

For Better Project Fact Sheet

What is the For Better Project?

For Better is a collaboration between small businesses, community leaders, and consumers to make our communities safer and better. The project is led by Guns Down America, a national nonprofit pursuing business solutions to reduce gun violence and improve community safety. This is a shared effort to make all neighbors, businesses, and communities thrive by standing for actions that are proven to make us safer.

How does For Better work to make communities safer?

Strong small businesses = strong communities = better outcomes for all

- Small businesses create more economic and social mobility opportunities for neighbors, uplifting the entire community.
- Shopping local creates jobs and keeps money for local communities: studies show when you spend \$100 locally, 73% stays local vs. 43% when shopping at a non-local business¹ and that spending locally has a multiplier effect² of money spent in the local economy, improving the community and the lives of neighbors.
- Economic opportunity is one of the most effective ways to improve public safety, reduce crime, and achieve safer communities.³

The business and economic case for engaging with community safety

- A study that observed the impact of gun violence in Washington, D.C. showed that every 10 shootings prevented resulted in one new business that alone produced 20 more jobs, \$1.3 more sales, and one less business closure.⁴
- Mass shootings result in an estimated \$27 billion loss in business revenue annually and businesses within a 1.25-mile radius of a mass shooting see an average 19% drop in revenue.⁵
- Losses in revenue and productivity due to gun violence are estimated to cost private employers \$535 million per year nationwide.⁶
- Just one gun shot can result in up to 7.5% of business closures.⁷

¹ <https://ced.msu.edu/upload/reports/why%20buy%20local.pdf>

² <https://amiba.net/local-multiplier/>

³ <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-path-to-public-safety-requires-economic-opportunity/>

⁴ <https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/justice-policy-center/projects/economic-impacts-gun-violence>

⁵ <https://www.informs.org/News-Room/INFORMS-Releases/News-Releases/New-Study-Reveals-Economic-Ripple-Effects-of-Mass-Shootings-on-Local-Businesses>

⁶ <https://hms.harvard.edu/news/business-case-reducing-gun-violence>

⁷ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s40163-021-00146-9>

- Over half of U.S. adults say they would leave a store if they saw someone openly carrying a firearm.⁸
- Nearly two-thirds of adults believe companies should pursue policies that could help reduce gun violence.⁹
- Adopting policies that discourage the carry of weapons, particularly guns, can improve safety. States with stronger policies against public carry have less violent crime.¹⁰

Connected communities are better communities

- Neighborhoods with even 1 point higher social connectedness are safer, resulting in 21% less murders and 20% less motor vehicle theft than less connected communities.¹¹
- The strongest deterrent for burglaries is neighborhood cohesion — neighborhoods where people greet and know one another.¹²
- Nonprofits that are locally focused and involved create stronger, safer communities. It's estimated that "every 10 additional organizations focusing on crime and community life in a city with 100,000 residents leads to a 9 percent reduction in the murder rate, a 6 percent reduction in the violent crime rate, and a 4 percent reduction in the property crime rate."¹³

What does a For Better business do?

Every For Better business signs a pledge that states they will take actions to promote safety, make sure every neighbor thrives, and create connection in their community. There are actions outlined in the pledge, like discouraging weapons carrying in store and ensuring you have a first aid kit handy, donating to local nonprofits, sourcing products locally when possible to grow your local economy, and encouraging feedback from the neighborhood to be good stewards of the community.

There are many ways to engage in community safety, thriving, and connection. Every business will have local community partners as a resource to bounce ideas off of and imagine the best possible solutions for your unique area.

⁸ <https://www.gunsdownamerica.org/resources/new-poll-consumers-want-gun-safety>

⁹ <https://www.gunsdownamerica.org/resources/new-poll-consumers-want-gun-safety>

¹⁰ <https://www.rand.org/research/gun-policy/analysis/concealed-carry/violent-crime.html>

¹¹ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8460118/>

¹² <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/2470654.2481347>

¹³ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0003122417736289>