

Firearm Safety Issues in the Context of COVID19



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Disclosures



- No pharma/industry payments or gifts since 2007
- I receive payments from government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and non-healthcare businesses (including a firearms dealer) for consultation, training, and expert witness work
- I neither donate to nor receive payments or gifts from pro or anti firearm advocacy groups

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393,000,000
civilian-owned firearms in **USA** (Karp/SAS, 2018)

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|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 2. India | 15. Iraq | 28. Argentina |
| 3. China | 16. Nigeria | 29. Angola |
| 4. Pakistan | 17. Venezuela | 30. Sudan |
| 5. Russian Federation | 18. Iran | 31. England & Wales |
| 6. Brazil | 19. Saudi Arabia | 32. Serbia |
| 7. Mexico | 20. South Africa | 33. Austria |
| 8. Germany | 21. Colombia | 34. Switzerland |
| 9. Yemen | 22. Ukraine | 35. Sweden |
| 10. Turkey | 23. Afghanistan | 36. Ghana |
| 11. France | 24. Egypt | 37. Chile |
| 12. Canada | 25. Philippines | 38. Portugal |
| 13. Thailand | 26. Australia | 39. Guatemala |
| 14. Italy | 27. Spain | 40. Lebanon |

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Agenda

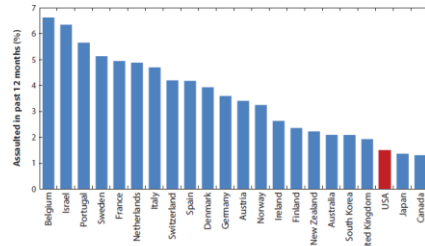
- Guns in America pre COVID
- Surges & Stressors: Historical Perspectives
- 2020: Purchase Surge, New Stressors, and New Science
- Implications for Public Safety and Mental Health
- Practical Strategies



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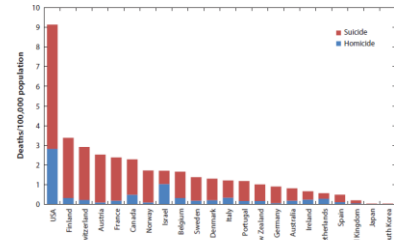
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Impact of firearm violence – 2018

85 + 128, 27 incidents	Mass shooting deaths + injuries (FBI/ALERT)
371 + 1336, 337 incidents	Mass shooting deaths + injuries (GVA)
458	Accidental shooting deaths (CDC)
13,958	Firearm homicides (CDC)
16,214	All homicides (CDC)
24,432	Firearm suicides (CDC)
130,000*	Nonfatal Firearm Injuries 2017 (CDC)

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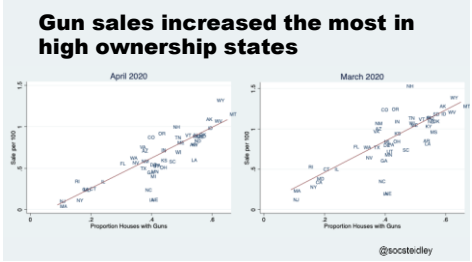
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Gun sales increased the most in high ownership states




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Stand Your Ground (Shoot first)



Rand, April 2020:

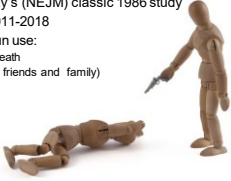
- Multiple studies, multiple data sources, multiple states, multiple other variables controlled for
- "Considering these findings, we conclude that there is moderate evidence that stand-your-ground laws may increase total homicide rates but inconclusive evidence for the effect of stand-your ground laws on other types of violent crime."

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Who gets killed by a firearm in the home

(Butler et al JAMA IM 2020)

- Updating Kellerman and Reay's (NEJM) classic 1986 study
- King County, Washington: 2011-2018
- For every lethal defensive gun use:
 - 1.5 accidental/undetermined death
 - 7.9 criminal homicides (mostly friends and family)
 - 48 suicides




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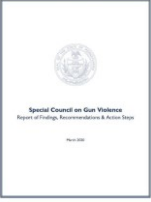
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Governor's Special Council on Gun Violence

- Threat management
- Universal background checks
- Child access prevention laws / incentives
- Safer storage laws / incentives
- Lost / stolen gun reporting laws / incentives
- Exploration of ERPOs
- Improved collection of data on injuries, deaths, crimes
- Improved, evidence based education for owners, dealers, and health professionals



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New handguns in the home increase suicide risk

(Studdert et al NEJM 2020)

- Male handgun owners 3.4x as likely to kill themselves if they own a handgun because they have a 7.6x increased risk of firearm suicide
- Female handgun owners 7.1x as likely to kill themselves if they own a handgun because they have a 35x increased risk of firearm suicide
- "Handgun owners did not have higher rates of suicide by other methods or higher all cause mortality."
- 48% of the suicides were within one year of purchase

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Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board sales: First quarter



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Shooting under the influence

Randomized, blinded, placebo controlled; 12 subjects, a total of 160 scenarios

BAL of 0.1g%, randomized (all told they went to EtOH am)

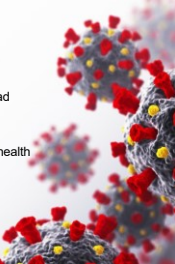
- Less accurate
- Slower to fire in reaction time scenarios
- Quicker to fire in judgment scenarios

Carr et al Injury Prevention 2009

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Stress & Agitation

- Prolonged uncertainty and fear
- Increased demands and Information overload
- Less structured time (home schooling)
- Less ability to use coping strategies
- Progressive risks to employment, housing, health
- Impaired access to mental health services
- Increased access to firearms
- Increased drinking
- Increased time with families, housemates



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Too early to be certain about new trends in firearm injuries and deaths

- **Violent crime:** mixed by region, mostly gun crime has not gone down
- **Suicide:** too early to know; no clear signal. Lots of hyped fake news
- **Intimate partner violence:** Inconsistent, increased in some areas; calls initiated by witnesses > targets
- **Mass shootings:** Fewer school shootings; maybe fewer mass killings but May was historic record setting mass shootings
- **Accidental:** Some early unconfirmed reports from Everytown of significant increases

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TSA data on firearms detected at airport carryon security checkpoints

- 2019: 4,432 firearms detected
- 87% loaded
- 34% round chambered

March 22- April 22, 2020 vs 2019:
270% increase in interceptions per traveler



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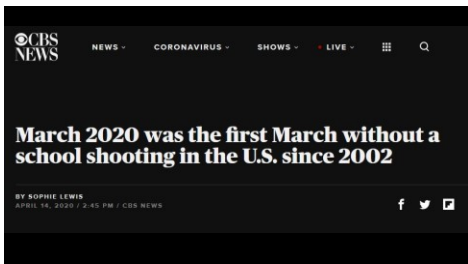
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COVID as a relationship accelerator

- Isolating with abusers
- De novo abuse
- New stressors and pressures, more irritability, changes in schedules and substance use
- Difficulty seeking and accessing help
- Financial dependence and exploitation
- Changes in custody handoffs / visits

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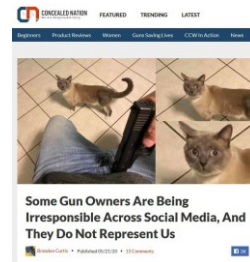
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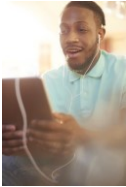
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And the brave new world of tele health


- New technology, rapid transition
- New workflows and patient flows
- New environments to do the work in
- Interruptions and distractions
- Bookcase credibility and background
- Narrowed bandwidth of information to interpret
- Privacy issues (on both ends)
- Interruptions and distractions
- Telegap



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So what do we have?

- New guns
- New stressors
- Layered and persisting syndemics
- New barriers in accessing and providing care
- Unclear timelines and ambiguous endpoints



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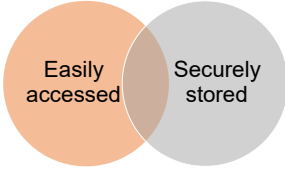
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Most gun owners want them for self defense



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Asking about access



- A**ccess
- E**xperience
- I**deation or Intent
- O**perational plan or practice
- U**nconcerned with consequences

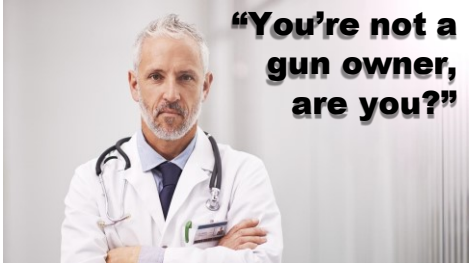
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“You’re not a gun owner, are you?”

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How do you store your guns at home?

How many guns do you have at home?

Tell me about the guns in your home.



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Warning signs (PHASES)



- P**roximity change
- H**ostility / **H**atefulness
- A**cquisition despite exclusion
- S**ubstance use
- E**scalating purchases
- S**uicidal or hopeless

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A retirement plan for the gun



- Triggers: driving issues, not recognizing family, missing/lost possessions or worries of possessions being stolen
- Part of end of life planning (will, living will, DPA, advanced directives)
- Who is the trusted friend to take the gun? (military buddy, partner, etc.)
- Not taking the gun away but making sure it is safely handed down to kids / grandkids

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Tele tips

- Confirm address and location; have a second line available
- Presume risk and presume crisis
- "Who else is at home with you?"
- With all the changes in peoples lives, recently, what has changed in yours
 - People in the home
 - Locations
 - Income and housing stability
 - Childcare
- Alert signals, call and response, canaries

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Gun ownership isn't my crisis, it's my Constitutional right!


- Personally sensitive
- Politically sensitive
- HCP likely to be seen as intrusive or judgmental
- May not be an issue identified as a priority or concern by the consumer

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May I offer some suggestions?

Somewhere else (store it)

- At work
- Storage locker
- Safe friend/relative's home
- Law enforcement agencies

Sell it

- Pawn it
- Buyback programs
- Gun dealers
- Armistist, etc.


Safer: Secure it at home

- Locked with ammo stored/locked seperately
- Locks, safes
- Locked up + key removed
- Disassembled

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General considerations

- Professional and safe training
- If in a home with children or somebody in psychological crisis, should not be left unattended and unsecured
- Never handled while intoxicated or sedated
- Properly carried (in a holster, not a pocket)
- Properly stored (in a locked safe or case, not a drawer)



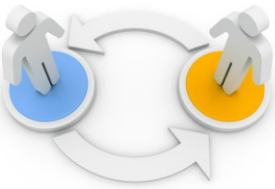
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Engagement is the critical goal, and a predicate for safer storage



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Rolling with resistance

- Empathize with affect
- Engage on shared interests
- Focus on priorities
- Evoke commitment
- Planning first steps and follow up
- Agree – or agree to disagree



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