
SOUTHEASTERN AND SOUTHWESTERN INJURY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION (IVP) REGIONAL SUMMARY

The Southeastern and Southwestern Injury and Violence Prevention Network Regional Summary (Nov. 2024) provides a comprehensive overview of recent legislative efforts across 13 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas, highlighting diverse approaches to IVP. This summary, prepared for the Safe States Alliance SE/SW Regional Policy Forum, distills key trends and policies to inform training and technical assistance for IVP professionals.

KEY LEGISLATIVE TRENDS

- 1. Child Safety and Education:** States are prioritizing preventive education to protect youth. Alabama’s HB280 mandates fentanyl and overdose education for grades 6-12, while Arkansas’s HB1157 requires water and swimming safety courses in public schools. Georgia’s HB402 ensures water safety resources reach parents or students, and Florida’s WaterSmartFL program addresses its top ranking in drowning deaths for ages 0-4. Alabama’s Child Passenger Safety Voucher Program, though limited to three counties, provides car seats to ticketed parents, showcasing innovative local solutions.
 - 2. Substance Abuse and Overdose Prevention:** Efforts to combat overdoses vary widely. Arkansas’s HB1514 mandates opioid overdose rescue kits in high schools and colleges, and Georgia’s SB395 stocks schools with opioid antagonists. South Carolina’s S0407 allows over-the-counter Narcan sales, enhancing accessibility. However, punitive approaches dominate elsewhere—Louisiana’s HB9 increases fentanyl distribution penalties, and Oklahoma’s HB2686 mandates drug testing for treatment program participants, reflecting a regional split between harm reduction and enforcement strategies.
 - 3. Violence Prevention:** Approaches to violence diverge sharply. Kentucky’s HB5, a sweeping crime bill overridden after Governor Beshear’s veto, and Tennessee’s HB2692/HB2538 escalate penalties for violent acts and threats, signaling a “zero-tolerance” trend among Republican-led states. In contrast, North Carolina’s Office of Violence Prevention, established via executive order, distributed 50,000 firearm storage devices, and New Mexico’s HB129 imposes a firearm purchase waiting period to curb impulsive violence. Mississippi’s HB903, criminalizing gun modification devices, marks a rare Republican-led gun control effort.
 - 4. Specialized Safety Initiatives:** Targeted measures address unique risks. Florida’s S838 funds motorcycle safety education to tackle its leading collision death rate, while Texas’s SB240 mandates healthcare facilities form workforce violence prevention committees. South Carolina’s S0096 establishes a boating safety certificate program, and Alabama’s HB315 strengthens penalties under the Move Over Act to protect emergency responders, illustrating diverse IVP priorities.
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NOTABLE DIVERGENCES & POLICY GAPS: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES WORTH NOTING

- Some states (e.g., **Mississippi**) have introduced rare gun control measures despite conservative leadership, while others have doubled down on expanded access.
 - **North Carolina’s Office of Violence Prevention** (created by executive order) contrasts sharply with states that lack formal structures for IVP coordination.
 - **Adults with disabilities** are addressed in **Texas’s SB240** (healthcare workplace violence), a rare policy focus outside of youth-centered safety.
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REGIONAL INSIGHTS BY STATE

- **Alabama:** Modest funding (\$170k, SB70) supports domestic violence monitoring, reflecting resource constraints.
 - **Arkansas:** Governor Sanders balances child safety (HB1514) with regressive fire policy shifts (HB1766).
 - **Florida:** High drowning (fourth nationally, ages 0-17) and motorcycle deaths drive targeted education (S838).
 - **Georgia:** IVP lags, with minimal focus beyond school safety (HB147, SB395).
 - **Kentucky:** Democratic Governor Beshear’s veto of punitive HB5 was overridden, highlighting partisan divides.
 - **Louisiana:** Republican-led punitive drug laws (HB9) signal a “zero-tolerance” shift under Governor Landry.
 - **Mississippi:** HB903’s gun control stands out in a Republican state, paired with seizure training (HB346).
 - **New Mexico:** Governor Grisham’s public health approach to gun violence (HB129) contrasts regional norms.
 - **North Carolina:** Democratic executive actions (50,000 firearm devices) counter Republican legislature.
 - **Oklahoma:** Punitive drug policies (HB2686) coexist with overdose prevention (HB2424).
 - **South Carolina:** Modest gains (S0096, S0407) focus on education and Narcan access.
 - **Tennessee:** “Zero-tolerance” laws (HB2692) prioritize punishment over prevention.
 - **Texas:** Mixed agenda includes healthcare safety (SB240) but regresses with SB29’s mandate ban.
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IMPLICATIONS FOR SAFE STATES ALLIANCE

This analysis highlights both regional variation and opportunities for IVP professionals to bridge punitive and preventive strategies, understand evidence-based policies, and secure greater resources. Participants can use these insights to design targeted training, foster cross-state collaboration, and empower members to advance Safe States’ mission as the recognized leader in understanding and preventing injuries and violence.
