Serving up Safety and Economic Opportunity

A Guide for Restaurants to Prevent Gun Violence

Version 1.0, January 2026

Scan for Digital PDF

in kind

Forward

Restaurants can make a real difference in preventing gun violence—both by promoting firearm safety and preparedness, and by serving as engines of economic opportunity in the communities they serve. Lack of stable employment and pathways to mobility is one of the leading risk factors for firearm homicide, and restaurants are uniquely positioned as employers, training grounds, and community anchors.

Gun violence can affect anyone, at any time. We learned this in the most painful way when our brother and co-founder, Rajan, was killed. His death forced us to confront not only our own lack of preparedness, but a larger truth: as restaurant owners, our responsibility extends beyond hospitality to the safety of the people who work in and gather in our spaces.

As a restaurant company that supports and funds thousands of independent restaurants across the country, we believe this responsibility comes with an opportunity to lead. Safety is foundational to hospitality, and today, gun violence prevention must be part of how restaurants think about safety. Restaurants are places of connection and community—making them both vulnerable to violence and uniquely positioned to help prevent it.

We are embarking on this work alongside leading experts and partners, including Chethan Sathya, a pediatric surgeon and national public health leader focused on gun violence prevention, as well as nonprofit organizations, survivor-led groups, corporate partners, and community-based violence intervention organizations. Together, we are committed to grounding this effort in evidence, lived experience, and practical action.

This guide is a call to action for the hospitality industry. It offers clear, practical steps restaurants can take to improve safety, support their teams, and reassure guests—without compromising the openness and warmth that define hospitality. We invite restaurant owners and leaders everywhere to engage, act, and help make our communities safer places to work, gather, and belong.

Johann Moonesinghe
CEO & Co-Founder, inKind

Jonathan de Wolff
Chief Sustainability Officer, inKind

Table of Contents

4 Gun Violence & Economic Distress

5 How Restaurants Can Be Part of the Solution

6 What Restaurants Can Do to Curb Gun Violence

7 Promote Firearm Safety & Secure Storage

8 Support Community Violence Intervention Programs

9 Expand Economic Opportunities

10 Address Food Insecurity & Food Deserts

11 Strengthen the Workplace

12 Public Health Resources & Policy Supports

13 Communities Transformed by Restaurants

in kind

Gun Violence & Economic Distress Are Deeply Interconnected [1]



Complex Epidemic

Homicides, mass shootings, accidents, and suicides each have distinct drivers and solutions.



Poverty & Violence

Nearly two-thirds of firearm homicides occur in high-poverty areas, where unemployment strongly correlates with violence.



Cycle of Disinvestment

Violence fuels fear, slows down consumer activity, and drives disinvestment in local communities.



Impact on Business

Gun violence threatens safety, mental health, and financial stability for employees and employers.

Proven solution

Economic reinvestment — where restaurants can play a key role through tailored community approaches.

1. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Firearm Violence: A Public Health Crisis in America. NCBI Bookshelf. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK605165/

in kind



Restaurants are at the heart of every community.

You're not just serving meals — you're building connections, creating jobs, and shaping safer neighborhoods.

This guide shows how restaurants can be part of the solution to gun violence, with clear actions and trusted resources.

in kind

What Restaurants Can Do To Curb Gun Violence in Their Communities

Promote Firearm Safety & Secure Storage

Improper firearm storage drives many shootings, suicides, and thefts — simply securing storage prevents tragedy.

Support Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Programs

CVI programs interrupt cycles of violence through trusted community relationships, not policing.

Expand Economic Opportunities: Jobs & Mentorship

Economic instability fuels higher violence rates — but restaurants can serve as engines of opportunity and community renewal.

Address Food Insecurity & Food Deserts

Food insecurity is a root cause of violence. Food deserts exacerbate poverty, health issues, and social disconnection.



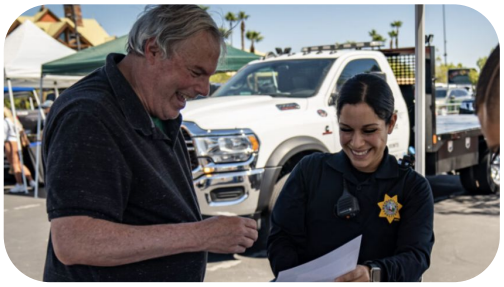
Promote Firearm Safety & Secure Storage

Improper firearm storage drives many shootings, suicides, and thefts — and most mass shooters obtain guns from family members. Simply securing firearms can prevent these tragedies before they start.

4.6 M
children live in homes with unsecured guns

380,000 +
firearms are stolen annually

What Restaurants Can Do



Increase Access to Safety Tools

Partner with local law enforcement or programs like **Project ChildSafe** to distribute free gun locks and support gun buyback initiatives.



Educate Employees & Community

Host or promote gun safety workshops and collaborate with local gun owners to encourage responsible firearm practices.



Share & Display Safety Information

Post secure storage reminders and share trusted educational resources such as **Be SMART for Kids**, **End Family Fire**, and **Own It? Respect It. Secure It.**

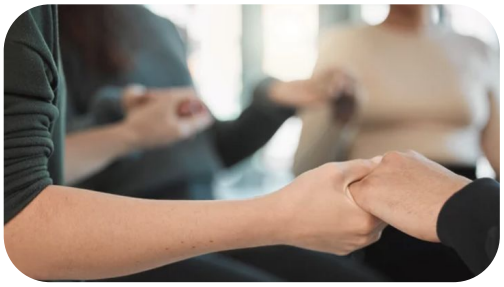
Support Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Programs

CVI programs interrupt cycles of violence through trusted community relationships by mediating conflicts, mentoring at-risk individuals, and connecting survivors to jobs, housing, and mental health support.

30-60 %

reductions in shootings have been achieved in high-violence areas through CVI programs

What Restaurants Can Do



Partner & Provide Space

Collaborate with local CVI organizations like **Cure Violence** and **Advance Peace**, offering your restaurant as a venue for mediation, community meals, or healing circles.



Support Frontline Workers

Provide meals, employment opportunities, or essential supplies to CVI staff who have direct contact with people at risk.



Amplify Awareness

Use your platform—through signage, social media, and community outreach—to promote CVI programs and their impact in reducing violence.

Expand Economic Opportunities: Jobs, Mentorship, & Entrepreneurship

Economic instability fuels higher violence rates — but restaurants can be engines of opportunity, where youth mentorship reduces violent crime involvement and entrepreneurship fosters lasting community resilience.

What Restaurants Can Do



Hire Locally & Inclusively

Prioritize local hiring and create second-chance opportunities for returning citizens.



Develop Career Pathways

Partner with culinary training programs and offer mentorships, internships, or job shadowing to build future talent.



Support Entrepreneurship

Encourage staff pursuing ventures like food trucks or catering, and collaborate with local, minority-owned businesses and incubators.

Address Food Insecurity & Food Deserts

Food insecurity is a root driver of violence — limited access to healthy food deepens poverty and isolation, while community food programs build trust, cohesion, and reduce violence risk factors.

What Restaurants Can Do



Reduce Food Waste & Support Access

Donate surplus food to local food banks and shelters. Partner with food co-ops or urban agriculture initiatives to expand food access.



Host Community Events

Organize pay-what-you-can meal nights, pop-up farmers' markets, or neighborhood dinners that bring people together around food and connection.



Promote Food Education

Offer cooking classes and nutrition workshops that empower families with skills for healthier and affordable eating.

What Restaurants Can Do for Their Workplace

Creating a safe and supportive workplace means addressing both firearm suicide and workplace violence through prevention, training, and mental health support.

Over **70%**
of workplace homicides involve firearms

Over **50%**
of gun deaths are suicides involving firearms

What Restaurants Can Do



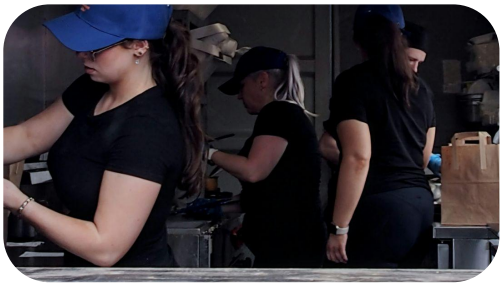
Promote Mental Health & Suicide Prevention

Train staff in **Mental Health First Aid**, **QPR**, share resources **988 Lifeline**, **Means Matter**, and safe firearm storage for at-risk individuals.



Strengthen Workplace Safety

Establish no-firearms policies (where legally allowed), offer de-escalation and active shooter training, and partner with law enforcement for safety assessments.



Support Employee Well-Being

Provide access to mental health resources, trauma-informed care, and create anonymous systems for reporting threats or safety concerns.

in kind

Public Health Resources & Policy Supports

Firearm Safety & Secure Storage

Northwell Health Center for Gun Violence Prevention Gun violence research and development for hospitals to depolarize gun safety.

Be SMART Promotes responsible gun ownership and secure firearm storage to help keep children safe.

End Family Fire Encourages gun owners to practice secure firearm storage and reduce the risk of shootings in the home.

Means Matter A public-health campaign that works to reduce suicide by encouraging limiting access to lethal means — especially firearms — during moments of crisis.

Project ChildSafe Promotes responsible firearm ownership by providing free gun locks and educational resources.

Own It? Respect It. Secure It. Promotes safe firearm ownership by respecting their firearms and storing them securely.

Community Violence Intervention

The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention Advances hospital-based programs to reduce violence and promote healing in communities.

Cure Violence Tackles violence like a public-health epidemic by deploying trained local "violence interrupters" to mediate conflicts, support high-risk individuals, and shift community norms.

Economic Opportunities

Cities United Works alongside public-safety stakeholders and young leaders to build safe, healthy and hopeful communities.

Advance Peace Supports individuals most affected by gun violence through trauma-informed mentorship, services, and opportunities to break cycles of retaliation.

Food Insecurity & Food Deserts

Feeding America Ensures equitable access to nutritious food by partnering with a nationwide network of food banks and meal programs.

Policy Support

Sandy Hook Promise Empowers youth and adults to recognize warning signs and intervene early to prevent violence in schools, homes, and communities.

Giffords Mobilizes voters, educates lawmakers, and advances evidence-based gun safety laws to save lives and build safer communities across America.

Workplace Safety

Mental Health First Aid A training program that teaches how to recognize and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges until professional help arrives.

988 Lifeline Provides free, confidential 24/7 emotional support via call, text, or chat for anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

National Domestic Violence Hotline Offers free, confidential 24/7 support for anyone experiencing relationship abuse or seeking help.

Communities Transformed by Restaurants

Increased jobs

Better, translatable skill sets for jobs for growth in and out of the community

Increased access to better food options

Safe spaces for people to gather



- Better health outcomes
- Reduced food insecurity
- Immediate and long-term economic opportunity and growth for individuals and family
- Reduced community gun violence

in kind



in kind

Restaurants can curb gun violence and build stronger, safer communities.

Every action counts. Every meal, job, partnership, and conversation helps save lives.

For more information, contact johann@inkind.com.