



THE COALITION TO STOP GUN VIOLENCE

FUNDING COMMUNITY-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION

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Community-based violence prevention programs avert violence by working with a range of community stakeholders to provide support and intervention to those at highest risk for violence. To stop the cycles of daily gun violence in disadvantaged communities of color we must (1) address the underlying social and economic inequalities that fuel gun violence and (2) fund violence prevention efforts that provide support and authentically engage the communities impacted by daily gun violence.

ADDRESSING UNDERLYING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES

Investments should provide support to communities that have been impacted by a legacy of racist housing, social, and economic policy. Congress should support efforts to address these systemic inequalities to reduce gun violence, improve health, and promote equity. These efforts should include:

- Increased funding for jobs training programs and youth employment opportunities, which evidence suggests can help reduce gun violence.¹
- Increased funding for recreation and community centers, parks, and pro-social development opportunities which allow individuals of all ages to build stronger safer communities and reduce firearm violence.²
- Fund programs that clean and rehabilitate blighted and abandoned property. These programs are associated with significant decreases in gun violence of up to 39% and improved community health.³
- Incentivize urban development programs that allow individuals in disadvantaged communities to lead efforts for neighborhood revitalization and provide affordable pathways to home ownership within these communities.

COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORTS TO INTERRUPT AND PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

Community-based violence prevention programs bring together community members, social service providers, and, in some cases, law enforcement to identify and provide support for individuals at highest risk for gun violence. These prevention programs should authentically engage community members and build trust and collaboration between police, community leaders, and social service providers.

CURE VIOLENCE

- Outreach workers are trained to identify conflicts within their community and help resolve disputes *before* they spiral into gun violence.
- These outreach workers are credible members of the community and well-respected by individuals at high risk of violence. Outreach workers use their credibility to interrupt cycles of retaliatory violence, help connect high-risk individuals to social services, and change norms around using guns to solve conflicts.
- Cure Violence models have been used successfully in multiple cities, including Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York. New York's neighborhoods with a Cure Violence site experienced 18% reductions in homicides while the matched control neighborhoods experienced a 69% increase from 2010-2013.⁴

TRAUMA-INFORMED PROGRAMS WITH COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

Trauma-informed programs that employ cognitive behavioral therapy to those at risk for firearm violence have experienced significant decreases in firearm violence.⁵



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- Cognitive behavioral therapy helps high-risk individuals cope with trauma while simultaneously providing new tools to de-escalate conflict.
- Trauma-informed programs in Chicago that provided high-risk youth with cognitive behavioral therapy and mentoring cut violent crime arrests in half.⁶

HOSPITAL-BASED VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

- In hospital-based violence intervention programs, gunshot victims are provided wraparound services such as educational support, job training, and mental health services to interrupt retaliatory cycles of violence and the potential for re-injury.
- One study found that people enrolled in these programs were six times less likely to be hospitalized again for a violent injury and four times less likely to be convicted of a violent crime than those not enrolled in the program.⁷
- An evaluation of Baltimore's program found that it saved the city \$1.25 million in lowered incarceration costs and \$598,000 in reduced healthcare costs.⁵

SHOOTING AND HOMICIDE REVIEW COMMISSIONS

- Shooting review commissions bring together law enforcement, community members, criminal justice stakeholders and service providers to examine firearm violence within their community and develop comprehensive interventions which address the underlying factors that lead to violence.
- Milwaukee's shooting review commission was associated with a significant and sustained 52% reduction in homicides.⁸
- A Department of Justice evaluation found shooting review boards to be an effective way to reduce gun violence by building trust between criminal justice stakeholders and the community.⁸

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT WORKS

Six states (California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New York) have funded community-based violence prevention programs. While the program models are different in each state, all states have experienced reductions in firearm violence within program sites.^{9,10,11}

- Massachusetts's state-funded program led to five fewer victims of violence a month and prevented nearly \$15 million in crime victimization over one year in Boston and Springfield alone.¹²
- The City of Oakland used both state and city funds to invest in comprehensive community-based gun violence prevention efforts to reduce gun violence by over 40%. These efforts were authentically led by community members, provided extensive wrap around services, and focused on improving relationships between the community and law enforcement.¹³

¹ Bilchik, S. (1999) Promising Strategies to Reduce Gun Violence. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

² Hausman AJ, Siddons K, & Becker J. (2000). Using community perspectives on youth firearm violence for prevention program planning. *Journal of community psychology*.

³ Branas CC, et al. (2016). Urban blight remediation as a cost-beneficial solution to firearm violence. *AJPH*.

⁴ Butts JA, et al. (2015). Effectiveness of the Cure Violence Model in New York City. John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Research & Evaluation Center.

⁵ Abt TP. (2017). Towards a framework for preventing community violence among youth. *Psychology, health & medicine*.

⁶ Heller SB, et al. (2017). Thinking, fast and slow? Some field experiments to reduce crime and dropout in Chicago. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

⁷ Cooper C, et al. (2006). Hospital-based violence intervention programs work. *Journal of Trauma and Acute Care Surgery*.

⁸ Azrael D, Braga AA, O'Brien M. (2012). Developing the Capacity to Understand and Prevent Homicide: An Evaluation of the Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission. U.S. Department of Justice.

⁹ Webster DW, et al. (2012). Evaluation of Baltimore's Safe Streets Program: effects on attitudes, participants' experiences, and gun violence. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence.

¹⁰ Huguet R, et al. (2016) Cost benefit analysis: operation peacemaker. University of Southern California.

¹¹ Ritter N. (2009). CeaseFire: A public health approach to reduce shootings and killings. National Institute of Justice Journal.

¹² Campie P, et al. (2017). Community-Based Violence Prevention Study of the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative: An Intervention To Prevent Urban Gun Violence.

Bradham DD, et al. (2014). Massachusetts Safe and Successful Youth Initiative. Benefit-to-Cost Analysis of Springfield and Boston Sites. Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

¹³ Muhammad, D. (2018). Oakland's Successful Gun Violence Reduction Strategy. National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform.