

VIOLENCE PREVENTION SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP



Welcome to the second SIG Newsletter! This month we have a Member in the Spotlight profile on Jo Peden who will be presenting at our next meeting. We also have a further reading section introduced on gun violence related to our last talk in January. We look forward to welcoming you all next week!

Our Next Presentation

Our next presentation will be delivered by Jo Peden on 04/05/2022 11-12 UK time. Jo has kindly provided the following summary:

'I am going to present on primary prevention of violence. Currently in systems around the world funding is mainly spent on picking up the pieces and responding to violence when it happens. In the West Midlands over the past seven years we have been shifting the emphasis to prevention of violence. This entails system change but also the need for system leadership; to work together, to join up funding and fill in gaps and take a longer term approach to preventing violence. Woven into the approach on prevention is the need to address the wider determinants of health to prevent inequalities, which are also the determinants of crime. In the West Midlands we have worked on system change at a regional level with strategic partners but also a 'place based approach' in areas of highest need to deliver interventions and develop community engagement in violence prevention.'

Come along next week to hear the presentation!

The Violence Prevention SIG Meetings in 2022

January 2022- Chris Barsotti

May 2022- Jo Peden

July 2022- Zara Quigg et al

October 2022- Open

If you haven't yet had a chance to fill out the information form please find the link below. If it doesn't work as a clickable link please copy and past into your browser:

<https://forms.office.com/r/PjypUccNj9>

If you are not sure if you've filled it out yet please contact Tim

Member in the Spotlight

Jo Peden



Where are you currently working?

I am currently working as a Consultant in Public Health at the West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit, which is funded by the Home Office and hosted by the Office of The Police and Crime Commissioner. The Strategic Board of the VRU is multi-agency with representatives from education, police, health, local authorities, voluntary sector and faith groups. The approach of the VRU is to embed and promote a public health approach to preventing violence by taking a long term approach, evaluating and developing evidence around what works, joining up systems and encouraging innovation and tackling the root causes.

How did you get involved in the SIG?

I worked previously at a national level at Public Health England (PHE) in the health and justice team, part of The WHO Collaborating Centre on Health in Prisons and became involved in violence prevention and preventing offending and re-offending in children and young people. I am interested in sharing ideas on what works to prevent violence and also to share knowledge on how best to evaluate interventions.

What value do you think the SIG brings?

I think the value is on drawing on ideas of what works in other countries and to ensure we can collectively identify and work on gaps in evaluation. For example, we have recently completed a rapid review of evidence on community response to a violent incident. The review highlighted the paucity of evidence in this area. I think this would be an opportunity to identify a research project to look at how best to respond, drawing on other specialities and knowledge which could be transferable.

What motivates your work in violence prevention?

The main reason I work on violence prevention is the very fact that violence is preventable. We can save lives. Violence impacts on those who are most deprived and those who have the least life opportunities. Children cannot control the circumstances they are born into but we can help to give them the best start in life and to help provide loving supportive relationships to help them thrive. We need to refocus our energies on 'upstream prevention' and protecting and enabling vulnerable children.

What do you think the biggest challenges for work in violence prevention are going forward?

The biggest challenge is that to make changes and to see improved outcomes around violence takes time and a concerted, concentrated effort to join up systems and to work collaboratively. The political systems we have are orientated towards achieving short term and immediate results. If we are taking a 'public health' approach to preventing violence it will take time to see the benefits. However, once achieved they will be long lasting and will impact on other areas not just a reduction in violence.

Further Reading

Gun Violence

We were fortunate at our last meeting in January to hear a fascinating talk from Chris Barsotti on 'Universal Health Approaches to Firearm Injury Prevention' which generated some great discussion! I thought this part of the newsletter would be useful for highlighting research conducted that relates to the talk we had for those interested. In this vein, Richard Bent sent through a link to an article by Lopez and Haskins entitled 'The Fight Against Rampant Gun Violence: Data-Driven Scientific Research Will Light the Way'. The conclusion of the article is quoted directly below:

'Taken as a whole, nearly 100 reports and publications populating the NIJ firearms violence research archive represent both micro- and macro-level examinations of the U.S. gun violence problem. Micro-level research examines individual needs, actions, and impacts in relation to gun violence. At the macro- or community level, research drawing from those individual findings probes the societal implications and impacts of firearms activity as a critical step toward forging collaborative programs and partnerships that can make a lasting difference.

As both the NIJ research archive and newer studies suggest, the criminal justice system is in a unique position to help prevent firearm violence by focusing on high-risk individuals in gun crime-ridden communities. Yet, decades of data-driven research instructs that the justice system must collaborate with other systems, such as urban planning, the public health system, and key community stakeholders contributing to the socioeconomic health of communities, in order to make a lasting impact on street violence.

Micro- and macro-level approaches are equally important to maintaining a scientifically sound basis for advancing gun violence policy and practice. In the end, only evidence-based science on who carries guns illegally, why they carry and use them, and how they get them can produce the answers law enforcement, the justice system, and community groups need to take clear aim at the gun violence crisis.' (See Lopez and Haskins, [The Fight Against Rampant Gun Violence: Data-Driven Scientific Research Will Light the Way](#) | [National Institute of Justice \(ojp.gov\)](#), [Accessed: 27/04/2022]).

Any queries, suggestions for future speakers, or anything that you would like including in the next newsletter (including if you'd like to be the next presenter or member in the spotlight)?

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