

GUN VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE



## KEY MESSAGES

**GUN VIOLENCE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS** - In the U.S., gun violence claims over 35,000 lives each year. It is a public health crisis that deserves a comprehensive public health response.

**WASHINGTONIANS WANT ACTION** - Year after year, Washington voters have proven at the ballot that they want action on gun violence prevention.

**LEADERSHIP** - Washington is a leader in the gun violence prevention movement. Our success is often replicated in other states, having a bigger impact than just Washington state.

**RESPONSIBILITY** - Focusing on responsible behavior and safety accurately frames the conversation around keeping guns out of dangerous hands.

**GUN VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE** - We know there are policies we can and should be adopting to reduce the number of gun deaths in our state. We need elected officials who will make gun violence prevention a priority.

## KEY PHRASING

**GUN RESPONSIBILITY CHAMPIONS** - The Alliance is a non-partisan organization, so rather than advocating for democratic candidates generally, our focus is on supporting gun responsibility champions, who will lead on gun violence prevention.

**EXTREME RISK PROTECTION ORDERS (ERPOs)** - Avoid referring to them as “red flag laws,” which mischaracterizes the way these laws operate and can stigmatize individuals with mental health disabilities.

**UNINTENTIONALLY VS. ACCIDENTALLY** - “Accidental” implies that nothing could be done to prevent a tragedy. When referring to gun deaths, use “unintentional” instead.

**GUN LOBBY** - In general, refer to the “gun lobby” broadly rather than the NRA specifically. Much of our opposition comes from the Washington-based Second Amendment Foundation as well as the NRA, “gun lobby” encompasses both. Refer to organizations by name if you are referencing them specifically.

**SURVIVORS** - In our work, we refer to any individual with a close connection to an incident of gun violence as a survivor—such as family members, friends, and community members—not just those who experienced the incident firsthand.



## DOs AND DON'Ts

DOs	DON'Ts
Talk about gun violence prevention, responsible gun ownership, and keeping our communities and schools safe.	Use the phrases “gun control” or “anti-gun.”
Use key facts to prove the need for and effectiveness of stronger gun laws.	Overload the conversation with numbers or overstate the potential impact of policies with phrases like “this will eliminate gun violence.”
Share victim and survivor stories to remind people of the human impact.	Rely entirely on victim stories or use stories that do not directly relate to the issue you’re talking about.
Talk about closing dangerous loopholes, keeping guns out of dangerous hands, strengthening or streamlining existing laws, and passing commonsense gun laws.	Talk about creating a database or registry of gun owners.
Use phrases like “restricting access to” or “prohibiting.”	Use words like “banning” or “confiscating”.
Talk about the recent progress Washington has made on gun violence prevention.	Frame these successes in a way that suggests our work is done.
Blame the gun lobby—the gun lobby is responsible for the lack of strong laws to protect our communities.	Attack the Second Amendment or gun owners in general.

For questions about how to talk about gun violence and gun violence prevention, email [press@wagunresponsibility.org](mailto:press@wagunresponsibility.org)