

STOP HANDGUN VIOLENCE

THE MASSACHUSETTS SUCCESSFUL
GUN VIOLENCE REDUCTION AND
PREVENTION MODEL



BACKGROUND:

WORKING FOR OVER 25 YEARS ON GUN SAFETY

Stop Handgun Violence (SHV) was founded in 1995 by businesspeople, gun violence prevention activists AND responsible gun owners. Since its founding SHV has been the lead advocate for gun violence prevention in Massachusetts, as well as a leader nationally. Today, urban Massachusetts has some of the most comprehensive and effective gun safety laws in the country, the second lowest gun death rate in the U.S. and has successfully reduced gun deaths by 40% over the past 25 years.

In Massachusetts, we have taken a three-prong approach to reducing and preventing gun injuries and deaths. We have raised public awareness, enacted effective gun laws and invested in focused public education and community violence intervention programs.

In short, we changed the historically polarized debate of banning guns versus unlimited access to guns and then focused on specific behaviors, regulations and laws making it harder to access guns for children, people with a history of violence, and other potentially dangerous and legally prohibited people without undue burden for law abiding gun owners.



COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GUN SAFETY LAWS

Massachusetts' legislative successes include:

- First in the nation consumer protection and safety standards regulating the gun industry.
- Renewable licensing and registration for all gun owners that includes police discretion for issuing licenses and prohibitions for individuals with a history of violence.
- Required reporting for lost and stolen firearms.
- Collection and maintenance of firearm sale records
- Regulations requiring gun dealers operate out of bona-fide stores separate from residences and licensing of their employees.
- Banning military style assault weapons, high capacity magazines and bump stocks, including replicas and copycats.
- Universal safe storage laws that require all firearms to be stored locked and unloaded except for when it is under the direct control of the owner.
- Extreme risk protection orders to empower family members and law enforcement to petition the court to have firearms removed from a person in crisis.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

BILLBOARDS, VIDEOS MEDIA OUTLETS

The very first campaign Stop Handgun Violence developed as an organization was a 252'x 20' billboard on the Massachusetts Turnpike in Boston which hundreds of thousands of drivers passed every day. Using the large and highly visible billboard as an education and public awareness tool we created targeted messages addressing a variety of topics related to specific gun safety behaviors, laws and regulations. We then filed specific legislation to address them.

For example, we installed billboard messages about background checks, gun trafficking, assault weapons, and safe storage and then pushed for policies that would address these issues. These billboard messages not only created general awareness of the issues but also created the political pressure necessary to address the specific topic and enact legislation.

We partnered with the US Department of Justice "Project Safe Neighborhoods Program" to produce several educational videos, some of which are still being used by the Boston Police Department community outreach team and community violence prevention organizations.



We've cultivated strong relationships with our local media by giving them exclusives, recruiting op-ed writers, connecting them with potential stories and being available for quotes and consultation with reporters and editorial boards. By partnering with the media, rather than viewing it as an obstacle to our goals, we have been able to successfully leverage our collective voices to increase awareness and ultimately increase pressure on elected officials to pass meaningful and effective gun violence prevention legislation.

Examples of op-ed consultation:

<https://bit.ly/7steps27klives>

<https://bit.ly/makeitstop2017>

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS:

Massachusetts continues to invest in community education and violence intervention programs that are proven to reduce and prevent gun violence. Safe and Successful Youth Initiatives (SSYI) Grantee Programs in Massachusetts are a competitive grant program for cities with high rates of violence.

Grantees provide a spectrum of social services to young men ages 17–24 who are at “proven risk” of involvement in gun violence. Last year, the Giffords Law Center conducted a review of programs in all 50 states and found SSYI to be a national model for violence reduction work in their “Investing in Intervention” report. A 2014 study conducted by the American Institute for Research found that “[f]or every \$1.00 spent on SSYI programs, Boston recouped an additional \$7.35 in crime-related savings, while in Springfield, every dollar spent recouped \$6.95 in benefits from preventing victimizations of violence.”

In addition to the cost savings, these programs are proven to reduce violent crimes in the cities employing these strategies. A 2017 American Institute for Research study found that cities employing SSYI programs showed a statistically significant drop in violence crime relative to other non-SSYI cities. These programs were also associated with a reduction in violent crimes of 2.8 per 100k population. In Lowell, the SSYI program, UTEC, is associated with a 61% reduction in nonfatal shootings and a 31% reduction in gang-related criminal activity.



CONCLUSION:

Gun violence is an intersectional issue that overlaps with mental health, public health, domestic violence, gang violence, police brutality, and racial justice. Therefore, taking a multifaceted approach to gun violence is the only way to truly tackle this problem that kills 40,000 people each year. Massachusetts has proven that effective gun safety laws and reasonable regulations save lives and has shown that gun violence can be reduced without banning most guns or undue burden on responsible gun owners.

This is a model that can and should be replicated.

CONTACT US:

Email:

info@stophandgunviolence.org

Website:

www.stophandgunviolence.org

Facebook:

facebook.com/stophandgunviolence/

Twitter:

[@stophandguns](https://twitter.com/stophandguns)

Instagram:

[@stophandguns](https://www.instagram.com/stophandguns)

ADDITIONAL BILLBOARDS



KIDS KILLED BY GUNS TODAY:

12



NATIONAL GUN LAWS PASSED TODAY:

0



TELL CONGRESS IT'S TIME TO ACT.



“If I had attended high school in Massachusetts instead of Parkland Florida, I would likely be alive today.”

GUN LAWS SAVE LIVES



Joaquin "Guac" Oliver
Murdered in Parkland FL
on 02/14/18