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Fighting Juvenile Gun Violence

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During the past two decades, the impact of gun violence in the United States has been greatest on juveniles and young adults. Firearms are the weapon of choice in most homicides (86 percent) committed by juveniles. The dramatic increase in homicides during the mid-to-late 1980's and early 1990's can be attributed to the use of firearms, particularly among 15- to 24-year-olds.

Most notably, the handgun homicide rate for this age group increased 158 percent from 1984 to 1993. These data contrast sharply with a 19-percent decline in firearm murders among those individuals age 24 and older for the same time period.¹ Although the homicide rate involving firearms steadily decreased between 1993 and 1997, the number of juvenile victims of gun violence was more than twice as high in 1997 than in 1984 (Snyder and Sickmund, 1999).

Firearm injuries are the eighth leading cause of death for juveniles in the United States; for every fatal shooting, there are

roughly three nonfatal shootings. Suicides and unintentional gunshot injuries claim the lives of even more juveniles than gun-related homicides. A teenager today is more likely to die of a gunshot wound than of all natural causes or disease (Fingerhut, 1993).

Although gun violence and homicides have been declining in recent years, gun-related crime remains at unacceptably high levels. A recent study by the U.S. Departments of the Treasury and Justice of firearm-related homicides found that the age at which people most frequently commit homicide was 18 and that 18- to 20-year-olds constituted 22 percent of all those arrested for homicide (U.S. Department of the Treasury and U.S. Department of Justice, 1999). This age group also ranked first in the number of homicides committed with guns (24 percent). These data are consistent with the trend in youth gun homicides over the past 15 years (Snyder, 1999).

The number of youth who report carrying a gun outside the home is significant. In a 1997 national youth risk behavior survey of students in grades 9 through 12, almost 6 percent reported carrying a gun outside the home in the past 30 days (Kahn et al., 1998). According to the same survey, 8.5 percent reported carrying a weapon to

From the Administrator

According to a study by the U.S. Departments of Justice and the Treasury, the age at which persons most often commit homicide is 18, with those ages 18 to 20 accounting for 22 percent of homicide arrests. Firearms are used in 86 percent of all homicides, and the rise in homicides from the middle 1980's through the early 1990's can be attributed largely to firearm-related homicides.

Youth are also victimized by firearm violence. Today's teen is more likely to die of a gunshot wound than of disease or other natural causes, and for every fatal shooting there are three nonfatal shootings.

Reacting, in part, to these and other sobering statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention established the Partnerships To Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence Program, which seeks to increase the effectiveness of existing strategies by enhancing and coordinating prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts and strengthening community linkages. This Bulletin describes the program's implementation at four demonstration sites in Baton Rouge and Shreveport, LA; Oakland, CA; and Syracuse, NY.

It is my hope that the lessons learned in the demonstration sites will enable us to combat youth gun violence more effectively.

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¹ Firearm and nonfirearm homicide deaths for ages 15-24 and 25 and above (1980-1997): Data assembled by the National Center for Health Statistics, Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998.



school within the past 30 days (Brenner et al., 1999).² In the inner city, the problem appears to be more severe. An earlier study involving 800 inner-city high school students reported that 22 percent said they carried weapons to school (Sheley and Wright, 1993). A study of arrestees from 11 urban areas revealed that nearly one-third of juvenile arrestees who were gang members admitted carrying a gun all or most of the time (Decker, Pennel, and Caldwell, 1997). Two-thirds of those carrying guns stated that the primary reason was self-protection. An even greater number of incarcerated juvenile offenders reported carrying firearms. Almost 85 percent of incarcerated juveniles in Atlanta, GA, reported carrying handguns, and 84 percent of those who possessed guns said that they had obtained them before they were 15 years old (Ash, Kellerman, and Fuqua-Whitley, 1996).

OJJDP's Partnerships To Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence Program

As part of its commitment to address the continuing problem of youth violence, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) awarded four communities demonstration grants in 1997 to implement the Partnerships To Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence Program (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996). The goal of these partnerships is to increase the effectiveness of existing strategies by enhancing and coordinating prevention, intervention, and

² Weapons include guns, knives, box cutters, and so forth.

suppression efforts³ and strengthening linkages among community residents, law enforcement personnel, and juvenile justice system professionals.

This problem-solving program is based on research showing that community assessment of local youth gun violence problems should guide program development and that strategies designed to reduce gun violence should be comprehensive and theory driven and should include suppression, intervention, and prevention components. The program goals are designed to:

- ◆ Reduce youth's illegal access to guns.
- ◆ Reduce the incidence of youth carrying guns illegally and committing gun-related crimes.
- ◆ Increase youth awareness of the personal and legal consequences of gun violence.
- ◆ Increase participation of community residents and organizations in youth violence reduction efforts.
- ◆ Increase and coordinate services and resources for at-risk youth, especially youth involved in the justice system.

Implementation of the following seven strategies is required if the program is to achieve its goals:

- ◆ A firearms **suppression** strategy that reduces juveniles' access to illegal guns

³ For the purpose of this Bulletin, prevention efforts employ public education strategies to reduce the use of guns; intervention efforts, directed at youth who have previously committed gun-related offenses, seek to reduce the risk factors associated with carrying and using illegal guns; and suppression efforts seek to eliminate the sources of illegal guns.

and prevents illegal gun trafficking by developing special law enforcement units, using community allies to report illegal gun trafficking, targeting gang members, prosecuting those who possess illegal guns, and imposing sanctions on those who are involved in gun violence.

- ◆ A **juvenile justice** strategy that applies appropriate alternative sanctions and interventions to respond to the needs of juvenile gun offenders.
- ◆ A **communication** strategy that unites law enforcement with neighborhoods, includes community policing, and initiates community supervision to educate at-risk and court-involved youth on the legal consequences of gun violence.
- ◆ A **positive opportunities** strategy that provides young people with beneficial programs such as academic tutoring, mentoring, job training and placement, and afterschool activities.
- ◆ An **education** strategy that teaches at-risk youth how to resolve conflicts and resist peer pressure to carry or possess guns.
- ◆ A **public information** strategy that engages broadcast and print media to communicate the dangers and consequences of gun violence to juveniles, families, and residents.
- ◆ A **community mobilization** strategy that encourages neighborhood residents and youth to improve the community.

The Demonstration Sites

Four demonstration communities received OJJDP funding for this 3-year program: Baton Rouge and Shreveport, LA; Oakland, CA; and Syracuse, NY. These communities were asked to build extended partnerships to develop and implement the seven program strategies. During the demonstration's initial planning phase, Shreveport was unable to create a viable partnership structure and struggled to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce juvenile gun violence. As a result, the community withdrew its application to participate in the program's implementation phase.

At the three remaining demonstration sites, high rates of juvenile and young adult gun violence helped focus the involvement of key community stakeholders. In Baton Rouge, the number of juveniles arrested

annually in East Baton Rouge Parish had increased 61 percent from 1992 to 1996 (from 2,931 arrests in 1992 to 4,716 in 1996) (Baton Rouge Police Department, Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) records, 1997). One-fourth of all juveniles arrested in 1996 were multiple offenders, having committed a total of 940 violent crimes. Further analysis revealed that a large percentage of these crimes were being committed in an area north of the center of the city.

Oakland's rates of overall violent crime and gun homicides involving youth were among the highest in the State and the Nation between 1986 and 1996. Young people between the ages of 10 and 19 made up the second largest number of the city's homicide victims each year (Oakland Police Department, UCR records, 1998). Youth access to illegal guns has been a contributing factor, and arrest data for violent crime involving youth suggest that more than 50 percent of these crimes have occurred in the eastern part of the city. In addition, a majority of juveniles and young adults admitted to hospital trauma centers for gun-related injuries were from East Oakland.

An examination of gun-related and violent crime in Syracuse revealed that roughly 60 percent of the city's arrests of youth between the ages of 12 and 24 occurred within its west and southwest neighborhoods (Syracuse Police Department, UCR records, 1998). During the early and mid-1990's, the city witnessed a 185-percent increase in weapons possession arrests of juveniles under age 16 and a 64-percent increase in similar arrests among 16- and 17-year-olds. Gang-like "street crews" were identified as a problem; the census tracts with the highest number of gun-related arrests of youth were within the boundaries of two well-known street crews, 110 and Boot Camp.

Role of the National Evaluation Team

During the initial phase of the project, the national evaluation team⁴ provided the sites with intensive technical assistance in developing their comprehensive plans and enhancing their partnership structures. The technical assistance involved developing logic models (see page 4) for each site to enhance their local strategies

⁴ COSMOS Corporation and the Criminal Justice Research Center at John Jay College.

and to identify appropriate process and impact outcome measures.

This capacity-building process, known as action research or empowerment evaluation, helps program planners conduct continual self-evaluations and improves program implementation (Gottfredson, 1994; Yin, Kaftarian, and Jacobs, 1996). As a result of these activities, the partnerships developed comprehensive plans using the logic models. This process has linked the efforts of law enforcement, probation and prosecutors' offices, city support agencies (e.g., parks and recreation departments and housing and job training organizations), schools, faith-based institutions, and other youth-serving community organizations (Sheppard, 1998). Initial assessments suggest that the three partnerships have been successful in developing strategies that focus on eliminating the sources of illegal guns (suppression), reducing the risk factors associated with carrying and using illegal guns for youth who have been involved with gun violence previously (intervention), and reducing the use of guns to resolve conflicts by employing public education strategies (prevention).

Initial Capacity-Building Activities

To begin, the evaluation team reviewed the original proposals submitted by the three demonstration sites. The sites were to demonstrate that:

- ◆ The partnership was comprehensive in structure, incorporating decision-makers from key agencies, service providers, businesses, and neighborhoods most affected by juvenile gun violence.
- ◆ The partnership had, or soon would have, the technical staff and volunteer capacity to initiate and sustain a comprehensive plan to reduce juvenile gun violence.
- ◆ There was a comprehensive plan, grounded in relevant theory, that clearly identified high-risk target group(s), had strategically linked activities, and included measurable outcomes and impacts.

The proposal reviews and initial visits to each site revealed that the grantees had not collected much of the specific data needed to define their juvenile gun violence problems. Although the partnerships supplied citywide aggregated statistics documenting juvenile violent crimes, the data were not broken down sufficiently

to identify a population of high-risk, gun-involved youth and geographic areas in the jurisdiction in which gun violence is more prevalent. In the absence of an identified target population and geographic neighborhoods specific to the underlying problems, the likelihood of producing outcomes or impacts to reduce juvenile gun violence was minimal. Moreover, the proposal reviews and initial site visits raised questions about the structure of the proposed partnerships and their capacity for strategic planning. Some partnerships had significant law enforcement involvement while others had little, some partnerships relied heavily on service providers but were missing grassroots participation, and none of the partnerships had included representatives from the target population. In short, while the grantees' enthusiasm for the project was high, there were few assurances that the desired outcomes could be achieved.

Additional Capacity-Building Activities

After a brief reassessment, the evaluation team returned to each site to work with the partnerships' stakeholders and to select appropriate target populations and neighborhoods. Assisted by the evaluation team, the partnerships identified pertinent risk factors in each jurisdiction and invited appropriate agency- and community-based group representatives who were not yet partnership members to participate. Now in control of their data and motivated by the information they had been able to uncover, the partnerships eagerly addressed the issues that still threatened their ability to produce change. The evaluation team conducted additional site visits to help the partnerships develop tailored logic models for each component of their comprehensive plan, identify appropriate measures to capture the specified outcomes, and set up process and impact data collection procedures.

Development of the Sites' Comprehensive Plans

With the assistance of the evaluation team, the sites used an analysis of each partnership's juvenile gun violence problems to identify specific geographic areas in which to target their suppression, intervention, and prevention strategies (see table 1). The three demonstration sites vary in population size and characteristics and in rates

The Logic Model Process

The use of logic models to enhance project planning and facilitate program evaluation is not new. The logic model is a succinct, logical series of statements that link the problems a program is attempting to address with the methods it will use to address them and the expected results. Illustrated in the figure is the logic model process as developed for the Partnerships To Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence Program.

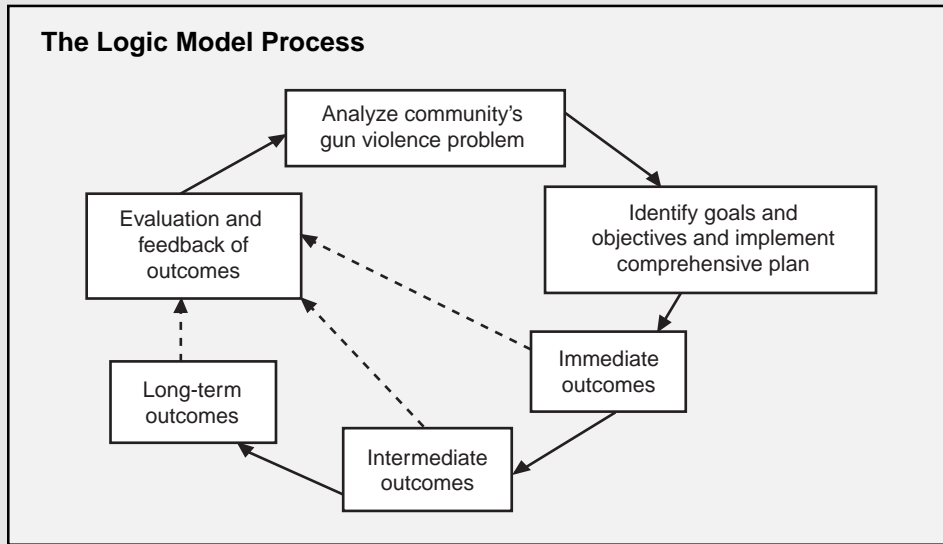
to risks and needs but also to those resources in the community that might already be having a positive influence.

The partnership's goals and objectives are more easily defined when the assessment of the city's gun violence problem is thorough and complete. Measurable outcomes can be used to define the project's goals and objectives. The partnership's stakeholders, representing a broad col-

availability of illegal guns, intervention and prevention strategies may be needed to help adjudicated juvenile offenders return to their neighborhoods and families.

Immediate outcomes are the initial intended outcomes of each strategy. If a police department has created a gun suppression team to sweep the target area, immediate outcomes would be the number of guns seized, the number of youth arrested, and so forth. These may lead to intermediate outcomes—for example, a reduction in the availability of illegal firearms within the target areas. Long-term outcomes are sustained changes made possible by a pooling of the strategies and activities of the comprehensive plan over time. Long-term outcomes reflect the goals of the program (e.g., reducing juvenile gun violence in the target communities).

Through the articulation of outcomes for each implemented strategy, the logic model specifies the actions to be taken over time, charting the strategies designed to produce desired outcomes. The evaluators collect data that confirm these paths or information that provides for "rival" explanations of these outcomes. As evidence accumulates, the logic models are refined so that rather than simply producing information about the ultimate accomplishments of a particular program, the evaluators can offer information on why particular goals and objectives are or are not being achieved. The logic model process is circular—planners are informed of needed program changes through constant feedback and evaluation. Logic models are never static tools; rather, they are constantly being adjusted and modified as outcome data are accumulated.



The logic model process begins with analysis of the community's gun violence problem. The first objective is to identify the sources of data needed to understand where gun violence is occurring and who is committing it. By documenting this information, program planners can identify hotspot target areas for implementing gun violence suppression, intervention, and/or prevention strategies. The underlying issues that define gun violence speak not only

lection of key public and private agencies and community organizations, collaborate to develop a comprehensive plan of research-based strategies. The planners must recognize that any single underlying issue may require several linked strategies to alleviate associated risk factors. A comprehensive plan is required to join together juvenile gun violence suppression, intervention, and prevention strategies. For example, although suppression strategies may be needed to reduce the

of violent crime: Oakland's target population is twice as large as that of Syracuse or Baton Rouge, and Baton Rouge and Oakland have 2.5 times more violent crime (e.g., homicides, robberies, rapes, and aggravated assaults) than Syracuse.

The Baton Rouge Partnership

With the mayor's office serving as its lead agency and the chief of police as the part-

nership's chairperson, the Baton Rouge program built on an existing partnership structure, the city's antidrug task force, to implement its initial planning phase. During the initial project workshop, the national evaluators noted that a broader representation from the community was needed at the planning table. The partnership's leaders quickly assembled the missing stakeholders, including representatives from the faith and business communities

and judges from the juvenile court, to facilitate the comprehensive planning process.

In addition, the evaluators noted that the planners did not have sufficient data to define adequately the juvenile gun violence problem in Baton Rouge. As a result, the partnership's staff and agency representatives launched an intensive effort to gather and analyze relevant data on the hotspot locations of juvenile gun violence, which resulted in the identification of target

Table 1: Characteristics of the Three Sites

Site and Lead Agency	Characteristics		
	City Population	Target Area Population	Citywide Violent Crime Rate, 1997*
Baton Rouge: The Mayor's Office	229,553	65,565	798
Oakland: Youth Alive! and the Oakland Police Department	376,976	142,335	850
Syracuse: The Center for Community Alternatives, the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office, and the Syracuse Mayor's Office	159,610	70,586	292

*Per 100,000 population.

neighborhoods for their comprehensive plan. By looking closely at police and probation records of those juveniles and young adults who had committed gun-related crimes, the partnership defined a target population (youth currently on probation for gun-related or other violent offenses) on which to focus the project's intervention and prevention strategies. The partnership designated these youth as "Eigers" (Eiger is a mountain in Switzerland reported to be one of the world's most difficult to climb).

At the core of the Baton Rouge comprehensive plan is an organizational structure involving law enforcement, the courts, the juvenile justice system, community service organizations, and the faith community. The partnership includes an executive committee and several task forces that focus on enforcement (suppression), intervention, prevention, and grassroots mobilization. Operation Eiger (see page 6), an intensive supervision program for youth on probation for gun-related offenses, is a central component of the partnership's suppression and intervention strategies. The program pairs police officers with probation officials to conduct home checks of the target population, ensuring that youth are meeting the terms of their probation.

The partnership monitors the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms' (ATF's) and Baton Rouge Police Department's activities in tracing and seizing guns used to commit

crime and also monitors Brady Bill background checks of applicants for gun permits. This information is used to identify juvenile and young adult gun offenders and also to give Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies information about applicants who have felony records or are known associates of individuals with felony records. Other suppression strategies include the School Drug Task Force, a police unit that enforces the school's zero tolerance policies for drug and weapons possession, and Operation Takedown, which targets street-level narcotics sales. A four-member judicial advisory committee composed of the district attorney and three judges (one from criminal court and two from juvenile court) advises the partnership on justice system reforms and additional residential and nonresidential treatment services. Although the partnership's original implementation strategies focused on enforcement activities, by the end of the first year, several intervention, prevention, and community mobilization strategies also were under development.

Baton Rouge's intervention strategies address risk factors associated with the violent behaviors of the partnership's target group of youth who have committed gun-related offenses previously. A three-pronged program has been developed to (1) provide targeted youth with intensive services to address their alienation, violent behavior, academic failure, unemployment, and lack of social and

interpersonal skills; (2) strengthen their families; and (3) build resilience in the community by addressing risk factors associated with gun violence. These strategies are being implemented through a case management system that identifies the needs of each youth and through individual service plans that address the risks and needs from the assessment process. A primary component of the intervention strategy is the Life Skills Academy, a program that addresses character strengthening and parenting skills for the targeted youth, their siblings, and parents. The academy is held in participating churches in the target areas and covers 12 skill areas (e.g., anger management, goal setting, parenting skills, and vocational skill development) over a 22-week period. The program involves 21 grassroots leaders as speakers, mentors, and tutors and offers direct access to social services and recreational programs for the youth and their families.

The partnership also implemented a prevention strategy by helping to form ACT NOW, a grassroots organization that links a diverse array of 54 community and faith leaders to respond to violence in their neighborhoods and to work with the partnership's target population and families. Working with ACT NOW and other community groups, the partnership has participated in several school programs that address risk factors associated with gun violence such as Character First, a program focusing on discipline and self-esteem, and mentoring strategies that link individuals to basic literacy, GED (general educational development), and vocational services. The partnership and its members also have actively involved the broadcast and print media and made regular presentations to community organizations, businesses, churches, and civic leaders.

The Oakland Partnership

The partnership's lead agencies in Oakland are Youth Alive!, a nonprofit agency that has developed innovative youth gun violence prevention initiatives in the city, and the Oakland Police Department. Initially, the lack of sufficient data to conduct a thorough analysis of the city's youth gun violence problems made it difficult for the partnership to adequately identify either a target area or those youth at highest risk for committing gun violence. With geographically based crime data provided by the police department and

Operation Eiger: An Example of Linked Strategies Targeting Juveniles at Risk for Gun Violence

Following an assessment of the city's gun-involved youth and the identification of hotspot areas in which violence was occurring, the Baton Rouge partnership developed Operation Eiger, a set of comprehensive problem-solving strategies that link the resources of the juvenile justice system, law enforcement, public and private service providers, and community grassroots organizations. The partnership designated those juveniles and young adults at highest risk for gun violence as "Eigers" (named after a mountain in Switzerland). The program includes suppression, intervention, and prevention strategies for youth referred from the county's juvenile probation department.

The partnership's case coordinator records the Eigers' conditions of probation as imposed by the juvenile court. The identified youth are then placed on a contact list for the Eiger police-probation teams, which are composed of specially trained police and juvenile probation officers. These teams conduct unscheduled evening visits to the Eigers' homes. Each Eiger is visited an average of six times per month, and during the visits, the team checks for compliance with the terms of probation and assesses the youth's needs and family situation. The juvenile court enhances the effectiveness

of this process by setting enforceable probation conditions to help the Eiger youth and family members address the risk factors associated with the youth's violent behaviors (e.g., curfew violations, poor school attendance, possession of illegal guns or other weapons, association with delinquent peers, and use of drugs and alcohol). Youth who violate their terms of probation or commit new offenses are severely sanctioned by the court's zero tolerance policy (e.g., with jail sentences).

During the police-probation visits, any signs of abuse or neglect of Eigers or their siblings are recorded and referred to the State's social services agency for followup. Other needs of the targeted youth are brought to the attention of the partnership's case coordinator, and individual case plans are developed for each Eiger, including those who are inactive and no longer on probation. The targeted youth are connected to a variety of social services operated or coordinated by the Baton Rouge partnership. These programs include mentoring services, academic tutoring, job training and placement, substance abuse counseling, mental health treatment, conflict resolution training, and social skills development. Parents of Eigers may be referred to family counseling and other family management services, if needed. Sib-

lings of Eigers also can be referred to myriad prevention services coordinated by the partnership.

The Eiger program also is building resilience in the neighborhoods in which the targeted youth live. These community-strengthening initiatives include efforts to reduce neighborhood deterioration, implement activities to increase community cohesion, and address factors that contribute to economic deprivation.

The partnership tracks Eigers as they complete the terms of their probation and records their progress while they are receiving social services. The Eigers' performance records are then analyzed and the results used to refine and upgrade the program's comprehensive plan. A total of 304 youth have been identified during Operation Eiger's first 22 months. The police-probation teams have conducted 9,610 Eiger home visits since the program began, with each Eiger contacted an average of 4 to 6 times per month. Dramatically, the percentage of contacts for which no probation violations were reported increased from 56 percent in September 1997 to 74 percent in June 1999, the most recent month for which data are available. Eiger rearrests for gun-related and non-gun-related offenses are being collected for the program's impact evaluation, to be reported at a later date.

technical assistance from the national evaluators, the partnership began to develop a more complete understanding of gun violence in the city. This analysis helped identify specific neighborhoods where there were high levels of juvenile gun violence. As a result, an area in East Oakland, roughly corresponding to the police department's third district and including the catchment area of two high schools, was designated as the program's target area.

During the program's first year, the partnership dedicated itself primarily to a prevention focus that limited the development of a more comprehensive plan incorporating gun suppression and intervention strategies. The partnership's members, using the logic model planning process, broadened the focus of the pro-

gram so that it included integrated gun violence suppression, intervention, and prevention strategies. The Oakland Police Department strengthened its role in the program by appointing a command-level officer as the partnership's codirector and the chief of police as its chairman. In addition, representatives from the city manager's office, State juvenile services, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Oakland and Alameda County school district, clergy, and other social service providers were recruited to join the partnership.

A suppression committee was formed to include representatives from ATF, the police department, district attorney's office, juvenile probation office, and community organizations. The suppression committee was asked to review gun-related crime

incidents and develop gun abatement strategies with the police department's Weapons Unit. These strategies focused on undercover enforcement to identify "straw purchasers"⁵ and illegal gun traffickers in the target area.

The partnership also sought to enhance its strategies that focused on juveniles at risk for gun violence through the formation of an intervention committee and by identifying a population in the defined target area of those at risk for gun-related crimes. The partnership agreed to seek referrals of juvenile probationers who live in the area and have committed gun-related or other violent offenses. Also targeted are violent

⁵ Purchasers who obtain guns for those who have criminal records or do not want to be identified as gun owners.

juveniles from the county's detention facilities who have returned to their neighborhoods and victims of gun violence referred from a nearby hospital trauma center. The intervention committee, composed of probation officers, partnership staff, and community service providers, currently reviews the case referrals and conducts intake assessments to develop tailored intervention plans. The targeted youth are matched with mentors and referred to services that include counseling, anger management, educational tutoring, and vocational training, depending on needs identified during the intake process. The intervention committee also tracks the progress of the targeted youth during their probation period.

Two existing Youth Alive! gun violence prevention programs have been incorporated into the partnership's comprehensive plan. Teens on Target (TNT), a peer mentoring program operating in the target area's two high schools, offers opportunities for trained student leaders to work with at-risk students. The TNT mentors also conduct presentations on alternatives to gun violence to younger students in the feeder middle and elementary schools.

Another prevention program, Caught in the Crossfire, provides bedside counseling to victims of gun violence to prevent future retaliation by the victim or the victim's friends and family members. Many of these victims and family members are known to be involved with guns and are referred to the partnership's intervention program.

The partnership has participated in several public education programs, including support for local ordinances that promote safe storage of guns, triggerlocks for firearms, and ordinances that restrict guns being sold in residential areas of the city. A citywide conference on youth gun violence, held during the program's first year, drew significant media attention and increased the visibility of the partnership among stakeholders and residents in East Oakland. Partnership members regularly contribute to local media programs on firearm violence, and a silent witness telephone hotline developed by the partnership has been publicized throughout the city to encourage citizen reporting of illegal gun possession and gun-related crimes.

Grassroots mobilization also has become an important goal of the partnership through the city's Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPC's) in the target area. NCPC's are composed of groups



of local residents, business leaders, clergy, leaders of community organizations, and public advocates who work with the Oakland police to create safer neighborhoods. Representatives of the partnership make presentations at NCPC meetings, and the NCPC chairpersons from the program's target area participate in the development of strategies to reduce gun violence in their neighborhoods.

The Syracuse Partnership

The lead agencies for the Syracuse Partnership are the Center for Community Alternatives (CCA), a nonprofit agency that works with the courts and correctional agencies to provide offender rehabilitation services, and the Onondaga County District Attorney's Office. The partnership is governed by a steering committee composed of representatives from key stakeholder agencies: the mayor's office, the Onondaga County Executive's Office, the Syracuse Police Department, the county probation department, city schools, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and faith-based organizations. CCA recently contracted with the city of Syracuse to oversee the implementation of the partnership's comprehensive plan. This action reflects increased collaboration between the partnership and the mayor's office. A community management team composed of service providers and community grassroots organizations develops and helps implement the partnership's intervention and prevention strategies.

The Syracuse Anti-Firearms Enforcement (SAFE) committee was formed with representatives from the police department, the district attorney's office, and the probation department to identify violent

crime hotspots and gang activity within the program's target area. SAFE originally served as the police department's violent crime enforcement unit, with little or no involvement from the community. Recently, the SAFE committee merged with the region's Law Enforcement Roundtable, a multijurisdictional violent crime task force, to bring the U.S. Attorney's Office, ATF, and other county and State law enforcement agencies into the partnership.

A new component of the partnership's suppression strategy, Project START (Surveillance, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Together), composed of eight officers from the police department's SAFE unit and six county probation officers, provides intensive home monitoring and supervision of high-risk, gun-involved probationers. The START team makes weekly home visits to ensure that the targeted youth are in compliance with probation conditions and to identify additional needs within the population. To demonstrate support for Project START's efforts to reintegrate probationers with violent crime histories back into the community successfully, local clergy and pastors from the target neighborhoods also participate in the home visits. Police-community communications also are being enhanced through the partnership's efforts to revitalize neighborhood watch groups within the target area.

In order to identify appropriate service needs for its target population, Syracuse developed the Partnership Peacekeepers Program (PPP) to complement Project START. The partnership hired outreach workers with close ties to the community to identify gun-involved and other at-risk youth. A referral source for PPP



(in addition to Project START) is the subgroup of youth arrested for, or suspected of committing, gun-related crimes. The partnership's outreach coordinator reviews the daily intake records from the judicial holding center to identify juveniles and young adults who have been arrested on gun-related charges. PPP outreach workers identify eligible youth from the target area for intake into the program; these youth then go through an assessment process that documents their individual service needs. The outreach workers contact appropriate service providers, match offenders with appropriate services (e.g., job training, mentoring, treatment), follow up each youth's progress, and provide feedback to the probation officers assigned to each case.

During the program's initial development, the Syracuse partnership has implemented several neighborhood-based violence prevention activities, including community forums that focus on the consequences of gun violence and conflict resolution training programs within area schools and correctional facilities. Through PPP and Project START, there has been an effort to identify and work with the younger siblings of the targeted youth who are already involved in street gang violence.

Recognizing the need for crisis counseling of the victims of gun-related violence, the Syracuse partnership has formed crisis

intervention teams. These teams, composed of local clergy and community leaders, provide immediate counseling assistance for this population and their families.

A Summary of the Strategies

The partnerships were required to develop integrated and comprehensive gun violence reduction plans that incorporated each of the seven OJJDP strategies within a suppression, intervention, and prevention framework. The specific strategies and activities selected by each site were based on an analysis of available community resources and gaps in services. The final logic models developed by each partnership and facilitated by the national evaluation team reflect their differing identifications of underlying issues and problems, organizational needs/resources, and initial focus. Table 2 provides a summary of the variety of strategies implemented by the partnerships.

Conclusion: What Has Been Learned So Far

Partnership Development

OJJDP's Partnerships To Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence Program was developed to strengthen the linkages among community grassroots organizations, law enforcement, social service providers, and the juvenile justice system. Community crime reduction theory suggests that by creating these partnerships, the participating agencies and organizations become more effective in developing and implementing comprehensive strategies to reduce youth gun violence. The grantees in all three of the demonstration sites have developed functioning partnerships. The evaluation team's technical assistance during the program's initial planning and implementation stages has revealed some important lessons related to creating effective partnerships involving such a large spectrum of stakeholders.

Lesson 1: A comprehensive and accurate needs assessment is critical to strategic planning. Working with the national evaluation team, the grantees identified data and data sources that helped them complete viable needs assessments. Using these needs assessments, the partnerships were able to develop comprehensive plans that closely linked strategies cover-

ing a wide range of suppression, intervention, and prevention activities. Initially, at all three sites, the lack of problem-defining data not only inhibited the planning process but also prevented the sites from implementing outcome-focused strategies.

For example, after key stakeholders in the Baton Rouge partnership reviewed the city's gun violence data, not only did a target area emerge (an area responsible for two-thirds of the city's homicides), but the partners also found that the majority of gun-related violent crimes were being committed by a group of chronic youth offenders. From these analyses, Operation Eiger was created to remove illegal guns and provide intervention services for those involved in gun violence.

Similarly, Syracuse and Oakland conducted needs assessments to evaluate the risks and needs of youthful offenders involved in gun violence. The partnerships discovered that their communities lacked sufficient resources for reintegrating offenders back into their neighborhoods. In Syracuse, the partnership originally had identified a need for outreach workers to assist recently released offenders but lacked information on their developmental and economic needs with which to develop strategies for working with this population. Following the completion of a more detailed needs assessment for this population, the outreach worker concept evolved to include working with youth currently in prison, conducting offender risk assessments, and developing individual reintegration plans.

Lesson 2: The partnership should develop a comprehensive plan using the logic model process. Each site used the logic model process to develop its comprehensive plan. In addition to focusing strategy development and ensuring a link between actual community needs and the strategies selected, the logic model process helps partners agree on a shared community vision.

At all of the partnership sites, the process of completing the logic model helped the participating agencies and organizations understand how all of the activities fit together into an integrated plan. By identifying measurable immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes, the partners recognized how law enforcement-based tactics complemented activities that are more traditionally in the purview of the courts or probation. For example, prior to the implementation of Baton Rouge's

Table 2: Gun Violence Reduction Strategy Matrix

Gun Violence Reduction Strategies	Baton Rouge	Oakland	Syracuse
Suppression strategies			
Targeted gun sweeps/hotspots analysis of gun crimes	X	X	X
ATF tracing of illegal guns	X	X	
Tracking Brady Bill background checks	X		
Enhanced gang intelligence			X
Home police/probation supervision of probationers	X		X
Enhanced prosecution of those committing gun-related crimes	X		
Street narcotics enforcement units	X	X	
Judicial reforms and sanctions	X		
Enhanced citizen reporting of illegal gun activities	X	X	X
Intervention strategies			
Enhanced assessment and case management of gun-involved youth	X	X	X
Prerelease and aftercare programs	X	X	X
Gang intervention strategies			X
Youth and parents life skills training	X	X	
Job training and placement	X		X
Street outreach workers			X
Conflict resolution training	X	X	X
Prevention strategies			
Local gun ordinances and legislation restricting the buying, selling, and carrying of guns	X	X	
Grassroots mobilization and community rallies	X	X	X
Gun violence educational programs in the schools	X	X	X
Mentoring programs for at-risk youth	X	X	X
Peer training	X	X	X
Counseling for victims of gun violence		X	X
Community policing	X	X	X
School Safe Passages Program		X	

Operation Eiger, which was developed using the logic model planning, there was very little communication between probation, parole, and the police (as found in many jurisdictions). As a result of this intensive planning, these agencies have become active collaborators in the management and support of the partnership’s goals.

Recently, both Oakland and Syracuse have used the logic model process to bring more stakeholder groups to the planning table. Oakland used its logic models to solicit the active support of the Alameda County Probation Office, a stakeholder integral to the new case management approach to working with juvenile probationers. The logic models demonstrated that without the participation of probation, the partnership’s intervention strategy would be ineffective. Similarly, meetings between Syracuse partnership members and the mayor’s office garnered the support of the office in implementing the strategies specified in previously developed logic models. The partnerships need to make adjustments to the logic models as new resources are added because the participation of these agencies was not part of the original process.

Lesson 3: The partnerships can use performance data to inform program planners and task force members as they refine their gun violence strategies. In addition to allowing planners to make “mid-course” corrections, identifying immediate outcome measures provides decisionmakers with a means of ensuring accountability throughout the implementation process. Immediate outcome measures provide milestones for defining what needs to be accomplished, when, and by whom.

Failure to identify appropriate immediate outcomes (within the logic model framework) contributed to implementation lags at all the sites. Individual stakeholders and partnership staff sometimes felt overwhelmed by the complexity of implementing the full menu of strategies and activities envisioned in the sites’ comprehensive plans. Without adequate outcome measures to inform planning, the partnerships had difficulty assigning tasks appropriately and lacked the means to monitor whether these tasks had been implemented as designed. Revisions to the logic models helped the stakeholders and project staff develop more realistic measures

of immediate outcomes and more effective monitoring systems.

Lesson 4: Key stakeholders need to make a commitment to the program and be active participants in the partnership. Program implementation across the three sites was affected directly by the degree to which key stakeholders were active participants. In Baton Rouge, the early involvement of the mayor's office and the chief of police as the partnership's chairperson played a substantial role in the partnership's ability to implement its strategies quickly. To develop sustainable activities, stakeholders need to make a commitment to the partnership's vision and goals. This commitment should be realized in terms of active participation and the provision of resources. For example, the Baton Rouge Police Department contributes in-kind staff and equipment resources to Operation Eiger. The Eiger program, however, would have met with significant community resistance if the planning process had not included key representatives from the community, including clergy members. Although this community representation was missing initially, the partnership invited these leaders to participate in the onsite workshops conducted by the evaluation team during the planning period.

Syracuse and Oakland struggled initially to find their vision and to accept the efficacy of a complete suppression, intervention, and prevention framework. Now that they have added key city and agency resources to the planning process, these sites are actively implementing their comprehensive plans. Implementing Oakland's intervention strategy would have been difficult, if not impossible, without access to key stakeholders in the county's probation office. Syracuse relies on the support of local adult and juvenile correctional facilities to gain access to its target population. At both sites, the key stakeholders have committed themselves and their agencies' resources to reducing gun violence through proactive collaboration. In Shreveport, the partnership was unable to involve many of the key stakeholders in developing a common vision and subsequently lacked sufficient capacity to develop a comprehensive framework.

Program Outcomes

Although the implementation of gun violence reduction strategies has varied across the three partnerships, each site has successfully developed a comprehen-

sive plan that contains integrated suppression, intervention, and prevention strategies and that facilitates changes in the policies and procedures of participating public and private agencies. As a result, the following program outcomes have been realized:⁶

◆ **Suppression.** Suppression strategies of local police departments—with the participation of ATF and State and county law enforcement agencies and the efforts of community organizations—have removed illegal guns from the streets. This has been accomplished through many activities, including gun tracing, targeted enforcement operations by the police, and community-supported silent witness programs that encourage residents to report the presence of illegal guns.

The Baton Rouge partnership was the first effort within East Baton Rouge Parish to implement a comprehensive suppression strategy involving the city's police department, district attorney's office, U.S. Attorney's Office, ATF, State police, and sheriff's department. During the first 3 years the partnership has been in operation, it has helped reduce violent crime in Baton Rouge, specifically gun crime in the target area. Homicides in Baton Rouge dropped from 71 in 1996 to 48 in 1999—a drop of 28 percent. In the partnership's high-crime target area, the drop in homicides was 44 percent. Furthermore, gun-related homicides in the target area have declined even more dramatically, from 19 in 1996 to 9 in 1999—a drop of more than 47 percent.

In addition, 110 gun cases were referred to the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1999 as part of its implementation of Project Exile.⁷ Of those cases, 3 are pending grand jury action; 6 were declined by the U.S. Attorney's Office; 70 resulted in convictions (66 plea agreements and 4 guilty verdicts); 1 resulted in an acquittal; 22 are pending trial; and 8 resulted in indictment and then were dis-

⁶ Data provided by the Baton Rouge, Oakland, and Syracuse partnerships based on information provided by local police department records, U.S. Attorney files, ATF reports, and partnership outcome measures.

⁷ This U.S. Department of Justice initiative refers cases involving illegal firearms for Federal prosecution when Federal guidelines provide for greater sentences than State prosecution. Project Exile involves the combined efforts of the U.S. Attorneys, ATF, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with the cooperation of State and local police and prosecutors.

missed. From October 1998 to June 1999, the Oakland Police Department recovered 2,255 firearms. From January 1997 through July 1999, the Syracuse Police Department recovered 1,238 guns.

◆ **Intervention.** All three partnerships have implemented intensive intervention strategies to provide case management services for their target populations. These intervention strategies rely on referrals from law enforcement, juvenile and adult probation and parole offices, judges, correctional agencies, and trauma centers at local hospitals. Operation Eiger began to identify youth for intensive supervision and case management in October 1997. By March 2000, the project had conducted 388 intakes and placed the youth in the partnership's case management system.⁸ The Oakland partnership began receiving referrals in February 1998 and by March 2000 had received 55 referrals from juvenile probation and its hospital-based Caught in the Crossfire program. These youth are enrolled in the partnership's intervention services programs. Syracuse began receiving referrals from its local correctional and juvenile facilities in September 1998 and is providing mentoring, tutoring, job training, and other services to 49 at-risk juveniles and young adults.

Table 3 presents the risk characteristics of the juveniles and young adults assigned to the partnerships' case management intervention strategies, including their history of violent crimes and their involvement in gun-related activities.

◆ **Prevention.** All three partnerships have implemented integrated strategies focusing on the prevention of youth gun violence. These strategies reach thousands of residents through community-sponsored rallies, marches, and public information campaigns. Grassroots mobilization efforts have ignited in all three sites, with the addition of ACT NOW in Baton Rouge, the Oakland partnership's collaboration with Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils in Oakland, and the active participation of the clergy in Syracuse.

⁸ It is noted that Baton Rouge maintains case records on all youth who have been assigned to the Eiger program. The number of active probation cases at any point averages between 60 and 80 Eigers.

Table 3: Characteristics of the Targeted Youth

Characteristics	Baton Rouge (388 cases)	Oakland (55 cases)	Syracuse (49 cases)
Age at intake to program			
Juvenile*	79.6%	81.8%	14.3%
Young adult	20.4	18.2	85.7
Mean age (years)	15.4	15.9	17.9
Age range (years)	11–20	12–19	14–22
Sex			
Male	87.6%	90.9%	93.9%
Female	12.4	9.1	6.1
Race			
African American	98.2%	76.4%	89.8%
White	1.5	0.0	2.0
Hispanic	0.0	16.4	4.1
Other	0.3	7.2	4.1
Family living situation			
Single-parent households	64.9%	37.1%	55.1%
Drug involvement (self-reported)			
Occasional use	51.8%	14.3%	14.3%
Chronic use	10.6	8.6	71.4
No use	37.6	77.1	14.3
Drug trafficking			
	20.1%	0.0%	71.4%
Prior criminal history (arrests)			
Violence and gun involvement	32.7%	12.7%	40.8%
Violence but no gun involvement	26.0	43.6	16.3
Gun possession but no violence	17.0	7.3	26.6
No violence and no gun involvement	24.3	36.4	16.3

* The legal definition of “juvenile” varies from State to State. In Louisiana, juvenile court jurisdiction covers all individuals under age 17. California recently revised its legal definition to provide juvenile courts with jurisdiction over all youth under age 18. New York provides juvenile court jurisdiction for youth over age 7 and under age 16.

onstration period in 2001, a national cross-site impact assessment of the overall program will be developed.

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These efforts have involved a variety of prevention activities, including the development of strategies to increase citizen crime reporting and to enhance police-community relations.

◆ **Policy and operational procedure changes.** Participating public and private agencies have made policy and operational procedure changes in support of the partnerships’ efforts. Probation agencies at all three sites have modified their assessment and referral systems to help place high-risk, gun-involved youth in treatment services and case management programs managed by the partnerships. In Baton Rouge, police crime analysis and reporting have been enhanced. The partnership has taken the lead in analyzing ATF and Brady Bill data and reported results to the police department and the local U.S. Attorney’s Office. All of the partner-

ships have developed agreements with their local police, probation agencies, and prosecutors’ offices to share records on juveniles and young adults arrested for or convicted of gun-related offenses. This level of cooperation has not been seen in the past and is attributed to the active participation of the stakeholders who share a common vision—the reduction of youth gun violence.

What’s Next

The evaluation team is now engaged in a national process and impact evaluation of the demonstration sites. The partnerships’ logic models are being used to identify relevant process and impact measures. The evaluators also are capturing extensive information on the partnerships’ capacity-building efforts and their achievement of short-term and long-term outcomes. At the completion of the dem-

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