REDUCING URBAN GUN VIOLENCE: WHAT WORKS?

LESSONS LEARNED AND INSIGHTS FOR THE FIELD AND PUBLIC POLICY

CUGH Webinar: July 2020

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OVERVIEW

1. Brief Framing and Background (CPSC)

2. Our Approach and The Evidence

3. Case Study: Oakland Ceasefire

4. Early Lessons in Mexico City
1. Our mission is to help cities advance a public safety “triple bottom line” – reduce serious violence, build police-community trust, achieve better outcomes for highest risk young people.

2. We engage in long-term (3-5 years) partnerships with cities to apply evidence based practices to these durable safety problems.

3. To do this, we help cities:
   a. Understand their violence problem (problem definition)
   b. Develop and manage violence reduction strategies
   c. Develop effective outreach and intervention approaches
   d. Pursue police-community trust building
   e. Apply performance management to this problem
   f. Research and impact evaluations of local efforts.
The Basics: Reducing Gun Violence

1. Gun violence is the most serious safety problem that we face in communities.

1. It is a problem that we can do something about in the near-term.

1. Across models and communities, there are certain “key ingredients” that are essential:

   • Political will and leadership (a shared strategy)
   • Using an evidence-based strategy
   • Understanding the problem and focusing on those at highest risk of violence now
   • Building devoted, sustainable infrastructure for reducing violence
   • Being accountable for violence reduction outcomes across partners and sectors
 Leading Models and Research Evidence (1): Operation Ceasefire / Focused Deterrence

To reduce violence, CPSC works primarily from the “focused deterrence” / Ceasefire framework, for several reasons:

• The largest body of research evidence supports it’s effectiveness in reducing violence. (20/25 evaluations, 2 meta-reviews).

• It has consistently been shown to reduce community violence and individual recidivism. It is an evidence based strategy.

• It is an effective way to mobilize police, justice system, community and social service actors to reduce gun violence in the near-term.
Systematic Review of Focused Deterrence
Braga, Weisburd, and Turchan (2018), Criminology and Public Policy

- Review identified 24 rigorous evaluations with control groups

- Overall, focused deterrence programs were associated with moderate crime reductions

- Group Violence Reduction Strategies were associated with larger crime reductions.
Research and Practice Take Aways

The core, uniting features of the effective or promising models are:

1. They all focus on people at the very highest risk of serious violence now,

2. They all have a primary goal of changing the decisions and behavior of those at very highest risk to reduce shootings and homicides in the near-term (as victim or perpetrator)

3. They all work in collaboration with other system and community partners.

4. Most of them are engaged in ongoing research and evaluation to understand what is/ isn’t working and why.
Murder Rate per 100,000: Oakland v. California

Oakland
California
United States

2003: 26.78
2004: 20.57
2005: 23.21
2006: 36.4
2007: 30.3
2008: 28.6
2009: 25.7
2010: 23
2011: 26.3
2012: 31.8

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Oakland’s Failed Attempts to Reduce Violence

Oakland had previously made numerous attempts to reduce this chronic violence problem

• Youth Curfew

• Gang Injunction

• **Large service and outreach investments** (Measure Y, private investments)

• Poorly designed/managed *attempts at “Ceasefire”* in 2006, 2009

• Numerous waves of aggressive, “zero tolerance” area-based enforcement

Take Away: These efforts were not informed by a thorough analysis/understanding of the problem; were poorly managed; did not constitute an effective citywide strategy.
Oakland Ceasefire Goals

1. Reduce shootings and homicides citywide.
2. Decrease recidivism and improve outcomes for those at highest risk of violence.

THE “TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE” – GOALS AND A UNIFYING SET OF VALUES.
Problem Analysis Insights and Implications

What the public and policy makers thought: Violence primarily driven by juveniles, drugs disputes and economic motives.

What the analysis revealed:

- Homicide primarily driven by **specific running group/gang conflicts and personal disputes between group members**.
- Those at very highest risk primarily group-involved **adult** men of color (the average age is 30)
- With heavy justice system involvement (averaging 12 prior arrests at the time of homicide, 7 for felonies) and social connections to actively violent street groups
- Only 10% of homicide involved juveniles, only 13% of homicides had any connection to drugs.
Focus on the very high risk individuals

OAKLAND’S POPULATION

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POPULATION

VERY HIGH RISK POPULATION

400k people

20k people

250-350 people
Oakland Ceasefire Performance Management:

1. PD Shooting Reviews – identify VHR people, hottest conflicts, enforcement and intervention priorities.

1. Coordination Meetings – Human Services Department, OPD, community partners develop near term strategy for these particular people and conflicts – mobilize community intervention partners.

1. Performance Review Meetings – Partners review citywide shootings trends; key program activities; relative to annual and two-month benchmarks
CEASEFIRE Strategy
Progress in Oakland 2012-2018

Shootings
Homicides

*Ceasefire Partnership began on October 18, 2012*
Estimated 31.5% reduction controlling for other trends and seasonal variations \((p<.05)\).

Only 2 of 12 comparison cities experienced significant reductions during this time period (Stockton, San Francisco).
GMI V. NON-GMI

GMI shootings decreased by 43.2% while non-GMI shootings decreased by only 23.2%.

QUASI-EXP RESULTS

Estimated 27.0% reduction in shootings by treated gangs relative to untreated gangs ($p<.05$).

Estimated 26.0% reduction in shootings by vicariously-treated gangs relative to untreated gangs ($p<.05$).
Early Lessons and Insights from Mexico City Demonstration Project

1. The super concentration of risk is very similar and the violence dynamics are very familiar.

2. Very little infrastructure exists to focus on this highest risk population – both within justice system and community / service stakeholders.

1. Implementation remains difficult: “Ceasefire” requires local actors to work differently and together — often for the first time. This is always difficult.

   • Systemic challenges with Mexico’s legal and justice system and the lack of community intervention programs compound these challenges.

1. Impact and sustainability will requires organizational change: Political will and quality implementation are the key ingredients.

2. Overall, the opportunities and challenges are more similar to U.S. context than they are different.