

CCGV Partnerships, Programs, Stakeholders and Community Engagement Subcommittee

Co-Chair- Chief Karl Jacobson

In the New Haven area, we held two community conversations one in October and the other in November. During these conversations met with New Haven Clergy and members of the community. Most of the conversation was surrounding police and community collaboration.

The community members and clergy asked for a collaboration between police and community liaisons. The idea was created that the traditional street outreach workers who did not talk to the police were affective but that there was more collaboration needed with the police. Project Longevity has been proven effective in the New Haven area. This program does not have street outreach workers or persons of past experience. There were discussions that since project longevity has more money and resources there maybe a need for street outreach or violence interrupters to be added to this program. Project Longevity is a police and community program where the police work hand and hand with a program manager and social service provider to help the people that are most at risk for being shot or being a shooter. The police information on these individuals and groups could be helpful if they worked more hand and hand with a street outreach element.

Project Longevity has recently received funding for housing, job training, and smaller needs such as getting a license. It is crucial to reduce violent crime that these services get to the people most at risk. The police and project managers work hand in hand to identify the most at risk and the theory would be that they would then provide this information to the Project Longevity social service provider and to the street outreach workers. A direct collaboration such as this is needed and appeared to be wanted by community members. The key as a law enforcement officers is that we have a group that is willing to work with police and officers that are willing to work with street outreach. The collaboration is not to help make arrests it is to identify who is at most risk and need. It would be to help save lives and not make arrests. After a violent incident there are several incidents of retaliation. Communication and outreach as soon as possible have shown to work to reduce further violent crime. New Haven today is seeing a 60% reduction in homicides this year and the change has been that we are doing communication and outreach as soon as possible after violent incidents.

The other conversations during these discussions was around shooting victims in hospital settings. We all agreed that outreach to victims was imperative to stop a second shooting or a retaliatory shooting. Gun violence needs to be interrupted and a victim getting treatment and services is a good path towards the interruption. There needs to be hospital-based outreach that is connected services such as project longevity or any entity offering services related to gun violence. Again, the solution was hospital based and approved community street outreach that can guide a victim or victims' families away from gun violence.

In conclusion, we feel the grant money can be used to setup street outreach workers that work more closely with law enforcement. The close communication between law enforcement and street outreach can lead to better identification of people who are at risk and better results. The Project Longevity model is based in all four major CT cities and is a great source of resources for at risk people. It lacks a street outreach element that can assist with getting the services to the right people. The bottom line is we all want to keep people safe, alive and out of jail. The services are there we need people who have lived experience to help get the services to the people that need the services.

