

This packet is an introduction and brief summary of information related to the strategy listed below. It is not exhaustive and is intended to be a starting point for the conversations that will take place at the Next Steps event. Your expertise and experience with this topic will help to fill in gaps and round out the conversation.

## Address violence as a public health problem in neighborhoods

**Group Charge: Create a plan for the coordination of groups addressing gun violence as a public health issue in order to connect social and health services and identify populations at risk.**

### WHAT WE KNOW

#### Background

##### General

- Exposure to violence in the community can lead to the development of post-traumatic stress disorder, toxic stress, and other MH disorders.<sup>1</sup>
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have suggested that violence should be addressed with a public health approach, through multi-sector collaboration and coordination.<sup>2</sup>
- Violent Crime Rates
  - o 80 percent of firearm deaths occurring in 24 high-income countries are in the United States.<sup>3</sup>
  - o More specifically, the homicide death rate in St. Louis is higher than the national average, which affects the quality of neighborhoods and the health of residents.<sup>4,5</sup> There were 188 homicides in the City of St. Louis in 2015.<sup>6</sup>
  - o In 2013, the overall homicide death rate was almost twice as high in St. Louis City (49 deaths per 100,000) compared to St. Louis County (27 deaths per 100,000).<sup>7</sup> The homicide death rate among African-Americans in both the City and the County was more than 15 times the rate for whites.<sup>7</sup>
  - o In St. Louis, homicide is the leading cause of death among African Americans between 15 and 44, and the 5<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for African Americans overall.<sup>5</sup>

#### Interventions

##### Focused deterrence

- This is a policing strategy that identifies offenders and their networks, directly informs them of intolerance of future criminal behaviors, and provides alternatives to criminal activity through jobs and social services.<sup>8</sup>

##### In St. Louis

- o Several St. Louis entities have committed to implementing the focused deterrence intervention including: the Circuit Attorney's Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Attorney's Office, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, Board of Probation and

- Parole, City of St. Louis, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, St. Louis Initiative to Reduce Violence (SIRV), and the St. Louis Metropolitan Clergy Coalition.
- o This multi-sector collaboration will receive assistance and support from both St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE) and the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University.
- o Evaluation of the intervention by measuring criminal justice, psychosocial, and health outcomes will be important.

### Violence interruption

- This strategy focuses on preventing the involvement of high-risk individuals in violent activities and changing community norms.<sup>9</sup> The model uses both violence interrupters as conflict mediators and outreach workers as public health advocates.<sup>9</sup>

#### In St. Louis

- o Kansas City’s Department of Health has implemented a program called Aim 4 Peace, which is modeled after the Cure Violence program.<sup>10</sup> Based on the experiences from Aim 4 Peace, there is interest in bringing a similar violence interruption model to St. Louis.

### Hospital-based violence intervention programs

- This is a strategy that provides high-risk individuals injured by violent acts with an intervention, case management services, and community resources.<sup>11</sup>

#### In St. Louis

- o The Victim of Violence Program at St. Louis Children’s Hospital treats children between the ages of 8 and 19, who are victims of interpersonal violence.<sup>12</sup> The program connects children with a mentor in the community in order to reduce recurrence.<sup>12</sup> They also collaborate with police departments and school districts in St. Louis City and County.<sup>12</sup>
- o There is interest from emergency and trauma physicians and social workers to expand the HVIPs like the Victim of Violence Program to serve more children, youth, and adults across St. Louis.

### Community mobilization, outreach, and norms change

- Mobilization of communities is a key component of approaches like focused deterrence and Cure Violence. These models depend on a change in awareness and community norms.<sup>13</sup>

#### In St. Louis

- o Better Family Life, a community-based organization, uses outreach workers in their Neighborhood Alliance program to identify households within high violence-neighborhoods in need of social services.<sup>13</sup>
- o Reverend Ken McCoy, Pastor of Progressive African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in North St. Louis, holds “Night Walks” on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, when clergy and community members outreach and engage with individuals with high violent crime and gang activity.<sup>13</sup>

### School-based violence prevention programs

- These programs teach students about the problem of violence, how to prevent it, and skills to reduce violence behavior.<sup>13</sup>

### In St. Louis

- o Several schools and districts in St. Louis use some form of the school-based violence prevention program, but there is no centralized location of information on the expense, implementation, and effectiveness on these St. Louis-specific programs.<sup>13</sup>

For more information on interventions and St. Louis-based initiatives, please see **Appendix A: Coordinated Approach to Gun Violence in St. Louis**.<sup>13</sup>

### Local Initiative: The St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Collaborative

- This collaborative, formed by Washington University in St. Louis and the United Way of Greater St. Louis, includes 20 initiatives in the sectors of education, healthcare, law enforcement, local government, neighborhood organizations, and social services.<sup>14</sup>
- The goal of this collaborative is to promote the coordination of the existing interventions and support systems in the area to successfully reduce gun violence.<sup>14</sup>

## BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY

- According to Steve Skinner of the Community Development Foundation, capacity building is “Activities, resources, and support that strengthen the skills, abilities, and confidence of people and community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of communities.”<sup>15</sup>
- Effective capacity building work includes a focus on community needs, community-based action and research, and strengthening community groups and organizations.<sup>16</sup>
- To have capacity to act, a community needs:<sup>16</sup>
  - o Motivation to take action and a drive to change<sup>16</sup>
  - o Resources needed to enable that action<sup>16</sup>
  - o Skills, confidence, and understanding to take action<sup>16</sup>

### Capacities Necessary for Violence Prevention

David Chavis, the CEO of Community Science, specializes in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and development of large-scale comprehensive community change initiatives. In “Building Community Capacity to Prevent Violence Through Coalitions and Partnerships,” Chavis outlined the following capacities that are necessary to prevent violence:<sup>17</sup>

#### 1. Resource Acquisition and Mobilization

- Expansion resources for violence prevention and community development
- Nonmonetary resources and volunteer recruitment
- Fundraising strategies and resources
- An enabling system like workshops and seminars

#### 2. Political

- Interinstitutional connections and collaborations promoting violence prevention and community development
- Setting goals and action plans
- Goal attainment
- Processes and structures that enable and encourage responsiveness and accountability
- Leadership development and support

### 3. Psychosocial

- Mobilization and management of relationships in the community
- Sense of community
- Development, support, and maintenance of organization and communities
- Appropriate and effective help seeking
- Structure and climate of organization

For more information, see [Appendix B: Building Community Capacity to Prevent Violence Through Coalitions and Partnerships](#).

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT

### General

- An approach that emphasizes cross-sector (non-profit, government, corporate, etc.) collaboration to address a specific social problem through a common agenda, coordination of efforts, and common measures of success.<sup>18-20</sup>

### Example: STRYVE (Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere)<sup>21</sup>

- A CDC national initiative that uses a multi-sector, collective impact approach with partnerships between federal public health institutions, local and state health departments, public health researchers, and practitioners<sup>21</sup>
  - Uses a public health approach for collecting data, coordinating data systems, and implementing evidence-based violence prevention strategies for youth ages 10-24<sup>21</sup>
  - Focuses on a comprehensive prevention strategy in order to target multiple risk factors<sup>21</sup>
- Strategic approaches include:
  - Strengthening the individual capacity of youth to resist violence through skill development<sup>21</sup>
  - Building positive, supportive relationships between youth, adults, and peers<sup>21</sup>
  - Promoting safe and connected communities by establishing economic infrastructure,<sup>21</sup> evaluating and strengthening community policies for health and safety, and implementing school-wide activities<sup>21</sup>
  - Creating a society focused on improving safety and health through multi-sector collaboration<sup>21</sup>
- Provides community tools of interactive training, customizable workspaces and tools, and resources, like up-to-date data through STRYVE online<sup>22</sup>

## READINESS TO ENGAGE IN COLLECTIVE IMPACT

The collective impact model is simply one of many ways to structure and achieve the coordination of efforts to reduce gun violence. The following information describes an approach that has been used successfully by other initiatives and could be adapted to the needs of this working group.

### Pre-conditions for Collective Impact Success

1. Influential **champions**<sup>19,20</sup>
  - Has ability to raise awareness of the issue<sup>23</sup>
  - Has credibility with collaborative partners<sup>23</sup>

- Can persuade other leaders to join the cause<sup>23</sup>
  - Has a passion for improving the outcome of this issue<sup>23</sup>
  - Allows participants to problem solve<sup>23</sup>
2. Financial and human capital **resources**<sup>19,20</sup>
  3. **Urgency** in the community to address the issue<sup>19,20</sup>

## Five Conditions of Collective Impact

### 1. Common agenda<sup>20,24</sup>

All participants must agree on primary goals of initiative<sup>24</sup>

- **Step 1: Creating Boundaries**<sup>20</sup>
  - Establish boundaries of the issue, key factors/players, and location(s) to-be-served<sup>20</sup>
- **Step 2: Developing the Strategic Action Framework**<sup>20</sup>
  - Identify an evidence-based problem description<sup>20</sup>
  - Outline the goals for change and desired outcomes<sup>20</sup>
  - Define key strategies to effectively drive the change<sup>20</sup>
  - Set guiding principles for involved partners<sup>20</sup>
  - Identify an evaluation approach to obtain and utilize feedback<sup>20</sup>

For more information on the Common Agenda, please see: [Appendix C: Examples of Logic Models](#).<sup>21,25</sup>

### 2. Shared measurement system<sup>20,24</sup>

The use of a common set of metrics to monitor performance, track progress toward the common agenda, and analyze the effectiveness of the collective impact approach<sup>24,26</sup>

- **Step 1: Design**<sup>27</sup>
  - Create shared vision for the system and broader goals<sup>27</sup>
  - Identify the current state of data and evidence<sup>27</sup>
  - Establish oversight for structured participation<sup>27</sup>
  - Identify metrics and approach to data collection<sup>27</sup>
- **Step 2: Develop**<sup>27</sup>
  - Develop web-based platform for shared measures and tools for data collection<sup>27</sup>
  - Test and refine the platform and tools<sup>27</sup>
  - Recruit staff for data management and analysis<sup>27</sup>
- **Step 3: Deploy**<sup>27</sup>
  - Create learning forums and continue improvement<sup>27</sup>
  - Continue support for infrastructure development<sup>27</sup>
  - Evaluate impact and usability<sup>27</sup>

### 3. Mutually reinforcing activities<sup>20,24</sup>

Coordinating different participant activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action<sup>20,24</sup>

- **Step 1:** Align existing efforts and resources to achieve common goals/agenda<sup>28</sup>
- **Step 2:** Agree on the significant outcomes<sup>28</sup>
- **Step 3:** Focus on coordination, orchestration, and specialization<sup>28</sup>
- **Step 4:** Create complementary strategies between involved agencies<sup>28</sup>

### 4. Continuous communication<sup>20,24</sup>

Open, consistent communication across all of the players that builds trust, creates common motivation, and encourages success of mutual goals<sup>24,27</sup>

- **Internal Communication:** Equal representation and involvement of all partners is necessary, and channels for communication, like web-based platforms and teleconferences, should be utilized by member organizations<sup>29</sup>
- **External Communication:** Transparency to stakeholders is of critical importance; communicating results to the public is important for building and sustaining the initiative, and gaining public support<sup>29</sup>

For more information on Continuous Communication, please see:

**Appendix D: Example of Continuous Communication**.<sup>30</sup>

## 5. Backbone Support<sup>20,24</sup>

A separate organization(s) is needed to be the backbone of the initiative and coordinate member organizations and agencies<sup>20,24</sup>

- **Function 1:** Maintain strategic coherence to the effort<sup>31</sup>
- **Function 2:** Coordinate through the steering committee<sup>31</sup>
- **Function 3:** Support fundraising and outreach efforts<sup>31</sup>
  - Support community engagement and build relationships<sup>31</sup>
- **Function 4:** Establishing a working group for project management<sup>31</sup>

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