



North Carolinians Against Gun Violence Education Fund

Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiatives

Community violence intervention and prevention initiatives focus on individuals at the highest risk of violence, and use prevention and intervention strategies to reduce violence and retaliation. They emphasize employing effective social services to address issues such as education, employment, substance abuse, trauma, and other root causes of gun violence, thereby preventing shootings in impacted communities.¹

What are the programs, and how do they prevent violence?

Street Outreach

Street Outreach programs employ Violence Interrupters from the community who interrupt cycles of violence by supporting victims, responding to shootings, mediating conflict, and providing social services. Trained workers immediately work with the victim's network of friends and family to prevent retaliation, identify ongoing conflicts and talk to key community actors, constantly following the issue and encouraging a peaceful resolution. Interrupters also work with high risk individuals to convince them to change their behavior and provide any necessary treatment. They shift community norms to non-violence, responding to every shooting, and supporting behavior change by program participants.^{2,3}

Cure Violence is a street outreach program now used in over 50 US cities and many more across the globe. New York neighborhoods participating in Cure Violence experienced 18% fewer homicides from 2010-2013 while the similar NY neighborhoods experienced a 69% **increase** during the same years.⁴

Group Violence Intervention (GVI)

First used by Operation Ceasefire in Boston, this strategy brings together community leaders with prosecutors and law enforcement to identify individuals and groups at greatest risk of gun violence by seeking out people involved in past violent incidents. Individuals are invited to a "call-in" with law enforcement, social service providers and community

¹ Cure Violence. [The 5 Required Components of Cure Violence](#). 2020.

² National Council on Crime and Delinquency. [Developing a Successful Street Outreach Program: Recommendations Lessons Learned](#). 2009 Oct.

³ Cure Violence. [The Cure Violence Health Model](#). 2020.

⁴ Butts JA, et al. [Effectiveness of the Cure Violence Model in New York City](#). 2015 Jan.

members. The call-ins warn of the consequences of violent behavior and offer social services and support for choosing an alternative path to violence.^{5,6}

The Group Violence Intervention strategy includes an analysis of violent incidents and trends; respectful, direct, and repeated in-person communications with high-risk residents; connection to social services to address root causes of violence and focus on desired behaviors; immediate law enforcement response to violence among individuals in the program (including inter-agency collaboration between city, state and federal authorities when needed); and the team consisting of law enforcement, social services, and key community members.^{7,8}

Overall, GVI has been found to lead to a 30%-60% reduction in homicides.⁹ Boston's program specifically found a 63% reduction in youth homicides and 25% decline in monthly gun assaults.¹⁰

Hospital-Based Violence Intervention (HVIP)

HVIPs are rooted in the philosophy that violence is preventable, and empirical evidence demonstrates that a violent injury offers a “teachable moment” and unique opportunity to break cycles of violence. HVIPs focus on patients in the immediate aftermath of violent injury with the goal of reducing reinjury and retaliation as well as promoting healing and psychological well-being. To accomplish this, HVIPs include a brief intervention in the emergency department or hospital bedside, followed by intensive community-based case management services for a period of approximately six months or more, depending on the program. HVIP services are provided by culturally appropriate violence prevention professionals who often also serve in a mentorship capacity. More than 40 programs in the U.S. and internationally have adopted this model and participate as members of the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (The HAVI).¹¹ One randomized control trial found individuals receiving HVIP services were half as likely to be convicted of any crime, and four times less likely to be convicted of a violent crime.¹²

⁵ Braga AA, Weisburd DL. [Focused deterrence and the prevention of violent gun injuries: practice, theoretical principles, and scientific evidence](#). Annual Review of Public Health. 2015 Mar 18;36:55-68.

⁶ Giffords Law Center. [Community Violence](#). 2020.

⁷ Braga AA, Kennedy DM, Waring EJ, Piehl AM. [Problem-Oriented Policing, Deterrence, and Youth Violence: An Evaluation of Boston's Operation Ceasefire](#). Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency. 2001 Aug;38(3):195–225.

⁸ Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. [Group Violence Intervention: An Implementation Guide](#). 2016.

⁹ Giffords Law Center. [Intervention Strategies](#).

¹⁰ Braga AA, Kennedy DM, Waring EJ, Piehl AM. [Problem-Oriented Policing, Deterrence, and Youth Violence: An Evaluation of Boston's Operation Ceasefire](#). Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency. 2001 Aug;38(3):195–225.

¹¹ The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention. [What is a Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program \(HVIP\)?](#)

¹² Cooper C, et al. [Hospital-based violence intervention programs work](#). The Journal of Trauma. 2006 Sep;61(3):534-7; discussion 537-40.