



Trenton Prevention Policy Board

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Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Planning Process

With the support and involvement of community coalitions, public agencies, and municipal authorities, the Trenton Prevention Policy Board is coordinating a citywide effort to develop a comprehensive strategic action plan to address and combat youth violence in Trenton.

Building on the successful models of other similarly situated cities, we will implement a local strategic planning process that follows the model of the [National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention](#). This model, developed as collaboration among cities and federal agencies in 2010, has provided transformative frameworks for struggling cities across the country to bring together key stakeholders to develop a shared vision and strategy to prevent and reduce youth violence. Combining data-driven analysis, the National Forum framework organizes work around four interrelated categories—prevention, intervention, enforcement, and reentry—to most effectively address youth violence at different points.

We invite you to join our effort and combine our energies to develop a meaningful and transformative set of practical actions to support youth in Trenton and redirect them from engaging in violent behavior.

About Trenton Prevention Policy Board

The Trenton Prevention Policy Board (TPPB) is a data-driven, participant-driven planning board that is comprised of non-profit, government, faith-based, and community stakeholders from the greater Trenton area. As part of an initiative from the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, and facilitated by staff at The College of New Jersey, the Board was founded in 2009 to promote positive youth development and reduce juvenile delinquency in the Trenton community.

As one of the multiple struggles that Trenton residents face, youth violence presents a unique and fundamental obstacle to realizing the Capital City's potential. To approach these questions comprehensively, TPPB focuses on the environmental and systemic factors that preclude opportunities for positive youth development, and develops strategies to address those factors. TPPB aims to reduce youth violence by working to coordinate a continuum of strategies--prevention, intervention, enforcement, and reentry--to provide a safer community for our youth. Building on successes and evidence-based strategies from here and elsewhere, we are confident that strong partnerships and effectively mobilized resources, TPPB can contribute to making Trenton a place for youth and adults to thrive and belong.

Why Focus on Youth Violence? Why Now?

Based on press coverage and resident impressions, Trenton has a significant problem with youth violence, particularly drug- and gang-related shootings. Numerous organizations and agencies seek to address youth violence from their own perspective, focusing on one piece of the broader puzzle, often without connections to other important components. However, Trenton-based

organizations lack reliable and up-to-date data about trends, patterns, and emerging developments in the community, and insufficient coordination among agencies occurs to best manage individuals and groups or to develop seamless support for affected populations.

Developing a strategic plan that brings relevant organizations and agencies to the table will provide an infrastructure to enable more effective communication, coordination, and data-sharing among all involved. With significant involvement of organizations across disciplines and services, efforts to reduce youth violence and to support youth affected by violence can more effectively be delivered and the ecosystem of causes of youth violence can be addressed through concerted, coordinated action.

Outcomes

A strategic action plan addressing youth violence will provide a necessary framework to better coordinate efforts to reduce youth violence, as well as lead to measurable reductions in the prevalence of youth violence in Trenton. Specific outcomes will be developed by working groups as part of the process.

In addition, as long-term outcomes of the development of the plan, participating organizations will:

- Identify and address gaps in services that could reduce factors leading to youth violence, providing organizations a better sense of where the greatest needs are systemically
- Gain access to reliable, up-to-date data and information as part of a sustained infrastructure of data-sharing and communication
- Be part of a coordinated network of organizations applying for funding to increase collaboration among entities and to improve Trenton's chances of receiving funding
- Be part of a venue for communication from regional, state, and federal entities about initiatives, trends, and funding opportunities related to youth violence and other related issues
- Participate in a coordinated communication effort to combat misleading and factually inaccurate representations of Trenton based on the shared information and data that guides the process
- Gain access to and awareness of a network of experts from the non-profits, public agencies, higher education, and others
- Learn what policies, programs, and practices are most effective at addressing Trenton specific issues based on current data in Trenton and in the broader youth prevention field

Structure

The National Forum model calls for working groups built around four categories:

- **Prevention:** Treatment, services, programs to general population; most may not be in extreme high risk category, with a focus on promoting protective factors. Programming examples include youth development and family support services, educational and community mentoring, and in-school and out- of-school activities.
- **Intervention:** Treatment, services, programs that intervene to reduce or eliminate risk behaviors; activities targeted to youth who have begun to demonstrate risk, destructive behaviors. Programs engage with high-risk and gang-involved youth in a range of settings, and may include educational, health, drug treatment, and other services.

- **Law enforcement:** Directly involved in law enforcement or has treatment, services, programs that work closely with entities who are directly involved in law enforcement. Efforts focus on the most serious, violent, and chronic youthful offenders and on crime hot spots.
- **Reentry:** Treatment, services, programs that work with youth returning from confinement to the community. Programs support youth offenders returning from confinement to the community and begin providing this support prior to their release.

Co-chairs that are representative of Trenton-based efforts in the relevant category will be designated to coordinate each working group’s activities, and to ensure broad-based participation from multiple sectors. TPPB will serve as the coordinating and facilitating entity, and will convene steering and chairs meetings to share information and ensure adequate and timely progress is made.

For each issue area, and following review of relevant data, working groups will:

- Produce an inventory of existing relevant policies, programs, and practices;
- Determine 5-7 key data points to measure and track changes in this category;
- Prioritize 5 top challenges facing Trenton in addressing youth violence in the context of their category;
- Determine if, and how, Trenton is different in comparison to other cities to determine appropriate and effective strategies.

The final report will include the products of the working groups, as well as concrete steps and milestones to move forward in each of the four categories. Cross-cutting recommendations regarding systems and processes in relation to youth violence will also be included.

Timeline

Step 1: Build Partnerships and Raise Awareness	
1.1: Initiate a call to action.	3/1/2017
1.2: Agree on a common vision of success	5/2/2017
1.3: Organize a structure for developing the plan.	5/10/2017
Step 2: Gather and Use Data to Inform Strategies	
2.1: Review current youth violence research and evidence.	5/31/2017
2.2: Collect and share local data on youth violence.	6/14/2017
2.3: Use the data to inform strategy selection.	6/30/2017
2.4: Identify resources and assets.	6/30/2017
Step 3: Write the Plan	
3.1: Develop strategies and goals.	9/15/2017
3.2: Match resources to strategies and goals.	9/30/2017
3.3: Develop measurable objectives and activities.	10/15/2017
Step 4: Implement the Plan	
4.1: Work the plan.	12/13/2017
4.2: Revisit and update the plan.	1/1/2018