EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Programs and practices are designated 'evidence-based' if they have causal evidence of effectiveness, generally obtained through one or more outcome evaluations. The strength of causal evidence will influence the degree to which a program or practice is considered to be evidence-based. Not surprisingly, communities where projects implement evidence-based practices with fidelity have significant violent crime reductions. Below are some examples of evidence-based programs.

- ❖ Proactive policing is an effective strategy for programs that have as one of their goals preventing or reducing violent crime. Law Enforcement is not reactive in terms of focusing primarily on responding to or investigating crimes after they have occurred or uncovering ongoing crime.

- ❖ Apprehension-focused deterrence. Effective projects prioritize strategies that maximize the certainty of law enforcement *apprehension*. While all elements of the criminal justice system have deterrent effects, strategies that lead to swift and certain apprehension have vastly stronger crime deterrent effects than strategies that prioritize the severity of punishment. After apprehension, there is no evidence that the deterrent effect increases when the likelihood of conviction or imprisonment increases. Nor is there any evidence that the deterrent effect increases when the severity of punishment increases. The certainty of law enforcement apprehension is a *vastly more powerful deterrent* than the severity of punishment.

- ❖ Community collaboration and buy-in are critical implementation needs for effective violent crime reduction projects. Law enforcement and partners must explain to community members and stakeholders how the strategies will prevent violent crime, gain buy-in and trust, and then maintain an ongoing partnership – especially using problem-oriented policing strategies. *Properly implemented strategies will not negatively impact community-police relations*.

- ❖ Targeted strategies. Within virtually any community, less than 10% of the population commits most violent crimes. Further, most violent crime tends to be concentrated at a small number of community locations ("hot spots"). Consequently, the most effective violent crime reduction projects focus proactive strategies on repeat violent offenders operating within places with high concentrations of violent crime. Some projects go further and focus their efforts on groups engaged in violent retaliatory exchanges or gang network rivalries that operate within these spaces.

    Effective violent crime reduction strategies focus attention on active, repeat violent offenders who play leading roles in driving violent crime in high-crime places. Typically, intelligence analysts from area police departments and other stakeholders compile a list of active, prolific violent offenders using their agency databases and other intelligence sources. Law enforcement and other criminal justice partners forewarn suspects that they will vigorously investigate, apprehend, and prosecute them if suspected of violent crime.

If law enforcement can swiftly deliver on these promises, suspects will be more likely to perceive an unacceptable risk of apprehension, and will avoid future violent crime.

❖ Hot spots policing focuses law enforcement resources on places where violent crime is concentrated (e.g. block faces, street segments, intersections, or addresses) in order to prevent violent crime. Crime mapping is often necessary to determine the locations of crime hot spots. Once identified, the most effective hot spot policing efforts use problem-oriented policing strategies, working with local residents and partners to figure out why crime is happening at these locations. Such strategies generate significantly better violent crime reductions than standard model policing tactics such as vehicle patrols, foot patrols, and crackdowns. Communities receiving properly implemented hot spots policing strategies have lower violent crime rates and do not displace crime into surrounding areas.

❖ Group Violence Intervention. Some violent crime reduction projects focus their efforts on groups engaged in violent retaliatory exchanges or gang network rivalries that operate within hotspots using Group Violence Intervention (GVI) strategies such as the Operation Ceasefire focused deterrence model. GVI identifies actively violent group members by conducting a group audit with local criminal justice stakeholders and community members, often supported with law enforcement data. GVI partners convene representative members of each violent group/gang – especially those who are vulnerable to criminal justice sanctions. At meetings, local community partners convey a credible moral message that the violence must stop. Law enforcement partners notify group members that they will swiftly concentrate their efforts on the gang/group if they commit any future violent acts. Law enforcement often reveals to offenders that they have already accumulated evidence against them. GVI partner agencies also offer services to help offenders meet their criminogenic needs. Finally, GVI partners ask group/gang members to communicate the "cease fire" message to their associates. *If law enforcement can swiftly deliver on these promises*, suspects will be more likely to perceive an unacceptable risk of apprehension, and will avoid future violent crime. Communities properly implementing GVI projects show significant reductions in violent crime, do not displace crime to other areas, and do not negatively affect community-police relations.

❖ Intelligence and analytics. Effective violent crime reduction projects use law enforcement and community intelligence and analytics to identify high crime places and suspects driving community violence. Projects integrate analytics into the strategic and tactical operations of law enforcement and community partners. *Access to current crime-related data is a critical necessity for effective analytics processes.*

The Bureau of Justice Assistance provided the following list of resources:

BJA Police and Mental Health Toolkit   CrimeSolutions.gov
https://pmhctoolkit.bja.gov   www.crimesolutions.gov
BJA Project Safe Neighborhoods webpage
https://bja.ojp.gov/program/project-safe-neighborhoods-psn

Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy: Community Policing and Procedural Justice
https://cebcp.org/evidence-based-policing/what-works-in-policing/research-evidence-review/community-policing/

Identifying and Working With a Research Partner
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers
https://psn.cj.msu.edu/tta/researchpartnerqa.pdf

International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP): Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative
https://www.theiacp.org/projects/iacp-project-safe-neighborhoods-initiative

National Gang Center   PSN Resources webpage (Michigan State University)
www.nationalgangcenter.gov   https://psn.cj.msu.edu

Strategies in Policing Innovation (SPI) webinars/videos webpage
http://www.strategiesforpolicinginnovation.com/tta/webinars

Public Safety Clearinghouse
https://www.nationalpublicsafetypartnership.org/Clearinghouse