

NEW SURVEY SHOWS  
**STRONG SUPPORT** FOR FEDERAL  
FUNDING OF INTERVENTIONS TO  
**REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE**



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**LRP**

LAKE  
RESEARCH  
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STRATEGY • PRECISION • IMPACT

A recently completed nationwide survey of likely 2022 voters, including an oversample of voters in states with competitive U.S. Senate elections, reveals strong majorities of voters support the federal government providing funds for state and local governments to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence.<sup>1</sup>

1

**Voters are highly worried about the level of gun violence across the country and want to see action at all levels of government.**

Three-quarters of voters are concerned about gun violence (75%), including a 51% majority who are very concerned. Just 22% of voters are not concerned.

2

**Voters strongly support the federal government providing funds for state and local government to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence.**

Fully 68% support this proposal compared to 24% who oppose it and just 8% who are undecided.

3

**Support for funding community-based intervention services transcends all the demographic and attitudinal divides we typically see in survey data, including crossing partisan, racial, ethnic, and regional lines.**

- More than 8-in-10 Democrats (85% support to 10% oppose) support this approach, as do solid majorities of independents (57% to 27%) and Republicans (56% to 39%).
- Approximately three-quarters of Black voters (75%) and Latinx voters (74%) support providing funds for state and local governments to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence, as do two-thirds of white voters (67%).  
(See Figure 1)
- In states with competitive U.S. Senate elections in 2022, 67% of voters support the federal government funding state and local governments to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence, while 26% are opposed, and 7% are undecided.

4

**Even two-thirds of voters who live in households where there are gun owners and/ or NRA supporters are in favor of the federal government providing funds for state and local government to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence.**

Fully 68% of households with NRA members support this proposal (compared to 29% oppose) and 66% of households with gun owners support this proposal (compared to 29% oppose).

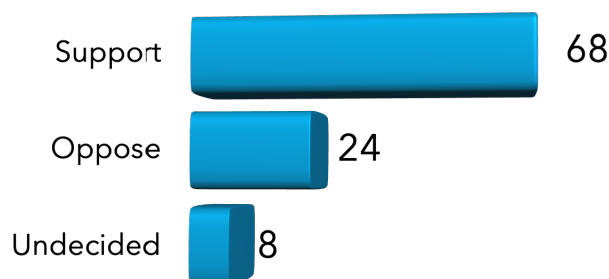
5

**After simulating an engaged debate over federal funding for state and local governments to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence, including a strongly worded attack on the proposal, support holds up at a 2:1 margin over opposition (60% to 30%), with opponents failing to attract even one-third of the vote.**

<sup>1</sup> Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey, which was conducted online, reaching n=1300 likely 2022 general election voters across the country, including an additional oversample of n=300 voters who live in 11 states that with competitive 2022 Senate races: AZ, CO, FL, GA, MO, NV, NH, NC, OH, PA, and WI. The survey was conducted 5/18 – 5/25, 2021. The margin of error for the nationwide sample is +/-3.1% and +/-4.2% for the oversamples battleground states.

**Figure 1**

**Do you support or oppose the federal government providing funds for state and local governments to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence, or are you undecided?**



### Text of Engaged Debate Statements (Rotated)

#### [ANTI-ARGUMENT]

(Some/other) people say that these new social programs would do more harm than good. The way politicians want to pay for this—by loading up the multi-trillion-dollar infrastructure bill—would divert funding from repairing roads and bridges, as well as creating jobs and helping small businesses. The activists pushing this openly admit their policies are a step towards socialism, abolishing the police, and allowing federal bureaucrats to confiscate guns from law-abiding citizens—including for hunting and self-defense. If we allow, ordinary citizens and communities will be left defenseless against violent criminals. This is the wrong approach to making our country safer.

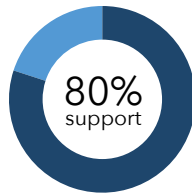
#### [PRO-ARGUMENT]

(Some/other) people say gun violence in some communities is in a spiraling cycle, costing us thousands of lives every year. America's youth are paying the greatest cost for our inaction, with their lives. We cannot continue to sacrifice young American lives to violence in our homes, schools and neighborhoods. For the sake of all our future, we need commonsense response to this crisis that includes universal background checks; increased services for victims of gun violence, like focused deterrence, cognitive behavioral therapy, hospital-based intervention; and street outreach, to minimize justice system involvement for community members and reduce gun violence in struggling neighborhoods.

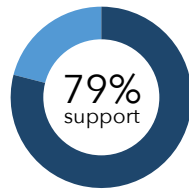
**Sometimes over the course of a survey like this, people change their minds... would you:**

Support Federal Government Funding Anti-Violence Interventions: 60%  
Oppose Federal Government Funding Anti-Violence Interventions: 30%  
Undecided: 11%

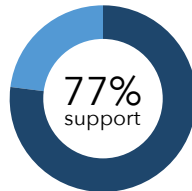
**The specific policy reforms aimed at preventing violence tested in the survey attract commanding support from voters. The most popular initiative involve:**



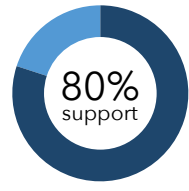
Expanding emotional support and recovery services for children who have been exposed to violence.



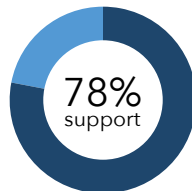
Increasing funding for recreation and community centers, after school programs, and other safe places for young people to interact, which help build stronger, safer communities



Addressing the root causes of violence, by investing in good schools, affordable housing, mental healthcare, and job training in communities all across the country

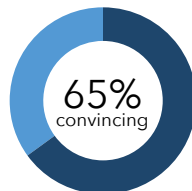


Increasing funding for job training programs and youth employment opportunities, which help build stronger, safer communities

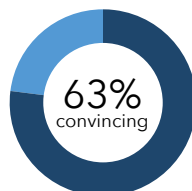


Expanding the 911 system so that calls for mental health and substance abuse issues are directed to trained mental health professionals instead of the police

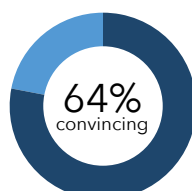
**Messages in support of federal funding for community-based interventions are quite compelling. The most persuasive arguments:**



Frame funding community-based interventions to reduce violence as a necessary **healthcare investment**.

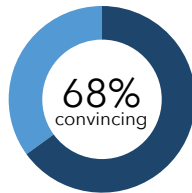


Compare the loss of American lives to **gun violence** to the number of American casualties and **deaths in the war in Afghanistan**

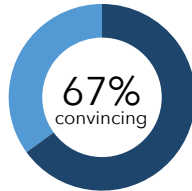


Invoke **law enforcement support** for community-based interventions, including relying on professionally trained mental health experts and social workers to **de-escalate mental health distress calls**

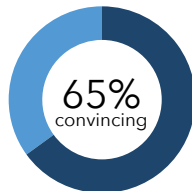
## Other effective messages underscore the importance of community-based interventions when it comes to:



saving the lives of America's children



stopping the cycle of violence



highlight the link between street outreach, social services and jobs

## Text of Messages in Support of Federal Funding for Community-Based Interventions:

"Every American deserves quality, affordable healthcare. Part of that is having good local hospitals, doctors and Emergency Rooms. Part of that is also having safe communities to live in. Preventing people from being injured, sick or killed is one of the greatest investments in healthcare we as Americans can make. We also need to keep our healthcare costs down for everyone, and a way to do that is root out violence before it happens. Funding community-based intervention to reduce violence is a necessary healthcare investment."

(65% convincing)

"America's longest war is right here at home. More than twice as many Americans have already died from gun violence in 2021 than servicemembers died in Afghanistan in nearly twenty years. Last year, despite social distancing and lockdowns, we saw the biggest 1-year increase in homicides ever recorded. If it were another nation killing tens of thousands of Americans every year, our government would have responded decisively. We can't wait any longer. We need to invest in community-based intervention and root out the causes of violence."

(63% convincing)

"Most police officers want to do the right thing, but we put them in unwinnable situations where they have to make split-second decisions. This isn't an ideal situation for anyone. We ask them to handle mental health distress calls, violent communities and other situations where mental health experts and social workers are trained—and proven—to help de-escalate. All Americans should join the many police chiefs and officers who support anti-violence interventions because it makes our communities and their jobs safer."

(64% convincing)

"Mahquill is a 30-year older from Philadelphia who lost a brother to gun violence. A year ago, while breaking up a fight, Mahquill was shot by a 15-year-old. When Mahquill started experiencing PTSD and became fixated on getting revenge, a social worker in the hospital talked with him and helped Mahquill understand that "getting even" would just continue the cycle. We need to invest in proven intervention services, like focused deterrence, cognitive behavioral therapy, mental health services, hospital-based intervention, and youth outreach to reduce the cycle of gun violence."

(67% convincing)

"With gun violence against children and young people at record heights, investing in non-violence intervention would make a huge difference. The murders of parents, friends and siblings also take a huge emotional toll on America's youth. This is a change we can make for the future of our children. We need commonsense policies like increased services for victims of gun violence, focused deterrence, cognitive behavioral therapy, hospital-based intervention, and street outreach, to reduce the cycle of violence for America's children."

(68% convincing)

**When it comes to learning more about this issue, voters are interested in hearing from a diverse mix of voices, including mental health professionals, crime victims and their families, ER doctors and nurses, violence prevention social workers and advocates, as well as police chiefs and officers.**



Seven-in-ten voters (70%) say that knowing that mental health professionals support federal funds going towards community-based interventions would make them more likely to support the proposal.



**Voters would also give disproportionate weight to the voices of:**

- crime victims (68% more likely to support)
- mothers/ families of victims (67% more likely)
- ER doctors and nurses (69% more likely for each)
- social workers involved in violence prevention (67% more likely)
- violence prevention advocates (66% more likely)
- police chiefs (68% more likely)
- police officers (67% more likely)

**Last, this is a voting issue for many voters. More than 6-in-10 voters (64%) say they would be more likely to reward their U.S. Senators if they support providing funds for state and local governments to implement community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence.**



Sixty-four percent of voters in Battleground Senate states agree, as do a 56% majority of independent voters and 83% of Democrats. Even pluralities of Republicans are more likely to reward their U.S. Senators for providing federal funds for community-based intervention services aimed at reducing gun violence (48% more likely to 28% less likely). Overall, just 17% of voters are less likely to vote for their U.S. Senators for take a positive stand on this proposal.