

**Generic Clearance for CDC/ATSDR**

**Formative Research and Tool Development**

**Title: Formative Research for Firearm Violence and Community Violence Messaging**

Supporting Statement B

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## 1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

For the surveys on both firearm injury and death (FA I&D) and community violence (CV), a random sample of general consumers will be recruited through the survey platform Optimal Workshop, which has extensive participant panels. The sample will consist of adults aged 18 years or older and reflect diversity in terms of gender and geographic residence.

For focus groups on FA I&D with general consumers, a professional recruitment firm will conduct recruitment.

For focus groups on FA I&D with policymaker organizations, community based organizations, and organizations serving communities of color, recruitment will happen via the following approaches:

- 1) DVP reaches out to relevant organizations that are within DVP's networks and partnerships.
- 2) DVP works with the contractor and a recruitment firm to identify and then contact relevant organizations.

For focus groups on CV with general consumers, a professional recruitment firm will conduct recruitment.

For focus groups on CV with community violence workforce members (e.g., violence interrupters, community health workers) and community based organizations, recruitment will happen via the following approaches:

- 1) DVP reaches out to CV workforce members and community-based organizations that are within DVP's networks and partnerships.
- 2) DVP works with the contractor and a recruitment firm to identify and then contact CV workforce members and community-based organizations.

All recruitment materials will be in English. They will include information on the purpose of the data collection, eligibility requirements, contact information for additional questions, and a link to a screening survey for individuals to express their interest in participating.

## 2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

### *Survey*

Two surveys will be conducted online via an online survey platform (Optimal Workshop), one survey for FA I&D and one survey for CV. Recruitment of general consumers will be conducted through the survey platform, which has extensive participant panels (up to 239 million people). The platform allows for national recruitment which reaches a wide and diverse target audience, including those in rural areas. Recruited survey participants will be provided with informed consent at the beginning of the online survey. If they consent to participate in the survey, they will be asked to proceed to fill out the survey. At most 500 general consumers will participate in the FA survey, and at most 500 general consumers will participate in the CV survey.

Quantitative survey data will be analyzed using the survey platform's built-in analytics, as well as by exporting data into Excel, where descriptive statistical and comparative analyses will be performed. Qualitative survey data will be exported into Excel and analyzed using grounded theory and narrative

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analysis strategies. Survey findings will be used to answer the research questions and develop recommendations to inform communication strategies.

### *Focus Group Discussions*

For FA I&D, at most 6 focus groups with general consumers will be completed. At most one focus group will be completed with policymaker organizations; one focus group with community-based organizations; and one focus group with organizations serving communities of color.

FA I&D focus group recruitment materials will be sent out via the previously described methods. For focus groups involving general consumers, a screening survey will be used to gather preliminary information and demographic characteristics, to help segment individuals into an appropriate focus group. General consumers who meet the eligibility criteria for the FA I&D focus group discussions will be segmented into one of six groups based on geographic location, race/ethnicity, and gender. Participants within each group will share one primary characteristic, and be varied on other characteristics. For example, participants in the urban focus group will all reside in urban areas, but vary across gender and race/ethnicity.

- Geographic Location: Urban
- Geographic Location: Rural
- Race/Ethnicity: Black, African American, and/or Hispanic
- Race/Ethnicity: White
- Firearm Ownership: Gun owners
- Firearm Ownership: Non-gun owners

For CV, at most 6 focus groups with general consumers will be completed. At most one focus group will be completed with CV workforce organizations. At most 2 focus groups will be completed with community-based organizations.

CV focus group recruitment materials will be sent out via the previously described methods. For focus groups involving general consumers, a screening survey will be used to gather preliminary information and demographic characteristics, to help segment individuals into an appropriate focus group. General consumers who meet the eligibility criteria for the CV focus group discussions will be segmented into one of six groups based on geographic location, race/ethnicity, and gender.

- Geographic Location: Urban
- Geographic Location: Rural
- Race/Ethnicity: Black, African American, and/or Hispanic
- Race/Ethnicity: White
- Gender: Female
- Gender: Male

Groupings may be adjusted based on recruitment and to ensure project timelines are met. In recruiting participants for focus groups, the professional recruitment firm will ensure that a diverse array of perspectives and practices are reached including age, gender, and place of residence.

Each focus group will last no longer than 60 minutes. For convenience to participants, focus groups will be conducted virtually via Zoom, an online video conferencing platform. Each focus group will be audio-recorded and the data will be transferred and stored on a shared information system with access

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restricted to authorized study personnel. Before participating in a focus group, each participant will be emailed an informed consent form, which they will be asked to complete and return before they may participate. Prior to beginning each focus group, the focus group facilitator will introduce themselves, describe the study, review the informed consent document, and answer any questions participants may have. After obtaining verbal consent from each participant, the facilitator will follow a predetermined list of questions to guide the focus group. Each focus group will be transcribed and imported into qualitative data analysis software for coding. While the focus group is not designed to capture personally identifying information (PII), the data will be reviewed prior to coding so that any PII participants offer throughout the course of the discussion is removed.

Analysis of these data will utilize grounded theory and narrative analysis strategies to answer the research questions and identify translatable findings into communication strategies. A codebook will be developed consisting of deductive and inductive codes to identify and compare themes within and across focus groups.

Findings from the survey and focus groups will be compiled into a report that will highlight recommendations for message and material development.

### **3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with No Response**

The survey platform that will be used (Optimal Workshop) will help maximize response rate, because of its extensive participant panels and ability to responsively recruit participants throughout the survey period, based on participation metrics. Non-responders to the survey will be replaced with newly recruited individuals from the panel.

Each focus group participant will receive a gift card as a token of appreciation and reimbursement for opportunity costs and expenses incurred due to participation. Providing incentives to respondents is necessary to successfully recruit individuals. Some of the target audience represents hard-to-reach populations (i.e., racial/ethnic minority individuals). Research suggests that incentives have proven helpful in recruitment of hard-to-reach groups (Bonevski et al. 2014; George et al. 2014). Incentives can increase the likelihood of obtaining a diverse sample of participants, which would include individuals in hard-to-reach and minority populations who encounter complex social problems that place limitations on their desire and time to volunteer for research studies (Ellard-Gray et al. 2015; Knoll et al. 2012).

### **4. Tests of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken**

To inform the survey instrument and focus group discussion guides for FA I&D, the following formative research activities were conducted: a review of public and media inquiries related to FA I&D, an environmental scan of communications from key organizations working to prevent FA I&D, a review of peer-reviewed and gray literature about FA I&D prevention messaging, and social listening to understand social media messaging from FA I&D-focused organizations.

To inform the survey instrument and focus group discussion guides for CV, the following formative research activities were conducted: a review of public and media inquiries received by CDC related to CV, an environmental scan of how 14 prioritized CV organizations communicate about CV, a landscape analysis of organizations and agencies present on the topic of CV, analysis of news media and social

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media across a 14-day period related to CV, interviews with CDC CV subject matter experts, and a discussion with 4 CDC partner organizations working to prevent CV.

For this study, the survey and focus group questions were reviewed by multiple staff within the consulting agency and by multiple staff within the DVP. Some survey questions were derived from pre-approved questions from the Health Message Testing System generic OMB mechanism; this includes questions assessing audience reactions to messages and preferred communication channels. Other survey questions were newly developed; these include questions assessing audience perceptions of topics, opinions about violence prevention, and preferred images.

### *FA I&D Survey*

The questions intend to:

- Assess audiences':
  - perceptions of FA I&D
  - opinions on FA I&D prevention
- Assess audiences' reactions to FA I&D messages in terms of:
  - understanding
  - agreement
  - believability
  - appeal
  - memorability
  - importance
- Assess audiences' preferred images depicting firearms, firearm locks, firearm safes/lock boxes, and community prevention of firearm violence
- Assess audiences' preferred:
  - communication channels
  - trusted messengers

### *CV Survey*

The questions intend to:

- Assess audiences':
  - perceptions of CV
  - opinions on CV prevention
- Assess audiences' reactions to CV messages in terms of:
  - understanding
  - agreement
  - believability
  - appeal
  - memorability
  - importance

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- Assess audiences' preferred images depicting community
- Assess audiences' preferred:
  - o communication channels
  - o trusted messengers

### *FA I&D Focus Group Discussions*

The questions intend to:

- Gain a greater understanding of audiences':
  - o perceptions of FA I&D
  - o opinions on FA I&D prevention
- Gain a greater understanding of audiences' reactions to and opinions on FA I&D messages
- Gain a greater understanding of audiences':
  - o communication needs
  - o trusted messengers

### *CV Focus Group Discussions*

The questions intend to:

- Gain a greater understanding of audiences':
  - o perceptions of CV
  - o opinions on CV prevention
- Gain a greater understanding of audiences' reactions to and opinions on CV messages
- Gain a greater understanding of audiences':
  - o communication needs
  - o trusted messengers

## **5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects/Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data**

This information collection request does not employ advanced statistical methods. CDC staff consulted are in the Division of Violence Prevention (DVP) and include: Jenny Dills, Cassidy Whitson, Alberto Santana, Leslie Dorigo. These staff were consulted about the methodological design of the study. Their recommendations were incorporated into the study design and instruments on an ongoing basis. The health communications consultancy will be responsible for overseeing and executing the data collection and analysis.

## **References**

Bonevski, B., Randell, M., Paul, C., Chapman, K., Twyman, L., Bryant, J., Brozek, I., & Hughes, C. (2014). Reaching the hard-to-reach: a systematic review of strategies for improving health and medical research with socially disadvantaged groups. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 14, 42. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-14-42>

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Ellard-Gray, A., Jeffrey, N. K., Choubak, M., & Crann, S. E. (2015). Finding the Hidden Participant: Solutions for Recruiting Hidden, Hard-to-Reach, and Vulnerable Populations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 14(5), 1609406915621420. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406915621420>

George, S., Duran, N., & Norris, K. (2014). A systematic review of barriers and facilitators to minority research participation among African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders. *American Journal of Public Health*, 104(2), e16-e31.

Knoll, M., Soller, L., Ben-Shoshan, M. et al. (2012). The use of incentives in vulnerable populations for a telephone survey: a randomized controlled trial. *BMC Res Notes* 5, 572 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1756-0500-5-572>