



## **FIREARM VIOLENCE FACT SHEET**

Violence continues to be a significant problem in Los Angeles, California and the greater United States (US). Violence not only directly harms victims and their families, but its detrimental effects significantly impact the community at large. The widespread effects of firearm violence are harmful to the health, economy, and wellbeing of communities. Gun violence is one of the two leading causes of death for young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age across the United States. Guns cause more deaths of these young people in Los Angeles than cancer, AIDS, heart disease or motor vehicle crashes.

### **United States**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2006, there were 52,307 violence related deaths in the US.<sup>1</sup> Of those, 30,034 were deaths due to firearms.<sup>1</sup> Over 7,234 lives of young people under the age of 24 were lost to gun violence in that same year.<sup>1</sup>

### **California**

Over ten percent of the total national gun deaths were in California. In 2006, over 3,350 deaths, with an additional 4,645 non fatal injuries involved guns in California. More than 1100 of those deaths were of children, teens and young adults under the age of 24.<sup>2</sup> Fifty-six percent (56%; 2595 injuries) of the nonfatal injuries involving guns were to young people under the age of 24.<sup>2</sup>

### **Los Angeles County**

In 2007, a total of 989 lives were lost due to gun related injuries in Los Angeles County alone.<sup>2</sup> An additional 3,555 nonfatal injuries involved a firearm.<sup>2</sup> Thirty-nine percent (39%; 386 deaths) of the deaths were of children and teens and young adults under the age of 24 and 34% of the nonfatal injuries involving a gun were also young people under the age of 24.<sup>2</sup>

Violence is preventable, and gun violence in particular is eminently preventable. One primary prevention strategy is to reduce the easy access and availability of firearms. In Los Angeles efforts to prevent gun violence have been ongoing since the late 1980's. Efforts have included the passage of laws limiting access to and the availability of firearms by organizations such as the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles. The Coalition engages public and private partners in efforts to deal with gun violence before the fact, using a public health model of primary prevention. By building and sustaining healthy communities, providing nurturing environments and supporting children and families at risk of engaging in violent behavior community efforts can break the back of the costliest epidemic of our time.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. (2010) {cited 2010 May 9}. Available from: [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars)

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Public Health, Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control Branch, EPICenter California Injury Data Online, [online] {cited 2010 May 10}. Available from: [http://www.applications.dhs.ca.gov/epicdata/content/ST\\_firearm.htm](http://www.applications.dhs.ca.gov/epicdata/content/ST_firearm.htm)