emphasis on novel, cross-sector collaborative approaches to firearm injury prevention.



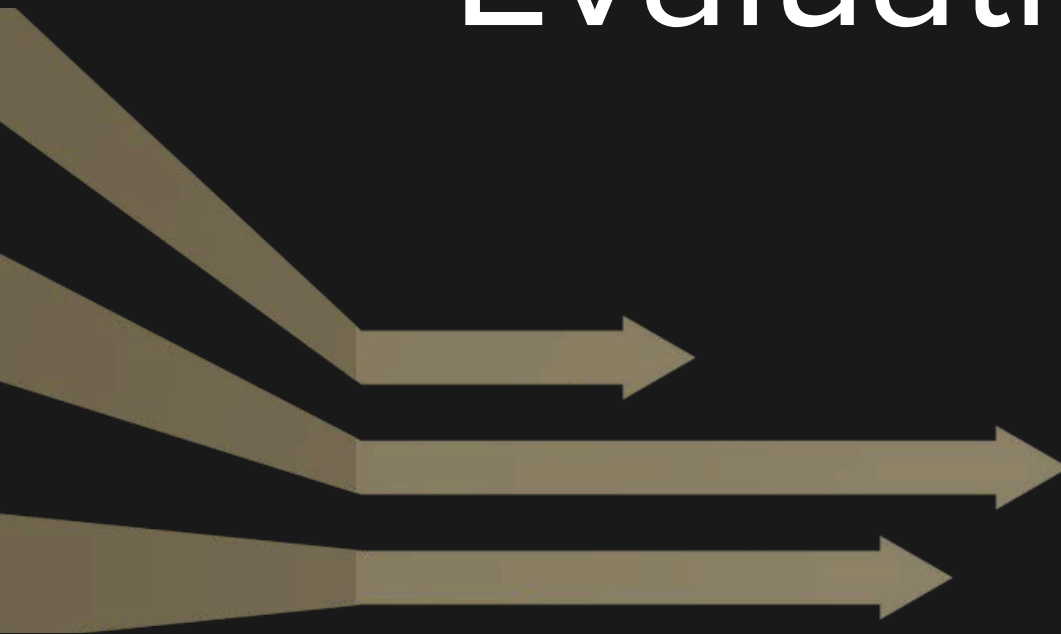
308
WEBINAR
ATTENDEES



408
RECORDED
WEBINAR VIEWS

- A Public Health Approach to Firearm Injury Prevention: A Focus on Community Violence
- Findings from the Inaugural Colorado Firearm Injury Prevention Survey
- Pause to Protect: A New Way for Firearm Businesses to Prevent Firearm Injury and Death
- Evidence-Informed Approaches to Preventing School Gun Violence
- Participatory Action Research to Inform a Social-Ecological Model of Gun-Related Attitudes, Behaviors, and Practices
- A Public Health Approach to Firearm Injury Prevention: A Focus on Firearm Suicide
- Understanding the Intersection of Threats, Self-protection, and Firearm Ownership

› Research & Evaluation



FIPI grew from a foundation of years of research conducted by CU Anschutz faculty members committed to using their areas of expertise to prevent firearm injuries, deaths, and related harms across the lifespan. Their contributions to the field have long made CU Anschutz a key institution influencing the national research agenda and expanding its knowledge base. FIPI now provides formal infrastructure and support for the expansion of firearm injury prevention research across the CU system and accelerates efforts to disseminate CU-based research on a local, state, and national scale.

Throughout our first year, we have focused on advancing ongoing research, jumpstarting new research projects, supporting faculty in obtaining research funds from various sources, enhancing dissemination efforts, and building networks for multi-disciplinary and multi-location collaboration.

RESEARCH IMPACT

Our origins, paired with the collective momentum we generated throughout our first year, continue to make us a leading national research program with specialized expertise in:



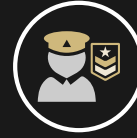
SECURE STORAGE



FIREARM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



FIREARM SUICIDE PREVENTION



INTERVENTIONS WITH MILITARY POPULATIONS



E-HEALTH INTERVENTIONS



CLINICAL INTERVENTIONS



FIREARM SAFETY ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

\$12.4m

new research funding obtained

80

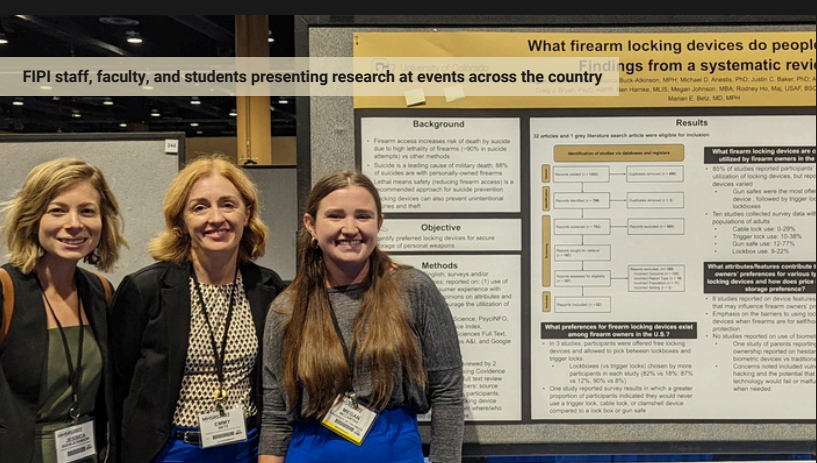
presentations delivered at **42** conferences across the U.S. and abroad

37

publications in peer reviewed journals, including **19** led by FIPI researchers

71

co-authoring institutions in which we partnered with on publications



NATIONAL EXPERTS COMMITTED TO COLORADO

While our work and influence extend across the U.S., we have an unwavering commitment to Colorado and to addressing firearm-related injuries that directly impact those closest to us. Our Colorado-focused research includes building firearm injury prevention data infrastructure in the state, understanding how state firearm policies are being used, and building interventions and resources to support our partners serving Coloradans alongside us.

UNDERSTANDING COLORADO'S EXTREME RISK PROTECTION ORDER LAW

Akin to many approaches aimed at reducing firearm injury and death, Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) laws are dynamic and can be controversial. Once implemented, legal, social, and political circumstances can change who uses ERPOs, how they are used, and what actions law enforcement and judges can take with them. Since Colorado's ERPO law went into effect in 2020, FIPI has developed and maintained a database to track the law's use. This database supports efforts to understand not only how Coloradans are using ERPOs, but to examine how the legal, social, and political contexts specific to the state continues to shape the law's effectiveness in preventing firearm-related injury and death.

FIPI's work in this area has resulted in numerous publications and presentations, and has served as a catalyst for strong partnerships in Colorado and across the U.S. Our Colorado partners come to us with practical needs, giving FIPI the opportunity to collaborate in the identification and promotion of efforts to improve the effectiveness, fairness, and implementation of the ERPO law. More broadly, it gives FIPI the opportunity to work on evidence-informed and non-partisan solutions for improving the safety of our communities.

“ We want to build and maintain trust with communities across the state, and that starts with understanding their standpoint and usage of firearm laws...We must reiterate the importance of preserving a person's rights and using the ERPO as a last resort, only if absolutely necessary.

Chris Knoepke, PhD, MSW, LCSW
Law Enforcement Lead
Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative

Secure storage education with the CU Anschutz community



FIPI faculty and students co-presenting with community partners



INTRODUCING THE COLORADO FIREARM INJURY PREVENTION SURVEY

Funder: Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

In 2023, FIPI conducted the first-ever state-representative survey of Coloradans' beliefs and perceptions about firearm injury risk, ownership, storage, and prevention opportunities. The Colorado Firearm Injury Prevention Survey (COFIPS) will be an annual FIPI project, providing invaluable data to inform ongoing firearm injury prevention strategies and advancing the understanding of firearm-related topics in Colorado.

The COFIPS data tells a story of Coloradans' diverse relationships and experiences with firearms, which can help guide efforts to prevent firearm-related injuries and deaths in our homes and communities both statewide and locally. It is one of only a few state-representative surveys on this topic across the country.

In addition to annual administration of the survey, FIPI is committed to supporting efforts to release and share the results with communities across Colorado and beyond. In addition to publishing results in academic journals, our staff and faculty will make the data available, as well as accessible, to the public through the provision of topic-specific data briefs, webinars, and technical support regarding understanding and utilizing the data. These resources, and more, can be accessed online.



“ These data help demonstrate the diverse backgrounds, opinions, and perspectives of Coloradans in a frontier state where many were raised with or have access to firearms.

This inaugural survey shows Colorado's commitment to building out data infrastructure on the perception of firearms and resonates with FIPI's approach to conduct collaborative work with impacted communities. We have to listen to what Coloradans think, want, and need in order to prevent firearm-involved injuries and deaths.

Erin Kelly, DrPH, MA
 Director of Research & Evaluation
 Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative

COFIPS collects information across four main categories:



firearm culture and access



perceptions and concerns about firearm injury



attitudes towards and knowledge of prevention approaches, including policies



firearm safety and storage behaviors



Scan or Screenshot



View
COFIPS.org
 Here

RESEARCH FOCUSED ON PRACTICE

True to our focus areas and values, we believe impactful research must extend beyond academic realms to directly inform and advance real-world solutions. The relationship between research and practice is symbiotic and only through that relationship can we achieve our mission. With that in mind, we are proud of our growing research portfolio that values both rigor and relevance, and intentionally focuses on practical application, actionable tools, and real-world implementation.

PAUSE TO PROTECT

A NEW WAY FOR FIREARM BUSINESSES TO PREVENT FIREARM INJURY

Funder: U.S. Department of Defense

Pause to Protect (P2P) is an innovative, voluntary program that empowers firearm businesses to take easy steps to help prevent accidents, theft, suicide, and other violence involving personally-owned firearms. Led by FIPI faculty, the P2P team is developing networks of civilian firearm businesses surrounding selected military installations in the U.S. to implement the program.

P2P is rooted in best practices learned from “gun shop projects,” secure firearm storage promotion, and firearm storage map efforts. It offers flexible participation options for firearm businesses to provide education, outreach, and secure firearm storage options to their local military community, including service members, families, and civilian employees.

To encourage widespread usage past study communities, the team launched an online, accessible hub of resources that can be used by firearm businesses anywhere. The hub includes tested standard operating procedures and guidance for business operators and staff on how to talk to customers about secure storage. It also hosts a nationwide map of firearm businesses willing to consider community requests for temporary, voluntary on-site firearm storage, created in partnership with the organization Pierce’s Pledge. The accessibility of these materials allows businesses and firearm owners to choose options that best fit their needs so they can engage in promoting secure storage and prevent firearm injury or death.



Scan or Screenshot



View Pause to Protect Here



“

I find value in providing a service like this. I have personally been affected by suicide, so any way to give back to the community is important. Being a Veteran I always try and find a way to support that community in any way I can. Also, our relationship with the base that is pretty much right next door is important – a lot of those community members are our customers.

Participating business owner



FIPI leadership at the 2023 National Research Conference for the Prevention of Firearm Related Harms



PREVENTING FIREARM INJURY ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Funder: National Institute on Aging

Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (ADRD) causes changes in the brain, meaning that even the most responsible and skilled person may no longer be safe around firearms. With this in mind, FIPI faculty developed Safety in Dementia (SiD), an online educational resource that provides caregivers, including family members or friends of persons with dementia, with information to identify solutions that work best for their unique situation and maximize safety in their home.

The project team is leading the first-ever randomized trial of a firearm safety decision aid for ADRD caregivers, which seeks to study the effectiveness of SiD in supporting caregiver decision-making and behaviors regarding firearm access in the home of persons with ADRD.

In early 2024, the project team achieved their goal of enrolling 500 caregivers from across the country. Caregiver participation in the study sheds light on SiD's innovative nature and the need for continued research to understand how to best support older adults and their caretakers with decisions regarding firearm access.

“
If there was a way for me to have gotten the [SiD] information sooner, I would've been a whole lot less stressed.
Caregiver trial participant

INTRODUCING THE FIREARM INJURY PREVENTION INITIATIVE RESEARCH AWARD PROGRAM

Rooted in our commitments to both advance the field of firearm injury prevention and support the research career trajectories of FIPI affiliate faculty members, FIPI launched the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative Research Award Program in early 2024.

The program, which is open to University of Colorado affiliates and students on a quarterly basis, provides pilot or supplement funding to conduct research, disseminate findings to affected populations, and/or advance the attainment of subsequent external research funding.

> 2024 Funded Projects



Transformative Voices Transform Violence Prevention: Violence Prevention Professional Engagement in Qualitative Inquiry

PI: Virginia McCarthy, MPH, MDiv, DrPH(c)

Description: This project will engage violence prevention professionals (VPPs) in qualitative coding of secondary and primary interviews with individuals involved in community violence intervention efforts in the Denver Metro area. VPP-engagement will inform program implementation and effectiveness measures for a regional hospital-based violence intervention program.



Evaluating Routine Care Template Changes to Increase Health Care Provider Discussion of Firearm Injury Prevention

PI: Eric Sigel, MD

Description: This project will assess whether updates to electronic medical charts can enhance the frequency and quality of conversations between healthcare providers and patients regarding firearm injury prevention.

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> Collaboration Begins With Our Team

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IAN STANLEY, PHD
Military & Veteran Lead

CATHERINE VELOPULOS, MD
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SHALE WONG, MD, MSPH
Policy Lead

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The launch of the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative formally brought together educators, researchers, clinicians, and practitioners who were already individually passionate about and engaged in firearm injury prevention. As a collective, we have had an extraordinary first year full of growth, joy, and success and defined by energy, enthusiasm, and momentum. Looking to the future, we are committed to harnessing this momentum to drive further innovation and growth in our research, education, and collaboration.

We are excited to welcome new researchers to our campus and support their professional growth into independent investigators and leaders in the field. Simultaneously, we look forward to expanding FIPI's research portfolio to include new areas of expertise including intimate partner violence involving firearms. We also look forward to moving forward efforts cultivated within our first year, including the launch of the FIP-LEAD program, which aims to provide leadership training to diverse groups of professionals, from school leaders to clinicians to policymakers, with the goal of increasing evidence-based, collaborative work in firearm injury prevention.

And perhaps most importantly, we look forward to continuing our work with our partners and are excited for the new partners we will connect with around the common goal of preventing all types of firearm-related injuries, deaths, and other harms. Particularly in an era of political divisiveness, we find hope and stamina through our past, current, and future collective momentum. No one wants firearm-related injuries or deaths in their homes nor their communities. Only together are we poised to face the inevitable challenges and discover innovative solutions.

As we embrace the opportunities and challenges that await, we do so with a sense of shared purpose, determination, and the unwavering belief that together, we can create a safer and healthier future. The road ahead may be uphill but it is filled with promise, and our collective momentum will continue to propel us forward.

In Gratitude,
The FIPI Team



Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



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