

## THE TRACE NEWSLETTER

### DECEMBER 29, 2017

Happy Friday, Bulletin readers. As a site dedicated to reporting on gun violence in America, we don't get to bring you a lot of good news. But that doesn't mean there hasn't been any on our beat in 2017. In fact, real progress has been made this year when it comes to reducing shootings. Below, some highlights. — Alex Yablon, reporter

The private sale loophole is shrinking. New survey data shows that only about 20 percent of gun sales now [take place without a background check](#), possibly due to an increase in the number of states requiring checks on transactions between private parties. Two decades ago, it was estimated that as much as 40 percent of gun transfers were not subject to vetting.

A Connecticut program to provide social services and recreational opportunities may help reduce fatal shootings. The state-funded [Project Longevity](#) tracks people in New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport who have been identified as likely to commit acts of violence. A [report by the Giffords Law Center](#) credited the program with cutting homicides by half in the three cities.

Seattle is expanding its experiment with [confiscating guns](#) from people subject to restraining orders... King County [kicked in enough money](#) to double an intergovernmental task force to look for domestic abusers who unlawfully keep their guns after they are subject to protective orders.

...And even pro-gun states are taking disarming abusers more seriously. A Republican state senator in Pennsylvania introduced a bill that would require residents guilty of domestic violence to [surrender any guns to police within 24 hours of a conviction](#) (currently they have 60 days).

A Chicago mentoring program is helping young men escape the vicious cycle of shootings. Becoming A Man leads students in exercises that help them cope with emotional challenges [without resorting to violence](#). Studies show enrollees are significantly less likely to be arrested for violent crime.

Another sign of progress in Chicago: An investment in technical expertise drove shootings way down in one of the city's most infamously dangerous neighborhoods. Police said [shootings in Englewood cratered](#) following wider adoption of the ShotSpotter gunshot detection system and the launch of a program that stations civilian crime analysts in precincts to develop local crime-reduction strategies.

Cities are investing in violence interrupter programs. New York said it would launch the Cure Violence program in [Brooklyn's Fort Greene neighborhood](#). Baltimore's mayor announced the city's similar Safe Streets initiative will [grow from four to ten neighborhoods](#). A philanthropic donation will [fund a Ceasefire initiative in Milwaukee](#) next spring.

Evidence grew that universal background check laws reduce firearm trafficking. Canadian police said they recovered far fewer American guns after Washington State, right across the border, [started requiring the checks on private sales](#).

A meaningful gun safety bill got serious bipartisan support in Congress. Though it hasn't passed yet, the Fix NICS Act introduced by Texas Republican Senator John Cornyn and Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy, a Democrat, [has enough cosponsors](#) to pass the upper chamber. The bill would substantially increase funding to ensure that federal gun background databases aren't missing records banning would-be buyers from owning guns.