City of Toledo

PEACE IN MOTION

Toledo's Path to Long-term Community Safety
Comprehensive 5-Year Plan, 2025 - 2029

Acknowledgements

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TOL City of Toledo | Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement

Quick Start Guide

If you want to...	Go to...
Review key updates on Peace in Motion since its release in August 2024	Page 11
Review in-depth, quarterly updates on each recommendation included in Peace in Motion	Review updates
Get updates on Save Our Community	Page 29
Access the Healing Hub Resource Guide	V1 Guide
Learn about, apply, donate, to, or share the Healing and Compassion Fund	Apply Donate
Learn specific ways to support community safety	Page 64
Identify safe and risky places in the community.	Support or share
Listen to a podcast by youth pursuing peace	Listen

Table of Contents

5 Letters from the Mayor and the Community Action Table

8 Executive Summary

11 • Key Updates

14 Plan Guide

15 • Timeline

17 • Working Groups

18 • Recommendations, Pillars, and Progress Indicators

19 • A Public Health Approach to Preventing and Addressing Violence

22 The Challenges

29 Addressing the Challenges

29 • Save Our Community

32 • Examples from the Ecosystem

34 Developing New Solutions

36 Goals & Objectives, 2025 - 2029

38 Recommendations

38 • Pillar 1: Improving Coordination and Shared Accountability

41 • Pillar 2: Enhancing the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Ecosystem

47 • Pillar 3: Fostering Hope and Healing

51 • Pillar 4: Accessing Opportunities

53 • Pillar 5: Building Engaged Neighborhoods and Networks

60 Conclusion

61 Appendices

62 • Letters from Cities United and MONSE

64 • How Can I Help?

68 • Glossary

74 • References

Letter from the Mayor

Greetings Toledoans,

In 2023, I established the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE) to help Toledo address gun violence through using a public health approach. The idea is to address the root causes of gun violence in this city and to minimize the preventable loss of life as well as the everyday impact these traumas have on our community.

Successful cities have ecosystems that protect citizens and promote safety. This ecosystem is made up of families, schools, police, churches, employers, health-care providers, social service agencies, violence interrupters, and countless other community members, all of whom want the same thing: for everyone in this city to live happy, healthy lives.

Last year, MONSE began convening a community action table of dedicated Toledoans from grassroots, institutional, and individual organizations who want to help. Now, after a year of consistent hard work, the community action table is ready to present its recommendations to address gun violence in Toledo for the next five years and beyond.

I am grateful for the work these outstanding individuals are doing for Toledo. We have already seen a significant decrease in gun violence in Junction and Englewood (from 11 homicides to 2) and the North Side focus area (from 8 homicides to 2) compared to the year before the implementation of violence interrupters.

In addition to the progress in these targeted neighborhoods, Toledo has seen an overall citywide reduction in all categories of crime– including violent crime and homicides– since the pandemic-related highs of 2021. In fact, in 2024, Toledo saw a third consecutive year of declines in homicides.

But even as we celebrate these successes, we know there is more work to be done. The research shows that we must focus on the most vulnerable population and then expand our efforts from there. These early results bring a renewed sense of hope that we can continue to reduce the number of fatal and non-fatal shootings city-wide.

The recommendations in this plan reflect the complexity of the problem at hand. There is no one single solution, but working together to build a system of support will ensure that Toledo is a city where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Wade Kapszukiewicz, Toledo Mayor

Letter from the Community Action Table

Greetings, Beloved Neighbors,

Peace in Motion (PIM) centers on those impacted by gun violence in our communities to build a cohesive framework for reducing gun violence. PIM is not just another plan but a collection of voices and experiences across the city. We are grateful for the Community Action Table's work.

Almost one year ago, a group of community leaders gathered to discuss the critical issue of gun violence. We agreed it was a significant problem in our community and were determined to address it collectively and strategically. We identified the focus areas needed for a comprehensive approach as a group. We formed working groups to address each one. The working groups assessed the current challenges, solutions, and gaps before researching best practices and strategies.

We then presented our work group findings and recommendations to the Community Action Table. Since presenting, we have been working together to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce gun violence in our community.

We are confident that this group can make a difference. We are committed to this cause and are working tirelessly to find solutions. Collectively, we present these most critical recommendations:

1. Identify community safe havens/hubs through youth-led participatory mapping and then bolster these locations with programming, training, recreational activities, supportive services, and completion of the National Safe Space designation.

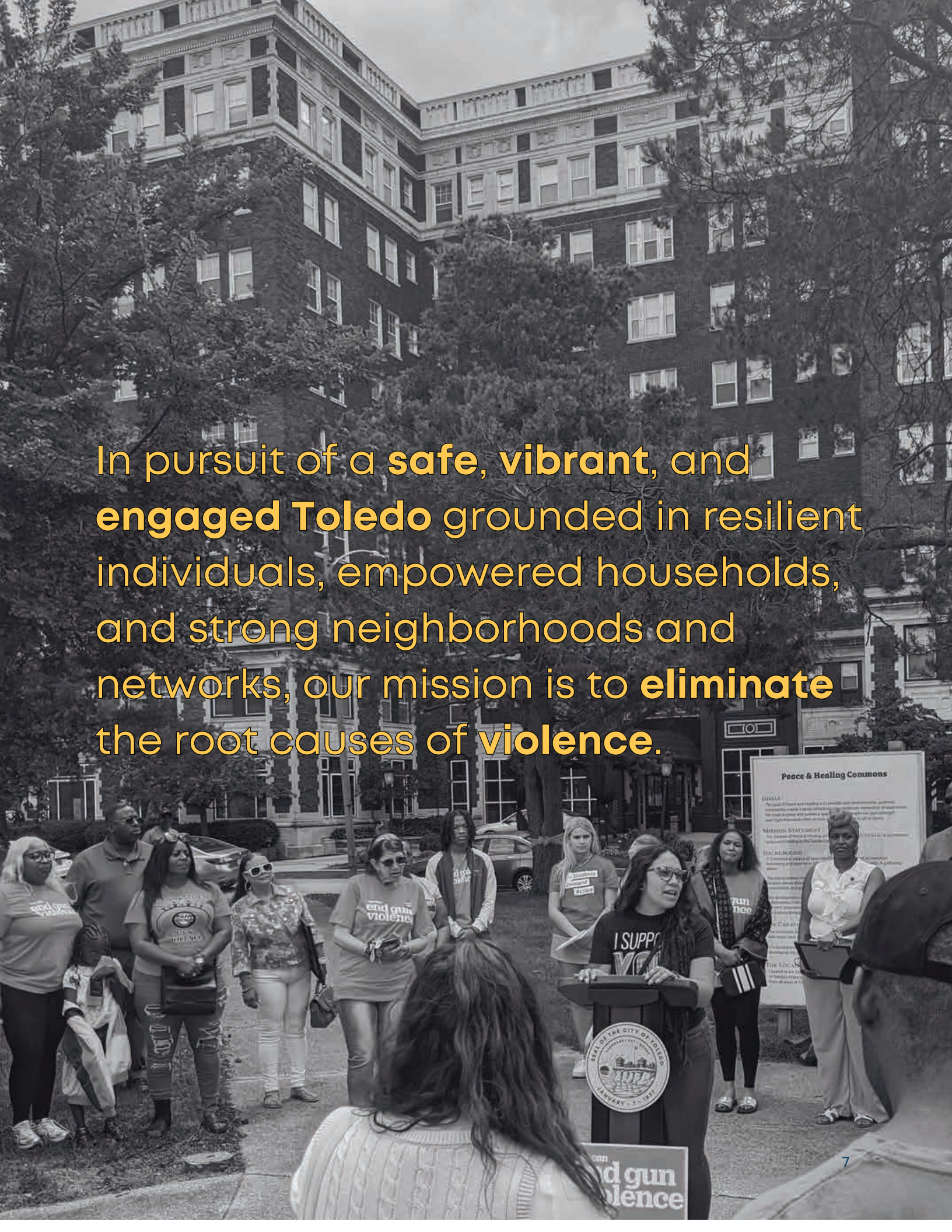
2. Coordinate initial contact and trauma-informed safety planning within 72 hours of an incident. Offer appropriate services and support, including meeting with families and networks to diffuse tension and reduce the likelihood of retaliation. Provide support and de-escalation at memorials. Offer safe spaces and relocation.

3. Develop a flexible donor-advised fund that reduces gaps in access to resources for those impacted by gun violence. Applicants can utilize up to $2,000 in assistance for basic needs, temporary respite, relocation, minor home repairs and modifications, lost wages, burial, funeral, and memorial costs.

The time to act is now! We have come so far on this journey and accomplished so much together. But now it's time to take the next step and make this vision a reality. We call upon private foundations, public charities, local and national corporations, and the government to combine financial resources. We urge the Toledo community to support the Peace in Motion Plan to create a better, brighter future for everyone. Together, we can create a city where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Sincerely,

The Community Action Table

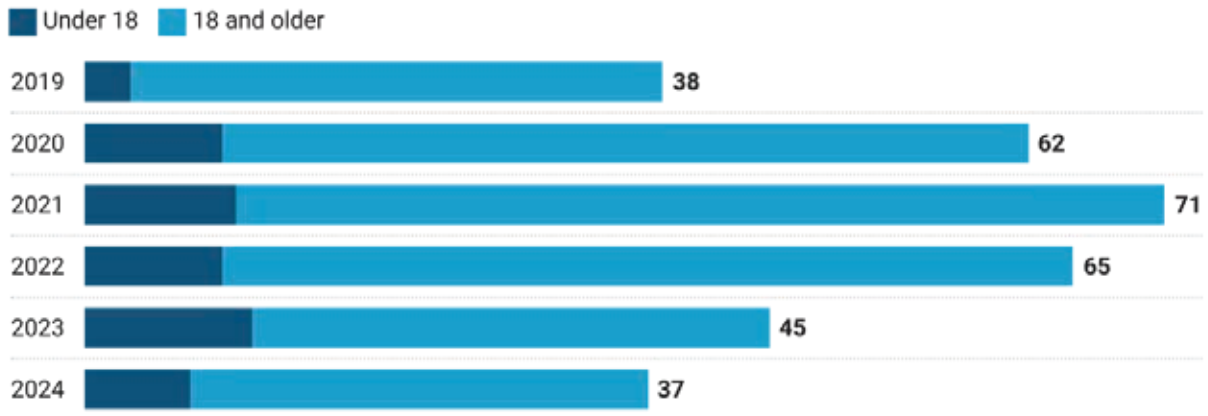


In pursuit of a **safe**, **vibrant**, and **engaged Toledo** grounded in resilient individuals, empowered households, and strong neighborhoods and networks, our mission is to **eliminate** the root causes of **violence**.

Executive Summary

Why Peace in Motion?

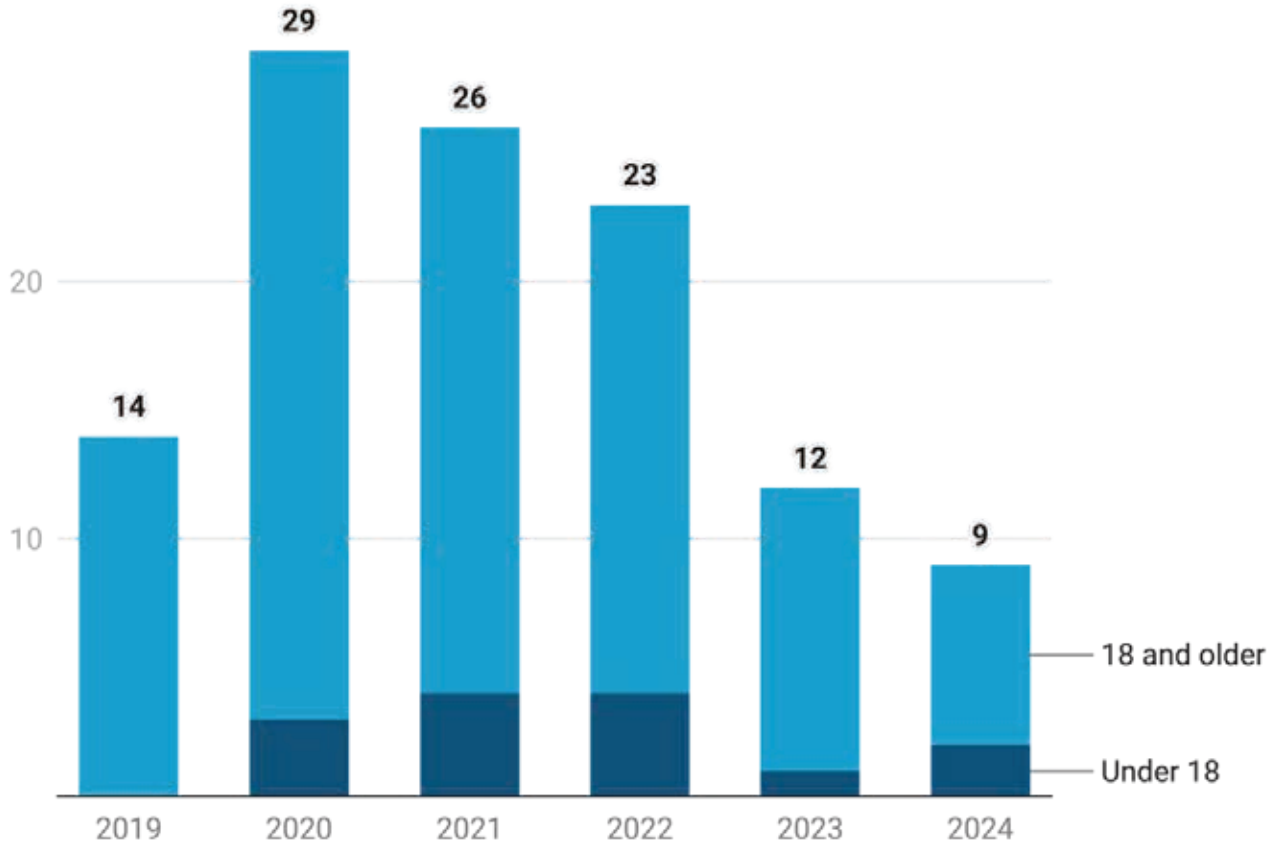
Peace in Motion: Toledo's Path to Long-term Community Safety results from 12 months of tireless work from the Community Action Table. Yet, the pain of losing people to gun violence, the collective trauma, and - critically - the efforts to prevent and address violence in our community stretch back much further. Mothers, fathers, and families who lost their children helped create this plan. People who were once on the other side of the gun helped as well. People prosecuting crimes and those formerly incarcerated contributed their perspectives. Centering the voices and lived experiences of those most affected by gun violence is critical to creating and sustaining long-term solutions. Toledo saw a **31% reduction in homicides** in comparison to a roughly 12% drop in fatal shootings nationwide in 2023 and an additional **18% in 2024**:



Homicides in Toledo, 2019 - 2024

While encouraging, 2023 also saw a sharp, tragic uptick in the number of youths under 18 fatally shot. In 2024, the community focused its efforts on reducing gun violence during the summer months when youth are out of school. Parks and Youth Services supported over 60 youth programs and dozens of neighborhood movie nights, concerts, and family-friendly events. The Police Department continued focused deterrence, crime gun intelligence operations, and homicide clearances. Urban Beautification hosted block-by-block cleanups. MONSE and Save Our Community (SOC) supported community peace events, their 61-person caseload with programming and employment opportunities, and coordinated responses to shootings into homes, nonfatal shootings, and homicides. In comparison to the previous summer breaks, the number of homicides continued a promising downward trend in 2023. 2024 continued this progress, with the **fewest number of homicides since pre-pandemic**.

Homicides between May and August, 2019 - 2024



Source: Toledo Police Department Transparency Hub

Homicides in Toledo during the summer months have decreased for four consecutive years since the surge of violence during the pandemic.

What Challenges Does this Plan Aim to Address?

Peace in Motion aims to address the root causes of gun violence by treating it as a public health crisis. Gun violence has had a devastating impact on the community, particularly among young Black men in Toledo's core neighborhoods. This plan was developed in response to the urgent need for a coordinated, community-driven approach to reduce violence and build safer, more resilient neighborhoods. The plan aims to continue progress on reducing gun violence through a multifaceted approach, including improved coordination and accountability, strengthening community capacity for violence prevention, bolstering neighborhoods, addressing blight and disinvestment, supporting gun violence survivors, and improving access to meaningful economic opportunities.

Key Recommendations

While the plan has more than 40 thoughtfully considered, evidence-informed recommendations, the following 10, listed in alphabetical order, are foundational. Additional details are available in the Recommendations section.

1. Community Coordinated Response
2. Community Violence Intervention and Prevention (CVIP) Training Academy
3. Community-Wide Social Media Strategy
4. Establish or Expand CVIP Programs
5. Healing and Compassion Fund
6. Healing Hub Resource Guide
7. Identify and Bolster Youth-Identified Safe Havens/Hubs
8. Safe Passage to Schools
9. Save Our Community Sustainability Plan
10. Violence Reduction Council

Quarterly updates on all recommendations are available in a public-facing Google Sheet:

Technical Assistance for CVIP Workers and Organizations		Progress	Progress Notes - Q1 2025
Establish Toledo Violence Reduction Council		1. Launched	Initial recommendations include bringing in additional grassroots credible messengers, having VRCs added to the Ohio Revised Code, and supporting high-risk, group and gang-involved individuals returning from incarceration. 1. VRC participants now include public safety, criminal justice, CVI, re-entry, the coroners office, mental health, and several other community service providers. 2. MONSE has hired a Street Intervention Specialist that will develop a 10-person caseload that includes high-risk individuals returning from incarceration. MONSE also conducts bi-weekly gun violence reviews with SOC staff and community service providers in order to develop responses to fatal shootings, nonfatal shootings, and shootings into homes.
Needs Assessment & Landscape Analysis		2. In Motion	$2M, 3 year grant awarded through the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Bowling Green State University Center for Regional Development is conducting the Needs Assessment and Landscape Analysis alongside MONSE and several other partners. Activities include reviewing qualitative and quant data, stakeholder interviews

Key Updates

This plan is called Peace in Motion because the work to end gun violence doesn't stop, and because we've seen meaningful progress in reducing violence. MONSE has worked diligently to advance this plan since the first draft was released in August 2024. Below summarizes key updates to date:

Fostering Hope & Healing

Launched the **Healing and Compassion Fund** in partnership with the United Way of Greater Toledo and the Victim and Survivor Services work group to provide up to $2,000 of support to help address immediate needs.

Developed the **Healing Hub Resource Guide**, a comprehensive list of partners, programs, and organizations that support violence intervention, prevention, and survivor support.

Save Our Community

SOC began bi-weekly **case conferencing with community service providers** to review all incidents of gun violence, caseload specific updates, and to develop and **implement plans to address issues** identified.

SOC and several community partners deploy **coordinated responses** to **prevent incidents** and to **reduce the risk of gun violence spreading**. The team has done **mediation** and non-aggression pacts, **temporary relocations**, crime scene cleanups, staffed memorials, funeral support, and myriad other activities that prevent or reduce the spread of violence and help **foster healing**.

Established a **referral pathway** with the Lucas County Juvenile Justice Center to ensure youth and families are supported throughout system involvement.

Improving Coordination and Shared Accountability

Convened a **Violence Reduction Council** comprised of public safety, criminal justice, mental health, CVIP programs, public housing, and community service providers to analyze specific instances of gun violence to identify trends and develop short- and long-term solutions. One early recommendation, to connect with **high-risk, gang-involved young adults returning from incarceration**, is being addressed with a new **Street Intervention Specialist position** in MONSE.

Expanded the Community Action Table to include a **Gender-Based Violence workgroup**, whose recommendations will be incorporated into subsequent updates of this plan. The workgroup is **hosting a conference in 4Q 2025**. Work group participants have also facilitated victim-centered, community-based, **coordinated responses to gender-based violence**.

Braided Funding

Secured **$3,000,000 in grants that** will provide three years of funding to promote capacity building and training for the CVIP ecosystem and to enhance support for students and families directly impacted by gun violence.

Transitioned Save Our Community to the City General Fund to ensure the important work of violence intervention is not solely reliant on external funding.

Partnered with the Mental Health Recovery Services Board (MHRSB) to fund **$250,000** in community wellness mini grants to **25 community-based organizations** to address violence, substance use, and mental health. Activities included **Restorative Justice** training, grief support, wellness activities, financial wellbeing coaching, **neighborhood beautification**, and other holistic activities meant to **increase protective factors for communities and people most impacted by violence**.

Procured **$49,975** in support from Lucas County Family and Child First Council and Cities United to support youth leadership development.

Access to Opportunity

Leveraging Community Development Block Grant funding to expand the **SOC Job Training Program to 20 youth and young adults**, which provides living wage employment for youth working to address blight within their communities.

Capacity Building

Trained 10 additional community partners and SOC staff in Rewire CBT, bringing the total to **31 Toledoans trained in Rewire CBT** to date. Rewire CBT is an evidence-based intervention developed by Roca Inc. that promotes healthier decision-making with those at highest risk of violence. Two SOC staff received Rewire Catalyst training to support ongoing training needs. SOC staff **use a Rewire CBT skill in more than half** of their behavior change activities.

Five MONSE staff and several community partners were trained in the National Organization for Victim Advocacy's (NOVA) **Community Crisis Response model**. This evidence-based, proven approach provides crisis responders and local leaders with the skills needed to **navigate community crises** and **build community resilience**.

Attended high impact professional development opportunities, including the Cities United Annual Convening; Bridging the Intersections: Integrating Diversion, Prevention and Violence Interruption (Annie E. Casey Foundation); Rumble Young Man, Rumble (Cities United and the Campaign for Black Male Achievement); Promoting Narrative Change Workshop (The HAVI); and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg American Health Summit.

Completed initial Safe Passage analysis in partnership with Boston University Rise Lab using student-generated participatory mapping data. The analysis uncovered **youth-identified safe spaces**, **risky places**, and ways that **students protect themselves to and from school**. Students tended to identify social and emotional factors, such as ongoing conflict, fear of dangerous animals, and being traumatized by walking past where a friend or classmate was injured or killed, as significant risk factors.

Receiving technical assistance and support from Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Alliance of Concerned Men to **develop Safe Passage programs at additional Toledo schools**.

Received the **Partner City Founder's Award** from Cities United.

Plan Guide

The following section provides context on Peace in Motion's structure, including (1) how the offices, programs, coordinating bodies, and working groups inform the development and implementation of PIM; (2) progress indicators used throughout the plan; and (3) the core public health concepts that underpin our efforts to address the root causes of gun violence.

Comprehensive Plan: This cross-sector, community-engaged, and owned plan will guide efforts to address gun violence over the next five years as part of an ongoing public health approach to addressing violence. Having the plan adopted by the Toledo City Council will ensure that community efforts to address violence inform policy, practice, and resource decisions.

Community Action Table: A cross-disciplinary team of individuals and organizations closest to gun violence. CAT was convened to develop the comprehensive five-year plan, to improve cross-sector coordination, and to engage in shared learning.

Executive Table: This group, chaired by the Mayor, provides executive leadership and oversight and drives policies, practices, and resources.

Violence Reduction Council: A multi-sector group that reviews gun violence data and specific cases that reflect trends to identify problems and develop solutions. The VRC supports ongoing data-driven decision-making.

Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement: This office oversees Save Our Community, convenes coalitions of cross-sector stakeholders addressing gun violence (CAT and the VRC), and is responsible for managing the comprehensive five-year plan to address the root causes of gun violence.

Save Our Community: SOC is a community violence intervention and prevention (CVIP) program that engages individuals at high risk of being perpetrators or victims of violence, particularly gun violence. SOC provides intensive case management, addresses basic needs, provides 1:1 skill development and mentorship in disrupting unhealthy think-feel-do cycles, and facilitates other direct connections to services, opportunities, and supports.

Key Points on the Path to Long-term Community Safety

The Peace in Motion plan continues city-led efforts beginning in 2020 that treat community violence as a public health issue.

2020

Mayor's Initiative to Reduce Gun Violence (MIRGV): In September 2020, Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz announced MIRGV, an initiative to treat gun violence as a public health crisis. In December 2020, the Toledo City Council unanimously voted to declare gun violence a public health crisis.

2021

Save Our Community (SOC). In February 2021, Jojuan Armour was hired as the program manager to oversee these efforts. Armour engaged the community and reviewed data to understand community needs and focus areas. These efforts resulted in the Save Our Community Violence Interruption program based on the Cure Violence model. SOC begins in the Junction-Englewood focus area. This area recorded two homicides in 2021, **down from 11 in 2020**.

2022

Lagrange Corridor. The Lagrange focus area recorded 2 homicides, **down from 8 in 2021**. Nonfatal shootings and shootings into homes are down as well.

Public Health Approach to Public Safety. Former Fire Department Chief Brian Byrd takes over as head of the Public Safety Department, overseeing police, fire, and SOC. The department incorporates a public health approach into city-wide safety efforts, focusing on **prevention**, **intervention**, and **enforcement**, including addressing the built environment.

2023

Cities United. The city begins formally engaging with Cities United to provide technical assistance in developing a comprehensive strategy to address gun violence. Cities United conducted a survey, stakeholder interviews, and focus groups with SOC staff, business leaders, community-based organizations, public safety, the faith-based community, and youth.

Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE). In May, Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz announced MONSE, which is mandated to oversee the development of the comprehensive, community-centered strategy and to bolster SOC with additional evidence-based practices to address gun violence. SOC incorporates evidence-based screening criteria to better identify participants at high-risk of gun violence in need of support. MONSE begins coordinated responses to shootings into homes, nonfatal, and fatal shootings.

Community Action Table. MONSE convenes community leaders, residents, organizations, and system partners to improve cross-sector coordination, share resources, and develop the comprehensive strategy. The group establishes eight working groups that address specific facets of gun violence and its root causes.

SOC School Team. SOC expanded to Maritime Academy, and Woodward, Waite, and Scott high schools. Expanding to these schools allowed the program to support students at the highest risk of gun violence.

Mediation and Rewire CBT. SOC staff participated in formal mediation training and began offering mediation services to students and community members. Staff and several community partners are also trained in Rewire CBT, a behavior change intervention for frontline staff to use with high-risk individuals with a history of trauma. The practice aims to support a healthier think-feel-do cycle that can disrupt high-risk behaviors.

2023 has a **31% decline in homicides city-wide.**

2024

Peace in Motion. MONSE, the Community Action, and Cities United unveil the first draft of the safety plan for community review and feedback.

Violence Reduction Council (VRC). MONSE, the Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio, and several system and community partners began convening the VRC, a cross-sector violence review board that develops and implements recommendations based on data and best practices.

2024 has an **18% decline in homicides city-wide.**

Community Action Table Working Groups

Peace in Motion includes recommendations from the eight Community Action Table working groups and MONSE's strategic planning efforts. The finalized recommendations are informed by stakeholder interviews, surveys, focus groups, data, reviewing other plans and reports, and assistance from experts in long-term neighborhood safety planning efforts. Working groups required representation from community members, content experts, and those directly impacted by community violence. The working groups are as follows:

Built Environment: Increase protective factors and reduce blight, disinvestment, heat, and other built factors associated with a higher risk of gun violence.

Capacity-Building: Build grassroots and community-based organizations' ability to conduct evidence-informed, high-quality community violence intervention and prevention work.

Conflict on Social Media: Increase protective factors while screening for and addressing violent conflict influenced by social media and other technology.

Coordinated Response: Establish coordinated system and community-based responses to gun violence.

Inclusive Workforce Development: Invest in the people and communities most impacted by a lack of access to economic opportunity.

Public Housing Safety: Increase public housing safety and reduce risk factors related to gun violence in multifamily unit housing.

Victim and Survivor Services: Provide trauma-and-healing-informed, person-centered support for people, communities, and networks affected by violence.

Youth Engagement: Provide youth at high risk of violence with positive experiences centered around programming, mentorship, and jobs to deter violence and restore hope within the community.

Gender-Based Violence: In recognition of concerns about violence against women, MONSE requested the city's Gender Equity manager form a working group to develop recommendations for inclusion in the plan.

Recommendations, Pillars, and Progress Indicators

The 43 recommendations included in PIM have been divided into five pillars:

1. Improving Coordination and Shared Accountability
2. Enhancing the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Ecosystem
3. Fostering Hope and Healing
4. Accessing Opportunities
5. Building Engaged Neighborhoods and Networks

Each recommendation includes highlighted text that shows general progress since the plan was released in 3Q 2024. For additional details about the progress on each recommendation, check the MONSE department page at toledo.oh.gov/peace or Google Sheet. Progress indicators include:

Not Started - No structured activities, including planning, have taken place

Planning - Developing timelines, partner meetings, and general pre-work

In Motion - Significant progress has been made; work is actively happening

Setbacks - Unforeseen issues have stymied progress

Complete - Work product has been completed

Launched - The item, program, or initiative has started and is available

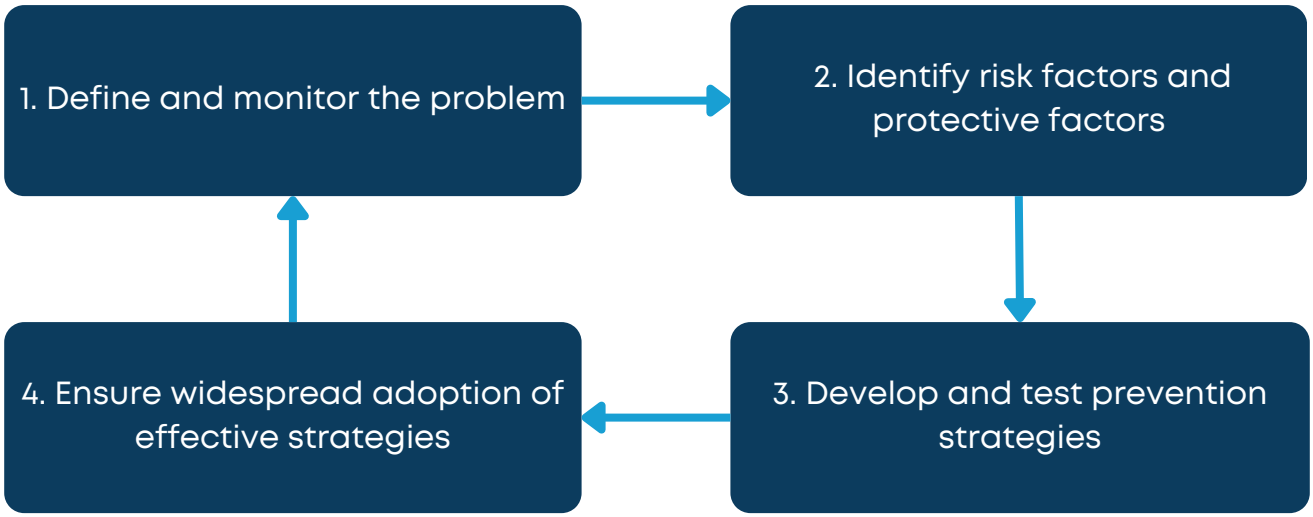
A Public Health Approach to Addressing Violence

At its core, public health aims to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. Public health considers the community conditions, policies, and systems that underpin health and wellbeing and actively works to address barriers to health. MONSE uses several public health tools and frameworks to assess, evaluate, develop strategies, respond to incidents, and build capacity to address the public health challenge of gun violence, but is grounded in several key frameworks. The following section discusses key frameworks and how they inform our approach to addressing gun violence in Toledo.

Problem-Solving in Public Health

Problem-solving in public health includes four key steps. First, it is essential to **understand the data**. This includes gathering statistics on violence's location, frequency, and characteristics from multiple sources, including gaining insight directly from the community. Second, **identify risk and protective factors**. Some issues increase the risk of experiencing or committing violence, while others help to protect against violence. Critically, risk factors are not destiny and do not cause violence, but they do provide opportunities for prevention and earlier intervention. Third, **identify, develop, and test prevention strategies** with continuous improvement and evaluation in mind. Lastly, **standardize and spread effective strategies** so that other communities can benefit from proven solutions. Community-based approaches, such as mentorship, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), and Cure Violence, have been repeatedly evaluated and, when implemented appropriately, proven effective and worth spreading.

The problem-solving process loops. Assessing, identifying, evaluating, refining, and so on should be considered essential to addressing violence. One example of an emerging challenge to addressing community violence is the role of social media and technology. Applying the steps and other tools outlined in this section is a helpful way to consider how communities throughout the country will reduce the risk factors - and perhaps increase the protective ones - associated with social media.

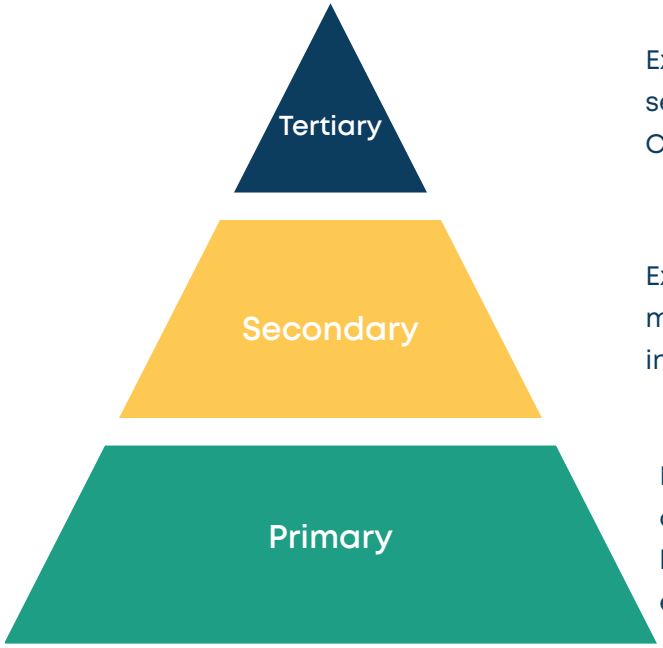


Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Interventions

The age-old saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth ten pounds of cure," is a helpful way to understand the three levels of intervention. Primary interventions aim to **prevent** something from happening. Secondary interventions aim to **screen and treat** issues. Tertiary - or 3rd-level interventions - aim to **manage the impact of the problem**, often after it has become chronic.

Diabetes is a helpful example for understanding the different levels of intervention. The ultimate goal is diabetes prevention. Prevention is often accomplished through education, access to healthy foods, and lifestyle choices. A secondary approach is screening for and intervening with treatment before it becomes unmanageable. This is often done through community screenings for high blood sugar and behavior change support, such as healthy cooking classes and lifestyle changes for prediabetics. 3rd-level interventions include insulin for ongoing diabetes management and wound care to prevent further complications.

Similarly, consider gun violence prevention and intervention. Which risk factors are at play, and which ones can be prevented? How might we screen for and treat those who are at risk of gun violence - or those already exposed? How might we manage the challenge of long-term exposure to gun violence - whether indirectly impacted, witnessed, or injured?



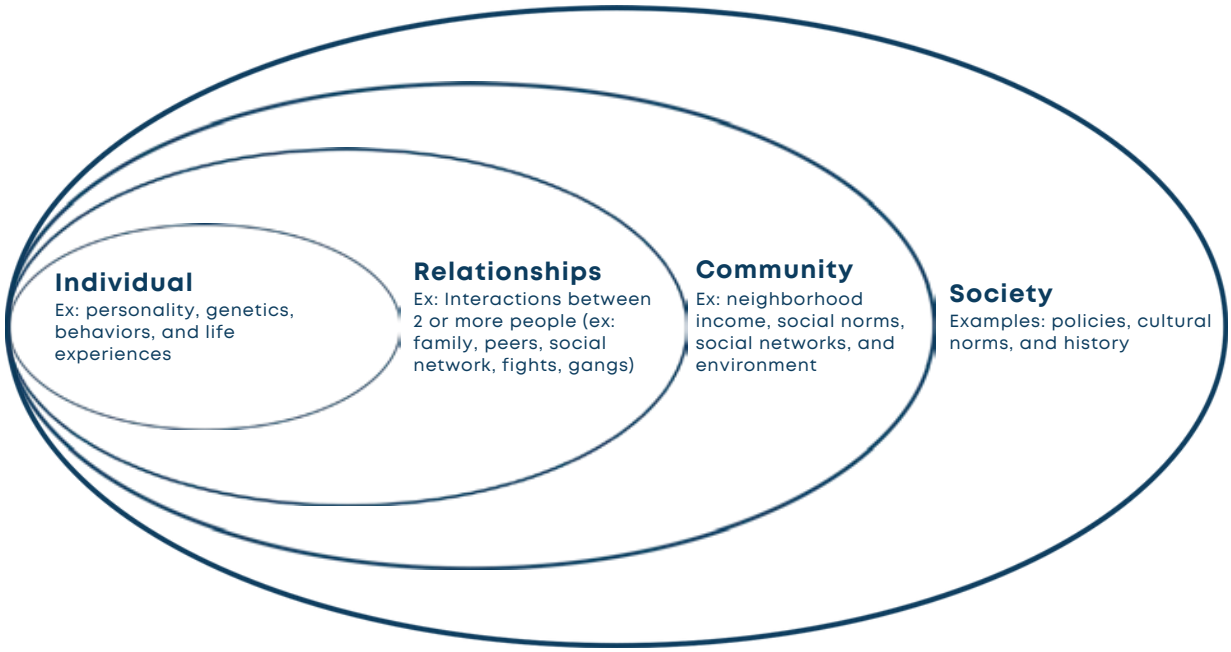
Examples: Trauma Recovery Centers, victim services, Mental Health First Aid, and the NOVA Coordinated Community Response model.

Examples: Violence interruption, intensive case management, conflict mediation, gun violence incident reviews, and safety planning.

Examples: Mentorship, access to economic opportunity, addressing social determinants of health, resilience-building, early childhood education, and social-emotional learning.

Social-Ecological Model

All people have relationships, interact with others, and live in a community shaped by society. The social-ecological model is a helpful way to consider how these levels influence behaviors, health, and well-being. Viewing gun violence through this lens is a useful way to identify opportunities for prevention and intervention.



Life Course Perspective

A person's path in life is influenced by what they experience, when they experience it, and how much of it they are exposed to. This public health concept, called the **Life Course Perspective**, helps to explain how social conditions, life experiences, environmental exposures, and the timing of these experiences shape long-term health and well-being. There are **critical periods** where exposure drastically changes long-term outcomes - think lead exposure in children under five - and **sensitive periods**, where what happens, positive or negative, influences long-term outcomes more than at other points.

Removing risks entirely, whether through preventing lead exposure, community violence, or otherwise, reduces the likelihood that poor outcomes, like future violence perpetration or victimization, will occur. When people have already been exposed, protecting and buffering against these risks by addressing trauma and building up protections, like trusted, positive adults, education, and stable housing, helps to **reduce the impact of early exposure.**

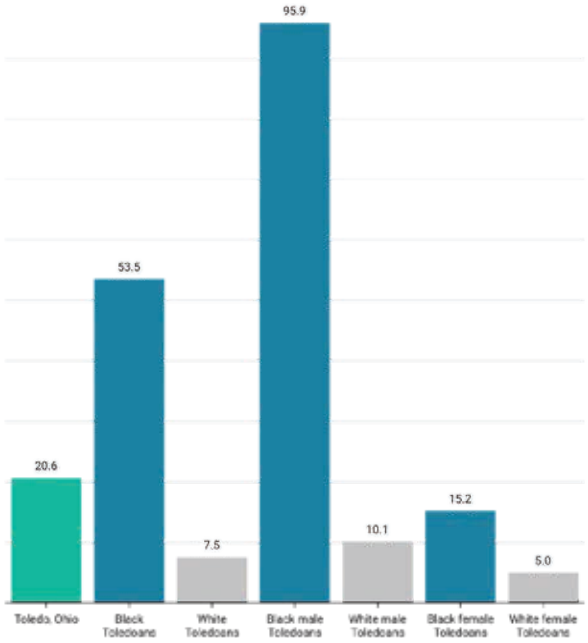
The Challenges

As of 2020, firearm deaths have surpassed motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of death for youth in America, driven mainly by a sharp increase in gun homicides. Similarly, Toledo has seen an increase in firearm deaths that overwhelmingly impact young Black men. Gaps in injury, death, and exposure to gun violence existed before the pandemic but doubled in 2020. This undue burden faced by Black men cannot be addressed without intentionally centering our efforts on them. In Toledo, both victims and shooters are primarily Black males between the ages of 14 and 29, who are **3%** of Toledo's population yet were **54%** of all firearm homicide victims between 2019-2023.

Without context, the public discourse surrounding gun violence rarely identifies solutions beyond policing and incarceration. While these are key for immediate community safety, **Toledo cannot reduce violence long-term without prevention, intervention, and addressing root causes**. The root causes of urban gun violence include policies, social determinants, intergroup dynamics, and individual factors. Research only tells us what the community already knows about gun violence: families, friends, schools, networks, and entire communities are often left to put the pieces together. To address this issue, we have to understand the challenges. This section provides context on these challenges.

Individual Risk Factors

Being a victim of gun violence increases the risk of illegal gun-carrying, further victimization, and gun violence perpetration. These victims have often been repeatedly exposed to community violence; this disrupts development and can result in numbing or hyper-awareness of perceived threats, mirroring **symptoms of PTSD**. Chronic exposure to violence creates challenges, including low self-esteem, no concept of a future, fear, and distrust. To many of those most impacted, gun carrying is seen as a viable solution, yet illegal gun-carrying is associated with a much higher risk of being impacted by gun violence.



Homicide rate per 100,000 people by race and gender, 2020 - 2024

Sources: Toledo Police Department Transparency Hub, American Community Survey

Relationship / Person-to-person Risk Factors

Social networks within communities also influence violence. Whether access to weapons, affiliation with others that inflict violence, affiliation with others that have been violently injured, or online conflict, one's network influences the risk of violence perpetration or victimization. Research uncovered that people at high risk of gun violence who live in disinvested neighborhoods have access to "community guns." Stakeholder interviews with Toledo youth reflect this theme as well. Many youths discussed how easy it is to access guns:

"There are more guns than people," "nowadays everybody has a gun," and guns are easy to "pass around," or buy.

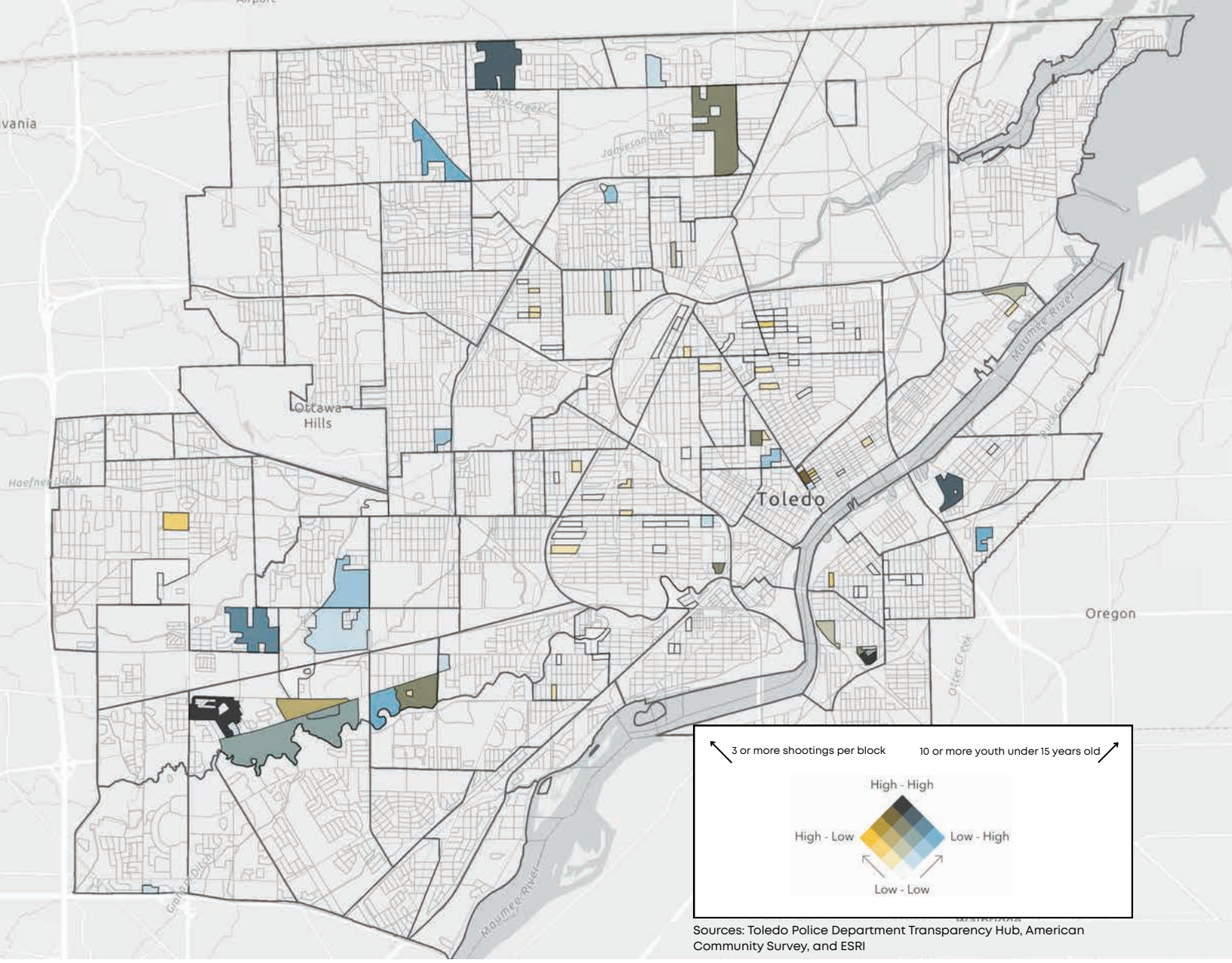
Stakeholder conversations also alluded to small groups and families that remain locked in perpetual cycles of revenge. One participant described the mentality as a process of grief, substance use to self-medicate grief, and substance use as a gateway to retaliation:

"It's the outrage... We're lamenting our boy being shot, drinking some henny… now we're juiced up and fired up. We want you [the perpetrator]."

Several community violence interventionists have described the advent of "freestyle gangs," which form in response to the death of a close friend or affiliate. Critically, these community-based interventionists feel that loose affiliation becomes more tight-knit through grief and loss.

Community Risk Factors

Living or attending school near where a gun homicide has occurred is associated with poorer mental health, academic performance, and behaviors among youth, even when accounting for socioeconomics, crime rates, and other common risk factors. This is because repeated exposure to community violence disrupts healthy development, including how brains and bodies process information. Chronic exposure to and fear of gun violence can also desensitize people to violence, treating it as a norm instead of a traumatic experience; it can also lead to increased gun carrying. Comments from stakeholder interviews corroborate this, indicating that guns provide a sense of safety often deemed unavailable through other means.



Sources: Toledo Police Department Transparency Hub, American Community Survey, and ESRI

Supporting Youth Already Impacted by Violence

The census blocks on this map are color-coded to show two types of data: the concentration of shootings into homes, nonfatal, and fatal shootings, and the number of youth under 15 years old. This map is *only* one way to identify **direct exposure to gun violence during critical** and **sensitive periods for many youth**. Blocks that are shaded **yellow** indicate higher direct exposure to gun violence, and a lower proportion of youth under 15. **Light blue** indicates a lower concentration of gun violence and a higher proportion of youth under 15. **Dusky black** indicates a higher concentration of both shootings and youth under the age of 15. High-quality, **credible mentorship and other supports for youth in these areas would help reduce the impact of early exposure to gun violence**.

Societal Risk Factors

Societal risk factors include policies, cultural beliefs and practices, and rapid societal changes such as new technologies or large-scale pandemics that change social norms. As an example of culture, stakeholders described a pervasive fear of street justice for cooperating with police:

"In our community, we know who the shooters are, but don't speak because of fear of retaliation. [It's the] reason block watch failed – people don't want to be classified as a snitch because it's hazardous to health and to property."

Distrust of police - borne of past experiences, limited ability to protect a person's day-to-day life, and concern that dangerous individuals will not be caught - can affirm a community's willingness to support street justice. Countering this, as trust in public safety improves through community-oriented policing, focused deterrence, anonymous reporting that limits personal risk of being labeled a "snitch," successful prosecutions, and reductions in crime in high-crime areas, a community becomes more willing to support public safety efforts to reduce violence.

Practices and Policies Enabling High Access to Guns Used in Crimes

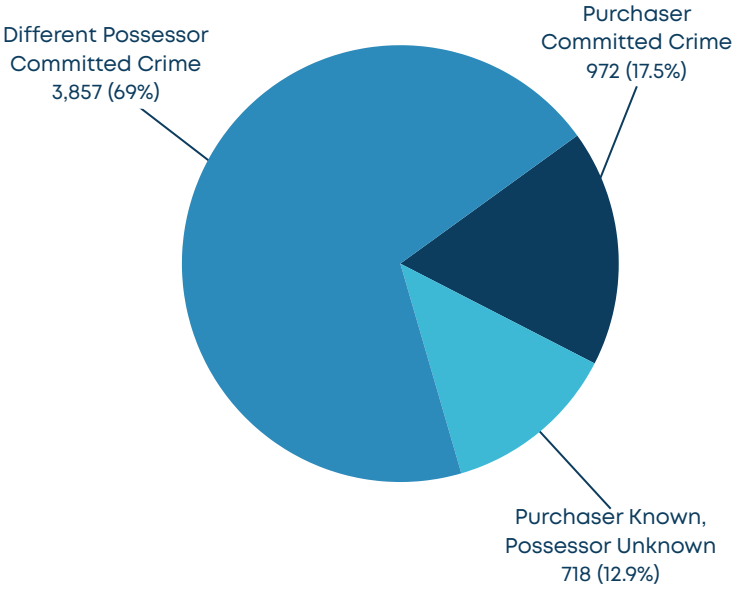
The illicit gun market is a risk factor as well, one likely exacerbated by practices among both legal gun owners and people using guns to commit crimes. One stakeholder within TPD noted that the number of guns stolen from legal gun owners, especially out of cars and homes, has risen swiftly:

"Last year, there were over 1,700 guns [removed]. Every year we break the record for the number of guns pulled off the street."

These crimes of opportunity appear to have increased throughout the country, with an estimated 300,000 to 600,000 guns stolen yearly. This rise in thefts may be due to increased gun carrying and more guns being left unsecured in cars and homes, resulting in additional opportunities for crime. Toledo is no exception, with gun thefts rising by 59% between 2010 and 2015 and 96 guns reported stolen from cars alone in 2020. Whether teenagers, police, pastors, or prosecutors, all feel that the high number and ease of access to guns used illicitly is a problem in Toledo.

Ohio is one of several states that allow unlicensed private sellers to sell guns without background checks. One public safety officer alluded to these private secondary markets, noting that gun sales can be tracked to the original purchase but then sold afterward without any recordkeeping or background check requirements. States that require background checks for private gun sales are associated with reduced homicide, suicide, and gun trafficking rates. Of **63,912 guns** used in a crime in Ohio between 2017 and 2021, 84% were initially purchased within Ohio. 3 out of 4 of the remaining guns were purchased in states also lacking background check requirements in the private gun market. Ohio also supplied 66,779 guns eventually used in a crime outside of the state over that same time frame.

Within Toledo, **5,548 guns** connected to a crime were traced to a known purchaser between 2017 and 2021. Over that time frame, as many as **7 out of 10** gun crimes were committed by someone other than the original purchaser.



Top 5 Cities where Crime Guns were Purchased	# of Crime Guns Recovered
Oregon, Ohio	1,148
Holland, Ohio	673
Rossford, Ohio	570
Swanton, Ohio	430
Toledo, Ohio	286
Total	**3,107**

The Cost of Gun Violence

Gun violence exacts an unbearable cost on people, families, businesses, neighborhoods, communities, and society; it also has significant direct costs to Toledo, Lucas County, and Ohio taxpayers. These costs include crime scene response, hospitalization and medical care, criminal justice, incarceration, victim support, and lost tax revenue. The National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform collaborated with the City to conduct a cost of gun violence study. Each fatal shooting in Toledo results in **$883,771.95** in costs per suspect.

Understanding the Challenges

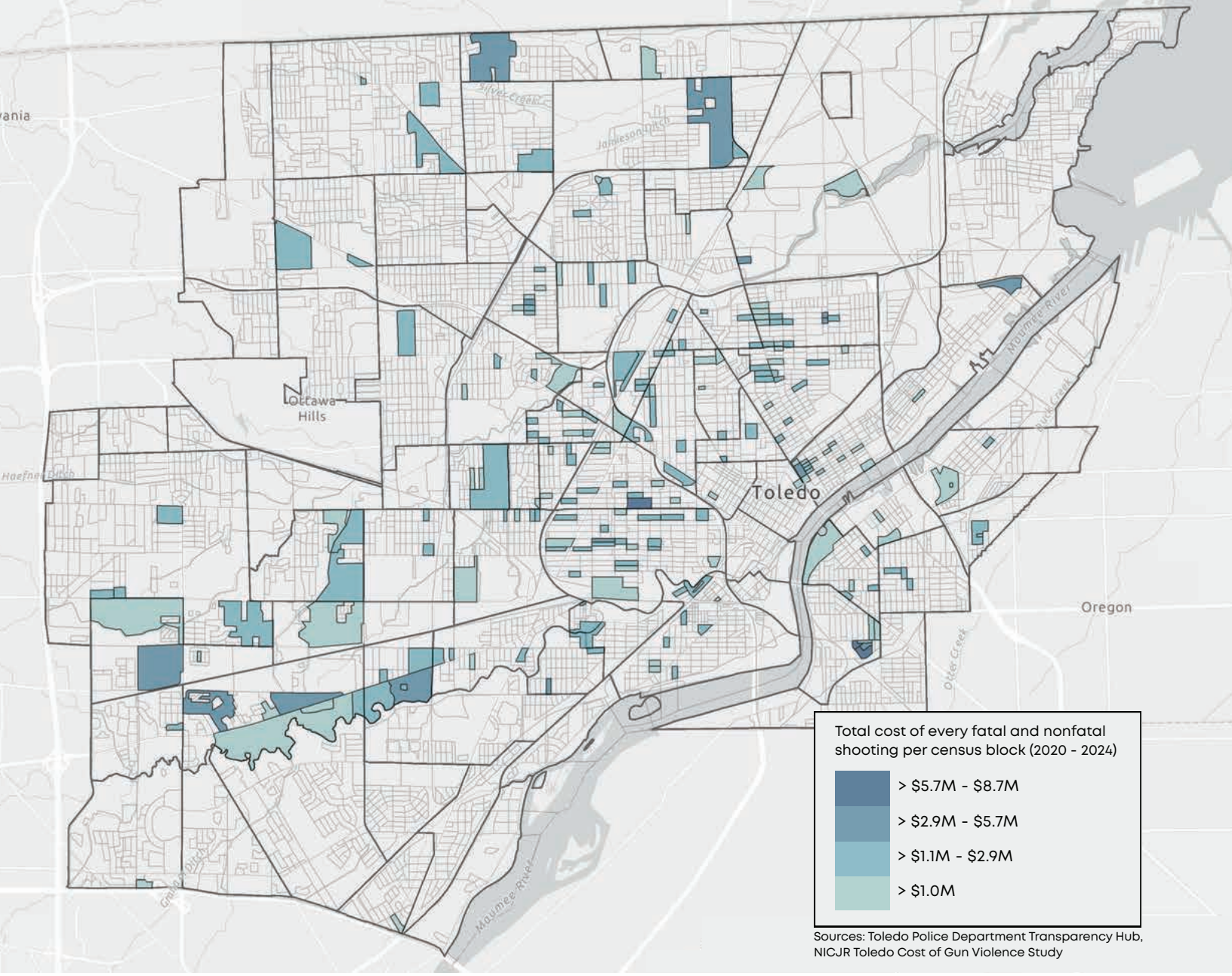
NICJR National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform

THE COST Per Shooting

The governmental cost of gun violence to the City, County, and State

Fatal Shooting Cost		Nonfatal Shooting Cost
CRIME SCENE $8,899.16		**CRIME SCENE** $8,099.33
Police Response: $4,274.74		$3,474.91: Police Response
Scene Cleanup: $3,500.00		$3,500.00: Scene Cleanup
Fire/EMT: $1,124.42		$1,124.42: Fire/EMT
HOSPITAL $88,525.00		**HOSPITAL** $144,617.00
ER/Trauma Center: $1,428.00		$1,428.00: ER/Trauma Center
Gunshot Surgery: $87,097.00		$87,097.00: Gunshot Surgery
		$56,092.00: Rehabilitation
CRIMINAL JUSTICE $46,750.05		**CRIMINAL JUSTICE** $12,482.65
Police Investigation: $2,477.27		$269.57: Police Investigation17
Prosecutor & Public Defense: $38,162.50		$11,379.86: Prosecutor & Public Defense
Court Process: $6,110.28		$833.22: Court Process
INCARCERATION $626,924.00		**INCARCERATION** $335,040.80
Pretrial Incarceration: $152,613.80		$152,613.80: Pretrial Incarceration
Prison Placement: $474,310.20		$182,427.00: Prison Placement
VICTIM SUPPORT $75,344.14		**VICTIM SUPPORT** $61,844.00
Coroner's Office: $1,656.14		$50,000.00: Victim Compensation
Victim Compensation: $50,000.00		$11,844.00: Social Service Assistance (one year of support for one family)
Social Service Assistance: $23,688.00 (one year of support for two families)		
LOST REVENUE $37,329.60		**LOST REVENUE** $9,954.56
Income Tax: $14,079.60 (both suspect & murder victim)		$3,754.56: Income Tax (for suspect, plus one year for injured victim)
Sales Tax: $23,250.00 (both suspect & murder victim)		$6,200.00: Sales Tax (for suspect, plus one year for injured victim)
Per **Fatal Shooting** $883,771.95 Assuming one suspect		Per **Nonfatal Shooting** $572,038.34 Assuming one suspect

17. The following Toledo Police Department divisions provided financial information: the Crime Scene Investigation Unit, the Field Operations Division, and the Investigative Services Bureau. Only the Investigative Services Bureau report included specific cost details for police investigation in nonfatal shooting cases.



Sources: Toledo Police Department Transparency Hub, NICJR Toledo Cost of Gun Violence Study

City Blocks where the Combined Cost of Fatal and Nonfatal Shootings between 2020 and 2024 Exceeds $1 Million

The census blocks on this map are color-coded to show the combined cost of fatal and nonfatal shootings between 2020 and 2024. Nonfatal shootings result in approximately $572,038.34 per suspect, while fatal shootings result in an estimated $883,771.95 in costs per suspect. The darker the **blue-green**, the more incidents of gun violence that have resulted in costs of more than $1 million.

Addressing the Challenges: Save Our Community

The City of Toledo launched its first CVIP program, Save Our Community, in 2021. Built on the Cure Violence model, SOC uses trained CVIP workers to **detect and interrupt potential violence**; reduce risks, change behaviors, and **support those at highest risk of involvement in violence**; and work with the community to **change social norms** and build positive, resilient, and safe communities. SOC includes staff whose unique lived experiences, personal and professional backgrounds, and wide-ranging skillsets make them **credible messengers** within the communities they serve.

Initially, SOC focused on areas that were hotspots for gun violence, specifically Junction-Englewood and the Lagrange Corridor. Since the City's peak of gun violence in 2021, the Junction, Englewood, and Lagrange focus areas have seen a **52% decrease** in the number of firearm assaults, **11% decrease** in firearm homicides, and a **66% decrease in shootings into homes**. Compared to the year before implementation, **gun homicides in Junction fell from 9 to 2**, and in the **Lagrange corridor from 7 to 2**.

Save Our Community School-Based Program

In the 2023-2024 school year, Save Our Community **expanded into four Toledo schools**: Waite, Woodward, Scott, and the Maritime Academy. The impact of violence is not contained to neighborhoods – it is felt in schools as well. Often, conflict that begins outside of school carries over into the school day, and conflict that begins in school extends beyond the school day. Expanding Save Our Community into these four area high schools allowed the program to establish more direct, consistent connections with students who are at the highest risk of experiencing violence.

Since launching, School-Based SOC staff have worked with over **70 students** who are at high risk of experiencing gun violence. Staff not only provide instruction on Rewire CBT's seven skills to promote positive decision making but also **mediated or de-escalated over 175 potential conflicts**.

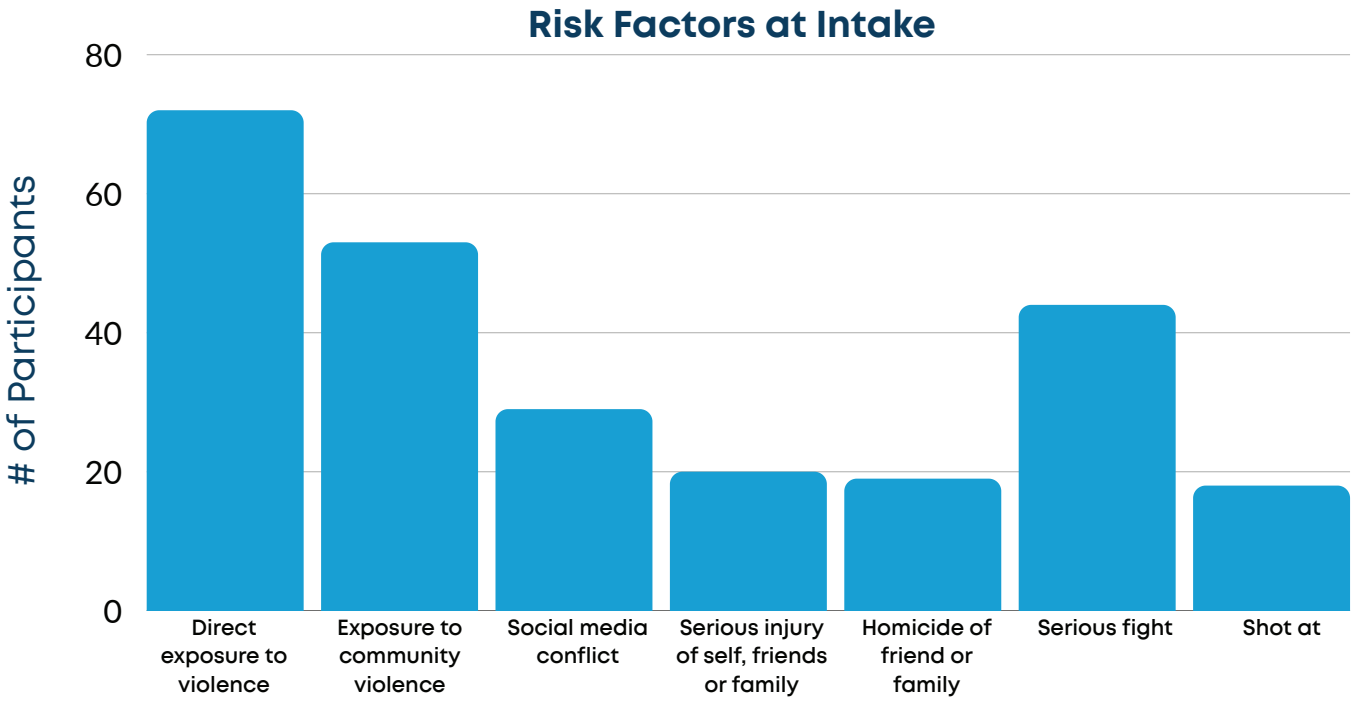
Strong partnership with local schools shows the positive impact that results from collaboration and shared responsibility to prevent gun violence.

Save Our Community In Motion

Save Our Community is a CVIP program that employs highly trained **credible messengers to detect and interrupt cycles of violence** within the program's focus areas: the Junction/Englewood and Lagrange neighborhoods and four area schools: Scott, Waite, Woodward, and Maritime Academy.

SOC staff maintain a caseload of participants who are at high risk of experiencing gun violence. **A major risk factor is someone's level of exposure to gun violence**, both in terms of geographic proximity and also in terms of the closeness within their social network. Since relaunching under MONSE in the summer of 2023 and the addition of school-based SOC in the fall of 2023, a total of **107 participants have enrolled in SOC**. Some participants require long-term engagement with SOC, while others work intensely with SOC for a shorter period while navigating a specific risk factor. Once enrolled, participants can connect with other initiatives, such as the summer jobs program (see Pillar 4, Recommendation 2) or the annual SOC Youth Summit.

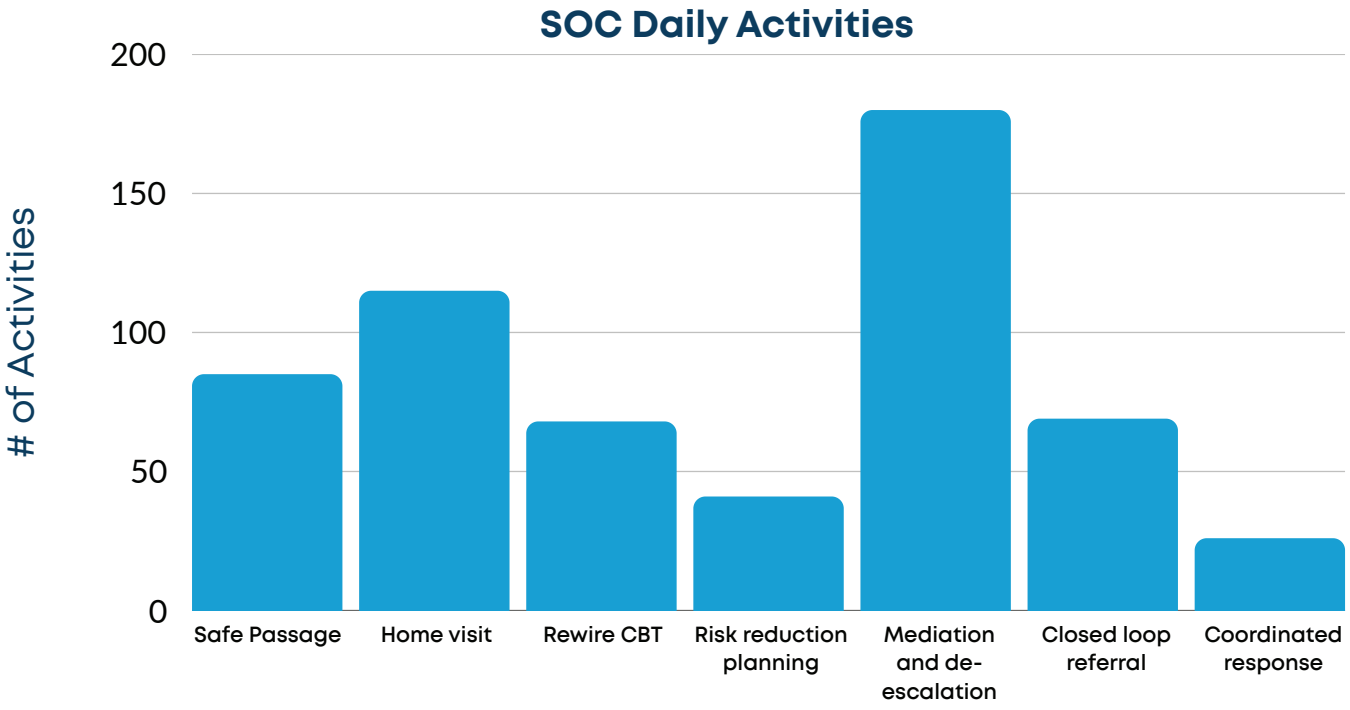
The graph below shows risk factors experienced prior to enrollment by the 107 individuals who have been on the SOC caseload.



Save Our Community In Motion

SOC seeks to replace the risk factors outlined on the previous page with protective factors that can help to reduce the risk of experiencing gun violence. **SOC staff are trained in a wide range of interventions and supports** and work diligently to equip their participants with the tools and skills needed to make decisions that do not lead to violence.

To work effectively with a participant and their family, one must be willing to meet the participant where they are - sometimes literally. **SOC staff have conducted over 100 home visits** to get to know participants, their families, and their social environment. Sometimes, intervening early in a conflict can prevent threatening words from escalating to violent action. As of April 2025, **SOC staff have conducted 180 mediations and de-escalations**, halting the spread of violence in our community and promoting safer alternatives to conflict. SOC staff are not a one-stop shop; sometimes, referring participants to other agencies for additional wraparound support is appropriate. Through strong and growing community partnerships, SOC staff have been able to make **69 referrals for additional services.** This graph is not a complete picture of how SOC staff support their participants, but rather provides a quick glance at the comprehensive and thoughtful support that they provide.



Addressing the Challenges: Examples from the Ecosystem

Countless programs, organizations, and individuals work every day in Toledo to prevent and address gun violence. This plan is In Motion because their efforts do not cease. Below are brief snapshots of some of the work already underway in Toledo, but this is far from a comprehensive picture of Toledo's ecosystem.

Primary and Secondary Interventions

Go Tyme Grynd is a gym and fitness center that provides a safe space and positive outlet that promotes physical and mental wellness for Toledo's youth. Among their programs is the Lil' Dogs Go Program, a free summer wellness program that includes fun exercise, socio-political discussions, and resilience-building activities. The leader of Go Tyme Grynd has participated in several MONSE-sponsored trainings in CVIP best practices and recently taught Save Our Community's street team the principles of public speaking.

Harbor Families and Communities Enhancing Stability (FACES) program identifies young members of the community who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which can have long-term negative impacts on health and wellness. FACES works with preschools and families to provide experiences that counteract the negative impact of ACEs, thereby helping to interrupt the pre-school-to-prison pipeline and providing youth with opportunities to flourish.

Hoodstock Foundation is a grassroots organization promoting peace, change, economic growth, and youth empowerment. They work to bring about positive change by providing intensive case management, positive mentorship, and social-emotional learning activities. Hoodstock Foundation also organizes an annual back-to-school giveaway that has distributed thousands of backpacks to students preparing to return to school.

Credible Messengers is a support group for youth involved in the Juvenile Justice System, often for gun charges. The group is facilitated by Willie Knighten, an anti-gang activist wrongfully convicted of a murder in 1996. Knighten has dedicated his life as a returned citizen to supporting others as they re-enter society and to reducing gang and group violence among youth.

Secondary and Tertiary Interventions

Mercy Health Toledo Trauma Recovery Center provides compassionate care to individuals seven and older who have experienced trauma, including abuse, assault, domestic violence, human trafficking, and gun violence. Certified Clinical Trauma Therapists use evidence-based therapy to promote healing and recovery. Additional services include group therapy for victims of crime, safety planning, training, and legal and court advocacy.

Good Grief of Northwest Ohio provides peer support groups to young people who have experienced loss. Although their services extend beyond those impacted by gun violence, they have remained an engaged partner throughout the development of Peace in Motion and are working with MONSE, schools, and other partners to ensure their services are available to young people impacted by gun violence.

Sisters 4 Unity is a grassroots organization founded and led by mothers who have lost children to gun violence. They provide peer support to families that experience the traumatic loss of loved ones to gun violence. Sisters 4 Unity helps to connect the families they work with to resources and supports. They also organize the annual Communities Against Violence march in Toledo.

Sisters 4 Unity Communities Against Gun Violence march.

Developing Solutions

Peace in Motion's goals, objectives, and recommendations are also informed by a wealth of community voice, choice, and perspectives predating MONSE. This includes the series of **listening sessions conducted by the Mayor's Initiative to Reduce Gun Violence**. These were town hall-style discussions at Garfield, Scott, Waite, and Woodward schools and in the Junction, Englewood, and Lagrange Corridor areas. Themes throughout included the need for direct engagement with youth, mental health, parental, family, and neighborhood support, the normalization and desensitization to violence, and policing.

Collaboration with Cities United also influenced the plan. This partnership included a community safety survey and a series of key stakeholder group interviews, which involved youth, faith-based leaders, business owners, community-based organizations, public safety, and members of the judicial system. The insights from these activities were analyzed and organized into themes. **Quotes from these sessions are included throughout Peace in Motion**. Additionally, Cities United's work contributed to establishing the Community Action Table and its eight initial working groups.

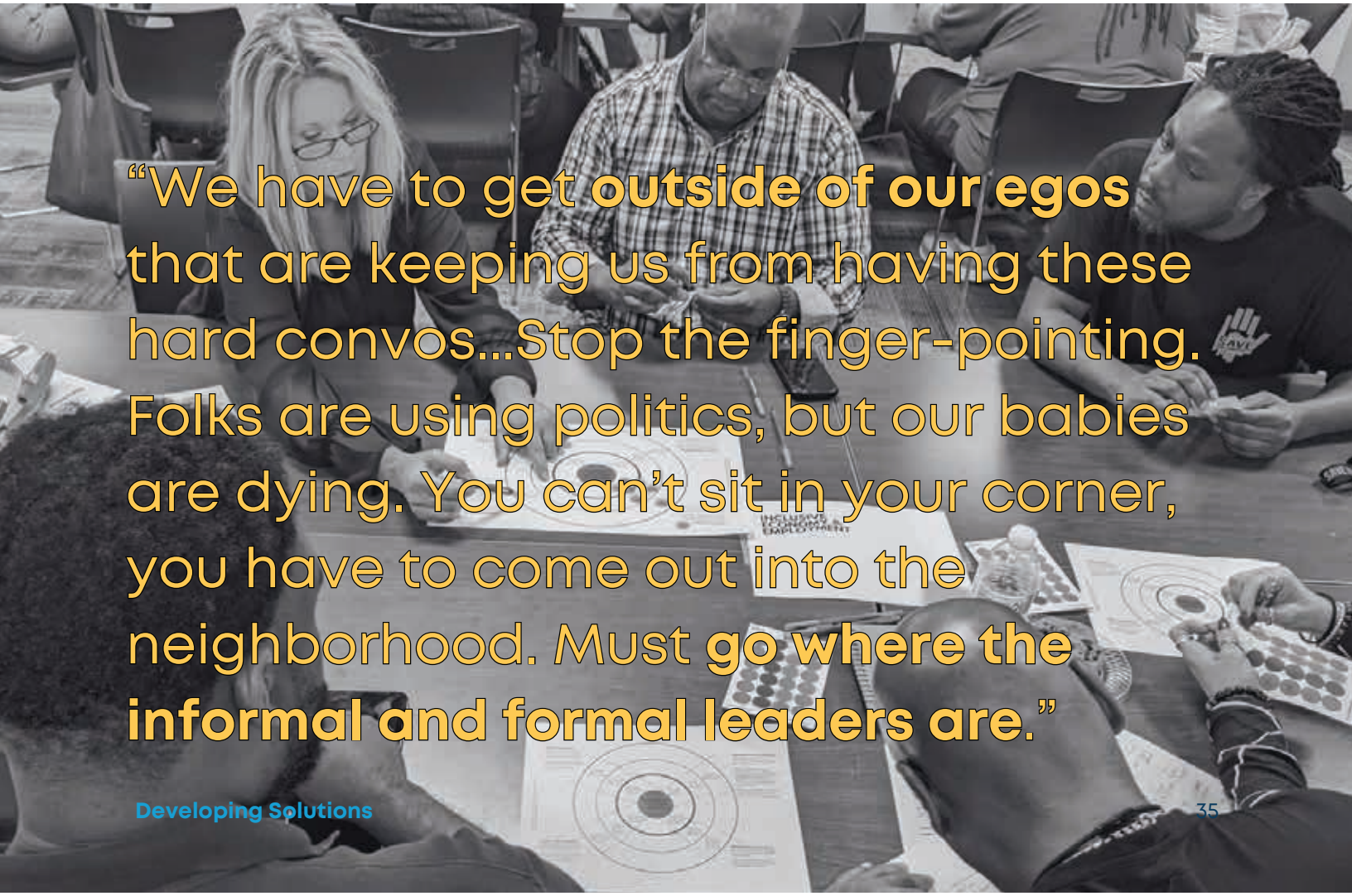
Peace in Motion is also informed by the **Coalition for Peaceful Toledo Neighborhoods**, formed by former Mayors Donna Owens, Carty Finkbeiner, Mike Bell, and Paula Hicks Hudson. The former mayors hosted a series of townhalls and developed a 12-point plan for addressing violence. PIM has significant alignment with this 12-point plan.

MONSE also collaborated with and sought guidance from **experts and practitioners** such as Dave Ross, Dedra Brown, DeVonne Fagan, Willie Knighten, Roca Inc., and No More Red Dots. Additionally, they engaged with expert and practitioner **conveners** like Cities United, the National Network of Offices of Violence Prevention, and the White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention. Furthermore, they consulted with **content experts**, including the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, Boston University RISE Lab, National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform, and Bowling Green State University. These collaborations informed analyses, literature searches, and processes that enhanced MONSE's understanding of challenges, solutions, and best practices.

Community-centered Engagement (CCE) was a critical framework used throughout developing the recommendations in Peace in Motion. CCE ensures that **those most impacted by the issues are central to developing solutions**. This includes people with lived experience, those who are part of the focus population, who live or grew up in the focus areas, or who work in community violence intervention and prevention. CCE is an ongoing process.

More than **100 people** representing more than **40 communities and organizations** contributed to the Community Action Table and, thus, the recommendations. The groups followed the steps to develop a Theory of Change, which included identifying existing solutions, gaps due to (lack of resources, capacity, or other factors), and solutions to address these gaps. Each work group presented their recommendations to the rest of the Community Action Table and used the feedback to refine their recommendations further.

Inclusive Economy and Employment workgroup members Amy Wachob, Willie Knighten, and Matthew Smith work through an activity.



"We have to get **outside of our egos** that are keeping us from having these hard convos...Stop the finger-pointing. Folks are using politics, but our babies are dying. You can't sit in your corner, you have to come out into the neighborhood. Must **go where the informal and formal leaders are.**"

Goals and Objectives, 2025 - 2029

Reduce Gun Violence by 20%

1. Reduce the number of nonfatal and fatal shootings of youth (under 18 years old) and young adults (18 to 24 years old) by 20%
2. Reduce the number of Black women killed by 40%
3. Reduce the number of fatal shootings of Black males 25 or older by 20%
4. Reduce nonfatal and fatal shootings in focus areas by 15%
5. Reduce shootings in homes in focus areas by 20%

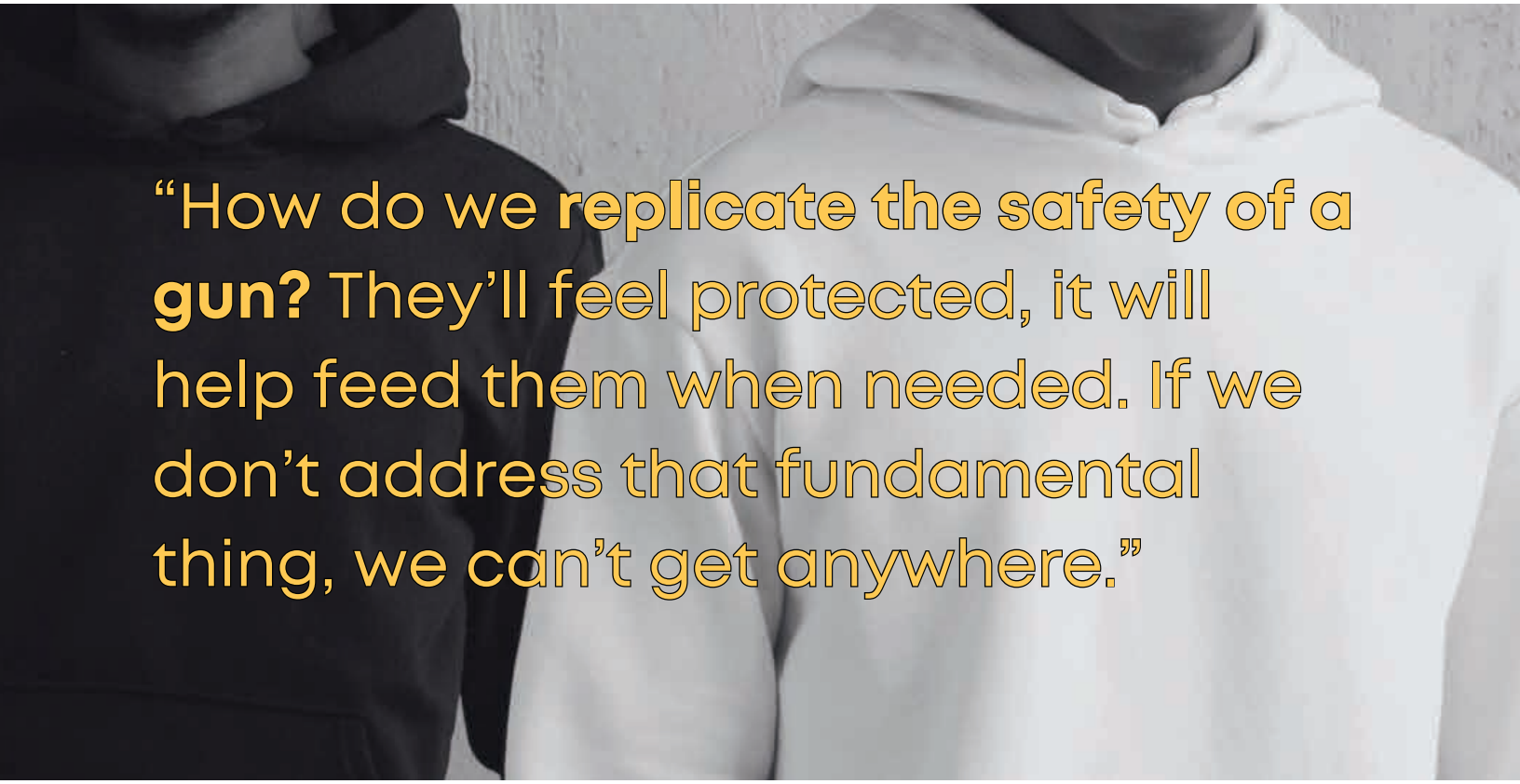
Change Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors

At 6 months of enrollment in SOC and other CVIP programs, participants will:

1. Improve Attitudes Towards Interpersonal Peer Violence
2. Change Beliefs About Conflict
3. Increase Resiliency and Protective Factors

At 1 year of enrollment in SOC and other CVIP programs, participants will:

1. Reduce additional gun charges
2. Reduce violent crimes
3. Reduce serious fights
4. Reduce violent crime recidivism
5. Reduce violent injuries
6. Reduce violent injury re-hospitalization



Neighborhood Change

1. Improve neighborhood-level Collective Efficacy
2. Reduce disinvestment and disrepair in core neighborhoods
3. Reduce gun homicides within ½ mile of schools in SOC focus areas

Address Social Determinants of Health

1. Align with the Toledo Housing and Land Use strategies
2. Increase median household income in core neighborhoods
3. Increase homeownership in core neighborhoods
4. Increase the number of people from core neighborhoods in living wage jobs
5. Increase the number of opportunity-youth and young adults under 25 engaged in school, employment, or job training
6. Increase net worth, credit score, and median household income among participants in SOC and all CVIP or re-entry workforce development programs

Ecosystem Changes

1. One Hospital-Based Violence Intervention at a high-volume trauma center
2. One training and capacity-building program for CVIP professionals
   1. 75 people trained and certified as CVIP workers
   2. Ten people trained as Rewire CBT Catalysts
   3. Ten people trained as trainers in an additional evidence-based CVIP
3. One umbrella organization with the capacity to service and provide technical assistance to grassroots CVIPs
4. Sustained, braided funding supports CVIP in Toledo
   1. Medicaid billing for CVIP
   2. Dedicated resources for Save Our Community and other CVIP programs
5. The Community Action Table becomes community-led
6. The Violence Reduction Council leads data-driven decision-making.
   1. Violence Reduction Councils are added to the Ohio Revised Code
7. Benefits Cliff policies and programs allow more Toledoans to successfully transition into living wage jobs without sacrificing benefits
8. The Healing and Compassion Fund is robust and able to self-sustain

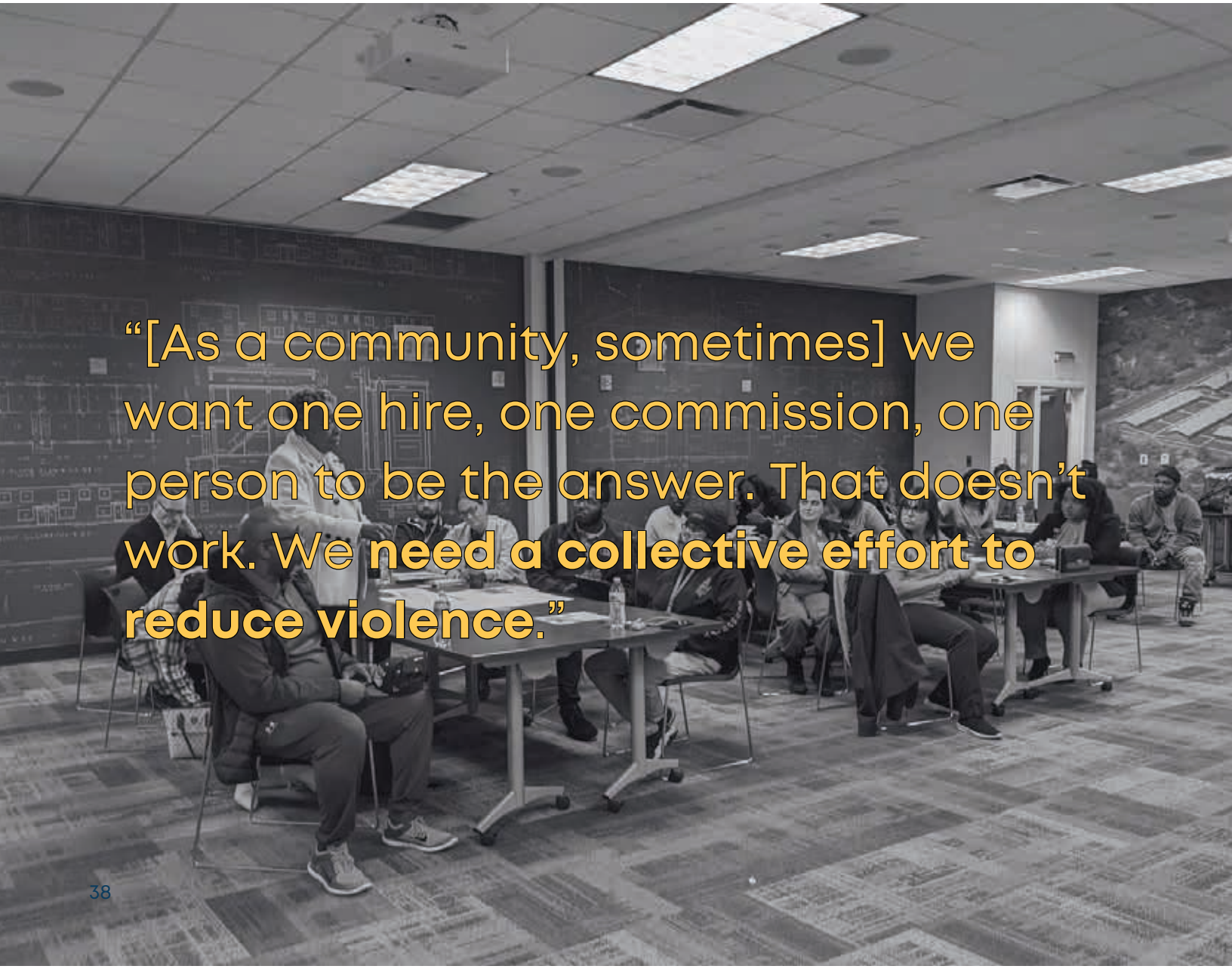
Pillar 1

Improving Coordination and Shared Accountability

Purpose: To ensure that the CVIP work happening at all levels, from grassroots to executive level, is empowered to contribute expertise towards a coordinated, community-wide effort that fills gaps, avoids duplicated services, and eliminates silos.

Goal Alignment: All Goals & Objectives

Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson meets with the Community Action Table.



"[As a community, sometimes] we want one hire, one commission, one person to be the answer. That doesn't work. We **need a collective effort to reduce violence**."

Recommendations

1. Needs Assessment & Landscape Analysis

Assess Toledo's current CVIP landscape, including capacity, focus areas, and alternative CVIP models (e.g., group-based violence intervention, intimate partner intervention, workforce programs, street outreach, pre-release) to inform the future direction of the CVIP ecosystem. This assessment will inform which modules are developed and/or included in the CVIP Academy as well as a funding opportunity that supports at least two (2) CVIP programs.

In Motion - 3-year grant awarded; BGSU conducting assessment

2. Community-Level Coordinated Response*

Develop and deploy a coordinated, community and grass-roots organization-level response to violence, supporting families, neighborhoods, and communities impacted by community violence. *Includes, "Foundational and Ongoing Training Specific to CVIP," "72-hour Community Response and Continuum of Care," and "Rapid Relocation" found in Pillar 2.

In Motion - Ongoing capacity building, relocations, and community responses

3. System-Level Coordinated Response*

*Includes *Hospital-Based Violence Intervention*, *Competencies for Victim & Crisis Response, Handle with Care Protocol,* and *Violence Reduction Council*.

In Motion - VRC has launched

4. Handle With Care Protocol with Schools

Establish Handle With Care protocol with appropriate partners to support students, households, and networks impacted by incidents of gun violence, beginning with SOC-focus schools. Gain Handle With Care Ohio certification.

Planning - Partnering with TPS, MHRSB, and TA from Handle with Care Ohio

5. Community-Public Safety Liaison

Develop a community-public safety liaison role that assists in communication between public safety and victims and survivors.

Not started

Coordination and Shared Accountability in Motion: Toledo's Violence Reduction Council

Violence Reduction Councils (VRC) take a data-driven, collaborative, and public-health problem-solving approach to violence intervention and prevention. VRCs convene criminal justice, community service providers, elected officials, local government, CVIP programs, and key systems to conduct in-depth case reviews of homicides that reflect trends in community violence. These reviews build trust, data sharing, and a more robust problem analysis than one done entirely within one sector. VRC recommendations balance short and long-term efforts at prevention and intervention.

With extensive technical assistance from Dr. Mallory O'Brien, a $25,000 Network of Practice Grant from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health American Health Initiative (BAHI), coordination from the Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio, and the convening power of the Mayor's Office, Toledo's Violence Reduction Council **began to meet in October of 2024**.

Initial service provider reviews have focused on firearm deaths of Black males aged 15 to 24. VRC participants identify risk factors involved in the deaths and gaps in data to develop recommendations that prevent future incidents. Recommendations to date include (1) **group violence intervention** with high-risk networks that have driven violence and are beginning to re-enter the community; (2) advocating for **protections within the Ohio Revised Code** to bolster data sharing; (3) an intentional focus on **addressing social dysfunction in the neighborhoods of perpetrators**; (4) developing practical strategies to **reduce social media conflict**.

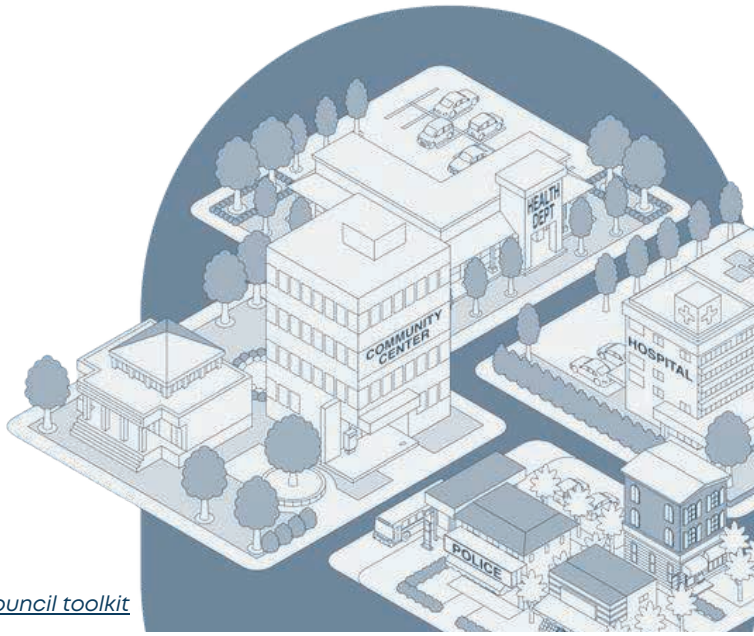


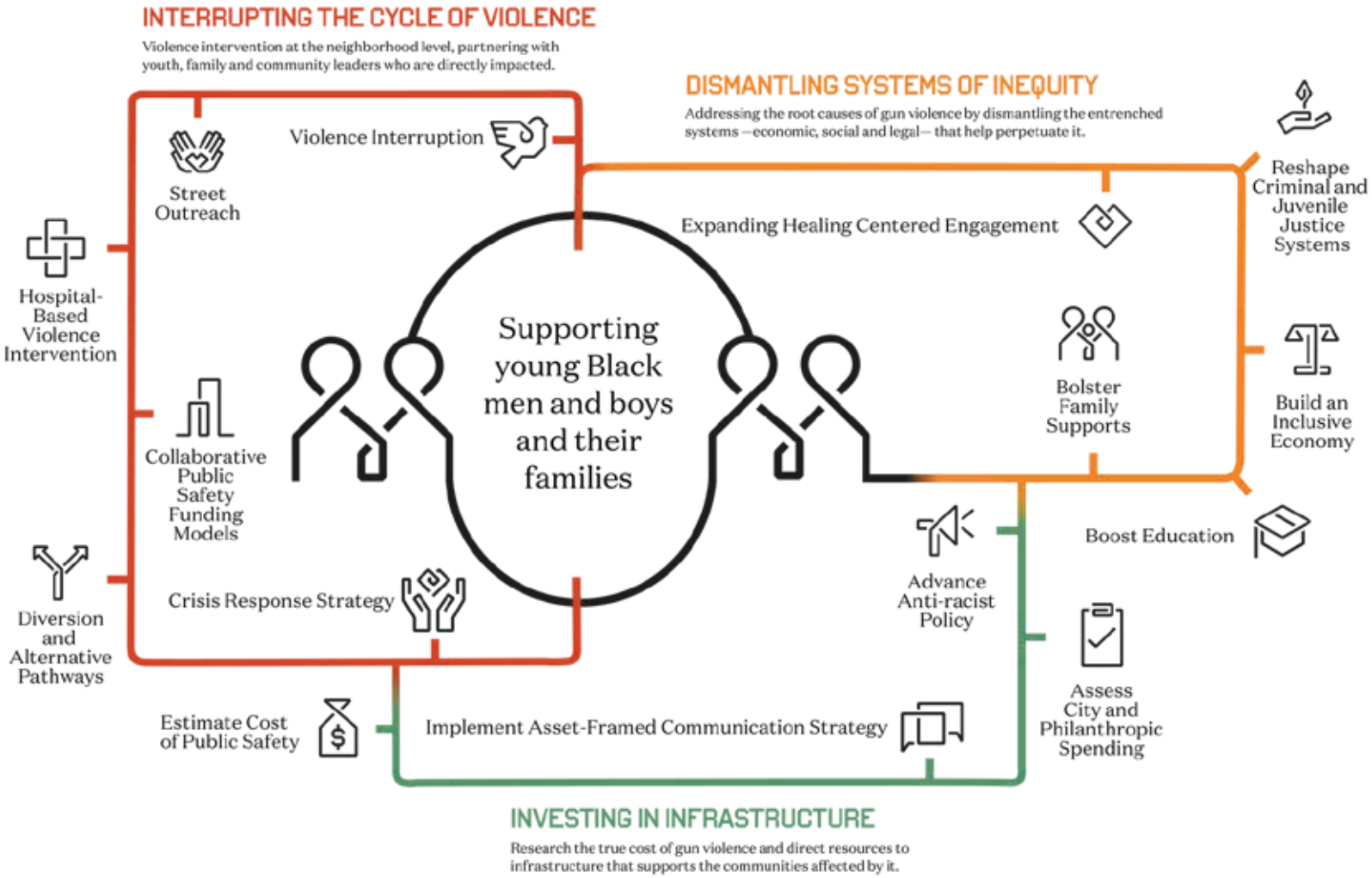
Image source: BAHI Violence Reduction Council toolkit

Pillar 2

Enhancing the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Ecosystem

Purpose: To implement & share evidence-based practices throughout Toledo so that the work being done to reduce gun violence aligns with best practices and to create a broad coalition of stakeholders committed to this work.

Goal Alignment: All Goals and Objectives



Cities United's diagram of a safe, healthy, and hopeful safety ecosystem.

Recommendations

1. Save Our Community Sustainability Plan

Considering the existing strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities - including the end of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding after 2025 – how should the city's backbone community violence intervention and prevention program look in the future? Develop a model to sustain SOC beyond 2025, including where the program should be housed, how it should be structured, and funded.

In Motion - Sustainable funding, SWOT analysis, and capacity building

2. Hospital-Based Violence Intervention

Establish a best-practices hospital-based violence intervention focused on individuals, households, and networks experiencing violent injuries resulting in hospital admission. Begin with trained hospital liaisons and a full-scale program at the trauma center with the highest volume of gun violence injuries.

Planning - Ongoing discussion with possible hospital partner

3. CVIP Academy

Establish an academy that trains organizations, individuals, and programs in evidence-based and promising CVIP practices, models, and strategies. The academy will build expertise and capacity to sustain CVIP programs in Toledo.

Planning - Awarded 3 year grant; needs assessment informing Academy

4. Foundational Competencies for Victim & Crisis Response

Establish foundational, evidence-based requirements for the network engaged in a coordinated response to gun violence. These include best practices in victims' services and the NOVA Community Crisis Response model.

Complete - See Appendix

5. 72-Hour Community Response and Continuum of Care

Coordinate initial contact and trauma-informed planning within 72 hours of an instance of community violence. Offer appropriate services and support, including meeting with families and networks to diffuse tension and reduce the likelihood of retaliation. Provide support and de-escalation at memorials. Offer safe spaces and relocation as needed.

Launched - Being done by Save Our Community alongside partners; hiring 2 positions

6. Victim & Survivor Services Team

Develop a community-based victim and survivor services team that assists individuals and families in the immediate and long-term aftermath of violence.

Planning - Staff positions funded and awarded 3-year grant

7. Social Media Intervention Team

Adapt the E-Responder training to the local context to interrupt potential and actual violence connected to social media. If an inflammatory post is made, violence interrupters will contact the involved parties or their social ties to de-escalate, mediate, and peacefully resolve conflicts. In addition, build a network of credible community members trained in E-Responder. This network will track incidents, intervention results, and follow-up services.

Planning - Technical assistance from BU Rise Lab

8. Youth Fellowship / Leadership Program

Develop a program that centers the voices, perspectives, and skills of youth most impacted by gun violence. Participants will engage in service learning, action research, and problem-solving and be compensated for their time.

Planning - Braided funding from LCFCFC, MONSE, and CU; YES curriculum

9. Rapid Relocation

Procure and/or tap into existing resources for rapid relocation and temporary respite for people and households at acutely high risk of gun violence. Develop a regional network of supportive programs for relocation between cities.

Planning - Regional network and criteria

10. Technical Assistance for CVIP Workers and Organizations

Develop a staffed position and suite of services and supports to advance the capacity-building efforts included in the comprehensive plan. Support foundational and ongoing training specific to CVIP. Support the network of people closest to the work with training and ongoing practice in restorative justice, restorative practices, mediation, Rewire CBT, NOVA, and other foundational skills for violence intervention and prevention.

Planning - 3-year grant funds TA; 2 SOC staff trained as Rewire CBT Catalysts

11. Bolster an Umbrella CVIP Organization

Support a local organization engaged in CVIP to serve as the umbrella organization responsible for capacity-building programming and administrative work. Needs include grant writing, reporting, acting as a fiscal agent, and managing payroll for grassroots CVIP organizations.

Planning - RFQ for community partner included in 3-year CVIP grant

12. Increase Credible Mentorship

Identify and bolster existing mentorship programs that work with opportunity youth and young adults. Identify and procure funding to implement one evidence-informed mentorship program designed to work directly with youth at the highest risk of exposure to gun violence.

Not Started

13. Host a Regional CVIP Conference

Convene survivors, community-based organizations, CVIP programs, public safety, and other relevant stakeholders for a conference to discuss best and emerging practices; enhance support networks for clients, communities, and organizations; and celebrate progress in violence intervention and prevention.

Setbacks - Applied to host NOVPN Regional Convening but not selected. 2026?

14. Assess the Cost of Gun Violence to Local Taxpayers

Complete the Toledo Cost of Gun Violence Study in partnership with the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform. These studies use local data to identify the governmental costs of gun violence based on six categories: crime scene response, hospitalization and rehab, criminal justice, incarceration, victim support, and lost tax revenue.

Complete

15. Establish or Expand Two CVIP Programs

Based on the results of the Needs Assessment and Landscape Analysis (see Pillar 1, Recommendation 1), provide funding and intensive technical assistance to build the capacity of or establish two evidence-based CVIP programs.

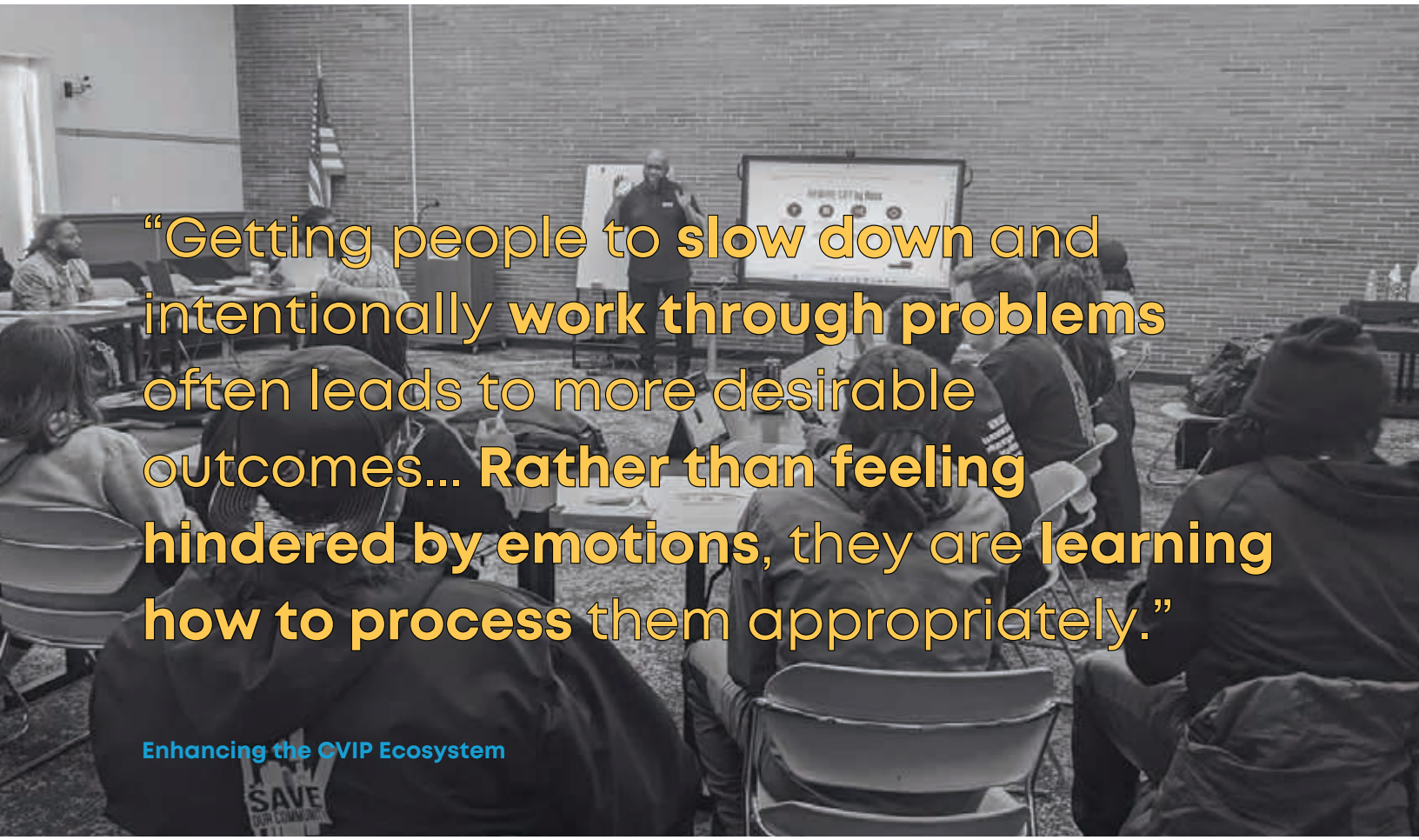
Planning - Awarded 3-year grant that will support at least 2 organizations

Capacity Building in Motion

In the fall of 2023, the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement worked with Cities United to arrange a training series for the Save Our Community staff to learn Roca's evidence-based **Rewire CBT**. Rewire CBT is a **seven-skill cognitive behavioral toolkit for frontline CVIP staff** to help young people develop lifesaving skills and make healthier choices. Several organizations beyond Save Our Community work with Toledo youth at risk of experiencing gun violence. Leaders from **Go Tyme Grynd**, **The Program Inc**, **Man Day with Hassan**, **DDYC**, **Hoodstock Foundation**, and the **Arts Commission** of Greater Toledo joined the training to embed Rewire CBT in the community. At the end of the 8-week course, staff at these partner organizations walked away with a shared evidence-based skillset.

Since completing this training, SOC staff have used a Rewire CBT skill in **more than half of their behavior change** communications with participants. Two staff, Sierra Webb and Christopher Matthews, have also been trained as Catalysts and can now train others who have completed Rewire CBT training.

Community partners and SOC staff being trained in Rewire CBT.



"Getting people to **slow down** and intentionally **work through problems** often leads to more desirable outcomes... **Rather than feeling hindered by emotions**, they are **learning how to process** them appropriately."

REWIRE CBT by Roca TOLEDO MONSE

Cohort 1 Survey Feedback | Dec 2023 - Feb 2024

100%

WOULD RECOMMEND REWIRE CBT TO A COLLEAGUE

Toledo Cohort 1 compared to **95%** across all cohorts

81%

ARE USING REWIRE CBT REGULARLY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Toledo Cohort 1 compared to **83%** across all Community Violence Intervention cohorts

> [We are] having them think through how to use [Rewire CBT] with their participants and programmatically.

OF SUPERVISORS ARE SUPPORTING THEIR STAFF WITH IMPLEMENTING REWIRE CBT

Toledo Cohort 1 compared to **94%** across all Community Violence Intervention cohorts

IMPACTING OUR WORK

95% AGREE THE TRAINING HAS INCREASED THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE THINK, FEEL, AND DO

> At first, when I started work with them, I would just go with the punches now I am actually being more present to the things that matter to them.

> Having a follow up refresher course periodically [would be helpful].

How are participants using **REWIRE CBT**

> *Getting people to slow down and intentionally work through problems often leads to more desirable outcomes for themselves and being more empathetic to the actions of others. Rather than feeling hindered by emotions, they are learning how to process them appropriately and being empowered by them.*

Pillar 3

Fostering Hope and Healing

Purpose: To provide trauma-informed, healing-centered support to individuals and communities who have experienced gun violence and create services and systems that address common challenges faced by those who are most impacted.

Goal Alignment:

1. Reduce Gun Violence
2. Change Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors

2.1.1. Improve Attitudes Towards Interpersonal Peer Violence

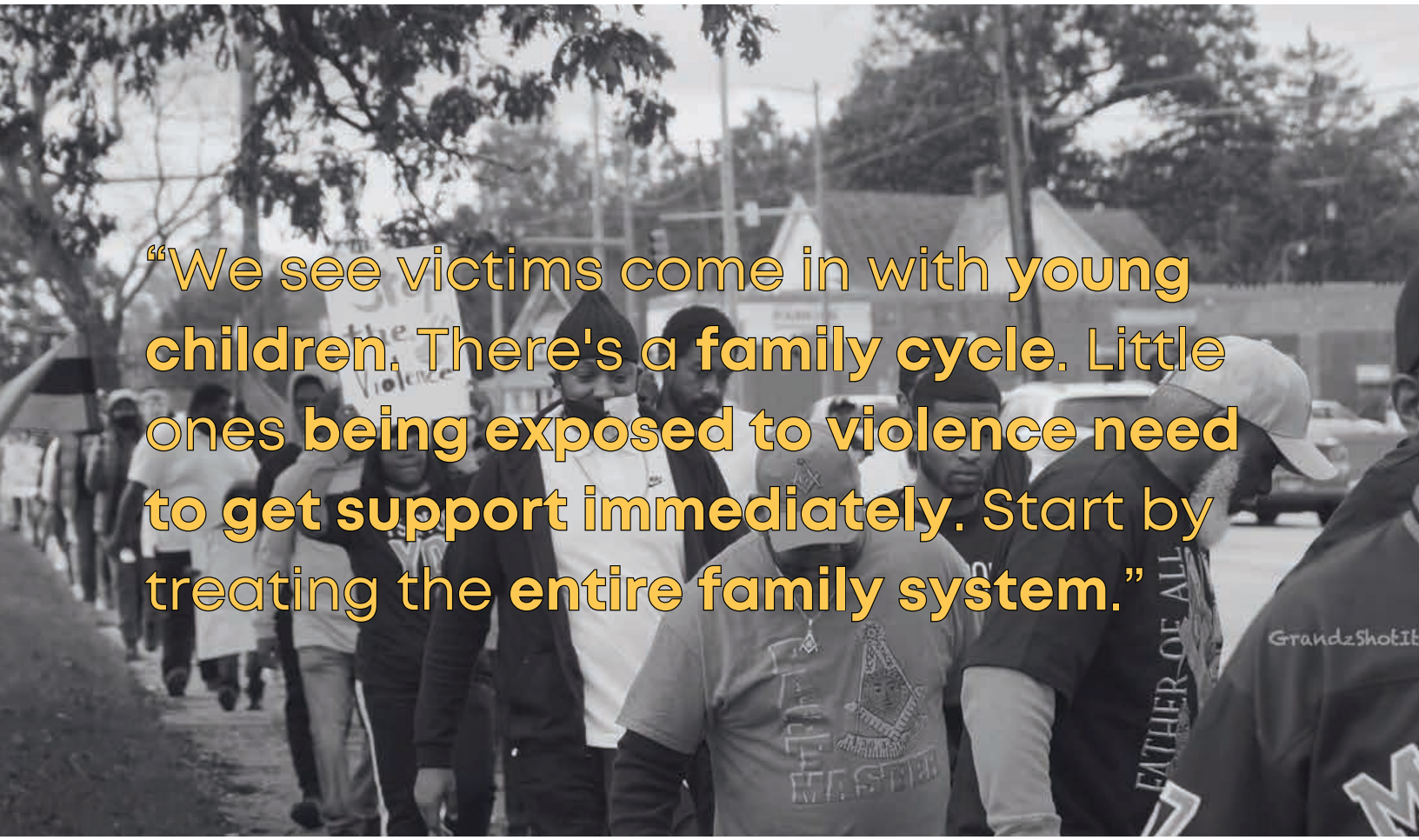
2.1.2. Change Beliefs About Conflict

2.1.3. Increase Resiliency & Protective Factors

5. Address Social Determinants

5.8. The Healing & Compassion Fund is robust and able to self-sustain without depending on an annual allocation from the City.

A 2021 march against gun violence organized by SOC in light of recent incidents.



Recommendations

1. Healing and Compassion Fund

Develop a flexible donor-advised fund that reduces gaps in access to resources for those impacted by gun violence. Applicants can utilize up to **$2,000** in assistance for basic needs, temporary respite, relocation, minor home repairs and modifications, burial, funeral, and memorial costs. The fund is not a replacement for Victims' Compensation, Trauma Recovery Centers, or other supports; it is meant to provide support to victims of gun violence swiftly while reducing common barriers to accessing traditional victims' compensation.

Launched - Donate, Share, or Apply

2. Healing Hub Resource Guide and Resource Navigators

Develop and maintain a resource guide/clearinghouse that provides a thorough listing of services, support groups, and organizations that are available to support those impacted by violence. Include 211 as a standalone, develop an external website, and train 211 Resource Navigators in the Healing Hub to ensure safe face-to-face accessibility for those impacted by violence.

Resource Guide: In Motion - Download V1 **Resource Navigators: Not started**

3. Virtual Safe Spaces

Create or support virtual safe spaces or forums where individuals can discuss conflicts, grief, or other concerns openly under the guidance of trained moderators, fostering dialogue, healing, and understanding when in conflict.

Not started

4. Online Conflict Mediation Workshops

Offer online workshops for community members, particularly youth, on conflict resolution techniques specific to social media interactions, empowering them to de-escalate online tensions.

Not started

5. Youth Peer Support*

Train youth in mediation, violence prevention, and substance use prevention.
*Aligns with *Youth Fellowship* recommendation.

Planning - Mediation and violence prevention skills included in Youth Fellowship

6. Medical Debt Forgiveness for Gun-related Injuries

Reduce the burden of gun injury-related medical debt by identifying and seeking forgiveness for medical debts tied to billing codes for assaultive gun injuries at Mercy St. Vincent Medical Center, ProMedica Toledo Hospital, University of Toledo Medical College, physical rehab, and other health-serving organizations supporting Toledoans impacted by gun violence.

Setbacks - Debt forgiveness funding fully allocated; HIPAA concerns

7. Victim and Survivor Services Team*

Develop a community-based victim and survivor services team that assists individuals and families in the aftermath of violent crimes.

In Motion - See Pillar 2, Recommendation 6

Fostering Healing and Improving Coordination

Gun violence inflicts pain and trauma on all who experience it. In the aftermath of a shooting incident, **families face a slew of challenges** that can persist for a lifetime. Fatal shootings, non-fatal shootings, and shootings into homes each present their own obstacles. How can I move forward after this loss? Will my loved one be OK? Am I safe in my home? How am I supposed to deal with this?

A range of dedicated people and organizations **provide support in the aftermath of gun violence**. Emergency rooms, social workers, community-based organizations, fellow survivors, and the city **have a role to play**. If those efforts are not coordinated - if the "secondary responders" are not communicating and working together - the impact on families can be harmful. Currently, **many responders exist in "silos,"** meaning that communication and coordination between different groups is limited. Working to **develop and implement standard practices**, communication flows, partnerships, and procedures **throughout the network** of individuals and organizations that respond to incidents of gun violence will ensure that those impacted receive the highest quality **support that is trauma-informed and victim-centered**.

How Does Coordination Look in Motion?*

A long-simmering conflict escalates after one youth involved in the dispute makes a **social media post that shares his location** and calls out the people he is beefing with. Hours later, **shots ring out** in front of his home, and the young man is **rushed to the hospital**. Shortly after the shooting, **MONSE is notified** of what took place and receives preliminary information from an unusual incident report, and begins establishing a coordinated response.

First, MONSE **reaches out to SOC staff**, sharing initial information and asking who knows the families involved. What is the **likelihood of retaliation?** Who else will be **impacted, and how can we support them?** Is there someone we can talk to to **turn down the temperature** on this situation? Next, MONSE connects the hospital social worker with Sisters 4 Unity and a member of SOC. Within hours, two members of the coordinated response team – one from Sisters 4 Unity and one from SOC – **arrive at the hospital**. They meet with family members in the waiting room to **offer support and comfort**. One of them leaves to buy food for everyone, since the family has not left the hospital.

The next day, additional partners – the Trauma Recovery Center, Good Grief of Northwest Ohio, school administrators, mental health providers, and more – are **notified of what took place**, what **response has occurred so far**, and how they may be **able to assist**. Several days later, the young man pulls through his injuries and is expected to recover, but the road will be long. SOC team members meet with him and his family once he has returned home to offer him a **spot on the SOC caseload**. He begins meeting with an Interrupter weekly.

In the coming weeks, Sisters 4 Unity continues checking in on the young man's family to see what additional support they may need. The shooting **damaged their door**, so Sisters 4 Unity finds a **local organization to repair the damage**. As summer winds to a close, and the young man prepares to return for his senior year of high school, MONSE reaches out to the school administrators to discuss what **school-based supports** they can provide during the school year. The young man receives **in-school mental health support** and **enrolls in a job training program**. After graduation, he joins the SOC Jobs program and begins to earn a living wage.

** This description is a composite of several coordinated responses. Details have been changed to protect all parties.*

Pillar 4

Accessing Opportunities

Purpose: Bolstering integrated services for youth and communities in pursuit of to ensure that risk factors for experiencing gun violence are reduced by improving access to opportunities. Opportunities will be designed specifically to meet the needs of those at the highest risk of experiencing violence.

Goal Alignment:

1. Reduce Gun Violence
2. Change Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors

2.1.3. Increase Resiliency and Protective Factors

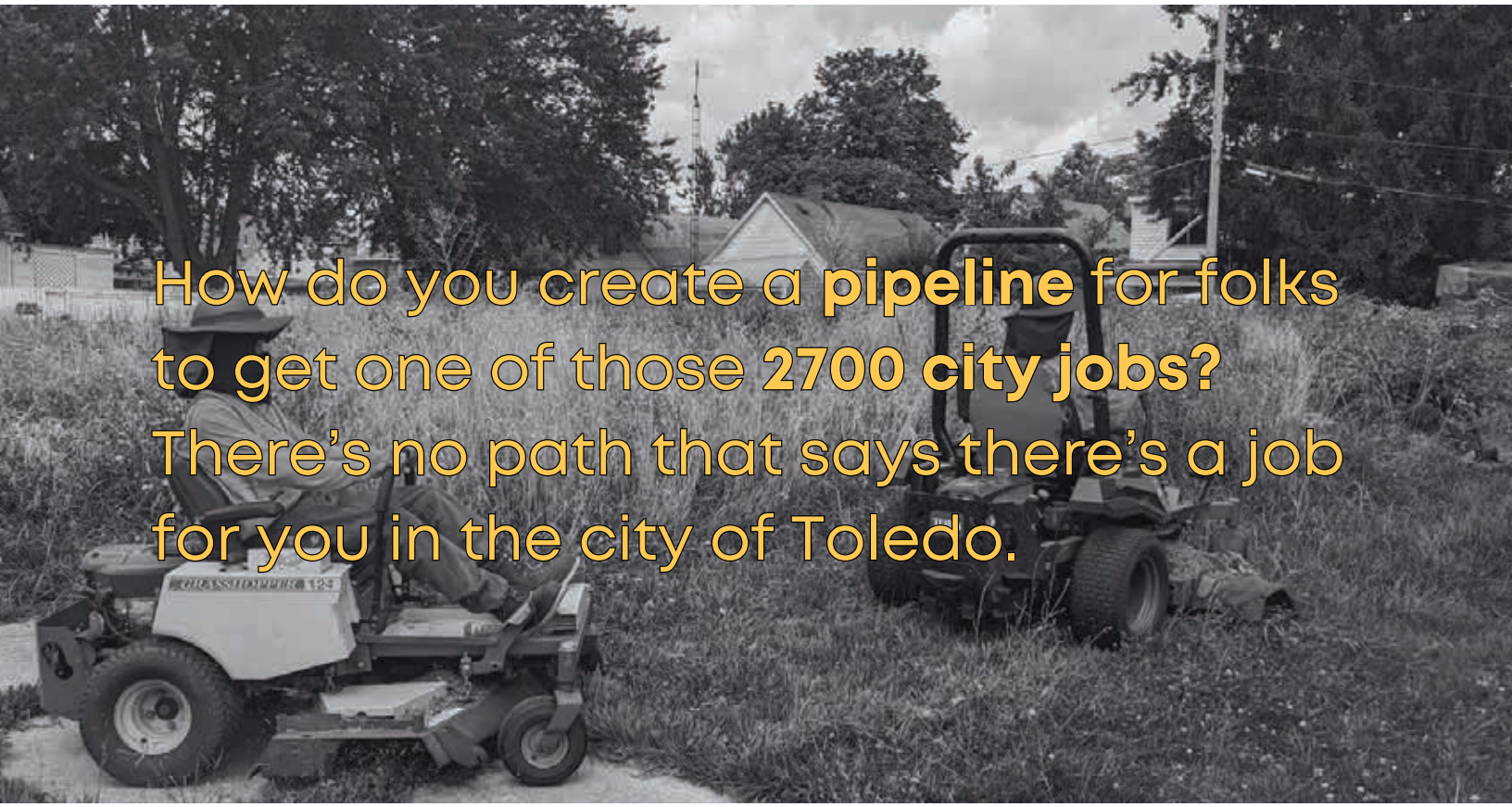
4. Address Social Determinants

4.2. Increase core neighborhood employment in living wage jobs.

4.3 Increase the number of opportunity-youth and young adults under 25 engaged in school, employment, or job training.

4.4. Increase net worth, credit score, and median household income.

2024 SOC job training program pilot in the Lagrange Corridor.



Recommendations

1. Career Pathways & Career Coaching

Fill gaps in career counseling efforts to better support core neighborhoods, focusing on those at elevated risk of or impacted by violence.

Planning - Youth Education and Workforce Commissioner Hired

2. SOC Employment

Develop a suite of workforce opportunities for SOC clients, ensuring enhanced support that includes job coaching and shadowing, financial literacy, and supportive training alongside SOC staff and other appropriate partners. Support transitional-aged participants with pathways to employment and careers within the city and other relevant living wage jobs.

In Motion - Expanding to serve 20 youth in Spring and Summer 2025

3. Resume the Youth Build Program

Identify backbone organization(s) and funding to stand up Toledo Youth Build. Youth Build "partners with opportunity youth (youth aged 14 - 24 not in school, employed, or in training) to build the skill-sets and mindsets that lead to lifelong learning, livelihood, and leadership."

Planning - TA from Toledo YouthBuild's former Director and Dayton YouthBuild

4. In-Person Employment Tours and Job Placements

Expose opportunity youth to the depth and breadth of career opportunities. Offer in-person employment tours and job placements.

Not started

5. Mobile Outreach for Workforce and Career Development

Mobile outreach that caters to identified neighborhoods by bringing career and workforce resources directly to those neighborhoods. Initially, these will operate as scheduled pop-ups, with the long-term goal of establishing a Mobile Outreach Unit.

Not started

Pillar 5

Building Engaged Neighborhoods and Networks

Purpose: To support people, families, friends, networks, and neighborhoods with tools, resources, and opportunities for meaningful engagement in the work being done to reduce violence. Key focuses include addressing the intersections of the built environment and violence and the role that networks, whether online, social, or otherwise, play in increasing risk or protecting against violence.

Goal Alignment:

1. Reduce Gun Violence

3. Neighborhood Change

3.1 Improve neighborhood Collective Efficacy.

3.2 Reduce disinvestment and disrepair in core neighborhoods.

3.3 Reduce gun homicides within ½ mile of schools in focus areas.

SOC staff Matthew Smith, Christopher Matthews, and Eduardo Adams work alongside a Habitat for Humanity volunteer to beautify an Englewood elder's yard.

Recommendations

Neighborhood Safety and Vibrancy

1. Safe Passage to Schools

Focus blight reduction, beautification, and place-making efforts on high-trafficked routes to schools. Bolster the network of community members willing to support Safe Passage before and after school. Initial efforts should focus on youth who walk, bike, or ride the bus to or from school, beginning with SOC and Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSA).

In Motion - Participatory mapping completed at 4 schools; TA from LISC and Alliance for Concerned Men beginning in 2Q 2025

2. Embed Mediation and Restorative Practices in the Community

Support community leaders, influencers, and trusted adults with training in high quality mediation, conflict resolution, and restorative practices.

Planning - See CVIP Academy in Pillar 2, Recommendation 3

3. Identify and Bolster Community Safe Havens/Hubs

Engage in participatory mapping with youth to identify safe havens. Bolster locations with programming, training, recreational activities, and supportive services. Acquire National Safe Space designations for safe havens.

In Motion - V1 complete with School SOC and BU RISE Lab; Online version live; Zepf's Safety Net will acquire Safe Space certification and train safe havens

4. Support Youth-Led Community Projects

Identify and support at least one youth-led community project per quarter that fosters community engagement, peace, and leadership skills. Focus areas include SOC areas, NRSA areas, and others as appropriate.

In Motion - Paint it Forward, RAM Empowerment Project, and more

5. Neighborhood Guide for Assessing and Addressing Safety

Develop a guide for assessing and addressing safety concerns. The guide should speak to the built environment, neighborhood cohesion, and trust. It should also include implementation, including how to access resources that help address identified concerns.

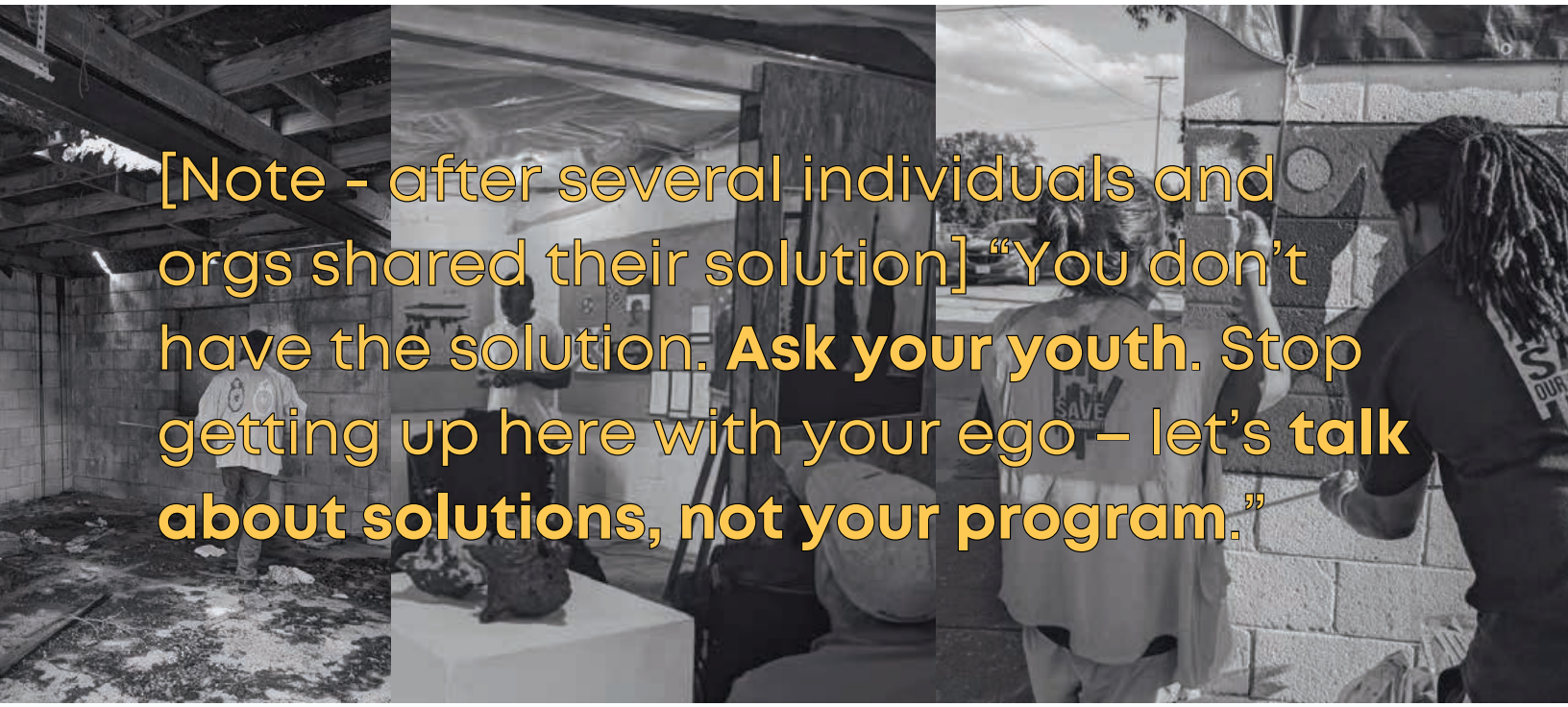
Not started

Why Focus on the Built Environment?

Our physical surroundings have a significant impact on how we think, act, and view the world. In cities across America, gun violence is concentrated in neighborhoods that share certain characteristics: they have a history of disinvestment fueled by redlining and forms of structural racism that resulted in concentrated poverty, blight, lack of economic opportunity, and other risk factors for gun violence.

Specific policies were passed that created these circumstances, and new policies and practices exist that, if implemented, can help create positive change and promote peace in our neighborhoods. As an example, the city - in partnership with several grassroots and system-level partners, was awarded a $20 million RAISE grant that will re-connect the Uptown and Junction neighborhoods once split by highway construction and urban renewal.

Beyond undoing policies, physical disrepair and blight have an impact on violent crime. Proactively addressing these issues - transforming vacant lots into vibrant green spaces or rehabilitating a home in disrepair - not only transforms those spaces from risk factors to protective factors that help reduce gun violence, but also ultimately save taxpayers money.



*Artist and youth leader Lydia Myrick, BGSU students, Parks and Youth Services, Ondeck Alliance, Junction Coalition, SOC, and several other partners put on the **Paint It Forward** festival in the Junction neighborhood in the summer of 2024. This event transformed a blighted garage and adjacent lot into a temporary art gallery and healing space. Yoga, poetry, resources, and youth activities were provided for those in attendance.*

Youth Leadership in Motion: RAM Empowerment Project

Youth leaders at Rogers High School have been lending their efforts to the work to end gun violence in our community. In 2023, several community partners collaborated to secure grant funding to support a youth leadership initiative called the RAM Empowerment Project. The young leaders then worked through the University of Michigan's Youth Empowerment Solutions curriculum, which teaches youth about **community organizing and bringing about positive change**. The students decided they wanted to focus on reducing gun violence.

Since completing the curriculum, the students have taken action across several fronts. After hearing about the Healing and Compassion Fund included in Peace in Motion, the students worked with the school's Visual Communication and Design class and **designed a t-shirt to sell to raise money for the fund**. They also created banners featuring QR codes to this plan to **promote awareness about gun violence prevention efforts** in the city.

The students also launched the No More Silence Podcast, which **brings youth and community experts together to discuss root causes of gun violence** and gun violence prevention efforts. Students learn to record, edit, and produce podcast episodes alongside industry experts. Multiple MONSE staff have joined as guests on the podcast to discuss different aspects of gun violence prevention and are grateful to the students for using their voices to promote positive change.

The Fearless Writers program at Rogers HS has also worked to address gun violence. By utilizing the Amherst Writers Method, Fearless Writers provides a creative outlet for self-expression for students impacted by gun violence. **Multiple young scholars shared their writing** at BGSU's Black Issues Conference in the spring of 2025.

Recommendations

Community-Wide Social Media Strategy

6. Social Media Action Research Team

Engage youth as compensated co-researchers with Boston University RISE Lab to better understand the connections between social media and violence and develop actionable strategies.

Planning - See Pillar 2, Recommendation 7

7. Community Engagement Campaign

Launch media campaign to promote community cohesion and positive messaging, encouraging residents to share uplifting content and support one another, thereby counteracting negative influences.

Planning - local media, MONSE, and Roca Inc

8. Anonymous Reporting System

Implement an anonymous reporting system where community members can report concerning social media activity or potential conflicts. This will allow violence interrupters to intervene proactively.

Not started

9. School-Based Digital Citizenship and Conflict Resolution

Beginning with SOC focus schools, collaborate with local schools to incorporate digital citizenship and online conflict resolution skills into the curriculum, ensuring that young people are equipped with the tools to navigate social media safely and responsibly.

Not started

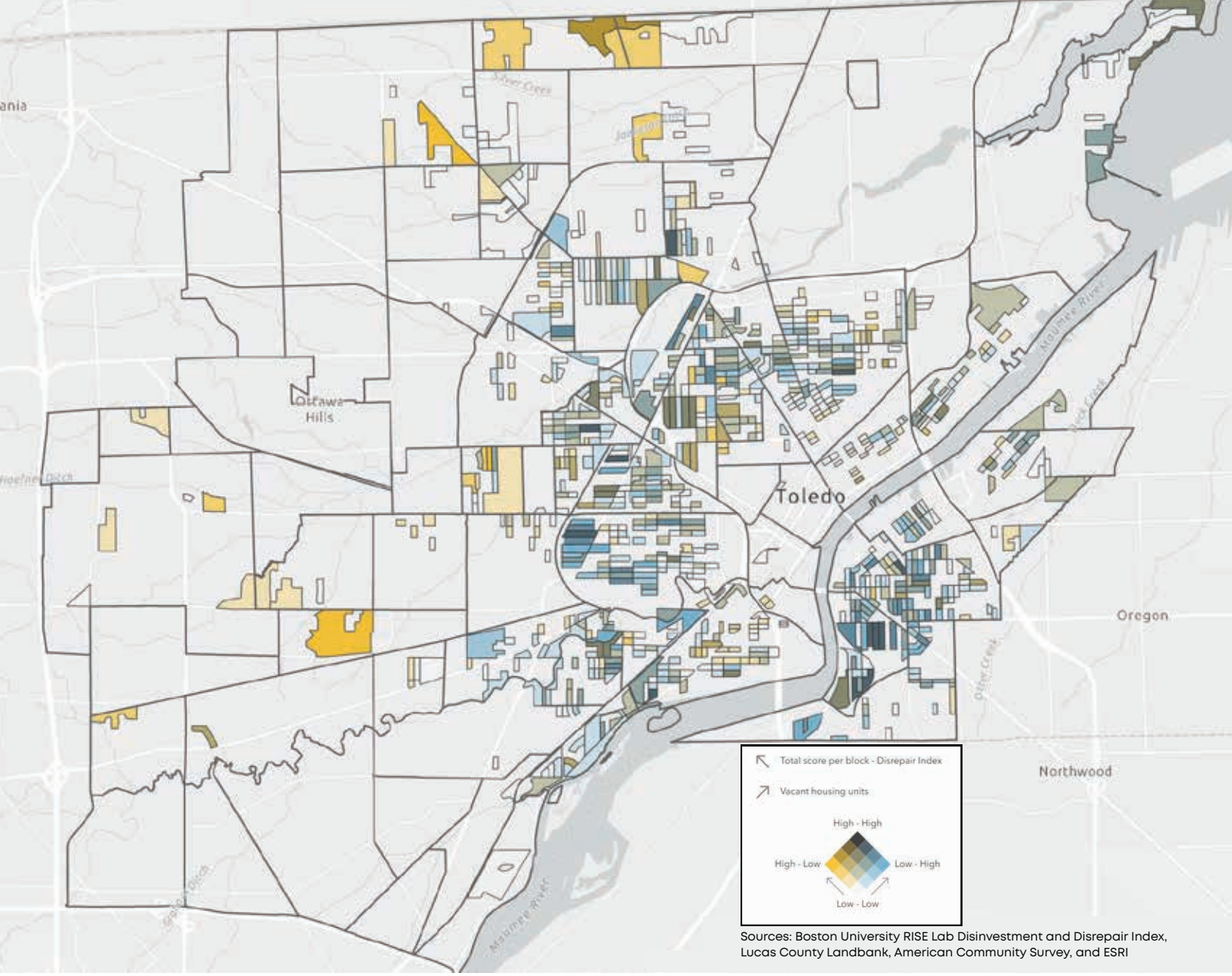
10. Disinvestment and Disrepair Index

Reversing physical disinvestment by remediating abandoned buildings and vacant lots is an evidence-based strategy to reduce urban firearm violence. The Disinvestment and Disrepair Index was developed by Boston University RISE Lab using data from the Lucas County Landbank parcel survey and gun violence data from the Toledo Police Department. The index identifies areas in a 5-minute walking area that have increased odds of gun violence. Each increase in overall disrepair conditions results in **1.68 times higher odds of gun violence**. Parcels with the highest levels of disinvestment in Toledo resulted in an estimated **20.16 times higher odds of gun violence** associated with that area's disrepair conditions. This index is a way to target **intentional blight remediation**, repairs, greening and cleaning initiatives, job development programs, beautification initiatives, and so on. This recommendation will initially focus on projects in SOC areas, NRSA areas, and others as appropriate.

Complete

Artists James Dickerson and Yusuf Lateef activate a blighted, overgrown lot in the OWENI neighborhood.

"[We can] do all this work in the neighborhood and then step outside and **see blight**. There are no businesses. We need economic development. We **need to restore communities**."



Sources: Boston University RISE Lab Disinvestment and Disrepair Index, Lucas County Landbank, American Community Survey, and ESRI

Identifying Relationships between Vacant Housing Units and the Disinvestment and Disrepair Index Score

The census blocks on this map are color-coded to show two types of data: the number of vacant housing units on each block and the Disinvestment and Disrepair Index score developed by Boston University's RISE Lab. Blocks **shaded yellow** indicate higher Index scores and a lower proportion of vacant housing units. **Dusky Blue** indicates more vacant housing and a lower Index score. **Dusky black-brown** indicates a higher Index score and vacant housing. Considering vacant housing units, disrepair, and risk of gun violence at the block level is a way to focus resources to address economic, safety, and housing challenges.

Conclusion

Why Peace in Motion?

Peace in Motion: Toledo's Path to Long-term Community Safety results from 12 months of tireless work from the Community Action Table. Yet, the pain of losing people to gun violence, the collective trauma, and - critically - the efforts to prevent and address violence in our community stretch back much further. Centering the voices and lived experiences of those most affected by gun violence is critical to creating and sustaining long-term solutions.

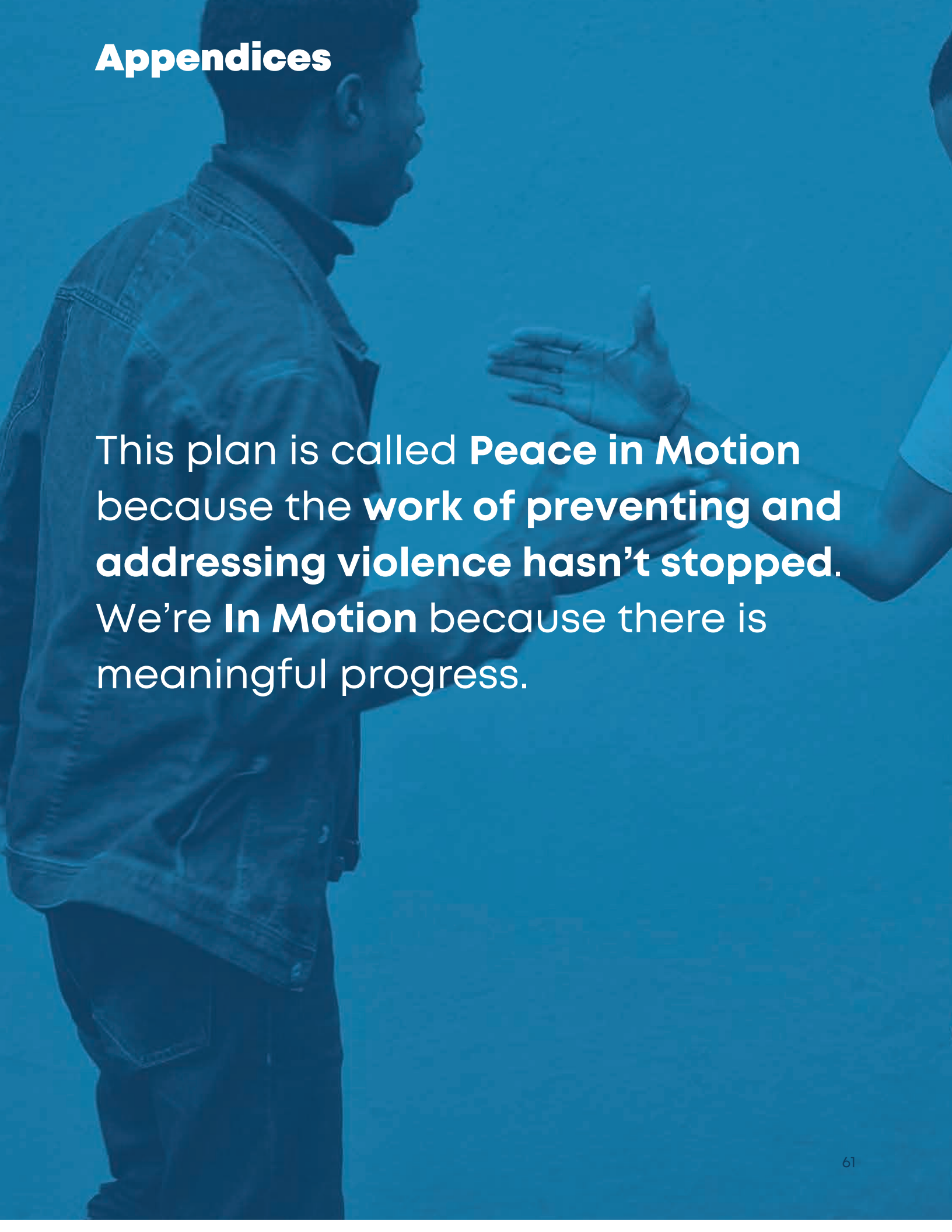
Toledo saw a **31% reduction in homicides** in comparison to a roughly 12% drop in fatal shootings nationwide in 2023 and an additional **18% reduction in 2024**. Our community is taking steps in the right direction, and this plan **provides a roadmap** for where we go next and what we must do to get there. Although **no amount of progress fully alleviates the pain of loss**, this community-driven collaborative approach to addressing gun violence is working.

There remains much to do. These recommendations **provide a guide, but Peace in Motion is not set in stone**. As circumstances change, as progress is made, and as new needs are identified, we will **update and hone the plan to ensure it remains relevant in guiding our efforts**. Progress reports, detailing both successes and challenges, will be shared regularly by the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement to ensure the community remains informed and engaged in this work. The Community Action Table will continue to convene to push this work forward.

The recommendations included in this plan seek to **address the root causes of violence** that are able to be addressed at the individual, relational, and community levels. However, other underlying causes of violence fall outside the scope of our community's ability to affect change within five years. These **societal factors will inherently limit this plan's impact**. Peace in Motion is not an end goal, but merely a plan for the next five years. We believe the recommendations it presents will save lives.

By 2029, we will see significant reductions in gun violence in Toledo, but **more work will remain unstarted and unfinished**. Peace in Motion, therefore, is merely the **next step in the long and righteous journey** towards the ultimate goal of **making gun violence a relic of the past**.

Appendices



This plan is called **Peace in Motion** because the **work of preventing and addressing violence hasn't stopped**. We're **In Motion** because there is meaningful progress.

Letter from Cities United

CITIES UNITED 1718 W. MUHAMMAD ALI BLVD.
LOUISVILLE, KY 40205

502.709.6462
INFO@CITIESUNITED.ORG
CITIESUNITED.ORG

August 2024

To Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz and The Citizens of Toledo, The release of "Peace in Motion: Toledo's Path to Community Safety" shows what can happen when Political Will and Public Will align towards a common goal.

From day one, you, your team, and concerned citizens from all walks of life - have been focused on creating a comprehensive ecosystem that will identify, engage and support those who are most at risk of being impacted by community violence. Your team has spent 1000's of hours in the community listening to and learning from those on the frontline, they have created space for everyday citizens to feel heard and seen.

This has not been an easy process, in the midst of building out "Toledo's Path to Community Safety," families have continued to experience loss and pain – loss and pain that vibrates throughout the whole city. Through this loss and pain, the community has continued to show up for each other – building a path to a safer Toledo. They showed up because they believe in the possibilities of Toledo.

The five pillars that have been identified to guide the work: *enhancing the CVIP ecosystem*, *improving coordination and shared accountability*, *fostering hope and healing*, *accessing opportunities*, and *building engaged neighborhoods and networks* – will be foundational to the success of Peace in Motion.

The work to develop your comprehensive public safety plan, along with its release are phases in your journey – there is much more work on Toledo's Path to Community Safety. To reach your bold goals, it's going to take all of Toledo coming together, working towards a common vision – and centering those who have been disproportionately impacted by community violence. Now is your time, and with this plan guiding your work – I am confident that lives will be saved.

I want to thank each of you for your leadership and for your commitment to build pathways to a safer Toledo.

In Partnership,

Anthony Smith, Executive Director

Letter from MONSE

To the Community Action Table – we're grateful for the time, care, and heart you've poured into one another, this community, and ultimately into Peace in Motion. The plan is only a continuation of your work, since long before the Initiative to Reduce Gun Violence or the Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement existed. Thank you for your patience and willingness to have deep, uncomfortable, and occasionally tense conversations. Discussing gun violence isn't easy, generally; to do so while owning the pain of loss, injury, and incarceration from being on either side of the gun felt impossible initially. Yet you all continued to lead with dignity and respect. Thank you for keeping peace in motion – we all know the work never stopped.

To all impacted by violence, especially those in "the trenches" or having to navigate them every day: know that there is a community of folks committed to you and your wellbeing. There's a path forward for every person, regardless of where they begin. That includes justice and restoration. Many young men and women from similar backgrounds have grown past a rough past and now reach back to help.

For all of us with "two ears and one mouth," thank you for listening to one another, developing shared goals, and honoring the perspectives of others.

To Toledoans – gun violence has impacted us all, whether directly or indirectly. Toledoans worked tirelessly to develop this plan. These recommendations are based on the experiences of Toledoans most affected by gun violence and those working to end it. They also align with strategies that have proven successful in other communities.

We've made progress on several recommendations since the plan was initially released in August 2024. We believe the continued decline in fatal and nonfatal shootings is partially related to the work we do every day - reviewing every fatal, nonfatal shooting, and shooting into a home, mediating conflicts, supporting temporary relocations, and connecting high-risk people to resources. Peace is "in motion" because we see meaningful progress and haven't stopped working. Yet this work doesn't happen alone. No person, program, or idea can bring about this change in isolation. Each of us has a role to play. As you read this plan, we hope you see opportunities to join us in our work and make Peace in Motion's vision a reality.

To our elected officials – we know the weight of responsibility felt by each of you when you receive news of another fatal shooting in our city, the desire to provide answers when people ask what you are going to do about gun violence. Our residents have elected you to represent them and offer a safe Toledo for all of us to share. We hope this plan will spur new ideas for innovation in how our city addresses gun violence. This plan is not for the government of Toledo to implement, but rather for our entire community to embrace and make real. Thank you for the trust shown and the scrutiny given to the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement. Nothing short of the best will suffice when addressing an important issue.

In Peace,

Malcolm Cunningham, Director

Joshua Davies, Commissioner

How Can I Help?

Support the Healing and Compassion Fund

The Healing and Compassion Fund, which exists to provided limited financial support to those directly impacted by gun violence, was launched in March 2025 with **$35,000 of seed money from the MONSE budget**. However, in order for the Fund to remain a viable resource for our community, it requires ongoing support. To help ensure the Healing and Compassion Fund's long-term sustainability, **you can share the donation link** within your network. More importantly, you can help to spread the word about the Healing and Compassion Fund with service providers, trusted community organizations, and those directly impacted by gun violence so that those who need to access these resources will be able to do so.

When discussing the Fund with your friends and family, you may encounter harmful narratives based on misinformation about the causes of gun violence and about victims and survivors. **You can counter harmful narratives** by sharing information from this plan or your own personal experiences.

Donations to the Fund will **help survivors cover essential needs** such as temporary housing, home modifications, and burial expenses for grieving families. Unlike traditional victim compensation programs—which can be slow, complex, and difficult to access—the Healing and Compassion Fund ensures timely relief when it's needed most. If you are in a position to do so, **you can donate** to the fund directly.

To learn more about the Healing and Compassion Fund or to donate, visit www.unitedwaytoledo.org/hcf/ or scan the QR code below.

If you have experienced gun violence and are in need of support, scan the QR code below to **apply for support from the Healing and Compassion Fund**

Support the Healing Hub Resource Guide

The Healing Hub Resource Guide serves as a one-stop-shop for community resources that can assist those who have been impacted by gun violence. The programs and organizations included in the Guide have been selected based on meeting common needs identified by survivors of gun violence. The information in the guide will be updated regularly to ensure it remains an accurate source of information and support for those experiencing the aftermath of gun violence.

To support the Healing Hub Resource Guide, **you can share it** within your network and with trusted organizations in our community. The more Toledoans are aware of the guide, the more likely it is that those impacted by gun violence will be able to access it.

While reading through the Guide, **you can review it** for accuracy and help to identify any missing resources that you feel should be included. If you know of a resource for gun violence survivors that is not yet in the plan, you can add it by completing this form.

Promote Safety on Social Media

For Students and Young Adults:

Online drama can sometimes spill into real life, and it's important to know how to handle it safely. If you see posts that feel threatening, violent, or dangerous, avoid sharing, liking, or commenting on them—**giving attention to negative posts can make things worse**. If it's coming from a friend, reach out with a text or call to check in and let them know you care. However, **don't try to intervene in conflicts online unless you or a close friend are directly connected to the people involved**. If you're worried something you see online could lead to harm, talk to a trusted adult like a teacher, parent, coach, or mentor who can help.

Social media algorithms shape what appears on your feed, often prioritizing negative or violent content. You can interrupt this cycle by **searching for and engaging with positive posts**—watching and liking uplifting content in bulk retrains your algorithm to show you more of what inspires you. Beyond consuming good content, think about creating it yourself. Use your social media presence as a platform to **promote positivity and share engaging messages** that uplift others. In a world where violent posts often go viral, positive content is gaining more attention than ever—and there's real opportunity for that engagement to skyrocket and lead to new opportunities for growth and connection.

Remember that everything you post online contributes to your digital footprint —and once it's out there, it's permanent. Be mindful of the things you share or say on social media because they can follow you for years to come. Your online activity matters more than you think, so **use your voice thoughtfully and intentionally**. By staying aware of your impact and focusing on positivity, you can help create a safer and more inspiring online community while building a **reputation that reflects the best version of yourself.**

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Promote Safety on Social Media

For Parents and Guardians:

For members of previous generations, social media is a relatively new phenomenon. We can remember the days before Facebook, Instagram, and even MySpace. Given this perspective, it can be easy to dismiss what happens on social media as irrelevant, "not real," or unimportant. However, **for today's youth, social media has been a permanent fixture of their existence**, and what happens on social media is very much a part of their real lived experience. It is important that we keep these different perceptions of social media at the forefront of our minds when talking with teens about their online activity. Rather than dismissing it entirely or even banning its use, **talk to the young people in your life about how they use social media** and what it means to them. Encourage safe practices, such as **not sharing their location publicly, avoiding incriminating posts, and setting boundaries** to create intentional time away from social media. Try to ensure your conversations about social media remain a two-way dialogue, where you are learning from them, and they are learning from you. If you see a young person in your life engaging in risky behavior online, it is important to address that with them. **Those conversations are best handled offline**. If you see other young people making similar posts, consider reaching out to the trusted adults in their life and encouraging them to have an in-person conversation about. Successful conversations about sensitive topics such as this require trust and strong relationships.

For Other Community Members:

Many harmful narratives surrounding gun violence are shared online. If nobody speaks up to share another perspective, these harmful narratives may be the only ones that some people encounter. If you see a harmful or inaccurate narrative being posted, consider speaking up to **offer an alternative understanding of the issue**. Don't engage in arguments, and don't tell anyone that they are wrong. Consider using phrases like "In my experience," "From my perspective," and "Based on my understanding of this issue," to **avoid getting drawn into debates**. Lastly, be sure to **never call out a young person for risky online behavior publicly on social media**. They are likely to shut down and not hear you. Compassionate in-person conversations are much more effective.

CVIP Glossary

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Traumatic events between ages 1-17 that can impact lifelong health, leading to mental, physical, and substance use disorders.

At-risk individuals: Early drug, alcohol, or tobacco use; low parental involvement; poor academic performance; association with delinquent peers; economic disadvantage; low self-esteem; and residence in high-risk communities.

Benefits Cliff: When career advancement leads to the loss of public assistance, making a family financially worse off or no better off.

Burnout: Psychological stress with physical and psychological symptoms like exhaustion, depression, frustration, and anxiety, often experienced by victim assistance providers.

Busy Streets Theory: When neighbors and community organizations collaborate to improve their environments, they create safer, more connected neighborhoods.

Capacity-building: Investing resources in people and organizations to bolster them.

Cognitive Behavioral Interventions with wraparound supports: Community-based programs partnering with the criminal justice system to provide cognitive behavioral interventions and wraparound social services to individuals impacted by gun violence.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): Teaches people to manage emotions, address conflicts constructively, and think before acting, helping high-risk individuals improve thinking and behavior to avoid crime and violence.

Collective Efficacy: A community's social cohesion and willingness to control behaviors within its boundaries can reduce violence.

Community violence: Interpersonal violence in public spaces by a person or persons not intimately related to the victim.

Community Violence Intervention and Prevention (CVIP): An approach that uses evidence-informed strategies to reduce violence through tailored community-centered initiatives.

Community-based organization (CBO): A nonprofit organization that works to serve people in its community through activities and services like healthcare, education, public safety, legal services, youth programs, employment, training, and advocacy.

Community-centered: Active involvement of community members in a community's governing structure and organizations that influence decision-making.

Compassion fatigue: Traumatic stress from working with victims/survivors, common when victim service providers don't practice self-care.

Conflict mediation: Intervention between conflicting parties to promote reconciliation, settlement, or compromise.

Credible Messenger: An individual with lived experience and community ties who can build relationships and intervene with at-risk individuals.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): Using urban and architectural design to reduce victimization, deter crime, and build community.

CVI Training Academy: Structured training and support to implement evidence-based CVIP strategies.

Diversion: Alternatives to formal system processing/incarceration of youths, aiming to correct antisocial behaviors through family and community assistance.

Ecosystem: Interconnected programs and strategies to reduce community violence, complementing law enforcement.

Empowerment: Giving authority or power; helping people by sharing information or resources so they can help themselves.

Evidence-informed: Practice backed by evidence from multiple disciplines and methods, including research, evaluation, case studies, and expert opinions.

Freestyle Gangs: Groups forming around an incident, often in response to a death, with grief and substance use leading to retaliatory violence.

Gang desistance: Leverage points leading a gang member to reconsider and end gang membership, influenced by experiences like criminal justice involvement, negative law enforcement contact, victimization, gang disruption, and life changes.

Gender Based Violence: Harmful acts directed at individuals based on their gender, often rooted in gender inequality and power imbalances.

Grassroots organization: A collective body of residents, community members, and Community-Based Organizations working together toward a shared goal.

Group-Based Violence Intervention: Partnership between law enforcement and community partners to identify and prevent chronic violent offenders from future violence through legal action and social services.

Gun Violence: Violence committed with firearms.

High-risk individuals: At high risk of being a victim or perpetrator of gun violence, often with limited education, group activity involvement, history of violence, trauma, and distrust for services and systems.

Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP): Programs in trauma centers engage patients after a violent injury to reduce retaliation and offer services like mental health counseling and support.

Indirect or secondary victim: Impacted by a crime but not the direct victim, often a friend, family member, or community member.

Intimate partner violence: Physical, sexual, stalking, and psychological aggression by a current or former partner.

Life Course Perspective: Understanding how early life environment affects later health outcomes, with critical and sensitive periods for exposure.

Logic Model: Description or graphic showing the relationship between a program's activities and intended impacts.

Motivational Interviewing: Research-based dialogue process strengthening intrinsic motivation for change and is effective with resistant individuals.

Office of Violence Prevention (OVP): Local government office dedicated to violence prevention, providing a centralized approach to community safety.

Opportunity Youth: 16-24 year olds not in school or working, often with disabilities, homelessness, or involvement with juvenile justice or child welfare systems.

Outreach worker: Connects with high-risk individuals to build trust and connect them to formal programs and services.

Participatory mapping: a process in which community members contribute their own experiences, relationships, information, and ideas about a place to the creation of a map.

Polyvictimization / polyvictim: Experiencing multiple victimizations of different kinds, linked to various physical, psychological, and emotional problems.

Positive Youth Development: Providing opportunities and protective factors like family support, caring adults, positive peer groups, and involvement at school and in the community to help young people succeed and reduce behavioral problems.

Protective factors: Characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of adverse outcomes.

Public health approach to addressing violence: Defining, measuring, identifying causes, preventing, implementing, and evaluating violence.

Re-entry / returning citizen: Individuals who have been incarcerated and are reintegrating into society.

Resilience: Positive adaptation despite serious threats or adverse circumstances.

Restorative Justice: Focuses on repairing harm caused by an offense through bringing together those affected to find solutions, rather than solely punishing the offender.

Restorative Practices: Focus on strengthening relationships and social connections within communities.

Root causes of violence: Underlying community, family, historical, and societal factors contributing to violence.

Safe Place: Provides immediate help and resources for youth in need and is a place they feel comfortable.

Safe Passage: Provides safety to students traveling to and from school in high-violence communities.

Safety Plan: Personalized plan to help individuals anticipate and stay safe in dangerous situations.

Secondary or vicarious trauma: Physical and emotional stress from working with traumatized individuals.

Self-care: Intentional stress reduction and resilience-strengthening practices for staff in high-stress situations.

Self-Efficacy: The belief in one's ability to achieve desired outcomes. Self-efficacy includes confidence in controlling behavior, influencing events, and staying motivated in pursuit of goals.

Sexual violence: Sexual act committed without consent or against someone unable to consent.

Social Determinants of Health: Non-medical factors influencing health outcomes, like income, housing, and social connectedness.

Street Outreach: Public health approach to violence prevention using outreach workers to mediate conflicts and prevent retaliatory violence.

Structural violence: Harm from economic and social structures, power relations, and inequality, preventing people from meeting basic needs.

Suicide: Death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with intent to die.

Survivor: Person who has survived an ordeal or trauma, including direct and indirect victims.

Survivor-informed: Designed with leadership and input from victims/survivors to meet their needs.

Theory of Change: A structured approach for designing, implementing, and evaluating a program that explores change and its causes.

Trauma-informed: Realizes the impact of trauma and integrates that knowledge into practices to resist re-traumatization.

Universal School-Based Violence Prevention: Universal school-based violence prevention programs educate students and staff about violence, changing their mindset while enhancing interpersonal and emotional skills.

Victim-centered: Prioritizes victims' needs, provides nonjudgmental assistance, and emphasizes self-determination and safety.

Violence Interruption: Intervenes to prevent retaliation and violence from spreading through a community.

Violence Reduction Council: Collaboration to analyze firearm violence and develop policy recommendations for support and risk reduction.

Wraparound services: Coordinated, comprehensive, community-based support for high-risk individuals.

Youth engagement: Levels of youth involvement in activities and strategies, ranging from informing to youth-led.

Youth-Led Organization: Fully led, managed, and coordinated by young people.

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