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Press release : 2017 : 01 : 31 : USFSP Research Suggests Link Between Exposure to Violence, Gun Carrying

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USFSP RESEARCH SUGGESTS LINK BETWEEN EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE, GUN CARRYING

[Dr. Joan Reid](#), assistant professor of Criminology at USF St. Petersburg, co-authored an article that was published online in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* on Tuesday, Jan. 31. The article, "[The Relationships Among Exposure to Violence, Psychological Distress, and Gun Carrying Among Male Adolescents Found Guilty of Serious Legal Offenses](#)," examines the potential effect of exposure to violence in relation to gun carrying and psychological distress among 1,170 primarily African-American and Hispanic male youths between the ages of 14 and 19 who had been found guilty of committing at least one serious criminal offense.

The article analyzes the first two years of a seven-year Pathways to Desistance Program study of serious juvenile offenders in Philadelphia County, Penn., or Maricopa County, Ariz. The program followed serious young offenders in an attempt to determine what factors led to a decrease in their involvement with crime.

"We collected data four times during the two-year period, and about 50 percent of the subjects said they were carrying at some point during the study," said Reid, whose academic research includes exposure to violence, victimology, and human trafficking. "So we were looking at whether there was anything we could see as far as when they carried and when they didn't carry during that two-year period in an attempt to determine what was causing them to carry."

According to 2013 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the leading cause of death for black males in the United States between the ages of 15 and 34 is homicide.

"Every semester, I look at these statistics for my Victimology class and it disturbs me," said Reid. "It is extremely upsetting. And even for black males as young as 10-14, homicide is the second leading cause of death with most of these homicides being gun-related violence. That is why this research really matters."

Reid served as lead author on the publication with Dr. Tara N. Richards from the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Baltimore; Dr. Thomas A. Loughran from the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland; and Dr. Edward P. Mulvey from the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

In February 2016, Reid co-authored a research article on gun carrying in the *American Journal of Public Health* titled "Feeling Bulletproof: Does Carrying a Gun Make Crime Seem Less Risky to Offenders?" The study observed how perceptions of risks, costs, crime rewards, and violence exposure are impacted as individual gun-carrying behaviors change among high-risk adolescents.

Reid has served as a Criminology faculty member at USFSP since 2014 and has been an adjunct faculty member with the USF System since 2008. She's earned three degrees from USF: a Ph.D. in Criminology, a master's degree in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling, and a bachelor's degree in Psychology. Reid recently published findings from another study about childhood adversity in human trafficking in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

[Read more](#) about Reid's study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.



Dr. Joan Reid

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