

YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION STEERING COMMITTEE

FRAME WORK FOR OUR BLUE PRINT FOR ACTION

Prepared for the July 2007 Community Forums

Youth violence is a serious public health problem that is preventable. It is at an epidemic stage in Minneapolis. The problem needs to be addressed with aggressive and early prevention and intervention actions.

We anticipate the Blue Print for Action...

being multifaceted, bold, creative, and actionable.

including best practices, grass root ideas, research-based ideas, as well as short and long-term strategies.

getting parents and other caring adults involved.

tackling the issues from a youth perspective

building cross-sector partnerships.

addressing gaps in policy, funds, and services.

Ideas Under Discussion for the Blue Print for Action

OUT-OF- SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Goal: To provide for all Minneapolis youth across race, culture, place, abilities and class, access to high quality programs and opportunities that invite their full engagement and provide some education on youth violence prevention. engagement.

Some Suggestions Actions:

1. Create and develop an infrastructure to ensure all youth of Minneapolis have access to interesting out-of-school activities. Support youth serving organizations in coordinating services and programs.
2. Develop criteria for high quality program standards. Gather information on proven criteria and disseminate among youth serving organizations for input.
3. Provide culturally appropriate activities, programs, and opportunities that includes providing training and technical assistance to youth serving organizations.
4. Coordinate, leverage and braid resources.

IN-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Goal: To increase and intensify curricula and extra curricula activities to reduce and eliminate violence; and to engage students and their support systems in multiple types of activities to increase their leadership, reading, and conflict resolution skills; deepen their cultural roots; and plan their preferred futures.

Some Suggested Actions:

1. Offer a wide range of activities (courses, seminars, workshops, discussion circles) that address character development, values, courtesy, and nonviolent conflict resolution.
2. Help students become media literate to help inoculate against violent messages in video games, television programs, and movies.
3. Offer training and incentives to teachers and administrators and train them to be more pro-active in preventing, de-escalating, and reducing violence.
4. Extend the school day with appropriate activities for students who want to come early and stay late – because the school is a safe haven.
5. Reconnect with kids who have recently dropped out of school.
6. Establish a protocol that is used in each school every time there is a violent attack involving students or persons that students know.
7. Create a non violent message campaign that is promoted throughout the school system.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Goal: To increase the number of year-round employment opportunities in all the sectors for youth 14 – 18.

Some Suggested Actions:

1. Create a job readiness program that has built-in incentives for youth to participate.
2. Intensify the publicity to youth and parents about the Minneapolis Promise, Step Up!, and the Power of You programs.
3. Continue to recruit large, medium size and small business for the STEP Up program as well as academic institutions, government agencies, and non profits.
4. Develop a job program for teen parents.
5. Create a pipeline for youth to get jobs in the construction industry, hospitality, and health care.

FAMILY SUPPORT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Goal: To develop strong families in order to raise responsible youth and build healthy communities.

Some Suggested Actions:

1. Create neighborhood hubs that provide services for parents and children who are at risk. The program would be family-centered and would be a single point of contact for all services needed by the family.
2. Identify those communities where the largest amount of violence is present and determined what assets exist. Target programs at specific neighborhoods within North and South Minneapolis.
3. Review programs identified in the Community Resource inventory for children and families. Determine who is doing what, their current capacity, service area, and target group.
4. Create criteria for program expectations.

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Goal: Serve every youth in contact with the Juvenile Justice and Law Enforcement Systems using a public health, youth-focused, problem solving approach geared to quality youth activities, education, employment, quality youth activities and to reducing violent behavior and exposure to violence.

Some Suggested Actions:

1. Develop and provide tools to help the system work more effectively to address release of information, contacts for education, quality youth activities, employment and help with reducing violence encounters.
2. Begin a “one-stop” approach with new curfew truancy for first time offenders and for repeat offenders.
3. Develop a mechanism to measure and report collective accomplishments.
4. Initiate a focused effort across the juvenile justice system to help assure that youth involved with law enforcement can successfully comply with stated expectations.