

# Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative

Injury & Violence Prevention Center

Colorado School of Public Health \* University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

## FIREARM VIOLENCE IN COLORADO

Multiple mass shootings

~34% of Coloradans own firearms

Firearm death rate:

- 19<sup>th</sup> highest in US (all)

- 10<sup>th</sup> highest in US (suicide)

1999-2019: Nearly 13k deaths



76% suicide

20% homicide

## WORKING TOGETHER for a WAY FORWARD

New state Office of Gun Violence  
Prevention as potential partner

Existing local programs offer models



Nationally-recognized  
Colorado Firearm Safety  
Coalition

AIM (Hospital-based  
Violence Intervention  
Program)

## VARIED CAUSES, VARIED SOLUTIONS

Spectrum from upstream prevention  
to downstream treatment

Across population groups and ages

Need multi-pronged  
approach grounded in  
community partnership  
and with robust evaluation



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# PURPOSE

To coordinate, synergize, and stimulate collaborative approaches to firearm injury prevention in Colorado & the nation

# GOALS

Partnership and **COLLABORATION** with affected communities → optimizes impact of effective, acceptable approaches

**Action-oriented, innovative RESEARCH**, including policy and program evaluation → development and dissemination of evidence-based solutions

**Outstanding EDUCATION** and information → informs affected communities, policy makers, front-line gatekeepers, and public

**POLICY translation research and engagement** → Increases likelihood of effective policy engagement, development of evidence-based policies, and effective policy implementation



# VALUES

Recognition of a common goal of health and security

Respect for diversity and consideration of a range of views

Engagement of affected communities and those with lived experience

## WHY COLORADO?

High rates of firearm injury and death AND strong state culture of hunting, sport shooting, and firearm ownership

State has a reputation for innovative approaches for firearm injury prevention

No current firearm injury prevention center in the Rocky Mountain region

## WHY NOW?

The COVID pandemic and other events of 2020-21 brought gun sales to their highest level ever, with a large spike in first-time owners and a spike in violence, mass shootings, and suicide risk.

Dedicated federal funding for firearm research is available for the first time in decades – and CU researchers are helping lead this critically important research.

## WHY US?

Anschutz campus is state leader in medical and public health research and central hub for connection across campuses

Injury & Violence Prevention Center (joint SOM/CSPH) AND Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative have strong foundation and reputation for collaborative, impactful work

Our grounding in partnership and integration of views of affected communities (especially firearm owners) makes us unique in the US

## NOW is the time to grow the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative:

- ✓ To cement Colorado as a national leader in evidence-based, collaborative approaches to prevent firearm injuries and deaths
- ✓ To accelerate the pace of innovative education and research
- ✓ To expand the reach of effective programs to communities across the state, region, and nation

## FUNDING will support a multi-year plan for:

- Program support
  - Outreach and communication
  - Hospital- and community-based education and intervention
- Strategic faculty hires
  - Policy analysis
  - Domestic violence research
- Faculty and trainee support
  - Research stipends & mentorship
  - IRB & analytic support

## LEADERSHIP

**Emmy Betz, MD, MPH (Director)** – Emergency Medicine; suicide, dementia, Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition

**Ashley Brooks-Russell, PhD, MPH** – Community & Behavioral Health; youth violence

**Catherine Velopoulos, MD** – Trauma Surgery; hospital-based violence intervention

**Maya Haasz, MD** – Pediatric Emergency Medicine; youth suicide, pediatric injury

**Erin Kelly, PhD** – Injury & Violence Prevention Center; youth suicide

**Beverly Kingston, PhD** – CU Boulder – youth & school safety

**Sabrina Mattson, PhD** – CU Boulder – “Gun Shop Projects”

**Eric Sigel, MD** – Adolescent Medicine; youth violence

**Joseph Simonetti, MD, MPH** – Internal Medicine; Veterans, suicide

**Erik Wallace, MD** – Internal Medicine; firearm suicide, clinician education

## ACTIVE FACULTY