

Congressional Priorities

119th Congress



INVEST IN PREVENTION



ENSURE HEALTH, WELL-BEING, & PROSPERITY



STRENGTHEN PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE & WORKFORCE

PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

The Safe States Alliance uses the public health approach to prevent injuries and violence before they occur. This approach involves:



Using data, research and lived experience to fully understand injuries and violence.



Identifying factors that increase or decrease the risk of injuries and violence.



Implementing and evaluating program and policy strategies designed to prevent injuries and violence.



Ensuring the implementation of effective strategies in states and communities.

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Injury is the leading cause of death and the leading cause of hospitalization for Americans in the first half of life. More Americans ages 1-44 die from injuries and violence—overdose, suicide, motor vehicle crashes, drowning, and homicide—than from any other cause. Every year, **injuries and violence cost the U.S. more than \$4 trillion**. These deaths are **preventable**.

To be effective and impactful, injury prevention programs at the local, state and federal levels must be supported in proportion to the burden of injuries and violence. Safe States calls on Congress to support robust funding levels for the following nine programs, for which **over 80% of funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Injury Center goes directly back to communities** to support community-driven, evidence-informed prevention.

The Safe States Alliance's Congressional priorities reflect the interests and expertise of professionals on the frontlines of injury and violence prevention in states and communities.

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Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur in childhood, like witnessing or experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect. To prevent ACEs, we must understand and address the factors that put people at risk. Creating and sustaining safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for all children and families can prevent ACEs and help all children reach their full potential.



Core State Injury Prevention Program (SIPP)

States rely on the Core SIPP program at the CDC Injury Center to implement, evaluate, and expand strategies to prevent their most pressing injury and violence problems. As of December 2024, 26 states currently receive Core SIPP support. With additional funding, all 50 states can benefit from this program.



Firearm-Related Violence & Injury Prevention

Science-driven approaches are essential to prevent firearm violence. Research can provide important insights into how to prevent firearm injuries and deaths. The CDC Injury Center funds research that is focused on understanding the characteristics of firearm violence; the risk and protective factors for interpersonal and self-directed firearm violence; and the effectiveness of interventions to prevent firearm violence.



Injury Control Research Centers (ICRCs)

ICRCs advance injury and violence prevention science by conducting cutting-edge, multidisciplinary research on the causes, outcomes, and prevention of injuries and violence. ICRC funding provides resources to focus on the understudied area of rural injury and violence. Their research has far-reaching impact, improving the lives of millions of Americans. Currently, only 11 ICRCs are funded, leaving a significant void in efforts to advance violence and injury prevention.



Continue to expand funding at the CDC for states and communities to track and prevent ACEs, including those that address the social drivers of health.

Provide funding to expand the CDC Core SIPP program to all 50 states, all U.S. territories, and Washington, DC., and increase funding to each recipient.

Support additional federal funds to support firearm-related violence and injury research.

Support and fund the expansion of ICRCs to increase the geographic reach and impact by funding more centers and bolstering existing ICRCs.



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Motor Vehicle-Related Injury Prevention

In 2022 there were over 5,000,000 police-reported traffic crashes in which over 42,000 people were killed and over 2,000,000 people were injured ([National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#)). Congress has shown support for traffic safety through CDC and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to fund programs that address vehicle safety, highway safety enforcement, and autonomous vehicle development.



National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS)

Frontline investigators, including law enforcement, coroners, and medical examiners, collect valuable information about violent deaths. However, these data points are seldom combined systematically to provide a complete picture. NVDRS merges these data elements together, providing valuable context about violent deaths, such as mental health conditions and treatment, toxicology results, and life stressors. Decision-makers use this comprehensive information to develop and tailor violence prevention efforts.



Older Adult Falls Prevention

Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths among older adults. Recent CDC findings show that total healthcare costs related to non-fatal older adult falls were about \$80 billion in 2020. Medicare paid about two-thirds (\$53 billion) of these costs ([Journal of Injury Prevention](#)). However, Congress allocates just over \$9 million to prevent older adult falls before they occur.



Overdose Primary Prevention

The most recent data, from July 2023, reflects 94,000 annual deaths, a 17% decline from the previous year. Currently, the CDC funds 90 health departments to reduce drug overdoses and the impact of related harms. The CDC's Overdose to Action (OD2A) program uses data to select, improve, and scale up drug overdose prevention programs and policies.



Increase support to federal agencies that help states prevent motor vehicle injuries before they occur.

Provide additional NVDRS funding to help states recruit data providers, analyze data, and implement scientific research to inform state and federal violent death prevention programs.

Increase support for older adult falls prevention at the CDC and Administration for Community Living (ACL).

Continue to fund state-based prevention programs that will address the overdose epidemic.

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Suicide Prevention

Nearly 50,000 Americans died by suicide in 2023, with higher rates among veterans and those living in rural areas. Suicides are a significant public health burden. CDC administers several grant programs to support suicide prevention efforts. These grant programs include the CDC's Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Program, the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Program, and Zero Suicide for Health Systems, a program supported by SAMHSA, Universal Health Services, and the Education Development Center.



Continue funding existing suicide prevention grants which help state, territorial, and tribal agencies.

ENSURE HEALTH, WELLBEING, AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL

Safe States supports policy initiatives that ensure health, wellbeing, and prosperity for all. Unfortunately, economic inequality, racial injustice, and other systemic and structural barriers in our society have created immense inequities. These barriers undermine opportunity, justice, and freedom for everyone. These severe inequities exacerbate existing injury and violence challenges, including ACEs. Congress must ensure that everyone – regardless of their race, age, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status – have an opportunity to achieve economic, educational, and personal prosperity throughout their lifetimes.



Enact policies and fund programs that create equity, address the root causes of racial discrimination, and bolster the social drivers of health.

STRENGTHEN PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKFORCE

Strengthening public health infrastructure and workforce means protecting people from preventable illness, death, and health threats. With a stronger infrastructure, public health will raise the tide on American health by proactively addressing foundational elements of wellbeing for all individuals, including building and maintaining strong surveillance systems that track ongoing patterns, identifying outbreaks expediently, and providing swift intervention when needs arise.



As we look to the future, continued investments will strengthen our national public health workforce and infrastructure, supporting a public health system that is prepared to elevate American health and respond to any future threats. The CDC's Public Health Infrastructure Center is committed to ensuring the everyone enjoys the benefits and protections of effective public health services. It supports all 50 states, 22 cities, 27 counties and eight territories to build foundational capability and support the people and systems needed to effectively protect health in their jurisdiction. The CDC's Office of Rural Health advances strategies to meet the unique public health challenges of rural populations.

Continue to invest significantly in public health infrastructure and capacity.



The [Safe States Alliance](#) is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to serving as the national voice in support of injury and violence prevention professionals engaged in building a safer, healthier America. Founded in 1993, the Safe States Alliance is the only national non-profit organization comprised of public health injury and violence prevention professionals representing all states and territories in the United States.

Learn more about Safe States
www.safestates.org



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