

# Trenton Youth Safety Playbook

Goals, Objectives, and  
Recommended Strategies for the  
Reduction of Youth Violence in  
Trenton, New Jersey

Capital City Youth Violence Coalition  
(formerly Trenton Prevention Policy Board)



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# Capital City Youth Violence Coalition

(formerly Trenton Prevention Policy Board)

## About Capital City Youth Violence Coalition

The Capital City Youth Violence Coalition (CCYVC, pronounced “civic”) 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. Formerly the Trenton Prevention Policy Board (TPPB), CCYVC changed its name in early 2019 to better communicate its purpose.

The concept of local prevention policy boards emerged during the administration of former Attorney General Anne Milgram and was included in the Governor’s Strategy for Safe Streets and Neighborhoods of 2008. The strategy for protecting at-risk youth called for local participants to use a research-based framework and focus on risk and protective factors.

The College of New Jersey assumed the lead facilitator role of the CCYVC in the fall of 2011. Staff from the Bonner Institute for Civic and Community Engagement joined the Board as facilitators for working groups, integrating CCYVC priorities with TCNJ’s community engaged learning initiatives. In addition, TCNJ faculty members were recruited to support each working group and provide research and training, as well as to produce literature reviews on ideas and questions proposed by working group members. Through this process, the Board ensured that the ideas included in the annual report would be based on evidence and best practices.

The leadership of CCYVC has evolved over time; however, it includes one of the original leaders, Marygrace Billek, the Director of Mercer County’s Human Services Division. Serving as co-chair with her since July 2015 is Michael Nordquist, Executive Director of the TCNJ Center for Community Engaged Learning and Research. In addition to the co-chairs, the Steering Committee coordinates the board’s activities and priorities. Steering Committee members are Cynthia Oberkofler, Millhill Child and Family Development; John Hart, Isles, Inc.; Alexis Durlacher, Trenton Police Department; and Brittany Aydelotte, TCNJ CELR Center. In 2017, CCYVC committed to developing a youth violence reduction plan and to supporting its implementation; this document is the result of that commitment.



# National Forum Overview

## About the Forum

During the Obama administration, the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (the Forum) was established to build a national conversation concerning youth and gang violence that would increase awareness, drive action, and build local capacity to more effectively address youth violence through comprehensive planning. The Forum model encourages participants to change the way they do business by sharing common challenges and promising strategies, and through coordinated action.

This model, developed 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 Forum framework organizes work around four interrelated categories- prevention, intervention, enforcement, and Re-Entry- to most effectively address youth violence at different points.

To develop this plan, CCYVC adapted the National Forum model to fit the context and needs of Trenton. We have integrated the principles of the Forum into the plan development and implementation.

## Goals and Activities of the Forum

The Forum model is built around a set of shared core values:

- **Multi-Disciplinary Partnerships:** e.g. law enforcement, education, public health, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, business and philanthropic communities
- **Balanced Approaches:** prevention, intervention, enforcement, and Re-Entry
- **Data-Driven Strategies:** necessary to pool data from a variety of sources to provide comprehensive picture and to have objective means of measuring progress

In the short term, preparation of these plans intended to lead to more active partnerships, improved coordination and focus of resources, and better use of data. In the medium term, exposure of these plans should lead to improved ability to secure funding from a variety of resources (federal, state, local, private) for anti-youth violence efforts, and to accomplish short-term goals. In the long term, implementation of plans should eventually reduce violence among youth, improve opportunities for positive youth development, enhance public safety and quality of life, and encourage innovation, e.g. explore ways to better coordinate funding, policy, and regulation at local and federal levels

The Forum convened a diverse array of stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels. Participating localities included Boston, Camden, Chicago, Detroit, Memphis, Minneapolis, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Salinas, San Jose, Long Beach, Cleveland, Louisville, Seattle, and Baltimore. Additional information on local activities can be found in the individual plans of each participating locality.

<https://youth.gov/collaboration-profiles/national-forum-youth-violence-prevention>



# Youth Voice

***CCYVC believes youth voice and youth participation are essential to the development of a plan that will be successful in the reduction of youth violence. Youth are the experts on their own experience and the board prioritized the engagement of youth in this process.***

## **CCYVC Youth Advisory Board**

Youth from the Next Generation Community Leaders program, coordinated by Millhill Child and Family Development, have served as the youth advisory board throughout the planning process. 15 youth from Trenton participated in monthly meetings and brainstorming sessions.

## **Focus Groups**

Three focus groups were held in April 2018 and November 2017. There were a total of 25 participants that were recruited as volunteers by community partners. The prompts that guided the conversation focused on youth violence prevention and engagement in community services.

Feedback included:

- the lack of accessibility and efficacy of the numerous services made available to city residents
- a lack of constructive outlets and safe programs
- limited or absent school responses to bullying
- disproportionate school punishment
- criticism of parents without support
- cost of programs
- a reduction in community resources such as the libraries and pool
- poorly maintained public areas to use for safe, productive activities

# Youth Voice



## Youth Panel

In December 2016 CCYVC hosted a youth panel with five participants recruited by school staff from Daylight/Twilight and West Campus.

Feedback included:

- What works?
  - Adults who help students through motivation & encouragement
  - Opportunities for youth to leave Trenton
  - College/SAT prep programs, including visits to colleges with different environments
  - Support from parents/family
  - Being exposed to diversity & youth from different backgrounds
- What can keep kids off the street?
  - Opportunities to play sports
  - After school / mentoring programs, & safe places to hang out
  - Raising awareness to existing programs available
  - Help kids who speak another language integrate into regular classes/activities
- What are safety ideas/concerns?
  - Police that are active in the community and are connected
  - Curfew laws don't work
  - Larger police presence
  - Community events like fairs, festivals, movie nights
  - Police that are active in the community and are connected
  - Fears of police brutality
  - Wanting family connections, but trying to avoid negative influences that may be in the family
  - Inability to leave neighborhood, avoiding certain neighborhoods because of safety
  - Worried about offered programs that integrate youth from different areas because of gang affiliation

# Youth Voice

## Trenton Youth Voices Project

In 2016 over 100 Trenton youth, ages 8-24, participated in focus groups. The initial question of the focus group asked to imagine themselves as the “Mayor of Trenton” with unlimited power and resources and discuss the challenges and changes they would like to see in their city.

Four themes came out of the feedback from the groups:

- #1 Environment and Safety
  - Students are concerned about their physical environment, including concerns for their safety. Violence and crime are obstacles that students must face while living in Trenton, and many times, they do not have access to safe spaces. Improvement of their environment was also a concern such as park upkeep, having clean streets, and having more age appropriate activities.
    - Youth Quotes
      - “If all you know around you is violence... If you go home and all you see is violence...”
      - “It’s a lot of gangbangers and stuff. When in you’re a gang you feel like you’re safe.”
      - “...the parks abandoned. There are chains everywhere and I’m like why are their chains everywhere. Shouldn’t there be a place where kids want to go.”
      - “I think like cleaner streets because there’s some streets that are not that good.”
- #2 Improved Schools
  - Students often discussed the need to incorporate additional resources to improve their schools. Students discussed a lack of arts programming and limited school materials such as textbooks. Also mentioned was the need for a more friendly and welcoming school environment.
    - Youth Quotes
      - “We need to be buying us new books or a new desk or fixing the walls or something like that.”
      - “Then you go to a school where it’s supposed to be equal education, but you have less resources than a kid who goes to another school because their parents have more money to pay for the school.”
      - “... because the school has actually gotten, a lot more run down since I been there. There like, it’s, it’s not the prettiest school, it’s not like how I remember it, like everything was colorful, and teachers had posters everywhere.”

# Youth Voice

## Trenton Youth Voices Project con't.

- #3 Economics
  - Students viewed their social economic status as limiting their opportunities for involvement. Students discussed how buying food was difficult for their families, sometimes resulting in the student needing to work. Many students also discussed wanting to get out of Trenton if they could afford it.
    - Youth Quotes
      - “If you’re cutting the budget, you don’t feed the kids. What if that’s the only meal that child gets a day? You’re cutting the budget and you’re cutting their food. Food is serious. It’s very serious.”
      - “...the students who have to work late night jobs to support their families.”
      - “It’s hard for, they don’t hire us. I put in 15 applications down there for like a whole two years I haven’t gotten any calls.”
  
- #4 Services Needed
  - Students discussed the need for more services both in school and in the community. Students talked about the desire for more after school programs, which included participating in organized sports, etc. The older students also showed concerns about having different activities in the community that represented all age groups. Community engagement and prevention program were other major concerns for students.
    - Youth Quotes
      - “... you can have sports that the kids can do, so they can like, have something to do.”
      - “Yeah because they cut down the community centers so we don’t really have nowhere to go. Everybody doesn’t have a place to go.”
      - “They have programs but the programs it is like little kids.” “There’s no programs for our age group.”
      - “We don’t plan on, my mom always tell me they used to have a skate rink here and they closed everything down. Then they wonder why our generation is so out of involved in anything because there is nothing for us to do here.”
      - “...Extra curriculum such as performing arts. At my school we don’t even have a drama club.”
      - “More expression programs. More programs where teens can express themselves.”





# TYVRAS Collective Principles

## CCYVC Youth Safey Playbook Collective Principles

*A rope is made up of many fibers, but it does not get its strength from any one fiber that runs from one end to the other. It gets its strength from all of the fibers overlapping.*

The core idea of our planning process is that coordinated efforts, not isolated ones, are most effective in solving social problems. Therefore, over the last three years, the CCYVC has engaged community stakeholders to build a collective plan for action.

We believe that having a collective impact requires:

1. A common agenda
2. Shared measurement systems
3. Mutually reinforcing activities
4. Frequent, effective communication
5. Backbone support organizations

This Playbook, and the process we took to get here, are built around these principles. However, collective impact requires the participation of all stakeholders: elected officials, school administrators, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, concerned citizens, formerly incarcerated individuals, and of course, youth. By working together on mutually reinforcing activities, with the help of key support organizations, and communicating frequently about shared goals with shared data, stakeholders can have a far greater impact than if everyone works on their own.

Therefore, this Playbook is not the end of a process, but the beginning. New policies and programs will have to be developed and existing ones will need to be expanded and coordinated. Data will have to be collected to evaluate and track our progress as a community. Existing forms of communication will have to expand, and new forums for cooperation will have to be opened. There is a part for everyone in this effort and a need for many types of leadership and many types of cooperation. We invite you to join us – [find the section in “how to read this for different stakeholder groups” that’s for you] and join us at the CCYVC meetings to get started!



# Community Responsibility

This playbook depends upon the commitment of various stakeholders and partners to play lead roles in implementing the strategies described. CCYVC is committed to supporting all interested stakeholders in meeting the goals in this document.

## Government

Take the lead in making youth violence prevention a community priority through funding and policy decisions. Support neighborhood based interventions by joining community-based initiatives and coalitions. Be a champion and consistent voice for implementing best practice policies and programs.



## Law Enforcement

Build trust and community cohesion by implementing best practices and training in community/youth relations. Participate in prevention and intervention activities, stakeholder meetings and civic engagement along with crime suppression work. Collect and utilize data to identify and address disparities in enforcement.

## Service Providers

Implement best practices and uniform evaluation of program outcomes. Reduce barriers and increase access to services provided. Participate in early identification of challenged families/youth and cross-referral.



## Schools

Implement school climate strategies that support youth wanting to be at school. Work across districts to develop common data collection and evaluation tools. Examine school disciplinary practices for unintended consequences and disparities.

# Community Responsibility

## **Non-Profits**

Create effective programs that work in conjunction with current violence prevention activities. Collaborate to achieve common goals. Share information and resources when possible.

## **Businesses**

Create opportunities for meaningful youth employment. Be a designated safe haven for youth. Serve as a mentor and offer internships/apprenticeships.

## **Community Members**

Serve as a mentor or volunteer with a youth serving organization. Create opportunities for meaningful youth engagement in the community. Advocate for prevention as a community priority.

## **Faith Community**

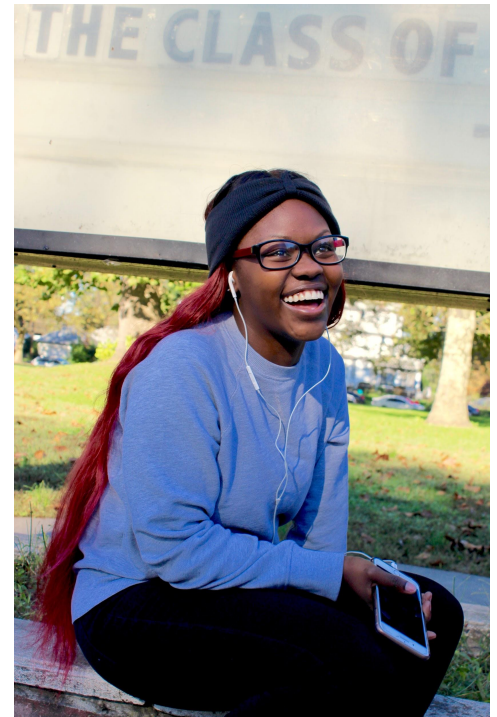
Serve as a mentor or volunteer for a youth. Be a resource for youth and their families, referring them to appropriate services. Be a designated safe haven for youth.

## **Families/ Caregivers/ Other Adults**

Take advantage of and help spread the word about resources and services available. Provide a consistent model for how to respond to stress, fear and conflict without violence. Build a meaningful relationship with youth where it is safe for them to share concerns.

## **Youth**

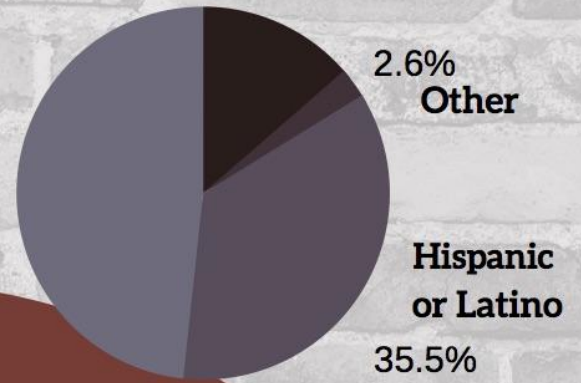
Get involved in community initiatives and let your voice be heard. Help each other through peer to peer support and mentoring. Ask for help if you or a friend needs it.



38.6% of residents speak a language other than English at home

Among these, 84.9% speak Spanish

African-American or Black 48.3%



# DEMOGRAPHICS

## TRENTON SNAPSHOT

Population: 84,964

Median Age: 33.5

Median Income: \$34,412

Unemployment Rate: 7.1%

36.4% of residents are 24 years of age or younger

# CONTEXT

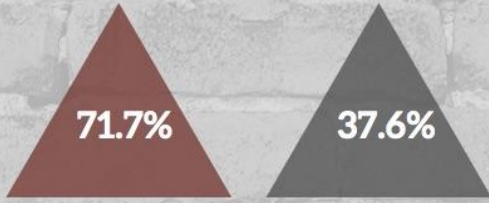
Historically a center for manufacturing - boasting the country's finest steel, porcelain, and rubber - Trenton succumbed to the effects of deindustrialization and, a subsequent decline in population (34% between its 1950s peak and today). Trenton has struggled for decades with the generational consequences of post-war policies and practices, including municipal disinvestment, redlining, and poor urban planning decisions, and continues to face a number of systemic challenges, including a lack of industry, a shrinking tax base, and a prevalence of vacant properties (20% of parcels citywide). The challenges of -- and opportunities for -- Trenton must be considered in this historical context.

32.5% of families with children live below the poverty line

Trenton

New Jersey

## CHILDREN LIVING IN RENTER-OCCUPIED UNITS



## HOUSING

3 in 10 Trenton renters face the threat of eviction each year

478 individuals were experiencing homelessness in Mercer County during the 2017 Point in Time count

## EDUCATION

29% of young adults in Trenton are high school graduates

Only 30% of young adults in Trenton have started a form of post-secondary education

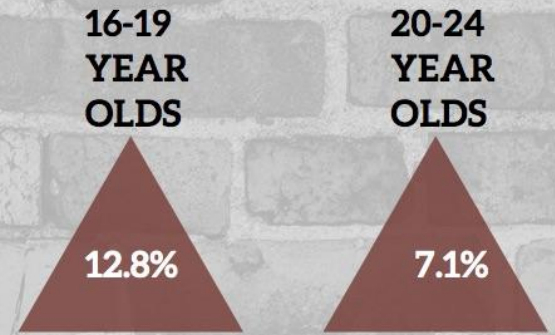
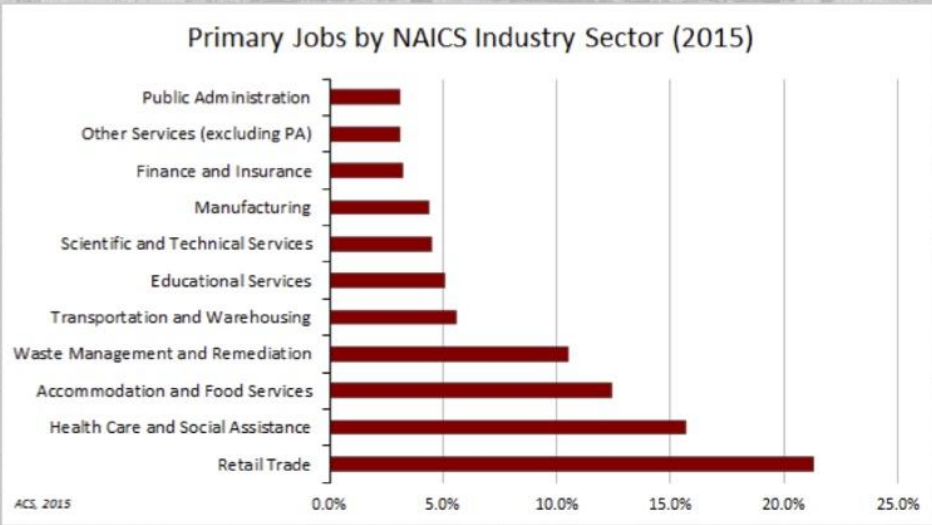
**Truancy Rate: 26%**

Of those individuals, 128 were age 24 or younger



## DROP OUT RATE

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT



## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

# HEALTH

16.7% of Trentonians self-report poor mental health

12th highest rate among the nation's 500 largest cities

In 2016, 61% of Mercer County's hospitalizations for mental and behavioral disorders came from Trenton

Half of all county youth (15-24) facing such crises come from Trenton

64.6% of individuals in Mercer County receiving treatment for substance abuse live in Trenton

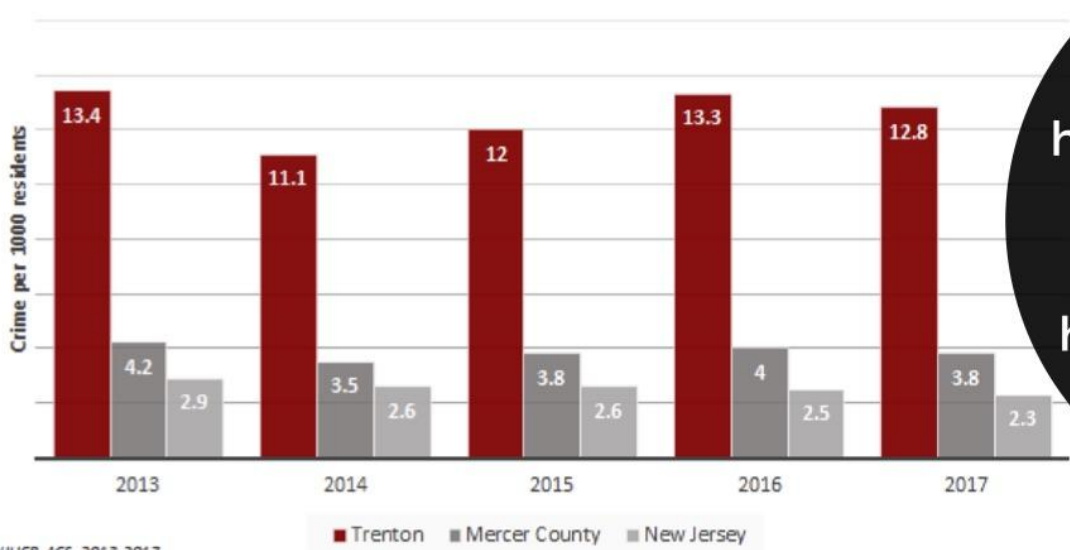
# VIOLENCE

Trentonians are 11 times more likely to end up in the ER for firearm injuries than the rest of the state

## REPORTED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS PER 100 STUDENTS



Violent Crime Rate (2013 - 2017)



Since 2013, 55% of homicide victims and 64% of homicide suspects in Trenton have been below the age of 30



**Youth Safety Playbook**  
**Definition of Youth Violence**

*Acts of violence committed by youth,  
ages 0-24, including homicide, rape,  
robbery, and assault.*

# Risk and Protective Factors

CCYVC participants identified the most important Risk and Protective Factors to Trenton Youth based on the CDC's Youth Violence Risk and Protective Factors.\*

Risk factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes.

Protective factors are characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact. Protective factors may be seen as positive countering events.\*\*

The top 5 Risk Factors:

- Low family involvement
- Exposure to violence and conflict in the family
- Association with delinquent peers
- Low commitment to school and school failure
- Poor monitoring and supervision of children

The top 5 Protective Factors:

- Ability to discuss problems with family
- Involvement in prosocial activities
- Positive social orientation
- Highly developed skills for realistic planning
- Consistent presence of family when awakening, arriving home, mealtime, etc.
- 

Each strategy in this Playbook identifies which risk and protective factors it addresses.

\*<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

\*\*<https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/practicing-effective-prevention/prevention-behavioral-health/risk-protective-factors>





**CCYVC Playbook  
Vision**

*To make Trenton a place where  
all its youth thrive.*

# CCYVC Playbook: Goals, Objectives, Strategies

Starting in mid-2017, CCYVC participants identified the priority concerns of Trentonians related to youth violence. Based on these priorities, a working group of staff from TCNJ's CELR Center, Isles Inc., Millhill Child and Family Development, and TCNJ faculty members collaborated to identify the most promising and proven strategies from across the United States to reduce youth violence effectively.

From these efforts, five broad goals were developed to address youth violence in Trenton. Under these goals, specific objectives were developed to focus on a particular aspect of each broad goal. Then, examples of successful strategies were gathered and reviewed to provide guidance for organizations and individuals in Trenton on adaptable models for the region.

The next two pages summarize the five goals and the 24 objectives to reduce youth violence in Trenton. In the pages that follow, specific strategies and examples are provided for each objective. These strategies have been demonstrated to be effective in cities across the United States, and we encourage the creative adoption and adaptation of these strategies for Trenton.

# CCYVC Playbook: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

## Goal 1: Youth feel safe in their city.

- Objective 1.1 - Improve youth experience of safety in their neighborhood.
  - Strategy 1.1.1 - Develop community-based violence response program.
  - Strategy 1.1.2 - Develop hospital-based violence response program.
  - Strategy 1.1.3 - Invest in built environment.
- Objective 1.2 - Improve youth experience of safety across neighborhoods.
  - Strategy 1.2.1 - Create safe routes.
  - Strategy 1.2.2 - Implement youth-based participatory research practices.
- Objective 1.3 - Improve youth and police relations.
  - Strategy 1.3.1 - Increase police/community initiatives.
  - Strategy 1.3.2 - Implement additional community policing practices.

## Goal 2: Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

- Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.
  - Strategy 2.1.1 - Develop and maintain city-wide youth program database.
  - Strategy 2.1.2 - Remove transportation as a barrier to youth engagement.
  - Strategy 2.1.3 - Review and implement ward-based of programs/services.
  - Strategy 2.1.4 - Teach positive behavior in schools.
  - Strategy 2.1.5 - Increase comprehensive employment programming.
  - Strategy 2.1.6 - Increase youth civic engagement opportunities.
  - Strategy 2.1.7 - Increase number of non-structured activities.
- Objective 2.2 - Increase family engagement in youth activities.
  - Strategy 2.2.1 - Improve and leverage school relationships.
  - Strategy 2.2.2 - Improve coordination of family engagement.

# CCYVC Playbook: Goals, Objectives and Strategies

## **Goal 3: Youth have positive relationships with trusted, informed adults.**

- Objective 3.1 - Increase the number of trusted, informed adults in the community and train youth to identify those adults.
  - Strategy 3.1.1 - Develop trainings for adults to increase knowledge and build trust.
- Objective 3.2 - Improve services for families with high-risk factors for youth violence.
  - Strategy 3.2.1 - Develop multi family group intervention program.

## **Goal 4 - Youth-serving organizations deliver coordinated, effective, empirically informed programs.**

- Objective 4.1 - Improve coordination of youth and family services.
  - Strategy 4.1.1 - Provide individualized coordination and planning for youth.
  - Strategy 4.1.2 - Improve systems coordination.
- Objective 4.2 - Expand awareness of evidence-based prevention, intervention, enforcement and Re-Entry practices.
  - Strategy 4.2.1 - Develop and implement training series for providers.
  - Strategy 4.2.2 - Create a city-wide youth violence prevention center.

## **Goal 5 - Youth returning from out-of-home placement or secure care successfully reintegrate into their community.**

- Objective 5.1 - Improve reintegration of youth back to family, community, and school/employment.
  - Strategy 5.1.1 - Increase number of individual, reintegration mentors, supporters and advocates.
  - Strategy 5.1.2 - Create city-wide reengagement center.

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.1 - Improve youth experience of safety in their neighborhood.

## Strategy 1.1.1

### Develop community-based violence response program.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Ability to discuss problems with family**  
**P: Positive social orientation**  
P: Family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Exposure to violence and conflict in the family**  
R: History of violent victimization  
R: High emotional distress

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

### Summary

In order to effectively and immediately respond to violence, many communities have developed or invested in a community-based violence response program. These programs come in different forms, but all address youth before and after violent incidents in order to help cope with the trauma and prevent future incidents.

### New Strategies

#### Children Who Witness Violence (CWWV)

“Established in 1999, CWWV is a county initiative coordinating a crisis response team that provides a comprehensive assessment of children exposed to violence and includes all youth from early childhood through late adolescence (age 18). More recently, CWWV includes the provision of trauma informed care for children and families needing treatment.”

<http://www.ja.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/cwwv-new.aspx>

#### Louis D. Brown Peace Institute (Homicide Reponse)

“The Louis D. Brown Peace Institute is a center of healing, teaching, and learning for families and communities impacted by murder, trauma, grief, and loss. Our programs and services are grounded in the Center for Disease Control’s social-ecological framework that interventions are needed at multiple levels in order to interrupt cycles of violence. The heart of our work is with families impacted by murder on both sides. Our impact extends to community and society through tools, training, and technical assistance.”

<http://www.ldbpeaceinstitute.org/content/our-mission>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.1 - Improve youth experience of safety in their neighborhood.

## Strategy 1.1.1

### Develop community-based violence response program.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### Cure Violence

“Cure Violence stops the spread of violence by using the methods and strategies associated with disease control – detecting and interrupting conflicts, identifying and treating the highest risk individuals, and changing social norms.

- Detect and interrupt potentially violent conflicts
  - Trained violence interrupters and outreach workers prevent shootings by identifying and mediating potentially lethal conflicts in the community, and following up to ensure that the conflict does not reignite.
  - Prevent Retaliations; Mediate Ongoing Conflicts; Keep Conflicts ‘Cool’
- Identify and treat highest risk
  - Trained, culturally-appropriate outreach workers work with the highest risk to make them less likely to commit violence by meeting them where they are at, talking to them about the costs of using violence, and helping them to obtain the social services they need – such as job training and drug treatment.
  - Access Highest Risk; Change Behaviors; Provide Treatment
- Mobilize the community to change norms
  - Workers engage leaders in the community as well as community residents, local business owners, faith leaders, service providers, and the high risk, conveying the message that the residents, groups, and the community do not support the use of violence.
  - Respond to Every Shooting; Organize Community; Spread Positive Norms
- Other key elements
  - Continual data collection and monitoring
  - Extensive training of workers
  - Partnerships with local hospitals”

<http://cureviolence.org/the-model/essential-elements/>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.1 - Improve youth experience of safety in their neighborhood.

## Strategy 1.1.2

### Develop hospital-based violence response program.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Ability to discuss problems with family**  
**P: Positive social orientation**  
P: Family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Exposure to violence and conflict in the family**  
R: History of violent victimization  
R: High emotional distress

Target Age Group: 0-25 year old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention

### Summary

Hospital-based programs provide supports and guidance to victims and families of violence while still in the hospital. This encourages the family to engage services right away and prevent further violence. Programs also provide support hospital staff and promotes collaboration between the community, social services and local law enforcement.

### New Strategies

#### Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs

NNHVIP programs are dedicated to engaging patients during the window of opportunity when they are recovering in the hospital after a violent injury, to reduce the chance of retaliation and recurrence.

<http://nnhvip.org/>

#### Program Examples

##### Caught in the Crossfire, Oakland, California

“As soon as a young person is admitted to the hospital with a violence-related injury, an Intervention Specialist typically arrives within one hour to help the injured patient, family and friends cope with the injury and start talking about alternatives to retaliation. Intervention Specialists are young adults from the same communities as the clients they serve who have overcome violence in their own lives. They provide emotional support, work to prevent retaliation, promote alternative strategies for dealing with conflicts, identify short-term needs, and develop a plan for staying safe. Following hospital discharge, Intervention Specialists continue to provide case management and mentoring for six months. The results: In 2009, 95% of all active Caught in the Crossfire participants avoided re-injury and 90% were not arrested. Former Attorney General Janet Reno selected Caught in the Crossfire as a model to be replicated throughout the country in 1999.”

<http://www.youthalive.org/caught-in-the-crossfire/>

##### Massachusetts Violence Intervention Advocacy Program

“Boston Medical Center's VIAP Program helps guide victims of community violence through recovery from physical and emotional trauma. Using a trauma informed model of care, VIAP empowers clients and families, facilitates recovery by providing services and opportunities. VIAP presents options for families that bring hope and healing to their lives. In turn, this guidance helps strengthen others who are affected by violence and contributes to building safer and healthier communities.”

<https://www.bmc.org/programs/violence-intervention-advocacy-program>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.1 - Improve youth experience of safety in their neighborhood.

## Strategy 1.1.2

### Develop hospital-based violence response program.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Violence Intervention Program, Baltimore, Maryland**

“The Violence Intervention Program (VIP) at the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, University of Maryland Medical Center, was launched in 1998. The VIP is an intensive hospital-based intervention program that assists victims of intentional violent injury. Victims receive assessment, counseling, and social support from a multi-disciplinary team. The program model is strongly rooted in evidence-based research.

The VIP model embraces four basic phases of change for program participants: 1. Stabilization 2. Recovery and Rehabilitation 3. Community Reintegration 4. Self-Reliance and Referral

Priorities for intervention include safety issues such as retaliation, domestic violence, and risk-taking behavior; medical, mental, social adjustment; healthy coping skills; and connection to community-based services. The priorities for intervention are incorporated into the four phases of change..”

<https://www.umms.org/ummc/health-services/shock-trauma/center-injury-prevention-policy/violence>

##### **Wraparound Project, San Francisco, California**

“The Wraparound Project works to reduce injury and criminal recidivism in the most vulnerable citizens of the city of San Francisco. It serves as a vital point of entry, providing mentorship and linking clients to essential risk-reduction resources.

Our philosophy is based on three critical components. First, we believe that the Public Health Model works for injury prevention, based on evidence that addressing root causes of violence can prevent future injury and incarceration. Second, health communication in this country is marred by cultural incompetence. Our Case Managers correct this flaw by ensuring that any service provided is culturally appropriate. Lastly, we believe that a major event like trauma provides a teachable moment, which is a period of self-reflection brought on by a tangible sense of mortality and vulnerability. This is the “golden window” in which the individual is more likely to change high-risk behaviors, precluding them from re-injury.

Violent injury is a societal disease. The nature of the environment affects risk factors and individuals exposed to these risk factors. To properly address the contributing environmental factors, it is important for attempts at violence prevention to extend into the greater community in which at-risk individuals reside. To achieve this, the Wraparound Project has developed a seamless link to its surrounding communities.”

<https://violenceprevention.surgery.ucsf.edu/>



Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.1 - Improve youth experience of safety in their neighborhood.

## Strategy 1.1.3 Invest in built environment.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Positive social orientation**

P: Involvement in prosocial activities

P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children**

R: Low levels of community participation

R: Diminished economic opportunities

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention

### Summary

Improving the built environment is a strategy to reduce the number of opportunities for crime. Models encourage the community to take ownership and control of their space and provide more opportunities place making.

### New Strategies

#### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

“Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is defined as a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behaviour through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts by affecting the built, social and administrative environment. It is pronounced sep-ted and is known by various labels or names around the world, such as Designing Out Crime and other acronyms.”

<http://www.cpted.net/>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.1 - Improve youth experience of safety in their neighborhood.

## Strategy 1.1.3 Invest in built environment.

### New Strategies Continued

#### Program Example

#### **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Paterson, NJ**

“This toolkit focuses on ‘streets’, which is primarily a reference to the public right of way. This space is generally comprised of sidewalks, landscaped areas and roadway. Amenities and elements located within these areas include furniture, lighting, trees and other landscaping, utilities and other elements.

These factors include:

- Land use types or combinations of uses that may be impacting or generating crime
- Window coverage affecting sight lines from inside the building to the street or vice versa
- Vacant or abandoned properties revealing disrepair or inviting illicit use of the space
- Graffiti prone or blank walls that face the street
- Building entrances and their treatment on the street

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design is based on twelve primary principles. Principals 1 - 4 are considered First Generation CPTED; 5-8 are considered Advanced First Generation CPTED; and 9-12 are considered Second Generation CPTED. The City of Paterson CPTED Safe Streets Toolkit is focused on designing, planning and improving streets and corridors throughout the city.

1. Territoriality
2. Access Control
3. Image
4. Natural Surveillance
5. Incompatible Land Uses
6. Movement Predictors
7. Activity Support
8. Displacement
9. Capacity
10. Cohesion
11. Connectivity
12. Culture”

[https://togethernorthjersey.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/PatersonCPTED\\_Toolkit-\\_FINAL\\_DRAFT\\_042715.pdf](https://togethernorthjersey.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/PatersonCPTED_Toolkit-_FINAL_DRAFT_042715.pdf)

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.2 - Improve youth experience of safety across neighborhoods.

## Strategy 1.2.1 Create safe routes.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Consistent presence of family**

P: Intolerant attitude toward deviance

P: Family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children**

R: High emotional distress

R: Socially disorganized neighborhoods

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention

### Summary

Safe routes models require community and school involvement to make traveling to and from school and activities safer for youth. The lack of safe routes and transportation are often an obstacle for youth engagement and commitment to school and other pro-social activities.

### New Strategies

#### Safe Routes - Taking Back the Streets and Sidewalks

“Safe routes to school are collection of strategies for helping youth get to and from school while staying safe. These strategies involve community members, small businesses, and local schools in creating systems for keeping youth safe. Safety on the way to and from school is crucial because fear of violence is one of the most important barriers to academic success. At the same time, academic success is a major protective factor against involvement in violence. Eliminating violence and fear on the way to and from school will create a self-reinforcing cycle to prevent and resist violence.”

#### The 6 Es of Safe Routes to School

Comprehensive Safe Routes to School initiatives have been shown to be more effective at increasing physical activity and reducing injuries. The Six E's of Safe Routes to School summarize the key components of a comprehensive, integrated approach. For more information about how each of the 6 E's factor into a comprehensive Safe Routes to School program, and tools to support including the 6 E's, see The Basics of Safe Routes to School. The Six E's framework includes Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, Evaluation, and Equity.”

<https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.2 - Improve youth experience of safety across neighborhoods.

## Strategy 1.2.1 Create safe routes.

### New Strategies Continued

#### **Safe Routes - Greater Mercer TMA**

“Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal, state and local effort to enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school where it is safe to do so and to improve the areas where it is not safe. SRTS facilitates the planning, development and implementation of projects that improve safety and air quality, as well as reduce traffic and fuel consumption around schools.

SRTS programs bring a wide range of benefits to students and the community by:

- Increasing the health and mobility of school-age children
- Reducing congestion, air pollution and traffic conflict around schools
- Establishing healthy lifetime habits for students
- Increasing children’s independence
- Helping children arrive at school ready to learn
- Teaching safe pedestrian, bicyclist and driver skills

Initiatives Include

- Walk to School Day Events
- Bike and Pedestrian Safety Presentations
- Bicycle Rodeos / Skills Clinics
- Walking School Bus
- Frequent Walker Programs
- Other Classroom Activities”

<http://gmtma.org/safe-routes-to-school>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.2 - Improve youth experience of safety across neighborhoods.

## Strategy 1.2.2

### Implement youth-based participatory research practices.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**  
**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Antisocial beliefs and attitudes  
R: Lack of involvement in conventional activities  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure

Target Age Group: 12-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention

### Summary

Involving youth directly in the research, data collection and decision making builds skills and investment in their schools and community while assisting the community in creating a safer space and choosing initiatives that will have the greatest impact.

### New Strategies

#### Youth Mapping

This initiative is a partnership between schools and a youth community organization in which young people are given the opportunity to map the places in their community that they feel safe and unsafe. This process of place-mapping, along with narrative explanations of experiences, emotions, activities that occur at these locations allow youth to name what safe and unsafe places look and feel like and how they may change at different times of the day/week/year. Youth participatory action research can empower youth to be a part of naming the problem from their own lived experiences and define actionable responses to issues that they name as important and related to their sense of safety in both school communities and the larger community.

- Through the research course in the schools and a local community organization, students would create maps of places that feel safe/unsafe in and around the school neighborhood
- Maps would be collectively analyzed by youth to determine places that are common and determine the characteristics of these safe/unsafe places
- Youth participants write narratives about experience in place and the feelings and behaviors associated with various spaces
- Youth share maps with other community members to inform action and policy.

Tzou, C., Scalone, G., & Bell, P. (2010). The role of environmental narratives and social positioning in how place gets constructed for and by youth. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 43(1), 105-119.

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.2 - Improve youth experience of safety across neighborhoods.

## Strategy 1.2.2

### Implement youth-based participatory research practices.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### Youth Survey

Young people design a survey for other youth that addresses issues of safety in and around the school community. A core group of students in a research course work on modifying an existing school safety survey (e.g. NYC school climate survey, polling for justice) in order to poll their peers about safety issues from the perspective of youth. Survey results are analyzed with the help of local higher education faculty and other adults and actions and policy recommendations are formulated and presented to stakeholders in the community.

- Build into the school electives (middle and high school) a research course in which students develop the skills of conducting qualitative and quantitative research
- Students and adults associated with the course create a student survey based on existing school surveys
- Students pilot test their survey and revise questions
- Students administer the survey with their peers and other youth in their school and community
- Students analyze the results, define actions that need to be taken in response to youth safety concerns, share results in a diversity of ways with community members and policy makers

Fox, M., & Fine, M. (2013). *Accountable to Whom? A Critical Science Counter-story about a City that Stopped Caring for its Young*. *Children & Society*, 27(4), 321-335.

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/survey/default.htm>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.3 - Improve youth and police relations.

## Strategy 1.3.1 Increase police/community initiatives.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

P: Positive social orientation  
P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family  
P: Intolerant attitude toward deviance

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Harsh, lax or inconsistent disciplinary practices  
R: Low levels of community participation  
R: Lack of involvement in conventional activities

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Re-Entry

### Summary

Increasing police and community led initiatives can improve relationships with police, improve community trust, allow for increased real time information sharing, more community events and trainings and provide support for law enforcement.

### New Strategies

#### Police Assisted Referrals - Cleveland, OH

“PAR is a partnership among law enforcement, university crime prevention, the public housing community and mental health services that aims to identify potential violent crime early on by helping people with counseling and other services. The program is a new and permanent way of policing where CMHA officers responding to violence-related service calls are trained to identify eligible individuals and families in need of these services, explained CMHA Chief of Police Andres Gonzalez. Police respond to roughly one thousand calls that deal with domestic violence in the household -- violence that children witness. By providing help early, it is hoped that violent crime will be reduced.

With PAR, officers are trained focused on three major points: recognize; identify; refer. At the time of a service call, the officer calls a referral directly into a FrontLine Services central intake center and provides the family with a referral card containing the responding officer’s information on the front and the referral number on the back. The officers clearly explain to residents that FrontLine staff members are not affiliated with the police and it is up to the residents to follow through. Once the call is placed, FrontLine responds to the family within 48 hours to schedule counseling either by phone or in person. Within 48-72 hours, an evaluation visit can take place at the residence or where the family members feel comfortable. From there, counselor and the family can assess if additional help is needed. FrontLine then send the officer a letter thanking the police for the referral, a copy of which is sent to the chief.”

<http://www.safercleveland.org/police-assisted-referral.html>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.3 - Improve youth and police relations.

## Strategy 1.3.1 Increase police/community initiatives.

### New Strategies Continued

#### **Youth Connect**

“YouthConnect is an advocacy and intervention program of Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston that helps the most at-risk young people make positive life choices through trusting relationships with skilled and compassionate social workers. Through our innovative partnership with the Boston Police Department, we place licensed clinical social workers in police stations throughout the city of Boston. This direct partnership with law enforcement allows us to immediately intervene with the child at the critical moment when they are engaging in – or are at risk of – engaging in delinquent activity.

Our relationships with both government agencies and community-based providers, allow our staff to then help secure the most appropriate level of care and services needed to help the young person get back on track for a more hopeful future. YouthConnect’s innovative clinical model enables social workers to not only assist a wide-range of youth, but also help their families. Services are often put in place for the younger children in the family to help ensure their academic and out-of-school time needs are met, and YouthConnect also works directly with the teen’s parent/guardian to address their concerns and needs. In addition, our staff provide community-based counseling to address issues related to truancy, delinquency, safety, substance abuse, victimization, school performance and family functioning.”

<https://www.bgcb.org/what-we-do/youthconnect/>

#### **Community Calendar**

There have been many request for a up-to-date community calendar of events from community members and organizations in order to better engage youth and families in activities that are already happening in the city. If the Trenton Police Department hosted this calendar, the police would have more information about events happening in the city and the community would be better informed about the opportunities available.

#### **Take It To The Streets**

Take It To The Streets is an initiative that has been run by the Trenton Police Department in the past, where selected streets are blocked off, cleaned up and local law enforcement have the chance to engage with that neighborhood for a fun, relaxed afternoon. Events like this one help build relationships and encourages youth to play outside with supervision.



Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.3 - Improve youth and police relations.

## Strategy 1.3.2

### Implement additional community policing practices.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

P: Positive social orientation  
P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family  
P: Intolerant attitude toward deviance

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Harsh, lax or inconsistent disciplinary practices  
R: Low levels of community participation  
R: Lack of involvement in conventional activities

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Intervention, Enforcement

### Summary

Community Policing is a law enforcement philosophy that encourages local police to be engaged fully in the community. By building policies, programs and practices with the community in mind, relationships can be developed and crime can be prevented instead of just enforced.

### New Strategies

#### Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)

“Community policing emphasizes proactive problem solving in a systematic and routine fashion. Rather than responding to crime only after it occurs, community policing encourages agencies to proactively develop solutions to the immediate underlying conditions contributing to public safety problems. Problem solving must be infused into all police operations and guide decision-making efforts. Agencies are encouraged to think innovatively about their responses and view making arrests as only one of a wide array of potential responses. A major conceptual vehicle for helping officers to think about problem solving in a structured and disciplined way is the scanning, analysis, response, and assessment (SARA) model.

Community policing comprises three key components:

- Community Partnerships - Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police
- Organizational Transformation - The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving
- Problem Solving - The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and evaluate effective responses”

<https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf>

Goal 1 - Youth feel safe in their city.

Objective 1.3 - Improve youth and police relations.

## Strategy 1.3.2

### Implement additional community policing practices.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### The SARA Model

“A commonly used problem-solving method is the SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment). The SARA model contains the following elements:

##### Scanning:

- Identifying recurring problems of concern to the public and the police.
- Identifying the consequences of the problem for the community and the police.
- Prioritizing those problems.
- Developing broad goals.
- Confirming that the problems exist.
- Determining how frequently the problem occurs and how long it has been taking place.
- Selecting problems for closer examination.

##### Analysis:

- Identifying and understanding the events and conditions that precede and accompany the problem.
- Identifying relevant data to be collected.
- Researching what is known about the problem type.
- Taking inventory of how the problem is currently addressed and the strengths and limitations of the current response.
- Narrowing the scope of the problem as specifically as possible.
- Identifying a variety of resources that may be of assistance in developing a deeper understanding of the problem.
- Developing a working hypothesis about why the problem is occurring.

##### Response:

- Brainstorming for new interventions.
- Searching for what other communities with similar problems have done.
- Choosing among the alternative interventions.
- Outlining a response plan and identifying responsible parties.
- Stating the specific objectives for the response plan.
- Carrying out the planned activities.

##### Assessment:

- Determining whether the plan was implemented (a process evaluation).
- Collecting pre- and post-response qualitative and quantitative data.
- Determining whether broad goals and specific objectives were attained.
- Identifying any new strategies needed to augment the original plan.
- Conducting ongoing assessment to ensure continued effectiveness.”

<http://www.popcenter.org/about/?p=sara>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.1

### Develop and maintain city-wide youth program database.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

P: Involvement in prosocial activities  
P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning  
P: Involvement in prosocial activities

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Association with delinquent peers  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure  
R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention

### Summary

Youth connectedness and engagement are two of the most identified protective factors in the research and from youth feedback. While there are many programs and opportunities in the Trenton area, the most commonly heard obstacle identified has been knowledge of and access to programs. A city-wide database would allow youth and families to find programs that meet the individual needs (including program type, cost, location, transportation and other important factors).

### New Strategies

#### Newark Thrives (Program Database)

“Mission - To improve access to and participation in high-quality out of school time opportunities for Newark youth by leveraging resources, convening stakeholders, and empowering young people, families, and educators.

Vision - To engage every child in Newark in high-quality experiences outside of school time so that they will grow, develop, and thrive.

Newark Thrives! envisions citywide OST access to:

- safe and healthy learning environments,
- positive relationships with peers and adults,
- a wide variety of opportunities to explore and develop twenty-first century skillsets”

<http://www.newark-thrives.org/>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.1

### Develop and maintain city-wide youth program database.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Starting Points OOS Program Locator (Program Database)**

“Starting Point, a nonprofit child care and out-of-school time resource referral agency, is the lead agency in the MyCom network focused on out-of-school time activities. Starting Point promotes MyCom youth access to fun, safe and inexpensive programs and activities beyond the school day. These activities are diverse and may include athletics, visual and performing arts, character education, college access, service-learning, life skills, social support, career exploration and tutoring.

Starting Point develops the repository of information on out-of-school time services and activities for youth, identifies gaps and barriers to services, and provides technical assistance and professional development to organizations to increase the quality of programs in our community. Starting Point offers a resource and referral service for after-school and summer youth programs.

Starting Point is Northeast Ohio's child care, early education and out-of-school time resource and referral agency; serving families, youth, professionals and the community.”

<http://www.startingpointyouth.com/>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.2

### Remove transportation as a barrier to youth engagement.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

P: Involvement in prosocial activities  
P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning  
P: Involvement in prosocial activities

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Association with delinquent peers  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure  
R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

#### Summary

Youth, community members, schools and organizations all identify transportation as a barrier to engagement. Youth noted they do not always feel safe traveling across neighborhoods to programs or school, which is a key reason they do not attend regularly.

#### New Strategies

##### Intercity Transit (Seattle, WA)

“Mission & Vision - Our mission is to provide and promote public transportation choices that support an accessible, sustainable, livable, healthy, prosperous community. Our vision is to be a leading transit system in the country, recognized for our well-trained, highly motivated, customer-focused, community-minded employees committed to enhancing the quality of life for all citizens of Thurston County.

Village Vans Program - The Village Vans program serves individuals working toward economic independence. Participants must be actively seeking jobs or training. The program also provides on-the-job driver training for the participants who drive the vans.”

<https://www.intercitytransit.com/>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.2

### Remove transportation as a barrier to youth engagement.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Trenton Public Schools Transportation Policy Change**

Trenton is a walking school district, which provides some challenges for students to get to school everyday. It is a recommendation to review the policy, budget and partnerships in order to consider providing busing for all students.

##### Current Policy

Current policy states that eligibility is determined by the shortest walking distance from home to school. Kindergarten - eighth grade students must live over two miles (2.1 or more) to be eligible for free bus transportation or bus tickets. 9th - 12th grade students must live over two and a half miles (2.6 or more) to be eligible for free bus transportation or bus tickets.

In addition, for students who qualify for transportation assistance by distance, paperwork and pick-up policies have been an additional barrier. Current proof of address must be provided by a parent/guardian, or student 18 or older (PSE&G bill, Mortgage Statement, Deed or Lease, Landline Phone Bill, Cable, Water or Tax Bill). When a parent/guardian travels to the Transportation Office to pick up bus tickets, photo identification is required.

<http://www.trenton.k12.nj.us/Transportation.aspx>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.3

### Review and implement ward-based programs/services.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**  
P: Highly developed social skills/competencies

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Association with delinquent peers  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure  
R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

### Summary

Access to programs in all wards is important for youth engagement. While there are pro-social activities in the city, not all wards have necessary programs and services for the youth in the local neighborhoods. In order to best serve youth, a review of what is available in each ward would allow for more intentional development of new programming.

### New Strategies

#### Beacon Youth Programs

“Beacon youth programs are designed to help participants acquire the skills and attitudes they need to graduate from high school, succeed in their chosen career, and give back to the community.” The programs are organized by the NYC Department of Youth & Community Development by neighborhood and make safe, positive programming available by location.

Typical programs are intended to build:

- Academic Enhancement
- Life Skills
- Career Awareness/School to Work Transition
- Civic Engagement/Community Building
- Recreation/Health & Fitness
- Culture/Art

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/after-school/beacon-youth-programs.page>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.4

### Teach positive behavior in schools.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Positive social orientation**

P: Exposure to school climates that characterized by clear behavior rules and consistent negative reinforcement of aggression

P: Commitment to school

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Low commitment to school and school failure**

R: Poor academic performance

R: Low commitment to school and school failure

Target Age Group: 5-18 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention

### Summary

In addition to academic skills building, youth can begin to learn positive behaviors and problem solving skills through clear and fair school discipline policies and practices.

### New Strategies

#### Positive Behavior Support

“The Association for Positive Behavior Support (APBS) is an international organization dedicated to improving the support of individuals in order to reduce behavioral challenges, increasing independence, and ensure the development of constructive behaviors to meet life goals in the areas of social relationships, employment, academic achievement, functional life-skills, self-determination, health, and safety. We believe that the competent and skilled use of PBS (i.e., focusing on strategies that are compassionate, constructive, and educationally oriented) can help individuals make meaningful progress toward these goals.

The Association for Positive Behavior Support is a multidisciplinary organization made up of professionals (teachers, researchers, university professors, and administrators), family members, and consumers who are committed to the application of PBS within the context of the school, family, and community including across systems (e.g., entire schools, organizations), for small groups, and for individuals with complex needs for support.”

[http://www.apbs.org/new\\_apbs/genintro.aspx](http://www.apbs.org/new_apbs/genintro.aspx)



Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.5 Increase comprehensive employment programming.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**  
P: Highly developed social skills/competencies

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Diminished economic opportunities  
R: High concentrations of poor residents  
R: Low levels of community participation

Target Age Group: 16-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Re-Entry

### Summary

In order to be successful in reaching personal and professional goals, youth need employment opportunities that give them the chance to experience the workforce while in a supportive environment. Training and mentorship are important components in preparing youth to be successful employment.

### New Strategies

#### Jersey City Summer Internship Program

“The Jersey City Summer Internship program is a public-private collaboration between the Office of the Mayor, the Jersey City Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC), the Jersey City Public Schools and the City’s leading firms and institutions. The highly-competitive program is open to Jersey City’s public high school juniors. The program places students in paid work-based learning opportunities at the City’s leading private and nonprofit firms and higher-education institutions. JCSI includes a weekly professional development class, where students apply what they learn in their internships. Students receive academic credit through the Hudson County and Jersey City School Districts.

The JCSI includes the following key elements.

- Paid Internship
- Professional Enrichment
- Academic Credit”

<https://www.jerseycityyouthworks.org/jersey-city-summer-internship-program/>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.5 Increase comprehensive employment programming.

### New Strategies Continued

#### **Hopeworks Camden**

“Mission - Hopeworks ‘N Camden uses education, technology and entrepreneurship to partner with young men and women as they identify and earn a sustainable future. Together we seize the opportunity to heal and thrive in the midst of violence and poverty.

#### Program Components

Day Training Program - Youth participates in our technology training as well as our literacy and formation programs. The typical timeline is that after three months, a youth will have acquired the skills to apply for a job with us and will also test at a level to enroll in entry level college courses. Once this level has been achieved, youth can continue to work and train at Hopeworks as long as they are continuing their college education.

Academic Success - Hopeworks works to empower youth to identify and develop their DREAMS by fostering within each trainee a sense of the value of academic success, and to help each trainee improve in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Hopeworks strives to prepare young people not only with the skills to be competitive in today’s tech saturated job market, but to also ready youth for the pressures and stresses of the workplace, and especially prepare them to stay healthy while managing these pressures . Hopeworks’ goal is to support youth in all aspects of their life.

Counseling - One-on-one counseling on a weekly basis aides youth in realizing their patterns to make positive changes.

Externships/Internships - Youth are provided mock interview experience in preparation for their real world interviews for one of Hopeworks’ internal internships or one of the many externships we have with regional partners.

Education - Formation partners with our Literacy program to ensure youth are always tracking toward their goals, and achieving their DREAMS.

CRIB - The C.R.I.B. is a residential community for college students who have earned a job at Hopeworks, or who demonstrate responsibility in the workforce while pursuing a degree at an accredited College or University. The C.R.I.B. is a community of success where college students live together, share meals, and all believe in furthering their higher education goals.

The heart of the C.R.I.B. is community living, built in accountability, encouragement, and safe, secure housing. The C.R.I.B. continues to provide Hopeworks youth with a safe, respectful, and celebratory atmosphere as they strive to develop their dreams by pursuing higher education, corporate internships, and peer leadership roles. The C.R.I.B. is a community built on hope, belief, and love; it is a home where you will study, hang out, encourage, cook, eat, and live for your future together.”

<https://hopeworks.org/>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.6 Increase youth civic engagement opportunities.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**  
P: Highly developed social skills/competencies

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Association with delinquent peers  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure  
R: Low levels of community participation

Target Age Group: 14-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

### Summary

Youth civic engagement encourages youth to be an active participant in their community, builds investment and teaches life and professional skills. Youth voice and experience can also assist leadership in making informed decisions to best serve the youth in the community.

### New Strategies

#### Youth Civic Engagement

“Youth participating in civic engagement activities civic engagement involves ‘working to make a difference in the civic life of one’s community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.’ Civic engagement includes both paid and unpaid forms of political activism, environmentalism, and community and national service. Volunteering, national service, and service-learning are all forms of civic engagement.

The Character and Civic Education (CCE) group administers programs in character and civics education, including providing financial assistance for character and citizenship education activities in elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education, and reporting on issues and programs, disseminating information, and providing technical assistance to state agencies and state and local correctional institutions. These activities may be carried out by state and local educational agencies and by other public and private nonprofit organizations.”

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/civic-engagement-and-volunteering>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.1 - Increase # of youth engaged in meaningful, positive activities and behaviors.

## Strategy 2.1.7 Increase number of non-structured activities.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**  
P: Highly developed social skills/competencies

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Association with delinquent peers  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure  
R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children

Target Age Group: 14-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention

### Summary

In order to have a larger number of available activities, youth engagement opportunities should include non-structured, positive activities.

### New Strategies

#### **Parks After Dark - Los Angeles, CA**

“In neighborhoods with high crime rates and economic hardship, the Parks After Dark program turns parks into vibrant community centers. Participating county parks stay open late during summer evening hours, when crime rates are the highest and youth have fewer social and recreational opportunities. Participating parks provide a variety of free activities for community members of all ages.”

Sports, Dance, & Fitness - LA Sparks Basketball Clinics, Basketball, Baseball, Cheerleading, Soccer, Golf and Tennis lessons, Martial arts, Dance class,, Zumba®, Bike rides, Walking clubs, Rec swim, Open gym, Aerobics (Family, Step, Water), Dodgeball, Tennis, Tumbling, Yoga

Programming - Art in the Park, Movies in the Park, Concerts in the Park, Teen Clubs, Talent Shows, Family Game Night, Music classes & karaoke, Face Painting, Petting Zoo

Classes - Car Seat Safety, Child Development, CPR/First Aid Workshop, Home Owner Information, Healthy Cooking, Parenting, Reading, Arts and Crafts, Computer, Ask the Nurse, Ask a Sheriff, Healthy Eating, Self Defense

Resource Fairs - Health and Wellness, Jobs, Legal, Social services, Back to School

<http://www.choosehealthla.com/live/pad/>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.2 - Increase family engagement in youth activities.

## Strategy 2.2.1

### Improve and leverage school relationships.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

P: Frequent shared activities with parents  
P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family  
P: Perceived parental expectations about school performance are high

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Low family involvement**  
R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children  
R: Low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers

Target Age Group: 5-18 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

#### Summary

In order to increase family engagement, supporting school-based family initiatives can engage parents not only in their child's school life, but relationships can also be leveraged for engagement in other programming.

#### New Strategies

##### School Smarts - CA

“School Smarts is a parent engagement program with an operating principle of inclusion — reaching across all parent groups and bringing them together in support of their common interest in helping children succeed. Parent engagement is a longstanding focus of PTA. Research shows that parent engagement in education improves students' success in school, across all socioeconomic groups. The program is available statewide and helps parents from all backgrounds advocate for issues that are most important to their children and schools.

The program offers a seven-session parent academy that educates and empowers parents. Topics include understanding the education system, communicating effectively, advocating for a quality education, and the importance of parent involvement. The program's operating principle is inclusion and the curriculum is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Tagalog and Vietnamese. Each session includes instructional art activities that reinforce key lessons, which helps build a sense of community and underscores the importance of a complete education that includes the arts.”

<https://capta.org/programs-events/school-smarts/what-is-school-smarts/>

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.2 - Increase family engagement in youth activities.

## Strategy 2.2.1

### Improve and leverage school relationships.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Parent University - Boston, MA**

“Launched in 2009, Parent University was created as the primary strategy to build the capacity of parents to be actively engaged in their child's education . The goal of the program is to "educate and empower parents as partners, advocates and lifelong teachers in their child's education through educational courses and leadership opportunities." The vision is that All BPS families are equipped and empowered to advocate and partner with schools to ensure every child has access to a quality education and achieves excellence in school.

Theory of Change - If we provide all BPS parents with knowledge and experiences that build their capacity to advocate and support not only their child's learning but their own personal learning, then parents will become more engaged and intentional in demanding and supporting quality education for their children in ways that result in improved student outcomes and school improvement. Parents are Teachers, Parents are Advocates, Parents are Leaders, Parents are Learners.”

<https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/5818>

##### **Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC) - Somers Point, NJ**

“The goal of the Somers Point Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC) is to support programs that serve the English Learners (ELs) and to advocate for the development of bilingual and bi-literate students. The Somers Point BPAC provides family support, information, communication and learning activities that will assist in ensuring our students have equal access to education as they grow into global citizens.

School districts are required to establish a Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC). BPAC is comprised of parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the English Language Program, teachers, administrators, and other community members. The council must meet a least four times per year and participate in the planning, operations, and evaluation of the English Language Program.”

<https://www.sptsd.org/domain/502>

##### **Community Schools**

“A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. Its integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Community schools offer a personalized curriculum that emphasizes real-world learning and community problem-solving. Schools become centers of the community and are open to everyone – all day, every day, evenings and weekends.

Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities. Partners work to achieve these results: Children are ready to enter school; students attend school consistently; students are actively involved in learning and their community; families are increasingly involved with their children's education; schools are engaged with families and communities; students succeed academically; students are healthy - physically, socially, and emotionally; students live and learn in a safe, supportive, and stable environment, and communities are desirable places to live.”

[http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what\\_is\\_a\\_community\\_school.aspx](http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx)

Goal 2 - Youth engage in meaningful, constructive activities.

Objective 2.2 - Increase family engagement in youth activities.

## Strategy 2.2.2

### Improve coordination of family engagement.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

P: Frequent shared activities with parents  
P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family  
P: Perceived parental expectations about school performance are high

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Low family involvement**  
R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children  
R: Low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Re-Entry

### Summary

Family engagement can be a challenge when families are asked to attend multiple meetings for the different stakeholders working with their youth. In order to have higher family engagement, organizations should coordinate services and required family meetings.

### New Strategies

#### Youth Development Network - Boston, MA

“The Youth Development Network partners with four BPS high schools to address and reduce chronic absenteeism among students. Our services are completely voluntary to the student and family. With current staffing, YDN serves 200-300 students a year.

#### Academic Year Programming

Organize: support school structure around attendance  
Identify: develop a system of identifying issues with student attendance  
Outreach: meet with parents at home, school or other location  
Assess: what are the obstacles to attending school?  
Case management: what resources are needed to overcome above?  
Mentor: guide and support each student towards success.”

#### Summer Programming

Our summer program is a partnership between YDN, BPS and the Division of Youth Engagement & Employment, Boston Centers for Youth & Families (BCYF). This program was created by YDN staff to address tension between academic and financial needs of students. Workshops are provided by YDN staff and professional guest speakers.”

<http://www.bphc.org/whatwedo/Teens/YDN/Pages/YDN.aspx>

Goal 3 - Youth have positive relationships with trusted, informed adults.

Objective 3.1 - Increase the number of trusted, informed adults in the community and train youth to identify those adults.

## Strategy 3.1.1

### Develop trainings for adults to increase knowledge and build trust.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Ability to discuss problems with family**

P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family

P: Parental / family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Low family involvement**

**R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children**

R: Low levels of community participation

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Re-Entry

#### Summary

Youth being connected to trusted, informed adults allows for learning skills through modeling and for developing relationships to help with intervention when necessary. Having one caring adult in a youth's life is noted in some research as the single best protective factor.

#### New Strategies

**Parent University - Boston, MA**

"Launched in 2009, Parent University was created as the primary strategy to build the capacity of parents to be actively engaged in their child's education . The goal of the program is to "educate and empower parents as partners, advocates and lifelong teachers in their child's education through educational courses and leadership opportunities." The vision is that All BPS families are equipped and empowered to advocate and partner with schools to ensure every child has access to a quality education and achieves excellence in school.

Theory of Change - If we provide all BPS parents with knowledge and experiences that build their capacity to advocate and support not only their child's learning but their own personal learning, then parents will become more engaged and intentional in demanding and supporting quality education for their children in ways that result in improved student outcomes and school improvement. Parents are Teachers, Parents are Advocates, Parents are Leaders, Parents are Learners."

<https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/5818>



Goal 3 - Youth have positive relationships with trusted, informed adults.

Objective 3.1 - Increase the number of trusted, informed adults in the community and train youth to identify those adults.

## Strategy 3.1.1

### Develop trainings for adults to increase knowledge and build trust.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Mental Health First Aid**

“Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. In the Mental Health First Aid course, you learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.

##### Topics Covered

- Depression and mood disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Trauma
- Psychosis
- Substance Use disorders

Mental Health First Aid teaches about recovery and resiliency – the belief that individuals experiencing these challenges can and do get better, and use their strengths to stay well.

##### The Mental Health First Aid Action Plan

- Assess for risk of suicide or harm
- Listen nonjudgmentally
- Give reassurance and Information
- Encourage appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies

##### Interventions Learned

When you take a course, you learn how to apply the Mental Health First Aid action plan in a variety of situations, including when someone is experiencing:

- Panic attacks
- Suicidal thoughts or behaviors
- Nonsuicidal self-injury
- Acute psychosis (e.g., hallucinations or delusions)
- Overdose or withdrawal from alcohol or drug use
- Reaction to a traumatic event

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org>

Goal 3 - Youth have positive relationships with trusted, informed adults.

Objective 3.1 - Increase the number of trusted, informed adults in the community and train youth to identify those adults.

## Strategy 3.1.1

### Develop trainings for adults to increase knowledge and build trust.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Community Connections for Youth - Credible Messenger Boot Camp**

“The Credible Messenger Boot Camp is a 5-day intensive training experience for Credible Messenger Mentors who are working with system-involved youth. This transformative training prepares mentors both internally and externally to work with youth and lead them through a process of growth and change.

The Credible Messenger Boot Camp is comprised of 10 Modules that take participants through a journey from understanding the context of Credible Messenger Mentoring all the way through the skills for creating spaces and lessons that engage youth.

##### Training Agenda

**Credible Messenger Mentoring** - The first day of training introduces Credible Messengers to the practice and philosophy of transformative mentoring. The orientation establishes the roles and responsibilities of the Credible Messenger, along with basic techniques and practices to develop mentoring relationships with youth.

**My Role in the Movement & Taking Care of Myself** - This day leads Credible Messengers through the process of recommitting to their personal growth and ongoing transformation. Credible Messengers identify areas of pain, wounds, and trauma that can threaten the integrity of their work. They explore the importance of ongoing self-care, inner-healing, and personal growth to ensure that they show up at their best for youth. Mentors learn to understand healthy boundaries, essential to the work of mentoring.

**Understanding How Youth Grow** - This day focuses on giving mentors a complete orientation of the theoretical underpinnings of how people change, and covers the basics of Positive Youth Development, Restorative Justice, and Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques. Credible Messengers learn to apply a Positive Youth Development lens to their work with system-involved youth (also known as Positive Youth Justice). They learn to create community using Restorative Justice Practices. Finally, they learn to understand the cognitive-behavioral principles to help guide youth through changing their thinking, attitudes, and behavior.

**Curriculum Development** - This fourth day equips the Credible Messenger to prepare effective group mentoring sessions for young people. This training day prepares Credible Messengers to design group mentoring workshops for youth using a template that includes team building activities, icebreakers, presentation of new information, testimonies, reflection, and other techniques that facilitate both group formation and the individual change process. This curriculum preparation training also teaches Credible Messengers to use media, popular culture, and spiritual and cultural traditions to communicate concepts that are relevant and engaging for young people.

**Group Facilitation** - This last day is a practicum session that builds on the previous day’s curriculum development training to give Credible Messengers the skills to effectively facilitate workshops for youth. Mentors learn the theory behind effective group facilitation and also practice specific techniques to maximize group participation. Participants have the opportunity to practice facilitating the curriculum they have been developing for their peers and receive feedback and coaching on ways to maximize their workshops. By the end of the 5-Day Training, all Credible Messengers will have demonstrated that they are equipped to prepare and deliver culturally competent workshops for youth that are lively, fun, and engaging.”

<https://cc-fy.org/>

Goal 3 - Youth have positive relationships with trusted, informed adults.

Objective 3.1 - Increase the number of trusted, informed adults in the community and train youth to identify those adults.

## Strategy 3.1.1

### Develop trainings for adults to increase knowledge and build trust.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **School Smarts - CA**

“School Smarts is a parent engagement program with an operating principle of inclusion — reaching across all parent groups and bringing them together in support of their common interest in helping children succeed. Parent engagement is a longstanding focus of PTA. Research shows that parent engagement in education improves students’ success in school, across all socioeconomic groups. The program is available statewide and helps parents from all backgrounds advocate for issues that are most important to their children and schools.

The program offers a seven-session parent academy that educates and empowers parents. Topics include understanding the education system, communicating effectively, advocating for a quality education, and the importance of parent involvement. The program’s operating principle is inclusion and the curriculum is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Tagalog and Vietnamese. Each session includes instructional art activities that reinforce key lessons, which helps build a sense of community and underscores the importance of a complete education that includes the arts.”

<https://capta.org/programs-events/school-smarts/what-is-school-smarts/>

##### **Big Brothers, Big Sisters**

“When children and teens have the influence of a caring adult, they are more likely to avoid risky behaviors and to focus on academics. Today’s youth face a variety of challenges, and being matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister can help them navigate these challenges and reach their potential. Big Brothers Big Sisters helps children realize their potential and build their futures. We nurture children and strengthen communities. We provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.” BBBS provides training, matching and relationship management services in order to set up pairs for a successful relationship.

<http://www.bbbs.org/>

Goal 3 - Youth have positive relationships with trusted, informed adults.

Objective 3.2 - Improve services for families with high-risk factors for youth violence.

## Strategy 3.2.1

### Develop multi family group intervention program.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

- P: Ability to discuss problems with family
- P: Consistent presence of family
- P: Family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

- R: Low family involvement
- R: Exposure to violence and conflict in the family
- R: Poor family functioning

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

#### Summary

Providing trainings for families to learn new skills and promote positive relationship building, will help families build their own support system while learning how to best support their youth.

#### New Strategies

##### Families And Schools Together (FAST)

FAST® is an internationally-acclaimed parent engagement program that supports the family bonding necessary for children to thrive. Built on evidence-based practices and rigorously tested, FAST:

- Empowers parents to become more effective family leaders;
- Builds positive connections and social capital between families and schools; and
- Creates a supportive community engaged in fostering children's well-being and education.

The cumulative effects of FAST can change the course of children's lives. After a single 8-week FAST Cycle, children's school behavior problems improve and emotional problems diminish at home and at school. Parent-child bonding strengthens and family conflict declines. Academic performance improves, and children get along better with their parents and with their peers. In short, FAST applies research and evidence-based family therapy practices to promote the full potential of every child."

<https://www.familiesandschools.org>

Goal 3 - Youth have positive relationships with trusted, informed adults.

Objective 3.2 - Improve services for families with high-risk factors for youth violence.

## Strategy 3.2.1

### Develop multi family group intervention program.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Strengthening Families Program**

“The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program for high-risk and general population families. SFP is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance. Child maltreatment also decreases as parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills.

The Strengthening Families Program is a 14-session, evidence-based parenting skills, children's social skills, and family life skills training program specifically designed for high-risk families. Parents and children participate in SFP, both separately and together. Group Leader Manuals contain a complete lesson for every session. Parents' and children's Handouts are also provided for every session.

SFP sessions include all the critical core components of effective evidence-based parenting programs (CDC, 2008) including: parent and child practice time in the family sessions learning positive interactions, communication, and effective discipline. The parenting sessions review appropriate developmental expectations, teach parents to interact positively with children (such as showing enthusiasm and attention for good behavior and letting the child take the lead in play activities, increasing attention and praise for positive children's behaviors, positive family communication including active listening and reducing criticism and sarcasm, family meetings to improve order and organization, and effective and consistent and effective discipline including reasonable and logical consequences and time-outs.

The children's skills training content includes communication skills to improve parents, peers, and teacher relationships, hopes and dreams, resilience skills, problems solving, peer resistance, feeling identification, dealing with criticism, anger management and coping skills.

The family sessions allow the parents and children to practice what they learned in their individual sessions in experiential exercises. This is also a time for the group leaders to coach and encourage family members for improvements in parent/child interactions. The major skills to learn are: Child's Game or, for Teens, Our Time, similar to therapeutic child play where the parent allows the child to determine the play activity, complimenting the good, effective communication, Family Meetings, making family rules, and Positive Discipline. SFP also includes group practice in problem solving and anger management. Home practice assignments of these skills improve generalization of new behaviors at home.”

<https://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/>

Goal 4 - Youth-serving organizations deliver coordinated, effective, empirically informed programs.

Objective 4.1 - Improve coordination of youth and family services.

## Strategy 4.1.1

### Provide individualized coordination and planning for youth.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
**P: Positive social orientation**  
**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Low commitment to school and school failure**  
**R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children**  
**R: Antisocial beliefs and attitudes**

Target Age Group: 5-18 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

#### Summary

Coordination of services will allow youth to engage in the most appropriate programming to fit their needs. In addition, youth will be more likely to follow up and attend recommended programming if referral services extend past sharing of contact information.

#### New Strategies

##### City Connects

City Connects takes a systematic, high-impact, cost-effective approach to addressing the out-of-school factors that limit learning. The support we offer makes a significant impact on students — now, and years from now.

- Every Student, Every Teacher, Every Year: When a school partners with City Connects, a full-time City Connects Coordinator becomes embedded within the fabric of the school. The City Connects Coordinator collaborates with teachers in every classroom to review the strengths and needs of every student, every year.
- Systematic Support: The City Connects Coordinator creates a tailored support plan for every student - leveraging a comprehensive range of prevention, intervention, and enrichment services that already exist in schools and communities. Students who are most at risk receive an in-depth review and a broader level of support. At City Connects schools, the City Connects Coordinator becomes the hub of student support — a single point of contact in an otherwise crowded maze of service providers. We alleviate the burden on principals and teachers, and we create an organized referral process for community-based partners.
- Feedback and Follow-up: Using proprietary software developed for City Connects, City Connects Coordinators constantly track services and evaluate results, making sure every student is getting what's needed. The City Connects Coordinator works closely with students and their families, providing referrals and support that bolster the long-term health of the entire family.

<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/lsoe/sites/cityconnects.html>

Goal 4 - Youth-serving organizations deliver coordinated, effective, empirically informed programs.

Objective 4.1 - Improve coordination of youth and family services.

## Strategy 4.1.2 Improve systems coordination.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

- P: Involvement in prosocial activities**
- P: Positive social orientation**
- P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

- R: Low commitment to school and school failure**
- R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children**
- R: Antisocial beliefs and attitudes**

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

### Summary

Youth are involved in many systems, that often, are not providing coordinated, comprehensive plans. Youth could be better served if agencies and organizations coordinated efforts.

### New Strategies

#### Health Information Exchange

“The demand for electronic health information exchange among care professionals is growing along with nationwide efforts to improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of health care delivery. Meaningful use requirements, new payment approaches that stress care coordination, and federal financial incentives are all driving the interest and demand for health information exchange.

Electronic health information exchange (HIE) allows doctors, nurses, pharmacists, other health care providers and patients to appropriately access and securely share a patient’s vital medical information electronically—improving the speed, quality, safety and cost of patient care.”

<https://www.healthit.gov/topic/health-it-basics/health-information-exchange>

#### City-based Youth Collaborative Liaison

It is a recommendation of the board that the city create or designate a liaison for youth services. There are many initiatives, programs and collaboratives serving youth, with little formal coordination.

Goal 4 - Youth-serving organizations deliver coordinated, effective, empirically informed programs.

Objective 4.1 - Improve coordination of youth and family services.

## Strategy 4.1.2 Improve systems coordination.

### New Strategies Continued

#### CaseWorks-YASI

A comprehensive assessment instrument for each youth that enters the system to assess the youth's risk and strengths, level of service and necessary case management. The assessment results will provide the juvenile justice treatment team with specific interventions and service plans to address the youth's needs and risk factors. It is recommended that New Jersey implement a software platform, such as "CaseWorks-YASI", developed by Orbis Partners, Inc, for all youth records. This software is currently utilized by New York, Illinois, California, North Dakota, and Mississippi (<http://orbispartners.com/software/>).

It includes assessments to assess needs and strengths, create individualized client goals, monitor progress, scheduling, case management initiatives and youth involvement in activities. Further, the software includes the YASI assessment tool, which identifies the youth's strengths and needs, level of need, pre-screening, and case management interventions recommended for the categories identified as needing assistance. This instrument assess the following categories: Legal history, family/environment, school, community/peer, alcohol/drugs, mental health, attitudes/behavior, skills, employment, and use of free time (Orbis Partners, Inc).

<http://orbispartners.com/software/>



Goal 4 - Youth-serving organizations deliver coordinated, effective, empirically informed programs.

Objective 4.2 - Expand awareness of evidence-based PIER practices.

## Strategy 4.2.1

### Develop and implement training series for providers.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**  
P: Highly developed social skills/competencies

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Association with delinquent peers  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure  
R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Re-Entry

#### Summary

In order to best serve youth, organizations and staff need to stay informed on new and best practices in their field. Many partners do not have the resources to provide professional development for their staff, so providing free, or low cost, training is an important component of a successful city-wide youth violence initiative.

#### New Strategies

##### Trenton Prevention Policy Board Training Series

TPPB will provide a series of trainings based on the priorities that are chosen from the Trenton Youth Violence Reduction Action Strategy. Trainings will happen at the monthly TPPB meetings and through an annual symposium.

The Board will work to coordinate with other collaboratives to provide trainings for as many agencies and partners as possible.

<https://tppb.pages.tcnj.edu/>

Goal 4 - Youth-serving organizations deliver coordinated, effective, empirically informed programs.

Objective 4.2 - Expand awareness of evidence-based PIER practices.

## Strategy 4.2.2

### Create a city-wide youth violence prevention center.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

P: Intolerant attitude toward deviance  
P: Family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems  
P: Positive social orientation

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

R: Exposure to violence and conflict in the family  
R: History of violent victimization  
R: Involvement in gangs

Target Age Group: 0-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Re-Entry

### Summary

To coordinate violence prevention efforts, some cities have invested in a city-wide youth violence prevention center. Centers are tasked with coordinating programs and advocating for better policies and practices.

### New Strategies

#### Youth Violence Prevention Center - Denver, CO

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) established the National Centers of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention (YVPC) program in 2000, with the primary goals of linking research to practice and preventing youth violence by building infrastructure and enhancing academic and community partnerships. CSPV was first designated as a CDC funded YVPC in 2011. The resulting initiative was called Steps to Success, with the goal of reducing youth violence in Denver's Montbello neighborhood. The Center worked closely with residents and community partners to reduce rates of violence among 10-24 year olds through a coordinated community-wide effort focused on effectively implementing a package of evidence-based programs at the individual, family and community levels.

In 2016, CSPV was again designated as a YVPC (one of five centers) by the CDC, and began the Youth Violence Prevention Center- Denver (YVPC-D), which builds upon the work of Montbello's Steps to Success project. The goal of this initiative is to reduce violence among 10- to 24-year-olds in the Montbello and Northeast Park Hill (NEPH) communities in Denver by identifying, implementing and evaluating a community-level prevention system that delivers community- and policy-level strategies matched to local need.

<https://cspv.colorado.edu/yvpc-denver/>

Goal 5 - Youth returning from out-of-home placement or secure care successfully reintegrate into their community.

Objective 5.1 - Improve reintegration of youth back to family, community, and school/employment.

## Strategy 5.1.1

### Increase number of individual, reintegration mentors, supporters and advocates.

#### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Ability to discuss problems with family**

P: Connectedness to family or adults outside the family

P: Parental / family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems

#### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Poor monitoring and supervision of children**

**R: Association with delinquent peers**

R: Involvement in gangs

Target Age Group: 10-25 years old

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Re-Entry

### Summary

Youth coming back into the community from secure care, or other out of home placements, often need additional support in order to reintegrate into the community, school or the workforce.

### New Strategies

#### Arches Transformative Mentoring Program

“The New York City Department of Probation (DOP) helps build stronger and safer communities by working with and supervising people on probation, fostering positive change in their decision-making and behavior, and expanding opportunities for them to move out of the criminal and juvenile justice systems through meaningful education, employment, health services, family engagement and civic participation.

Arches is a curriculum-based group mentoring intervention that helps probation clients transform the attitudes and behaviors that have led to criminal activity. DOP contracts with nonprofit organizations in targeted neighborhoods to provide a transformative mentoring intervention designed to meet young people where they are in the process of pro-social engagement, focusing on changes in cognition and thinking that often precede the ability to secure concrete attainments in education and employment.”

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/prob/html/community/arches.shtml>

Goal 5 - Youth returning from out-of-home placement or secure care successfully reintegrate into their community.

Objective 5.1 - Improve reintegration of youth back to family, community, and school/employment.

## Strategy 5.1.1

### Increase number of individual, reintegration mentors, supporters and advocates.

#### New Strategies Continued

##### **Community Connections for Youth - Credible Messenger Boot Camp**

“The Credible Messenger Boot Camp is a 5-day intensive training experience for Credible Messenger Mentors who are working with system-involved youth. This transformative training prepares mentors both internally and externally to work with youth and lead them through a process of growth and change. The Credible Messenger Boot Camp is comprised of 10 Modules that take participants through a journey from understanding the context of Credible Messenger Mentoring all the way through the skills for creating spaces and lessons that engage youth.

##### Training Agenda

**Credible Messenger Mentoring** - The first day of training introduces Credible Messengers to the practice and philosophy of transformative mentoring. The orientation establishes the roles and responsibilities of the Credible Messenger, along with basic techniques and practices to develop mentoring relationships with youth.

**My Role in the Movement & Taking Care of Myself** - This day leads Credible Messengers through the process of recommitting to their personal growth and ongoing transformation. Credible Messengers identify areas of pain, wounds, and trauma that can threaten the integrity of their work. They explore the importance of ongoing self-care, inner-healing, and personal growth to ensure that they show up at their best for youth. Mentors learn to understand healthy boundaries, essential to the work of mentoring.

**Understanding How Youth Grow** - This day focuses on giving mentors a complete orientation of the theoretical underpinnings of how people change, and covers the basics of Positive Youth Development, Restorative Justice, and Cognitive-Behavioral Techniques. Credible Messengers learn to apply a Positive Youth Development lens to their work with system-involved youth (also known as Positive Youth Justice). They learn to create community using Restorative Justice Practices. Finally, they learn to understand the cognitive-behavioral principles to help guide youth through changing their thinking, attitudes, and behavior.

**Curriculum Development** - This fourth day equips the Credible Messenger to prepare effective group mentoring sessions for young people. This training day prepares Credible Messengers to design group mentoring workshops for youth using a template that includes team building activities, icebreakers, presentation of new information, testimonies, reflection, and other techniques that facilitate both group formation and the individual change process. This curriculum preparation training also teaches Credible Messengers to use media, popular culture, and spiritual and cultural traditions to communicate concepts that are relevant and engaging for young people.

**Group Facilitation** - This last day is a practicum session that builds on the previous day's curriculum development training to give Credible Messengers the skills to effectively facilitate workshops for youth. Mentors learn the theory behind effective group facilitation and also practice specific techniques to maximize group participation. Participants have the opportunity to practice facilitating the curriculum they have been developing for their peers and receive feedback and coaching on ways to maximize their workshops. By the end of the 5-Day Training, all Credible Messengers will have demonstrated that they are equipped to prepare and deliver culturally competent workshops for youth that are lively, fun, and engaging.”

<https://cc-fy.org/>

##### **Education Advocate Program Manual**

“This publication is a guide for Washington State Education Advocate program supervisors and staff who plan to, or are implementing a re-entry, case management model to assist incarcerated youth to successfully re-entry into the community from secure facilities. The manual covers the theoretical framework for the education advocate model and outlines research for effective re-entry programming. In addition, the manual provides details of program services and tools needed for program implementation.”

[http://www.k12.wa.us/InstitutionalEd/pubdocs/EA\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.k12.wa.us/InstitutionalEd/pubdocs/EA_Manual.pdf)

Goal 5 - Youth returning from out-of-home placement or secure care successfully reintegrate into their community.

Objective 5.1 - Improve reintegration of youth back to family, community, and school/employment.

## Strategy 5.1.2 Create city-wide reengagement center.

### CDC Youth Violence Protective Factors Addressed

**P: Involvement in prosocial activities**  
**P: Highly developed skills for realistic planning**  
P: High educational aspirations

### CDC Youth Violence Risk Factors Addressed

**R: Association with delinquent peers**  
**R: Low commitment to school and school failure**  
R: Low commitment to school and school failure

Target Age Group: 15-24

PIER Category: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry

### Summary

Once youth dropout of school, it is a challenge to get back engaged in the right program and catch up to gain the confidence to be successful. Reengagement centers work with youth individually to select the best plan for their education, connect them with the appropriate programs and follow-up to ensure success.

### New Strategies

#### Re-engagement Center - Boston School Model

“As the only Boston Public Schools program that specifically targets dropouts, the Re-Engagement Center (REC) provides one central location in a caring environment for students to access the resources and counseling that they need to re-enroll in school and get back on track to graduation. One of the first programs of its kind nationwide, the REC has found that dropouts want to come back to school and can succeed when they’re given the right support. It is a partnership between the Boston Public Schools and the PIC. Staff at the REC reach out to young people who have dropped out of high school. It all begins with a conversation, staff sharing their own story and listening to the young person. They help students determine what the best fit will be for them, whether it’s a high school in the district or an alternative program with a non-profit partner, and help them enroll.

#### REC Services

Outreach to dropouts via mail, phone, and door knocking, Review transcripts to give students a picture of what they need to complete school, Referral to online credit recovery, night school, day and summer school classes, Help students enroll in an appropriate BPS high school or alternative program, GED program referral, Follow-up with students after placement, Connections to various support services within the community, Life and career workshops”

<https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/domain/1389>

# CCYVC Playbook: Planning Process

This Playbook is the result of two years of collaboration and cooperation among hundreds of individuals, organizations, community leaders, and public figures. Key dates and events are included below.

- March 2017: Call to Action from Judge Lawrence DeBello to gathering of 50+ leaders and community stakeholders;  
TPPB commitment to National Forum model
- June 2017: Present National Forum model and Playbook plan to city and county leadership, local collaboratives and organizations
- August 2017: Key participants determine framework, definitions, and priorities
- December 2017: Symposium on Youth Violence, 150+ attendees; Boston, Cleveland, Camden National Forum representatives  
Update city and county leadership on Playbook progress, challenges, opportunities
- January -July 2018: Development of goals, objectives  
Research, selection, and consideration of strategies  
Risk and Protective Factors identification
- December 2018: 2nd Symposium on Youth Violence, 120+ attendees  
Final plan published and shared
- January 2019: Name change from TPPB to CCYVC
- Throughout: TPPB presentations and feedback  
Youth input and feedback  
Faculty and staff review  
Steering Committee review



# Next Steps

This plan was designed to be a framework and resource for organizations, individuals, and agencies to identify potential programs, practices, and policies to reduce youth violence in Trenton and Mercer County. Combined, the implementation of the strategies included under each goal and objective would have a dramatic impact on the rate, recurrence, and frequency of youth violence.

CCYVC sees five main ways to utilize the Playbook and the information contained in it:

- For guidance: Identify evidence-supported practices that have been successful elsewhere
- For information: Use the information and data to demonstrate need, urgency, relevance; use the strategies as examples to adapt to Trenton
- For collaboration: Identify like-minded organizations and individuals to partner with on projects, programs, and grants
- For framing: Situate your project and programs within the larger youth violence reduction initiative
- For grants: See above! We do not own this playbook: it becomes reality when we all take on a piece.

CCYVC serves to facilitate collaboration, coordination, and sharing of resources related to the Playbook. We encourage any and all interested parties to attend CCYVC meetings and to contact CCYVC leadership if they are interested in pursuing implementation of any of the included strategies. CCYVC has identified priority strategies that we are currently building coalitions and partnerships to implement. We look forward to your involvement in reducing youth violence, creating a safe city where all Trentonians can thrive, and building a future for Trenton's youth today.

