

Speaker: *Rosanna Smart*

Presentation title: The Science of Gun Policy: A Critical Synthesis of Research Evidence on the Effects of Gun Policies in the United States

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The past two years has seen a surge in scientific research evaluating the effects of firearm policies, as well as continued efforts by states and philanthropic organizations to sustain and expand research investigating specific gun policy or gun violence prevention topics. In this study, we conduct a systematic review of the literature published since 1995 evaluating the effects of 18 classes of gun laws in the United States on eight outcomes: violent crime, suicide, unintentional injury and death, mass shootings, defensive gun use, hunting and recreational gun use, officer-involved shootings, and the gun industry. Our broad search strategy, which covered 13 electronic literature databases, identified 21,700 articles, 123 of which met our inclusion criteria of using comparative pre-post designs for causal inference. We found supportive evidence – our strongest evidence rating -- that stand-your-ground laws increase firearm homicides and that child access prevention laws reduce self-inflicted fatal or nonfatal injuries among youth. We also found moderate evidence that state laws prohibiting gun ownership by individuals subject to domestic violence restraining orders decrease total and firearm-related intimate partner homicides; and that waiting period requirements reduce firearm suicide and total homicides. However, for many policies, current science is inconclusive or non-existent about their effects, with particularly scarce research to inform how policy influences officer-involved shootings, defensive gun use, and hunting or sport shooting. Our review findings highlight the need for improvements in both methodological approaches and systematic data collection to better support firearm-related research.