Operation Healthy Homefront
Outline

1. Status Quo and Policy Target
   a. The Problem by Demographic in Louisiana
   b. Gun Violence Root + Immediate Causes

2. Our Policy: Operation Healthy Homefront
   a. Overview
   b. Policy Justifications
   c. Implementation Timeline
   d. Feedback Loops and Tradeoffs
The Status Quo
+
Policy Target
Louisiana’s High Rate of Gun Violence

Average Annual Hospitalizations for Firearm Injury Nationally

Louisiana’s High Rate of Gun Violence

Average Annual Hospitalizations for Firearm Injury Nationally¹

## Opelousas’ High Rate of Gun Violence

### Historical Homicide Rate Per 100,000 Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Name</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rate of Homicides*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lutcher</td>
<td>3,266</td>
<td>91.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Castle</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>57.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opelousas</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,262</strong></td>
<td><strong>55.34</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA (at large)</td>
<td>4,664,000</td>
<td>11.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*83% of Louisiana homicides are firearm homicides²

Opelousas

"All of these shootings involve young men. Please try to save your son’s life..."

- Chief McLendon
10/10/2022
Racial & Socio-Economic Dimensions of Gun Violence

Gun Homicide Victims by Race/Ethnicity in Louisiana\(^1\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latine</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Increase in Gun Violence Per 100k Persons by Poverty Category\(^2\)

- Low Poverty: 0
- Low Medium Poverty: 1
- High Medium Poverty: 2
- High Poverty: 3

Chain of Causation for Gun Violence

- A: Root Causes
- B: Obtaining a Firearm
- C: Gun Violence
Youth Exposure to Violence and the Cycle of Firearm Violence

3. Ibid. 4. Ibid. 5. Ibid.

Youth Witness or are Victims of Violence

Psychological Numbing

Youth Firearm Violence Increases

Psychological Hypersensitivity
Empirical Reality: the Youth Cycle of Violence

44% of patients return for treatment

29.5% in firearm fatalities for youth (56.6% are homicides)

Leading Causes of Death Among Children and Adolescents in the United States, 1999-2020

Safe-Storage Homicide Trends and Training

The Problem

4.6 million American children live with an loaded + unlocked firearm.¹

35% of Gun Owners Say:
Lack of gun-safety classes is why they don’t safely store.²

Source: “Unload, Lock, and Separate,” Everytown Research, 2021

Chain of causation for gun violence

A. Root Causes
   - Psychological Detachment
   - Psychological Hypersensitivity

B. Obtaining a Firearm
   - Improper Storage

C. Gun Violence
Operation Healthy Homefront (OHH)

Our Policy
A Two-Pronged Approach
Centering around veterans

**Prong 1: Youth Mentorship**
- At-risk youth
- Mentorship program - sports and dinners
- After school M/W/Fr
- Stipends/salaries

**Prong 2: Firearm Safety Courses**
- Gun owners
- Teaching safe-storage
- After work, M/W/Fr
- Stipends/salaries
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Fri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00-4:05</td>
<td>Mentees arrive at the school</td>
<td>Mentees arrive at the school</td>
<td>Mentees arrive at the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:05-5:00</td>
<td>Athletic Activity 1</td>
<td>Athletic Activity 2</td>
<td>Athletic Activity 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00-6:00</td>
<td>Mentorship over dinner</td>
<td>Mentorship over dinner</td>
<td>Mentorship over dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00-6:30</td>
<td>Break for Veterans + Drive to Community Center</td>
<td>Break for Veterans + Drive to Community Center</td>
<td>Break for Veterans + Drive to Community Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30-8:30</td>
<td>Adult Gun Safety Classes</td>
<td>Adult Gun Safety Classes</td>
<td>Adult Gun Safety Classes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Weekly Schedule in Opelousas, LA**
Why Veterans?

**Best candidates**
- Already committed to public service
- Mission based
- Group based
- Trusted by gun-owners

**Positive externalities**
- 3 day/week part time job to veterans
- 57% more likely to commit suicide → joblessness is a key contributor

---

1. "Veteran Suicide Risk." Stop Soldier Suicide. 2021. https://stopsoldiersuicide.org/vet-stats#:~:text=Veterans%20are%20at%2057%25%20higher,1.5x%20the%20national%20average
Community-Level Policy Budgeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total budget</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10,564 per month</td>
<td>Mentor Salary ($18/hr, 48 hr/mo)</td>
<td>$864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ $730 startup costs</td>
<td>Youth Stipends ($10/hr, 24 hr/mo)</td>
<td>$4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety Trainee Comp. ($15/2 hr)</td>
<td>$3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Venue Maintenance/Cleaning</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food and Refreshments</td>
<td>$900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Startup Costs:** Athletic Equipment, Recruitment, Advertisement Flyers, Mentor Training, Curriculum

261 Impacted $40.48
## Potential State & National Funding Sources for Community-Level Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Grants per Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HVIP Medicaid Reimbursement</td>
<td>$13.4 T (total LA Medicaid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOJ VOCA Fund</td>
<td>$2,015,000,000 (2.015 B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOJ OJP CVI and Prevention Initiative</td>
<td>$100,000,000 (100 M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Rifle Association (NRA) State Fund Grants Program</td>
<td>$14,280,000 (14.28 M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund for a Safer Future</td>
<td>$3,150,000 (3.15 M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everytown for Gun Safety Community Safety Fund</td>
<td>$1,500,000 (1.5 M)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Total Medicaid Spending. 2019, KFF. September 12, 2019. [https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/total-medicaid-spending/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22](https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/total-medicaid-spending/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22).
Evaluating Operation Healthy Homefront

1. Effectiveness
2. Efficiency
3. Equity
4. Feasibility
5. Acceptability
OHH Combines Proven-Effective Interventions in a Novel Way

Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP)

- Public Health Approach
- Precise Youth Targeting
- Rigorous Data Collection

Re-hospitalization

Incarceration
OHH Combines Proven-Effective Interventions in a Novel Way

**Sports Participation:**

+ Self-Esteem
+ Mental Well-Being

**Youth Mentoring:**

76% Gun Homicides
34% Recidivism


OHH Combines Proven-Effective Interventions in a Novel Way

Safe Storage Training:

- **2X** Safe Storage
- **36%** Child Firearm Mortality

Policy Cost-Savings and Efficiency

Costs of Hospitalization/Incarceration vs. Prevention via OHH

$32,700

20 youth mentees (covers 3 months)

AND

720 adult trainees

Impacted by OHH

Hospitalization

6

$196,200

23.6

$383,524

$579,724

Incarceration

Total Savings


state-spending-trends/prison-spending/2015-
state-spending-trends-prison-spending
Centering Equity and Fairness

- Representative Mentors
- Stipends
- Community Selection

Feasibility

- Scalable Approach
- Incentive Design
- Recruitment Conduits Exist
- Evaluation & Assessment
- Low Start-Up and Equipment Costs
- Dual-Role for Vet Mentors
Broad-Based Political Acceptability

- Bipartisan Appeal
  - Promotes Gun Safety
  - Saves Taxpayer Money
  - Lowers Violent Crime
  - Protects Youth Public Health
  - Honors & Supports Veterans
Implementation Timeline

- 01 | Now, 2022 | FUNDING AND DATA COLLECTION
- 02 | Aug 2023 | TRAINING + RECRUITMENT
- 03 | Sept 2023 | BASELINE SURVEY + PROGRAMS START
- 04 | Dec 2023 | DATA COLLECTION

RE-EVALUATE & EXPAND TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES & STATES
Feedback Loops

Quantitative Metrics

- Short-term surveys and analytics
- Long-term analysis

Potential Actions

- Community Oversight Board
- Seek additional funding
- Lower cohort size
- Advertising, stipend, curriculum

Scale up: new cohorts, new communities
OHH Tradeoffs and Possible Solutions

- After School Time Tradeoff: Broad excused absence policy
- HVIP Recruitment Limitation: Limited teacher, parent, & coach referrals
- Mental Health Challenges: Community oversight board, mentor mental health priority
Chain of causation for gun violence

A: Root Causes
   - Psychological Detachment
   - Psychological Hypersensitivity

B: Obtaining a Firearm
   - Improper Storage

C: Gun Violence
   - Youth Mentorship
   - Firearm Safety Classes
Appendix
Budget

CLICK HERE
Youth Violence Exposure: The Cycle of Violence Perpetuates

Mental Health Effects

- Youth become desensitized to violence
  - “Psychological numbing”
    - detach from others
    - lose interest in activities they once enjoyed
    - School dropout, crime, and substance abuse
- Youth develop hypersensitive trauma reactions
- Youth develop “protective behaviors” like
  - Arming themselves
  - joining violent groups

At-risk youth witness (75%) or are victims of (59.3%) community violence

Youth firearm violence increases → 44% of patients treated for violent injury are retreated within 5 years

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
Cooper (2006) HVIP v. Control Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before Program</th>
<th>After Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intervention/</td>
<td>Non-intervention/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case Group</td>
<td>Control Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n = 56)</td>
<td>(n = 44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail time served</td>
<td>1,723 mo (144 yr)</td>
<td>1,083 mo (90 yr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of incarceration*</td>
<td>$3,600,000</td>
<td>$2,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitalizations</td>
<td>56 (100%)</td>
<td>44 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of hospitalization</td>
<td>$46,000 each</td>
<td>$46,000 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>22 (39%)</td>
<td>20 (45%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The annual cost of incarcerating one person is estimated at $25,000.
Policy Cost-Savings and Efficiency

Costs of Hospitalization/Incarceration vs. Prevention via OHH

$$\$32,700 = \overset{20\ \text{youth mentees}}{\text{Avg. Cost of Firearm Hospitalization}} \overset{\text{AND}}{\text{covers 3 months}} = \overset{720\ \text{adult trainees}}{\text{Impacted by OHH}}$$

2 Re-hospitalizations

$196,200 youth medical costs saved

23.6 years of incarceration avoided (1.5–)

$383,524 youth incarceration costs saved

Opelousas Civic Center
Youth Violence Trends

- Firearms are the #1 cause of death for children in the United States.¹

- From 2019-2022: A relative increase of 29.5% in firearm-related fatalities for youth.²

- 56.6%* of youth firearm fatalities are homicides.³

*54% in Louisiana⁴

Leading Causes of Death Among Children and Adolescents in the United States, 1999-2020⁵

2. Ibid.
A Multi-Pronged Approach is Necessary!

Problem Statement:
In Louisiana communities, there is a cycle of firearm-violence caused by systemic factors such as trauma and inequity especially to youth, and perpetuated by easy access to improperly stored firearms.
## Analysis of Status Quo Policies in Louisiana

### Policies that LA Does Well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Require permit to concealed carry guns</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require training to concealed carry</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No guns allowed in K-12 Schools</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relinquishment Laws</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Policies that LA is Missing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safe gun storage incentive/requirement</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe ammo storage incentive/requirement</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community intervention funding</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drawing on LA’s strengths, we will improve **training programs** through **safe storage gun training**.

LA has policy deficits and the highest rate of firearm injury hospitalizations in the nation, making it an urgent target for HVIP implementation.

Addressing LA’s deficits, we will increase safe storage and build community investment in solving gun violence through a robust **Hospital Violence Intervention Program (HVIP)**.

---

The Rationale: An HVIP Approach

Youth Mentorship
- Pays youth
  - Reduces incentive to get involved with violent, substance-based groups
  - Provides a constructive use of after-school time
- Intervenes in the cycle of violence at the “psychological effects” phase.
  - Fosters consistent, constructive human-connection
  - Sports-based mentorship targets withdrawal from activities.
- Targets youth who have been introduced to firearm violence

Firearm Safety Courses
- Employs veterans, who are trusted by gun owners to teach firearm safety
- Provides an empirically lacking safeguard.

Both Prongs
- Provide a 3 day/week part-time job to veterans
  - 57% more likely to commit suicide than someone who hasn’t served
  - 72% of veteran suicides are committed with a firearm
  - Joblessness is a key contributor to suicidal tendencies for veterans
- Use data-driven partnerships with
  - The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
  - Local Hospitals
  - Local Law enforcement

Figure 1: Social-Ecological Model of Violence Prevention
Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the diagram below provides a social ecological model of violence prevention at multiple levels of the social ecology to prevent interpersonal violence.