



KAREN L. SMITH, MD, MPH
Director and State Public Health Officer

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

May 30, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

On May 31, 2017, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released the *Preventing Violence in California Volume 1: The Role of Public Health* report. The publication reaffirms CDPH's commitment in addressing violence as a public health concern, and is the initial issue of a planned series on the public health role in violence prevention. This is intended to serve as a resource for local health jurisdictions and other stakeholders. CDPH developed this report emphasizing that the public health has a long-standing mission to prevent negative health outcomes, promote healthy communities, and protect the health of entire populations. Additionally, public health recognizes that violence is preventable and takes a primary prevention approach, working “upstream” addressing underlying causes to prevent violence from happening in the first place.

In 2014, there were more than 6,000 violent deaths, 27,000 hospitalizations, and 154,000 emergency department visits for violent injuries in California, with an estimated annual cost of over \$11 billion in medical cost and lost productivity. These numbers only tell part of the story – violence affects the health and well-being of all Californians.

Through its Violence Prevention Initiative, CDPH will promote a collaborative vision for addressing violence prevention, track population-based indicators, and provide technical assistance to local partners on evidence-informed or evidence-based health strategies through the ongoing report series. CDPH is committed and dedicated to achieving tangible and measurable success to address violence from a multi-disciplinary perspective using public health approaches in order to reduce violence and create safer, healthier communities across California.

Future issues will provide in-depth content on specific topics, including data on forms of violence and prevention strategies. The development of this series of reports provides an opportunity for collaboration among local and state stakeholders invested in violence prevention. Interested partners may contact violenceprevention@cdph.ca.gov to provide feedback or find out more about participating in this collective effort.



Page Two
May 30, 2017

Preventing Violence in California Volume 1: The Role of Public Health can be accessed on the [Violence Prevention Initiative](#) page on CDPH's website. We look forward to continuing to provide information to better understand, prevent, and address violence in California.

Sincerely,



Karen L. Smith, MD, MPH
Director and State Public Health Officer
California Department of Public Health