

# BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

*Preventing  
Youth Violence  
in Minneapolis*



## GOAL 1

Every young person in Minneapolis is supported by at least one trusted adult in their family or their community

## GOAL 2

Intervene at the first sign that youth and families are at risk for or involved in violence

## GOAL 3

Do not give up on our kids; work to restore and get them back on track

## GOAL 4

Recognize that violence is learned and can be unlearned by reducing the impact of violent messages in our media, culture and entertainment

## Blueprint Minneapolis Achievements 2008 - 2012

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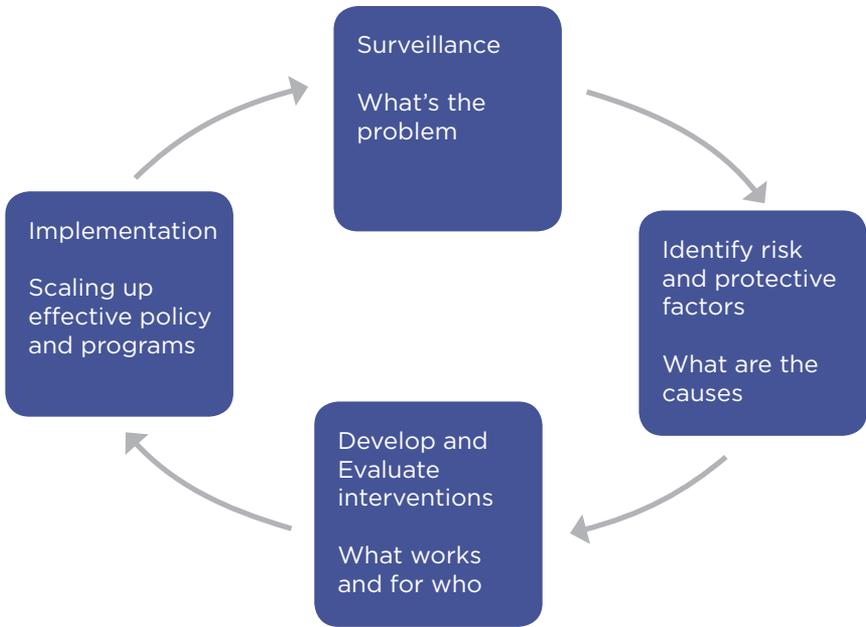
*[Our work] is about a collective value system in this community that says yes, we will raise our children in peace. We have not yet reached our ultimate goal of not a single homicide in the city, but the Blueprint and the work of many people have had a powerful and significant impact on making this community safer.*

**-Minneapolis Mayor R. T. Rybak**

## History

Through the implementation of a multi-faceted, multi-sector, multi-year master plan the City of Minneapolis Blueprint for Action to Prevent Youth Violence is helping to reduce and prevent youth violence in Minneapolis by using a public health approach. The public health approach is population-based, targets all city residents and treats violence as a disease or an epidemic, such as tuberculosis, polio or smoking. The public health approach uses strategies that reduce the factors that put people at risk for experiencing violence and increase the factors that protect people or buffer them from risk.

## Public Health Approach



From a public health perspective, youth violence is not inevitable. It is a problem that can be prevented using a scientific approach similar to what is used to address other public health problems such as automobile injuries or lead poisoning. We need everyone in this community to embrace the core value that youth violence affects each of us and each of us has a role to play to keep our children and youth safe. The Blueprint's four goals:

1. Every young person in Minneapolis is supported by at least one trusted adult in their family or their community.
2. Intervene at the first sign that youth are at risk for violence.
3. Do not give up on our kids; work to restore and get them back on track.
4. Recognize that violence is learned and can be unlearned by reducing the impact of violent messages in our media, culture and entertainment.

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### **Making Progress through Partnership**

Minneapolis has had four years of activity under the Blueprint, with city-wide collaboration that is both broad and deep.

Collaborators, listed at the end of this report, report activities and progress made on addressing Blueprint recommendations as part of the Youth Violence Prevention quarterly report. Youth Violence Results Minneapolis, an annual city-wide shared results accountability process tracks 22 indicators identified around the 4 Blueprint goals, including youth homicide victims, hospitalizations from assault injuries, perception of safety in school and teen pregnancy rates. A brief summary of those results and an example of an activity within each of the Blueprint's 4 goals, follows. There are many initiatives across the City; this is a sampling.

#### **From 2006 - 2011, Minneapolis saw:**

56% reduction in juvenile crime

58% reduction in incidents involving guns and juveniles

36% reduction in firearm related injuries in Minneapolis youth and young adults

57% increase in number of youth in STEP-UP and other City jobs programs

Significant drop in teen pregnancy rate

## TIMELINE

**2003-2006:** Homicide is leading cause of death for youth aged 15-24 in Minneapolis

**2006:** Working with the Minneapolis Foundation, community meetings were held to identify gaps and opportunities related to preventing youth violence

**2006:** City Council adopted a resolution declaring youth violence a public health issue

**2007:** YVP Steering Committee reviewed best practices research

**2008:** Blueprint for Action to Prevent Youth Violence adopted and YVP Coordinator hired

**2008:** Juvenile Supervision Center established. 1,515 youth seen in 1st 6 mos. 950 rec'd services

**2008:** YouthRHere buses serve over 500 riders – City cosponsors

**2008:** Mpls Park Board extends summer hours for youth programming until 10 PM

## Stories of Blueprint Goals

### 1. We are connecting youth to trusted adults by supporting parents through Parent Support Groups.

The Parenting Support Groups aim to strengthen families and help parents and caregivers to provide the best environment for healthy youth development. The programs are also particularly effective because they are culturally specific and focus on the unique needs of each community. Deb Organ, a Latino community workshop supervisor, says “after the workshops the parents feel more confident in their parenting roles because they have more information and better communication within the family”. Whether it is teaching your kids open communication skills or modeling healthy relationships to your kids, parent support group programs help strengthen families and can be an effective youth violence prevention strategy. It is an important prevention strategy that can change negative family dynamics and help aid parents to support and raise their children in positive ways that help them lead healthy lifestyles.

**2008:** Juvenile Offender Gun Initiative launched

**2009:** Youth Violence Prevention Act in Minnesota

**2009:** Congressional Field Hearing on impact of Blueprint

**2009:** Street Reach: Utilization of parks staff for outreach to youth

**2009:** SpeakUp: Anonymous youth to report weapons, tip line launched

**2009:** School Resource Officers: Close coordination with police juvenile unit and the School Resource Officers

**2009:** Brooklyn Park adopts Blueprint for Action

**2010:** Minneapolis Parks and Recreation receives mentorship grant.

**2010:** MYVIP: Hospital protocol to reach out to youth victims of violence

**2010:** North 4 Program: Collaboration with city employment and training and a community based organization to engage and employ gang affiliated youth

## **2. We are intervening at the first sign of risk through our StreetReach staff.**

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation StreetReach staff were active in the parks June through October of 2010 and 2011. In 2010, StreetReach staff targeted their attention toward youth ages 10-17. Seven staff conducted street outreach within and near the perimeters of parks, at events, and within park buildings with a special focus on engaging these youth and linking them with available park and community programs. In addition to engaging youth, the StreetReach staff also served as a visible adult presence to the community and provided supervision for the youth. The following is an example of a success story through their outreach efforts: StreetReach staff met a woman who cared for two of her grandchildren, both of whom had Down syndrome. Because of StreetReach staff encouragement, she brought her grandchildren to a Family Festival event at her neighborhood park. Prior to the event, she never visited the park near her house because she feared for her grandchildren's safety. However, she and her grandchildren had so much fun at the Family Festival that they went every festival for the rest of the summer – even festivals at parks outside of their neighborhood!

**2010:** MDHFS awarded OJJDP grant to implement gang prevention curriculum in several sites

**2011:** Youth Violence Prevention Conference with Attorney General Eric Holder in May 2011, just after the devastating North Minneapolis tornado

**2011:** Summer 612 Media Campaign; Foundation funding of Summer 612 - a youth driven effort to counter the culture of violence

**2011:** BUILD gang prevention and intervention program implemented

**2011:** Launched Operation Backpack Recover community crisis protocol in aftermath of shooting

**2011:** STRYVE program of CDC features Minneapolis as community success story

**2011:** MDHFS co-hosts community forum on alcohol use & youth violence

**2011:** MPD Juvenile Unit - new partnership w/Henn. Co. Human Services & Public Health

**2011:** SBC health educators hired to promote new teen pregnancy prevention work

### **3. We are restoring youth who have gone down the wrong path in the North4 program.**

The North4 program offers Minneapolis gang affiliated youth the opportunity to gain employment and make positive changes in their lives. Thirty youth have gone through the program to date. The following is an excerpt from a letter a participant wrote in thanks for the program. "I can write a book about my life. I don't know how many copies would sell. I don't even know if they would publish it, but it would include angels and demons, love and hate, and a lot of war stories. I have seen it all. I can say I grew up too fast. I can also say you are and will become what you think about. At this point in my life, all I can and want to think about is bettering my mind, body, and soul. If I never met Will Wallace (program manager) I wouldn't be alive today. I would be a statistic. I would be like my peers "Jerome", or "KC". I hate to think like that but it's true, but since Emerge has giving me a chance when no one else would, I'm going to make them proud because that's my family. Will taught me to embrace my failures..."



**2012:** National Youth Violence Prevention Week held

**2012:** Launch of Picturing Peace in partnership with Hennepin County Libraries and Downtown Improvement District

**2012:** Congressional Tri-Caucus briefing on youth violence as a public health issue

**2012:** Applied to and awarded entry to National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention

**2012:** UNITY convening in Minneapolis Relaunch of Youth Violence Prevention Week

**2012:** Minneapolis hosts listening sessions on challenges of youth violence prevention efforts for National Forum partners

**2012:** MDHFS receives Block Grant to expand BUILD curriculum

**2013:** Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak commits to youth violence prevention as focus of final term and his legacy

**2013:** Blueprint Executive Committee tasked with creating a strategic plan of how to proceed, due April 2013

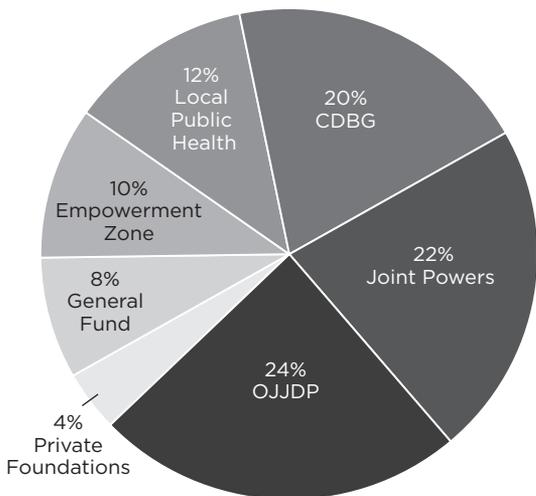
#### **4. We are helping the community unlearn the culture of violence with Picturing Peace.**

With the goal of sparking dialogue about community solutions to youth violence, The Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District and City of Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support partnered to develop Picturing Peace, a collaborative community engagement campaign and photography project that explores youth violence, peace and safety, and community support for young people. In 2012, empowered with cameras and a critical eye, over a dozen Minneapolis teens documented their reflections and hopes for peace and safety in their communities.

**One participant, Alicia, took this photo and said, “I took this picture because the sunset looked calm and nobody was doing bad things. Things are beautiful when they are peaceful.” Photos were posted on utility boxes around Minneapolis.**



## Minneapolis Department of Health & Family Services Resourcing for Blueprint Initiatives



OJJDP	\$585,000
Joint Powers	\$538,661
CDBG	\$495,843
Local Public Health	\$288,062
Empowerment Zone	\$250,000
General Fund	\$185,000
Private Foundations	\$100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,442,566</b>

### Next Phase for the Blueprint

President Obama and the National Department of Justice and Education created a National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention in 2010 pooling the efforts of 6 cities in order to share information and support local efforts to prevent and reduce youth violence. In 2012, 4 additional cities were added to the Forum including Minneapolis. Joining the Forum brings continued focus and energy to Minneapolis' Blueprint for Action: Preventing Youth Violence in Minneapolis and allows the organizations working on the Blueprint to take the plan to the next level of expansion. Minneapolis is charged with creating a strategic plan by April 2013, to detail how it will continue to prevent youth violence, which will allow the City to continue to develop the Blueprint for Action: Preventing Youth Violence in Minneapolis and expand it to take us to 2016.

# Blueprint Leadership

## Executive Committee Members 2008-2012

The community response to the need for the Blueprint was resounding. Many community leaders in the areas of law enforcement, juvenile detention, public health, youth programs, education, social services, faith communities, neighborhoods, and city and county government came together to develop the Blueprint's comprehensive plan to reduce youth violence in Minneapolis. Members served 2-year terms, with some renewing and others continuing to provide leadership and support, while new members have joined.

R.T. Rybak, Minneapolis Mayor

Karen Kelley-Ariwoola, Minnesota Fdtn

Ellen Luger, General Mills Foundation

Tim Dolan, Minneapolis Police Dept.

Gretchen Musicant, HFS Commissioner

Judith Kahn, Youth Coordinating Board

Shukri Adan, Universal Home Health Care

Carol Batsell Benner, Hennepin County

Kirk Crow Shoe, Division of Indian Work

Mike Chrstenson, Minneapolis CPED

Gary Cunningham, NorthPoint

Roberta Englund, Folwell NA

Michael Favor, North High School

Mike Freeman, Hennepin County

Cam Gordon, Minneapolis City Council

Clarence Hightower, Minneapolis Urban Lge

Carlos Quezada Hoffman, HC Strat. Initiatives

Kaoa Inxiengximay, Lao Advancement Org.

Tom Johnson, Council on Crime & Justice

Mary LaGarde, Little Earth of United Tribes

Adam Lares, Minneapolis Parks & Rec

Sean McMenomy, Southwest High School

Mike Opat, Hennepin County

Deborah Christine Owens, Juv. Probation

Shane Price, NorthPoint Health

Sondra Hollinger Samuels, Peace Fdtn

Lamarr Scott, Achieve Minneapolis

V.J. Smith, MAD DADS

John Strand, Transitions Plus/CHEER

Rufus Thibodeaux, Sr., Word of Life Ministries

Doris Thomas, Mothers of Crime Victims

Wesley Walker, Northway Community Trust

Charlie Weaver, Minnesota Business Partnership

Titilayo Bediako, WE WIN Institute

Dale Blyth

Henry Crosby, North Community YMCA

Bianca Dawkins, UCare

Eloisa Echavez, La Oportunidad

Sherenia Gibbs, Minneapolis Park & Rec

Jose Gonzalez, MDH Office of Minority & Multicultural Health

Cam Gordon, Minneapolis City Council

Tracine Asberry, Minneapolis School Board

Barbara McMorris, Uof M, School of Nursing

Khalid Mohamed, Argosy University student

Eugene Roehlkepartain, SEARCH Inistitute

Darrell Young, Emerge Community Development

Shane Zahn, Minneapolis DID

Janee Harteau, Minneapolis Police Chief

Linda Higgins, Hennepin County Commissioner

Ben Knoll, United Way COO

Wokie Weah, Youthprise Executive Director

# Supporting Agencies & Quarterly Report Contributions

500 Under 5  
Alternatives  
American Indian OIC  
Asian Media Access  
Banyan Community  
Big Brothers Big Sisters  
Black storytellers Alliance  
Bolder Options  
Boys & Girls Clubs  
Butterfly Springs  
Center for Multi-cultural Mediation and Restorative Justice  
Center for Policy, Planning, and Performance  
Centro  
City, Inc., The  
Citywide Education and Development Services  
Confederation of Somali Community MN  
Conflict Resolution Center  
CPAV  
Division of Indian Work  
EMERGE  
Family & Children's Service  
First Free Methodist Church  
Freeport West  
Heading Home Hennepin  
Hennepin County Corrections  
Hennepin County Library  
HIRED  
Holy Rosary Catholic Church  
JSC-The Link  
Kinship  
Kwanzaa Community Church  
La Oportunidad  
Lao Family Community  
Legal Rights Center  
Little Earth of United Tribes  
MAD DADS  
MN Dept. of Health  
Mentoring Partnership of MN  
Mpls. Employment & Training Program  
Midtown Comm. Restorative Justice  
Mpls. Police Dept.  
Mpls. Park & Rec. Board  
Mpls. Public Schools  
MVNA  
Northpoint  
Northside Achievement Zone  
Parenting with Purpose  
PEACE Fndtn.  
Plymouth Christian Youth Center  
The Project Diva  
Project Footsteps  
Protect the E.D.G.E.  
Project Minnesota  
PUC-Brian Coyle Center  
Restorative Justice Community Action  
SEARCH Institute  
Shiloh Temple  
STEP-UP  
TV by Girls  
Two Mothers & Two Fathers  
Urban League  
Urban Youth Conservation  
West Bank Neighborhood Youth Service  
Youth Coordinating Board (YCB)  
YIPA  
YMCA  
YWCA  
YouthCARE  
YouthLink  
Youththrive  
Zion Baptist Church  
And others