

Info Sheet:

History of Approaches to Addressing Community Violence

- 2015: Community begins to see an increase in gun violence. The Community Coalition begins developing solutions to address the increase in gun violence through a holistic, community-wide approach.
- 2016: Community Coalition includes community violence as a priority. A Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) consisting of law enforcement, government, and community representatives from Champaign-Urbana is established. The MDT serves as the community entity to gather information and implement initiatives designed to address gun violence.
- CU Fresh Start focused deterrence initiative is established, consisting of partners across Champaign-Urbana, funded through an Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority grant. This initiative is designed to provide outreach to individuals involved in gun related activity.
 - CU Fresh Start consists of representatives from three pillars: Law Enforcement, Social Services, and Community. Each pillar features a corresponding subcommittee to inform and information share with the MDT. Through CU Fresh Start, individuals are offered an opportunity to receive support and case management if they choose to put down their guns. The CU Fresh Start Community Outreach Liaison works to identify additional mentorship and opportunities through multiple programs and partnerships. 34 individuals have participated in CU Fresh Start, receiving assistance locating employment and education opportunities, accessing behavioral health support, participating in mentoring activities, and navigating barriers as they arise.
- 2017: The Coalition supports the establishment of CU Trauma and Resilience Initiative (CU TRI) to help educate the community on trauma and trauma informed care, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), resilience building, and strategies to address the root causes of violence. Hundreds of community members have received training from CU TRI, including representatives from Champaign-Urbana law enforcement, school districts, government organizations, and community members.
- 2018: Under the community violence priority, the Coalition establishes the Community Violence Response Task Force (CVRT) to design a seamless coordinated system of care for individuals and families who have been impacted by gun violence. The CVRT works to ensure that there are processes in place to support survivors of gun violence and to ensure that resources are available to individuals and families who have lost a loved one to gun violence. Additionally, the CVRT may coordinate and mobilize the community response after a significant incident of gun violence/or community violence. The CVRT has worked with families to identify and assess their immediate needs and rally community support to meet those needs, which have included temporary hotel stays to ensure safety, violence interruption services to prevent retaliation, comfort and care packages for young family members, rent assistance, and more.
- 2019: A number of community organizations/partnerships are established including Driven to Reach Excellence and Academic Achievement for Males (DREAAM), Parkland Support for Workforce Training (SWFT), Housing Authority of Champaign County YouthBuild, First Followers, Champaign County Reentry Council, Illinois Department of Corrections Reentry and Constituent Affairs and Hood Vote, Hood Voice, Hood Vision Neighborhood Transformation (HVNT).
- 2020: The COVID-19 pandemic impacts community outreach efforts significantly. In person meetings and event are put on hold for several months awaiting direction from public health. The decision was made to transition to virtual meetings and events indefinitely. The Community Coalition includes COVID-19 education as an emergency priority.
- Ongoing dialogue with community members stresses the need for a community-led approach to addressing violence. Feedback also emphasizes the need for stronger collaboration of community resources. The decision is made to disband the MDT Steering Committee and the Community Pillar Subcommittee and regroup under a community-led committee to coordinate community violence initiatives including, but not limited to, CU Fresh Start.
- 2021: A community-led Countywide Coordinating Committee to address community violence initiatives is established. This group meets the third Thursday of each month from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. via Zoom.
- The Coordinating Committee has the following roles:
 - Hub of resources and information regarding history of addressing community violence.
 - Elevate the community voice in promoting initiatives to address community violence with a unified vision.
 - Facilitate community input and engagement in community violence initiatives.
 - Identify community resources to support community members impacted by community violence.
 - Identify resources and training to support community-based initiatives.
- The CVRT scope will focus on response efforts, providing support to families, individuals, and neighborhoods in the immediate aftermath of community violence. Individuals interested in helping provide direct response to community violence should join the CVRT monthly meetings.