

risks they pose, particularly in the home,⁴⁴ and developing means such as amnesties and buybacks to encourage individuals to rid themselves of unwanted or unneeded firearms.⁴⁵ Educational programs have also focused on increasing awareness of safe practices and compliance with them.⁴⁶

Regulatory restrictions and litigation have also been used to encourage suppliers of firearms to control sales and be more responsible.⁴⁷

Many countries maintain information systems for owners and their firearms. Often these systems are computerized and centrally maintained. Many countries, including the US, Canada, Australia and Great Britain are in the process of upgrading these systems.

The efforts in the United States to understand the problems of firearms death and injury, and measures to reduce it, have been well-documented.⁴⁸ However, relatively little has been published on international efforts to control firearms. The International Study on Firearm Regulation prepared for the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice indicated that of the countries responding to the survey, more than half indicated that they were in the process of undertaking reforms to their firearms regulations. Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia and the United Kingdom have reforms in progress. Major legislative reform is under discussion in Brazil, Denmark, Finland, India, Jamaica, Poland, South Africa and New Zealand.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Public programs to discourage keeping guns in the home have been extensive in the US. For example, Project Lifeline is a public service campaign of the HELP Network, Physicians for Social Responsibility and the Centre to Prevent Handgun Violence. The advertisements show a handgun pointed out from a picture with the caption "The person most likely to kill you with a handgun already has the keys to your house". The Nation's Health, November 1996.

⁴⁵ The impact of these programs has been questioned. C.M. Callahan, F.P. Rivara, T.D. Koepsell, Money for guns: evaluation of the Seattle buy-back program, Public Health Reports, 1994; 109:472-477. See also M.T. Plotkin, ed., Under Fire: Gun Buy-backs, Exchanges and Amnesty Programs. Washington: Police Executive Research Forum, 1996. They may, however, have educational effects which have not been measured.

⁴⁶ R. J. Flinn, L.G. Allen, Trigger locks and Firearm safety: one trauma center's prevention campaign, Journal of Emergency Nursing, 1995; 21:296-298.

⁴⁷ Center to Prevent Handgun Violence Legal Action Project. Outline of Gun Manufacture and Seller Liability Issues, Washington DC, 1995.

⁴⁸ See for example, Krista Robinson, et. al. Firearm Violence: an Annotated Bibliography, John Hopkins University, Centre for Gun Policy and Research, August 1997 which, regrettably has little international research.

⁴⁹ United Nations Commission On Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, op.cit.