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STREET BY STREET

Cross-Site Evaluation of the OJJDP Community-Based
Violence Prevention Demonstration Program

Kathleen A. Tomberg and Jeffrey A. Butts

with Hannah Adler, Laila Alsabahi, Kwan-Lamar Blount-Hill, Michelle Cubellis, Sheyla Delgado, Douglas Evans, Alana Henninger, Jennifer Lynn-Whaley, Marissa Mandala, Megan O'Toole, Jennifer Peirce, Emily Pelletier, Caterina Gouvis Roman, Maggie Schmuhl, and Caitlin Taylor

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Executive Summary

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) provided funds to the Research and Evaluation Center at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (JohnJayREC) to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of the Office's Community Based Violence Prevention (CBVP) demonstration in five cities across the United States. Programmatic grants in the CBVP demonstration varied in amount, but were typically $2 million per city. The funds usually supported projects for two to four years between 2010 and 2014.

All the city projects in CBVP shared common elements, such as their overall objectives and core principles, an inter-agency collaborative approach, a focus on specific geographic areas, demographic groups and identified "high risk" youth. Cities varied, however, in the implementation of their strategies. Not surprisingly, the cities also differed in the nature, dynamics, and driving factors behind youth violence and gang activity in their local areas. This influenced the overall design and implementation of the program, as well as the type and availability of data.

Although the five city projects all included law enforcement, youth services, job training, and other nonprofit social services, the structure and content of these institutional roles assumed different configurations in each location. This is clear in the project management structure across cities. In three sites – Oakland, Newark, and Denver – a specific city agency led project development and implementation, with service provision assigned to nonprofit organizations. In Brooklyn and Washington, DC, nonprofit organizations with strong neighborhood roots designed and implemented the programs. In these cases, they collaborated closely with key city agencies (notably, the police, probation, and youth services) and with other nonprofit service providers.

Many details of program implementation were different in each CBVP location, regardless of the institutions involved. Some cities had teams in which a coherent staff group with clear roles supervised the majority of program activities, including monitoring their data about services and outcomes. Other cities had a more diffuse approach, with staff from multiple organizations holding program responsibilities and minimal coordination from a single entity. While one of the strengths of the OJJDP-CBVP funding model was its emphasis on adaptation to local context and needs, this variation across program sites posed serious challenges for the evaluation team's efforts to assess and compare the experiences and outcomes in each city.

The CBVP program in Brooklyn took place in one sector of Crown Heights, a neighborhood with a long record of high crime and violence that more recently began to face gentrification. The Crown Heights CBVP program was arguably the most coherent in its theoretical model and the most comprehensive in its implementation. The Center for Court Innovation, a large and well-known nonprofit organization, developed the program "Save Our Streets (SOS) Crown Heights," which is based entirely on the public health model of violence interruption known as "Cure Violence." The central idea in this approach is that violence

is transmitted within a community like a contagious disease, and that law enforcement tactics (arrests, threats of prosecution) are not a sufficient long-term response. The program treats violence as a "virus" that can be "interrupted" or halted through interventions that alter community norms (such as tolerating violence as a 'normal' way to solve conflicts). During the CBVP project, violent crime fell across Brooklyn as a whole, and it was impossible to discern any reduction in crime that could be attributed to the program.

A local nonprofit organization led the CBVP project in Washington, DC. The Collaborative Solutions for Communities (known colloquially as The Collaborative) implemented the Creating Solutions Together (CST) program in the Columbia Heights and Shaw neighborhoods of central Washington from 2010 to 2013. The program model was inspired by a previous project, the Gang Intervention Project, which had been in place since 2003 and mapped out gang dynamics and incidents, enabling more focused and strategic responses by police and social services.

The CST program employed a core group of outreach workers who were familiar with the youth and their contexts. Outreach workers drew heavily on the public health and violence interruption model of Cure Violence (Chicago) in fashioning their methods for responding to acts of violence—at hospitals, funerals, schools, and in the streets. The outreach workers used mediation and "cooling down" tactics with individuals or groups to prevent retaliation. The program also offered services to at-risk youth who needed help finding pathways out of violence. Services often included counseling, GED education, and job training programs. Crime data from the neighborhoods in Washington, DC were not specific enough to discern a clear effect of the program on youth violence in targeted areas, although the amount of violent crime committed by juveniles citywide declined between 2006 and 2014.

In Denver, local government took the lead in program implementation. The Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID) focused specifically on gang violence in five sectors of Denver and it drew heavily on an established approach: the Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM). This model entails social services and supports for youth, in combination with law enforcement "suppression" tactics and the threat of legal penalties for group-affiliated youth who commit gun violence (similar to focused deterrence).

Violent crime trends in Denver were generally stable or slightly increasing during the CBVP project period (2010-2014), but the City's crime data were not specific enough to determine whether or not the program was responsible for any of the changes. Denver experienced an increase in gang-related arrests that coincided with GRID implementation, but researchers could not determine whether this was due to the implementation of focused deterrence or if it was simply due to a more general "crackdown" tactic by police. Nonetheless, the GRID program undeniably catalyzed new and constructive inter-agency relationships and approaches to youth and violent crime in general–the effects of which may still emerge.

The City of Newark developed the CBVP program under the name Newark United Against Violence (NUAV), and it began implementation in 2013 in the South and Central Wards, with joint leadership by the Newark Office of Reentry and the Newark Police Department. The NUAV, like other CBVP cities, took a hybrid approach to existing violence-reduction models, and combined hotspot policing, focused deterrence, and some elements of the violence interruption public health model (Cure Violence). Data on violent crime and youth crime in Newark, like other cities, showed an overall decline. However, data for the specific program areas and participants were not available in Newark. Thus, it was not possible to determine whether the program had any effect on youth crime in the targeted program area.

The City of Oakland, led by the Department of Human Services, implemented its CBVP demonstration project known as Oakland Unite. The primary model that shaped the Oakland project was Cure Violence (public health and violence inter-ruption), although Oakland also added elements of focused deterrence. Oakland Unite focused on specific neighborhoods and on the young people (under 25) most involved in violence, as victims and perpetrators. Data about crime trends in Oakland showed a notable decline in both shootings and homicides from 2012 to 2014. Moreover, the declines were stronger in the specific neighborhoods where Oakland Unite was most active. The intensity of program activity may have been associated with the more dramatic declines in shootings and homicides, but baseline and/or comparison data to determine a clear effect were not available. Oakland Unite is generally seen as an initiative that brought together disparate agencies into a more coherent approach to gang violence, and many of its activities have been sustained past the end of the grant because the City success-fully passed new revenue sources dedicated to violence prevention.

In two CBVP demonstraton sites, Brooklyn and Denver, the Research and Evaluation Center also conducted an outcome analysis using a survey of households. The surveys measured changes in attitudes and perceptions of violence over a two-year period and focused on four key concepts: disinclination toward gun violence, disinclination toward non-gun violence, perceived sense of safety in the neighborhood, and neighborhood efficacy or pro-social action. The results failed to detect clear effects of CBVP programming. In Brooklyn, the relative difference in neighborhood safety scores actually worsened, but this was due to the fact that equivalent scores in the comparison area improved–for reasons likely unrelated to CBVP. In Denver, there was some improvement in residents' sense of safety in the program area, but not a statistically significant difference when contrasted with the comparison area.

While these results may seem to reflect less change than expected, it should not be surprising that no significant improvements in attitudes and perceptions were evident after only two to three years of program activity. Additional research over a longer period of time and with sufficient complexity to capture the inherent variations in individuals' experiences and involvement with program activities may have revealed more meaningful effects of CBVP intervention.

The John Jay evaluation measured the possible effects of the CBVP initiative using a very rigorous standard—i.e. large-scale changes in violent crime and detectable improvements in attitudes about violence among the general public. Given the different approaches used in the five CBVP cities, the variations in their program designs and implementation efforts, and the different types of data available to researchers in each city, it was not possible for the evaluation to draw strong conclusions about the effects of the CBVP demonstration as a whole. In each city, however, researchers identified some potentially beneficial effects of the interventions implemented as part of CBVP. This report describes the efforts of each city and the lessons learned during implementation of CBVP.

CHAPTER 1

Background and Evaluation Goals

Introduction

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) issued a pair of grant solicitations under the Community-Based Violence Prevention (CBVP) program to support several cities in new initiatives to reduce youth violence at the community-level. The solicitations offered program demonstration grants for community applicants as well as a separate grant for an evaluator to monitor and assess the demonstrations. The community grants provided funding to improve federal, state, and local resource coordination that enabled cities to replicate evidence-based strategies to reduce violence. Two of those strategies were Cure Violence (previously known as Chicago CeaseFire) and the Boston Gun Project (also known as Boston Ceasefire and later Group Violence Intervention, which is sponsored by the National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College).

The CBVP demonstration grant asked recipient cities to target selected intervention strategies on youth and young adults who engage in high-risk activities and who are most likely to be involved in violence in the immediate future, either as victims and/or as perpetrators. The Research and Evaluation Center at John Jay College of Criminal Justice received the CBVP evaluation grant and focused its research efforts on the first five CBVP grantees: Brooklyn, NY; Denver, CO; Newark, NJ; Oakland, CA; and Washington, DC.

Legislative History

The Department of Justice (DOJ) requested $25 million in appropriations from the 111th Congress in 2009 (FY 2010) to support community-based violence prevention initiatives using a public health approach (Office of Management and Budget 2009). The Administration justified the request on the growing body of research establishing the success of strategies to reduce violence in communities without an exclusive reliance on law enforcement. Specifically referencing the Boston Gun Project and Chicago CeaseFire (or Cure Violence), the request outlined general best practices used by successful violence reduction programs in multiple (anonymous) cities across the United States.

As described in the FY2010 budget request, best practices included "street-level outreach, conflict mediation, and the changing of community norms to reduce violence, particularly shootings." These practices were assumed to contribute to decreased gun violence and retaliatory murders, fewer shooting hot spots, more direct assistance for high-risk youth, and improved neighborhood safety. The Department of Justice asserted that the public health approach was fundamentally different from other violence reduction programs although it did not elaborate on the differences. The President's Budget paralleled DOJ's justifications for community-based violence prevention initiatives, broadly referencing prior successes in violence reduction when those efforts incorporate a public health approach.

Although sub-committee budget hearings held by the Senate Appropriations Committee did not include detailed discussions about community-based violence prevention initiatives, then-Attorney General Holder mentioned the grant program in a written response following the hearing (Department of Commerce 2009). Responding to questions about crime prevention, the Attorney General reiterated the justifications for funding community-based violence prevention. The Senate Appropriations Committee declined to recommend a specific amount of funding to community-based violence prevention initiatives, but a Committee budget report listed community-based violence prevention as a funding category under the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (Congressional Record 2009).

In the same year, the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Appropriations released a budget report containing an $18 million allocation to community-based violence prevention and recommended its consideration by the entire House (House of Representatives 2009). The Committee report described community-based violence prevention initiatives as strategies with a "focus on street-level outreach, conflict mediation, and the changing of community norms to reduce violence." The report language reflected the best practices described in the Department of Justice budget request.

Following these initial budget reports, the Senate and House budgets were consolidated to fund community-based violence prevention initiatives under the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies division of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010. The discrepancy between the $18 million allocation by the House of Representatives and the lack of explicit allocation by the Senate resulted in a $10 million allocation for community-based violence prevention initiatives. Approved by the House and the Senate, followed by the President's signature, the 111th Congress appropriated $10 million from the federal budget for community-based violence prevention initiatives. As stated in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, the 2010 federal budget included the $10 million in alignment with the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act, which authorizes the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to provide funds through discretionary grants (Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act 2002). At final passage, the budget failed to include any of the previous language about the "public health model" or even any other specific guidance about intervention approaches.

The appropriation process for community-based violence prevention in fiscal year 2011 included less discussion on Congress' expectations than the 2010 process. For fiscal year 2011, the Department of Justice and the White House requested $25 million in funding for community-based violence prevention, based on the same general justifications in the 2010 request. The request for $25 million was the same amount requested for fiscal year 2010 and reflected an increase of $15 million above the 2010 appropriation. Based on the President's Budget, the Senate Appropriations Committee allocated $20 million for community-based violence prevention, but Congressional debate resulted in passage of continuing resolutions and acts to fund government activities in 2011 at levels similar to 2010. The final appropriation of $10 million for community-based violence prevention initiatives was based on the 2010 appropriation (Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act 2011).

CBVP Solicitations

In 2010 and 2011, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention released a series of solicitations for applications to fund community-based violence prevention initiatives. One solicitation (the demonstration solicitation) was for programs seeking funds to implement community-based violence prevention strategies. The other solicitation (the evaluation solicitation) was for an evaluation partner who would assess the successfulness of the CBVP programs in the funded cities. The demonstration solicitation was issued in early 2010 and again in early 2011 to add more cities to the program, while the evaluation solicitation was only issued once in early 2010.

The solicitations identified the broad goals of the CBVP appropriation and elaborated on the purpose, objectives, and expected deliverables (e.g., reports, publications) from the applicants. The demonstration solicitations sought applicants to reduce gun violence in specific communities through the replication of evidence-based programs. The OJJDP named Cure Violence, the Boston Gun Project, and the Richmond Comprehensive Homicide Initiative as examples of evidence-based programs with demonstrated effectiveness in reducing gun violence. The Richmond Homicide Initiative appeared as an example of a public health model to decrease violence for the first time in the 2010 solicitation. It was not included as an example during the formal budget allocation process. Applicants were encouraged to select from among these or other strategies that could be described as evidence-based, as long as they believed a specific approach would work well in their community.

Applicants were not restricted to replications of specific models and the solicitation did not require projects to be backed by a specific type of evidence. The key components of violence reduction named in the CBVP solicitations naturally became the preferred strategies for demonstration applicants—i.e. changing community norms surrounding violence, providing non-violent conflict resolution alternatives to violence, and increasing public awareness of the harms of violence. The agency directed applicants to identify geographic areas at high risk for gun violence and to propose strategies that would engage the efforts of outreach workers, clergy, and community leaders. Applicants were also encouraged to include law enforcement partnerships and community education campaigns. The solicitations emphasized that the CBVP program intended to support and enhance existing anti-violence strategies within applicant communities. Thus, every grantee received federal funding to expand programs that were already under way with pre-existing methods and partnerships.

The application process required projects to provide data about current levels of violence in their communities and to supply information about the disproportionate involvement of groups, either as the perpetrators or victims of violence. Small groups (e.g., gangs, cliques, and crews) could be named as the target population for a CBVP demonstration. Applicants were asked to provide documentation (ideally in the form of a map) identifying the size, scope, and effects of violence involving any targeted groups. Specifically, the demonstration

Focused Deterrence

One of the violence prevention models endorsed by CBVP solicitations was the Boston Gun Project. Developed in response to an increase in homicides in the 1990s, particularly among youth, the project attempted to de-escalate potentially violent situations by conducting street outreach, connecting youth with services, and organizing meetings (or "call-ins") for gang-involved youth (Kennedy et al. 2001). At these meetings, police, community leaders, and relatives of gunshot victims would express their disapproval of the gun violence and its harms, as well as their commitment to helping youth involved in gangs to find alternatives. Law enforcement leaders would warn youth that their entire violent group (i.e. gang or crew) would be held accountable for the violent behavior of any individual members through strict enforcement of all relevant laws.

The project was an effort to shape behavior with the power of group norms and accountability, and to shift the community away from accepting gun violence. The Boston Gun Project implemented targeted interventions—including both the "call-ins" and social services to provide alternative life paths—aimed at a single group at a time to focus on chronic offenders and leaders. The project emerged in part from the realization, through discussion among stakeholders and community members, that fear and concerns about status—rather than instrumental reasons—were key drivers of gun violence.

The Boston Gun Project, now known as the focused deterrence approach, emphasized the need to reduce fear in communities and among gang-involved youth as a method of breaking the cycle of violence. The Boston effort led to a useful and clear conceptual framework for this new approach to violence prevention, and the model has been expanded and adapted by many other cities in the past twenty years (Braga and Weisburd 2012).

solicitations asked applicants to incorporate crime and violence data on killings and shootings for a period of 3 or more years to indicate a significant violence problem affecting the community. Applicants had to show support from local government and to demonstrate the compatibility of their CBVP strategies with the existing efforts of local government.

Grantees and the Evaluation Plan

From the 2010 CBVP funding, more than $8 Million was awarded to grantees in Brooklyn, Denver, Oakland, and Washington, DC. The evaluation grant was awarded to John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, NY and its Research and Evaluation Center via the Research Foundation of the City University of New York, and included a subcontract to Temple University. The project required a combination of process, outcome, and impact evaluations. In 2011, a second group of demonstration grants of more than $6 Million went to Baltimore, Boston, and Newark, NJ. Of the three new cities, only Newark was added to the John Jay evaluation. Each of the five evaluation sites agreed to implement projects drawing on the principles and practices of evidence-based models to prevent youth violence, focusing on changing the attitudes, community conditions, and individual behaviors associated with youth violence. The evaluation team at John Jay College and the subcontractor at Temple University designed varying process, outcome and impact evaluations in the five evaluation cities.

Cure Violence

Cities applying to be grantees under the CBVP demonstration program were encouragd to consider the Cure Violence model of violence prevention. Originally known as Chicago Ceasefire, the Cure Violence model began in 1999 and was inspired by public health approaches to violence reduction rather than law enforcement (Skogan et al. 2008; Butts et al. 2015). The model views violence as a behavioral epidemic that spreads in a manner similar to that of infectious diseases. People have the capability to stop the spread of violence by: (1) interrupting the transmission of violence; (2) changing the thought processes of people identified as the highest likely transmitters of violence; and (3) altering the group norms that would otherwise sustain and perpetuate violence.

Cure Violence programs employ culturally appropriate workers who serve as "credible messengers" to work with neighorhood residents. They maintain close, confidential relationships with the young people most likely to be involved in violence. Their goal is to learn about and to interrupt violent situations and then to provide conflict mediation as an alternative to violence. Outreach workers from the Cure Violence program then engage with the most high-risk individuals to determine their needs and to connect them with services and supports that may help them to lead non-violent lives. Outreach workers might broker connections with substance abuse interventions, job training and placement supports, legal services, housing assistance, and GED programs or alternative schools. They also help participants to avoid situations that could lead to violence by providing "on-the-spot" alternatives and broadening the decision choices that participants are likely to consider. Cure Violence programs also conduct public education campaigns and host community events. The public education component of the model reinforces non-violent ideas in an effort to shift community norms away from tolerating violence and toward outright rejection of violence.

The process component of the evaluation was conducted in all five cities and documented how each community implemented and evolved its CBVP strategy over the course of the grant period. The evaluation team documented each site's approach, how that approach resembled the initial plan, and what challenges and/or modifications occurred throughout the course of the study. The evaluation team conducted multiple site visits and stakeholder interviews with agency staff, law enforcement partners, judges, community leaders, neighborhood volunteers, advocates and other program partners. Individual interviews provided an understanding of each person's involvement in the CBVP process, as well as his or her opinions about violence reduction efforts in their community and the challenges or potential improvements in implementation.

The outcome component of the evaluation largely depended on each grantee's ability to provide the evaluation team with detailed data about client contacts (dosage), program performance, and violent crime trends. The study team attempted to measure program activities with administrative data whenever possible, including number of contacts or hours/days of service. As a backup strategy, the team collected data from short, self-administered questionnaires of youth participants in the CBVP programs to gauge their perceptions, beliefs and attitudes regarding crime, violence, and neighborhood safety. The evaluation team tracked changes in crime and violence as measured by administrative data from the local criminal justice system. The team worked with local agencies to assemble and analyze any available criminal justice data —specifically homicide and gun violence data— for each CBVP site and any comparison areas identified within each city. As available, data about gun violence incidents and arrests

Richmond Comprehensive Homicide Initiative

CBVP applicants were encouraged to review the work of the Richmond Comprehensive Homicide Initiative as they prepared their broader violence reduction strategies. The Richmond initiative began as a problem-oriented policing program in 1995, and grew out of a summit convened by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (Fyfe, Goldkamp and White 1997). The initiative was piloted in Richmond, CA, with funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and incorporated traditional law enforcement strategies (searches and arrests) with targeted prevention and intervention efforts as well as partnerships with local agencies that focused on reducing homicides (Crime Solutions 2012). Strategies under the initiative were grouped into two categories: 1) community-based, non-enforcement strategies (e.g., job skills training, school-based mentoring, youth courts, domestic violence support programs); and, 2) investigative and enforcement strategies (e.g., targeting violence-prone individuals, homicide prevention tactics, and improved information sharing). An evaluation of the Comprehensive Homicide Initiative suggested that it may have had gradual, but long lasting effects that helped to reduce homicides (White et al. 2000).

were compared using a quasi-experimental, matched community design. Finally, the evaluation also measured changing community norms with repeated surveys of probability-based household samples in two CBVP cities–Brooklyn and Denver. Household surveys were administered by the Institute for Survey Research at Temple University in 2012 and again in 2014, both in a CBVP program area and a non-program comparison area in each city. This allowed the research team to estimate what changes in community norms may have occurred in the absence of CBVP.

As required by OJJDP, each site had begun violence-prevention efforts prior to receiving CBVP funding, but the timing and intensity of these efforts varied. This presented serious challenges for the evaluation team. It was not possible for the study to gather pre-program or baseline measurements. The study could rely only on historical analyses of administrative data. In addition, each site implemented its own intervention plan, using varying (and evolving) combinations of strategies. This heterogeneity prevented the evaluation from comparing outcomes between sites. Denver, for example, used its CBVP funds to bolster existing programs and to enhance a broad network of agencies with the capacity to carry on violence-prevention work after the grant expired. This meant that CBVP-funds enhanced varied sources of ongoing support, which made it difficult to attribute any changes to a single funding source. In Brooklyn, CBVP funds were used to implement new activities in one program site. But, without precise baseline measures, it was not possible to isolate any effects of the new activities apart from those of the pre-existing program. Both approaches were entirely consistent with the intent of CBVP funding, but they created many challenges and prevented the study team from designing a rigorous, comparative evaluation. Finally, each of the cities had its own administrative data sources of varying strength and accessibility. The study team made the most of all available data, but none of the cities was able to provide enough relevant data to construct an accurate assessment of outcomes.

Community Based Violence Prevention Demonstration Grant Awards: 2010-2011

CBVP Sites in the Study

Award Year	Award Title	Grantee	Location	Amount
2010	Save Our Streets (SOS) Crown Heights Enhancement	Fund for the City of New York/ Center for Court Innovation	Brooklyn, New York	$1,969,898
2010	Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID)	City and County of Denver, Safe City Offices	Denver, Colorado	$2,215,787
2010	Oakland Ceasefire	City of Oakland	Oakland, California	$2,216,582
2010	Violence Intervention and Technical Assistance Program	Columbia Heights Shaw Family Support Collaborative	Washington, DC	$2,208,125
2011	Newark's Hotspot Violence Prevention Initiative	City of Newark	Newark, New Jersey	$2,196,085
2011	Safe Streets Baltimore	Baltimore City Health Department	Baltimore, Maryland	$2,200,000
2011	Boston Community-Based Violence Prevention Demonstration Project	City of Boston	Boston, Massachusetts	$2,199,999

Source:
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.

Summary

The CBVP demonstration presented serious obstacles to evaluation. Each CBVP site had the flexibility to choose whatever program or strategy it preferred. Each of the five sites implemented a unique intervention plan, designed its own logic model, and carried out its own program activities. While all sites shared the same overall goal —to reduce youth violence— it was not possible for the evaluation to ascertain the effect of CBVP as a whole. This five-city evaluation of CBVP is essentially five distinct stories. Of course, the five sites have common elements. Each city intended to: (1) reduce violence in specified geographic areas; (2) change community norms toward violence; (3) enhance inter-agency collaboration; and (4) increase awareness among young people about the consequences of their involvement in violence and other high-risk behaviors. This report describes the planning and execution of CBVP-inspired violence-reduction interventions in all five cities. It assesses the likely outcomes of these efforts, and it examines any possible conclusions and policy implications that may be derived from the demonstration project.

Brooklyn, New York

Introduction

Crown Heights, Brooklyn is a neighborhood of New York City with a population of largely poor and working class African-American residents. Upward social mobility was historically difficult for the residents of Crown Heights. Many families remain isolated and marginalized. From the 1970s to the early 1990s, areas of New York City like Crown Heights received little public funding or private investment. Insufficient financial support led to deteriorated housing and widespread decline. When the CBVP grant began in 2010, Crown Heights had yet to experience the level of economic redevelopment already evident in other Brooklyn neighborhoods, such as Williamsburg, Park Slope, and Boerum Hill. By late 2014, however, Crown Heights had begun to gentrify and rent prices were increasing (Sierra 2014).

Crown Heights was traditionally one of the most violent neighborhoods in New York City. A disproportionate number of young males in Crown Heights were involved in the criminal justice system. Between 2003 and 2008, the number of homicides in the neighborhood led the New York Times to call the neighborhoods' 77th police precinct the "bloodiest block in Brooklyn" (Lehren and Baker 2009).*

Crown Heights, however, was also home to the Community Mediation Center (or, Mediation Center), a project of the Center for Court Innovation. In October 2010, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) selected the Mediation Center to participate in the Community-Based Violence Prevention Demonstration Initiative. The Mediation Center operated out of a storefront location and named the new program "Save Our Streets (SOS) Crown Heights." The Center's strong presence in Crown Heights made the neighborhood an ideal location to evaluate strategies aimed at reducing the shootings and violence that adversely affect youth, families and the community. As its primary violence-reduction strategy, the Mediation Center chose the Cure Violence model (formerly called Chicago CeaseFire).

RESPONSE TO GROWING VIOLENCE

Crown Heights was historically divided along racial and ethnic lines. Long simmering tensions between the Jewish and Black communities erupted in 1991. On August 19 of that year two Guyanese cousins—both age seven—were struck by the car of a prominent Hasidic rabbi. A Jewish-affiliated ambulance arrived at the scene to tend to the Jewish driver of the car, but failed to administer aid to one of the children stuck under the vehicle. Both children were ultimately taken by city ambulances to the hospital and the boy who had been trapped under the car died as a result of his injuries. Protests turned to a general uprising during the following three days. In one incident, African-American residents attacked and murdered a Jewish man (Hicks 1993).

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* According to the CBVP proposal, the 77th precinct saw 164 shootings and 31 gun fatalities between 2007 and 2009. In just the first five months of 2010, there were 26 shooting victims. In any given year, more than one-third of shooting victims and up to half the perpetrators of gun crimes were under age 25. In 2008, 80 percent of all individuals arrested in Crown Heights were between 16 and 21 years of age and 38 percent of those arrests were for felony charges. That year, one of every 12 males ages 16 to 24 were imprisoned.

Immediately following the uprising, local officials assembled community leaders of various ethnic groups to create the Crown Heights Coalition. Their efforts helped to sustain a long process of restoration that continued with the 1998 establishment of the Crown Heights Mediation Center. Supported by the Center for Court Innovation, a prominent non-profit organization in New York City, the Mediation Center acted as a neutral party for resolving conflicts and providing resources to the community (Who We Are n.d.). Other services provided by the Mediation Center addressed education, parenting, family disputes, housing, unemployment, immigration concerns, and reentry support for formerly incarcerated residents. The Center provided training on conflict resolution and diversity and facilitated dialogue about community issues, such as how to re-unite a discordant block association and how to plan a street fair (Crown Heights Community Mediation Center n.d.).

Mediation Center staff supported a variety of grassroots, anti-violence efforts. For example, the Center created an anti-gun violence mural and hosted a video contest about ending gun violence. It created a re-entry resource directory and held a re-entry resource fair to assist people returning to the community from jail. The Mediation Center also organized a coalition against gun violence and helped to organize and advertise several local law enforcement initiatives which sought to combat gun violence, including a gun amnesty program and gun buy-back program. With all of its anti-violence efforts, the Mediation Center fought to affect neighborhood behaviors and change the social norms that fostered gun violence.

In February 2010, the Mediation Center launched a replication of the Cure Violence model. Save Our Streets (SOS) Crown Heights was supported by OJJDP with funding from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Cure Violence is a public health violence reduction approach that considers violence as acting similar to a communicable disease. Communities must focus on changing the behaviors that lead to shootings to curtail the spread of violence. By harnessing the Mediation Center's resources and reputation for neutral conflict mediation, SOS responded to violence in Crown Heights and mobilized

Timeline of Important CBVP Events in Brooklyn
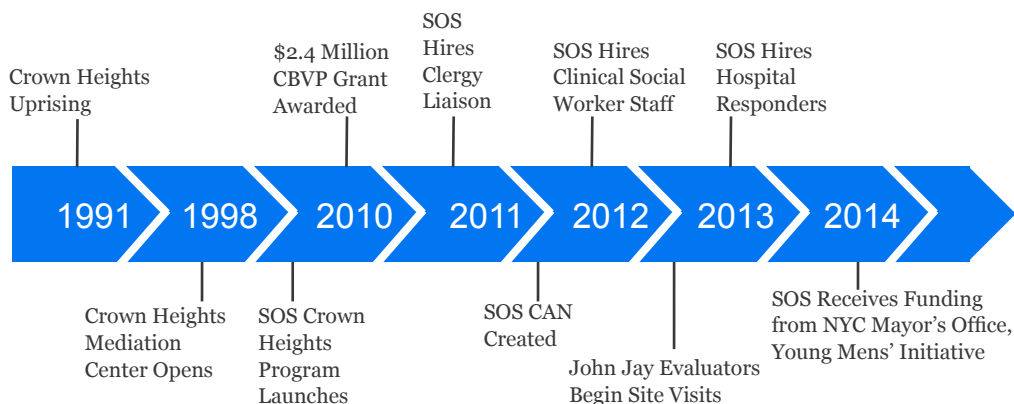
Crown Heights Uprising		$2.4 Million CBVP Grant Awarded	SOS Hires Clergy Liaison	SOS Hires Clinical Social Worker Staff	SOS Hires Hospital Responders
1991	**1998**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
	Crown Heights Mediation Center Opens	SOS Crown Heights Program Launches	SOS CAN Created	John Jay Evaluators Begin Site Visits	SOS Receives Funding from NYC Mayor's Office, Young Mens' Initiative

community partners in positive ways that police are sometimes incapable of doing on their own. The SOS team believed that waiting for the police response to shootings would never fully stop violence in the community without additional proactive prevention measures.

The ARRA grant provided SOS Crown Heights with funding for a program manager to supervise and organize community events. The funding enabled the organization to establish partner-ships, to hire outreach workers who work with high risk individuals in the neigh-borhood, and to begin producing public education materials. The SOS program was established in the Mediation Center storefront location because it was convenient to the neighborhood and because the Mediation Center already had a positive reputation in the community.

Program Components Supported with CBVP Funds in Brooklyn

- Hiring violence interrupters
- Implementing a public education campaign
- Enhancing data processing capabilities
- Developing a strong faith community connection
- Establishing a youth program (YOSOS)

The SOS program was in operation for only a few months when the Mediation Center received an additional $2.4 million OJJDP grant in through the CBVP program in October 2010. The additional funding provided program support from October 2010 through March 2013, which allowed SOS to enhance its replication of the Cure Violence model by hiring violence interrupters, growing the public education campaign, developing a stronger connection with the faith community, and establishing a youth program known as Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets, or YO SOS.

By the end of 2010, the SOS Cure Violence replication site had expanded to include implementation of all the model's core components: outreach to high-risk community members, community mobilization, public education, faith community utilization, hospital crisis response, and data processing/analysis. YO SOS began to work with youth as a complement to SOS's work with high-risk community members. In 2013, the New York City Council provided additional funding to hire a hospital responder in accordance with the Cure Violence model, rounding out Crown Heights' services.

Program Approach

SOS Crown Heights identified two main goals: 1) to reduce gun violence in the Crown Heights neighborhood; and 2) to change community norms regarding violence. At the time of SOS implementation, the Crown Heights community had developed a tolerance for gun violence. By implementing a full Cure Violence replication, the SOS team hoped to change community perceptions of the risks

and cost of involvement in gun violence. In order to decrease the acceptance of violence in the community and to reduce its prevalence, SOS worked to increase community mobilization and encourage a sense of efficacy related to violence prevention. SOS also hoped to increase education and employment options for the high-risk population. SOS staff found that one of the best ways to get the community involved in their efforts was to connect the neighborhood with resources. Providing resources to the community gave SOS an avenue to open dialogue about the broader SOS goals and to help instill faith in SOS's efforts in the wider community.

In the beginning, the community did not really buy into SOS. According to one SOS staff member, the highest risk individuals in the neighborhood would look at the SOS staff when they said they wanted to stop shootings as if to say, "Yeah? Good luck. We're going to be shooting regardless." Some individuals reportedly called SOS "Shoot On Sight" or "Snitches On Sight." Residents believed that the police did not care about the shootings happening in their neighborhood. Apparently, it was normal to hear shots fired without any sirens following thereafter.
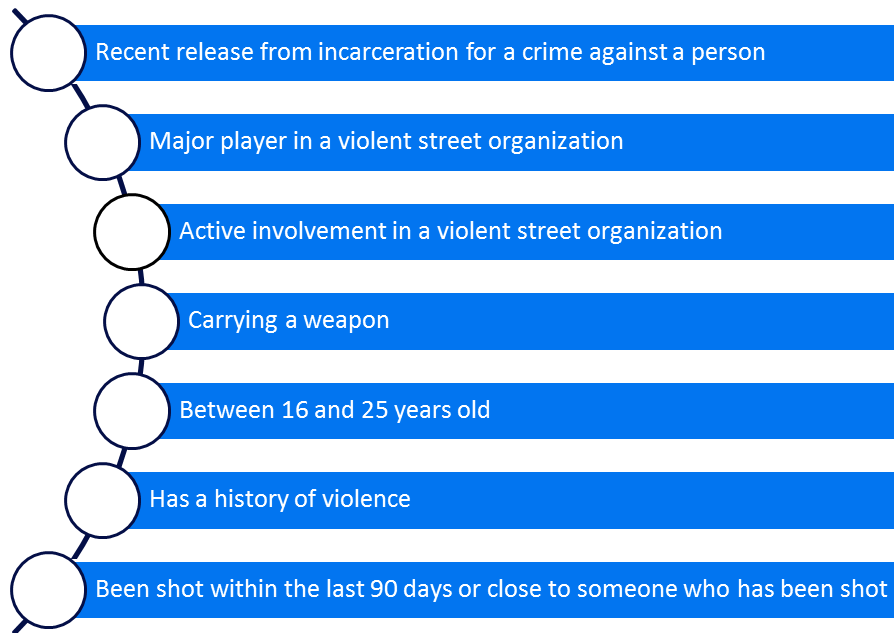
For the SOS team, the first step to creating lasting change in the neighborhood was to demonstrate their sincerity. In distressed communities, people are less likely to trust social programs because they have experienced a lot of hypocrisy in their lives. By having an organization of people from the neighborhood declaring that the violence has to stop and then diligently working to improve the community, the SOS team demonstrated its commitment. Slowly, neighbors began to believe in the program's intentions. The SOS team was visible in the community, working in heat, rain, snow, and all forms of bad weather. This contributed to the community's eventual acceptance of the program and its work.

TARGET POPULATION

In order to maximize its effectiveness, SOS staff focused their efforts on a small area within the Crown Heights neighborhood. When SOS was launched in 2010, the targeted zone (or catchment area) was the entire 77th New York Police Department (NYPD) precinct. By the time OJJDP funding began, SOS had reduced the catchment to focus its efforts and maximize effectiveness. The new target area was roughly 40 square blocks within the 77th precinct bordered by Kingston Avenue to the west, Uttica Avenue to the east, Atlantic Avenue to the north, and Eastern Parkway to the south. The new target area aligned neatly with census tract boundaries and remained stable over the course of the evaluation period. There were extended periods of time during the evaluation period when the catchment area was quiet and had little violence. This caused staff members to consider expanding the target area. New incidents would flare up, however, and the catchment area would stay the same.

SOS outreach workers and violence interrupters used seven criteria to identify those individuals living in target area who were at the highest risk to engage in gun violence. The criteria included: (1) recent release from incarceration for a

Participant Selection Criteria

- Recent release from incarceration for a crime against a person
- Major player in a violent street organization
- Active involvement in a violent street organization
- Carrying a weapon
- Between 16 and 25 years old
- Has a history of violence
- Been shot within the last 90 days or close to someone who has been shot

crime against a person; (2) being a major player in a violent street organization; (3) active involvement in a violent street organization; (4) carrying a weapon; (5) having been shot within the last 90 days or being close to someone who has been shot; (6) being between the ages of 16 and 25 years old; and (7) having a history of violence. When an individual met at least four of the criteria, he or she was eligible to be included as a participant in the SOS program.

Many participants were offered case management services as well. Community partners could refer SOS participants to case management services through a variety of channels, including violence interrupters, clergy members, program workers, school staff and criminal justice partners. Case management included working with participants to determine their strengths and needs and then helping connect them with appropriate services and support as needed (e.g., education, housing, mental health, and counseling resources).

STRATEGIES

SOS was based on a comprehensive violence reduction and prevention model that was both crisis-based and prevention-oriented. Part of its prevention strategy involved spreading the message of nonviolence throughout the neighborhood and then engaging high-risk community members to change norms around gun violence. Through street outreach and violence interruption, public education and community engagement, and the organization of clergy and youth, SOS attempted to engage and empower the community to take a stand against violence and to change attitudes about the neighborhood's role in reducing gun violence.

Acting Before Violence Occurs

In 2011, SOS staff heard that four different gangs were supposed to meet in a project parking lot on a hot summer night. The situation had a high potential for gun violence and injury which greatly concerned the SOS team. The outreach worker supervisor organized the entire outreach and interruption team from SOS Crown Heights to meet with a group of more than 100 young people in the parking lot where the team would try to diffuse the situation peacefully.

The supervisor asked the outreach workers with the most influence to speak directly with the highest ranking gang leaders to fashion an effective solution to the problem. SOS was able to mediate the situation and the leaders of the gangs set aside their conflict without incident. The groups actually shook hands. Many weapons were observed in the parking lot that night, but none were used and no one got hurt.

In addition to averting tragedy, the SOS staff members were proud that local police did not have to get involved. Officers from the NYPD had been alerted and were present that night, but they allowed the SOS team to do its work and to craft a resolution without the intervention of law enforcement.

SOS employed outreach workers (OWs) and violence interrupters (VIs) who were "credible messengers." In the Cure Violence model, credible messengers are culturally appropriate individuals who live in or near the targeted neighborhood, who are known and respected by high-risk community members, who may have had some personal history of gang-involvement or incarceration, or who are at least well-known to those with such personal histories (Cure Violence n.d.). These individuals serve as role models for other community members because they have either been perpetrators or victims of gun violence and they have since transformed their lives in a positive way.

Finding the right people to hire for the SOS outreach team was a challenge. SOS leadership learned that traditional job posting approaches (e.g. websites such as Monster and Idealist) yielded candidates with educational credentials but without the practical street experience needed to be credible messengers. SOS managers had more success recruiting staff through community partners. They spoke in churches, posted flyers in barber shops and beauty salons, and discussed the need for staff with community leaders. The program made it clear that they would consider anyone who might be a good fit for this unique program.

SOS tried to maintain a staff of three full-time OWs, four part-time VIs, and one hospital responder, all of whom were managed by one full-time Outreach Supervisor.* The Outreach Supervisor ensured that the workers were carrying out their tasks correctly and properly entering their participant contact data in the Cure Violence database. The Outreach Supervisor also helped workers meet their participant contact goals, helped the team find a balance of "street credibility

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* The structure of this position continued to change and develop over the course of the grant period and beyond. By late 2015, SOS was collaborating with three non-profit agencies to fill this need. Coverage for the area was divided into shifts and agencies would rotate shift coverage. If an incident happened during a shift that an agency believed could be better mediated by an outreach worker from a different agency, that other agency would be contacted to help out.

with corporate professionalism," and helped ensure that they implemented the Cure Violence model with fidelity. Each OW managed a caseload of 15 participants. SOS initially planned OW caseloads of 60 high-risk participants, but the program quickly discovered that 60 was too many. Outreach Supervisors were asked to carry a caseload of four participants, while VIs and the hospital responder did not carry specific caseloads.

In 2013, SOS began to support the hospital responder position with funding from the New York City Council. The hospital component was not supported by OJJDP funds. The hospital responder was originally intended to reduce retaliations and the re-admittance rate of people who had already been injured. When someone came into the hospital with a wound attributed to community violence, the hospital's social worker would immediately contact the hospital

SOS Staff Structure

Program Director

Program Manager

Outreach Supervisor

| 3 Full-Time Outreach Workers | 4 Part-Time Violence Interrupters | 1 Hospital Responder |

Generally up to **15** Participants per Outreach Worker

responder and the responder would assess the situation and offer services to the wounded individual. The responder would then either stay in the hospital to defuse any conflicts that may erupt between those waiting for the patient or would go out in the neighborhood to work with related individuals to lower the likelihood of retaliation. By 2014, the hospital responder's catchment area grew to be larger than that of SOS. The hospital component covered calls from the 71st, 77th, and 79th NYPD precincts. The program explained that this expansion was done at least in part to justify the expense of retaining this staff position.*

Contact with program participants by the outreach team was part of their weekly tasks. OWs were required to make eight contacts per participant per month. For example, two home visits, two office visits, two street visits, and two referrals. In addition to working directly with high-risk participants, the program involved community residents in SOS's work by inviting them to post-shooting responses and community events (e.g., rallies, marches, basketball games, talent shows, etc.). On a typical day, OWs and VIs spent a majority of their time canvassing the streets of their target area. This allowed them to maintain connections with key individuals and to ensure that they could mediate conflicts as necessary.

Outreach workers helped participants set and achieve educational and vocational goals for themselves. OWs were responsible for regularly reporting participants' activities on their caseload. They worked to connect participants with services (e.g., referring them to GED or skill-building programs, providing court
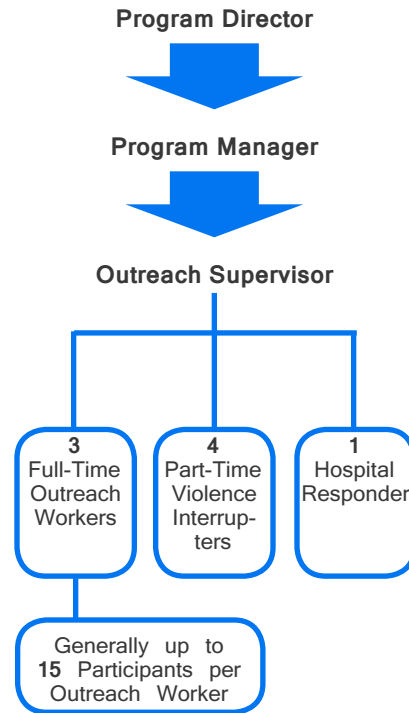
guidance and parole and probation support, assisting them with resume creation and job applications, etc.) and create positive relationships with those identified as most at-risk for gun violence. Their personal experience allowed them to speak to youth currently involved in gun violence and mentor them by teaching non-violent responses to conflict. Ultimately, OWs were sure to let participants know that they would not be judged but would instead be supported when they were ready to make sincere attempts to change their circumstances.

Much like outreach workers, VIs spent a majority of their time in the community mediating street conflicts and helping to prevent retaliatory violence. When VIs made contact with individuals who appeared to fit the high-risk criteria for program participants, they developed relationships with the individuals and eventually referred them to OWs for further services and case management. VIs learned about potential conflicts in many ways, including being approached on the street about a fight already occurring or about to occur, interactions with neighborhood residents, and phone calls with community members.

When mediating conflicts, VIs separated individuals involved in a conflict and attempted to convince them to avoid violence as they also helped to resolve the issue at hand. During this process, VIs informed the parties involved about the potential consequences of gun violence on their own families, as well as on the families of their potential victims. Sometimes, before the mediation could get fully underway, VIs would first need to identify and remove the "loud mouth" of the group (i.e., the instigator urging others in the group to pull out their guns). Once this individual was identified, the VI would take him to the side and attempt to convince him to leave the situation. After this individual was removed, VIs could calm down the group and mediate the conflict. While there was some inherent physical risk in being a Violence Interrupter, VIs reported feeling safe for the most part. If they did not, VIs had to rely on their instinct and experience to realize when they had to walk away from conflicts.

OWs and VIs utilized a variety of strategies to connect with high-risk individuals and gain their trust. First, they always approached youth with respect and patience. They also wore fashionable attire, such as sneakers and trendy clothing, when they approached possible participants to engage them in conversation. In 2013, the SOS uniform was an Adidas brand jacket emblazoned with the SOS logo. Branding themselves this way helped to convey SOS's message of non-violence and served as an ice breaker. Implementing these strategies helped program staff to be perceived as credible messengers and to build relationships with youth. By the end of the evaluation period, the OWs and VIs reported that they were being very well received by potential participants. In the beginning of the project, the workers did not always receive positive reactions from community members.

SOS staff agreed that using credible messengers to do outreach and interruption work was essential to their work. OWs and VIs with street experience and prior justice system involvement were able to empathize with youth in unique ways. Hiring and supervising such unconventional workers, however, created

challenges for SOS leadership. New hires did not always have state identification or other official documents needed to complete the hiring process. Staff members were often previously incarcerated and had no formal training. Many had never worked in a structured office environment before and this required some adjustment time. They were also unfamiliar with the type of paperwork associated with employer-provided medical benefits. Many had never had health insurance. Some members of the outreach team were not computer literate. Even basic tasks like completing paperwork and entering data about their participant contacts proved challenging.

Maintaining an appropriate work ethic both in the streets and in the office was a challenge for the team. SOS hired credible messengers because they had a special ability to navigate the streets and were knowledgeable about the habits and practices of street crews and cliques. Once they began working for SOS, however, they had to adjust to the professional culture of office work. "Code-switching" back and forth between the street and office environments caused complicated psychological, emotional, and social issues for some staff members.

To help support the outreach staff and alleviate some of these job-related stresses, SOS leadership brought in clinical social workers to speak with the outreach team workers for 30 to 45 minutes each week. Some of the social workers were volunteers from King's County Hospital. These therapeutic opportunities allowed staff to talk about how past trauma in their own lives may have affected their work. With support from SOS leadership and modeling by the Outreach Supervisor, most of the workers developed strategies for maintaining a good street-office balance, but at least one staff member became overwhelmed during his tenure and made the decision to leave the program as a result of the trauma encountered during this work.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

SOS launched a public education campaign soon after the program opened. The campaign consisted of distributing posters and flyers throughout the community to promote their anti-violence message. According to community residents, the most effective advertisement was the Cure Violence poster depicting a young boy holding a sign that read, "Don't shoot. I want to grow up." These types of posters raised community awareness about the effects of gun violence. SOS encouraged local businesses to hang other posters in their storefront windows and to update them every day—"It has been ___ days since our last shooting." Eventually, however, the program took on the responsibility for the updates. Each day, an SOS intern from AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps wrote the current number of days the community had been without a shooting. Sending an SOS intern to update the posters on a daily basis helped SOS to build and strengthen its relationships with local businesses.

The language used on public education materials was specifically crafted for the Crown Heights community. Using graphics, pictures, and drawings was important in the design of posters and flyers because many Crown Heights community

SOS Community Events

Public responses to every shooting	Community discussions around violence
Prisoner re-entry resource fairs	Neighborhood anti-violence events

residents had low reading levels and their ability to understand public education materials was important. In addition to posters and flyers, SOS implemented the "Hair Me Out" campaign in neighborhood barber shops and beauty salons. Every week, SOS asked barbers to discuss a particular topic with their patrons to help them think more broadly about causes of violence (e.g., "share a time when you avoided a violent conflict"). "Community Conversations" was another SOS initiative that ignited group dialogue on the issue of gun violence. SOS also started "Arts to End Violence," an art contest that included a gallery opening and street festival.

The program asked AmeriCorp interns to attend community meetings (i.e., community board meetings, precinct community council meetings) to distribute public education materials and to share information about the program. On average, interns attended four or more of these meetings per month to maintain relationships with stakeholders in the neighborhood. By the end of the evaluation period, community meeting attendance decreased as the AmeriCorps-funded internship came to an end and SOS was more established.

Community residents began to acknowledge the program after witnessing the day-to-day efforts of staff members. When SOS first started, it seemed as if there were no voices in the community protesting violence. SOS staff noticed a change in attitudes about violence over the course of the evaluation period. People would see SOS staff out in the community and say, "Thank you. It's getting better. We want it to get good, but it's getting better." Staff reported that community members were also solving conflicts on their own rather than calling SOS to help control violence. Mobilizing community members had long been an aspiration of the outreach workers. Some team members even wanted to start a community empowerment campaign, such as "Everyone is an interrupter," that would give neighborhood residents conflict resolution training.

Although the neighborhood as a whole was very involved in SOS and responded well to the program, over the course of the evaluation period, SOS realized that community members did not understand every aspect of SOS's involvement. Part of this was due to the fact that the different events that SOS held reached

different parts of the community (e.g., art shows versus shooting responses). Some residents complained that there were no resources in their neighborhood when in reality, they just did not always know how to access them.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The SOS Program Manager directed community engagement and mobilization efforts that worked in conjunction with SOS's public education strategy. SOS encouraged the entire Crown Heights community, including schools, hospitals, senior citizens, tenant's organizations, merchants, and artists, to participate in their anti-violence activities. Program activities included public post-shooting responses, community discussions around violence, prisoner re-entry resource fairs, and other anti-violence events aimed at gaining community engagement and support for the intervention. SOS also encouraged community members to have conversations with people in their neighborhood about issues related to violence, talk with the young people on their blocks, and know the statistics on violence.

Post-shooting responses were a significant piece of the Cure Violence community engagement strategy. According to the Cure Violence model, program workers must respond within 72 hours of a shooting with some type of public event. SOS was able to host a shooting response event after every shooting in their target area over the course of the evaluation period, but they sometimes struggled to comply with the 72-hour requirement. Initially, SOS was coordinating quick responses with an emphasis on getting them done rather than having them well attended. SOS constantly worked to find the right balance between attendance and promptness.

After a while, SOS shooting responses developed a pattern where the same people always attended and leadership wanted to reach a wider audience. Program staff experimented with various methods to advertise shooting responses (i.e. blog posts, e-blasts, text blasts, Facebook, Twitter, phone calls to volunteers, and posting flyers). Event schedules moved around relative to the time of shootings themselves to ascertain what times attracted the most attendees. If shooting victims were well-known and well-loved in the community, a response event might have up to 100 attendees. In the case of one homeless man who was shot, the only attendees were SOS staff. On average, around 35 people attended any given post-shooting response.

In addition to attending shooting responses, residents had other ways to work with SOS. Volunteers could distribute fliers about gun violence in the community, work at barbecues and other events sponsored by SOS, and help in the Mediation Center office. SOS was generally successful in engaging community members with their work. In 2012, for example, over 100 people volunteered with SOS at least once and 45 to 50 attended the volunteer appreciation ceremony held in their honor.

During a particular lull in shootings in early 2012, SOS staff decided to focus the program's efforts on long term changes in social norms. The peaceful streak did not last long, however, and the team returned once again to its focus on outreach and interruption work. The program continued to wrestle with finding an appropriate balance in its crisis-based work with the long term goal of changing community norms around violence.

CLERGY ACTION NETWORK

Involvement of faith leaders in violence reduction work is a component of community mobilization under the Cure Violence model. Early in the Crown Heights demonstration effort, SOS hired an official Clergy Liaison to organize the program's work with the faith community. Faith-based leaders represented another type of credible messenger for violence reduction work. In 2012, SOS created the Clergy Action Network (CAN). The network of 180 faith-based leaders in Crown Heights and nearby neighborhoods worked to support and spread SOS's message of non-violence. The network produced a book, *Praying with our Feet*, focusing on the non-violent philosophies of clergy members. More than 30 members regularly attended the events coordinated by CAN.

Building the network required a lot of relationship development, as each member was accustomed to focusing only on the needs of his or her congregation rather than the larger community. For example, they did not always know about the high crime rates in various parts of the community. To maintain positive relationships with communities and the police, the clergy liaison routinely attended meetings of NYPD's 77th Precinct Clergy Council.

Clergy involvement helped to increase attendance at post-shooting events sponsored by SOS. At a shooting response for a one 17 year-old gunshot victim, nine CAN members brought along 50 of their congregants. This type of public involvement in SOS's efforts refuted the community's prior perception of clergy as not caring about issues outside their own congregations and being un-involved in outreach efforts. Staff members at SOS, however, reported that the program began to scale back the involvement of CAN members in shooting responses as the demonstration project progressed. The visible participation of many clergy members began to appear overwhelming and SOS did not want to give the impression that the program events were strictly faith-based.

CAN also hosted three to four clergy breakfasts throughout the year. At these events, clergy from the Crown Heights community were given the opportunity to learn more about SOS and CAN, as well as to meet other like-minded clergy. The Clergy Liaison led these breakfasts and strategized with the local clergy in attendance about how to best work with the community and with youth to prevent violence. These events were opportunities to generate clergy interest in future events and recruit volunteers for various CAN sponsored projects.

CAN coordinated other events for the community as well, such as conflict resolution trainings, parenting classes, and resource fairs. In October 2013, the Clergy Action Network hosted an event called "Power-Filled Me" to give

Youth Organizers Speak

"I never thought I would be the one educating people and telling them about how to end gun violence. I never thought it would be me."
   - 16 year-old participant

"Before I came here I was a hothead, everything would get me upset and I had a really bad temper. Because where I come from, we always resort to violence first. Since I've been here, it really changed my life. I don't get as mad as I used to; I just walk away from certain situations. I let stuff roll off my back. Honestly, it really changed my life. Without SOS, I really don't know where I'd be right now, to be honest."
   - 17 year-old participant

"By taking part in this program, I've grown as an individual. I've learned how to self-sacrifice, to put forth an effort for this community. It is hands-on experience with the world. I don't think we could find a better place that exposes us to the reality of our world. Kingston Winter Windows (a project of YO S.O.S. and the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce) is us reaching out to the community and making it part of our family."
   – 16 year-old participant

neighborhood youth an opportunity to open up and discuss their struggles in a forum where youth were the focal point. At this event, 50 guests listened to a panel of 15 young men in their late teens and early twenties as they discussed a variety of topics, including their experiences as teenagers and their priorities for neighborhoods. The adults in attendance were asked to refrain from speaking so they could learn from what the young men had to say about the difficulties they were facing.

In addition to working with the community, the Clergy Liaison helped to support the SOS team. For outreach workers, it was difficult to be the sole providers of support to mothers whose children (participants in the program) were shot and killed. The Clergy Liaison was able to provide emotional support for the SOS team and to organize the network to provide support for families in times of crisis. Members of the SOS staff believed this support helped them to preserve the stability of each individual working for SOS.

Faith-based leaders proved to be very useful to SOS's community mobilization effort because they could spread the message of nonviolence to hundreds of congregants at a time. Clergy members also played an important role in helping people to navigate the mourning process when they lost a loved one to violence. By hosting positive events like resource fairs or neighborhood marches and participating in shooting responses, clergy showed members of the community that they cared about how their daily lives and not just matters of faith.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

SOS supplemented the Cure Violence model with a unique youth component–Youth Organizing to Save our Streets (YO SOS)–which trained young people to become organizers and advocates against gun violence and to work on resolving conflicts in their neighborhoods. It engaged high school students between ages 14 and 17 with the capacity to be leaders on gun violence issues. The program included service learning opportunities, case management assistance, and small stipends. YO SOS participants, called Youth Organizers, came to the program with varied backgrounds and experiences. They were not always members of the highest-risk populations in the neighborhood. Some had been personally involved in gun violence, but others were simply interested in a leadership opportunity focused on gun violence.

YO SOS operated in annual cycles following the school year. A program coordinator planned twice-weekly workshops and occasional trips for participants (e.g., trips to Albany and Washington, DC to speak with lawmakers), and the program followed a unique curriculum created especially for YO SOS and the youth of Crown Heights. YO SOS adapted ideas from existing models, including Rites of Passage, Brotherhood/SisterSol, H.O.L.L.A!, and Cure Violence. Workshops engaged youth in discussion topics (e.g., what is violence, and where do you see violence in your life?) and challenged young people to come up with creative ideas to deal with violence and to talk with their peers about the topic. Participants helped to guide the development of the program and the choice of discussion topics. The curriculum allowed for unanticipated topics as new issues arose, and the program encouraged youth to be involved with other anti-violence efforts and events occurring in Crown Heights.

YO SOS youth participated in special projects during the school year. The first big effort was the Kingston Avenue Winter Windows Project. The project began as a collaboration between SOS and the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce and allowed youth to work with local merchants around the holiday season to decorate their windows with messages of peace. Community members noticed the efforts of YO SOS participants working positively in the neighborhood and enjoyed the decorations that resulted from their work. SOS hoped that seeing young people organizing to stop violence would inspire the highest-risk youth of the neighborhood to change their attitudes.

When the Chamber of Commerce lost funding to continue the project the following year, SOS took on sole responsibility to sustain it. Local businesses enjoyed the chance to have youth decorate their store fronts and they hoped the effort would become a yearly project. During the 2013-2014 program cycle, YO SOS added a social media component to the window project by incorporating a mirror on the windows. They encouraged people to take a picture of themselves and post it to social media using the hashtag "#selfiesforsafety."

YO SOS staff spent the first part of each year preparing youth for a big Spring event. The theme of the event changed each year. During 2012-2013, YO SOS was involved in the Mediation Center's "Arts to End Violence" project. Youth

were responsible for mingling with the crowd during the art gallery opening and discussing the event. To prepare for this event, youth practiced engaging in conversation with adult residents and learned how to articulate their feelings about gun violence. The following year's Spring project focused on organizing classroom projects in public schools to start conversations about violence. YO SOS youth surveyed their classmates about gun violence and how to raise awareness. Additionally, YO SOS helped youth do a short asset mapping project to identify the anti-violence resources available in their schools and in their neighborhoods.

YO SOS staff helped find summer jobs for neighborhood youth, despite having no additional funds to pay students. Some of the jobs were with local art programs and the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. During the 2011-2012 cycle, Youth Organizers secured 15 summer jobs and internships. The number decreased to 13 summer jobs and internships in the 2012-2013 cycle. This component of the program proved to be challenging for the YO SOS program to sustain.

Youth Organizers also participated in larger SOS-sponsored events. When SOS sponsored block parties in the neighborhood, YO SOS participants ran their own table and engaged with community members. By attending such events, the youth were able to practice speaking on behalf of SOS and explaining the program's mission to community residents. By the second year of the program, YO SOS was collaborating with 21 different organizations to spread its anti-violence message.

For a young person to be selected for the YO SOS program, they needed to meet the age requirement and live in or near Crown Heights. The residence requirement was imposed partly to ensure that youth would have a manageable and safe commute home after workshops. It also helped to maximize partici-pants' knowledge of the neighborhood. Participants also had to demonstrate a sincere interest in the topic of gun violence. They could have been interested in an after-school program with an anti-violence focus. They may have lost a family member to gun violence. They could have considered engaging in gun violence themselves in the past, or they may have simply become frustrated with the scope of gun violence in their community. The program tried to admit youth from varying backgrounds and experiences. Upon entering the program, coordinators conducted intake interviews with each youth. They asked about the participants' demographics, educational backgrounds, family situations and personal histories.

YO SOS limited each participation to one year of involvement in order to reach as many young people as possible. Recruitment for the pilot (2010 to 2011) program was done via community partners, schools, and outreach workers. It started at the beginning of the school year and lasted approximately six weeks. The effort resulted in seven participants. The second cohort (2011 to 2012) was recruited via school visits and youth referrals, and that group included 17 participants. For the 2012-2013 year, YO SOS recruited 26 new members, mainly through classroom visits. By 2013-2014, formal recruitment was largely unnecessary and YO SOS received most of its referrals from high school teachers already familiar with the program. Recruiting males remained an ongoing challenge for the program. There were always more females than males expressing interest in the group.

Students involved in YO SOS were eligible to receive a stipend of up to $225 for their participation. Stipends were awarded at the end of the program, but youth participants lost $5 of the original amount for each unexcused absence. Overall, participant retention was high throughout the course of the program. Many participants were disappointed that they could only be a part of YO SOS for one year. YO SOS instituted a graduation ceremony at the end of the program to give them something to work toward as well as a way to mark the end of the experience.

In response to the continued enthusiasm of YO SOS alumni, the program started a Facebook group. YO SOS staff posted information about upcoming YO SOS and SOS events that alumni could attend, and they used the page to keep in touch with program graduates. The ongoing communication resulted in many YO SOS alumni attending neighborhood events. Organizing a full alumni event was more challenging, however, as many of the alumni were busy with school or away at college.

YO SOS faced many other challenges. Initially, it was even difficulty to get support from the SOS team. The regular staff at the Mediation Center did not always appreciate the value of getting youth involved who were not connected to violence themselves. Eventually, the SOS team became very supportive. The young people motivated the SOS workers with their excitement about the program and their sense of purpose proved inspirational.

Office space was a struggle for YO SOS. In its first year, the program rented space from a church located a few blocks away from the Crown Heights Mediation Center. The space was a good fit because youth could use it any day, even non-workshop days. Just before the 2013-2014 program year started, however, the church space became too expensive and YO SOS had to relocate. Weekly meetings were held in the Mediation Center, with other meetings happening in a privately owned community space. Neither space was perfect for the program. The Mediation Center was a more inviting environment, but it could not offer private space for YO SOS to meet. The community center was more private, but it was never as welcoming as the Mediation Center or the church space.

The most difficult challenge facing the program was always funding. Specifically, how would YO SOS continue when the OJJDP funding ended? The Mediation Center made a commitment to finish out the academic year with the 2013-2014 cohort of YO SOS youth, but the City government did not appear to be interested in funding the program itself. Some staff members believed the City was reluctant to fund YO SOS directly because that addition would have made SOS's budget higher than the budgets approved for other New York City sites running Cure Violence programs. SOS argued that YO SOS was working to enhance the Cure Violence model and that it was successful. Fortunately, OJJDP was able to provide at least some continuation funding for a new cohort of 19 students for the 2014-2015 school year.

YO SOS was an important pilot project for the Crown Heights neighborhood. Youth opinions on gun violence are rarely heard in public discussions and staff believed that many of their youth participants began to shift away from violence as a result of their contact with the program. Staff members reported that they heard about young people taking it upon themselves to talk their friends out of violent situations. Participants began to see themselves as peacemakers in a way they had not before. Many young people started identifying themselves as part of the program within their schools and embracing the "Youth Organizer" identity in other aspects of their lives.

Challenges Facing SOS Partnership Strategies

Adapting shared strategies or shared campaigns to changing situations

SOS traveling outside Crown Heights to attend collaboration meetings

Programs getting past their differences and agreeing about overall stratgies

YO SOS staff also believed that the program helped Crown Heights residents overcome the stigma of living in a "high-violence" area, a perception that may have even been reinforced by SOS's presence in the neighborhood. The youth program highlighted positive changes being made in the community and young people celebrated their ability to help stop violence. The neighborhood began to take pride in YO SOS's youth organizers and the youth began to embrace their new role and their impact on the community.

SOS TEAM TRAINING

When outreach workers and violence interrupters were first hired by SOS, they received training from the national Cure Violence team. In addition to educating staff on the components of the Cure Violence model, the training included role-playing situations that could occur during outreach and interruption work. This training helped the team adjust to their new roles in the community. Before being hired by SOS, staff were accustomed to going out to the streets and talking to youth as members of the community. After SOS hired them, their dynamic with young people in the neighborhood shifted slightly. The staff needed to engage youth in conversations about violence and not just interact informally.

Booster trainings with Cure Violence were required every few months. During these boosters, the Cure Violence staff from Chicago would double-check SOS's data, attend staff meetings, and canvass the community with the street team. In between official trainings, the outreach supervisor conducted role playing with the team to continue to reinforce appropriate techniques and help staff avoid making mistakes on the street. If outreach workers had questions between trainings, they

could meet with the outreach supervisor, project manager, or contact the Chicago office directly. Direct access to Cure Violence proved problematic at times, as some OWs would take their questions and issues straight to the Chicago staff without asking the Crown Heights project manager. The managers of SOS had to intervene to stop this from happening.

Initially, all staff trainings were done in Crown Heights and developed specifically for this site. After SOS Crown Heights became part of the consortium of New York City Cure Violence sites, however, the trainings became less specific to Crown Heights. Chicago still came to New York City to do booster trainings, but trainings were scattered around the city and based on the needs of the other sites as well.

During the project's CBVP funding, SOS leadership added a motivational interviewing training component for outreach workers (Rollnick and Miller 1995). The technique complemented the SOS model and was approved by Chicago for use in Cure Violence sites. This shifted the function of outreach worker to become more similar to professional case managers and less like peer support counselors or mentors. The training was reportedly very helpful to the staff.
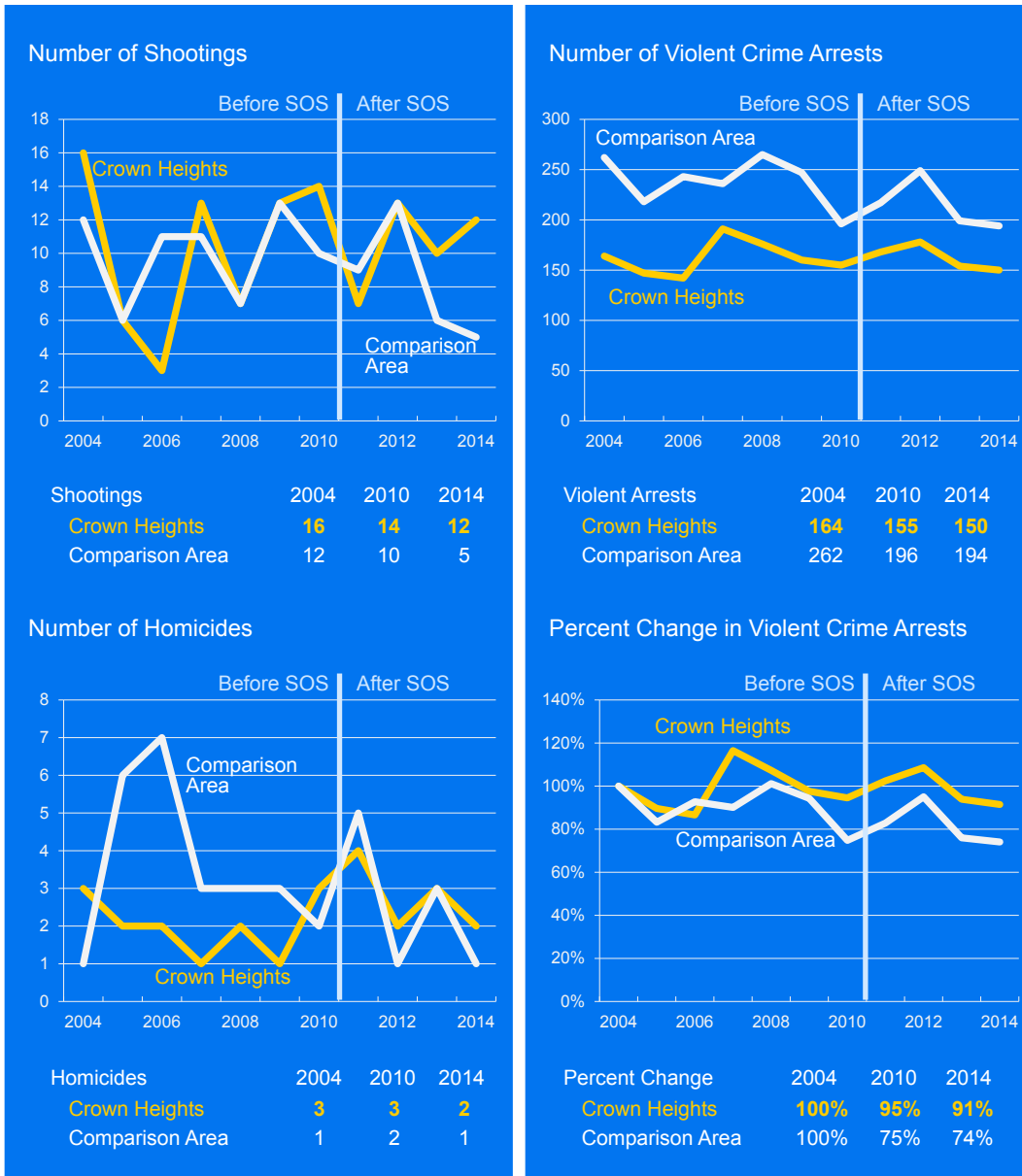
KEY PARTNERSHIPS

Soon after SOS Crown Heights launched, New York City began funding new community-based violence reduction programs. Agencies funding the new initiative included the New York City Council, the Mayor's Young Male Initiative (YMI), and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). As the city expanded these efforts, DOHMH became the designated provider of technical assistance and oversight for all city-funded Cure Violence programs.

The centralized approach presented new challenges for SOS. Greater expectations of shared goals and strategies introduced complexity. SOS struggled to adapt its approach to the City's guidelines. Although the many initiatives across New York City shared the basic goal of violence reduction, each program operated in a distinct neighborhood culture and sometimes employed unique tools and tactics. It was difficult for programs to get past these differences and to agree about core components. For example, tensions arose when several program sites tried to order public education materials together as a way to lower costs. Staff quickly found that they had different ideas about how the materials should look and the messages they should convey.

Possible Effects on Crime

The John Jay research team collected crime data from the New York Police Department to assess the project's possible effects on reported violence. The data covered the years 2004 through 2014, or six years prior to implementation and four years during SOS (2011-2014). The data included shootings, homicides, arrests, and complaints all coded at the level of U.S. Census Tracts. The research team compared data for the eight census tracts in the SOS program

Number of Shootings

Shootings	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	**16**	**14**	**12**
Comparison Area	12	10	5

Number of Violent Crime Arrests

Violent Arrests	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	**164**	**155**	**150**
Comparison Area	262	196	194

Number of Homicides

Homicides	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	**3**	**3**	**2**
Comparison Area	1	2	1

Percent Change in Violent Crime Arrests

Percent Change	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	**100%**	**95%**	**91%**
Comparison Area	100%	75%	74%

area with another eight census tracts in a similar area of Brooklyn that was not served by a specialized violence reduction program during the grant period. This comparison area was identified early in the evaluation project. It was similar in size, demographic make-up, the incidence of violent crime, and other neighborhood factors such as the presence of public housing properties and parks.

SHOOTINGS AND HOMICIDES

After a sharp decline between 2004 and 2006, the number of shootings in Crown Heights rose through 2010. The total number of shootings decreased slightly between 2010 and 2014 (from 14 to 12 per year), but the figure varied from three to 16 during the entire project period. These numbers clearly justified the implementation of SOS in the Crown Heights neighborhood, but they do not indicate that the introduction of the program changed the trend substantially.

Similar shooting trends were observed in the matched comparison area. Between 2004 and 2010, the number of shootings ranged between 13 and six per year with no clear direction, either an increase or decrease. Shootings spiked in 2012 and then declined through 2014 (5 shootings in 2014 versus 13 in 2012). Thus, both the program area and the comparison area areas experienced a similar pattern of shootings during the course of the CBVP grant period. Homicides ranged between one and four between 2004 and 2014. Similar to the trend in shootings, homicide trends failed to reveal a program effect. A similar trend was observed in the comparison area, with homicides falling after 2011, much like in the Crown Heights program area.
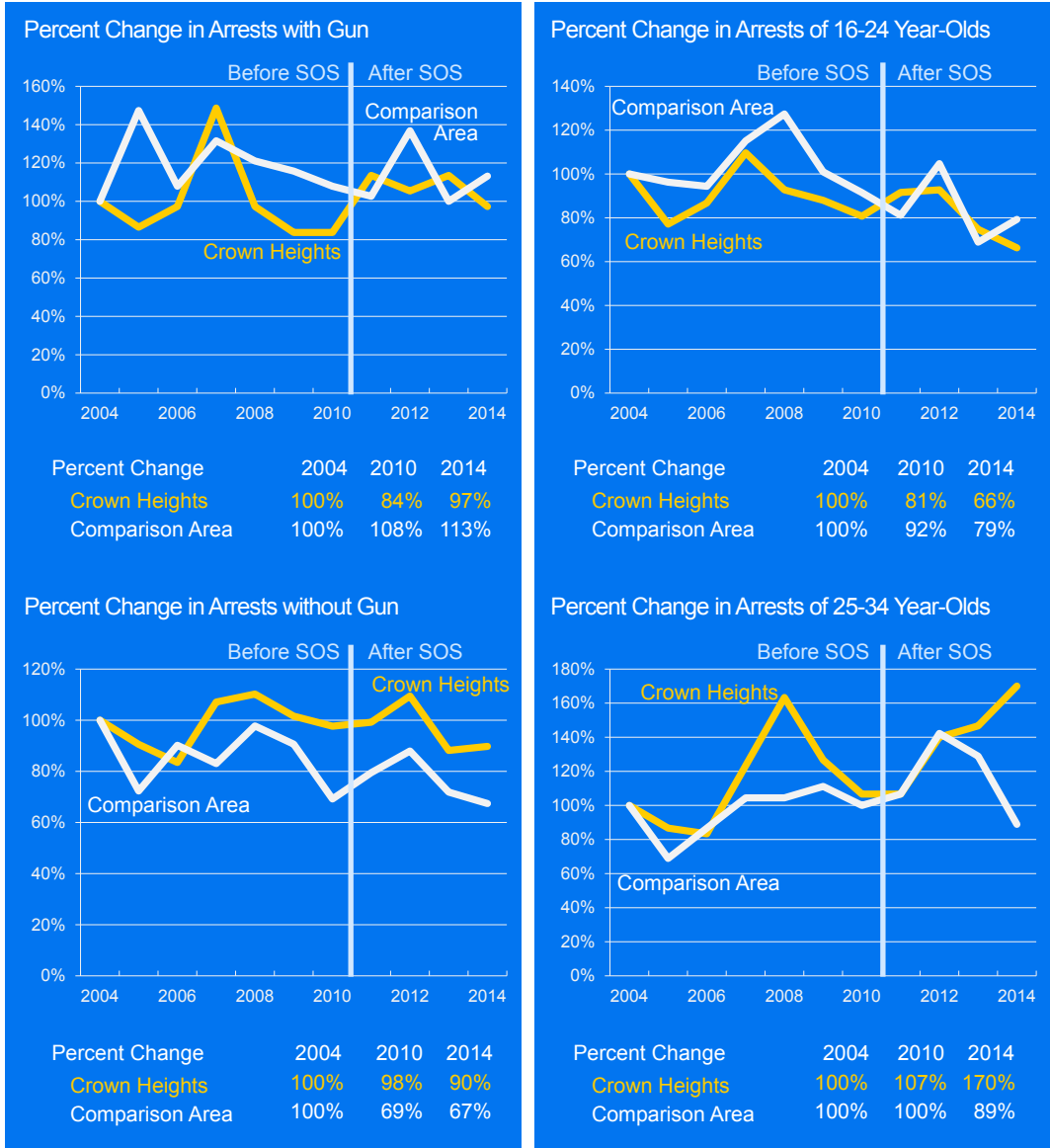
ARRESTS/COMPLAINTS

The total number of arrests in Crown Heights between 2004 and 2014 remained relatively stable, but the number of arrests in 2014 (150) was less than the total in 2004 or at the time of program implementation in 2010 (164 and 155, respectively). A similar pattern was observed in the comparison area, although the overall number of arrests per year was higher in the comparison area.

When all arrests in Crown Heights were separated into arrests that did or did not involve the presence of a weapon, similar and stable patterns were observed again in both the program area and the comparison area. The total number of arrests with a gun in the comparison area was almost the same as in the program target area (varying between 40 and 60 per year), while the total number of arrests with no weapon present was higher in the comparison area.

The evaluation found one possible indicator of effectiveness when total arrests in Crown Heights were examined across categories of offender age. Total arrests of 16-24 year olds (the focus of the SOS program) appeared to be decreasing between 2004 and 2014, with 83 arrests in 2004, 67 in 2010 and 55 in 2014. By contrast, total arrests of 25-34 year olds appeared to be increasing, with 30 arrests occurring in 2004, 32 in 2010, and 51 in 2014. The study cannot rule out the possibility that these age-related trends were influenced by the effect of the program.

Crime complaints (i.e. citizen reports) appeared to be declining between 2004 and 2014 in both Crown Heights and the study comparison area. In Crown Heights, a total of 155 complaints occurred in 2004, while 98 occurred in 2010 and 94 were reported in 2014. In the comparison area, a total of 321 complaints occurred in 2004, with 194 in 2010 and 141 in 2014. Since the decline in complaints preceded the program intervention date in Crown Heights in 2010, and because the pattern was present in the comparison area as well, the analysis of complaints failed to support the effectiveness of the program.

Finally, when complaint data were disaggregated by estimated offender age, it was apparent that the total number of complaints involving perpetrators between 16-24 years old increased in Crown Heights between 2004 and 2014. The same trend was observed for offenders between 25 and 34 years of age, however, and the patterns were similar in the comparison area.

Percent Change in Arrests with Gun

Before SOS | After SOS

Comparison Area

Crown Heights

Percent Change	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	100%	84%	97%
Comparison Area	100%	108%	113%

Percent Change in Arrests of 16-24 Year-Olds

Before SOS | After SOS

Comparison Area

Crown Heights

Percent Change	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	100%	81%	66%
Comparison Area	100%	92%	79%

Percent Change in Arrests without Gun

Before SOS | After SOS

Crown Heights

Comparison Area

Percent Change	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	100%	98%	90%
Comparison Area	100%	69%	67%

Percent Change in Arrests of 25-34 Year-Olds

Before SOS | After SOS

Crown Heights

Comparison Area

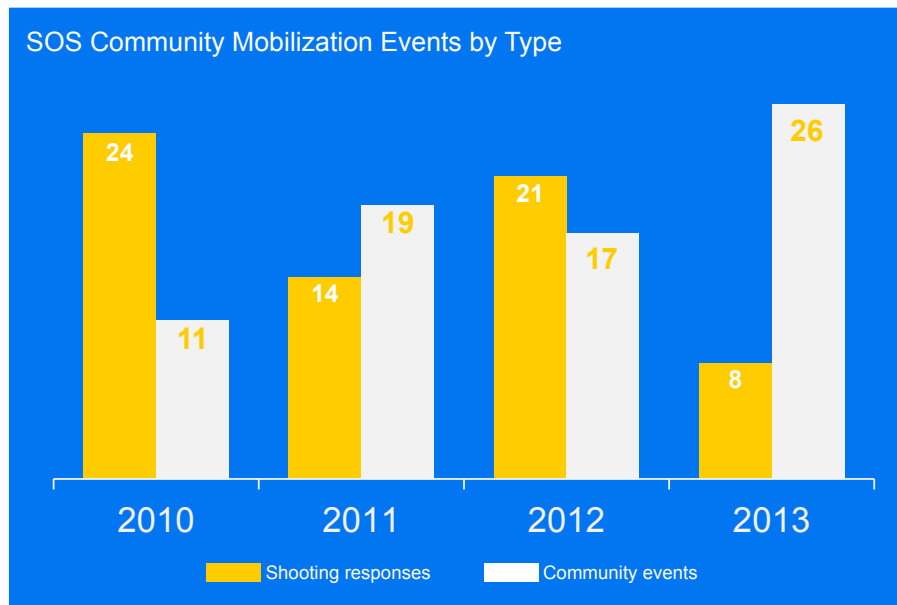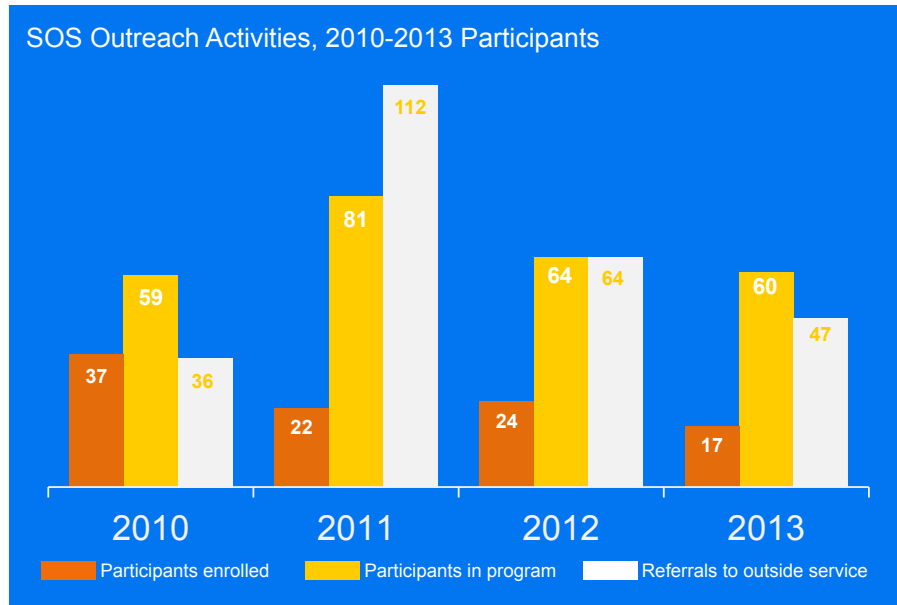| Percent Change	2004	2010	2014
Crown Heights	100%	107%	170%
Comparison Area	100%	100%	89%

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The study attempted to analyze programmatic data to see whether they would support the effectiveness of the program in Crown Heights. The research team collected data about program activity from the database maintained by the Mediation Center during the course of the grant period. The data covered 2010 through 2013, which encompasses the period of full grant activity and program implementation. The data included outreach activities, community mobilization activities, distribution of public education materials, mediations, and records of conflicts in the community.
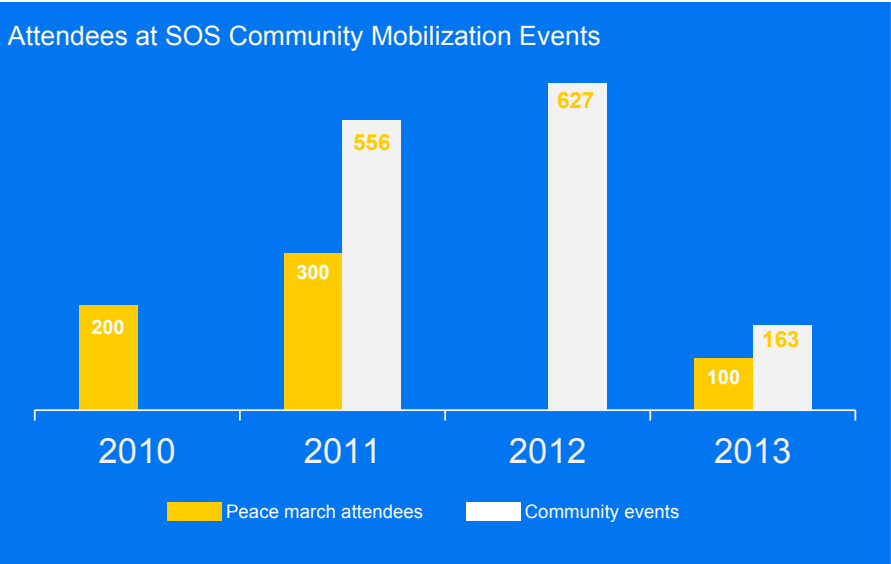
Outreach Activities

The number of participants in the program remained steady for each year between 2010 and 2013, with around 60 participants. The first full year of program implementation (2011) had the highest number of participants in the

SOS Outreach Activities, 2010-2013 Participants

2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013

■ Participants enrolled   ■ Participants in program   ■ Referrals to outside service

SOS Community Mobilization Events by Type

2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013

■ Shooting responses   ■ Community events

program (81) and the most referrals to outside services (112). The number of new enrollments decreased from 36 in 2010 to 17 in 2013 as the OJJDP grant came to an end. In-person contacts with participants decreased steadily each year, from 1,643 in 2011 to 1,324 in 2013.

Community Mobilization

Community mobilization was measured through the number of shooting responses, the number of community events, and how many people attended each of these types of events. The most shooting responses occurred in 2010—a total of 24. The number decreased to 14 in 2011, 21 in 2012, and 8 in 2013. By comparison, the number of community events held by SOS rose steadily between 2010 and 2013. In 2013, the program reported a total of 26 community events compared to 11 in 2011.

Attendees at SOS Community Mobilization Events

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Peace march attendees	200	300		100
Community events		556	627	163

Peace march attendees   Community events

Conflict Mediations in Crown Heights

	2011	2012	2013
Total mediations	71	44	57
How conflicts were discovered			
Personal contact	30 (42%)	19 (43%)	19 (43%)
Street knowledge	36 (51%)	18 (41%)	18 (41%)
Hospital	0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
Police	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	4 (6%)	6 (14%)	6 (14%)
Type of mediation			
Phone	5 (7%)	2 (5%)	2 (4%)
One-on-one	30 (42%)	22 (50%)	37 (65%)
Small group	22 (31%)	11 (25%)	9 (16%)
Intra-group	22 (31%)	7 (16%)	11 (19%)
3rd party	10 (14%)	14 (32%)	14 (25%)
Unknown	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
Outcome of mediation			
Resolved	47 (66%)	38 (86%)	47 (83%)
Temporarily resolved	16 (23%)	4 (9%)	6 (11%)
Conflict ongoing	5 (7%)	2 (5%)	3 (5%)
Unknown	3 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Compared with all previous years, 2013 had the most community events (26) and the fewest shooting responses (8). The SOS program held a number of "Peace Marches" between 2010 and 2013 with more than 100 participants in each march. Total attendees at shooting responses ranged from 556 in 2011 to 627 in 2012, but the number declined to 163 by 2013. Total attendees at SOS community events, however, rose from 2011 to 2012, suggesting that community recognition of SOS improved from when the program first began.

Conflict Mediation

Conflicts in need of mediation were discovered by SOS staff nearly equally through personal contacts and from street knowledge. Conflicts were attributable to various causes, including gang "beefs," personal altercations, competition over narcotics and drug sales, domestic violence, and simple robbery. Together, gangs and other personal altercations accounted for up to 75 percent of all conflicts resulting in SOS outreach efforts. The most common risk factors for participants to become involved in conflicts included being involved in gangs, having a history of violence, and being between 16 and 25 years of age.

Staff members from SOS carried out mediations in a variety of ways. The most common method was one-on-one conversation. Other common forms of mediation included the facilitation of small group interactions and third party interventions. Mediations by phone were used least often—only 9 between 2011 and 2013. Most conflicts (77%) were reported as being resolved. SOS estimated that half of all mediated conflicts could have led to shootings.

Lessons Learned

Staff members and the leadership of SOS believe the program's efforts were successful in reducing gun violence and changing community norms. Inevitably, the program began with a slow start, as it can take several months to locate and renovate suitable office space, hire employees, and create the supervision structure necessary to operate effectively. The nature of the SOS intervention itself adds complexity to the start-up. Outreach workers depend on the strength of their personal relationships with participants to affect violence in the community, and participants are not very trusting. Building these new relationships takes time and patience. In SOS's experience, it takes a year for new programs to identify staff and then establish a team with effective community contacts.

SOS also struggled to situate the program within the space of the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center. As the SOS team grew, the Mediation Center was not always able to help all the people who learned about the Center from SOS and then came seeking assistance finding work, housing, and other public benefits. The SOS team continued to operate separately from the Mediation Center staff, but the dynamic of the Center changed as SOS grew and became a more visible presence in the office.

Survey of Youth Participants

Each site receiving an OJJDP grant agreed to administer a survey to program participants. The survey, developed by the John Jay research team, asked youth about their experiences in the neighborhood and with the CBVP program. In Brooklyn, 35 youth answered the anonymous survey.
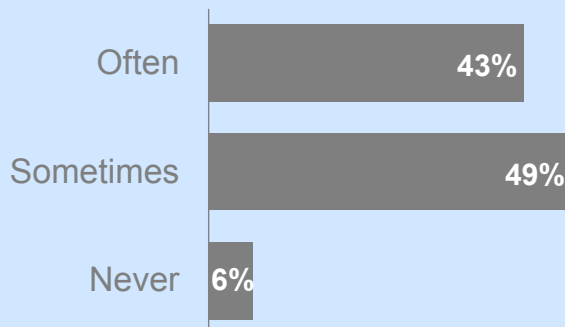
Nearly half the respondents (40%) were aware of the SOS Crown Heights program and knew about how the program worked with the community to prevent violence.

Most respondents indicated that they had witnessed a fight in their neighborhood. More than 40 percent of the youth reported that they had personally known someone who had been the victim of gun violence.

The survey asked about violence and when it might be acceptable to use violence. Nearly half the respondents believed it was acceptable to use a gun in at least some circumstances —e.g., if their life was in danger (43%) or if someone had stolen their money or property (51%). If a family member had been shot, 28 percent of respondents felt it was acceptable to use a gun, while 23 percent thought it could be acceptable depending on the situation.

Finally, the survey asked respondents if they ever felt unsafe walking in their neighborhood or getting to and from school. The majority of youth indicated that they felt unsafe often or at least sometimes.

How often do you *feel safe* walking in your neighborhood?

Often	43%
Sometimes	49%
Never	6%

How often do you think it's *dangerous* getting to and from school?

Never	31%
Sometimes	46%
Often	6%
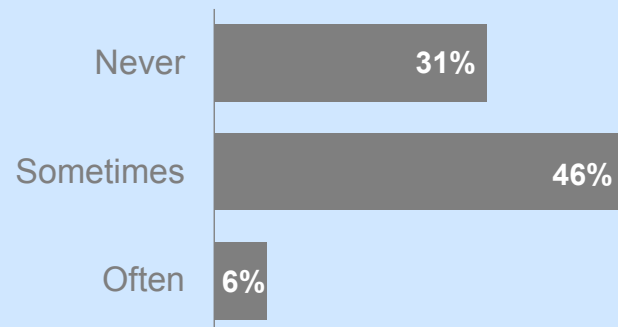
There were also times during the early phases of the project when the SOS leadership hierarchy was confusing to the front line employees. The differing responsibilities of the SOS director, SOS program manager, and the outreach worker supervisor (OWS) were not always clear. At times, the duties of the OWS and the program manager were indistinguishable. The qualifications of these two positions, however, were quite different. The OWS needed an equal balance between a street mentality and office professionalism in order to maintain a level of authority over the outreach team. If the OWS could not do both well, program staff could begin to ignore the leadership hierarchy of the program.

More difficulty derived from the fact that the Cure Violence model did not carefully define the roles of program director and program manager, which created confusion for outreach workers as they interacted with both positions as well as the OWS. All of these roles are important for the smooth functioning of a Cure Violence program. There are lots of details for a program director to handle that could otherwise overburden the program manager. Budgets for future Cure Violence replication should account for the varying roles and responsibilities. In addition, SOS staff argued that future budgets should account for dedicated administrative support, a position that was not included in the CBVP grant.

Many SOS staff identified the professional development and support of outreach workers as a crucial need for future programs. Inevitable complications arise when a program is designed to operate with a staff of formerly incarcerated individuals with little to no work experience. Moreover, almost everyone on the SOS outreach team had suffered traumatic experiences at some point in their lives. The effects of past trauma, combined with a lack of previous professional experience, made it challenging to run the SOS program. Staff often failed to come to work on time. They did not respond consistently to emails from their supervisors. The Mediation Center eventually sought and received additional federal funding to implement the "Make It Happen" program for staff members, a program that helps victims of violence to overcome trauma. Bringing these resources to the SOS violence interrupters and outreach workers was seen as very helpful and some staff believed this support should be a routine part of the Cure Violence model.

Future replications of the SOS program model should consider that the outreach and violence interruption positions can be exhausting jobs with a high burnout rate. SOS staff members reported that even individuals well equipped to be violence interrupters should probably do the work for about two years only. SOS leadership agreed that having a two-year plan for staff would also encourage them to have a plan for their post-SOS work lives. The violence interrupters (VIs) involved in SOS faced other challenges. The program in Crown Heights paid $17 per hour with full benefits including health insurance, but the VI positions were mostly part-time. Living in Brooklyn on $17 per hour, part time is extremely difficult. Some VI's left the job because they could not cover even basic living expenses.

Staff at SOS worked late hours and had to keep very close connections to street life. Sometimes, they lived a bit closer to the streets than management would have liked, although that could also be an asset in some situations. The VI staff members were on-call virtually all the time. It was challenging to maintain this lifestyle when they had families and children. Leaving the house at three in the morning to mediate an ongoing gang dispute was an added source of stress for families that were already living in tough conditions. The strain that the position put on personal lives resulted in higher VI turnover than OW turnover.

Finally, some staff believed that SOS should have provided more training and resources for VIs and OWs on handling the effects of unacknowledged trauma

among program participants. It was difficult for workers to refer participants to counseling and mental health services, leaving staff to devise their own solutions. Other New York City programs implementing Cure Violence (and other closely related programs) received funds directly from New York City to provide wrap-around support services for clients. At SOS Crown Heights, the OWs and VIs did not have access to this structure of support services (e.g., mental health services, therapeutic services, legal services, government services, employment services, etc.) and SOS staff had to make their own connections.

MOVING FORWARD

Neighborhood residents tend to be initially suspicious of new programs. When SOS started in Crown Heights, the community had already been exposed to many programs that opened up, made promises, and closed in two or three years. For a violence reduction plan to be sustainable, it needs to focus on the long-term and enjoy community support. Funding for a violence reduction model should support programmatic efforts without interruption for at least three years with an additional two years of funding for prevention work.

By the end of the CBVP evaluation period, SOS started to report differences in the general community. Outreach workers reported that during some of their neighborhood canvasses, people were starting to wave them off, as if to say, "We got this – we don't need your help. We'll call you if we need you." Neighborhood residents may have been unprepared to handle all conflicts on their own, but it seemed as though the community was embracing the approach pioneered by SOS and making progress towards mediating conflicts in a non-violent manner. Workers at SOS argued that their program would be most effective if it changed its focus after the first three to five years—shifting from direct intervention to a training program for neighborhood leaders and volunteers who learn conflict mediation skills that they can use themselves instead of relying on paid outreach workers and violence interrupters.

Throughout the demonstration grant period, SOS Crown Heights struggled to find funds to sustain their efforts. Some believed that funders were more likely to award money to crisis situations than sustaining positive work so they could report that their funding drew people out of crises. SOS also recognized that their model for violence reduction did not appeal to all funders because it involved hiring formerly incarcerated individuals. This compounded the difficulty of finding additional funding.

After the CBVP grant expired in March 2014, SOS successfully obtained continuation funding through New York City's Young Men's Initiative (YMI) administered by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. YMI funding stems from many sources, including New York City's Health and Hospital Corporation (HHC) and the Mayor's office. The new funding sustained SOS through 2015 and into 2016, but at a reduced level of effort. SOS also continued to receive support from unpaid interns. In recent years, two individuals worked on the program's blog, its social media presence, and a broader media campaign.

The program was also able to enlist the help of three clinical social workers who offered to meet with staff members at no cost. These supports helped the program to run smoothly and efficiently. Of course, even unpaid staff members and interns still require supervision, direction, and training by SOS staff and the program's funding challenges were not likely to end any time soon.

Conclusion

The funding awarded to SOS Crown Heights through the CBVP demonstration provided staff with the financial resources they needed to replicate the Cure Violence model and to become a role model for other Cure Violence sites throughout New York City. SOS also created a youth-oriented supplement program, YO SOS, to promote positive youth engagement and empower young people to work against violence in their community. During the course of the demonstration grant, SOS worked hard to hire credible messengers, maintain community trust, and balance the program's crisis response orientation with its community mobilization work. They helped staff to balance their street lifestyles with office professionalism by providing in-office role models and social worker support. They gained neighborhood trust with daily outreach and by simultaneously implementing intervention and violence prevention strategies while also mobilizing the community to take an active role in stopping violence in their own neighborhood.

SOS staff members believe their efforts made a real difference. Relying on a proven model and investing significant resources into a small catchment area allowed SOS to focus on interrupting current conflicts and to change community norms in a way that would prevent future conflicts. During the evaluation grant, however, the available data about violent crime in the neighborhood failed to detect significant changes when compared with another neighborhood with similar characteristics. Whether this was due to the short time period allowed or to the actual absence of a program effect remains an open question.

CHAPTER 3

Denver, Colorado

Introduction

In 2010, the Safe City Office of Denver, Colorado received funding through the Community Based Violence Prevention demonstration program to enhance the city's efforts to combat gang violence. Denver's problems with gang violence had been a growing concern since the early 1990s. In 2009, after a series of meetings and planning efforts, the city launched the Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID). The City then applied for OJJDP funds to enhance the initiative and to create a sustainable network of community organizations, social service providers, and law enforcement agencies. The goal was to address gang violence in a way that would outlast any short-term grant period and that would inspire long-term, positive changes in Denver.

The Denver area began to confront serious gang problems in the 1980s. Until the 1990s, however, public awareness of the issue was generally low and the attention of law enforcement tended to focus on lower socio-economic and minority communities. In 1993, Denver experienced a wave of violence that became known as the "summer of violence." Seventy-four people were killed by gun violence, including an infant struck by a stray bullet at the Denver Zoo (Denver Post 2012). The sudden spike in violence led to a package of state and local efforts targeting youth violence, but policymakers' attention faded as public concerns declined. More than 10 years later, on New Year's Day 2007, Denver Bronco's cornerback Darrent Williams was killed in a drive-by shooting outside a local nightclub, only hours after completing the final game of the season (Klis 2014). The shock of Williams' death reignited public awareness of violence in the city. Over the next several years, community groups demanded stronger action from City and State government.

Denver's GRID initiative emerged during this time from a series of meetings involving law enforcement, the court system, school officials and social service providers, as well as grass-roots and faith-based organizations. Everyone involved in the meetings was motivated by the desire to find more effective and holistic strategies for reducing violence—especially gang-related violence.

The core ideas for GRID drew heavily upon the Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM), a well-known model supported by the U.S. Department of Justice (OJJDP 2009). The CGM approach focused on mobilizing and coordinating community resources against gang violence, providing legitimate employment and educational opportunities for those most at risk of gang involvement, extending outreach efforts to connect youth with other social supports, and ensuring focused enforcement as needed. GRID targeted at-risk youth even before they entered gangs and became involved in street violence.

GRID faced resistance at first. Some community organizations, particularly gang outreach organizations, resisted what they perceived as the City's encroachment into their traditional areas of responsibility. Some city agencies did not work effectively with GRID initially because of its lack of visibility and their need to manage other, ongoing projects. In an effort to address these conflicts and to
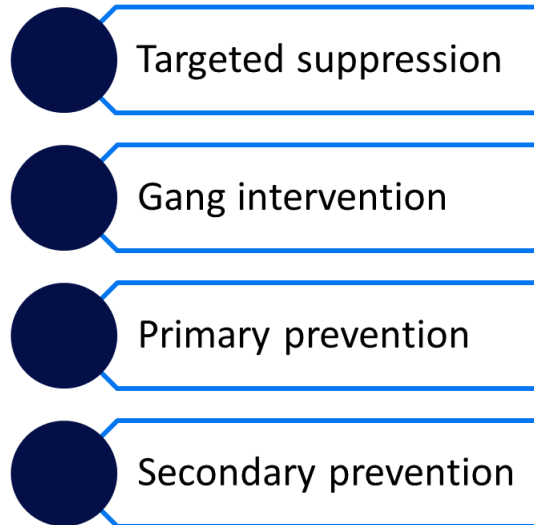
strengthen the City's overall violence-reduction efforts, GRID leaders conducted a systematic review of programs around the country to discover methods that might fit Denver's situation, including violence reduction strategies like Ceasefire and Cure Violence. In 2010, after devising their own hybrid approach, GRID submitted the model for review by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

GRID leaders were pleased when OJJDP suggested that they apply for funding to support their activities. OJJDP, however, recommended a more focused implementation of CGM. GRID leaders believed the CGM model was a good foundation, but it needed more specifics strategies. After a series of negotiations, Denver applied to OJJDP and received funding under the Community-Based

Program Components in Denver

Core Components

- Targeted suppression
- Gang intervention
- Primary prevention
- Secondary prevention

Complementary Components

- Classes for parents
- G.R.E.A.T. program
- Parent nights
- Weekend graffiti cleanup
- Community events
- Summer programs for students

Violence Prevention (CBVP) demonstration program. GRID was to employ its modified version of CGM, with all of Denver's proposed strategies aligned under one or more of the CGM strategic principles (community mobilization, organizational change, opportunities provision, social interventions, and suppression). The program's structure was finalized in early 2012 and Denver received $2.2 million from OJJDP to support implementation. GRID was housed in Denver's Safe City Office (SCO) initially until it became its own entity under the umbrella of the Executive Director of Safety's Office in 2014.
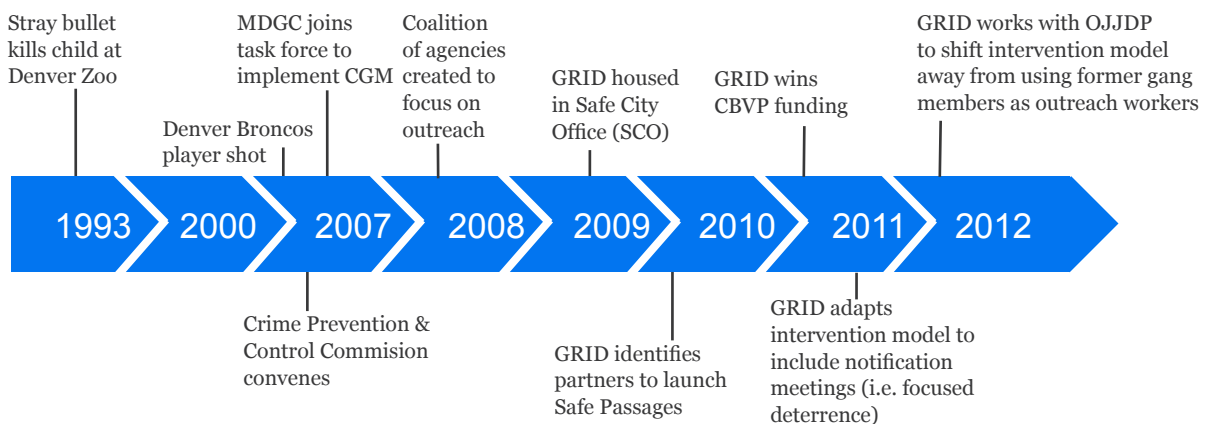
The Denver program worked on three areas: targeted suppression, gang intervention, and prevention. In addition, GRID expanded the city's capacity to provide gang intervention services, particularly focusing on outreach efforts. The new funding allowed GRID to hire outreach workers (up to seven at one point in time), to coordinate the project's Intervention Support Teams, and to support police overtime costs, which allowed police officers to coordinate with probation and parole officers in making home visits with at-risk youth and to participate in monthly gang intelligence meetings. Suppression funding focused on administrative expenses, including staff salaries, adult systems navigation teams, and incorporation of the CeaseFire (or focused deterrence) strategy. A large proportion of secondary prevention funding was devoted to outreach agencies that provided case management services and supporting regional gang prevention coordinators.
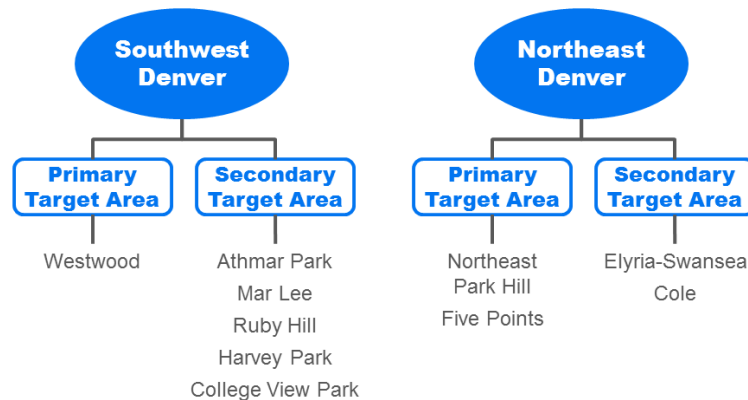
At one point during the grant period, GRID operations were supporting seven outreach agencies. The primary prevention portion of the OJJDP grant paid full-time salaries for two juvenile probation officers to implement the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program in Denver public schools. Funds were also used to train additional police officers and sheriff's deputies in the G.R.E.A.T. model.

Despite the wide array of coordination activities needed for GRID, the majority of OJJDP funding was used to support direct interventions. The City of Denver even waived its traditional portion of indirect and administrative costs in order to invest more funds into outreach and community building. The City valued the OJJDP funds for their ability to develop aspects of the GRID model that would be difficult to fund at the local level. For example, GRID received special permission from the State of Colorado to hire probation officers to implement a gang prevention program in schools. Such an activity would have been outside the normal scope of work for probation officers in Colorado.

Timeline of Important CBVP Events in Denver

Stray bullet kills child at Denver Zoo

Denver Broncos player shot

MDGC joins task force to implement CGM

Coalition of agencies created to focus on outreach

GRID housed in Safe City Office (SCO)

GRID wins CBVP funding

GRID works with OJJDP to shift intervention model away from using former gang members as outreach workers

1993 | 2000 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012

Crime Prevention & Control Commision convenes

GRID identifies partners to launch Safe Passages

GRID adapts intervention model to include notification meetings (i.e. focused deterrence)

GRID Intervention Areas

GRID relied on OJJDP funding to create sustainable partnerships by leveraging and coordinating $5 to $7 million of additional in-kind services and supports to combat violence. Denver's goal was to create a consistent framework for change that would evolve into a long-lasting program. The City used a variety of federal and state grants to facilitate partnerships between multiple agencies under the GRID umbrella. Initiative leaders believed that coordinated, financial partnerships would encourage organizations to work together and to minimize competition for funding. Ideally, all the partners would continue to collaborate even after the initial funding ended. Early success in reducing gun violence would catalyze even broader efforts.

GRID's approach originally centered on four goals: 1) reduce recidivism; 2) reduce violent gang crime; 3) create positive individual behavioral change; and 4) increase the coordinated efforts of local partners to reduce other effects of gang violence. In 2012, at the request of OJJDP, GRID added a fifth goal—change community norms from endorsing to rejecting violence.

The GRID was organized by three collaborating teams: 1) a policy steering committee to develop the initiative's strategic focus; 2) a project support and management team to implement strategies at the level of communities and neighborhoods; and 3) an implementation team to ensure that all strategies were targeted appropriately in specific neighborhoods. Each team included individuals from local government, faith-based organizations, neighborhood groups, and general community members. The City worked to ensure representation from diverse interests and perspectives.

Denver selected three primary areas for GRID interventions: Westwood in Southwest Denver and Northeast Park Hill and Five Points in Northeast Denver. In addition to these areas, a number of secondary target areas were identified in surrounding communities: Athmar Park, Mar Lee, Ruby Hill, Harvey Park and College View Park in Southwest Denver, and Cole and Elyria-Swansea in Northeast Denver. GRID eventually included participants from neighboring Aurora, Colorado as well. According to City officials, active groups from Aurora were known to target Denver rivals in acts of violence. In addition to this

geographic focus, GRID used several criteria to select individuals for intervention. Under the conditions of the CBVP grant, Denver stipulated that roughly 60 percent of new clients be probationers or paroleees. The remainder were to be individuals considered at "high risk" for gang violence, with a key indicator being early withdrawal from high school.

Core Strategies

The GRID model was not a simple replication of CGM. It embraced key principles of CGM, including community mobilization, organizational change, social intervention, opportunities provision, and suppression. GRID, however, was a hybrid that incorporated strategies from other programs supported by research evidence, such as the focused deterrence model. The initiative focused on three broad categories of activities as suggested by OJJDP guidelines: 1) suppression; 2) intervention; and 3) primary and secondary prevention.

STRATEGY 1: SUPPRESSION

Suppression included targeting active gang members through offender notification meetings, coordinated multi-agency operations, and agency capacity building. In the first year of the initiative, GRID collaborated with federal, state, and local partners to develop a protocol for offender notification meetings. A working group guided the implementation of the strategy. Each meeting was to alert gang members in targeted areas that law enforcement was aware of their identities and that violent actions would not be tolerated. During the meetings, gang members were informed of the certain consequences of future gang violence. By inviting them to a meeting, the City conveyed to gang members that their communities wanted them to find alternatives to violence, and to advise them in very clear terms that any additional violence would entail "costs" to themselves and their members. Social services were also offered to participants and their families to provide legitimate alternatives to meeting familial needs.

Representatives from the Denver Police Department (Denver PD), the District Attorney's Office, the US Attorney's Office, the City Attorney's Office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the Departments of Corrections and Probation were present to deliver these messages in a collective, authoritative voice. Victim advocates were also present to share victims' experiences with gang violence and present the social costs to gang members, their families, their victims, and the entire community. Meetings were often hosted by faith-based organizations that provided representatives to speak from a "moral" perspective in opposition to community violence.

Seven notification meetings were held in the first two years. Initially, GRID invited gang members to attend notification meetings with each meeting devoted to a single targeted gang. Members of the gang were served with invitation letters signed by the Police Chief asking them to attend. However, it soon became

Connecting to Work

Staff of the GRID program characterized a lot of their participants as good people who had made bad choices. One individual became involved with GRID after being released from a state youth facility. He had already failed in two job placements and was having a difficult time adjusting. Staff believed that he was uncomfortable with his role in the first two jobs and he lacked the confidence to act on his own behalf. He was fired from both positions, but remained in contact with GRID. One year later, he had secured a new job as an electrical laborer. Within three months, he passed the entrance exam to start an electrical apprenticeship program. He began working at $12 per hour. By the time his case was closed with GRID, he was making $16 an hour. He was still active in the apprenticeship program when his contact with GRID ended. Many grant participants had stories like this, according to the Denver staff.

apparent that this made the meetings look like sting operations. Thereafter, GRID began asking its faith-based partners to invite the gangs instead. Twenty or thirty gang members might be invited to a single meeting. This arrangement proved to be more successful in getting gang-involved individuals to attend.

GRID expected meeting attendees to convey the message of the meeting to the larger gang membership, but this rarely happened with the initial meetings. Some GRID staff believed that the meetings were not drawing the individuals best equipped to spread the deterrence message effectively. In response, GRID began to limit invitations to high-risk gang members and associates who were already on probation and parole. In this way, it could rely on formal authorities to encourage attendance at meetings and to follow up on any issues that arose during meetings.

During the initial year of implementation, GRID evaluated the success of the meetings and concluded that they were not yielding the desired results. In order to understand what might make the technique work more effectively, enforcement representatives conferred with David Kennedy, a leading proponent of the focused deterrence approach and a faculty member at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. GRID learned that its definition of gangs may have been too broad. It also learned that notification meetings should be restricted to the most influential gang members and the small subpopulation within the gang that was driving the violence. To assist GRID, the Denver Police Department's Gang Bureau produced a list of known gang members that it believed to be influential group members. This strategy helped the meetings attendance improve.

In 2014, under a revamped meeting format, GRID coordinated the police department's Gang Bureau, probation and parole, and special law enforcement teams to map all gang activity in Denver by conducting group audits and evaluating past violent gang crimes. Despite the new strategy, the meetings continued to present challenges. More than 100 gangs, cliques and groups were thought to be operating in Denver. GRID attempted to make contact with representatives of all groups to invite them to notification meetings. For those that did not cooperate, GRID was ready to impose suppressive sanctions.
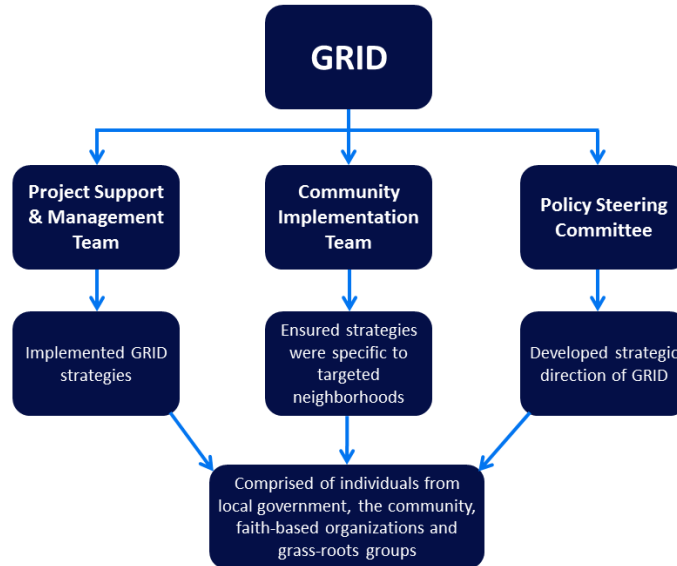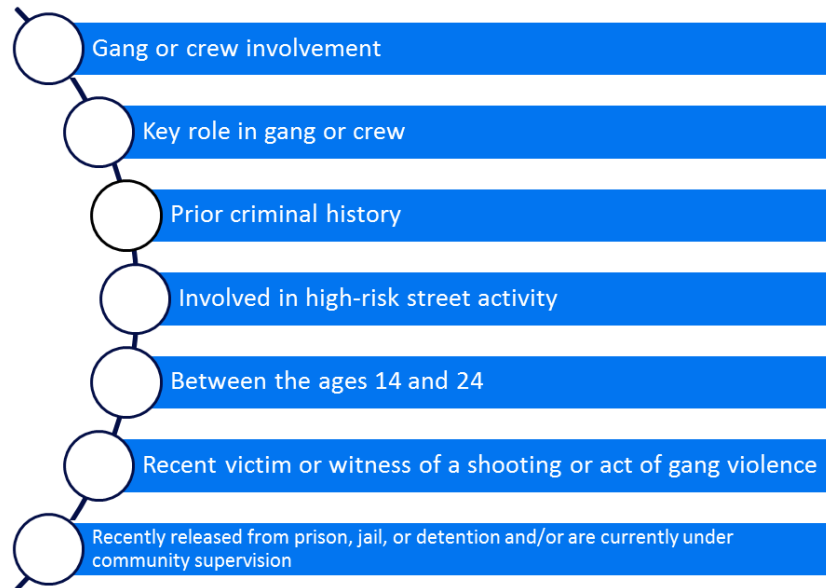
In the second year of implementation, GRID began to meet monthly with partner agencies to share information and coordinate strategies, and participating agencies were invited to share their knowledge of local gang activity and to track current violent crime trends. GRID supported Probation and Parole and the Denver police to implement coordinated probation and parole checks in areas where violent incidents tended to occur. Initially, probation officials had reservations about imposing sanctions or revocations on individuals for crimes that other members of a larger group committed. Some agencies were initially hesitant to share detailed information. GRID leadership worked with the agencies to allay their concerns. As relationships were built and solidified, better information began to flow between partner agencies.

Part of GRID's suppression strategy was to increase the capacity and effectiveness of all partner agencies. For example, GRID provided support for the departments of juvenile and adult probation in their efforts to conduct home visits and client searches and to focus on specific gangs or high-risk clients that they believed may have violated probation conditions. In Colorado, probation officers do not carry firearms. GRID helped to build a partnership between probation and law enforcement to ensure the security of probation officers during visits to high-risk households. GRID leadership also helped juvenile probation staff to provide gang-affiliated clients with information about community resources, in addition to normal suppression activities.

STRATEGY 2: INTERVENTION

GRID viewed gang outreach work as critical to the success of intervention efforts and the initiative provided funding to a number of community non-profit organizations to provide outreach services. The organizations receiving funding included the Center for Hope, Brother Jeff's Cultural Center, the Gang Rescue and Support Program (GRASP), Prodigal Son Inc., Impact Empowerment Group,

Participant Selection Criteria

- Gang or crew involvement
- Key role in gang or crew
- Prior criminal history
- Involved in high-risk street activity
- Between the ages 14 and 24
- Recent victim or witness of a shooting or act of gang violence
- Recently released from prison, jail, or detention and/or are currently under community supervision

and CrossPurpose Ministries. Outreach workers provided case management, community-based mentoring, advocacy and support, conflict mediation, violence prevention, crisis response, and disseminating anti-violence messaging. During its first year and a half, GRID struggled to get agencies to comply with the CGM approach to outreach work, as part of a multi-disciplinary effort to coordinate services for clients. Over time, the role of outreach workers shifted from a mentorship approach to case management.

This focusing of the outreach worker role resulted in tension and resistance from a couple of sources. At a prominent outreach organization that had been in operation several years before GRID, staff members were initially resistant to change. They believed their outreach approach was appropriate and effective, and they were reluctant to adopt the GRID recommendations. When faced with either compliance or contract termination, the agency reluctantly complied. Some members of the GRID Policy Steering Committee were also reticent at first. The Committee struggled with defining a new role for outreach workers considering that outreach work had been part of Denver's crime prevention approach for years. Some members resigned from the Committee rather than continue to be part of a process that included threatening non-complying agencies with the loss of their contacts.

Outreach work continued to be a controversial issue throughout the OJJDP grant period. Problematic compliance, paired with poor performance measures and difficulties maintaining programmatic data resulted in a turnover rate among outreach workers of nearly 50 percent annually. GRID leaders did their best to fill the positions and to enforce the approved definition of outreach. Interagency cooperation was a key component of GRID's outreach effort. When a local gang

Staying in School

An outreach worker was working with a multi-generational gang family and noticed that the youngest son was often left out of conversations about services and supports. The worker visited the son's school and learned the youth was struggling. Despite being enrolled in the 8th grade, a recent assessment indicated that he had 2nd grade reading and math skills. The outreach worker worried that school failure would accelerate the youth's enagement with street culture.

The outreach worker carefully began to engage with the young man in an attempt to facilitate the implementation of an individual education plan. He spoke with the parents and eventually helped them to understand that their son needed extra attention in order to remain in school and stay safe. He worked with the youth for more than a year before the family began to accept the help and to participate in services.

The young man ultimately stayed in school. Even after their formal relationship came to an end, the young man remained in touch with the program and his outreach worker. Several years later, he visited the program and proudly told the outreach worker about his high school graduation, his job, and his brand new baby girl.

leader attempted to recruit from a local middle school, GRID outreach workers cooperated with the Police Department to support school resource officers who could work in schools to prevent such recruitment efforts. When a shooting occurred, Denver PD immediately contacted GRID to send outreach workers to the crime scene to prevent further retaliatory violence and to provide victim assistance. In addition to the standard outreach worker response, GRID worked with faith-based organizations to provide secondary trauma assistance and to engage the community in conversations about the negative effects of violence.

Outreach workers often received referrals from Probation and Parole, the Denver Police Department's Gang Unit, and former and current clients. Probation also invited outreach workers to attend and recruit youth from its officers' meetings. GRID collaborated with halfway houses and other partner agencies to set up events and barbeques designed to attract clients and educate non-profit partners about evidence-based case management approaches. GRID devised a workload management system that capped outreach worker caseloads at 25 clients. This helped to ensure that outreach workers could devote sufficient time to each client.

The target population for GRID's outreach work was gang-affiliated youth ages 14 to 24. Many other agencies did not want to work with these youth due to their violent histories, and some agencies involved with GRID's efforts believed that the age restriction pulled focus away from their work with the older adult population. GRID attempted to address this gap by implementing an age restriction-exemption procedure to allow agencies to work with older clients whenever a clear connection could be made to potential acts of violence.

GRID's core intervention strategy depended on a multi-disciplinary team (MDT). The MDT identified families and individuals involved in gang culture and provided coordinated case management led by a contracted outreach agency. The team met with clients monthly and developed a case plan for each participating individual and/or family that would facilitate access to services and prevent duplication of effort.

To be eligible for MDT case management, an individual had to meet at least three of seven criteria: 1) gang or crew involvement; 2) key role in gang or crew; 3) prior criminal history; 4) high-risk street activity; 5) between the ages of 14 and 24; 6) recent victim of or witness to a shooting or act of gang violence; or 7) currently under community supervision after release from prison, jail or juvenile detention.

Referrals came from Probation and Parole, the Denver District Attorney, the city's Safe City Office, Colorado's Division of Youth Corrections, schools, prevention coordinators, outreach workers, and various community groups.

GRID established a Juvenile Intervention Support Team (JIST) to provide coordinated case management for the highest risk juvenile gang members between ages 14 and 21. JIST connected youth and their families to wrap-around social services and helped to involve participants in developmental and social activities, such as sports and music production classes. JIST members met monthly to allow outreach workers and intervention coordinators to review the progress of ongoing cases and to review intake information for new cases. GRID funds covered a staff member to coordinate funding strategies, paid salaries for outreach workers, and supported a mental health representative for four months, with many agencies providing in-kind services for participants. By April 2014, JIST had coordinated services for more than 200 youth.

In response to the growing concerns that one team could not handle the differentiated needs of juveniles and adults, GRID also established an Adult Systems Navigation Team (ASNT). The ASNT coordinated services for high-risk adult gang members, focusing on those involved in the court system as well as violent offenders coming out of prison. They worked with every justice re-entry agency, teaching gang disengagement strategies with attention to past trauma and individual positions within gang hierarchies. ASNT hosted weekly sessions to provide clinical services and facilitate client meetings with program managers to determine whether other services were needed, including outreach, mental health supports, parenting assistance, and employment readiness. A client could spend up to 12 months receiving services even before they fully disengaged from their crew or gang. GRID helped the re-entry service providers meet the needs of participants and provided funding to the teams. The program funded one full-time outreach worker to work with the team and relied on the City of Denver to cover ASNT's additional expenses. Staff promoted ASNT as an example of GRID's ability to leverage and coordinate different funding sources. The leadership of GRID opted to partner with existing reentry programs run by the Department of Labor and to add a gang desistance component rather than create an entirely new reentry program for adult gang members.

GRID utilized state, local, and federal grant funds to fund an Opportunities Provision Coordinator (OPC) to help clients achieve educational and employment goals. Approximately 30 participants were referred by GRID staff and partners during the first year, and up 50 in each of the following two years. Participants received assistance with GED testing, training on how to discuss their criminal records, short term certification training, and job placement services. Businesses were offered wage subsidies to cover 100 percent of each participant's beginning wages. The OPC enrolled participants in mental health services, conflict resolution training, empowerment classes, drug and alcohol treatment, housing assistance, transportation assistance, clothing assistance, and tattoo removal. In March 2013, the program got a significant boost, when a Denver City Council member connected the OPC with numerous potential employers, expanding access to jobs for all the participants. In 2014, oversight and primary funding for the OPC shifted from GRID to the Office of Economic Development (OED).
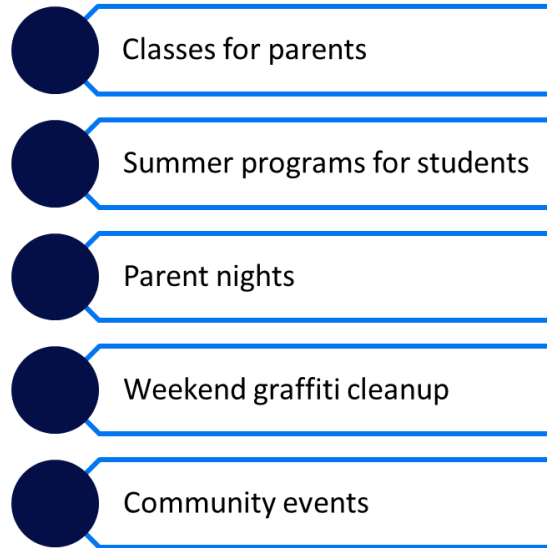
GRID established a jobs program by partnering with Denver's OED and other organizations already providing job readiness workshops. The program was designed in accordance with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment model and the Work for Success curriculum, which contained pre- and post-employment components. Pre-employment workshops focused on skills such as completing applications, interviewing, and résumé building. Post-employment workshops used mentoring groups to teach workplace communication, workplace ethics, problem solving, and advocacy skills. At the end of the program, each participant earned $50.

To supplement these services, GRID applied for Workforce Investment Act funding to co-enroll participants in training programs and one-week employment preparation workshops. GRID also contracted with several local organizations to provide education and employment assistance for its clients. One of these organizations, Center of Hope, provided education assistance, therapeutic treatment, job training, mentoring, and DUI classes, for 75 GRID clients. In return, GRID supported Center of Hope with an outreach worker who shared information about gang activity, street-involved youth, and potential retaliatory acts, especially at the Center's funeral services. After demonstrating its ability to host funerals free of violence, Center of Hope was designated a safe zone.

GRID also partnered with Brother Jeff's Cultural Center to hire an outreach worker for youth outreach and community mobilization. The Center was a particularly suitable partner, having been established to provide a safe social center for youth after 1993's "summer of violence." The Cultural Center focused on education and used poetry and the spoken word to help promote literacy and create a sense of accomplishment among youth. The GRID-funded outreach worker concentrated specifically on gang-affiliated youth and promoted community mobilization during team incident responses to shootings. As with all partners, the outreach worker also discussed each case at a weekly meeting with staff members from different GRID partners to connect clients with additional services.

GRID funded the Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) to provide direct mental health services and assisted the agency in securing a federal SAMSHA grant to expand their efforts. After consulting staff members at MHCD, they created a trauma-based treatment plan for high-risk gang members. This program, in combination with the additional federal funding, allowed GRID to provide mental health services to over 600 youth. Project RISE (Resilience, Independence, Strength and Empowerment) provided individual and group therapy to gang-involved youth who experienced severe trauma. Participants were referred from Denver Public Schools, both Probation departments, the Department of Human Services and other community organizations.

G.R.E.A.T. Components

- Classes for parents
- Summer programs for students
- Parent nights
- Weekend graffiti cleanup
- Community events

GRID collaborated with Denver Health Medical Center's (DHMC) juvenile emergency room to launch the At-risk Intervention and Mentoring (AIM) program. Full-time outreach staff worked with gang-involved individuals admitted to the DHMC. They discussed the life-long consequences of gang involvement with youth, provided mentorship, and helped clients to qualify for financial assistance from the victim services system to cover their medical expenses. Outreach staff followed up with clients after their discharge from the hospital. As part of the program, GRID also developed a protocol for emergency room workers to connect youth involved in shootings with outreach workers. In 2014, the City secured an OJJDP Field Initiated Research and Evaluation grant to continue the program.

STRATEGY 3: PREVENTION

City officials in Denver believed that youth violence was often associated with the illegal drug market and the influence of gang culture in families. With a familial history of incarceration, many youth assumed that their lives would lead to the same outcome. GRID sought to change these perceptions and to persuade participants of their ability to alter the trajectory of their own lives in positive directions. GRID assigned Prevention Coordinators (PC) to the target the highest risk areas in Northeast Denver and the Southwest. The PCs provided case management and treatment services, and GRID paid to train five Denver police officers and one sheriff's deputy to teach G.R.E.A.T. classes in those neighborhoods.

GRID used community network teams and public education campaigns to raise awareness about violence. The Southwest Denver Coalition met once a month to share information, seek resources, and plan community events, among them the Safe Summer Kickoff. The Kickoff was often the largest community event of the year. It introduced service providers to the community and offered free food and entertainment to engage youth. Many agencies donated food and provided healthy alternatives like veggie burgers to promote healthy eating. Others sent representatives to consult with local residents and to offer assistance with clothing, food, utilities expenses, and housing expenses. By 2013, the event grew to include more than 50 registered agencies and attracted 500 attendees.

During National Night Out, another large community event, communities around the country organized neighborhood residents in high-crime areas to clean up trash and reclaim their communities. As part of Denver's National Night Out, the Coalition worked with police and outside agencies to focus their efforts on an abandoned bar. Community members put together an event with food and speakers to raise funds and sponsor a coffee shop to replace the bar. The Coalition gathered at the site one year later to celebrate the newly successful coffee shop. Through these and other efforts, GRID promoted a broad strategy of prevention to engage the targeted neighborhoods. GRID became a prevention hub for police officers, community members, social service organizations, and city council members.

The Gang Resistance Education and Training Program (G.R.E.A.T.) placed two Juvenile Probation officers—fully funded through the CBVP grant—in selected Denver elementary and middle schools. Supported with OJJDP funding, G.R.E.A.T. taught participants about the negative consequences of violent crime, strategies to resist gang involvement, how bullying relates to gangs, the community effects of drug use, and the value of various intervention programs. The G.R.E.A.T. program held graffiti cleanup activities in collaboration with community organizations and sponsored parent nights to empower youth and families to work together to address issues related to crime and violence. Through G.R.E.A.T., GRID was able to develop partnerships with the schools to coordinate classes for parents, host training series, and sponsored community events. In addition to teaching youth, G.R.E.A.T. officers served as a school resource, advising teachers on gang-related issues.

G.R.E.A.T worked in 10 elementary schools and seven middle and junior high schools. The elementary school curriculum lasted six weeks and was repeated in the fourth and fifth grades while the middle and junior high curriculum lasted 12 weeks and only occurred once in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade. The program allowed students to participate in the program more than once. Community residents often welcomed G.R.E.A.T. because it provided at-risk siblings with a supportive place to discuss their experiences, helped to change their negative views toward authority figures (e.g., probation officers), and provided youth with the confidence they needed to avoid gang involvement.

The National Gang Center (NCG) visited Denver several times during the CBVP initiative to train GRID providers and outreach workers on everything from drug recognition to mental health and mandated reporting. Each provider also held its own trainings to help staff members maintain professionalism. Training topics included gang identification, gang structure, and working with clients who exhibited gang behavior. In addition to training sessions, NCG staff remained available to mentor outreach workers over the course of the grant period.

The Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) trained providers on recognizing trauma and properly addressing it to enhance GRID partners' community education and training on family dynamics, parenting, and mentoring. GRID hosted additional trainings on Denver gang structures and the dynamics of gang violence. By April 2014, GRID had trained over 5,000 case managers to work with gangs or provide mental health services. To augment these trainings and subsequent outreach work, the City of Denver provided all their outreach workers with laptops and cell phones.

PARTNERSHIPS

GRID partnerships brought organizations together to improve communication. All agencies had prior experience with gang involved populations. GRID helped to improve the coordination of the police department, adult probation, and juvenile probation. Prior to GRID, it was often difficult for probation staff to obtain current information about their clients and about gang activity in Denver. Juvenile and adult probation offices were in separate locations and the workers did not communicate routinely. Through GRID, all three agencies came together at least monthly to discuss the current state of gang violence in the city and to develop intervention strategies. The agencies began to share information to develop joint case management plans and to address emerging gang issues. While GRID facilitated this work initially, justice agencies in Denver began to increase information sharing outside of GRID-sponsored meetings.

GRID collaborated with the Denver Police Department to suppress gang activity through offender notification meetings. Seeking to create partnerships among all criminal justice agencies, GRID built a system that assigned specialized officers to gang caseloads and paid for agency capacity building. According to GRID staff, its work with the police, especially with the Gang Unit, created its most successful partnership. From all accounts, attitudes about information sharing improved tremendously due to GRID's work. GRID also helped the Department of Corrections to develop a sustainable Gang Unit composed of parole officers that supervised only gang members.

Possible Effects on Violent Crime

As part of the evaluation of CBVP, the John Jay research team collected crime data from the Denver Police Department. The information covered 2005 through 2015, including six years before Denver's receipt of the CBVP grant, three years during the grant period, and up to two years after the grant. The data included homicides, aggravated assaults, and robberies in the areas of the city affected by GRID as well as other, non-GRID areas. The research team examined trends in these data and looked for any changes that began around 2011 when CBVP-funded activities began.

Violent crimes in Denver generally increased between 2010 and 2015, but increases were larger in areas served by GRID. There were 3,268 violent crimes citywide in 2010, growing 27 percent to 4,140 by 2015. In areas served by GRID, however, violent crimes grew 47 percent. Violent crimes increased between 2010 and 2015 in all three primary GRID areas, including Five Points (up 37%), Northeast Park Hill (up 30%), and Westwood (up 61%).
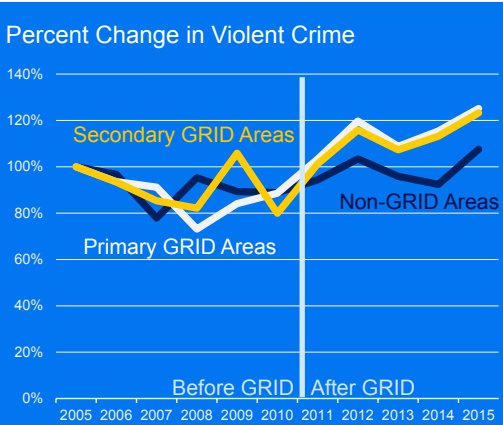
If it were reasonable to expect the efforts of GRID to have city-wide effects on general violence (and the study team would not suggest that it is), the data from the Denver Police Department failed to show it. Violent crimes declined between 2005 and 2008 before increasing through 2015. Areas of the city served by GRID grew more than non-GRID areas relative to 2005 levels.

Violent Crimes* in the City of Denver Before and After Implementation of GRID: 2010-2015			
Areas	2010	2015	Percent Change
All City Areas	3,268	4,140	27%
All Non-GRID Areas	**2,568**	**3,109**	**21%**
All GRID Areas	**700**	**1,031**	**47%**
Primary GRID Areas	**373**	**527**	**41%**
Five Points	178	244	37%
NE Park Hill	98	127	30%
Westwood	97	156	61%
Secondary GRID Areas	**327**	**504**	**54%**
Athmar Park	44	77	75%
Cole	52	85	63%
College View	44	61	39%
Elyria-Swansea	34	85	150%
Harvey Park	32	64	100%
Mar Lee	53	69	30%
Ruby Hill	68	63	–7%

* Includes murder, aggravated assault and robbery.

In 2005, GRID's primary target areas experienced 421 violent crimes. By 2015, the number had climbed to 527, an increase of 41 percent. Secondary GRID areas saw violent crimes grow 54 percent, from 409 crimes in 2005 to 504 crimes in 2015. In other areas of the city, violent crimes grew just 21 percent, from 2,891 to 3,109 crimes between 2005 to 2015.
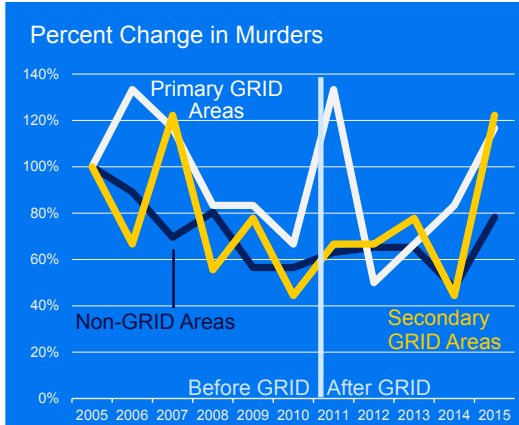
Percent Change in Violent Crime

Secondary GRID Areas

Non-GRID Areas

Primary GRID Areas

Before GRID | After GRID

Number of Violent Crimes	2005	2010	2015
Primary Target Areas	421	373	527
Secondary Target Areas	409	327	504
Non-Program Areas	2,891	2,568	3,109

Percent Change in Murders

Primary GRID Areas

Non-GRID Areas

Secondary GRID Areas

Before GRID | After GRID

Number of Murders	2005	2010	2015
Primary Target Areas	6	4	7
Secondary Target Areas	9	4	11
Non-Program Areas	46	26	36

Percent Change in Aggravated Assaults

Secondary GRID Areas

Non-GRID Areas

Primary GRID Areas

Before GRID | After GRID
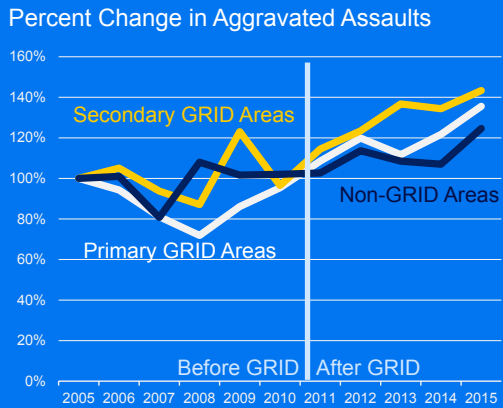
Number of Aggravated Assaults	2005	2010	2015
Primary Target Areas	281	268	381
Secondary Target Areas	256	247	367
Non-Program Areas	1,684	1,718	2,099

Percent Change in Robberies

Primary GRID Areas

Non-GRID Areas

Secondary GRID Areas

Before GRID | After GRID
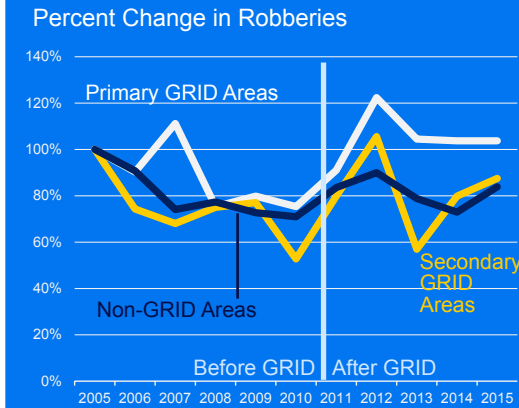
Number of Robberies	2005	2010	2015
Primary Target Areas	134	101	139
Secondary Target Areas	144	76	126
Non-Program Areas	1,161	824	974

GANG ARRESTS

The number of gang arrests in Denver was fluctuating before the launch of GRID. Between 2007 and 2010, the police department made between 10 and 30 gang arrests per year. After the city received its CBVP funding, the number of gang arrests began to grow, reaching nearly 100 per year by 2015. Although the effect of GRID on total violence is not clear, the new funding may have allowed the police to combat gang activity more aggressively. On the other hand, when arrests are separated
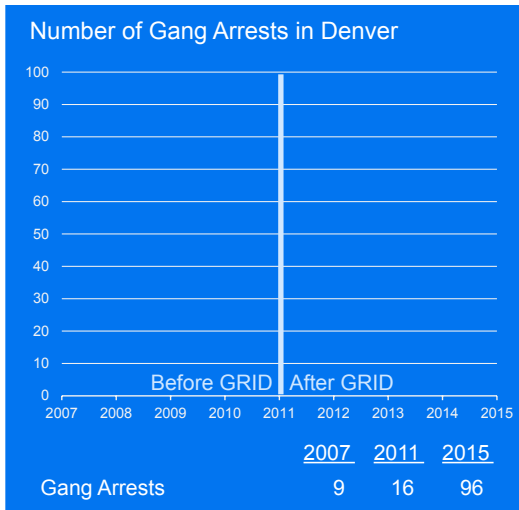
Number of Gang Arrests in Denver

Before GRID | After GRID

	2007	2011	2015
Gang Arrests	9	16	96

Survey of Youth Participants

Each site receiving an OJJDP grant agreed to administer a survey to program participants. The survey, developed by the John Jay research team, asked youth about their experiences in the neighborhood and with the CBVP program. In Denver, 212 youth answered the anonymous survey.
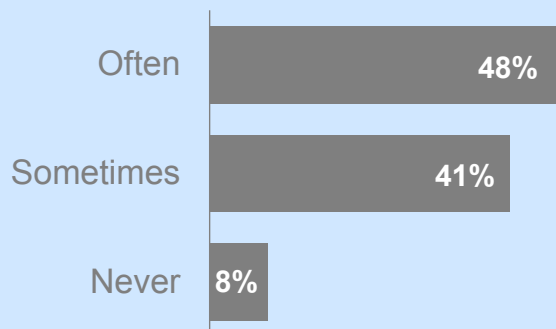
More than half the respondents (56%) were aware of GRID and knew about how the program worked with the community to prevent violence. Two in five respondents were unaware of any other violence reduction efforts in their neighborhood.

Many respondents (43%) indicated that they had witnessed a fight in the neighborhood. Nearly a quarter (24%) youth reported that they had personally known someone who had been the victim of gun violence.

The survey asked about violence and when it might be acceptable to use violence. Many respondents believed it was acceptable to use a gun in at least some circumstances—e.g., if their life was in danger (32%) or if someone had stolen their money or property (23%). If a family member had been shot, 13 percent of respondents felt it would be acceptable to use a gun in reacting to the situation.

Finally, the survey asked respondents if they ever felt unsafe walking in their neighborhood or getting to and from school. The majority of youth indicated that they felt unsafe often or at least sometimes.

How often do you *feel safe* walking in your neighborhood?

Often	48%
Sometimes	41%
Never	8%

How often do you think it's *dangerous* getting to and from school?

Never	41%
Sometimes	38%
Often	10%
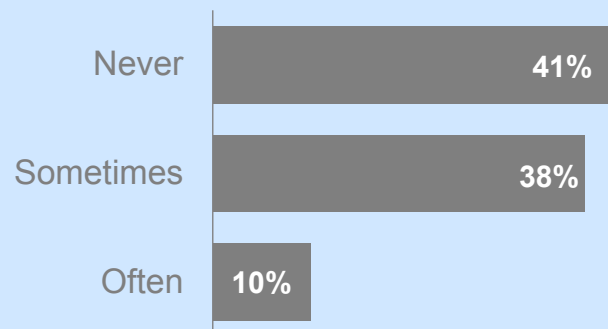
by age, gang arrests appeared to grow among 25-34 year olds just as much as among 16-24 year olds. Since the OJJDP-funded effort focused on youth gang members, it is difficult to know whether the sharp increase in total gang arrests was due to the effects of newly funded activity supported by GRID.

Lessons Learned

GRID's suppression model was integrated with prevention and intervention efforts. For example, the Denver Juvenile Probation Department's Impact Unit dealt with approximately 120 at-risk youth, most of whom were also supervised

by GRID outreach workers. Probation and parole clients were informed about the availability of GRID services, including individual therapy and resource supports. These service-oriented interactions were a necessary pairing with GRID's suppressive efforts. Each needed the other to be successful. By considering what worked and what did not, GRID built on the strong points of each strategy, reevaluated its weaker points, and created a sustainable network of service providers and partners.

The City of Denver and GRID leadership worked to change and adapt the original GRID model to meet the needs of the targeted client base. While the initiative pursued a number of different strategies, the majority of its efforts focused on direct gang intervention and crime prevention. Over time, it committed more of its resources to developing partnerships with community organizations and residents. GRID leaders believed it was better to let community partners develop and implement the program on their own to ensure the long-term stability of the effort. GRID also shifted its original strategy to rely less on the Cure Violence model (with dedicated "violence interrupters") to an approach that depended on law enforcement along with outreach workers to provide case management services. The shift came about after discussions with OJJDP, Cure Violence, and the National Gang Center.

In the initial stages of implementation, GRID focused very little on reentry programming with formerly incarcerated youth. The initiative primarily targeted youth involved in the criminal justice system through diversion programs as well as probation and parole, believing that the program could more adequately address the needs of these youth. As time passed, GRID expanded its work with previously incarcerated individuals.

STRENGTHS

Denver's participation in the CBVP demonstration program helped the City to revamp its approach to violence prevention. The leadership and staff of agencies involved in GRID created new and expanded relationships between agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. Collaboration between the Mayor's office and other city officials increased and managers and supervisors of public safety agencies embraced the GRID project more fully. Partner meetings featured representatives from mental health, education, and probation and diversion services and allowed all participating organizations–even those not providing direct services–to provide feedback to the City.

GRID focused on developing partnerships and improving the capacity of organizations to address gang violence. When GRID started, the city identified only a handful of relevant agencies to participate. GRID was able to bring over 150 partners together to address different aspects of the gang issue. Prior to collaborating with GRID, for example, the Office of Economic Development did not have a program in place to work with high-risk gang members. Many of the newly enrolled partners contributed funding to implement the strategies, allowing GRID to expand its efforts beyond what was possible with OJJDP funds. Staff

from the partner organizations told researchers that GRID was well-run and cohesive because the structure included various checks and balances that ensured broad participation. Furthermore, GRID leaders were respected because they did not dictate how service providers should work in the field, and they always asked partner agencies for feedback and input on important decisions.

CHALLENGES

GRID's model incorporated aspects of focused deterrence, Cure Violence, and the Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM). This presented a number of challenges. Early in the initiative, OJJDP suggested that Denver incorporate more of the CGM into the GRID model and to align their strategies with CGM principles (community mobilization, organizational change, opportunities provision, social interventions, and suppression). This resulted in some theoretical dissonance. In particular, the service provision component was sometimes difficult to manage when GRID's offender notification meetings affected the same youth and groups of youth.

GRID was effective in leveraging funds from multiple sources to focus on suppression, intervention, and prevention. The number of funding sources made it hard to credit the effectiveness of any one program component to a specific funding source. Suppression strategies, for example, were primarily funded through local sources (with only 6% of OJJDP grant funds used in this category), but suppression strategies were one of the main tenants of the GRID model as proposed to OJJDP. The complicated funding structure made the initiative more difficult to evaluate.

GRID was careful to ensure that partner agencies hewed closely to its model. At one point, GRID funded two "community liaison" staff members to help coordinate its work with other agencies. However, GRID soon found that these positions were "not the right fit" for the project and at the end of the contract period the positions were reallocated to provide more outreach workers at partner organizations. GRID included a successful job placement and training program, but this required guidance from someone with expertise in job development and the business community. Some partners looked to GRID's Opportunity Provision Coordinator for this, but the position was not consistently funded, which meant that GRID did not always have a full-time staff member devoted to opportunities provision.

GRID also had to contend with staffing changes. Sometimes the changes were helpful. The relationship between the Police Department's Investigative Support Division (ISD) improved with a shift in the unit's leadership. The new Commander placed a higher value on collaboration and began to attend monthly operations meetings. In other cases, staffing changes presented a challenge. For instance, in April 2014, the Office of Economic Development Youth Services revamped its entire training curriculum with a new partner. Instead of providing the trainings directly, they began to contract out training to Denver non-profits which altered the content of the limited curriculum.

Shifting outreach work to align more with the CGM approach led to some inconsistent staffing and delays for GRID. At first, some of the outreach workers who contracted through other organizations pushed back against GRID's attempt to brand all outreach work as its own. GRID was able to change this resistance, persuading staff members that a unified brand would help their recognition across Denver neighborhoods.

GRID also struggled to find the right outreach workers and went through an exhaustive process to determine the most effective personality type and background. Many young men released from correctional institutions expressed interest in becoming outreach workers, but they were not always ready to handle the work. Hiring former gang members also occasionally presented security concerns. Before taking on former gang members as outreach workers, GRID had to understand each applicant's level in the gang hierarchy to see if they could safely conduct outreach work in the community. In 2012, GRID stopped focusing the recruitment of outreach workers on former gang members and shifted instead to hiring neighborhood residents who grew up in the target areas, knew of the gangs, and had successfully avoided gangs when they were younger. Soon, half the outreach workers had college degrees. Some workers told researchers that this reduced GRID's effectiveness.

Coordinating the outreach component was often a significant challenge. Some youth involved with GRID had family members who were still active in gangs. Service providers had to approach the gang involvement of youth carefully while focusing on suppression and family engagement. GRID took a multifaceted approach, working with probation and parole to communicate with the parents as well as relying on family therapy and varying suppression techniques. GRID also tried to have an outreach worker or G.R.E.A.T. officer linked with generational gang families who were more likely to trust people outside law enforcement.

Outreach workers struggled to balance their relationships with participants and law enforcement. Some workers reported that trainings conducted by law enforcement officials were not as helpful as trainings by other outreach workers. Law enforcement officers also disclosed to researchers that outreach workers sometimes provided information about their clients, risking their trust. One official blamed this for the difficulty the group faced in reducing recidivism rates. GRID was alerted when this occurred and took immediate steps to correct it by providing more training on program protocols and appropriate information sharing.

Probation officers were also sometimes hesitant to trust outreach workers. Officers were concerned about what would happen if pertinent client information fell into the "wrong hands." At least one outreach worker told researchers that probation officers looked down on outreach staff. Outreach workers reported that the effort to build relationships with probation officers was never ending.

Engaging community support was a difficult process at times. Faith-based organizations were not as supportive of GRID as initially hoped. Local schools referred families to Prevention Coordinators believing they could benefit from the services provided but some families (i.e. generational gang families) were suspicious of the program. Some employers were very interested in partnering with GRID to help individuals succeed and find employment while others were not.

Inevitably, each partner agency understood its own work better than it understood the GRID strategy as a whole. GRID tried to bring all relevant agencies into the project, but it was sometimes difficult to reach consensus. Diversion providers did not focus on suppression work, so it was difficult to engage them in call-ins. Police at the district level did not always appreciate the need to work across districts. Eventually, GRID leaders learned to focus on their partnership with police at the administrative level and then coordinate efforts from the top down.

IMPROVING GRID

GRID leaders soon realized that focusing on smaller communities within the greater Denver area allowed partner agencies to cultivate stronger relationships. Efforts similar to GRID had been attempted before and proved unsuccessful due to lack of support from the community. Denver relied on its new program manager to navigate the politics necessary to develop important relationships with agencies in these smaller communities and to maintain the purpose and focus of the initiative. GRID and the Denver Police Department relied on social media to spread the message of gang violence reduction, but they needed to improve how they disseminated the message to the community at large. The Denver Police Department actually began to build its own TV studio during the CBVP project.

Several agency representatives told researchers that the training of outreach workers would have to be improved in the future. Establishing clear roles and expectations for workers was essential. Other partners, such as Denver Human Services, juvenile probation, and the Gang Center, needed to come together to share information on how they worked with clients. Some staff thought it would be useful to learn more about how social workers operate as an example of how to structure outreach work. It would also be beneficial for GRID to expand the services and resources available to partners and participants.

Staff members from one outreach provider wished they could offer short-term shelter for families to help them get back on their feet, but the agency did not have the resources for this. They frequently received calls from homeless families and had to refer them to other agencies. They wished they had the capacity to create a drug-free safe zone for families and to connect them with housing and employment. GRID leadership believed it would be helpful to create a network of project managers around the country to share information in a structured way. Without this, project managers could feel isolated in their experiences implementing these types of strategies.

The funding received from OJJDP helped GRID to build its city-wide presence. With the new resources, GRID was also able to fund projects that would have been difficult to support through local sources alone. OJJDP funding allowed GRID to pay for the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT), to support the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) officers, and to address the needs of clients receiving services through the Juvenile Intervention Support and Adult Systems Navigation Teams. Understanding that community organizations might be reluctant to undertake new efforts without guaranteed financial support, GRID also utilized some of its funds to support organizations such as Brother Jeff's Cultural Center and the Center for Hope. Through these efforts, GRID produced stronger partnerships that may last and may sustain gang prevention work over time.

Conclusion

The CBVP funding was a critical source of support for violence reduction efforts in Denver. Program staff and city officials reported the successful formation of new and stronger relationships between agencies and community stakeholders due to the atmosphere of collaboration fostered by GRID. During the course of the OJJDP grant period, GRID leadership exhibited the ability to adapt and improve its CBVP demonstration efforts, learning from previous experience how to better target youth violence. By focusing its program target areas and shifting focus from intervention to prevention, GRID developed over time into a more important resource for Denver's efforts to combat youth violence. The impact of the effort, however, could not be confirmed with local crime data. Violent crimes in Denver generally increased between 2010 and 2015 and the increases were actually larger in the areas served by GRID. Whether GRID helped to aggravate or attenuate established crime trends could not be determined without a more rigorous evaluation design. The possible absence of an effect, however, was also indicated by the household surveys conducted in Denver.

CHAPTER 4

Outcome Evaluation

Introduction

To conduct a more rigorous test of the effects of CBVP, the OJJDP evaluation grant required researchers to measure general community attitudes about crime and public safety. The John Jay College study selected two cities in which to measure public opinions and attitudes: Brooklyn and Denver. The evaluation team worked with the Institute for Survey Research (ISR) at Temple University to measure attitudes and perceptions of violence among a probability sample of neighborhood residents in both cities. Researchers from ISR conducted two rounds of face-to-face surveys to ask respondents about their awareness of violence reduction efforts and their perceptions and concerns about crime and violence.

In each of the two cities, the ISR team conducted identical interview-based surveys in the CBVP program target area and a matched comparison area. Surveys were conducted in 2012 and 2014. Exploratory factor analyses extracted four factors that measured residents' concerns about violent crime and another set of items was compiled into a cumulative index of the respondents' awareness of violence reduction efforts in their neighborhoods and cities. A difference-in-difference analysis was used to test the main research question—did communities implementing CBVP strategies show more improvement on key measures when compared with similar communities not implementing CBVP?

Methods

The survey project began by mailing letters to the homes of all potential survey respondents identified in the initial household sampling frame. Households had to meet three criteria to be included in the study: (1) the household had to be located within a target or comparison area; (2) an adult resident of the household (age 18 years or older) was required to be present to complete the survey; and (3) the adult resident completing the survey had to be cognitively capable of under-standing and responding to the survey questions. The letters explained these inclusion criteria and the purposes of the survey and the larger CBVP evaluation project. Recipients were instructed how to complete the survey online if they preferred not to be contacted by the research team. All households not completing the survey online were visited by a pair of ISR staff members who offered to screen the residents for eligibility. Households that agreed to participate and that met all three requirements were surveyed by the ISR staff immediately.

The ISR survey instrument was pre-tested for reliability and validity to create three to five latent indicators of a respondent's perceptions and attitudes toward violence. All questions were designed to be close-ended and measured using Likert-type scales (agree, strongly agree, etc.). With a balanced design (one treatment site and one comparison site in each of the two cities), power analysis was used to design a sample that would be likely to detect a 10 percent change

ISR @ Temple University

The Institute for Survey Research (ISR) at Temple University is one of the oldest and most highly regarded academic units in the United States. Since its founding in 1967, ISR has made numerous research contributions to policy planning at local, state, and national levels through surveys using personal, telephone, mail, and Web-based interviews; program evaluations; and focus group research. The Institute has particular strength in field work, achieving respectable response rates and maintaining high data quality even with difficult populations. It is one of only three university- based survey research facilities in the United States capable of conducting large-scale in-person surveys that represent the entire U.S. household population.

The main objectives of the Institute are: to provide national, state and local survey capabilities to social scientists in universities, foundations, and private and governmental agencies; to provide on-the-job training for undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty; to develop research programs in areas that include but are not limited to survey methodology, quality of life, adaptations to stress, child development, family experiences, welfare status, and drug and alcohol use.

ISR's complete in-house research facilities enable the Institute to provide study design and direction, sampling and the computing of sampling error, data collection, data processing including editing, coding, data entry, verifying and computer cleaning, programming, data tabulation and analysis, and report writing.

During its 47-year history ISR has conducted approximately 1,000 studies about such topics as health care, mental health, adaptations to stress, drug and alcohol use, sexual practices and their role in the transmission of disease, child development, family dynamics, job training, similarities and differences among twin pairs, PTSD, cardiovascular effects of stress, and patterns of domestic violence. In addition, ISR has evaluated numerous programs.

From:
Methods Report: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Evaluation of the Community-Based Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (CBVP), prepared for the Research and Evaluation Center at John Jay College by Keisha Miles and Dionna Robinson-Davis, Institute for Survey Research, Temple University.

in attitudes/perception over time with 80 percent power. Preliminary analyses assumed that the two paired sites were independent of each other and no pooled estimates would be calculated. The most conservative sample size (N = 1,600 for the entire study) required 200 surveys to be administered in each survey site, in each city, at two different times (2012 and 2014).

The research team purchased address data from a commercial provider (Marketing Systems Group) to construct neighborhood samples of 200 households in each neighborhood using an address-based sampling frame. Comparison neighborhoods were matched to CBVP neighborhoods according to recent crime data and demographics. Each comparison community was selected to be demographically similar, but geographically distant, from the treatment neighborhoods to prevent "spill over" effects from the CBVP interventions.

The study was not based on a panel design—i.e. researchers did not survey the same set of residents in the first and second survey waves. The activities of the agencies implementing CBVP programs in each city were hypothesized to affect the entire community over the course of implementation. Thus, two independent resident samples separated by at least 24 months should be sufficient to detect changes in neighborhood concerns about crime and violence if the programs worked according to theory.

The first wave of surveys was completed early in 2012 in both Denver and New York, approximately 12 months after each site began to receive CBVP funds. Follow-up surveys were scheduled to occur 24 months later in both cities. The second survey wave was completed on schedule in New York, but post-test surveys were postponed seven months in Denver, in part because Denver was slower to implement its model than anticipated. The research team wanted to ensure that at least 24 months had passed with the program at full implementation before attempting to measure change in attitudes. Thus, second wave surveys in Denver were completed late in 2014.

Collecting only two waves of survey data with both waves following the implementation of CBVP activities was not the ideal method for measuring community-level change. The evaluation project, however, had little choice in the timing of the surveys. Funding for the evaluation coincided with funding for the demonstration sites and prevented the evaluation team from gathering baseline (pre-implementation) data. Collecting the first wave of survey data during the first year of the demonstration was the best option available given the realities of federal funding cycles.

The survey team from ISR collected all data using tablet computers and "CASES," ISR's computer-assisted, in-person interviewing software. Researchers worked in pairs to visit all sampled households in each neighborhood. Each survey began with the research team offering the household another version of the study's information letter. The letter provided background information about the study as well as the procedures to be used in the survey. A screening and consent form was then read aloud to potential respondents to ensure their comprehension and consent before the survey began. All recruitment and data-collection procedures were reviewed and approved for human subject protections by the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) of the City University of New York as well as the IRB from Temple University.

Respondents in the first wave of the survey received a five dollar cash incentive to participate in the survey. The ISR field researchers, however, reported that this amount did not seem to be enough to incentivize survey participation, especially in Brooklyn where residents had a higher cost of living. The cash incentive was increased to $10 for the second wave of the survey and this resulted in improved recruitment rates.

All identifiable data were stored on handheld devices assigned to individual survey team members during the data collection period. To ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of participants, each device was password protected and included encryption software that protected all information about the sampled households as well as completed survey data. Only the survey team member assigned to work on a particular case had access to specific information once the survey was completed. All records were locked and unavailable to anyone other than the survey team. Research personnel informed all study participants of these confidentiality assurances during the consent process. When survey data were transferred from the field to the data collection team at Temple University, all personally identifiable information was maintained on encrypted, password protected files and stored on a secure server. Original data files were destroyed once the de-identified surveys results were validated and forwarded to the evaluation offices at John Jay College.

DATA SOURCES

The intervention areas in Brooklyn and Denver were established by OJJDP and the CBVP grantees before the evaluation project began. Both cities selected areas known for their high rates of youth violence. The research team made every effort to ensure that the comparison areas in both cities were as closely matched to the CBVP intervention areas as possible.

The intervention area in Brooklyn was located in Crown Heights. During the study's survey interviews, it was clear that many residents of the public housing community knew about the CBVP grantee (Save Our Streets), but some residents were confused about the goals and purposes of the program. Some even believed the program acronym ("SOS") was affiliated with area gangs. Residents reported a strong police presence in the neighborhood, especially near the public housing buildings.

The comparison are in Brooklyn was part of the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood (known locally as "Bed-Stuy") and included the Marcy and Lafayette Towers public housing communities. Police presence was heavy. Officers from NYPD regularly walked the neighborhood blocks and the Marcy Projects. There was a mobile police station (a large, visible trailer) located next to the Lafayette Towers.

The neighborhood also included part of Brooklyn's large Hassidic community. Data from the U.S. Census indicated that 106 Hassidic households resided within the boundaries of the comparison area. Due to their stark economic and social differences, and the relative insularity of Hassidic households compared with the predominant African-American population, Hassidic households were excluded from the study. The research sample was drawn from the remaining 73 percent of households within the sampled area.

Sampled Areas of Brooklyn, New York
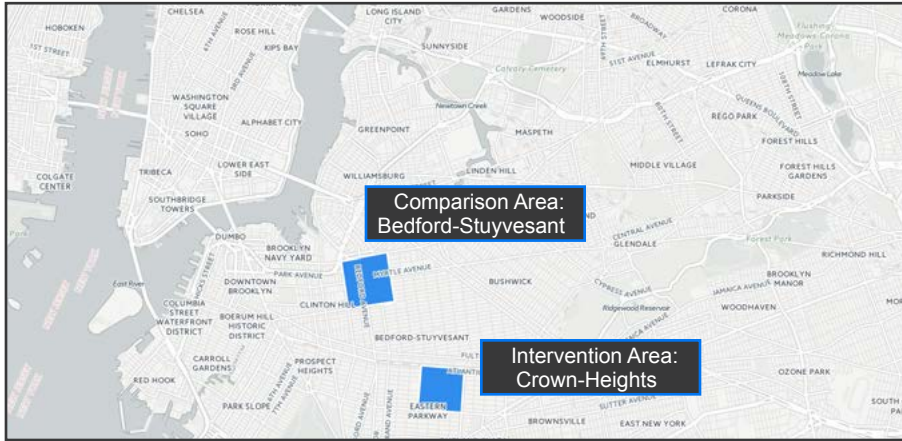
Intervention	Comparison
Neighborhoods Crown-Heights	**Neighborhoods** Bedford-Stuyvesant
Census Tracts 309, 311, 337, 343, 345, 351, 353	**Census Tracts** 191, 193, 233, 235, 237, 239, 241, 253, 255
Zipcodes 11213	**Zipcodes** 11205, 11238, 11206, 11216

Sampled Areas of Denver, Colorado
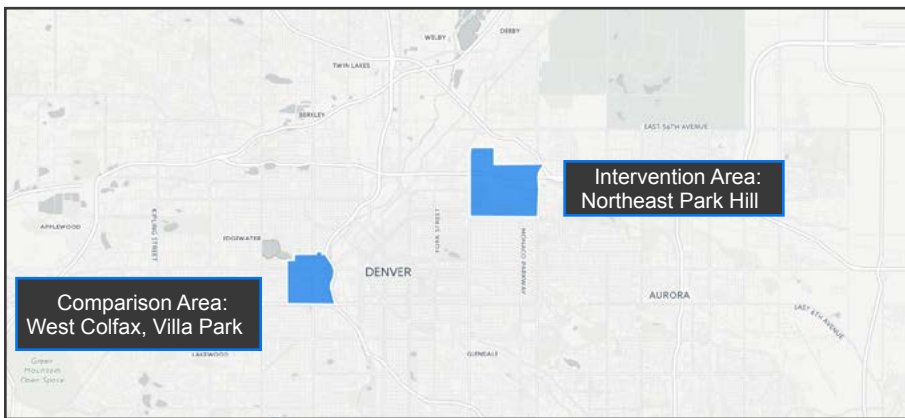
Intervention	Comparison
Neighborhoods Northeast Park Hill	**Neighborhoods** West Colfax, Villa Park
Census Tracts 41.01, 41.02	**Census Tracts** 7.02, 9.05
Zipcodes 80207	**Zipcodes** 80204

Intervention Area: Northeast Park Hill

Comparison Area: West Colfax, Villa Park

Intervention Area: Northeast Park Hill

Comparison Area: West Colfax, Villa Park
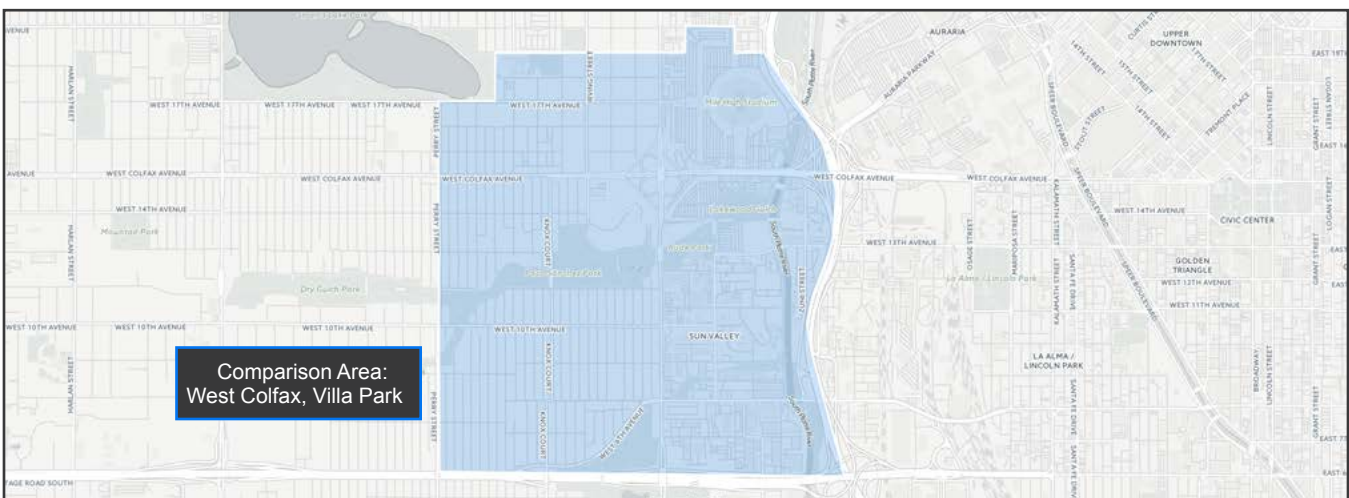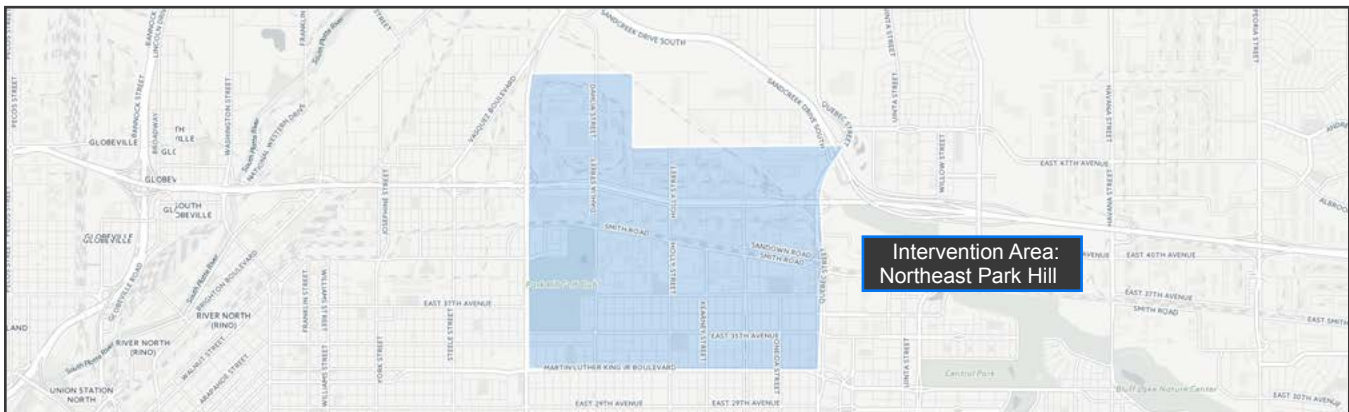
The CBVP intervention area in Denver included a large number of homes that were vacant or being remodeled. "Neighborhood Watch" signs were scattered throughout the intervention area when the research team visited the site. In both the intervention and comparison areas of Denver, few residents expressed fear of gunfire and/or gangs. During the evaluation's initial inquiries, a number of potential respondents asked, "Is there a lot of violence in this area?" Respondents tended to identify only isolated sections of the community as unsafe. Few respondents were able to recognize or comment on the Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID), the CBVP-funded violence intervention program in Denver.

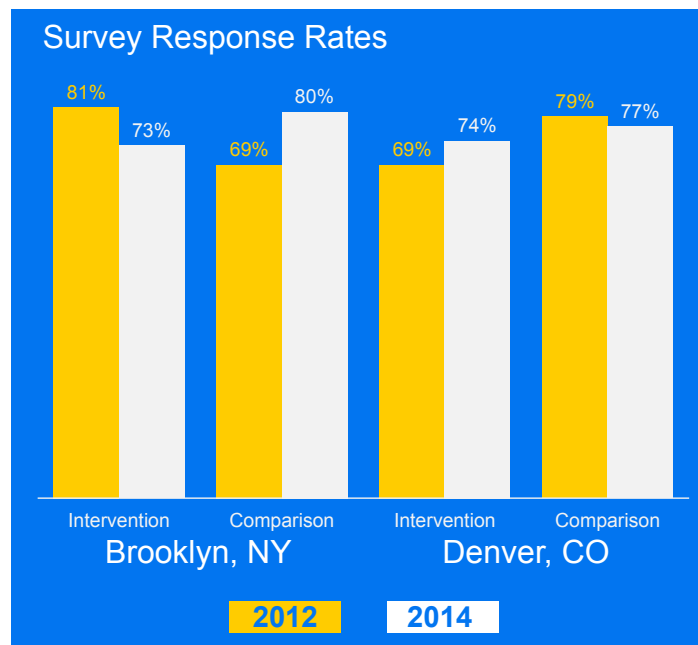The comparison area in Denver included DHA (Denver Housing Authority) communities that were difficult to navigate, particularly in the evenings because there was little to no lighting. The sampled housing units were spread across three separate neighborhoods that differed from one another. Specifically, Sun Valley had lower incomes compared to the other two, which had more college student residents and families.

RESPONSE RATES

For the first wave of the survey, all data collection was completed during January 2012 (intervention and comparison areas in both cities). The survey team collected data from 428 respondents in Denver and 402 in Brooklyn. With the exception of just five surveys completed online, all surveys were conducted in-person by the team from Temple University. More than 80 percent of the surveys in both cities were conducted in English. A larger number of Spanish surveys were conducted in the Brooklyn comparison area (24%) than in the intervention area (8%). In Denver, the percentage of Spanish surveys was similar in the comparison (18%) and intervention area (15%).

Survey Response Rates — Brooklyn, NY: Intervention 2012 81%, 2014 73%; Comparison 2012 69%, 2014 80%. Denver, CO: Intervention 2012 69%, 2014 74%; Comparison 2012 79%, 2014 77%. Legend: 2012, 2014.

The overall response rate is calculated as the percentage of completed surveys among the total number of sampled addresses minus those deemed to be ineligible (e.g., vacant). The study's 830 completed surveys in 2012 represented an 81 percent response rate for the Brooklyn intervention neighborhood, a 69 percent response rate for the Brooklyn comparison neighborhood, a 69 percent response rate for the Denver intervention area and a 79 percent response rate for Denver's comparison neighborhood.

In 2014, the study completed 415 surveys in Brooklyn and 422 in Denver. Data collection in Brooklyn was completed in 29 days spanning the months of January and February. Data collection in Denver was completed in 35 days during August and September. Again, very few surveys were completed online (approximately 1%). In both cities, about 93 percent of the surveys were conducted in English. The surveys completed in 2014 represented response rates of 73 percent in the Brooklyn intervention neighborhood, 80 percent in the Brooklyn comparison neighborhood, 74 percent in the Denver intervention neighborhood, and 77 percent in the Denver comparison neighborhood.

Measures

The research team performed an exploratory factor analysis on the 2012 survey data to determine which items could be grouped together as single, statistical constructs. Before conducting the factor analysis, all survey items were coded to be in the same direction so that higher scores indicated more pro-social responses and lower scores indicated more negative responses of residents. Analyses of 25 attitude questions identified four multi-variable factors. Each factor incorporated several survey questions and all factors were correlated strongly enough to represent single concepts (α = 0.65 to 0.80).

The research team determined that survey items had successfully "loaded" on a particular factor when loading scores were 0.30 or greater. Of the original 36 items included in the factor analysis, 19 items were retained. The number of question items in each factor varied, ranging from three to eight items. The remaining 6 items were set aside for separate analyses.

The final factors described four distinct concepts:

1. Disinclination towards Gun Violence

2. Disinclination towards General Violence

3. Experience of Neighborhood Safety

4. Experience of Neighborhood Efficacy — i.e. the respondent's experience of pro-social/helpful actions in the neighborhood.

Survey Items and Reliability Scores: 2012 and 2014

FACTOR	ITEMS	RELIABILITY (α)	
		2012	2014
Disinclination Toward General Violence	R uses violence to get even.	0.695	0.799
	R feels they must be tough to avoid being taken advantage of...		
	R thinks you need to threaten someone for fair treatment.		
	R use physical forces or aggression when disrespected.		
	R does not respect someone afraid to fight physically.		
	R thinks it is important to show no intimidation.		
	R thinks it is okay to do whatever it takes for victimization prevention.		
	R thinks you should walk away from fights.*		
Disinclination Toward Gun Violence	R thinks it is okay to threaten someone who robbed them with a gun.	0.645	0.676
	R thinks it is okay to threaten someone with a gun when disrespected.		
	R thinks it is okay to shoot someone for retaliation.		
Neighorhood Safety	R's fear of gunfire prevents neighborhood day travel.	0.800	0.858
	R's fear of gunfire prevents neighborhood night travel.		
	R's fear of gang violence prevents neighborhood day travel.		
Neighorhood Efficacy	Neighbors likely to break up a fight if someone is beaten of threatened.*	0.725	0.740
	Neighbors likely to address youth vandalizing with graffiti.*		
	Neighbors likely to address youth disrespecting adults.*		
	Neighbors likely to report youth truancy.*		
	Neighbors likely to report shooting to police.*		

* Reverse coded for factor analysis.   R = Respondent

In order to create comparable and interpretable scores for each individual, the research team calculated a mean response score for each resident on each factor. Only valid item scores were used in the calculation of each mean factor score and a respondent must have completed 60 percent of the items in a given factor to receive a factor score. In other words, if a resident responded to only six of eight items on a particular factor, his or her mean score for that factor was based on those six responses. If a resident responded to just four of eight items on a particular factor, he or she would not receive a score for that factor. Each factor score can be interpreted on a scale of one to four, with one being the least pro-social response and four being the most pro-social response to a given factor.

In addition to these factor scores, the study created an index measuring each resident's exposure and knowledge of the CBVP-funded program activities in his/her city. Four questions in the survey measured program exposure and these items were added together to create the total program exposure score. Reliability was found to be moderate for this index ($\alpha = 0.53$). A resident must have completed all of the exposure items to receive an index score. The index score can be interpreted on a scale of one to four, with four indicating the highest level of exposure to the CBVP program.

Respondent Characteristics: 2012 and 2014		Brooklyn, NY				Denver, CO			
		Intervention		Comparison		Intervention		Comparison	
	Overall	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Age									
19-29	29%	42%	33%	24%	36%	19%	20%	28%	31%
30-39	26	28	20	30	25	28	21	25	30
40-49	17	10	16	20	20	20	17	17	14
50 and up	39	19	30	26	19	33	43	30	25
Sex									
Male	43%	46%	40%	38%	38%	45%	38%	46%	50%
Female	57	54	60	62	62	55	62	54	50
Race / Ethnicity									
Black / Non-Hispanic	35%	58%	46%	46	38%	34%	46%	7%	6%
White / Non-Hispanic	16	1	6	8	11	21	20	28	31
Latino / Hispanic	33	21	15	39	35	27	22	54	50
Other or Multi-Ethnic	16	19	33	8	17	17	12	11	13
Education									
Less than High School	17%	13%	13%	20%	14%	16%	15%	24%	21%
High School / GED	32	33	34	42	29	33	24	37	25
Some College or 2-Year Degree	28	31	27	20	28	29	38	21	31
4-Year Degree or Graduate School	23	23	25	18	29	22	22	18	22
Time Living in Neighborhood									
Less than 2 years	17%	13%	7%	8%	9%	18%	17%	29%	32%
2-5 Years	24	22	20	18	22	28	28	29	24
6-10 Years	15	16	17	15	14	14	16	14	15
More than 10 Years	44	48	55	60	53	39	39	28	29
Time Living at Current Address									
Less than 2 years	24%	16%	13%	10%	13%	31%	25%	37%	42%
2-5 Years	29	29	27	24	27	35	33	29	30
6-10 Years	16	22	19	16	20	10	15	16	11
More than 10 Years	31	32	40	51	39	24	27	18	17

Finally, in order to examine potential differences in resident group factor scores, the research team calculated and compared a series of group means. This included overall mean factor and index scores for all residents in each city's treatment and comparison areas. Researchers conducted a series of difference-in-difference (DiD) regressions to compare changes in factor scores for each surveyed area. This allowed the research team to compare two units (respondents, groups, areas, etc.) at two points in time when those units were known to have experienced different treatment conditions. The explanatory strength of DiD regression lies in its ability to capture both the effects of time and of the treatment on both units. It also cancels the effect of time when measuring a potential treatment effect. In other words, by subtracting the differences over time in untreated units (comparison) from treated units (program), any treatment effect should become apparent based on the assumption that time effects are the same for both types of units, given that both types of units are reasonably well matched on other characteristics.

Household Characteristics: 2012 and 2014

Person Under Age 18 in the Household?	Overall	Brooklyn, NY				Denver, CO			
		Intervention		Comparison		Intervention		Comparison	
		2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014	2012	2014
Yes	46%	51%	46%	48%	43%	46%	47%	39%	44%
Household Income									
Less than $20,000	37%	28%	40%	33%	34%	32%	33%	53%	45%
$20,000-$39,999	31	44	29	46	23	29	30	28	23
$40,000 or more	32	28	32	22	44	39	37	19	33
Do You Own Your Home?									
Yes	19%	6%	7%	5%	4%	41%	37%	24%	27%
Marital Status of the "Head of Household"									
Never Married	39%	51%	45%	37%	57%	25%	29%	37%	35%
Married or Domestic Partnership	39	28	33	46	24	48	45	37	49
Formerly Married or Partnered	22	21	22	17	19	26	26	26	17

The research team hypothesized a significant, positive effect for the factor and index scores in the DiD regression outcome for the treatment group. The analysis accounted for respondent age and length of time living in the neighborhood as part of the regression. Researchers believed that long-term residents were more likely than newer residents to be familiar with problems of neighborhood violence and to be more knowledgeable about CBVP-related efforts in the area.

Respondent characteristics varied slightly between survey areas and survey year. For example, 42 percent of respondents in the 2012 sample in the Brooklyn intervention area were between ages 19 and 29, but that number dropped to 33 percent in the 2014 sample. Across all sites and both waves of the survey, 29 percent of respondents were between 19 and 29 years old, 26 percent were between 30 and 39 years old, 17 percent were between 40 and 49 years old, and 39 percent were 50 or older. Female respondents generally outnumbered male respondents, ranging from 50 to 62 percent of the samples in both cities and both years. In all of the study areas except the Denver comparison neighborhood, Black/non-Hispanic respondents made up the majority of the sample. In the Denver comparison area, the sample was majority Latino/Hispanic. Most of the survey respondents had either finished high school or achieved a GED degree (ranging from 24% to 42%) or had attended at least some college (from 20% to 38%).

Many of the respondents had lived in their neighborhoods at least 10 years (44% overall), but this varied across sites and across survey waves so these were examined individually. Brooklyn respondents tended to have lived in their neighborhoods the longest (48% to 60% for more than 10 years in Brooklyn; 28% to 39% for more than 10 years in Denver). The same holds true for the length of time respondents had lived at their current address (32% to 51% for more than 10 years in Brooklyn; 17% to 27% for more than 10 years in Denver).
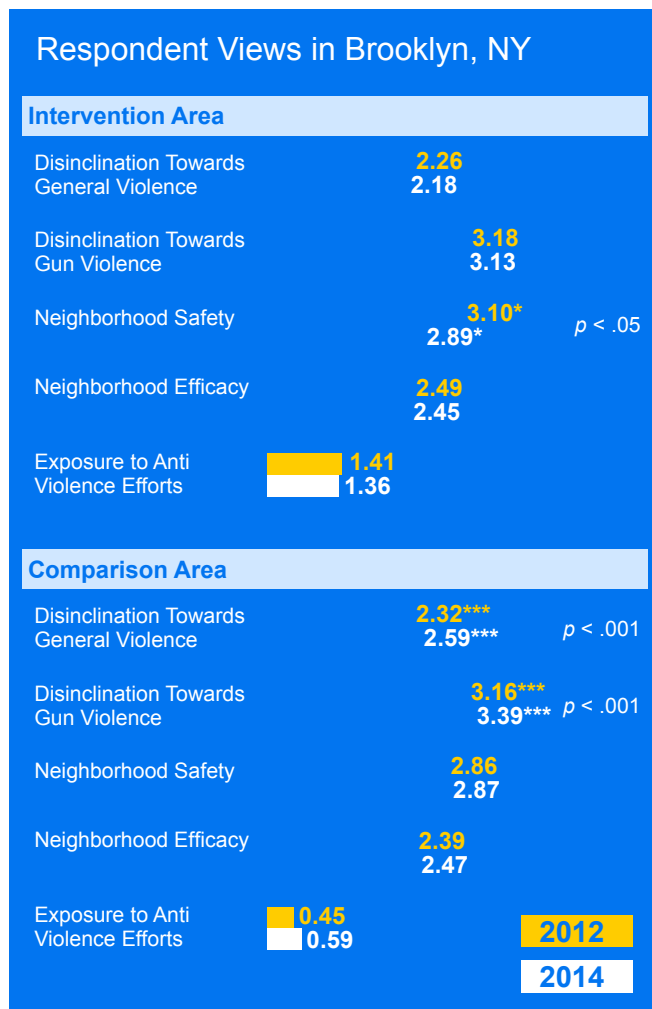
Almost half the respondents lived in a home with at least one person under the age of 18 (39% to 51%). Respondents were evenly distributed across income categories (less than $20,000 per year, $20,000 to $39,999 per year, and $40,000 or more) and household income varied only slightly from site to site and survey wave to survey wave. Few respondents owned their own homes, especially in Brooklyn where renting is the norm (4% to 7% owned in Brooklyn; 24% to 41% in Denver). Finally, the head of the household was equally likely to be married or in a domestic partnership versus never married, with some variation across survey site and wave.

Results

The possible effects of CBVP were tested by comparing the factor and index scores for each survey area in 2012 and 2014. An increase in mean score between 2012 and 2014 would suggest a prosocial change in respondent opinions and perceptions. The results of the analysis, however, revealed little movement in scores over the course of the study period.

In the Brooklyn intervention area, no positive or pro-social changes were observed in any of the factor or index scores. Perceptions of neighborhood safety actually deteriorated significantly between the 2012 and 2014 surveys, suggesting that respondents were experiencing more fear of being out in their neighborhood in 2014 than in 2012.

In the Brooklyn comparison area, scores on respondents' disinclinations toward general violence and gun violence both improved significantly. In other words, respondents in the Brooklyn comparison

Respondent Views in Brooklyn, NY

Intervention Area

	2012	2014	
Disinclination Towards General Violence	2.26	2.18	
Disinclination Towards Gun Violence	3.18	3.13	
Neighborhood Safety	3.10*	2.89*	$p < .05$
Neighborhood Efficacy	2.49	2.45	
Exposure to Anti Violence Efforts	1.41	1.36	

Comparison Area

	2012	2014	
Disinclination Towards General Violence	2.32***	2.59***	$p < .001$
Disinclination Towards Gun Violence	3.16***	3.39***	$p < .001$
Neighborhood Safety	2.86	2.87	
Neighborhood Efficacy	2.39	2.47	
Exposure to Anti Violence Efforts	0.45	0.59	

2012
2014

area (without CBVP) were significantly more prosocial in their attitudes toward violence in 2014 than in 2012.

These findings were contrary to the study hypotheses. Of course, the increase in respondent fear of violence in the intervention area may be an unanticipated byproduct of the CBVP efforts—perhaps the program's efforts at community mobilization drew more attention to neighborhood violence.

The contrast with the improved fear climate in the comparison area is more difficult to explain. The research team did not find evidence of any new

Respondent Views in Denver, CO

Intervention Area

	2012	2014	
Disinclination Towards General Violence	2.30***	2.47***	$p < .001$
Disinclination Towards Gun Violence	3.19	3.23	
Neighborhood Safety	3.20	3.29	
Neighborhood Efficacy	2.85	2.84	
Exposure to Anti Violence Efforts	0.42***	0.90***	$p < .001$

Comparison Area

	2012	2014
Disinclination Towards General Violence	2.39	2.45
Disinclination Towards Gun Violence	3.20	3.23
Neighborhood Safety	3.41	3.39
Neighborhood Efficacy	2.79	2.77
Exposure to Anti Violence Efforts	0.44	0.45

2012
2014

efforts to address violence in the comparison area that could explain the positive shift in resident attitudes. (New York City launched a new violence reduction program affiliated with the Cure Violence model in an area just south of the study's comparison area, but that program opened in mid-2014, or just after the study's second round of surveys.)

In the Denver intervention area, on the other hand, the disinclination towards general violence factor improved significantly from 2012 to 2014. In other words, residents in the 2014 sample were more prosocial (more anti-violence) than those in the 2012 sample.

Respondent scores on the exposure to anti-violence efforts index also increased significantly in the Denver intervention neighborhood, which could suggest that respondents noted more CBVP-related efforts over time. The scores in the Denver comparison area did not change significantly in either direction between 2012 and 2014.
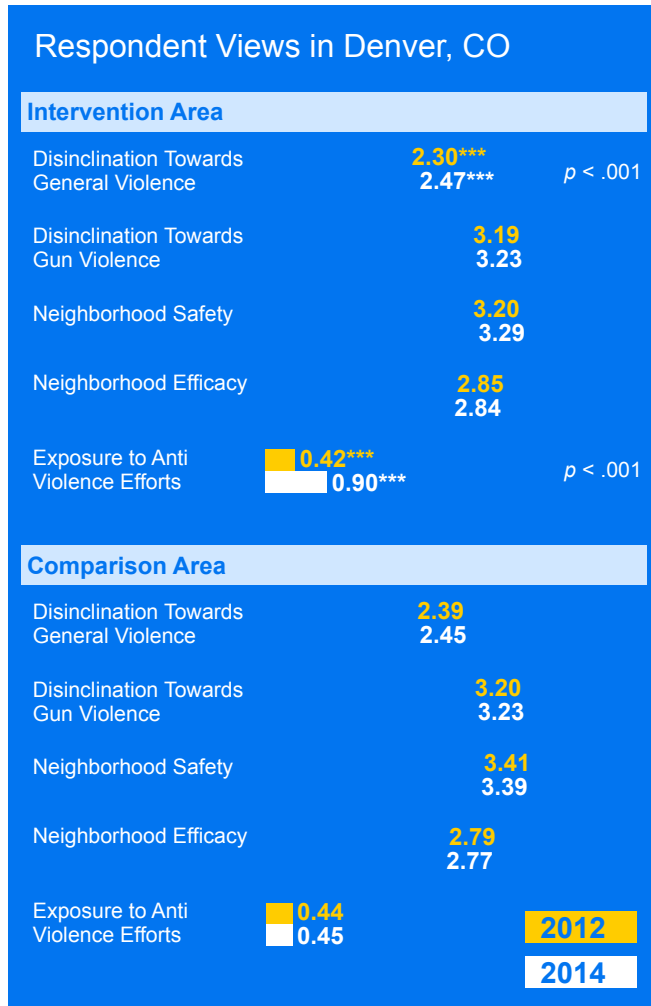
Difference-in-Difference Results: Intervention Areas Relative to Comparison Areas				
With Controls (Age and Time in Neighborhood)				
Brooklyn, NY	Strandardized Coefficient (β)	t-statistic (τ)	signif. (p)	Significant Controls
Disinclination Towards General Violence	− 0.361	− 6.266	* * *	1, 2
Disinclination Towards Gun Violence	− 0.263	− 4.328	* * *	
Neighborhood Safety	− 0.110	− 1.773	0.077	
Neighborhood Efficacy	− 0.080	− 1.283	0.200	3
Exposure to Anti Violence Efforts	− 0.073	− 1.274	0.203	
Denver, CO				
Disinclination Towards General Violence	0.095	1.600	0.110	
Disinclination Towards Gun Violence	0.019	0.319	0.749	1
Neighborhood Safety	0.048	0.805	0.421	
Neighborhood Efficacy	0.004	0.061	0.951	2
Exposure to Anti Violence Efforts	0.264	4.581	* * *	

* * * $p < .001$

Significant Controls:
1. Respondent Age — $p < .001$
2. Time in Neighborhood — $p < .001$
3. Time in Neighborhood — $p < .05$

DiD RESULTS

The study's DiD regressions showed that the relative changes in Brooklyn on both disinclination toward gun violence and general violence were statistically significant, but in an unwanted direction. That is, the change in the Brooklyn intervention area was less prosocial than in the comparison area. Significant positive changes in the Brooklyn comparison area may have swayed the results of this analysis. Contrary to expectations, residents in the area without CBVP demonstrated positive and statistically significant changes in their opinions over time, while residents of the area with CBVP did not demonstrate significant changes.

The DiD regressions in Denver were also not strong. The analysis failed to confirm the positive results suggested by the more straightforward comparison of survey responses over time. The coefficient for relative change in respondent exposure to anti-violence messaging did reach statistical significance and the change was positive, suggesting greater resident knowledge of the CBVP program in the affected neighborhood. But, there were no corresponding improvements in the relative change of attitudes and perceptions toward violence and neighborhood safety.

Implications

The CBVP evaluation's pre-post resident surveys provided a more rigorous test of the program's community effects than any of the outcome measures described in other chapters of the report. Surveys were conducted in two cities to detect neighborhood-level changes in residents' perceptions of safety in the CBVP areas and to compare those changes with non-CBVP areas of each community as a means of assessing whether any effects might be associated with the CBVP demonstration. There were no consistent and significant changes in the survey data, however, which means the study failed to detect measurable effects of CBVP-sponsored activities at the community level.

Admittedly, the decision to survey probability samples of households about their perceptions of community violence set a very high bar for the CBVP demonstration. Changing broad community norms toward violence with public advocacy campaigns and interventions targeted on specific subsets of a population are very ambitious strategies. The CBVP-related programs in Brooklyn and Denver were attempting to move mountains and the CBVP evaluation gave them just 24 months to show success.

As evidenced by their selection for the CBVP program, the neighborhoods involved in this study had a long-standing history of violence and these new programs were not the first to attempt to change community conditions. It was exceedingly optimistic to expect fundamental attitudes about neighborhood safety to change in just two years, no matter how strong the programs were. As an individual working for one of these programs said, "It takes a lot longer to unlearn violence than it takes to learn violence." The same holds true for expectations. It takes longer for people to begin to expect non-violence in their community after years of experiencing violence as "normal."

It was encouraging to see a significant uptick in the program exposure index in Denver's program area. This suggests that residents may have become more familiar with the program's work over time. This may have occurred in Denver and not Brooklyn for a number of reasons. Perhaps the social and economic conditions in Denver presented a less profound challenge to the CBVP program than did conditions in Brooklyn. It is also possible that the extra seven months required to administer the second round of surveys in Denver may have been partly responsible for the gains in program awareness detected in that city. The Denver program had more time to get its name and message out to the wider community than did the program in Brooklyn.

An even more basic question relates to the use of public perceptions to judge the efficacy of violence-reduction programs. Perhaps a city's effort to address violence actually highlights the existence of neighborhood violence. Some residents may not have been aware of the extent of the problem, or they may have avoided learning about it. The introduction of an effective, new program to stop violence with a strong public messaging component may lead some residents to become suddenly more aware of violence, independently of the actual levels of violence

in the neighborhood. If so, when researchers returned to the neighborhood to administer a follow-up survey, people may have been more rather than less concerned about their own safety—even if the actual incidence of violence had not increased, or had even declined.

Conclusion

The John Jay College evaluation team worked with Temple University's Institute for Social Research to conduct two waves of household surveys that measured the perceptions and opinions of residents in two CBVP communities. The research team asked probability samples of residents about their awareness of violence reduction programs, their fear of crime, and their attitudes about the uses of violence. In both Brooklyn and Denver, surveys were conducted in a neighborhood served by the CBVP grantee program and in a matched comparison neighborhood not served by a CBVP-funded program.

The evaluation failed to find consistent and significant improvements following implementation of the CBVP demonstration program. This study did not find positive changes in respondent perceptions of violence and public safety in either Brooklyn or Denver. On the other hand, the survey results did indicate statistically significant improvements in community awareness of violence reduction efforts in Denver. This could be considered at least promising.

The results suggest either that the CBVP programs did not have their desired effects on public safety, or that it takes more than two years to change basic perceptions of community violence. Certainly, it takes time for a community with a long history of violence to begin to trust the appearance of positive changes. Using household surveys to detect meaningful changes within two years of any policy or practice innovation is a difficult standard to meet.

MARK LILLY PHOTOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 5

Oakland, California

Introduction

Oakland, California experienced high levels of gang-related violence in recent decades. At one point, law enforcement officials identified 78 different gangs with 3,800 core members, underscoring the need for more effective, sustainable interventions. In 2006, there were 145 homicides in Oakland, the highest since 1995. The number of murders decreased gradually to 90 in 2010 (Vara 2013), but the murder rate was still five times higher than state and national averages (DOJ FBI 2010). Over 80 percent of Oakland homicides were committed with a firearm, and over 75 percent of those took place on a public street. Young, black males in Oakland between ages 18 and 39 were 10 times more likely to die from shootings compared with other city residents. Individuals under criminal justice supervision accounted for 36 percent of murder victims in 2010 while they represented just two percent of the city's population (Urban Strategies Council 2011).

When OJJDP announced the availability of CBVP funding, city officials in Oakland were eager to apply. The application was developed by a consortium of city entities with the Department of Human Services appointed lead agency. Unlike other cities that locate centralized power within the office of the mayor, Oakland's mayor shares governing responsibilities with the Oakland City Council. A City Administrator reports to the Mayor's Office and to the City Council, and the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Oakland Police Department (OPD) report to the City Administrator.

Oakland was well positioned to apply for federal funding. The City had already been implementing Project Exile, a gun violence reduction program piloted in Richmond, Virginia. Because of Oakland's high population of offenders returning from prison, the City Administrator supplemented the city's violence reduction

Oakland Governance Structure
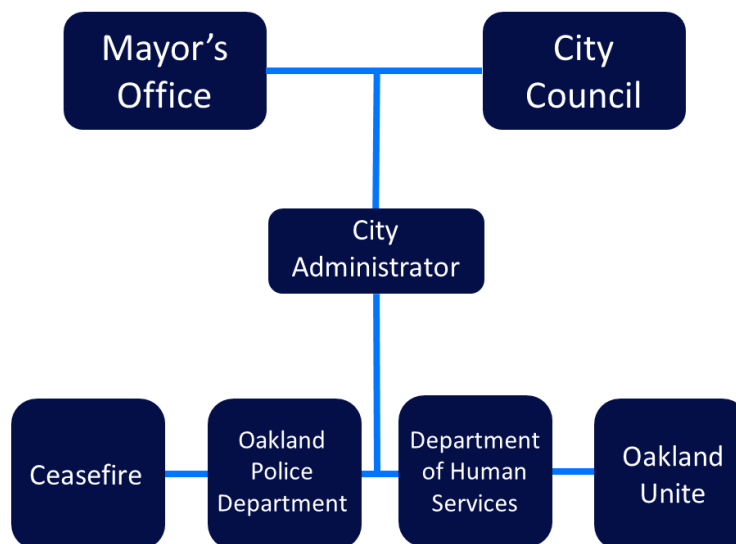
efforts with Project Choice, which provided resources for re-entry. Neither program was simple to implement. Responsibilities for both projects were eventually transferred to the Department of Human Services (DHS), which reinvigorated the projects by collaborating with local and regional providers. The State of California provided additional assistance through two California Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention (CalGRIP) grants.

In 2008, Oakland joined the California Cities Gang Prevention Network and convened a multi-agency team that developed a plan to address gang prevention. One of the primary objectives identified by the team was to improve and formalize collaboration among agency partners. This resulted in the creation of the Oakland Gang Prevention Task Force. In June of 2009, the Task Force adopted the Oakland Gang Prevention Plan and in 2011 the Mayor's Office assumed oversight of the Task Force. Soon thereafter, the City also began to incorporate the Ceasefire program, based on the focused deterrence strategy promulgated by the National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College.

Oakland embraced the Ceasefire strategy because many of the city's other violence reduction programs did not address the highest-risk members of the community. The initial version of Ceasefire, however, was not very successful. Program staff told researchers that participants were not made sufficiently aware of the consequences for noncompliance. Unfortunately, the violence did not appear to be decreasing and the initiative quickly fell apart (Johnson 2012). When Oakland received a CBVP grant in 2010, the City intended to integrate Ceasefire with key elements of the Cure Violence model, combining them into a new, citywide initiative called "Oakland Unite" (PR Newswire 2012). A new program planner position was created to manage the OJJDP grant and to expand street outreach efforts as favored by both Ceasefire and Cure Violence. The City hoped to blend the focused deterrence approach of Ceasefire and the public health model of Cure Violence.

Timeline of Important Events in Oakland

Project Exile Comes to Oakland
First attempt to pass Measure Y
City Council creates OPD's Gang Unit
Oakland joins CA Cities Gang Prevention Network
Gang Prevention Plan adopted
First CalGRIP grant received
Oakland voters pass Measure BB, amending Measure Y
Oakland wins CBVP funding
Oakland receives more Second Chance funding
Additional CalGRIP and Second Chance grants received
Messengers for Change partners with Urban Peace Movement
CBVP funding extended through 2017

2000 | 2002 | 2006 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014

Measure Y passes and is implemented in 2004
Oakland Gang Prevention Task Force created
Ceasefire strategy launched in Oakland
Oakland receives Federal "Second Chance" grant
Oakland local Community Development Block grant
Oversight Task Force goes to Mayor's Office
Mayor's Office takes over "call-ins"
Hot Spot areas realigned
Oakland Ceasefire alters call-in approach
Oakland voters approve Measure Z

To complicate matters, City officials knew that any new Oakland Unite activities supported by the CBVP grant would have to be integrated with existing programs funded by Oakland's Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act, or Measure Y, an initiative funded by a ballot measure beginning in 2004. Administered through DHS, Measure Y supported 24 different organizations and provided a network of services targeting the root causes of violence. The Measure Y initiative provided funding over a ten-year period, all focused on the prevention of crime and violence (City of Oakland 2012). DHS encouraged partnerships across agencies to transform gun violence reduction efforts from isolated programs into a citywide strategy. The violence prevention work put in place by Measure Y was also supported by federal Second Chance grants in 2010 ($750,000), 2011 ($375,000) and 2012-14 ($750,000), as well as a 2010 local Community Development Block grant. The work involved several strategies, including comprehensive youth services, family violence intervention, young adult reentry services, and violent incident/crisis response strategies.

CBVP Demonstration

Oakland used the new CBVP grant dollars to introduce or expand key components of the Cure Violence model and to bolster efforts under the Ceasefire model. The CBVP grant allowed the City to hire additional outreach workers, expand the use of Ceasefire call-ins, connect justice-involved young people to school and employment opportunities, create a public education and community awareness campaign, and establish stronger ties with the faith community. DHS staff members were responsible for overseeing both Measure Y and the CBVP grant. They maintained relevant databases and supervised the agencies involved in the broader initiative.

To maximize the impact of its efforts, the Oakland Unite initiative targeted police beats where incidents of crime and violence were most likely to occur, where residents were most likely to be the victims of violence, and where high-risk offenders tended to live. Project staff identified the highest risk individuals using a list of factors to distinguish young people who: (1) were under parole or probation supervision; (2) had a prior gun conviction; (3) were identified within a hotspot area; (4) belonged to a gang or clique; (5) were known to OPD or had been required to attend a Ceasefire call-in; (6) had been a victim of gun violence; and (7) were under the age of 25. Outreach workers were trained to inquire about these criteria when speaking with the young people they encountered in the community. Individuals meeting at least four risk factors were considered eligible for intensive outreach, case management, and other services provided through the CBVP grant and Oakland Unite. When someone did not meet the necessary criteria, outreach workers attempted to steer them toward other service providers.
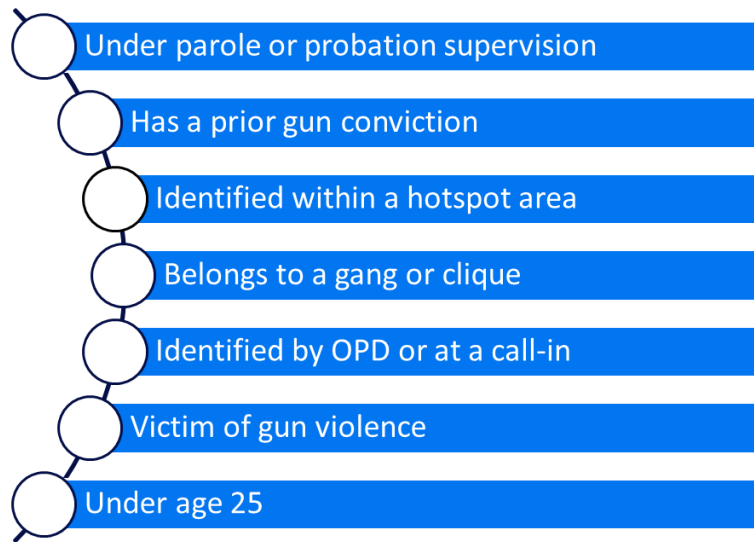
Activities Supported by CBVP Funding

- Hiring additional outreach workers

- Facilitating call-ins

- Strengthening services connecting justice-involved youth to school

- Providing resources and employment opportunities

- Creating public education and community awareness campaigns

- Organizing and mobilizing the faith community

Oakland Unite was geographically focused and its target area changed over the course of the grant period. Four areas were selected originally—two in West Oakland (Hoover and Lower Bottoms), one in Central Oakland (High Street Corridor), and one in East Oakland (Elmhurst/Macarthur Corridor). In 2012, the target areas were modified due to shifting violence patterns. Program staff selected five new target areas to work in: two in West Oakland (McClymonds and Lowell/Acorn) and three in East Oakland (Havenscourt, Parker, and Elmhurst). The boundaries of the new target areas were also better aligned with the Mayor's 100 Block Initiative to Reduce Violence, which focused on the areas accounting for most of Oakland's shootings and homicides.

Oakland used its CBVP grant to combine a number of violence prevention and gang reduction strategies, including street outreach, crisis response and support, reentry support and job training/job placement, as well as public education campagins, community engagement work, and the Ceasefire call-ins. While each strategy was important, City officials hoped the integration of all strategies would make their approach more successful. For example, street outreach was designed to complement a strong enforcement response. In turn, the police were expected to respond to community needs and concerns by rebuilding trust with the community.

Criteria for Identifying High-Risk Individuals

- Under parole or probation supervision
- Has a prior gun conviction
- Identified within a hotspot area
- Belongs to a gang or clique
- Identified by OPD or at a call-in
- Victim of gun violence
- Under age 25

DHS was involved in the implementation of most grantee programs. The agency provided technical assistance and communicated weekly with various organizations, including Youth ALIVE!, Catholic Charities of the East Bay, and the street outreach teams. Holding regular interagency meetings helped to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each partner and enhanced cross-agency collaboration.

STREET OUTREACH

Street outreach was a primary component of Oakland's CBVP effort. Overseen by the violence prevention coordinator, outreach work was carried out by teams that maintained a consistent presence in targeted areas during nights and weekends when violence was most likely to occur. Outreach teams included outreach workers, violence interrupters, case managers, and area team leads. The outreach workers' primary duties were to build relationships with people in the service area, encourage individuals to take a violence-free path, and encourage people to bring their friends into the initiative. Outreach workers interacted with participants for a limited number of hours by first mentoring them and taking care of minor issues before referring them to a case manager for help with more specific goals. Violence interrupters worked in the neighborhoods, mediating ongoing conflicts and preventing retaliations. The time demands on outreach workers often exceeded available resources, however, so the tasks of street outreach and violence interruption were sometimes blended.

Program staff focused on engaging youth and young adults in each neighborhood to obtain timely information about who was involved in risky conflicts and where the greatest threats of retribution might exist. Their influence depended on their personal credibility. Outreach workers and violence interrupters were seen as credible by participants when their life experiences were similar to those of the

young people they encountered in the neighborhood. Many had been incarcerated or involved in gun violence or gang activity at some point, but they had changed their lives and were now working to prevent violence. Program staff members were powerful examples that it was possible to live a life of respect and purpose without being involved in violence.

STAFFING AND TRAINING

The violence prevention coordinator in Oakland was a DHS employee who also served as an outreach team manager and a key liaison between law enforcement and the various outreach teams. Members of the outreach teams were employed by two independent non-profit organizations, Healthy Oakland in West Oakland and California Youth Outreach in East Oakland. Both programs were overseen by DHS and funded through Measure Y and CBVP. They began conducting street outreach on behalf of DHS as early as 2008. When the City received the OJJDP grant, the new funds enabled Oakland to expand outreach services in the targeted areas by doubling the number of workers from nine to 18 over the course of the grant period.

The total number of workers on each outreach team varied according to the host organization's resources. West Oakland's team included several half-time (20 hours per week) staff along with a case manager, program manager, and team lead. East Oakland's teams had fewer individuals but more of them worked full-time (32 to 40 hours per week). Managers at both Healthy Oakland and California Youth Outreach worked closely with their outreach teams to ensure proper documentation of fieldwork and accurate data entry into DHS's Cityspan database. DHS held trainings to facilitate consistent data entry. The outreach teams produced weekly reports that estimated the number of individuals involved in each intervention incident and the number of individuals who may have avoided gun injuries because of their intervention. DHS met regularly with the organizations and other key partners, including representatives from the school district, police, and probation and parole. Monthly "Y-Team" meetings helped to foster coordination between all those involved.

The violence prevention coordinator oversaw the hiring of outreach team members. It was crucial for all outreach workers to have street credibility, be able to engage with people, be dependable, and have empathy for their clients. Successful outreach workers also had to maintain a stable, crime-free and drug-free lifestyle. While the hiring process varied, outreach teams typically notified Oakland Unite staff when an outreach position was available. The violence prevention coordinator asked for their recommendations and then the teams began recruitment and preliminary interviews. The violence prevention coordinator usually participated in the second round of interviews with potential candidates. The interview process also included an observation component so the violence prevention coordinator could watch candidates interacting with community residents.

Street Outreach Challenges

- Unpredictable nature of violent events
- Shifting target areas and violence occurring outside these areas
- Finding outreach workers with street credibility
- Outreach staff turnover
- Outreach worker overexposure to violence
- Balancing relationships with police and individuals on the street

Every outreach team underwent training developed by the Chicago headquarters of Cure Violence. The training provided a consistent framework for outreach work and reinforced the program's standard approach. Outreach workers needed to know how to engage with people in emotional situations and to mediate conflicts as they encountered them in the street. Over the years, the training incorporated anger management skills and substance abuse treatment knowledge as well. Trainings were usually held twice a year for three to four day stretches, with booster trainings as needed. Outreach workers also received training on administrative tasks like data entry and data management practices, as well as personal safety. Outreach workers and violence interrupters had to constantly be aware of their surroundings. They may be engaged in a complicated, tension-filled conversation late at night in a dangerous area while also attending to the warning signs of potential violence so they could know when to leave. By paying attention to their own feelings, outreach workers learned to protect themselves in order to perform their duties.

Staff described street outreach as a "slow dance" between workers and community members. The outreach team would cautiously reach out to high-risk individuals, emphasizing that they represented the neighborhood and were not associated with law enforcement. Once they were able to dispel any suspicion, they relied on their personal experiences and existing relationships to build ties with residents and to encourage high-risk participants to listen to messages of non-violence. When they encountered indifference, outreach workers would work slowly to break through barriers and form stronger connections. Trust between outreach workers and community members developed slowly and required care and consideration.

OUTREACH CHALLENGES

The outreach team faced a number of challenges. The dynamics of group violence in Oakland did not often involve clearly defined gangs with set rivalries. Outreach workers sometimes found it difficult to predict where and when violence would erupt and the program's target areas had to shift a number of times to follow the violence. Constantly changing target areas, however, made it difficult for the team to establish the relationships needed to build rapport and trust with residents. Outreach workers, of course, knew they would never have perfect knowledge of where violence was to occur. Teams needed to focus on designated hot spot areas while anticipating violence outside these areas as well. The solution was to spend 75 percent of their time in hot spots and 25 percent outside those areas.

Program staff also had to learn how to balance their relationships with police and neighborhood residents. Outreach workers informed the police that sharing information on potential shootings without their clients' knowledge and consent could damage their credibility and safety. To clarify roles and solidify the program's relationship with police, the violence prevention coordinator held frequent police trainings. Trainings were designed to help police understand the important work being done by outreach workers and the fact that outreach clients feared the police and would never share critical information with them.

Staffing issues presented challenges for outreach teams. The West Oakland team often had trouble finding staff with enough street credibility to be successful violence interrupters. At the same time, however, they needed to know that staff members were not influenced by their former lifestyles in ways that would make them unreliable. Hiring the right staff was difficult and the need to recruit more staff was nearly constant. Due to the nature of the job and the stress it entailed, outreach workers typically stayed with the program for a year or two at most. Staffing issues had to be addressed promptly to ensure outreach teams were fully staffed.

Outreach workers also struggled with their own exposure to violence. Even when workers were not traumatized directly, their time working in dangerous and unpleasant situations tended to have a cumulative, negative effect. In some cases, the work triggered vicarious trauma and post-traumatic stress responses. Supervisors in the office tried to address these issues by ensuring staff members had the necessary resources to cope with difficulties arising from work. New team members were especially vulnerable to these issues. Oakland Unite began to insist that new outreach workers meet fairly stringent conduct requirements during training to ensure that they understood the seriousness of the commitment. The program even required that outreach workers be clean and sober for a minimum of one year before they could be hired.

Deciding how to deploy the meager resources of the program was also a challenge. The violence prevention coordinator surveyed community members to learn how they would prefer to focus the street outreach effort. The results suggested that people were most interested in employment opportunities for at-risk individuals. As a result, Oakland Unite staff initially dedicated their outreach efforts to

job referrals for residents. The strategy was selected with good intentions, but resulted in residents seeing outreach workers mainly as job providers. As this was not the goal of Oakland Unite, outreach workers had to reformulate their approach. If a community member asked for a job while interacting with an outreach worker, staff learned to respond by first informing the individual that the program had no job opportunities to offer, but that they could help them to get their lives back on track by avoiding violence. The outreach team slowly transformed their reputations into neighborhood peacemakers.

OTHER KEY COMPONENTS

Mental Health Supports

DHS and the violence prevention coordinator were dedicated to providing outreach staff with mental health supports. To ensure that everyone had the resources and action plans necessary to thrive, the program hosted weekly individual meetings and monthly team-wide meetings focused on well-being and mental health. As part of the larger Healthy Communities, Inc. network, which included a full health clinic and an on-site psychotherapist, the West Oakland team had reliable access to psychological supports.

Oakland Unite also organized yearly, multi-day training sessions involving team-building exercises and traumatic stress coping skills. In 2013, Catholic Charities (then coordinating homicide-response mental health services) began to offer the outreach teams "circles of support" using the restorative justice model. The meetings were facilitated by the project director with Catholic Charities of the East Bay and were supported through Oakland Unite funds for the Crisis Response Support Network (CRSN).

In late 2013, Oakland Unite staff began a pilot clinical supervision program for case managers, with the goal of eventually extending services to street outreach case managers and area team leads. Clinical supervision provided an opportunity for staff members to receive an additional means of emotional support. Following the pilot's success, Oakland Unite applied for and received additional OJJDP funding that supported the expansion of services for case managers.

Crisis Response

Oakland Unite modeled its crisis response and support strategy on the Cure Violence model, using violence interrupters to anticipate violent incidents and prevent retaliations. The program was careful to communicate with the police department about its activities, but only through the street outreach coordinator. Individual outreach workers developed strong working relationships with Oakland police officers and these collaborations sometimes lasted for several years. When a shooting occurred that involved a high-risk or gang-involved youth or young adult, police officers would contact street outreach who dispatched crisis responders to the scene and/or the hospital to assist the friends and family of the victim. The outreach workers offered support and case management services and worked to quiet down any friends or family of the victim who may be looking to retaliate.

Outreach workers also collaborated with two community-based organizations (Youth ALIVE! and Catholic Charities) to provide crisis response and support. These organizations worked together to respond to homicides and to help families of homicide victims navigate their grief. Youth ALIVE! operated three main program components: Teens on Target, Caught in the Crossfire, and the Khadafy Washington Project. Teens on Target trained teenagers to advocate against and prevent violence in their communities, the Caught in the Crossfire initiative visited individuals who were victims of shootings or who had friends who were victims of shootings to prevent retaliatory violence, and The Khadafy Washington Project provided immediate crisis response to families of homicide victims. Following a homicide, OPD's Homicide Unit provided the Khadafy Project with the names of families of homicide victims.

Catholic Charities provided case management support and supplemented its crisis intervention work with emergency relocation help, individual and family counseling, the circles of support program, and referrals to other support groups and social activities. By providing an immediate and direct response to violent incidents, crisis responders hoped to stop retaliatory violence before it occurred, thus changing the overall culture of violence in the community.

Youth case managers also helped Oakland Unite participants to re-enroll in school and connect with employment. Measure Y resources provided some funding for employment of high-risk youth in community-based organizations. Youth had access to afterschool positions, temporary employment, and paid job training. Case management focused on academic reintegration and success (i.e. attendance and performance) as well as employment guidance. A team consisting of representatives from the juvenile justice system, probation, schools, and case managers provided comprehensive support services including monitoring each youth's academic progress and helping youth complete court orders.

Engagement with services was not always a straightforward process, as responses were intentionally tailored toward individual need. In general, the process began as a case manager received clients from different sources, including Ceasefire call-ins, street outreach, and the trauma intervention specialists at Highland Hospital. After a client was referred, the case manager spent up to a month building rapport. The majority of clients did not ask for services. Rather, the outreach director relied on observations of client behaviors to determine which services were most appropriate. Collaboration with Ceasefire helped the case manager steer at-risk youth and young adults away from involvement in the criminal justice system. Prosecutors were sometimes willing to waive warrants or even pretrial holds if a young person was actively engaged with the program. The police department allowed young people to turn in weapons with no questions asked if the outreach team was already helping the individual with referrals to employment programs and other services. According to program leaders, these strategies enjoyed strong support from the Oakland Police Department and City Hall.

Public Education Campaign and Community Engagement

Community support for Oakland Unite developed slowly. Some residents were reluctant to trust the effort and continued to believe that all criminals should be imprisoned. Many residents, however, were more supportive and they began to say so in public meetings. Oakland Unite launched a campaign called "Messengers4Change" to support public education and community engagement. A community engagement coordinator, hired with CBVP funding, facilitated the effort. The campaign trained community members, faith groups, and volunteers to assist in demonstrations and responses to shootings. Focused primarily on area "hot spots," the public education campaign sought to reinforce community values that rejected gun violence and promoted the use of local resources by youth and young adults. When Messengers4Change began, it did not have a unique name and most residents knew it simply as "Measure Y." Staff later changed the name so that the community could more strongly identify with its mission. Once the overall Oakland strategy was re-branded as "Oakland Unite," the name Messengers4Change had already become known and was left unchanged.

In addition to its unique name, the project developed its own logo. The Messengers4Change logo was placed on flyers, t-shirts and banners that were visibly posted at all events. Messengers4Change worked in the community to organize block parties, peace walks, motivational speeches, BBQs, and park gatherings. Toward the end of each year, Messengers4Change partnered with the Mayor's office to hold a toy drive followed by a party where the toys were distributed. Staff members passed out flyers and knocked on doors to get residents involved. Many of these events were staffed with volunteers who had completed the Messengers4Change workshop and training on strategies for talking to and building relationships with high-risk youth and young adults.

Community members who attended the events shared positive feedback about their experiences. In the neighborhoods where the events were held, divisions between African Americans and Latinos were very apparent. During park events, however, families from different backgrounds interacted easily with one another. Latino and African American children began to build friendships. Adults who saw these interactions became more open to the idea of coming together.

The community engagement coordinator often discussed the project with leaders of the faith community, especially after a homicide or shooting affected a nearby neighborhood. Clergy members sometimes invited their congregations to project events. Partnering with prominent individuals in the faith community was a logical choice because faith leaders naturally supported the message of non-violence. Once Messengers4Change started working with closely with individuals of faith community, engaging with authority figures became much easier. Faith leaders helped to spread the word about the mission of Messengers4Change.

To augment its community events, Messengers4Change also launched a public education campaign to educate residents about the cost of violence and to

provide alternatives to violence. Billboards, bus advertisements, and flyers were distributed around neighborhoods that experienced shootings in an attempt to change community attitudes and norms about violence. In 2012, Messengers4Change partnered with the Urban Peace movement to install billboards featuring young people holding pictures of loved ones they lost to gun violence. All campaign materials included the Messengers4Change logo and a message reading: "Stop the killings, start the healing."
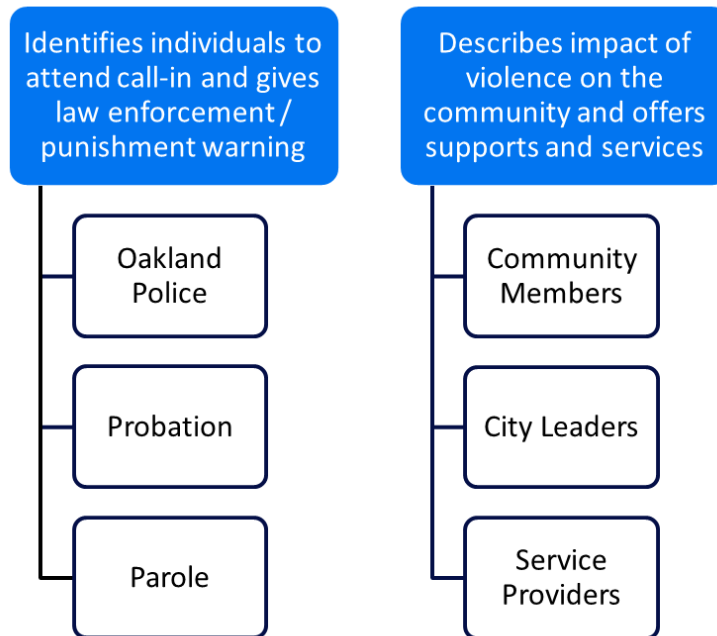
Call-Ins

The Oakland Unite violence prevention strategy also embraced strategies from the Boston Ceasefire (or focused deterrence) model. "Call-ins" were a collaborative effort between law enforcement (parole, probation, and police), social services, and community residents. During a call-in, young people known to be involved in violent group behavior were directed to appear at a meeting with no risk of being arrested. Law enforcement authorities informed the participants that if they continued to engage in violence, the full weight of the justice system would be used against them. Speakers from the community then told the participants how violence had affected their families and their neighborhoods. Service providers offered assistance including employment, substance abuse treatment, and housing support. The Ceasefire coordinator in Oakland worked closely with Oakland Unite to plan call-ins and to address the larger issue of how to reduce violence. According to some officials, this "carrot-and-stick" approach provided positive incentives for staying away from gun violence that were strengthened by the threat of enforcement for those who did not comply. Oakland Unite staff worked to maximize the "carrot" aspect with a state grant that supported more substantial client incentives (e.g. food, gift cards) and provided participants with additional stipends for engagement.

At first, participants in a call-in were invited to appear individually. In 2013, the Ceasefire program in Oakland altered its approach to include group call-ins. This presented some new challenges for the program in its efforts to ensure the safety of participants as they arrived and departed call-in meetings. The use of a neutral location and the visible presence of law enforcement helped to alleviate these concerns.

During the early part of 2012, the Ceasefire component experienced a number of difficulties with the schedule for call-ins, efforts to ensure the participation of those "called-in," and an absence of shared goals among partnering agencies. In order for a call-in to be successful, an adequate notification system had to be in place, a list of invitees had to be compiled, and a process for following-up with individuals after the call-in needed to be established. Law enforcement partners were often unable to complete notifications in time and to perform adequate follow-up. By 2012, however, the Office of the Mayor was able to assume responsibility for the call-ins using funds from a new CalGRIP grant.

Ceasefire Call-In Participants

Identifies individuals to attend call-in and gives law enforcement / punishment warning	Describes impact of violence on the community and offers supports and services
Oakland Police	Community Members
Probation	City Leaders
Parole	Service Providers

In October 2012, DHS resumed call-ins with members from two of the most active gangs in Oakland: the Money Team and the Case Boys (Drummond 2013). In that meeting, gang members were warned against further violence. Just three months later, however, four street killings within six hours prompted OPD to plan and execute the largest law enforcement action related to Oakland Ceasefire's work at that time. In March 2013, a series of early morning raids involving hundreds of local police officers and FBI agents swept through an Oakland housing project in search of illegal weapons (Wang 2013). The raids resulted in the arrest of at least 18 suspects. Ceasefire call-ins were then put on hold in May 2013 due to abrupt leadership transitions within the police department. The team of Oakland Unite, community partners, and OPD attempted to move forward with call-ins, but coordination became difficult. While some of the new command staff understood Ceasefire's mission, they did not have much experience in implementing it.

Department leaders decided that it would be best to use the summer to rebuild and improve the program to prepare for a successful relaunch in 2014. By the end of 2014, more than 100 people had been called in by the newly energized Ceasefire effort and Oakland was experiencing a decline in homicide rates. Compared with 2012, shootings in 2014 were down 15 percent and homicides dropped 30 percent (Payton 2014). City officials believed that the new incarnation of Ceasefire was more effective. All partners appeared to be in sync with one another.

Community violence indicators were reviewed in weekly meetings. The meetings helped stakeholders to understand how patterns of violence in different neighborhoods were often related. Representatives from Oakland Unite, Catholic Charities, Youth ALIVE!, Highland Hospital, Ceasefire, and Street Outreach were often involved in the meetings. In addition to providing a space for partners to

collaborate, the weekly meetings allowed the Outreach team to examine whether or not recent shootings were gang-related. They learned that relatively few groups accounted for the majority of victims and suspects. At one point, groups that were primarily engaging in violence in East Oakland were also active throughout the city. Once these individuals were identified, Ceasefire hosted call-ins specifically targeting them. According to the City's documentation, 80 percent of call-in participants expressed at least some interest in the services being offered and 68 percent of those followed through to initiate contact (Payton 2014).

Key Partnerships

TASK FORCES AND TEAMS

Coordination and collaboration were essential to the infrastructure of Oakland Unite. Community organizations, government agencies, and neighborhood residents worked within and across groups to form a strong network.

Community-Based Partners

The network of community-based partners was a cornerstone of the city's violence prevention efforts and a key component of the crisis response strategy. Different agencies came together to create this network, each offering a range of resources. One example of these partnerships was the way Catholic Charities collaborated with Youth ALIVE! in the crisis response arena. Catholic Charities provided extra funding to address client issues when Youth ALIVE! was not equipped to handle them. They provided relocation money for families at high-risk for retaliatory violence and partnered with the Khadafy Washington Project to provide mental health services to families of homicide victims, often paid for by the Victims of Crime office.

The staff of Youth ALIVE! and Catholic Charities also communicated closely with the Street Outreach teams. Typically, someone on the Street Outreach team had enough of a relationship with a victim's family to help DHS understand if there was the potential for retaliatory violence. The collaboration between street outreach and the crisis response organizations was one of Oakland's most powerful strategies to address violence.

The Oakland Gang Prevention Task Force

The Oakland Gang Prevention Task Force, which included representatives from city government, law enforcement, schools, and criminal justice, met monthly to share information on gang trends, to coordinate prevention and intervention efforts, and to address policy issues related to gang violence. The task force had a community engagement council—the Oakland Gang Prevention Council—that met regularly to increase cross-agency coordination around gang problems in schools. One of the strengths of these partnerships was that many shared DHS contracts, allowing for consistency among objectives and benchmarks, and enabling data sharing between probation and the Oakland school district.

The Juvenile Justice Transition Team

The Juvenile Justice Transition Team involved another set of partnerships in Oakland that focused on reentry issues surrounding high-risk youth exiting the Juvenile Justice Center. The team sought rapid reenrollment in school or job training for youth, and attempted to ensure that all youth had access to any necessary health and behavioral services.

OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

OPD remained an important partner in Oakland's violence prevention strategy, despite a great deal of turmoil. Between May 2013 and May 2014, the Department experienced a number of leadership changes and four different people held the title of Chief. Two years later, in fact, the department would go through another period of tumult with the appointments of three different chiefs in just nine days (Queally 2016). Oakland Unite often had to explain sudden leadership changes to community members in order to sustain their connection to the department and to the larger initiative.

The police department had other challenges involving staffing levels. In 2010, Oakland had a police force with approximately 16.5 officers per 1,000 residents, making it one of the smallest forces among major American cities (FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program 2010). Another 80 officers were later cut from the service due to budget constraints and attrition (Bulwa 2012). As of March 2013, the 396,000 Oakland residents were served by just 611 officers, down from 776 in July 2010 (Kuruvila 2013). The reduced size of the force likely contributed to the drop in solved homicides—from 44 percent in 2009 to 29 percent in 2011-12 (Chaflin and McCrary 2012).

Despite multiple leadership transitions and staffing shortages within the police department, the activities and operations of Oakland Unite did not experience major disruptions. City officials believed that this was due in large part to the work of the violence prevention network coordinator, who had worked in Oakland with this population for two decades. As turnover occurred within OPD, Oakland Unite staff worked quickly to establish relationships with the new staff, and the program reported that OPD maintained its support for the model throughout the grant period.

Officials in the Oakland Police Department embraced the public health model, understanding that reductions in violence were due to the joint efforts of enforcement and community support, and that one could not be successful without the other. In earlier years, Oakland's city government and police department did not have strategies in place to respond compassionately to tragedies in the community because most of their protocols emphasized enforcement. Oakland Unite allowed the city to develop the relationships needed to connect Street Outreach teams with the community. Responding quickly and in a coordinated fashion was most successful when strong partnerships existed across departments and organizations.

FAITH-BASED PARTNERS

The Street Outreach team utilized many community partnerships to carry out its work. The violence interrupters relied on churches to provide a safe space to mediate conflicts and to help the community to recover from violent incidents. Outreach workers also used church spaces to remind individuals of pro-social alternatives to their lifestyle, as many had grown up in the church but later became involved in violence. Church staff even provided counseling for outreach workers who needed an outlet to discuss the difficult situations they encountered.

PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES

While few would dispute the fact that Ceasefire initiatives required a true collaborative effort to achieve success, not all partners felt equally represented in the implementation of the Oakland initiative. Some perceived a power imbalance between Ceasefire partners and the individuals doing the outreach work. Perhaps because of their backgrounds, some outreach workers did not feel as though they were recognized or valued for the work that they performed. It was critical to the success of the initiative that all partners felt acknowledged for the contributions they made, and not marginalized by an unequal power dynamic.

Possible Effects on Crime

Even when they are designed and managed well, initiatives like Oakland Unite take time to affect violent crime problems. In the first year of the initiative, the murder rate in Oakland actually increased 40 percent (City of Oakland Weekly Crime Report 2012). The robbery rate was one crime for every 91 residents, "the highest of any major American city since 2000" and "36 percent higher than the second-ranked city, Cleveland" (Huffpost San Francisco 2013; Artz 2013). By 2013, however, overall crime in Oakland began to drop and even homicides declined (City of Oakland Weekly Crime Report 2013). In May 2013, OPD's Chief Whent attributed the reductions to the re-launching of Ceasefire call-ins (Stupi 2013). While the Chief's causal attribution was aspirational at best, it reflected the City's growing confidence in its violence reduction initiatives.

Oakland Unite focused on three crime types: shootings, homicides, and attempted homicides. The effort concentrated on five Hot Spots in the city, including two in the west area of Oakland (McClymonds and Lowell/Acorn) and three in the central/east area (Havenscourt, Elmhurst, and Parker). Oakland Unite partners used the Hot Spot boundaries to focus the efforts of outreach workers as well, directing them to spend at least 75 percent of their time and efforts on those areas.

Using data from the Oakland Police Department, the analysis shows that shootings declined in targeted Hot Spot areas after the 2011 launch of Oakland Unite, but the size of the decline generally mirrored the change in non-target areas. When viewed in terms of percentage change from 2005, the drop in

Number of Shootings

Percent Change in Shootings

Number of Homicides

Percent Change in Homicides

Number of Attempted Homicides

Percent Change in Attempted Homicides
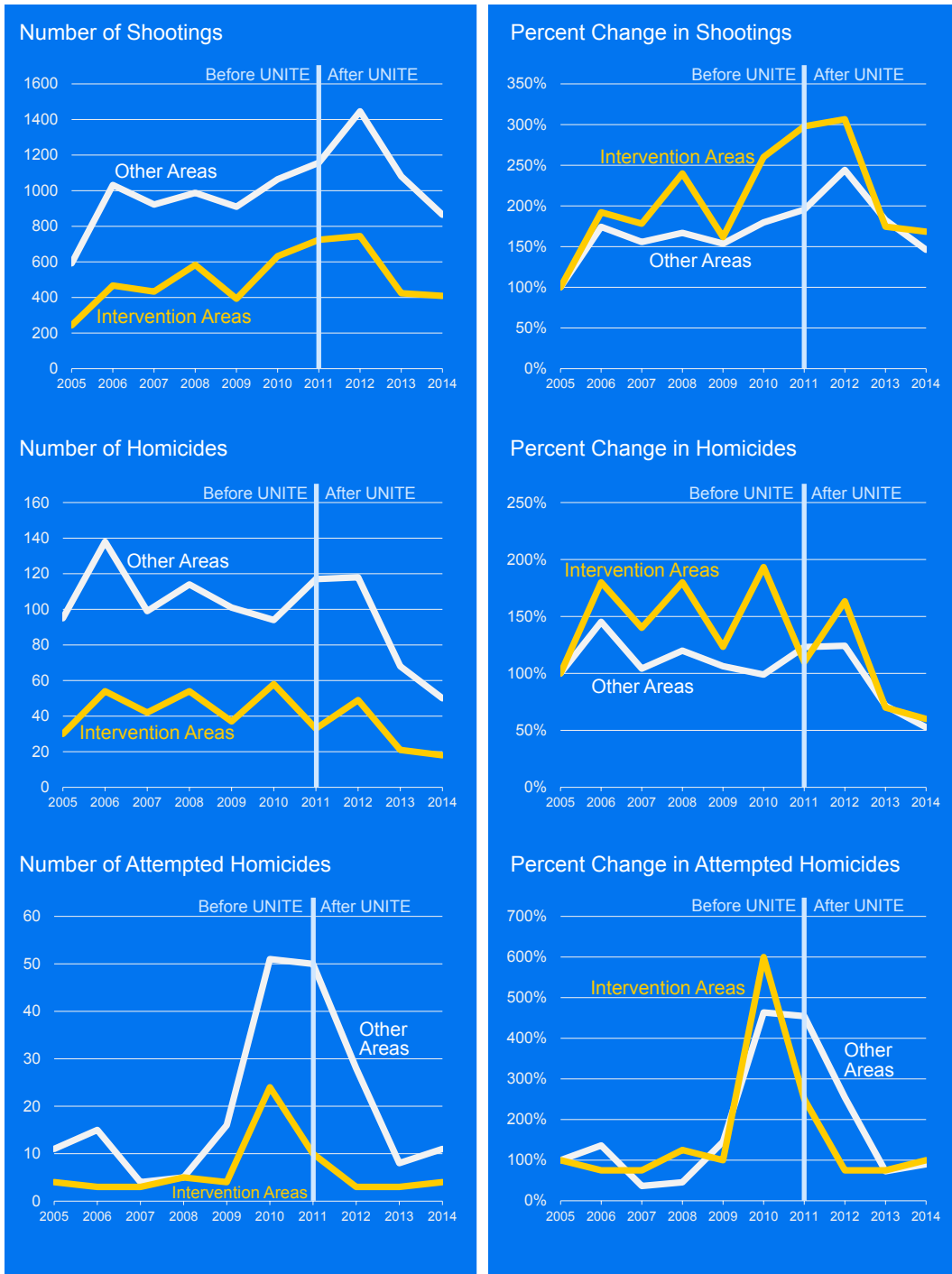
Source: Oakland Police Department.

shootings after 2012 is clear. Shootings reached a level in 2012 that was triple that of 2005 (307% increase), and the subsequent decline returned shootings to 168 percent of their 2005 level. Shootings in areas that were not the focus of Oakland Unite, however, grew to 244 percent of their 2005 level and then dropped to 146 percent by 2014.

Homicides displayed the same pattern. When viewed in isolation, the data could be interpreted to suggest that Oakland Unite had an effect on murders. The number of homicides in Hot Spot areas began to decline a year after the launch of the initiative and the 2014 level (18 deaths) was lower than any year since 2005. On the other hand, the number of homicides in non-Hot Spot areas also dropped sharply after 2012. In percentage terms relative to 2005, the overall change in homicides by 2014 did not differ greatly in areas that were and were not affected by Oakland Unite (60% and 53% of their 2005 levels, respectively).

Changes in attempted homicides between 2005 and 2014 were similar to the pattern exhibited by shootings and homicides. The number of attempted homicides grew sharply from 2010 to 2011, then returned to 2005 levels.

When viewed in terms of percentage change from 2005, the patterns in Hot Spot and non-Hot Spot areas were quiet similar. Taken together, the data demonstrate that violence dropped significantly in the years following the implementation of Oakland Unite, but it is not possible to attribute these changes to the initiative itself.
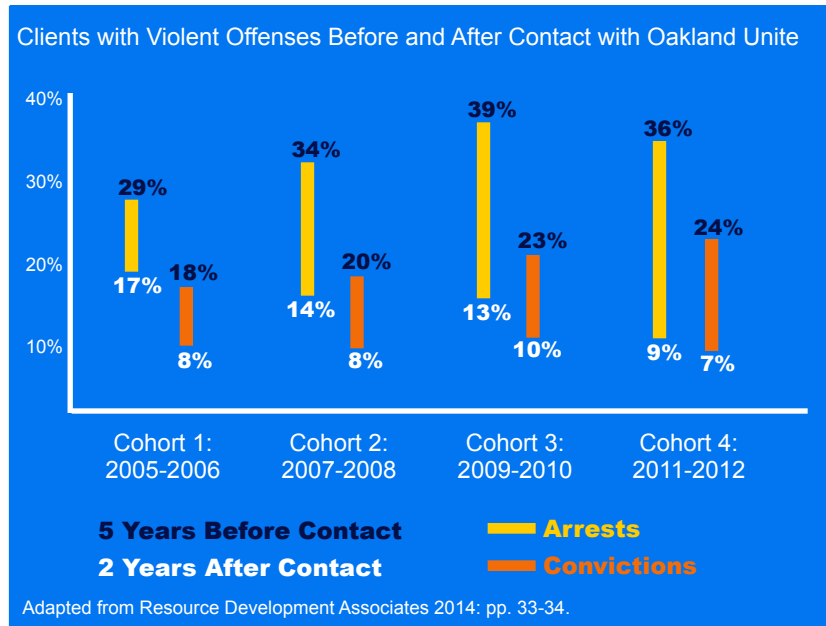
Survey of Youth Participants

Each site receiving an OJJDP grant agreed to administer a survey to youth participants. The survey asked about the youths' experiences in the neighborhood and with the local CBVP program. In Oakland, 40 youth responded. Survey topics included: attitudes towards gun violence, witnessing of violence, violence prevention in the community, programmatic aid, their presonal arrest experiences, and neighborhood safety. More than half (63%) the respondents reported that they knew about the efforts of Oakland Unite to prevent violence. The majority of respondents had witnessed a fight (87%) or saw someone shot (85%). The survey asked when it might be acceptable for an individual to use gun violence. A large proportion (75%) of respondents felt it was acceptable to use a gun if their life was in danger, while 35 percent believed it could be acceptable to use a gun if someone owed them money or had stolen from them, and 42 percent thought using a gun could be acceptable at least in some circumstances. If a family member had been shot, 28 percent of respondents felt it could be ok to use a gun.

How often do you *feel safe* walking in your neighborhood?

Often	28%
Sometimes	63%
Never	10%

How often do you think it's *dangerous* getting to and from school?

Never	10%
Sometimes	63%
Often	20%

Clients with Violent Offenses Before and After Contact with Oakland Unite

	Cohort 1: 2005-2006	Cohort 2: 2007-2008	Cohort 3: 2009-2010	Cohort 4: 2011-2012
Arrests (5 Years Before)	29%	34%	39%	36%
Arrests (2 Years After)	17%	14%	13%	9%
Convictions (5 Years Before)	18%	20%	23%	24%
Convictions (2 Years After)	8%	8%	10%	7%

5 Years Before Contact   ▬ **Arrests**
2 Years After Contact   ▬ **Convictions**

Adapted from Resource Development Associates 2014: pp. 33-34.

An evaluation of the program conducted by Oakland's own Resource Develpoment Associates (2014), on the other hand, was more optimistic. That study tracked the justice involvement of more than 7,000 Oakland Unite clients over an eight year period to assess the amount of offending activity at an individual level both before and after each person's contact with the program. The analysis suggested that program clients were substantially less likely to be either arrested or convicted for new offenses in the two years following their invovlement with Oakland Unite.

The authors of the study admitted, however, that their analysis was unable to show causation. The data did not prove the program itself produced these effects. By the time a young person has sufficient contact with the justice system to warrant formal intervention of some kind, he or she is less likely to offend in the future simply due to the advance of maturity and a statistical effect known as the "selection-regression artifact" (Maltz et al. 1980). Furthermore, the study tracked pre-program offending more than twice as long as post-program offending, which would account for much of the difference. Even with these caveats, however, the findings were somewhat encouraging. The researchers noted, for example, that the size of the declines before and after Oakland Unite grew between the first and fourth cohorts, suggesting that the program may have been becoming more effective.

Lessons Learned

The framework for Oakland's comprehensive violence prevention strategy was in place for less than five years. This timeframe afforded Oakland Unite staff the opportunity to take stock of programs and services that would benefit from additional resources or retooling. Overall, the city was satisfied with the direction of the strategy and was focusing on sustaining positive effects and building on its success. The city identified the following areas to develop further: expanding employment opportunities for Street Outreach and Ceasefire clients, providing additional training on evidence-based behavior change practices and trauma-informed care practices for case managers and street outreach workers, expanding mental health support for clients, and maintaining the consistency of existing efforts—namely call-ins, community engagement and street outreach.

Members of the street outreach team expressed a desire to raise awareness around their work—specifically clarifying that they work in targeted areas of the city with a primary focus on reducing shootings and homicides. During the grant period, there was a wide-spread misunderstanding that their efforts were also targeting other forms of violence across the city, which may have led residents to incorrectly conclude that street outreach did not work or that Measure Y was a failure. For any future efforts, City officials acknowledged that effective violence reduction strategies will need to incorporate effective communication components.

One of the fundamental goals of Oakland Unite was shifting cultural norms around violence, but everyone knew that this would not be easy. As the violence prevention coordinator stated, it is difficult to change the notion deeply embedded in our culture that for any serious argument to be resolved, "someone has to get shot" (Payton 2015). As long as this mindset persists, a neighborhood is always one disagreement away from a spike in violence. Despite the many positive achievements that took place in Oakland over the OJJDP grant period, serious issues remained and there were many areas where Oakland needed to continue working on its anti-violence message.

Between 2010 and 2014, Oakland received federal funds to keep and maintain the street outreach and the community engagement coordinator positions. Two other federal grants helped to support the law enforcement component and the project manager position for Ceasefire. Oakland wisely used its federal and state funds to leverage existing resources and to support violence reduction efforts already underway. The City also applied for and received funding to extend CBVP funding for an additional two years, through 2017. In addition, as Measure Y was scheduled to sunset in 2014, the City worked to pass Measure Z, a parcel tax that followed Measure Y and that was approved by 77 percent of voters in December 2014. This secured another 10 years of funding devoted, in part, to violence prevention.

City officials were also looking to secure resources from private companies and large agencies with a stake in Oakland, including Amazon, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Caltrans, Clorox, the Oakland International Airport, Target, and United Parcel Service. Because of the short-term nature of grants and grant-funded positions, the City often found itself at the mercy of funding cycles that shifted priorities from year to year. Just as one violence prevention strategy got off the ground and began to gain momentum, the philosophical or political winds would change and funders would begin to advocate yet another new approach. Establishing support from corporate partners would help to stabilize violence prevention projects and to sustain their momentum.

Conclusion

Oakland was largely successful in its use of OJJDP funds to "plug missing holes" in its existing comprehensive violence reduction strategy that was largely based on the Ceasefire and Cure Violence models. As one city official stated, "Oakland exemplified the importance of running multiple campaigns against gun violence. Every strategy had its place within a panorama of necessary interventions." The efforts in Oakland enjoyed strong support from local government, community organizations, and the faith-based sector. While the initiative encountered its share of obstacles, the City was confident that any issues could be resolved.

Unfortunately, available data about violent crime trends in the intervention areas failed to demonstrate the effect of the initiative. When compared with areas outside the Hot Spot intervention zones, violent crimes in the neighborhoods served by Oakland Unite did not decline in a way that would suggest the effort had a significant effect on overall public safety. It is possible that individual partici-pants were affected by the initiative in a way that influenced their behavior and that reduced their involvement in violence, but the law enforcement information available to the research team was not detailed enough to detect such effects.

CHAPTER 6

Washington, DC

Introduction

In 2010, the Columbia Heights / Shaw Family Support Collaborative (CH/SFSC or "The Collaborative"), received funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to build upon its violence reduction work as part of the Community Based Violence Prevention (CBVP) demonstration. The Collaborative, a nonprofit organization founded in 1996, offered services in English and Spanish for youth and families, including community and case advocacy. In recent years, the Collaborative expanded to work with additional communities and the organization changed its name to Collaborative Solutions for Communities (CSC). The agency used its CBVP grant to establish the Creating Solutions Together (CST) program in seven Police Service Areas (PSAs) of Washington, D.C., including sections of the Columbia Heights and Shaw neighborhoods.

The CST program focused on youth between 14 and 24 years of age, providing case management, outreach work, and family services. It helped clients address their personal, social, and family circumstances and quality of life issues, focusing on factors that would cause them to be at risk for involvement in violence or gangs. The program fit into the Collaborative' s broader work of building opportunities for youth in the Columbia Heights and Shaw communities, with an emphasis on Latino and African American youth.

Between 2011 and 2014, the research team from John Jay College visited the Collaborative to assess the implementation of the CST program and its potential effects on youth violence. Researchers interviewed staff members, reviewed project documents and reports about the program, and analyzed police data from the PSAs where CST was implemented. Interviews were conducted with current and former outreach workers, case managers, affiliated partner organizations, program managers, and directors. Researchers asked questions about each respondent's knowledge, perceptions and opinions of how CST was planned and implemented, as well as how successful the overall program was in the community.

DC's Response to Violence

The Collaborative was founded in 1996, as a family and youth services organization. The staff was concerned with high rates of crime and violence among local youth. After the 1999 on-site shooting of a staff member at the Latin American Youth Center (another nonprofit organization in the same area), District leaders encouraged the Collaborative to focus more on youth violence intervention (Horwitz, Swell and Lipton 1999). In the summer of 2000, the Latin American Youth Center and the Collaborative received a "Weed and Seed" grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to partner with the U.S. Attorney's office and other District officials in developing a multi-agency strategy for gang prevention and

intervention. Through this project and its work with other organizations, the Collaborative began to focus more intensively on employment and recreational opportunities for youth as the main mechanism for decreasing violence. Even as these programs became established and expanded, however, youth violence continued to escalate across the District.

Violence in the early 2000s was especially high and publicly visible in the Columbia Heights and Shaw communities. The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) asked the Collaborative to coordinate in further efforts to address this violence. Collaborative staff worked with a police unit devoted to gang violence in an effort to improve case closure rates. From the perspective of the Collaborative staff, low case closure rates likely contributed to the high rate of gun violence because youth assumed they would not get caught for shootings. The Collaborative consulted with other cities to learn about comprehensive gang intervention approaches, and in 2003 it established the Gang Intervention Partnership (GIP).

The GIP model relied on a philosophy of 3 P's: 1) violence is *preventable*, 2) there is always a bigger *picture* behind violence, and 3) it takes *partnerships* to stop violence. It brought together city and community agencies, schools, and the police department to collaborate and share information, to identify those most at-risk, and to intervene with youth and their families. Initially, some within the Collaborative were ambivalent about announcing an official gang intervention partnership with law enforcement, believing that their work was successful at least in part due to its low profile and its non-police identity. After establishing the GIP, the Collaborative focused on building trust with its community partners, including police.

At the outset of the GIP, the Collaborative hired several people who brought new skills and insights to the work. They used network mapping tools to diagram the locations and social connections between shootings in the community. This revealed that the youth violence problem in DC was concentrated among a small subset of young people in the community and it exposed the connections between shootings and the various unnamed groups affiliated with local drug dealing and transnational gangs. The GIP served as the foundation for the CBVP program that would soon follow.

CBVP Demonstration

The Collaborative received a CBVP demonstration grant to implement a new violence intervention strategy from 2010 through 2013. The name, Creating Solutions Together, was adopted in 2011. The program's experience in service provision, gang intervention, and outreach work, primarily through the GIP, prepared the staff to implement the newly funded effort. CST aimed for a community-based, multi-disciplinary approach to youth and gang violence prevention and intervention. Prior to receiving OJJDP funding, the Collaborative's work
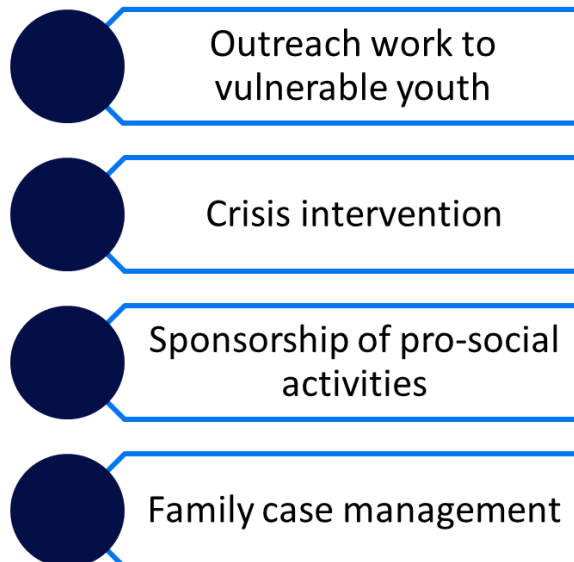
was largely focused on family units, which was in line with the organization's mission of saving communities and strengthening families. The CBVP grant encouraged the Collaborative to reach young people individually, including those not connected to their families. The Collaborative targeted the new services on violence prevention and outreach work to vulnerable youth, crisis intervention, sponsorship of pro-social activities, and family case management. To implement these over the course of the grant period, the Collaborative expanded its partnerships and focused more on its partnerships with schools.

Outreach workers tracked the activities of youth involved in gangs or crews, responded to critical incidents, mediated conflicts, and went to homicide scenes after the police. The staff had traditionally included these activities in its work, but the CBVP grant increased the program's consistency and professionalism. The funding provided outreach workers with over 100 hours of training in a certification program, including modules on data collection, engaging the business community, and key principles of youth development. In other trainings, outreach workers learned Family Group Conferencing and Solution Focused Brief Therapy.

The Collaborative began to provide more pro-social activity options for young people in the community, such as employment training and sports programs. Many youth went from spending most of their time on the street to taking an active interest in their educations. With OJJDP funds, the Collaborative hired more staff to coordinate its community education campaigns (shifting norms and attitudes against violence), which included candlelight vigils, peace walks, cookouts, and other summer activities.

In preparing to launch the CST model, the Collaborative examined the predictors of future shootings. They found that attempted homicides, shootings with or without victims, "skipping parties," and fights at school (or any other offenses

Services Supported by CBVP Funding

- Outreach work to vulnerable youth
- Crisis intervention
- Sponsorship of pro-social activities
- Family case management

resulting in a suspension) appeared to be catalytic events that triggered incidents of youth violence and retaliations. The CST program included multiple forms of engagement, information sharing, and service referrals across key institutions, namely schools, police, and community social services organizations. Intervention and mediation before or after violent altercations, to prevent retaliation, was another central component to the CST work.

CST GOALS

The CST program's over-arching goal was to reduce violent youth crime in the targeted PSAs. The specific timeframe for the reduction was not always clear to everyone involved. Some staff interviewed by researchers referred to reductions in the implementation period (2010-2013), while others discussed this same goal in terms of preventing future homicides. Within this larger goal, the CST set three intermediate goals: changing community norms regarding violence, providing alternatives to violence and gang membership, and increasing high-risk young people's perception of the risks and costs of being involved in violence. In terms of program implementation, the central objectives were: to successfully engage and 'graduate' youth and their families from programming, to provide technical assistance to new sites, and to train a minimum of 60 outreach workers and related staff.

The CST program combined suppression, outreach, and inter-agency collaboration tactics. Suppression used law enforcement tools in response to youth crime and violence, outreach created meaningful relationships between at-risk youth and outreach workers, and collaboration between policing agencies and community organizations served to improve responses, build trust, and avoid counter-productive police actions.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Collaborative's programs and activities were overseen by the executive director and various program directors and supported by the organization's administrative staff. These staff dedicated a substantial amount of their time to CST, but they also worked on other projects. Most CST strategies were implemented by outreach workers who were organized into teams focusing separately on Latino gangs and African American gangs. The Latino team had two full-time outreach workers, one part-time outreach worker, and a team leader. The African American team had two full-time outreach workers and one part-time outreach worker. Each full-time outreach worker was responsible for a caseload of approximately 30 youth and some of these were considered high risk. The Collaborative also employed case managers who were supervised by a clinical social worker who devoted half her time to emergency clinical support for CST. At the start of CST in 2011, 154 youth were actively involved in the program. The program enrolled an average nine new youth per month.

TARGET POPULATION

The CST program targeted seven PSAs: 101, 302, 304, 305, 307, 308 and 404. According to the Collaborative's CBVP proposal, these PSAs had high levels of violent crime and gang activity. The intervention areas did align naturally with community boundaries, but they were nearly contiguous with one another and fell generally within the Columbia Heights and Shaw neighborhoods. Most of the young people involved in CST (age 14 to 24) resided in the targeted PSAs, although staff members sometimes worked with clients from neighboring areas if conflicts spilled over the PSA borders.

In partnership with the City's Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS), the Collaborative classified eligible youth into three tiers of risk, based on their activities and the depth of their association with gangs or crews. Tier One included high risk youth, those involved in illegal drug sales, who regularly carried firearms, and who were willing to engage in violence. Tier Two included youth with known connections to Tier One youth, who may have participated in gangs or crews at a low level, and who may have carried firearms but had not yet been known to use them. Tier Three comprised youth at low risk of engaging in violence. The program focused mostly on youth in Tiers One and Two. Outreach workers identified youth who could be a good fit for the program during critical incident responses and during visits to schools, parks, recreational centers and youth groups. Some youth were referred to CST by law enforcement or by family members.

Strategies

The core strategies of CST were outreach, case management, mediation, and community engagement. Outreach and case management focused on building relationships and providing social services to youth participants. Mediation focused on finding non-violent solutions to ongoing conflicts. Community engagement included responses to critical incidents, work with schools and community education campaigns, and "safe passages," which focused on coordinating with police and community organizations in specific geographic areas with high rates of violence.

OUTREACH

The main purpose of CST program outreach was to build trust and relationships with neighborhood youth at a high risk of violence. Those youth were often disconnected from existing social services and community organizations and outreach workers tried to steer them into supportive connections. At its outset, the Collaborative initiated conversations with community residents to introduce the outreach workers and begin forming connections with local youth. Eventually, through the public support of key community members, the outreach workers built reputations as people who could be trusted and who genuinely cared about the community and about its young people.

Outreach with "Hector"

Hector was an influential leader in a DC group affiliated with MS-13, a well-known gang. When an outreach worker from the CST program started working him, Hector showed little interest, but he was clearly tired of the gang lifestyle and probably wanted out. He had become a prime target of gangs across the city. The Collaborative tried to enroll him in a different school outside of the immediate area, but the gang affiliated students there already knew who he was. Hector didn't even stay put for the entire first day at his new school. He left during lunchtime knowing that he could not return because he was in constant danger. Hector also had a spotty record with local violence prevention programs. He was kicked out of another program because he got into an argument with a gang member. Staff members at the Collaborative kept trying to find a solution. At some point, Hector's mother mentioned that she had extended family in California. The Collaborative immediately changed tactics and began to pursue Hector's relocation. The process included buying all new clothes because his wardrobe was replete with known gang colors. He had to leave everything behind; even his shoes. After he moved to California, he was able to embrace an entirely new lifestyle. His relatives drove him to and from school every day. Hector said he felt like he was "finally living like a kid." The Collaborative's outreach workers back in DC noticed another benefit of the relocation. Many of the ongoing issues between rival gangs in his old neighborhood involved Hector in some way. When he left town, everything seemed to calm down.

Outreach workers recruited clients into CST simply by spending time with them on the streets and by inviting them to Collaborative programs. Eventually, youth began to approach Collaborative staff on their own after hearing about the available services and supports. Recruitment often began during critical incident responses—i.e. outreach workers engaged residents in conversation on scene after a violent incident. After intervening in a crisis, CST staff members would share information about upcoming community events, job skills training, and educational opportunities.

Client outreach focused on youth who were known to be at-risk for gang activity. The process was often difficult and took considerable investments of time. It also required creativity and a genuine interest in working with high-risk youth. Outreach workers noted that listening to what youth and their families said "between the lines" was an essential skill for the work. Workers constantly asked themselves: (1) why is this person saying these particular things in this way; (2) what does he or she actually want and need; and (3) what strengths does this person already possess that could help in achieving positive, long-term goals?

Connecting with residents in a variety of settings, including schools, recreational centers, and parks allowed outreach workers to learn about new developments in the community. Outreach workers also fielded calls from any school or recreational center that requested assistance. On a typical day, the outreach staff was in the office for just one or two hours with the rest of the day spent in the community, especially during after-school hours. Workers tried to focus on youth in their designated caseloads and they were required to follow up on a regular basis until a youth was deemed low-risk enough to no longer require services.

Over the years, CST staff grew close and learned to work well together. The work was fast-paced, requiring them to meet and strategize on an ongoing basis. During routine review discussions, staff members would outline what they knew, what they did not know, and what they needed to know, and then designate and distribute responsibilities across the entire staff.

In their first contact with youth, outreach workers shared information about the Collaborative's work and how they could help. They made it clear that they were not trying to impose rules or tell anyone what to do; they were simply offering help. One recurrent theme, however, was the likely consequence of participating in shootings and violence. Outreach workers often shared their own histories as a way to relate to the youth and to ease potential nervousness on the part of the youth. Once youth saw that outreach workers genuinely wanted to help and were not a threat, they usually became more receptive. They became especially interested once they learned that Collaborative staff were ready to help them access job opportunities or other employment assistance.

If outreach workers had difficulty making the initial connections with youth, they were trained to continue interacting with the youth until they opened up. According to CST staff, youth generally interpreted the persistence of the outreach workers as honest concern. When an outreach worker determined that a youth was reluctant to engage, the worker could contact family and friends to facilitate an introduction. The key to effective client engagement was using all available partners and resources—no single worker was expected to succeed without allies.

Outreach workers developed a passion for helping the community and they often treated the work as more than a job. Most of them were originally from the target neighborhoods, which helped them to understand the social context. They were able to speak with youth about their own experiences with violent incidents and how they learned to avoid putting their lives and the lives of their families at risk. It was not uncommon for an outreach worker to stay out in the neighbor-hood until midnight. Some worked 12 to 16 hour shifts. The outreach workers told researchers that they could not go home at night until the work was truly done, regardless of how long they were scheduled to work or how much they were being paid.

The workers did whatever they needed to do. This might mean helping a youth learn to use computers to look for jobs, often in the Collaborative offices. It might mean going to appointments with youth, such as court hearings and referrals for services. By the end of the OJJDP grant, CST staff had come to know their youth participants extremely well. Even after the grant funding for outreach work ended, some workers remained in contact with certain youth and families, referring them back to the Collaborative as necessary. Most youth in the community appreciated their efforts, but not all youth were grateful. Some responded with anger and threats that put outreach workers at risk. The workers were trained for these scenarios and always responded peacefully and positively.

CASE MANAGEMENT

To preserve outreach workers' roles as youth advocates, separate case management staff handled broader family services for CST youth. Outreach workers identified youth who could benefit from family services and referred them to case managers. For example, if outreach workers had a client whose family was about to become homeless, they would talk to a case manager who tried to find a solution. Case managers would work with youth and their families to develop a plan for dealing with other immediate needs, such as finding employment. If a youth receiving services was gang or crew affiliated, outreach workers would continue to handle that part of the work. This required coordination and clear boundaries between outreach workers and case managers.

MEDIATION

Mediation was used during or after violent incidents to deter future retaliation. After an incident occurred, the mediation team worked to broker a short-term understanding between the people involved so that a long-term strategy could be devised. The Collaborative needed to be well-informed about gang and crew behavior to handle mediations effectively, and the conversations during a mediation often helped staff to assess the deeper needs of youth. Mediations prioritized situations and individuals involving multiple risk factors, such as youth who joined gangs at an early age, those with family members involved in gangs, and youth with a history of delinquent behavior, poor academic performance, and disruptive behavior in school. The mediation team used "solution focused" questions to guide participants through the mediation stages, including: introducing the issue and participants, gathering information, identifying interest and positions, developing options, building agreements, and finalizing agreements. Outreach workers, as well as case managers, community members, and even other gang members could refer individuals for mediation as necessary.

WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

Critical Incident Response

OJJDP funding also allowed the Collaborative to implement a critical incident response strategy. This was a broader response to incidents than mediation and included people and organizations outside of those directly involved in a given incident. Staff received information about incidents in the community through the police alert system, youth, schools, or referrals through MPD. Whenever they were alerted of an incident, Collaborative staff members responded to the situation within two hours. They set up a safe area near the incident location in case other violence broke out, and surveyed the area to identify any ongoing risk of harm. A staff member (usually the outreach response manager) would attempt to engage with the family. At the same time, outreach workers would speak with bystanders to obtain additional information. The staff usually tried to connect the family to Crime Victims' Services, which provided up to $25,000

worth of support, including $6,000 for burial and $3,000 for counseling, loss and bereavement. A vigil might be arranged to help the family grieve and to draw community attention to the consequences of gun violence. The Collaborative would provide candles for the event, arrange for MPD to have a patrol car on standby so no one would disrupt the ceremony, and then staff the event with outreach workers.

After any violent incident response, the staff would return to the CST office for a critical incident meeting to review the factors that precipitated the incident. In these meetings, staff members discussed what they knew, what they did not know, and what they needed to know. Staff always tried to gather as much information as they could in order to connect with aggressors to start mediation, work towards a ceasefire, and attempt to halt potential retaliation. Collaborative staff also tried to monitor other key individuals involved in the incident. They might take those individuals out to a movie or dinner to distract them and to keep them involved in pro-social activities. Staff wanted to ensure that at-risk youth remained with them during weekends, when violent situations were more likely to occur.

Beginning in 2011, CST developed a partnership with the Washington Hospital Center that enabled outreach workers to be among the first responders to critical incidents. A trauma prevention and outreach coordinator at the hospital would contact outreach workers about violent incidents involving youth. An outreach worker would then meet with youth and families at the hospital to determine what services and supports may be needed. The relationship between the two agencies proved to be helpful in sharing information and connecting youth with appropriate services. Outreach workers signed confidentiality forms to comply with HIPPA regulations that protected victims' privacy.

Monitoring Violent Incidents

Outreach staff used multiple systems to gather and share information about violence. One particular website, Homicide Watch D.C., was used almost daily as it posted information about virtually every murder in Washington, DC. It was part of a larger network of Homicide Watch websites that reported murders in cities around the country. The site allowed outreach workers to compare the information they gathered from the community with what was being reported online to see if they had missed anything important. Staff also monitored the MPD alert system that sent out incident alerts within twenty or thirty minutes of violent events. Each alert contained information such as the incident address, the color of any car that was involved, and identifying details about the suspect. Outreach workers monitored MPD crime statistics as well.

Initially, CST outreach workers found it difficult to get critical information from the community because people were very cautious. Community events organized by the Collaborative helped develop positive relationships with the neighborhood. The annual "You've Got Talent" event, for example, brought together many kids and families and increased their familiarity with the outreach staff. The workers also helped youth in summer job initiatives. As community residents came to recognize the positive efforts of the outreach staff, they became more receptive to returning the favor and helping outreach workers.

Schools

The Collaborative always tried to make staff available to assist schools. Outreach workers helped prevent fights both on and off school property and they tried to connect students with needed services. They talked with youth at risk of suspension or expulsion, provided them with a safe place to go as an alternative to staying on the streets after school, and even helped some students complete school work assignments. During the CBVP grant period, the Collaborative sent confidential emails to school officials if they believed a student posed a safety threat. The school worked to inform students of the consequences of violent behavior and the Collaborative held meetings at the schools (often providing food) on a regular basis to discuss the risks of gang membership and to recruit youth as CST allies. These meetings quickly turned into a safe place for youth—even for gang-affiliated students—to interact with other residents and to discuss neighborhood issues.

The Collaborative offered afterschool activities as well (e.g., sports) and encouraged the participation of the youth most at risk for gang involvement. Youth had to maintain a minimum grade point average to participate in activities. Outreach staff also spent time with students on school grounds, especially during lunch periods. They knew that gang recruitment usually occurred during lunch. If an outreach worker witnessed gang recruitment taking place, an attempt would be made to engage both the targeted student and the recruiting gang member in a conversation. Outreach workers learned to approach students after an attempted recruitment took place rather than as it was occurring.
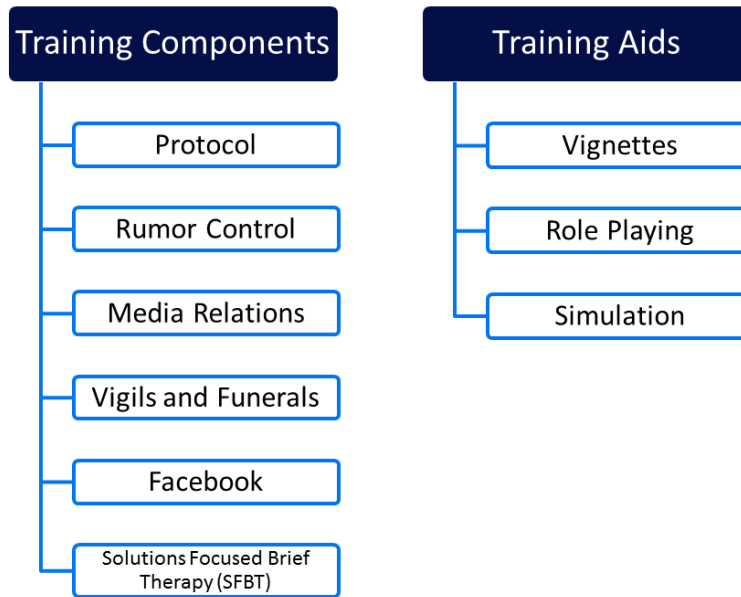
Collaborative staff focused on stopping "skipping parties"—where youth would gather at an empty residence during school hours to drink, use drugs, have sex, and sometimes fight. In collaboration with school personnel, the staff tried to hold young people accountable for their actions by tracking suspensions (particularly out of Bell High School in Columbia Heights) and coordinating with attendance counselors to determine patterns of student absences. The Collaborative sometimes sent youth who had recently been in a serious fight to stay with out-of-town relatives to prevent violent retaliations.

Staff members invited school officials to community events and block parties, providing schools with an opportunity to inform the community about what their local school may have to offer and how it was a safe place for students. The Collaborative coordinated meetings between schools, police, elected officials, and other major offices to ensure that an incident at one school did not affect other schools. Coordination with schools was not always easy, but it provided the Collaborative and the school system with greater understanding about the dynamics underlying many student conflicts.

Community Education

The Collaborative always tried to help youth understand the dangers of continued involvement in violence, particularly in high-risk areas. The CST program distributed public education materials and announcements. It organized workshops and events in partnership with other community-based organizations

Outreach Team Training

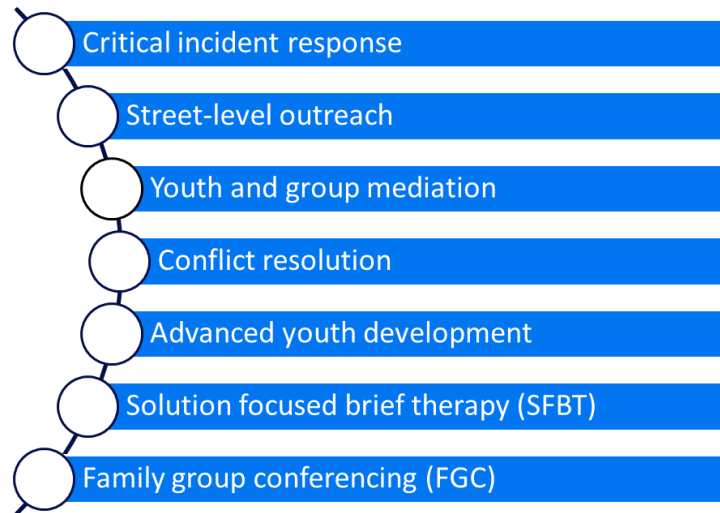| Training Components	Training Aids
Protocol	Vignettes
Rumor Control	Role Playing
Media Relations	Simulation
Vigils and Funerals	
Facebook	
Solutions Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)	

and agencies. In workshops and other meetings, the program distributed materials describing the resources and programs available for families and youth, including summer employment programs, mental health and substance abuse treatment, after-school activities, adult re-entry supports, teen health initiatives, etc. Workshop topics ranged from parenting supports, to photography, creative writing, DJ skills, dance and music groups, and a larger event called the Youth Outreach Anti-Violence Summit. Partner organizations involved in delivering these workshops benefited by building connections with different groups in the community. Some of the partner organizations involved in the workshops included: Shrine of the Sacred Heart; the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services; Office of Latino Affairs; Temple University; the Latin American Youth Center; George Washington University; World Vision; Safe Passages; the U.S. Department of Justice; AFL-CIO Community Services Agency; Covenant House in Washington; the Northwest Columbia Heights Civic Association; DC's Court Services Offender Supervision Agency; the Georgia Avenue Collaborative; Metropolitan Police Department; Columbia Heights Youth Club; Homicide Watch DC; the DC Office of Youth Programs; Federation of Civic Associations; Lifting Voices; InDaStreets, Inc.; Greater DC Cares; the DC Public Schools; and the Family Division of the Trial Lawyers Association.

Safe Passages

The Safe Passages Initiative was designed to keep youth safe from violent incidents on their way to and from school. It arranged for close coordination among various MPD sections, the DC transit police and probation officers, private security companies, and community groups with responsibility for monitoring neighborhoods. The Collaborative implemented the program with every partici-pating property, day and night, covering a ten block radius in Columbia Heights.

Training Components

- Critical incident response
- Street-level outreach
- Youth and group mediation
- Conflict resolution
- Advanced youth development
- Solution focused brief therapy (SFBT)
- Family group conferencing (FGC)

Police in DC were supportive of the Safe Passages Initiative and believed that it provided a useful citizen network for better and quicker responses. The combination of Safe Passages, law enforcement, and private security helped prevent potential conflicts among youth. At one point, District officials considered building a Safe Passages database of individuals and incidents that would help to identify the youth most likely to be involved in problem behaviors.

TRAINING

The CST program provided a 115-hour certification curriculum that trained outreach workers in critical incident response, street-level outreach, conflict resolution, group mediation and group facilitation, media relations, advanced youth development, Solution Focused Brief Therapy, and Family Group Conferencing. Each training session emphasized hands-on work through vignettes, role playing, and simulations. Trainings were intentionally stressful to provide an indication of what outreach workers might experience on the street. The trainings also helped workers to address their own emotional reactions to incidents.

About 100 individuals completed the program and earned certification by the end of the OJJDP grant period. This included nine CST staff, 44 people from local community organizations, and 37 people from partner organizations in Maryland and other parts of DC. Outreach workers were organized into "violence intervention teams" (VITs) that also included case managers and social workers. Each VIT provided a range of services and followed specific protocols to support individuals and their families. Protocols included violence response and incident follow-up, retaliation prevention, gang mediation, case review, referrals, reentry planning, and stress intervention workshops. VIT activities supported the goal of providing youth with alternatives to involvement in violence, using concrete intervention strategies.

The training curriculum included presentations by Aquil Basheer, executive director of the Professional Community Intervention Training Institute in Los Angeles, California. Drawing upon his experiences in the Black Panther Movement and community activism, Mr. Basheer trained outreach workers on mediation tactics, community development, and community interventions using street scenarios. For outreach workers to be certified, they had to complete training hours in all areas of the curriculum. The Collaborative offered certification training once a year with other trainings throughout the year. This allowed new outreach workers to start training at any time. All new outreach workers and case managers received a binder containing information from each component of the training curriculum, including a section about their responsibilities to enter data into the program's Efforts to Outcome (ETO) database.

Challenges

OUTREACH

One of the most difficult aspects of outreach work was sustaining youth engagement. Like all young people, the youth involved in Collaborative activities were restless and easily bored. The Collaborative tried to keep its programming interesting and it provided tangible incentives for participation at meetings and events, including food. Workers often had to cover large areas, which made it challenging to build relationships with hesitant youth over time. Outreach workers consulted with colleagues to adjust their schedules accordingly, and the team developed thirty-day relationship-building plans when needed. The Collaborative would also reconfigure outreach worker assignments, allowing them to spend more time in one place.

Cultural differences posed other challenges. Outreach workers were trained to handle violent incidents similarly, regardless of the race of the youth involved, but they admitted to researchers that they sometimes had difficulties relating to youth of different ethnicities or races. Youth and families were typically more responsive to individuals who were similar to themselves. Given the seriousness of this issue, the Collaborative created distinct outreach teams—one with African-American outreach workers and another with Latino and Hispanic workers.

Despite it being a requirement of the job, there was inconsistency in when and how outreach workers documented their work. To remedy the problem, Collaborative administrators supervised outreach workers and created documentation schedules that could not become backlogged. They also held one-on-one supervision meetings to discuss specific documentation problems as they arose. In a related concern, outreach workers expressed frustration with some of the bureaucratic difficulties of delivering services to youth and families. Some workers told researchers that there was too much paperwork required and this limited their time and efforts with youth and families.

SCHOOLS

School personnel were initially hesitant to trust Collaborative staff and sometimes refused to provide them with information, perhaps because they did not want school district officials to know about every violent incident occurring on campus. Eventually, however, the community and the schools embraced the Collaborative approach. Schools soon began to call Collaborative staff members to tell them about conflicts that had occurred or were about to occur, including nonviolent ones. Information from schools helped the Collaborative to manage its relationships with city government and school officials. When a city government official would contact the Collaborative out of concern about a violent incident, staff members could relay what school personnel had already told them and reassure the official that the school was handling the issue. Gaining the support and trust of school officials was an ongoing process and towards the end of the grant period, staff members were spending a significant amount of time working to maintain the trust of schools.

STAFF SUPPORT

Some outreach workers experienced secondary trauma (i.e. through hearing and absorbing the stories of others' traumatic experiences) while working with youth in the community. There was a clear need for therapy and debriefing to help manage emotional fatigue and absences. While the Collaborative provided mentoring, supervision, and coaching support to address these experiences, other partner organizations did not always have this type of support. Leadership established "cool down groups" to help staff cope with the emotionally draining aspects of the work. Because outreach workers often lived in the same neighbor-hoods they served, they often knew the youth who were involved in violence or those who were killed. Outreach workers needed time to discuss and reflect on the violence they often witnessed in the community. The "cool down groups" came to function as therapeutic support for outreach workers. One staff member reported that the groups allowed him say, for example, "Today, I really can't handle this case. I knew that kid. Somebody else needs to take over. I'll help you behind the scenes, but this is too much for me to manage."

"Cool down groups" eventually included staff from other community organiza-tions that had their own outreach workers. All outreach workers came together to ensure that everyone would be involved and the groups could be responsive to all situations in the community. The process also allowed outreach workers from different organizations to share their skills. Ultimately, the groups proved essential and under the OJJDP grant, the Collaborative hired a consultant to continue "cool down groups" and trainings. The consultant provided guidance on how the Collaborative should help staff members get "back on track" after violent incidents.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The Collaborative made some changes to the core components of CST as the grant period progressed, and as staff learned what elements seemed to be most effective. For example, the Collaborative put more energy into creating jobs for youth who were harder to place; they developed a media/IT program to certify youth in media skills. Despite these changes, however, the Collaborative still had difficulty obtaining employment for some young people. Staff shifted some funding from the GED program to the workforce development program in an attempt to improve the employment prospects of youth.

Although outreach worker training was helpful, some outreach workers said that shared experience with youth was the key to being an effective outreach worker. For example, some outreach workers had college degrees, but they lacked real life experiences similar to those faced by the youth they would be helping. It was often difficult for these outreach workers to understand how to effectively engage with youth—no matter how much training they received.

Sometimes other agencies did not have full staff attendance at trainings. For example, while offering New Beginnings Trainings to DYRS and Juvenile Detention Centers, only 160 out of 300 staff members from those agencies attended. Despite this, the Collaborative conducted a two-hour training session for staff on local youth violence dynamics in DC and on using Solution Focused Brief Therapy to engage youth and reduce violence. According to the Collaborative staff, some DYRS staff did not actively invest in changing their practices. Once the DYRS was allowed some input into the agenda for training staff members and development of the program tailored to the DC context, they began to actively participate in Collaborative training.

Key Partnerships

Partnerships between the Collaborative and other agencies were a major element of the program's success. Agencies partnering with the Collaborative addressed family stabilization issues, workforce development, and gang prevention. Each partnering agency had unique resources and made valuable contributions to youth violence prevention efforts. The Collaborative worked to build other partnerships with schools, local community organizations, and government entities so that their network of partners was strong and diverse. Through its partnerships, the Collaborative became a leader in mapping violence, collecting data, coordinating inter-agency efforts, and defining the broader continuum of services. The relationships of staff from various partnership agencies contributed to the overall success of the effort.

POLICE

Historically, the Collaborative had a tense relationship with MPD. For a time, the police department and the schools refused even to admit that there was a gang problem in the city. The 2003 GIP program began to improve the tone of agency relationships. Over time, the police department began to appreciate that arresting youth was only a short-term solution to a longer-term problem, and that community engagement was essential. Building relationships with police required time and energy with many meetings. Eventually, the Collaborative developed a much closer and positive relationship with the police.

Communication with MPD officers was crucial. Officers were encouraged to refer youth to the Collaborative, allowing outreach workers to intervene before a youth had to be arrested. Police officers informed Collaborative members about gang activity or specific individuals who they believed were involved in gangs, while the Collaborative provided the MPD with general information about anticipated violence and current gang "beefs." Collaborative staff believed this allowed the MPD to prevent violence and police officers appreciated the relationship with the Collaborative's outreach workers, as it helped them to learn about community conditions.

Some community members were initially suspicious of the Collaborative's connections with police. Community residents generally had very low confidence in the police and many believed the police would not do anything to prevent violence or to address violence even after it had occurred. Outreach workers explained to residents that a relationship with MPD was important so program staff could call the police on behalf of a youth in trouble. Their relationship with police allowed them to call and say, "This is my kid. He did something extremely stupid. I guarantee you it won't happen again. I'm going to monitor him." In turn, police were careful to avoid giving the neighborhood the impression that outreach workers were part of MPD. This was essential to ensure that residents felt comfortable communicating with outreach workers.

Overall, the Collaborative had a good relationship with MPD. Occasionally Collaborative staff members were uncomfortable with how the police department responded to certain situations. In those instances, liaison officers were dispatched to discuss and work out these issues. The Collaborative team told researchers about several times when off-duty officers responded to incidents to support the Collaborative's work. These officers did so with the support of the Police Chief and Assistant Police Chief. While this was very helpful and appreciated by the staff, some believed that it relied too much on informal rela-tionships and that an institutional memorandum of understanding would have been useful.

SCHOOLS

Close relationships with schools were very important in the Collaborative because a lot of youth violence occurred around school property. The Collaborative communicated regularly with MPD, school security, and the Department of
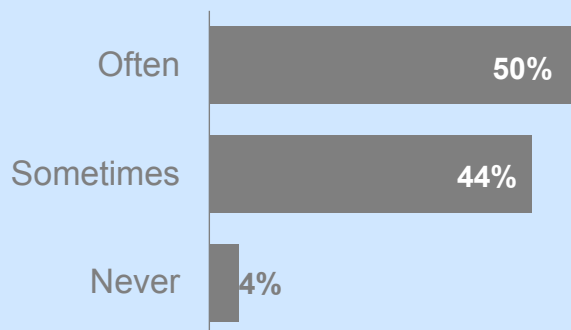
Youth Rehabilitation Services to monitor gang issues in the schools. Outreach workers from the Collaborative were often able to provide detailed information about potential gang violence to all of these entities. Some schools were more welcoming of the Collaborative involvement than others and there were disagreements about what level and type of services the Collaborative should offer. After some effort, outreach workers became a welcome presence in most community schools.

One of the Collaborative's goals was to build the schools' capacity to continue violence prevention work after funding ended. Schools faced multiple factors that affect youth violence dynamics, such as dropout rates, abuse and violence in students' homes and families, and other socio-economic challenges. The OJJDP grant could not address all issues, and school personnel tried to secure additional funding to support youth struggling to complete school. The Collaborative was one such source of assistance and tried to make their outreach workers consistently available to the schools. It proved to be a fruitful partnership and schools continued to come to the Collaborative when they needed help.

Survey of Youth Participants

Each site receiving an OJJDP grant agreed to administer a survey to youth participants. The survey asked about the youths' experiences in the neighborhood and with the local CBVP program. In Washington, DC, more than 50 youth responded. Survey topics included: attitudes towards gun violence, witnessing of violence, violence prevention in the community, programmatic aid, their presonal arrest experiences, and neighborhood safety. More than half (77%) the respondents reported that they knew about efforts to prevent violence in DC, whether those efforts were associated with the Collaborative or other programs. Nearly all the respondents had witnessed a fight (94%) or saw someone shot (71%). The survey asked when it might be acceptable for an individual to use gun violence. A large proportion (69%) of respondents felt it might acceptable to use a gun in some circumstances. For example, 56 percent believed it could be acceptable to use a gun against someone who shot a family member.

How often do you *feel safe* walking in your neighborhood?

Often	50%
Sometimes	44%
Never	4%

How often do you think it's *dangerous* getting to and from school?

Never	33%
Sometimes	50%
Often	12%
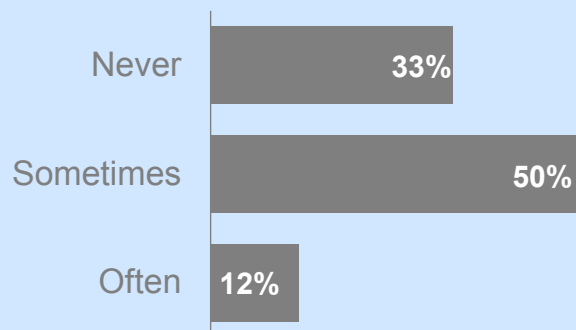
HOSPITALS

The Washington Hospital Center created a program to focus on helping youth who were victims of violence. Hospital staff noted that it was not enough to treat physical injuries. They hoped to divert youth away from future gang activity, risky behavior, and criminal involvement. Medical staff at the Washington Hospital Center created "Journey before Destination," a violence prevention and intervention program that targeted youth between the ages of 14 and 24. As part of this program, hospital staff treated youth for physical injuries and offered other services, including family supports and youth programs. When an injured youth was admitted to the hospital, social services staff worked with the youth and his or her family to address some of the factors that may have led to the violent situation.

OTHER PROVIDERS

The Latin America Youth Center (LAYC) worked with the Collaborative to provide outreach work support, both before and during the grant period. While the partnership was designed to provide additional outreach workers, according to Collaborative staff members, youth were less familiar with LAYC and sometimes expressed uncertainty about which workers to approach when they had to address a particular issue. Some youth noted differences in the approaches and amount of time spent on outreach by workers with the Collaborative and those employed by LAYC.

The Collaborative partnered with other, smaller agencies for specific services. One agency called Critical Exposure taught photography to middle and high-school students to advocate for policy change. Some of their issues included: lack of a school library, inconsistent and unfair discipline policies, and a widespread lack of funding for school facilities. Critical Exposure provided basic documentary photography skills and storytelling approaches. Staff members worked with youth to determine possible solutions to the problem and to develop a campaign on the issue. Through Critical Exposure, 150 youth displayed their photography work in an annual, city-wide exhibit. Initially, Critical Exposure shared office space with the Collaborative, resulting in a three-year partnership.

INTERAGENCY MEETINGS

During the grant period, the Collaborative held joint "roll call" meetings that brought police together with the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, city council members, security companies, property management representatives, and the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency. In these weekly meetings, participants shared information (e.g., current hotspots and individual and group activities of concern) and analyzed crime statistics to determine if current interventions were working. If specific incidents were brought up by partnering agencies during the roll call meeting, Collaborative members reached out to the youth involved and tried to intervene, reporting back to the group with confidentiality. City officials hoped to continue to the meetings to improve

collaborations even after the OJJDP grant period ended. Roll call meetings were initially funded by the city council, but, once crime began to decline, the City switched the funding to other areas.

The Collaborative also participated in monthly "partnership" meetings with city officials and community representatives. These meetings were hosted by different partner agencies each month. At these meetings, attendees informed other agencies of the progress of the city's initiatives toward improving community safety and requested advice or input as to how programs could be changed. The goal of these partnership meetings was to create a community forum that allowed a variety of stakeholders to contribute to discussions on community safety.

Performance Measures

The research team collected anecdotal information from interviews and program activity data from the Collaborative's Efforts to Outcomes database. The data encompassed the full period of implementation from 2010 through 2013.

DATA ENTRY SYSTEM

In 2011, the Collaborative began using the database, Efforts to Outcomes (ETO), from the company called Social Solutions. The ETO platform provides data management and analysis supports for service delivery organizations that need to track their client interactions and service outcomes. The Collaborative required outreach workers to document their activities with participants at least weekly and to input data on community contacts on an ongoing basis. A representative from the Children's Youth Investment Trust Incorporation provided technical assistance with ETO.

The Collaborative originally asked outreach workers to record information on paper files, but found that the switch to ETO was both more efficient and more user-friendly. Even with the ETO system, however, the program faced informational challenges. Since youth were not assigned to a specific outreach worker, all outreach workers could view the notes entered about any youth; this compromised the confidentiality of what youth told a specific outreach worker. In addition, outreach workers often had their own strategies for data entry. They entered notes on varying timelines and they often developed their own shorthand styles which led to some confusion and miscommunication.

YOUTH ENROLLMENT RECORDS

According to the program's own data, CST activities peaked in 2011, with a total of 48,930 enrolment days for all participants. In the startup year, 2009, there were only 3,614 program enrolment days in total, and this quickly rose to over 45,000 in 2010. It began to drop in 2012, to 16,133, likely because of a combination of more focused activities and some reduction in type and scope of services. The program wrapped up in 2013 with 6,056 program days.

Participants and program staff mostly interacted face-to-face, rather than over the phone. During the three-year grant period, there were considerably more face-to-face contacts than telephone contacts, according to agency records. In 2011, the most active year, the program made about 17,000 face-to-face contacts. By comparison, the program made between 1,000 and 2,000 telephone contacts over all three years. This disparity may reflect the importance and effectiveness of in-person engagement, as well as perhaps some logistical barriers to regular phone contact. The highest number of contacts occurred in 2011 and 2012, reflecting the heavier emphasis on recruitment and outreach in the initial years of the program. The number of contacts decreased by 2013 and was very low in 2014 after funding ended. Collaborative staff members began to scale back recruitment as the end of the grant got closer, focusing instead on the youth already enrolled.

Possible Effects on Crime

To explore the possible effects of the Collaborative during the OJJDP grant period, researchers attempted to obtain crime trend data directly from the Washington, DC Metropolitan Police Department. The only available data about violent crime, however, was the publicly available information posted on the police department website, specifically MPD's annual reports (after 2005), the DC Crime Map (which provided violent crime numbers at the PSA level for each year since 2011), and juvenile arrest data since 2011. The department was unable to provide any additional data to the study.

VIOLENT CRIME TRENDS

Violent crimes generally declined throughout the implementation of the Collaborative, but there were differences by the type of crime. According to the MPD's annual report series, for example, homicides dropped from 99 in 2006 to 72 in 2014. Robberies, in contrast, increased during the same period, from 687 to 907. Aggravated asaults also increased, nearly doubling from 1,689 to 3,057 by 2014. Some of the increase could be due to growth in the population, or to increasing willingness of citizens to report crimes. It is also possible that trends varied by age and offense across the many neighborhoods of Washington. It was not possible, however, to explore detailed hypotheses due to the limited amount of data available to the study.

The Collaborative focused its efforts on both juveniles and young adults, but MPD does not provide data on arrests with detailed age categories. Thus, the study could only analyze the juvenile proportion of crime. The MPD data show the proportion of homicides perpetrated by juveniles—at the city level—peaking in 2008 (at 12%) and then dropping to a low of seven percent in 2011, just after program implementation. The juvenile proportion of homicide arrests increased to about 10 percent in 2013, declining to four percent in 2014. Of course, the actual numbers of homicides among juveniles is relatively low, so single incidents can affect homicide trends more than in other crimes.

Violent Crime Trends in Washington, DC

Total Number of Homicides

Before CST | After CST

Juveniles as Percent of Homicide Arrests

Before CST | After CST

Total Number of Robberies

Before CST | After CST

Juveniles as Percent of Robbery Arrests

Before CST | After CST

Total Number of Aggravated Assaults

Before CST | After CST

Juveniles as Percent of Agg. Assault Arrests

Before CST | After CST

Source: Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, DC.

The percentage of robbery arrests that involved youth under age 18 was relatively steady from 2006 to 2014, fluctuating between 35 and 45 percent. Similarly, the proportion of aggravated assault arrests that involved juveniles over the same period fluctuated between 10 and 14 percent, while generally declining.

VIOLENT CRIME IN THE CST PROGRAM AREA

The police department in Washington does not disseminate crime data at the neighborhood level, but the study was able to examine crime trends in the Police Service Areas that were most closely aligned with the program catchment area. These PSAs were: 101, 302, 304, 305, 307, 308, and 404. The MPD provides crime data at the PSA-specific level through its online crime map, but only for years since 2011. To analyze changes in violent crime in the program area before and after CST implementation, researchers had to create a longer time series with a sequence of estimation steps.

The research team began with the PSA-specific data for 2011-2015. To build a baseline estimate for years prior to 2011, researchers calculated the proportion of each type of violent crime (homicide, robbery, and aggravated assaults) in each PSA relative to the equivalent category for the same year in the entire city. This proportion in 2011 was then applied to earlier years, using the city-level raw number of incidents (per violent crime category), to determine an estimated number of incidents of violent crime in each PSA for 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010. Finally, these estimates in the seven PSAs were combined in order to estimate violent crime incidents in the "program area" for each year prior to 2011. In the accompanying data graphs, these estimated trend lines are marked with dotted lines, while the actual MPD data for the catchment PSAs (all program PSAs combined) are marked with solid lines.

This method assumes that the overall proportion of violent crime in each PSA relative to the whole city in 2011 was steady over the five previous years (2006-2010). Given that the overall crime rate in Washington generally declined from 2006 to 2011, as well as the fact that the neighborhoods affected by CST experienced rapid gentrification during these years, the study's assumption of steady PSA-to-city proportions may under-estimate the amount of crime in the program PSAs in the earlier years (2006-2011).

Furthermore, all of the estimates and real data presented here are actual numbers of incidents and not per-capita incident rates. Thus, they do not account for changes in resident populations. Population estimates were not available at the PSA level for the most recent years, but data from 2000-2010 indicate that these PSAs likely continued to experience population growth after 2010. Therefore, graphing numbers of violent crimes (as opposed to per capita rates) may over-estimate increases in violent crime incidents relative to the population.

Violent Crime Trends in Program Catchment Areas

Total Homicides in CST Catchment Area

Before CST | After CST

Juvenile Homicides in CST Catchment Area

Before CST | After CST

Total Robberies in CST Catchment Area

Before CST | After CST

Juvenile Robberies in CST Catchment Area

Before CST | After CST

Total Aggr. Assaults in CST Catchment Area

Before CST | After CST

Juvenile Aggr. Assaults in CST Catchment Area

Before CST | After CST
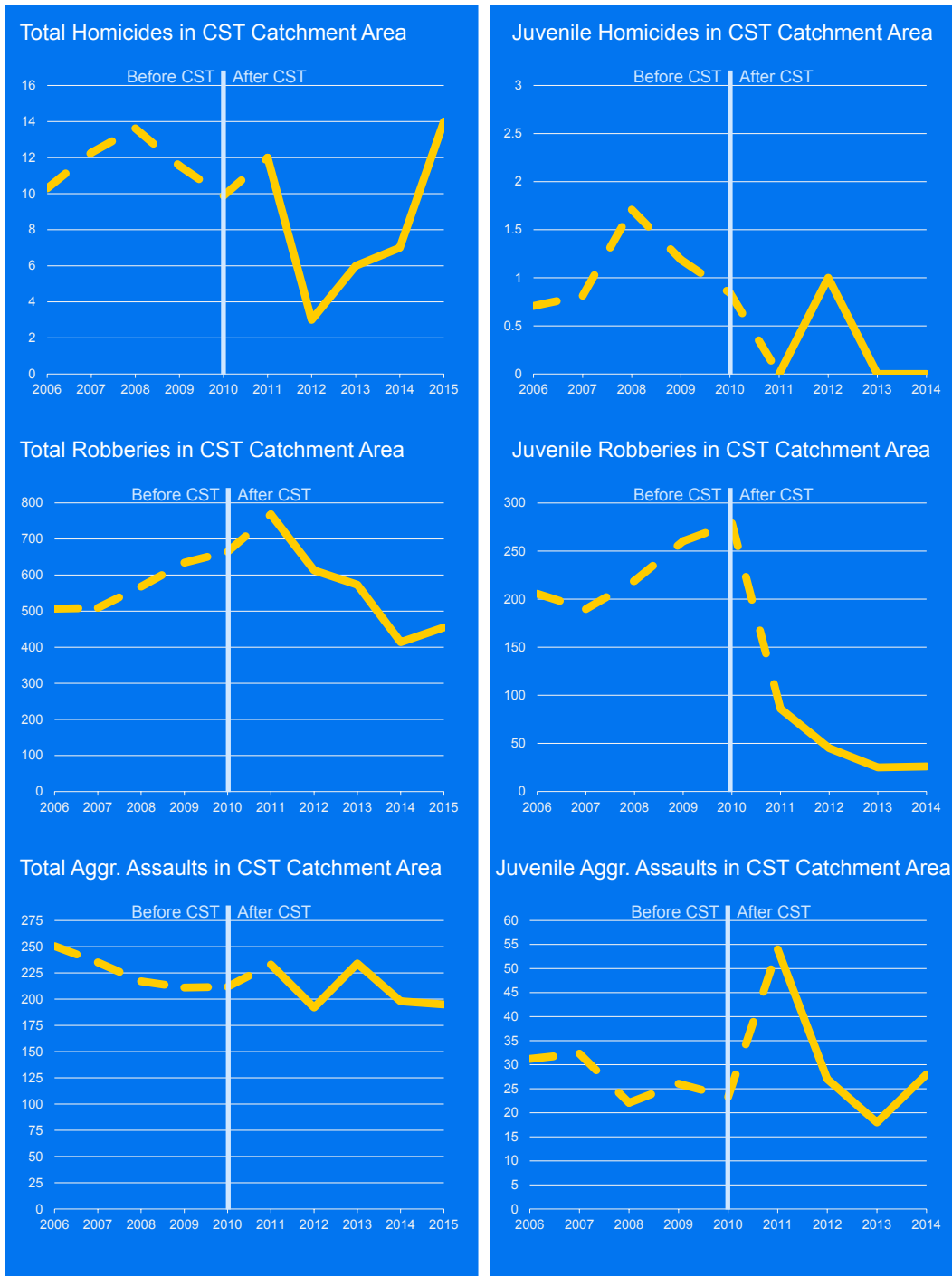
Source: Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, DC.

Changes in the three types of violent crime (homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault) in the seven program PSAs from 2006-2015 showed some interesting patterns. The total number of homicides fluctuated from 10 in 2006, to three in 2012, to 14 in 2015. The estimated trend line for robberies, on the other hand, shows a gradual increase from 2006 to 2011, and then a steep decline from 2011 to 2014. In contrast, the estimated trend line for aggravated assaults shows modest fluctuation and an overall decline between 2006 and 2015, from about 250 to approximately 200 incidents.

In order to examine possible changes in violent crimes involving youth within the program areas, the research team next estimated the amount of juvenile violent crime in the seven program PSAs prior to 2011. Juvenile arrests for violent offenses in 2011-2014 were available on the MPD website. The research team selected arrest records for homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault, and then combined the information for all seven PSAs each year. To estimate prior years, the city-level proportion of violent crimes committed by juveniles (provided by MPD for 2006 to 2014) was applied to violent crime figures in the program PSAs from 2006 to 2011.

The study's estimated amount of juvenile crime in the seven targeted PSAs prior to 2011 relied on the assumption that the city-level proportion of crime committed by juveniles was similar to the PSA-level proportion of crime committed by juveniles. Again, this may under-estimate the amount of juvenile violent crime in the program PSAs, since these areas were selected for CBVP funding due to their high levels of youth crime. The estimated trends for juvenile homicide may also not reflect all homicides that were relevant to the program's activities, since gang-related retaliations may have occurred outside the designated PSAs. There were also no publicly available data about shootings not resulting in homicide, which are more common. Finally, and as noted above, juvenile homicide data count only those crimes perpetrated by people under age 18. Much more youth violence in the program PSAs, of course, was likely committed by young adults ages 18 to 25. The available MPD data did not allow researchers to separate young adults from all adults age 18 and older.

The analysis of trends in juvenile robberies shows an apparent drop starting in 2010 (program implementation), and stretching to 2015, from a high of 280 incidents in 2010 to 26 in 2015. This could suggest that the Collaborative's program contributed to a steep reduction in juvenile robberies, but no further conclusions may be drawn without more detailed data and a more appropriate research design (comparison sites, statistical controls, etc.).

The estimated trend in juvenile assaults appears to be relatively steady between 2006 and 2010, with a peak in 2011 (54 assaults), dropping through 2013 (18 assaults). The reduction in assaults from 2011-2013 could be partly attributed to the work of the program, but it is not possible to make causal statements without additional information, and the subsequent increase from 2013 to 2014 raises doubts about any causal implications. The program had begun to close down by 2014 and it may be tempting to infer that this was responsible for the rebound in assaults. But, again, the available data are not sufficient to make such a claim.

The available information was not robust enough to support causal claims about the effects of the CBVP program on youth violence in Washington. Crime trends at the level of PSAs were encouraging, however, albeit with all the caveats noted above. Violent crime among juveniles appeared to be decreasing in the CST catchment areas. When estimates prior to 2011 were included, total juvenile violent crime (homicides, robberies, and assaults combined) showed fairly dramatic drops starting in 2010, the year the CBVP program began. The trends appeared to align with other, anecdotal information about potentially positive effects of the CST initiative.

Total Juvenile Violence in CST Catchment Area*

Before CST | After CST
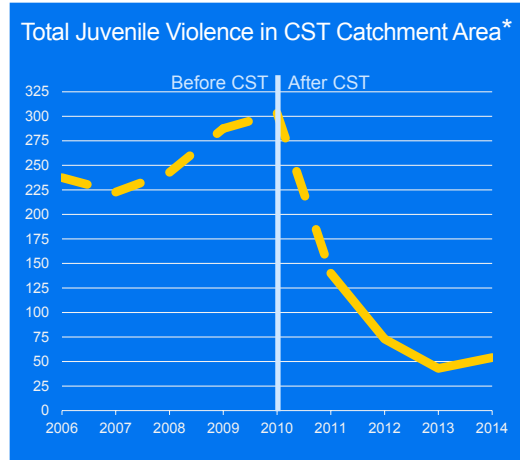
Source: Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, DC.

* Total juvenile violence is defined here as the number of arrests involving youth under age 18 for the offenses of homicide, robbery and aggravated assault.

Lessons Learned

According to staff and local officials, the CBVP grant was beneficial for the neighborhoods where the CST program took place. The Collaborative experienced challenges as they attempted to integrate the CST strategy into their existing work, but the partners involved always had a strong commitment to building capacity to address gang violence. The Collaborative understood that it could not eradicate the entrenched, underlying problems facing neighborhoods that were often associated with violence. Staff members told researchers that they believed the program had an effect on specific cases of violence, but they called it "wishful thinking" to assume that a local non-profit could fully address the major social problems that lead to chronic violence. Many of the youth involved in gang violence and shootings either grew up together or went to the same elementary schools. Communities just three to four blocks from each other were still in conflict because of what happened to them during the height of the crack cocaine era and sometimes even the residents could not recall exactly why one area distrusted people from the other.

The CST program was not the first outreach-worker program for youth in the Columbia Heights neighborhoods of DC. Because youth had prior exposure to outreach workers, they were sometimes confused when they saw outreach workers using differing tactics to mediate conflicts in the same neighborhood. The Collaborative's training program was helpful in teaching outreach workers

a more unified approach to their work, but the initiative could have benefited from more coordination. Collaborative members recommended implementing a uniform approach to outreach and mediation from the very beginning. Cross-organizational trainings improved the consistency of mediation approaches over the course of the grant period, but could have started earlier and addressed both tactics and practical implementation approaches.

The Collaborative promoted its work through events like "Social Corners" and "You've Got Talent," but some community members appeared to have preconceived notions that youth programming at the Collaborative was only for youth involved in gangs. Others saw the Collaborative only in terms of the direct services that specific individuals received. For example, if a person received mediation services, he or she often thought the Collaborative was mainly a mediation organization. More extensive public awareness campaigns could have helped residents understand the Collaborative and its different services.

The Collaborative adjusted elements of the CST program throughout its implementation. For example, the original strategic decision to institute separate directors of youth services and family services became a source of tension between staff members, and some began to take on "safer" cases to raise their section's success numbers. This conflict was a drain on organizational resources, and eventually the managers decided to re-connect the two sections. In retrospect, staff believed that varying personality traits of program leaders could have aggravated existing tensions. Management needed to work harder to show staff members that they all belonged to the Collaborative and that all the cases were "their" cases. Staff members also believed that the Collaborative needed to have one leader to oversee the organization and understand the culture.

With the benefit of hindsight, the Collaborative staff identified several strategic decisions that they would recommend altering in the future. First, staff members recommended focusing funding on sustaining the program past the end of the grant, specifically by expanding technical training and outreach work. Second, they would spend time and resources on more training for school personnel—i.e. training all school personnel who deal with behavioral issues rather than a select few from each school. Third, the staff believed the program would have been stronger with an emergency fund, or resources that could be used to address unexpected situations, such as establishing safe houses for youth and families in conflict. Finally, some staff members at the Collaborative suggested that the trauma-informed intervention component should have been at the core of their work. Initially, the Collaborative did not fully understand the extent of trauma young people had experienced. Many had been sexually assaulted and others had experienced the loss of an older sibling or friend due to violence. The program staff recommended the creation of a trauma protocol with training for workers who needed to deal with these issues. A trauma-informed approach should have been integrated into the program from the very beginning.

FINDING AND KEEPING THE RIGHT OUTREACH WORKERS

The Collaborative struggled to maintain a core group of outreach workers able to balance youth work and professional accountability. Experienced outreach workers in the office sometimes struggled to collaborate with other non-experienced staff members. Additionally, Collaborative leadership found that training without street experience was insufficient for staff to fully comprehend the issues they would confront in the neighborhood. Staff members with the most street experience, however, often presented the greatest management challenges. Some of the most experienced outreach workers resisted using the structured mediation and outreach strategies until they were forced to try them. Outreach workers from outside the community also found it difficult to navigate community politics and to build the relationships they would need to work in local schools.

Some on the Collaborative staff felt over-burdened as the grant period drew to a close and staff members began to leave. The strain on the remaining workers became noticeable as outreach workers were required to cover multiple schools and neighborhoods at the same time. The relationships outreach workers had created with youth kept them coming to programming at the Collaborative. Unfortunately, it was difficult for the dwindling outreach team to connect with new cases and to set up long-term plans. In retrospect, the Collaborative could have focused on having departing outreach workers connect their cases with other programs at other organizations (such as GED programs) before they left so that these youth were positively engaged elsewhere when the OJJDP funding ended.

INTRA-ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

In general, staff members got along very well, had good relationships with each other, and were a source of support for each other. However, there was some tension between the staff and leadership. The frequent turnover of the CST director position was one ongoing challenge that lasted throughout the entire grant period. While some staff members believed directors moved on to new career opportunities, other believed personality clashes were responsible for director turnover. The outreach response manager and the outreach manager had done the work for so long that they were able to facilitate the transition whenever a new director joined. They understood what needed to happen on a ground level from outreach worker and managerial perspectives. This helped ease the impact that changes in leadership had on staff so that it was not too disruptive to their work. However, the outreach response manager did have to take on some more responsibilities and had to bring the new director up to speed each time. The outreach response manager and the outreach manager had to assume additional writing and reporting tasks and they participated in meetings that the director would have managed, which took away from their time working with the outreach staff and program participants.

As a result of staff turnover, some outreach workers felt they were constantly adjusting to the vision of a new director. Different directors had different styles and requirements for paperwork and reporting. Some staff members felt that

they were forced to sacrifice outreach time in the community in order to learn yet another new set of reporting requirements. Despite having to navigate different views from management, outreach workers sometimes continued to work in the neighborhoods based on their own vision of outreach, which may have caused issues with Collaborative leadership.

Staff members at the office often held different views of these issues. Some believed the Collaborative was well-managed because they had successfully built relationships with their partners and worked to achieve the best outcomes for participants. Other staff members believed that the high-level leadership simply did not have enough street experience to understand the different interactions, exchanges, and expectations of urban communities. Some tensions arose between management and outreach workers due to this lack of mutual understanding.

Outreach workers believed the Collaborative hired them to be professional outreach workers, but then expected them to turn off their street outreach demeanor in the office. If a client were speaking to them with an attitude in the office, some outreach workers felt that it was appropriate and effective for them to respond back in an equally passionate manner. Management told them they could not respond that way. It was frustrating for outreach workers who felt management was undermining their ability to be well-respected in the neighborhoods, since management lacked the worker's street experience and credibility. Simultaneously, it was challenging for Collaborative leadership to supervise outreach workers and foster their development while also giving them autonomy on the ground. In future programs, it would be beneficial for management to better understand what happens on the ground level so that they could better manage the outreach team at the office. This could be accomplished by the manager or director occasionally shadowing direct service staff.

FUNDING CHALLENGES

The Collaborative struggled with funding challenges throughout the grant period. As with any grant, staff members know that there was a definite end date with no guarantee of continued funding. This introduced uncertainty to the work as the grant period progressed. Agency personnel spent so much time searching for grant funding that it became difficult for them to pursue a consistent mission over time. Even when additional funding was secured, this led to a second challenge—programs had to evolve and adapt to fit the requirements of a new granting body. This in turn influenced the strategies employed and the programs offered so that they could simultaneously pursue their mission while staying within the restrictions of the new grants. According to some staff members, the ongoing adjustments drained the focus and energy of the current project.

Upon completion of the OJJDP grant, the Collaborative ceased its CST program and reverted focus back to the family unit (rather than youth). Although funding only lasted for three years, it provided the Collaborative with the ability to create a unique platform focused on youth at risk for violence. After the Collaborative was no longer active in a way that allowed it to provide information on gang

related issues, the range and type of services it could offer also narrowed. Schools and the Metropolitan Police Department noticed this gap, as they had come to rely on Collaborative staff to facilitate relationships among these agencies, youth, and their families.

Staff believed that the core of the program would persevere based largely on the strength and importance of its work and outcomes. With the end of OJJDP funding, however, Collaborative staff was no longer available to continue responding to critical incidents in their former catchment area or provide outreach services to youth. There were a few staff members available to assist with this work, but only on a much smaller scale. Collaborative staff stated that they would try and find a way to help with old cases if any youth returned needing additional help, but there was no official plan in place to do this. After the end of the grant period, former Collaborative outreach workers continued to receive calls from youth. In these instances, former outreach workers connected youth to other current outreach workers in the area and contacted schools to inform them of possible issues. The Executive Director noted that it was now the role of the school system and local agencies to manage youth violence and provide additional support.

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

Several aspects of the CST strategy proved particularly effective and would be useful in future youth violence intervention strategies. Foremost was the Collaborative's success in finding outreach workers who developed good relationships with youth and kept them engaged in programming. Despite some difficulties along the way, the Collaborative was able to maintain an effective group of outreach workers who successfully implemented outreach approach.

Another strength was the effective implementation of specific services, such as employment assistance, critical incident response, and therapeutic interventions. The Collaborative used Solution-Focused Brief Therapy and Family Group Conferencing; these proved to be strong points of the Collaborative's strategy. These methods enabled clients to use their existing strengths to cope with struggles in their lives—skills that clients could continue to develop even after they no longer worked with the Collaborative.

The Collaborative's strength-based approach helped to lessen the stigma of mental health intervention in the community. The staff highlighted client strengths, acknowledging how difficult it was for them to go through trauma without counseling, and showed them how outside help could benefit them in traumatic situations. Family group conferencing helped participants to find sources of strength in their families and to address the root causes of gang membership. Family Group Counseling filled a gap left by other youth-serving organizations, which assumed youth were disconnected from their families and left families out of the gang intervention process. Clients felt the Collaborative cared more about them when services were provided for both them and their families.

The Collaborative's connections with school, good relationships with hospitals, and access to grief counseling enhanced the overall effectiveness of CST. By spending time in schools and in hospitals, the Collaborative staff learned information about potential gang violence that was not available on the streets. They relied on multiple sources and were more effective in preventing violence incidents. Staff members maintained their contacts with participants via cellphone 24 hours a day. This constant availability to clients strengthened the model.

THE FUTURE

The Collaborative hoped for additional phases of the CST project, but could not plan for a long-term transition without additional funds. Some staff members said that the Collaborative did not plan as well as it should have for the end of the OJJDP grant. They could have, for example, turned to local city government sources to ask for more funding. The Collaborative attempted to train other partner organizations (e.g., LAYC) to take over its violence intervention work, but building that capacity proved to be difficult. The Collaborative's strategy was to identify best practices and then integrate these practices into the existing infrastructure of partnering agencies who could continue the work once OJJDP funding ended. There were other partners interested in continuing the work, but they lacked the necessary infrastructure. Some of the organizations that initially claimed they could intervene in violent situations were not willing to do so in particularly dangerous situations.

By focusing on small areas of the city, the Collaborative maximized its impact in a short period. As a result of these efforts, the Collaborative received funding to implement Project Safe Neighborhoods in Ward 7 after the end of the OJJDP grant and to build the capacity of the area with the Justice Grants Administration and the U.S. Attorney's office. Collaborative members felt a strong base was created at home allowing them to share what the Collaborative as a whole had learned and implement similar work across the city.

Nevertheless, by 2014, no funding existed to sustain the youth-centered strategies employed under the OJJDP grant. The Collaborative attempted to galvanize stakeholders, government agencies, and community-based organiza-tions to sustain some of the strategies and activities. For example, they worked with council members and other key partners to ensure that the Safe Passages program would be sustained after OJJDP funding ceased. Through Safe Passages, the Collaborative learned about where the crime hot spots were, where the issues were, and what environmental events played a part in violence. They also publicized the success stories of key individuals from the community who were associated with violence and had become more educated, job ready and drug free. The staff did not want this valuable information to go to waste, but without continued funding their efforts eventually had to end.

Conclusion

The CST program was a significant initiative offering alternative paths to successful lives for young people in Washington, DC's highest risk neighborhoods. According to the staff, youth living in these areas were often fatalistic about violence. According to one staff member, young people often discussed their participation in violence by saying, "I live here, and I know how to survive here. If I lived somewhere else, maybe my behavior would be different."

Program workers tried to show young people that there was hope and that they could expect more from their lives if they learned to make different choices. The Collaborative staff believed that client outreach was the most successful part of the CST program. Providing youth with support and strength-based interventions created social connections and a sense of empowerment for youth. Outreach workers believed that these important social assets provided youth with a new perspective and a determination to opt out of gangs and crews.

The evaluation failed to find clear evidence that the CST program had a strong effect on neighborhood violence, but this was largely due to the limited data available from city agencies. Despite data limitations, the study was able to confirm that: 1) violence in the program areas of DC was generally in decline by the end of the OJJDP grant period; 2) the drop in violence appeared to be more pronounced among juveniles living in the areas of Washington, DC that were served by the Columbia Heights / Shaw Family Support Collaborative.

CHAPTER 7

Newark, New Jersey

Introduction

Newark considers itself to be a "small big city." It is the largest city in New Jersey, with a population of nearly 300,000. In its application to OJJDP for funding under the CBVP demonstration, City officials proposed an initiative that would combine the focused deterrence model with a community outreach approach based on Cure Violence, along with a "hotspot" model that deployed police resources according to continuous analyses of crime data.

Key entities for the project included the police and the City's Office of Reentry. The proposal also described an extensive role for social services, employment services, youth groups, and the faith-based community. Capacity for data collection, mapping, and analysis were essential components of both the hotspot component (for which the Newark police GIS section was primarily responsible) and for the focused deterrence strategy, which involved ongoing analysis of gang activity.

Even with the addition of federal funding, the CBVP effort was not the only program operating in Newark. Several other police-led programs were already operating during the same period, including a reentry initiative for specific populations (Juvenile Justice Reentry Initiative) and a city-wide program for serious and violent offenders.

Before the launch of CBVP, the Newark Police Division (NPD) had been working to strengthen its Crime Analytics Unit to provide data analysis for the CompStat system. The analytics unit allowed police decision-makers to allocate resources using the most recent and complete data on crime incidents. In combination with information from prosecutors and the FBI, the NPD used these data to develop a list of Newark residents thought to be at a "high risk for violence," whether as perpetrators or victims.

The NPD had also previously implemented a Gun Violence Reduction Strategy inspired by the focused deterrence approach. Standard policing tactics were being targeted more consistently and thoroughly on groups (cliques, crews, and gangs) known to be involved with gun violence. Newark's strategy was developed in consultation with David Kennedy from John Jay College and Anthony Braga from Rutgers University using tactics from the original Boston gun project that inspired the focused deterrence model. Officials believed the strategy was already helping to control violent crime in Newark because the city's West Ward had experienced a drop in homicides from 2006 to 2009. Without a formal evaluation, however, any reductions observed in the West Ward could not be attributed to any specific program. Homicides had also been falling in the North Ward during those years and they been had growing in the South Ward.
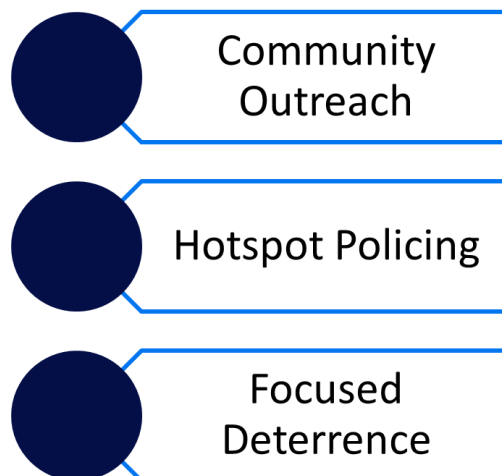
CBVP IN NEWARK

In its application for CBVP funding, the City of Newark proposed to combine focused deterrence (i.e. the Boston model) with a version of hotspot (or problem-oriented) policing and some components of Cure Violence (e.g. outreach workers maintaining social distance from police). The City would pursue objectives that fit with each program: transformation of community norms, offering known offenders an alternative to violence, and increasing the risks and costs of violence for those who persisted. The idea was that the hotspot data collection, analysis, and police mobilization would bolster the community- and norm-changing efforts of the Cure Violence approach while the City provided data to track the outcomes of the entire initiative.

OJJDP approved Newark's proposal in 2011 and provided a $2.2 million grant for programming that started in 2012/2013 due partly to a change in the City administration following the election of a new Mayor. Funds were to be managed by Newark's Office of Reentry. The program was initially called "Hotspot," but the name was later changed to Newark United Against Violence (NUAV). The program's target zone had distinct boundaries that remained the same throughout the grant period. The leaders of NUAV told researchers that they considered shifting target areas, but chose not to do so out of concern that moving away from the original focus area would cause a relapse in shootings.
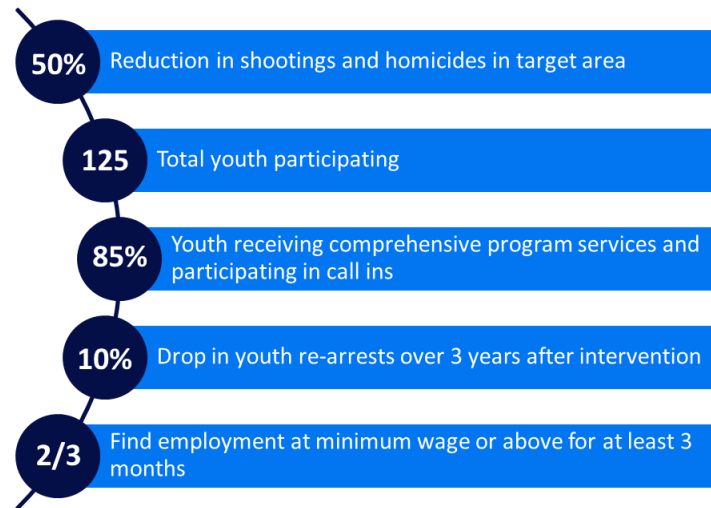
Newark's Office of Reentry and the Newark police both committed to implementing the program as proposed to OJJDP. They coordinated with other city agencies and initiatives (including provisions for managing sensitive information between outreach workers and police officers). There was also a plan for the Office of Reentry to seek additional funds for longer-term sustainability. Even before the CBVB grant, the Office of Reentry had an annual budget of more than $10 million and was pursuing other grants and contributions from the public and private sectors.

The Office of Reentry attached six key staff to the initiative: a program manager, senior advisor, outreach worker coordinator, and three outreach workers. Previously located in the Department of Economic Development and Housing, the Office of Reentry had been moved under the Workforce Investment Board which had a strong focus on job development. For CBVP activities, two additional partner agencies played key roles—the Greater Newark Conservancy and

Key Components of NUAV

Community Outreach

Hotspot Policing

Focused Deterrence

NUAV Program Goals

50% Reduction in shootings and homicides in target area

125 Total youth participating

85% Youth receiving comprehensive program services and participating in call ins

10% Drop in youth re-arrests over 3 years after intervention

2/3 Find employment at minimum wage or above for at least 3 months

Newark Community Solutions (NCS). The Greater Newark Conservancy managed the Clean and Green transitional employment program, which focused on environmentally-oriented jobs, such as urban farms. The NCS program was overseen by the Office of Reentry and provided therapy and other types of counseling, as well as assistance with the legal system.

The overall goal of the CBVP-funded NUAV program was to reduce homicides and shootings in Newark, particularly in the target geographic area and among the target population. The City of Newark's original grant proposal established several ambitious goals: 50 percent reduction in shootings and homicides in the target area; 125 active participants; and 85 percent of participants receiving comprehensive program services (mentorship, employment for 13 weeks, and attendance at call-ins). The program expected the re-arrest rate among participants to drop to 10 percent within three years of intervention and that two-thirds of the participants would find employment at minimum wage or above with each job lasting for at least three months.

The NUAV program required participants to be between 18 and 30 years of age and to be at high risk of involvement in violence (either as victim or perpetrator). Gang involvement placed a person automatically in the "high risk" category but not all program participants had known gang affiliations. Outreach workers and service providers did not always require youth to disclose their affiliations. The ambiguity of the "high risk" designation allowed staff to apply it as they chose and the program did not simply turn away young people who requested services. Youth under age 18 were referred to other city departments.

The target geographic area for the program included Newark's south and central wards due to the high number of shootings and murders in those neighborhoods. To be eligible for the program, participants had to reside in the catchment area. The program design anticipated a high number of referrals from the Newark police. According to program staff, however, police referrals were relatively

rare. Most referrals came through the local youth court and from other agencies involved in court proceedings. Program staff and outreach workers also recruited participants directly.

Core Components

Like other CBVP grantees, the NUAV program drew upon several established programs to reduce violence: focused deterrence, Cure Violence, and hotspot policing. The City hoped to blend these strategies and to fashion a hybrid approach suitable for the specific context of Newark. In the end, however, this lack of clarity appeared to hinder the program. While the inclusive approach enabled a broad set of partners to become involved, it may have created inconsistency and confusion among project staff and partner agencies.

OUTREACH AND SERVICES

The NUAV program hoped to establish a strong presence in the neighborhood via Newark Community Solutions (NCS). NCS had six key staff: an outreach coordinator, three part-time outreach workers, one case manager (with the ability to provide cognitive behavioral therapy), and one volunteer. Recruitment of outreach workers focused on "credible messengers," or individuals from the community who could hold the respect of the youth afflicted by violence and who would be able to deliver messages about the need to end the violence based on their own experiences. The program adopted the concept of "violence interrupters" from the Cure Violence model, but NUAV utilized outreach workers in this role.

Ensuring a consistent presence in the neighborhood was more difficult than anticipated. At least two staff members were needed in the program office from 9 am to 5 pm to handle administrative work as well as to receive walk-in inquiries. This limited the number of staff available to work in the community. The outreach workers attempted to connect each individual youth with the most appropriate services and programs, but the program leaders acknowledged that they frequently fell short.

Outreach workers tried to reach participants through different channels—walking or driving through the area, talking to family members at the scene

Key Program Staff

- 1 Outreach Coordinator
- 3 Part-time Outreach Workers
- 1 Case Manager
- 1 Volunteer

of a shooting, etc. Police or community members often called the Outreach Coordinator after a shooting and the outreach team would go to the location of the shooting or to the hospital to provide mediation and prevent retaliation. Information about shootings reached outreach workers directly, through social media and local news sources, and through informal social networks.

Some outreach workers focused on shooters based on information from acquaintances or through their knowledge of gang leadership. Program staff told researchers that by contacting shooters directly, they hoped to change their mentality and to give them a different direction in life. Outreach workers were known to have experienced similar events in their lives and they had the respect of young people from the neighborhood. Thus, they could engage youth in conversations about alternatives and direct them toward non-violent activities.

Outreach workers believed they provided a crucial link between participants and services. They talked to youth in the neighborhood, at community events, and at the courthouse when they knew a participant had a scheduled court appearance. Attorneys and judges from the criminal court sometimes referred eligible youth directly to outreach workers. Once the program became well-known, some participants appeared as walk-in clients. Outreach workers did not ask participants about gang activity or gang affiliations, and they made it clear that such information would not affect their ability to get help from the program. Individuals from rival gangs even spent time together in the NCS office due to the safe, non-judgmental environment fostered by staff.

Outreach workers relied on a case management approach to determine which services would be most appropriate for each participant. Services ranged from job training and subsidized job placements to individual advocacy, therapy, and mentoring. Part of the CBVP funding went to stipends for young people, including those in counseling and therapy, as an incentive for regular and active participation. The relatively modest resources allocated to services limited their impact, however, and staff pointed to this as one of the main limitations of the program.

Outreach workers tried to address the basic challenges faced by program participants and help them to find resources to cover rent, bus tickets, and other basics. These efforts helped staff to connect with participants and to build trust, which could eventually lead to their involvement in more structured programs and violence prevention efforts.

Staff provided courtroom advocacy for participants as requested. Young people referred to the program often had open court cases for a variety of (mostly misdemeanor) offenses. Outreach workers would advocate for participants in court, seeking a reduction of charges based on the young person's participation in the program. Outreach workers tried to persuade the court that the issues leading to participants' involvement in petty crimes were often the very issues the program was working to resolve (unemployment, housing, etc.). Unfortunately, this component of the program was terminated after the City administration changed in 2104. Officials feared that outreach workers could be sharing sensitive legal information with current gang members.

JOB TRAINING

The Clean and Green program was one of the central service options for program participants. Run by the Greater Newark Conservancy, Clean and Green was a 13 week program to help participants manage life change and to prepare for future employment opportunities. The Conservancy trained participants for environmental sector jobs and provided them with eight months of employment at an hourly wage of $8.75. NUAV staff believed that combining employment with case management supports would help participants to succeed. At the beginning of the project, a job developer worked with NUAV and Clean and Green to help participants find and secure jobs after the subsidized work period was over. Unfortunately, the job developer position was not funded for the full duration of the NUAV program.

POLICE

The policing component of the NUAV strategy focused on the areas of Newark with the highest rates of gun violence. The idea was to patrol differently by applying data-driven and problem-oriented solutions (a "hot spot" approach), with officers working to prevent violent confrontations and retaliations rather than responding with arrests after violence. The increased presence in high-crime areas required additional officers. The grant provided funding for several officer salaries (approximately $70,000 per year including benefits) in addition to what was already covered in the regular NPD operational budget.

In addition to the hotspot approach, the police were asked to implement a general "community policing" strategy as part of NUAV. The goal was to increase positive interactions between officers and residents and to draw the City's attention to quality of life concerns in the neighborhoods. Program leaders hoped that closer connections between communities and police would facilitate participation of the community in the NUAV program. Officers also had the option to refer people to NUAV programming rather than making arrests for minor transgressions (e.g., public drunkenness). Everyone believed that NPD officers using this community-oriented approach would be able to identify and refer the young people most at-risk for violence and to intervene more effectively in potentially violent situations.

Of course, the police also had a central role to play in the focused deterrence element of the NUAV program. They were to act as the lead voices in conveying the consequences of continued gun violence to the young people involved in "call-ins." These were the community meetings at which high-risk young people (mostly males) were directed to appear in lieu of justice processing. Their families and neighbors, along with police and community leaders, would speak at the meetings to reinforce anti-violence, pro-community messages and to clarify the potential (moral and legal) consequences of continued violent behavior. As proposed in the CBVP grant application, the program in Newark included two public call-ins at community colleges in the area. These events would serve as a platform for delivering anti-violence messages with the "moral voice" of

the community and to focus deterrence on the young people most involved in violence as well as to recruit participants for NUAV services. For anyone refusing to heed the message, NPD would cooperate with other criminal justice actors to apply and enforce heavy consequences (e.g. arrest, prosecution, and sentencing).

Evolution of the Program

Newark United Against Violence was once called Newark Ceasefire because it was inspired by the focused deterrence approach. Program staff told researchers the name was changed because the community had a negative reaction, associating the word "ceasefire" with international conflict and not community violence. The Newark office tried a variety of other names, including "Hotspot" and "Grow Up and Grow Out" before settling on NUAV, pronounced "New Ave." Like the name of the program, the strategy behind NUAV evolved over time. For example, the City eventually expanded the purview of the program to include issues other than gang violence. The program found it difficult to specify the exact meaning of gang violence. In addition to conventional gangs, NUAV focused its efforts on groups involved in violence even if those groups were not linked to any named organization. According to City officials, intervening with the most vulnerable and at-risk young men regardless of their group status was never a serious challenge, as they were already known to community agencies and to police.

The program also evolved its hybrid model over time. The idea of blending the focused deterrence approach with the Cure Violence methods of violence interruption and outreach was intended to achieve a balance in the level of police and community involvement. Both the mayor and police chief were interested in demonstrating that police could take on roles of community support and engagement, not just pursuing and arresting the most violence-prone individuals. NUAV's outreach workers were people who were already involved in local violence prevention activism. It seemed natural for them to take on a more visible role in the program.

Still, there were continuous debates about the appropriate balance between the program models that formed the hybrid design of NUAV. One staff member told researchers that he viewed the services and supports as the most important elements of NUAV, arguing that the project sometimes placed too much emphasis on police power. Yet, the services side of the model was also the most difficult to manage. Bureaucratic obstacles to obtaining services were always present, such as agencies demanding proper identification documents from people who did not have government IDs. Another staff person described the enforcement-oriented part of the model as "ambulance chasing," since it focused on responding to violent incidents after they occurred.

Staff also acknowledged that the Cure Violence model had its own limitations. To establish close, confidential relationships with known members of violent groups, program workers needed to limit their cooperation with police—at least in public.

This could have reinforced community perceptions of police as untrustworthy. In some neighborhoods, any person interacting with the police could be labeled as a "snitch," which brought both stigma and personal risk. The Newark outreach team sought to achieve a middle ground, wherein at least some interaction with police could be viewed neutrally, particularly when helping police to prevent violent incidents.

Program staff attempted to navigate the delicate dynamic of police-community relations by meeting with police behind closed doors, out of the public eye. Outreach workers generally did not visit the precinct at all. Staff also attempted to convince neighborhood residents to take a different view of police, reminding them that information sharing could sometimes lead to improved outcomes and that police can be a positive resource.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

Police

Law enforcement played a key role in NUAV as the lead entity for hotspot data collection and deployment efforts. The police were responsible for the offender call-ins and other elements of the focused deterrence approach. The program's partnership with police was not without its tensions due to funding limits and the amount of the grant claimed by NPD. One issue that bothered the program staff in particular was the use of grant funds for officer salaries. In theory, the NPD was responsible for the model's focus on hotspot policing and community policing, and this required some material support. To the neighborhood-based staff, however, these efforts prevented the program from having enough staff to deliver other important parts of the model, especially the outreach component. According to staff members, the NPD officers on the grant were rarely seen in the neighborhood.

Another source of tension in the partnership with the NPD related to information-sharing. In general, the NPD respected outreach workers and their ability to maintain the trust and confidentiality of participants who often told them about potential violent incidents. At times, however, the outreach staff members' access to information could prove problematic. The program manager attempted to act as an intermediary between outreach workers and police officers in order to share the most critical information without any details that could jeopardize the trust between the program and the community. Outreach workers were also careful to avoid asking participants about individual acts of crime or violence and instead focused on the community context and possible means of de-escalating violence. Police officers, however, worried that the program staff did not always consider the larger interests of the community as they protected the strength of their personal relationships with participants.

The program worked to build a strong relationship with the police. The Office of Reentry and Newark Community Solutions held regular meetings with the four officers paid through the grant. The officers worked to become more acquainted with community resources and to connect residents with needed services. In

addition, the NUAV-affiliated officers received training in community work along with the outreach officers at NCS. Program staff tried to cooperate with the police while not creating an impression in the community that NUAV was a "police program."

Newark Community Solutions

Successful implementation of the program depended on the outreach efforts and thoroughness of services provided by the Office of Reentry's contractual partner, NCS. One of the services it offered to program participants was cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). The amount of CBT provided to participants varied, and the service was offered in both group and individual sessions. Participants initially enrolled in both individual and group CBT. The program usually worked with participants for a period of six months. Some NCS staff felt this time period was not enough to make lasting change and would have liked to work with participants for up to a year. Staff noted that when participants stayed in the program longer, more people in the community could see that they were serious about turning their lives around and could appreciate that effort.

Greater Newark Conservancy

The Greater Newark Conservancy operated a number of environmental awareness and improvement programs, included cleaning, landscaping, community gardening, urban farms, and city beautification. Through the Clean and Green program, the Conservancy was able to help improve the quality of life in the local communities while paying the participants for the work they completed.

Lessons Learned

NUAV staff noted that initial implementation of the CBVP grant was slow and in the words of one staff member, "chaotic." During the first year, only the grant writers were involved in implementation. It took another year to execute a contract with an organization capable of providing outreach, training, and planning. Even after new staff members joined the program, the size of the team was generally insufficient for full implementation. Staff complained to researchers that resources were split in too many ways. Outreach workers, for example, could only work part-time due to budget restrictions.

After the change in City administration in 2014, the challenges became even worse. When the OJJDP grant was awarded, Samuel DeMaio was police director and Cory Booker was the Mayor of Newark. During the grant's first year, Mayor Booker resigned to become a U.S. Senator and DeMaio retired, leaving Newark's initiative in the hands of interim leadership. The changes made it difficult to maintain inter-agency coordination. NUAV's work continued to receive support from the Mayor's office even after the transition, but funding for the Clean and Green transitional jobs program was terminated. This caused an abrupt end to the subsidized work experience for enrolled participants. NUAV found it especially

difficult to keep qualified (i.e. credible) outreach workers employed due to budget constraints. Staff reported that the program's ability to form close connections with street-involved participants was damaged, and in some cases lost, due to insufficient pay for outreach workers.

Some core components endured. For example, the program managed to strengthen its professionalized services when a new partner organization, Newark Community Solutions (affiliated with the Center for Court Innovation), joined as a service provider. In most areas of the program, however, staff members identified deficiencies. As support for the Clean and Green program ended, NUAV could no longer provide participants with tangible supports such as income and transportation. The staff tried to refer participants to other service providers, but when a client needed immediate and urgent help, staff often paid out of their own pockets for bus tickets, etc. The program also ran out of funds to help participants obtain government IDs. Even the program's office space suffered and staff argued that a more appealing presence in the neighborhood would have increased their effectiveness by attracting the participants to spend more time there.

Other elements proposed in the OJJDP grant application, including data collection for evaluation, neighborhood improvements, and a community policing project, never materialized during the program period. Some staff members contended that these components failed to occur due to the City's changes in strategy and not due to a lack of capacity within the program. As proposed, however, the NUAV program was complex and involved multiple partners. Inconsistent communication and coordination with partners, City leaders, and federal officials presented significant obstacles.

Another important set of challenges derived from the program's interactions with the police in Newark. While it was somewhat inevitable that the program would have a difficult relationship with the police given the history of policing in Newark and the need for programmatic distance from law enforcement, the program staff believed that some of the tensions should have been avoidable. Staff members told researchers that it was difficult for them to feel like partners with the police when police officers received their regular salaries from the grant and outreach workers made barely more than minimum wage and could only work part-time due to funding limits. Outreach workers argued that their work was demanding, often emotionally intense, and involved unpredictable hours, which they believed justified a higher pay scale. Program leaders agreed that the conditions led to problems with rapid burnout among the outreach team.

Ideally, outreach workers would have provided a bridge between the police and the community. According to staff, however, the police were sometimes reluctant to trust outreach workers with previous gang involvement. Over time, and due to the efforts of the various partners, this dynamic improved somewhat. Officers assigned to the program, however, were not always with the program. Because assigned officers remained under police command, they were often deployed to duties unrelated to the NUAV mission. This exacerbated tensions.

Some staff suggested the project would have been more coherent if officers had been dedicated to NUAV or if some of the funds used to support police salaries had been used to hire additional outreach workers. Even when the officers worked in the NUAV target neighborhoods, residents were usually unaware the officers were connected to NUAV. Staff agreed the program missed an important opportunity to shift the tone of police-community relations.
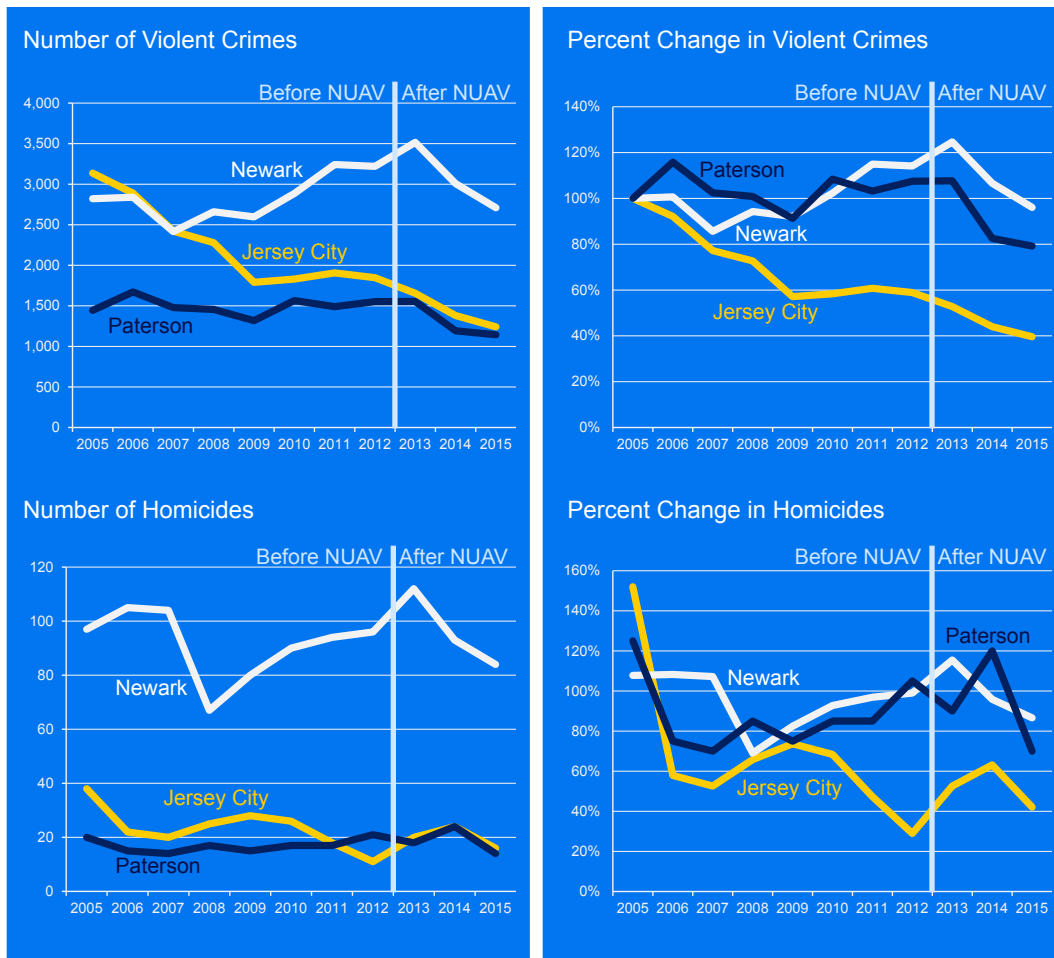
Possible Effects on Crime

Due to the limited amount of crime information available from the City of Newark, it was not possible for the research team to ascertain whether the efforts of NUAV had a demonstrable effect on violence in areas targeted by the program compared with other areas of Newark. Judging from data available at the city level, however, the study did not find a distinct pattern that would indicate large-scale changes in Newark relative to two of the next largest cities in New Jersey: Paterson and Jersey City.

According to data reported to the FBI, the total number of violent crimes in Newark increased from 2,800 to 3,500 between 2005 and 2013, and then declined to an estimated 2,700 in 2015. Viewed in isolation, this might suggest that implementation of NUAV had an effect on violent crime. In the next two largest New Jersey cities, however, violent crime also declined between 2013 and 2015.

It was not possible for the evaluation to estimate whether violence in Newark decreased more than it would have without NUAV or if it simply followed the pattern common to large cities in New Jersey. Violent crime in Newark fell 23 percent between 2013 and 2015, but violent crime dropped nearly the same amount in the other large cities between 2013 and 2015—25 percent lower in Jersey City and 26 percent down in Paterson.

On the other hand, the violent crime decline in Newark might be described as a greater departure from previous years. The 2013-2015 drop in violence was preceded in Newark by six years of steep increases, whereas the other cities had experienced relatively steady decreases (Jersey City) or were largely unchanged between 2013 and 2015 (Paterson).

Program staff from NUAV reported to researchers that police in Newark claimed to have data showing that murder dropped 50 percent in the NUAV target zone relative to other zones in the city, but that information was not made available to the research team. The crime figures reported to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting program, however, show similar patterns in Newark and other cities. Murder in Newark fell citywide between 2013 and 2015, but murders also fell in Jersey City and Paterson. Without geographically specific data, it was not possible for the study to identify a specific effect of NUAV on homicide.

Number of Violent Crimes

Percent Change in Violent Crimes

Number of Homicides

Percent Change in Homicides

Source: FBI, U.S. Department of Justice. *Crime in the United States*, Annual. Figures for 2105 estimated using half-year data.

Moving Forward

There were elements of job development and community support in the NUAV approach that were still growing and being strengthened at the end of the evaluation period. The program was working to build relationships with community organizations and to build additional partnerships where collaboration would be fruitful. By including clergy members in their violence reduction work, NUAV hoped to use religious spaces in the community as "safe havens" to host informational sessions and to invite clergy members to attend shooting responses with outreach workers.

NUAV continued to see a role for hospitals and treatment centers in providing social and health services to community members that the program itself could not provide. In addition to not-for-profit entities, NUAV hoped to establish closer ties with small businesses in the target zone. It would be easier, staff admitted, for the program to develop stronger neighborhood collaborations once its full mission was more clearly defined and articulated.

Conclusion

The actual effects of Newark United Against Violence were difficult to specify. By its own estimate, the program successfully incorporated the community and hotspot policing efforts of police into its broader strategy. It affiliated with strong service partners, including the Greater Newark Conservancy and Newark Community Solutions (although the former was discontinued due to funding limits). The program deployed credible messengers to intervene in neighborhood incidents of violence, but limitations in resources hampered that strategy. By the end of the study period, the program was still in a developmental stage and it was too soon to judge the overall effectiveness of NUAV. Many of its key components suffered from inconsistent implementation. Some were launched only recently; others ceased operating early in the initiative. The city-wide drop in violence, however, may warrant a closer look and could be justification for the program to continue operating long enough for rigorous evaluation.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions

Introduction

A rigorous, comparative evaluation of the CBVP demonstration was not possible due to the varied strategies employed by each of the five cities, the absence of geographically and age specific data about violence, and the study's inability to control for the variety of external influences that may have affected crime trends in the program target areas (e.g., police actions, competing services from other agencies, increased gang activity, etc.). Conducting rigorous and controlled evaluations of community-based crime-reduction efforts requires the ability to address these factors from the very beginning. Programmatic funding should be tied to strict guidelines designed to support research goals, including a singular intervention model across sites and mandatory data collection and submission procedures.

On the other hand, greater research control over routine program activities in cross-site evaluations inevitably hinder each site's ability to adjust for changing circumstances and would likely frustrate the designers and managers of local programs. Allowing for too much local flexibility, however, prevents cross-site evaluations from generating defensible results. The findings presented in this report suggest that the CBVP demonstration program may have led to positive changes in the communities involved, but evaluators were unable to tie those changes to the demonstration. Instead, the evaluators were forced to rely upon staff interviews and direct observations to build anecdotal support for the study's main conclusions.

BROOKLYN

The CBVP project in Brooklyn focused on a section of Crown Heights, a rapidly-gentrifying neighborhood with a history of gang violence and crime. The nonprofit Center for Court Innovation (CCI) implemented the project through its Crown Heights Community Mediation Center, including an adaptation of the "Cure Violence" public health strategy for violence reduction. The program, "Save Our Streets (SOS) Crown Heights," relied on an array of activities aimed at changing community norms and "interrupting" the transmission of violent behaviors. A key, but controversial, feature of the Cure Violence model is its minimal coordination with law enforcement. Staff members in the SOS program tried to maintain a collegial relationship with the local precinct, but the Cure Violence strategy hinges on outreach workers and violence interrupters who are deemed "credible messengers" for the young people most at risk of violence. Staff members in the program were often former gang-involved and previously incarcerated people.

The SOS staff worked closely with partners in local schools, churches, other community organizations, and local businesses to spread anti-violence messages and connect with young people. Their goal was to spread awareness about the consequences of violence throughout the neighborhood. Program staff focused specifically on the young people most involved in gun violence (as victims and perpetrators), through mapping patterns of violence and providing critical

incident responses, hospital visits, intervention in disputes, etc. Case managers connected those young people with education, counseling, housing assistance, and other services. With CBVP funds received in 2010, the SOS catchment area focused on a 40-square block area and the young people (mostly 16-25 years old) from that area who met key criteria for the risk of violence.

When the Crown Heights program first began to work in the community, the staff encountered considerable mistrust from neighborhood residents—ironically because of suspicions that the program was too closely aligned with police. Over time, the program developed more legitimacy with residents through perseverance and its continual neighborhood presence.

The SOS strategy hinges on the neighborhood compatibility and credibility of its outreach workers and violence interrupters. Identifying and selecting the right staff was a constant challenge. The most effective staff members were people with direct, personal experience with gangs and gun violence. Senior staff suggested to researchers that the program could be more effective if staff members had greater access to professional support to deal with their own life challenges, past experiences, and job-related stresses. Recognizing the difficulties faced by staff members and the complexity of their work, the Brooklyn program reduced its worker caseload expectations midway through the CBVP project grant. The program also increased its focus on public responses to shootings and worked to strengthen the consistency of its approach, balancing the need for a quick response with the need to ensure that all relevant stakeholders were involved.

The project's extensive use of posters, billboards, and public meetings seemed to pay off. Community residents expressed considerable awareness and appreciation of anti-violence messages. One frequent frustration—lack of sufficient social services—sometimes reflected lack of knowledge about available resources, and SOS events helped to bridge this gap. Some program staff found it challenging to shift activities and tone between their "crisis response" efforts after shootings to their more ongoing, less dramatic public education work. The fact that the SOS network successfully connected youth with jobs, education, and other services—even though this was often beyond the scope of SOS' formal tasks—is evidence of the staff's dedication and position of respect in the community.

Despite its many challenges, the Brooklyn project managed to develop a strong presence in the Crown Heights neighborhood during the CBVP project. Some people with knowledge of the effort attributed the program's success to the skills, support, and clarity of vision provided through ongoing training for SOS staff— including time that staff members spent with personnel from the Cure Violence headquarters in Chicago and other New York sites implementing the same model. Simultaneously, the need for model fidelity and close coordination with other New York Cure Violence sites limited the nimbleness of the Crown Heights program.

The evaluation project examined the effectiveness of the Brooklyn program in several ways, including analyses of violent crime trends in Crown Heights after

2010 compared with an area near Crown Heights that was not served by Cure Violence. This study failed, however, to detect a consistent pattern of declining crime that could be attributed to the CBVP project. Homicides and violent crime arrests declined in Crown Heights and the comparison neighborhood. Non-gun arrests fell more in Crown Heights than in the comparison area, but there could be many reasons for this difference. Towards the end of the grant period, local residents apparently believed that they were better able to handle disputes without violence and they appreciated the support and persistence of the SOS staff. The evaluation, however, did not find strong evidence of impact in Brooklyn, either from the analysis of crime trends or from the quasi-experimental outcome evaluation using household surveys.

DENVER

Denver used its CBVP grant to implement a program called the Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID). The GRID project drew many key principles from the Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM), including a focus on employment and educational pathways out of violence for at-risk youth, increased social supports for youth in gangs, and the assistance of law enforcement for suppression when required (loosely based on the focused deterrence model). Facing the need to coordinate with other organizations already involved in this sector, Denver ultimately applied a more eclectic model with some elements of the CGM and some additional elements—police work (suppression), gang intervention, and primary/secondary prevention (including case management and outreach done by several other agencies).

Denver relied on the CBVP project to leverage about $10M in additional services related to violence prevention, although the framework of how the numerous activities fit together was not always explicit. The GRID project focused on working in three communities. A smaller team focused more closely on 20-25 families with multiple people involved in the justice system and/or gangs, and attempted to offer case management and other services in a way that accounted for the family dynamics.

The fluidity of the CBVP effort in Denver led to implementation difficulties. For example, the call-in meetings—a key feature of focused deterrence—initially stumbled due to lack of precision in the convening and messaging. Agencies involved tried their best to apply the suppression tactics—such as penalizing entire groups for actions of some members—and to communicate the strategy to up-and-coming youth in gangs. GRID, working with numerous partner agencies, attempted to combine social services and outreach with suppression (law enforcement threats). This approach was not always successful. Nonetheless, the hybrid approach resulted in much better working relationships across agencies—particularly police, social services, and nonprofits—and increased sharing of sensitive information.

GRID reached over 3,000 youth during the project period. Primary activities included conflict mediation, crisis response, counseling, victim services, and

mentoring. Close coordination with outreach staff, halfway houses, police, and probation was also essential. Separate intervention teams offered tailored services to juveniles (14 to 21 years old) and people reentering the community from prison. The project also offered educational and employment opportunities and mental health services through other city agencies with some of its grant funding.

The available indicators of Denver's effectiveness were mixed at best. Homicides in Denver dropped from 2004 to 2014, but the largest declines occurred simultaneously with program implementation in 2011. Violent incidents increased slightly as did gang arrests. Because arrests reflect police decisions and tactics, however, rising arrests do not necessarily suggest an effect (positive or negative) of GRID. No other implementation data were available for analysis. During the project period, Denver shifted from an emphasis on violence-intervention (drawing on focused deterrence and mediation) to a broader array of preventive services. The diffused approach made it difficult to track activities and effects, and there was less accountability on individual organizations for results. The lack of geographically specific data about program implementation exacerbated these problems. On the other hand, the GRID program seemed to make a difference in how city agencies in Denver worked with one another. High-level involvement across organizational sectors catalyzed new and improved relationships where previously there had been no contacts or where key partners had been openly antagonistic.

OUTCOME EVALUATION: BROOKLYN AND DENVER

Household surveys measured attitudes and perceptions of violence among residents in Brooklyn and Denver, and compared changes in those perceptions with two matched comparison areas in each city. The first survey in both cities took place in 2012, approximately one year into CBVP programming; the second survey took place in 2014, after nearly three years of programming. Surveys were designed to detect shifts in attitudes and to test for their association with program activities.

The results in Brooklyn failed to show positive changes on several key indices. In fact, neighborhood safety appeared to be worse in 2014 than 2012 in the program area. The analysis suggested that perceptions of violence had changed in the opposite direction than that intended by the program. At the same time, there were positive changes in the comparison area—for reasons unknown to the research team.

The Denver survey results showed some positive outcomes, with improvement in key scores in the program area but not in the comparison area. Even these improvements, however, were not statistically significant, although the analysis did detect increased knowledge of the program in the CBVP site.

The mixed results likely reflect the challenge of measuring changes in attitudes toward violence after a relatively brief and modest program intervention. Given that the identified problem was an entrenched "normalization" or tolerance of

violence, it is not surprising that there would be limited, detectable evidence of change after just two years. Surveys focusing on attitudes also grapple with the subjective nature of perceptions. The mere existence of a violence-prevention program may heighten residents' awareness of the extent of, or consequences of violence—which may alter resident attitudes and perceptions negatively, even if the program itself is beginning to have positive effects. Additional research that uses a longer timeframe to capture differences in program exposure and that may account for awareness of violence versus personal inclinations toward violence could provide more meaningful results.

OAKLAND

Oakland's CBVP demonstration project operated from 2010 to 2014 and addressed gang violence, particularly among African-American young men. Oakland's Department of Human Services led implementation of the program, building on prior programs that focused on gun violence and reentry services. In 2010, Oakland was part of a California Cities Gang Prevention Network and had its own Gang Prevention Task Force. For the CBVP project, Oakland blended elements of two established program models: Cure Violence (Chicago) and focused deterrence. City officials named their combined program "Oakland Unite."

The Oakland Unite program identified targeted populations by both geographic and individual criteria related to various risk factors, gang affiliation, prior gun violence experience, and age. The target areas shifted during the program in response to new violence data. The program applied five central strategies: street outreach; crisis response; reentry and job support; public education; and "call-ins" (according to the focused deterrence model). The DHS coordinated numerous nonprofit groups to implement these strategies and relied heavily on inter-agency collaboration to keep them operating.

The outreach component involved "credible messengers" who could encourage young people to avoid violence, especially retaliatory violence. Outreach workers liaised with families and communities, managed case records, and coordinated with other agencies. Consistent with the Cure Violence model, the Oakland Unite program also used crisis response teams to engage young people in the aftermath of a violent incident. Public education campaigns promoted anti-violence messages and encouraged pro-social attitudes. A "Messengers for Change" campaign became widespread in print and media, as well as through public events. A "call-in" component—drawn from the focused deterrence model—offered positive incentives (food, stipends) to gang-involved young people and threatened legal consequences for those persisting in violent actions.

Homicides in Oakland declined during the program period. Shootings fell 15 percent and homicide dropped 30 percent from 2012 to 2014. This came after a spike in violent crime in the first part of program implementation (2011 and 2012), particularly in robbery. Many government officials gave credit to the "single voice" influence of the Oakland Unite program (especially the call-ins),

but the available data did not allow for a more rigorous analysis of the program's effects on crime. An analysis of the intensity of street outreach activities (amount and frequency) suggested that there was an association between intense outreach and greater reductions in shootings and homicides. All evidence, however, was suggestive rather than conclusive.

WASHINGTON

The CBVP demonstration project in Washington, DC was called Creating Solutions Together (CST). Staff operated in the Columbia Heights and Shaw neighborhoods of central Washington from 2010 to 2013. The project's goal was to reduce violent crime involving youth from the target areas. The nonprofit organization was known as the Columbia Heights / Shaw Family Support Collaborative (or "The Collaborative") at the start of the grant period and led the development and implementation of the program. (The organization was later renamed Collaborative Solutions for Communities.) The CST program built on the foundations set by the Gang Intervention Project (GIP), which the Collaborative also implemented in the same area more than five years prior to the CBVP grant.

The GIP mapped shootings and gang activities, and worked with police and other organizations to persuade youth to embrace non-violent lives. The CST program retained this core component, including mediating gang disputes and "critical incident responses" by coordinated teams of outreach workers and police officers. The program also focused on preventing retaliatory violence. More broadly, CST tried to shift community norms regarding violence and youth perceptions of the costs of violence, and to support life-course alternatives for youth already involved in violence.

The program involved extensive outreach work, especially focusing on hard-to-reach youth who were not already part of their family-based social services. Outreach work allowed the Collaborative to build trust with youth, form a better understanding of gang dynamics, and connect youth with services and supports. The CST program worked closely with school and hospital personnel, often triangulating information about at-risk youth and strategizing tactics to ensure that youth stayed involved in pro-social activities, including GED classes, vocational skills training, and therapy or counseling. Case managers at the Collaborative integrated family-oriented services with interventions tailored for young people already involved in violence. Through CST, the Collaborative also formally certified outreach workers and trained dozens of other Washington, DC nonprofit and city government agencies in youth violence prevention skills.

Violent crime trends in the targeted areas generally showed a decline from 2006 to 2014, but it was not possible to infer a direct effect of program activities. Many of the positive indicators of falling crime in the program neighborhood were also observed outside the program area, though the decline did appear to be steeper in the targeted areas. The visibility of gang violence declined in the program area, however, and many staff members expressed confidence that their efforts

had made a difference for neighborhood youth and for the safety of the entire community.

NEWARK

The City of Newark's CBVP demonstration project began in 2013 and was called Newark United Against Violence (NUAV). Newark's Office of Reentry and the Newark Police Department shared project leadership roles—an arrangement that enabled creative collaborations and also generated some obstacles due to divergent styles. As in other cities, Newark drew from several other established violence-prevention models, primarily drawing on focused deterrence, public health (Cure Violence), and hotspot policing. These components were linked with an assortment of other social and economic inclusion services. Previously, Newark had implemented several other programs targeting gun violence and gang activities in the city. The police component, led by the NPD, involved using more detailed violence data to deploy officers to "hot spots." The idea was that officers would use both community policing methods (building relationships with individuals and organizations) and also apply focused deterrence tactics of group-level law enforcement penalties for individual violations. While the NPD often accomplished elements of both approaches, at times they were in contradiction, and sometimes there were insufficient or misaligned police resources for the method that was needed.

The NUAV program also held community "mobilization" events that served as a platform for local leaders to convey messages against violence and to remind youth about the potential consequences of gun violence. Like other programs, NUAV relied heavily on outreach workers, who found and engaged the most at-risk youth, connected them with services, and spread a message of non-violence. Outreach workers also had a mediation and crisis response role; they learned about local dynamics in order to be able to intervene before, during, or after a violent confrontation. Finally, NUAV partnered with two nonprofit organizations—the Newark Conservancy and Newark Community Solutions—that provided job training, apprenticeships, case management, counseling, and other social services. NUAV focused its programming in the South and Central Wards of Newark and on young adults 18-30 years old who had some involvement in violence. The program also accepted some youth who were referred through the youth court, which worked closely with Newark Community Solutions.

Newark, like other cities, found it challenging to combine multiple strategies that were sometimes incompatible. This was most evident in the role of the police. Hotspot policing, on the one hand, involves greater presence and involvement of the police in the community. Mediation and violence interruption, on the other hand, involves local residents with past system experience and street credibility, and often requires some separation from police involvement. Focused deterrence involves even larger roles for police and prosecutors, with an emphasis on certain groups or individuals rather than a geographic location. In some cases, these three strategies complemented one another, or affected different youth. In other cases, these differences led to disagreements and difficulties in coordinating

strategies among various organizations and staff, most notably in the area of sharing information about gang-related individuals or incidents with police. The lack of clarity in the overall vision and model for the program also posed challenges for consistent messages and branding in the public education and community mobilization activities.

Due to the timing of electoral cycles, NUAV also faced implementation challenges due to staff turnover in city offices, including turnover of the original project team, and some shifts in local budget allocations. As a result, there were gaps in activities and documentation, and some services—most notably, the green jobs initiative—ended earlier than planned, which disappointed participants.

It was nearly impossible to assess the effects of Newark's efforts under CBVP. The City maintained no data on crime specific to the program area or in a timeframe needed to conduct a meaningful analysis of program efforts. Newark experienced a dramatic decline in homicides before and during program implementation, but this was observed at the city level and across areas without any NUAV activities. Program staff believed that collaboration across Newark agencies had improved during the CBVP effort and that community perceptions of the program had evolved from skepticism to appreciation. It was not possible, however, for the evaluation to ascertain whether these positive developments contributed to increased public safety.

Final Thoughts

John Jay College's evaluation of OJJDP's CBVP Demonstration project found a number of positive outcomes over the course of the project. Each city involved in CBVP worked in earnest throughout the grant period and did as much as possible with their given resources. It is not possible to say that one city took a better approach than another (i.e., choosing to replicate a known model vs. adapting a model to the city's circumstances). All cities were able to demonstrate at least some successes and believed that they were making a positive impact on the violence in their communities. Some cities were better able to document their successes than others, however, and some cities appeared more capable of continuing their successes after the cessation of OJJDP funding.

The findings presented in this report suggest that the CBVP demonstration program may have led to some positive changes in the communities involved, but those changes are based on program staff interviews and evaluator observations alone. When the study analyzed crime data from each city, and when the survey-based outcome evaluation component is considered, it is not possible to identify consistent effects of CBVP on youth violence and public safety.

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