Core Information about Community Violence

and its Reduction and Prevention

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The material below provides a brief summary of key available information on violence in Rochester and it provides a brief summary of key points from the research on violence prevention. Taken together these points can provide a foundation for strategic planning to address community violence. The material is divided into significant facts about the nature and distribution of violence, and information reflecting the state of knowledge on violence reduction strategies.

A. Key facts about violence

1. Compared with many other cities, Rochester has a high level of violence and has had that for a long time.
2. Serious violence in a community involves a small number of people both as perpetrators and as victims of violence.
3. Victims and perpetrators most often share common demographic characteristics and similar criminal histories.
4. A large majority of victims and suspects in cases of serious violence in Rochester are young, African American men.
5. The strongest predictor of violence in individuals and in places is a past history of violence, particularly a recent history.
6. Almost all serious violence involves victims and perpetrators who know each other and have some kind of relationship or involvement together. What people think of as random violence is rare.
7. The majority of serious violence is linked to arguments or disputes between individuals, and sometimes involves their friends, family members, or associates.

B. Key facts about violence reduction interventions.

8. Most successful violence reduction and prevention programs focus on violence in the near term, the current time period, rather than long term prevention. Some long term prevention programs, such as visiting nurse partnership programs have also been effective.
9. Successful anti-violence interventions can have enforcement or service components or both.
10. The greatest impact of violence intervention will occur with narrowly focused interventions which deal with high risk participants (the risk principle). Broad general programs for no-risk or low risk individuals are inefficient and can waste important resources.
11. The most successful interventions will focus on "criminogenic influences" such as drug use or sales, associating with other high risk people, having anti-social friends, acting impulsively, and participating in activity commonly associated with crime and violence. This is known as the "need principle." Focusing on "non criminogenic influences" such as low self-esteem, mental illness or creativity has not been effective.
12. The most effective program interventions are focused on changing behavior by addressing current factors that influence behavior. This is known as the "treatment principle." The most effective behavioral interventions include Cognitive Behavioral

Therapies which involve modeling appropriate behavior, and similar family-based interventions.

13. Information on effective criminal justice and non-criminal justice interventions to address crime and violence is available at several well managed clearing houses including www.CrimeSolutions.gov , http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/ and https://whatworks.csgjusticecenter.org/ . Adherence to the design of programs found to be effective is the most likely way to have successful interventions in a community. This is known as the "fidelity principle."