



Gun Violence: A Public Health Crisis

Gun violence is a public health crisis. There is a thread that is woven through racism, over-policing, domestic violence, mental health, mass shootings, and domestic terrorism. One of the many factors connecting these issues is certainly the proliferation of guns and our inability to garner enough support to regulate them.

We have hundreds of mass shootings each year. Besides these high-profile tragedies, shootings in neighborhoods, suicides, and accidental gun deaths are also results of the proliferation of guns. Connecticut Against Gun Violence (CAGV) has documented:

- In CT, there were 181 deaths by guns in 2019.
- In our state, young Black men are 39 times more likely to be murdered with a gun than young white men.
- In the U.S. there are more guns than autos and more stores to buy guns than there are coffee shops.
- At 393 million civilian-owned firearms, there's more than one firearm for every person in the U.S.
- A domestic abuser with access to a firearm makes it 5x more likely the woman will be killed.
- Of the deaths by guns, about 60% are suicides.
- Domestic terrorism almost always involves a cache of firearms.



The Social Justice Ministry supports our partners CAGV (cagv.org), Mothers United Against Violence (muavct.org), Moms Demand Action (momsdemandaction.org), and Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA, cljt.org) to strengthen our gun laws and prevent gun violence in Connecticut and nationally. We know that gun regulations, for example, background checks, prohibition of assault-style rifles, large capacity ammunition magazines and ghost guns, save lives. We need to establish high-risk protection orders, higher minimum age for the purchase of guns, and safe storage requirements. We promote funding for grassroots community violence prevention, victim support, and mental health programs.

Connecticut has some of the strongest laws against gun violence and continues to strengthen them. Surprisingly, however, there ARE gun rights extremists in our state legislature, and they have many constituencies. It takes vigilance to hold our state legislators accountable and there is much work to do in our communities.