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BLOOMBERG SCHOOL  
*of* PUBLIC HEALTH

# Evidence-Based Public Health Approaches to Reducing Violence with Less Reliance on Police and Prisons

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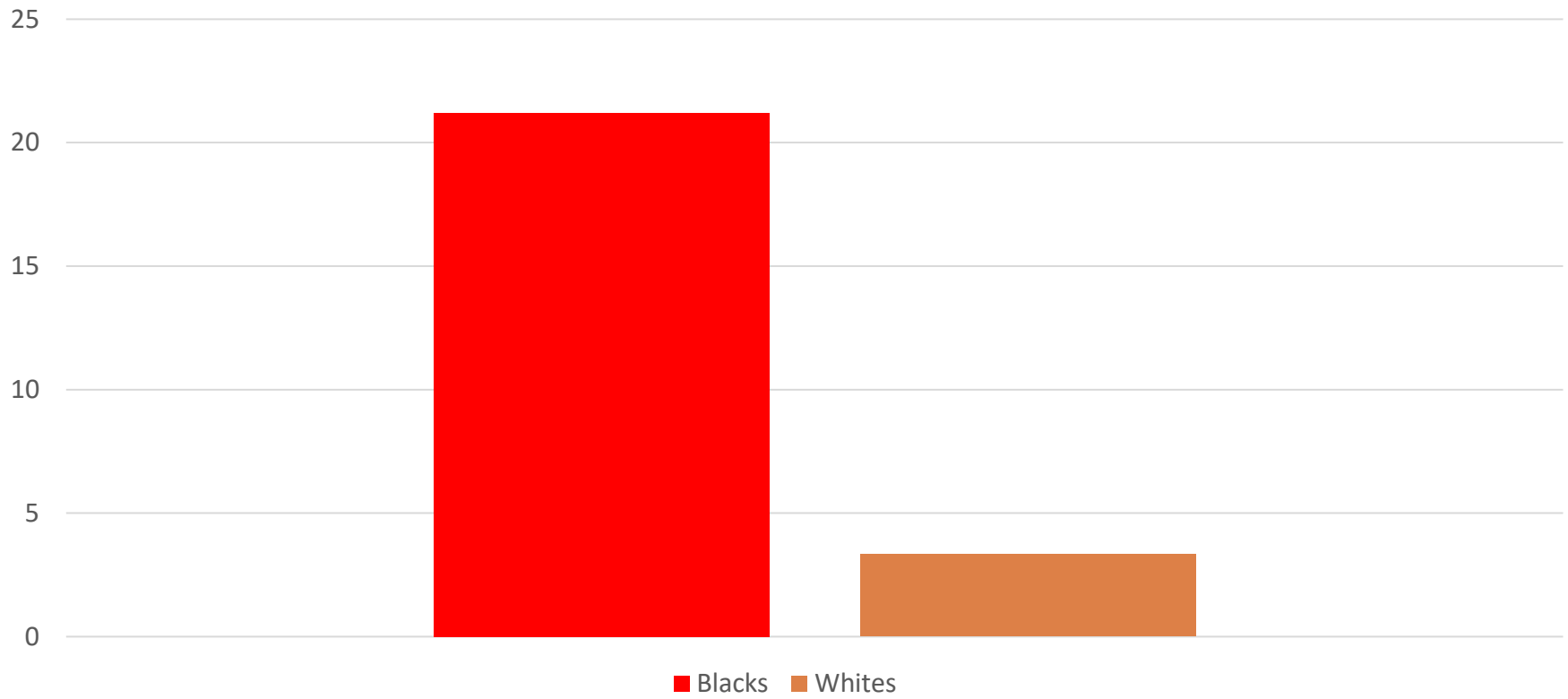
Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Prevention & Policy

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health



# Racial disparities for homicides

Age-Adjusted Homicide rates per 100K pop., by race, US, 2019



- 10,187 homicides among Blacks in 2019
- Leading cause of death for Black males age 15-34
- 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death BM age 1-4, 10-14
- 2<sup>nd</sup> most important cause of Black-White disparity in life expectancy among males.



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# REDUCING VIOLENCE WITHOUT POLICE: A REVIEW OF RESEARCH EVIDENCE

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NOVEMBER 9, 2020

*REPORT SUBMITTED TO ARNOLD VENTURES BY THE JOHN JAY COLLEGE RESEARCH  
ADVISORY GROUP ON PREVENTING AND REDUCING COMMUNITY VIOLENCE*

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# Key Evidence-Based Recommendations

- ▶ Improve the physical environment
- ▶ Strengthen anti-violence social norms and peer relationships
- ▶ Encourage and support youth
- ▶ Reduce substance abuse
- ▶ Mitigate financial stress
- ▶ Reduce harmful effects of the Criminal Justice process
- ▶ Confront “the gun problem”

# Public Health Policies to Promote Safe Communities

- ▶ Policies to reduce access to firearms by individuals with a history of violence
- ▶ Policies to reduce alcohol abuse
- ▶ Reduce environmental lead hazards
- ▶ Outreach, conflict mediation by “credible messengers” and connection to support services

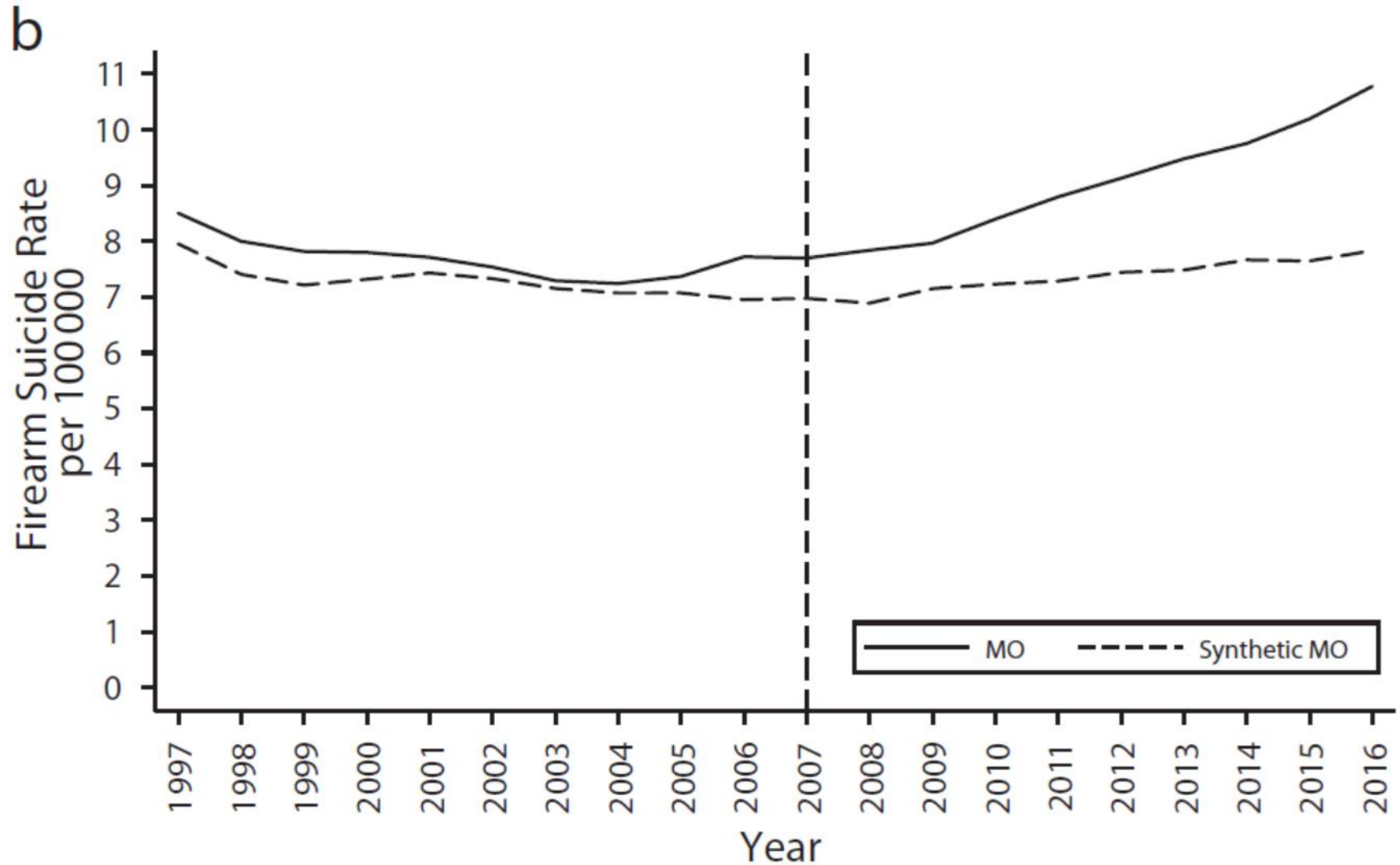
# Synthetic control model estimate for CT handgun purchaser licensing law effect on gun homicide rates: -28%. (McCourt, Crifasi, Webster 2020)

on Firearm Homicide: Synthetic Control Method



0 of 32 comparison states had larger declines over this period relative to their synthetic controls.

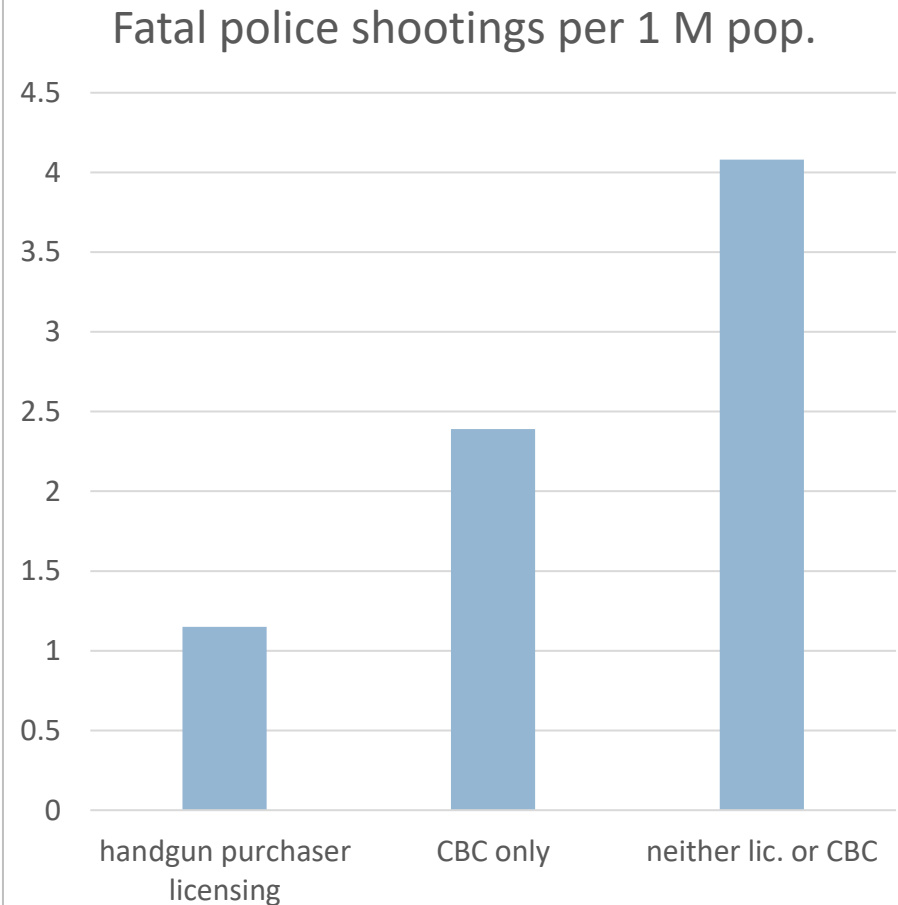
Firearm homicide rates +47% in Missouri relative to synthetic control after handgun purchaser licensing law repealed, 2008-2016. Similar effects across MO urban counties and smaller counties.





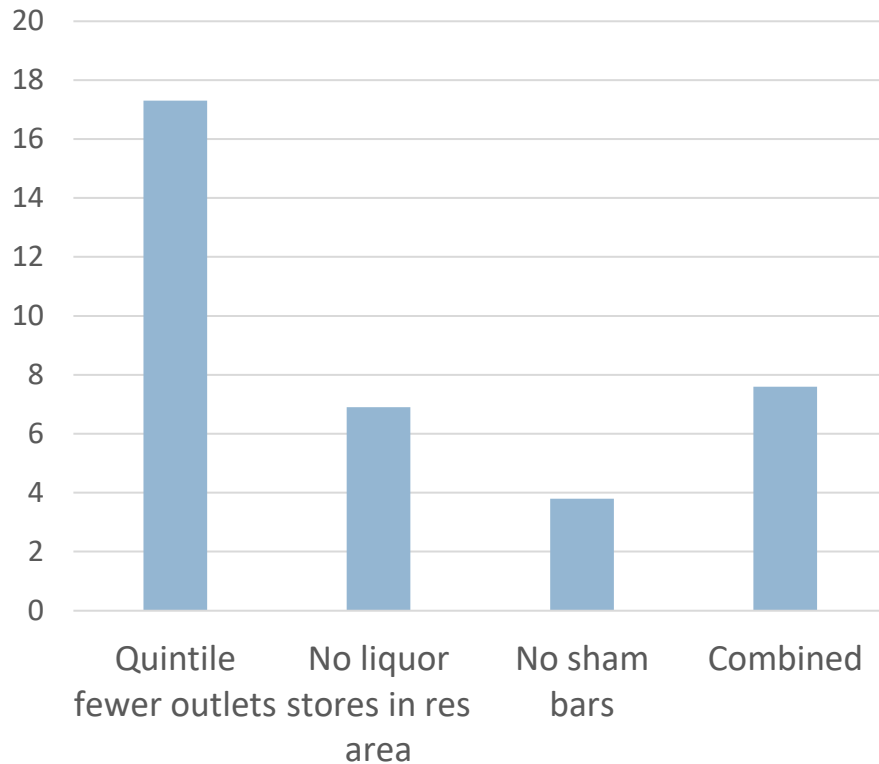
# Handgun purchaser licensing laws associated with reductions in guns diverted for criminal use, and shootings involving law enforcement.

- ▶ guns < 12 mo. sale-to-crime increased 2-fold after MO licensing law repeal (Webster et al. 2013)
- ▶ Crime guns recovered < 12 mo. sale by MD gun shops from non-purchaser declined 76% after purchaser licensing law. 40% on parole or probation in Baltimore said law made it harder to get a gun (Crifasi et al., 2017)
- ▶ Strong association between handgun purchase licensing changes in CT and MO and LEOs shot in line of duty (Crifasi, Pollack, & Webster, 2015)

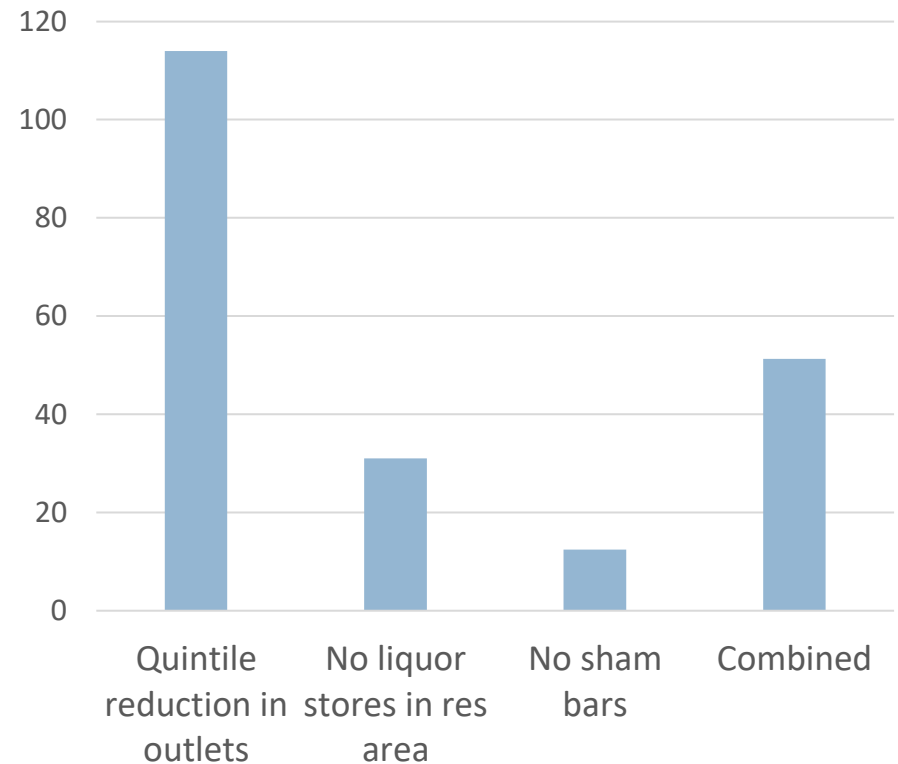


# Estimated effects of proposed regulations of alcohol outlets in Baltimore on Part I violent crime and annual savings in social costs.

**% projected reduction in violent crime**



**Estimated savings (\$ mil.) in social costs**



# Reducing Environmental Lead Reduces Criminal Offending

- ▶ Lead exposure increases learning deficits and impulse control. These issues can greatly increase risks of criminal offending over a lifespan.
- ▶ Study contrasts cities with lead pipes and acidic water vs. lead pipes but non-acidic water, and cities with acidic water but non-lead pipes, as control groups. Lead had strong main effect and interaction with acidic water interaction increasing homicide rates. Feigenbaum & Muller, 2016
- ▶ Kids who lived closer to busy roads within a neighborhood more likely to have high blood lead levels. Higher levels of lead increased likelihood of school suspension from school and juvenile incarceration. Aizer & Currie, 2017
- ▶ Early-life interventions recommended for lead-poisoned children greatly reduce juvenile offending and violent crime. Billings & Schnpel 2017

# *Cure Violence Strategy: Public Health Approach*

- ▶ Outreach to high-risk youth with credible messengers
- ▶ Promote nonviolent responses conflicts
- ▶ Conflict mediation
- ▶ Community mobilization and education



# Summary of Evaluations of Cure Violence

	Estimated Program Effect on GV vs. Controls
Chicago 1 (Skogan, 2009)	reductions 4 of 7 sites
Chicago 2 (Henry 2014)	reductions in 2 of 2 sites -15% shootings, -38% homicides
N. Philadelphia (Roman 2017)	-30% in 4 police posts

# Evaluations of Cure Violence – NYC

	Estimated Program Effect on GV vs. Controls
Crown Heights (Picard-Fritsche 2013)	-20%
2 sites in Brooklyn, 1 in West Harlem (Butts 2015)	-18% CV, +69% comp (1 yr baseline) -21% homicides 2011-2013
East NY (Delgado et al. 2017)	-45%
South Bronx	-8%

# Estimates of effects of Safe Streets Baltimore on homicides and nonfatal shootings, 2007-2017 Webster 2018

Webster, Buggs, and Crifasi. 2018

Site	Homicides % change (p)	Nonfatal shootings % change
McElderry Park	-1 (.974)	+13 (.571)
Madison-Eastend*	+39 (.496)	-37 (.339)
Elwood Park*	<b>+116 (.015)</b>	-17 (.546)
Cherry Hill	<b>-39 (.087)</b>	-30 (.108)
Mondawmin	+43 (.329)	+43 (.329)
Lower Park Heights	-4 (.921)	-12 (.658)
Sandtown-Winchester	+11 (.828)	+13 (.718)

# Synthetic control estimates of effects of Safe Streets Baltimore on homicides and nonfatal shootings, 2007-2017

Buggs, Webster, & Crifasi, 2021

Site	Homicides % change (p)	Nonfatal shootings % change (p)
McElderry Park	-30.8 (.11)	+25.6 (.78)
Madison-Eastend*	+69.0 (.11)	<b>+153 (&lt;.001)</b>
Elwood Park*	<b>+112 (.03)</b>	+13.1 (.34)
Cherry Hill	-21.1 (.17)	+10.7 (.41)
Mondawmin	<b>+75.9 (.02)</b>	+27.0 (.27)
Lower Park Heights	-21.1 (.22)	-19.3 (.28)
Sandtown-Winchester	-8.6 (.44)	+15.4 (.33)



# *Advance Peace* – Investing in Highest Risk People

- ▶ Peace Fellowship: Intensive mentoring, assistance with jobs and other needs, stipend, and activities to promote positive development.
- ▶ 55% reduction in gun violence in Richmond, CA. (Matthay et al., 2019)
- ▶ Promising data from Sacramento – 66% drop in gun violence 2010-2016.

# 1 8 Concluding Thoughts

- ▶ State-level gun policies – strong licensing of purchasers → fewer homicides in cities.
- ▶ Restrictions on alcohol sales reduce violence.
- ▶ Reducing environmental lead and treating lead-poisoned kids reduces offending and involvement in CJ system.
- ▶ Cure Violence can be effective, but needs augmented to meet needs of high-risk. May work best with effective gun laws and policing.
- ▶ Oakland Ceasefire model with heavy investment in coordinated social supports substantial reductions in homicides, arrests, and police shootings.