



## Investing in Community Violence Intervention to Reduce Gun Violence in Raleigh

Raleigh faces a crisis of gun violence that requires city-level investments in community violence intervention programs (CVI). In 2020, 22 residents died by gun homicide and 96 were shot and wounded.<sup>1</sup> This gun violence disproportionately impacts Black residents in Raleigh, who are ten times more likely to die by gun homicide than their white counterparts.<sup>2</sup> Much of this violence occurs within neighborhoods that face systemic inequities and racial discrimination, and it is highly concentrated among small numbers of people who are caught in cycles of victimization, trauma, and retaliation.

**The city should dedicate \$2 million annually to address this crisis of violence through evidence-informed community violence intervention strategies.** \$1.3 million of these funds should be invested directly into CVI programs that serve the community, and \$700,000 should be dedicated to create an office of gun violence prevention.

Community violence interventions (CVI) are evidence-informed programs that aim to identify and support people at risk for violence by helping them peacefully resolve conflicts, and by providing them with wraparound mental health support. When adequately funded and properly developed, CVI programs in multiple cities have reduced gun violence by as much as 30%.<sup>3</sup>

Many cities that have experienced the most promising reductions in violence have invested both in CVI and developed offices of gun violence prevention to ensure that CVI programs are adequately supported.

City policymakers should create a dedicated office of gun violence prevention tasked with funding and supporting CVI. This office should: 1) convene multiple city agencies to identify the drivers of gun violence and the small number of individuals at highest risk 2) disburse funding to CVI programs within the community, and 3) provide ongoing assistance to community-based organizations to help them build capacity and use evidence-informed violence reduction strategies 4) secure additional funding for CVI through federal, state, and private grant programs.

## Cost of Gun Violence in Raleigh

The economic costs associated with gun violence in Raleigh are staggering. Researchers calculated cost estimates specific to gun violence in North Carolina by using a similar methodology as the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's cost estimates. Two types of cost estimates are calculated, the direct cost to taxpayers and the total economic costs to society. The direct costs to taxpayers include healthcare fees, police response and investigation, and criminal justice services incurred by the government. The total economic costs include costs to survivors and families directly affected, employers, government, and the broader community.<sup>4</sup> These cost estimates for North Carolina are as follows:

- Each gun homicide costs taxpayers \$674,000 and has a total economic cost of \$6.8 million.
- Each gun injury directly costs taxpayers \$42,000 and has a total economic cost of \$280,000.
- **Based on the number of gun homicides and injuries in Raleigh in 2020, gun violence cost taxpayers \$18.8 million and cost \$177 million in total economic costs.**<sup>5</sup>

## Cost of Investing in CVI in Raleigh

- Research conducted by Thomas Abt, a Senior Research Fellow at Harvard University and former Chief of Staff in the U.S. Department of Justice, estimates that for a city to experience a sizable reduction in violence through CVI they should invest \$45,000 in CVI programs per homicide that occurs in the city. This cost estimate aligns with those used by other violence prevention experts at the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI) and the Invest In Us Coalition to inform federal policy.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2020, there were 30 homicide victims in Raleigh. Therefore, an effective annual investment would be  $30 * \$45,000 = \mathbf{\$1.35 \text{ million in CVI programs}}$ .
- An additional \$700,000 should be dedicated to establishing an office of gun violence prevention within the city to support CVI programming, secure additional funding, and facilitate inter-agency collaboration to address gun violence in the city of Raleigh comprehensively.

## A Cost-Effective Approach to Reducing Gun Violence

- As illustrated in other cities that have made CVI investments, a \$2 million annual investment in CVI has the potential to reduce gun violence by up to 30% in Raleigh.
- This investment has the potential to save 6 lives and prevent 28 gun injuries each year.
- By saving lives and preventing injuries, this CVI investment has the potential to save \$3.2 million in direct taxpayer costs and \$47 million in total costs to the larger community each year.

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<sup>1</sup> Gun Homicide and nonfatal shootings totals as reported by [AmericanViolence.org](https://www.americanviolence.org/). Marron Institute of Urban Management. *New York University*.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Homicide death rates in Wake County by race.

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of the research on effective CVI programs see: [Investing in Community-based gun violence prevention](#). EFSGV. Also see community violence resources at [CJAF](#) and [Giffords](#)

<sup>4</sup> See: [Calculate the economic cost of gun violence](#). Everytown research & Policy. For methodology see: [methodological note for the economic cost of gun violence](#)

<sup>5</sup> Costs were calculated by multiplying the number of homicides (22) and gun injuries (96) in Raleigh in 2020 by the estimated costs of each gun homicide and injury.

<sup>6</sup> Abt T. (2019). Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence--and a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets. *Basic Books*. See: Chapter 11 and appendix B. While Abt uses \$30,000 in his cost benefit analysis he also states that the estimated cost of funding CVI programs is between \$30,000 to \$60,000 per homicide. We based our calculations off the midpoint of these two estimates - \$45,000. Our estimate of \$45,000 aligns with the cost estimates other violence prevention experts at the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI) and the Invest in Us Coalition have used to inform federal policy.