HOUSTON PEACE

Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan

*"Preventing Youth Violence, Promoting Youth Health
& Providing Youth Opportunities."* Houston's Hope For Peace.

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HOUSTON PEACE

Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan

"Preventing Youth Violence, Promoting Youth Health & Providing Youth Opportunities." Houston's Hope For Peace.

CITY OF HOUSTON ———— **Sylvester Turner**

Mayor

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April 2019

My Fellow Residents:

Houston, like other cities across the country, is working diligently to address the issue of youth violence. Youth violence, including teen dating violence, gang-related violence, structural violence, and gun violence has a tremendous impression on our society, impacting the victim, the offenders, the witnesses, and the community.

I have dedicated my life to building safe and supportive communities so that our families can experience the best that Houston has to offer. To that end, I am proud to be a major catalyst and champion for expanding opportunities for youth. From promoting economic and educational equity to sealing juvenile records for youth to provide them with a fresh start.

As the fourth largest and most diverse metropolitan area in the United States, Houston has a youth population of approximately 460,000. This means nearly half a million people face the prospect of witnessing or living with violence every day.

I am proud to lend my support to *Houston Peace: A Strategic Plan to Prevent Youth Violence*. This comprehensive plan reviews the current state of youth violence and identifies areas where youth violence is most impactful. The plan also explores various ways to prevent violence at the individual, community, and societal levels, and narrows its approaches to focus on the following three goals to ensure our youth are safe, healthy, and have hope for the future:

1. **Prevent Youth Violence**
2. **Promote Youth Health**
3. **Provide Youth Opportunities**

Violence is a complex issue and is one that individuals and organizations from different sectors across Houston work on preventing daily and the release of this plan is a testament to their hard work. *Houston Peace* is designed to be a multi-year movement, covering three years of interventions, advocacy, and evaluation. For this undertaking, the Houston Health Department (HHD) will take the lead at monitoring and evaluating our implementation using the public health approach.

I am excited to continue the great work with all those dedicated to ending youth violence in our great city and if you are interested in getting involved, please contact houstonpeace@houstontx.gov.

Sincerely,

Sylvester Turner
Mayor

Council Members: Brenda Stardig   Jerry Davis   Ellen Cohen   Dwight Boykins   Dave Martin   Steve Le   Greg Travis   Karla Cisneros   Robert Gallegos   Mike Laster   Martha Castex-Tatum   Mike Knox   David Robinson   Michael Kubosh   Amanda Edwards   Jack Christie   Controller: Chris Brown

CITY OF HOUSTON

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Sylvester Turner

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April 2019

My Fellow Houstonians:

Numerous individuals and organizations in Houston work daily at addressing youth violence in Houston. This work is apparent in policy changes, mentoring programs, and after-school programs, among others. However, despite these numerous existing resources, there is a need to prevent youth violence on a larger scale.

Violence can look different to different people. To some it's being bullied on social media, others may experience violence when robbed, while still others may experience it by being pushed by a partner. The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention defines youth violence as occurring when "young people between the ages of 10 and 24 intentionally use physical force or power to threaten or harm others." This wide classification means adolescents can be involved in youth violence as a victim, offender, or witness.

It is important to realize that violence is a problem that extends beyond the criminal justice arena. It's a problem that requires the support of sectors ranging from faith-based organizations to education to healthcare. To best address the magnitude of a problem like this, the strategic plan to prevent youth violence in Houston, *Houston Peace*, takes a public health approach that addresses the root causes of violence and promotes opportunities for prevention at multiple levels.

The Houston Health Department spent several years reviewing local crime data, evaluating best practices, and engaging with communities and youth about youth violence. This plan is the culmination of that work. The goals listed in the plan, 1) prevent youth violence, 2) promote youth health, and 3) provide youth opportunities, serve as pillars to ensure the health and safety of our youth moving forward. We understand that there is no overnight solution to youth violence, but I am proud that we have *Houston Peace* to help support the youth violence prevention groundwork already laid by individuals, communities, and partnering organizations.

I am honored that the Houston Health Department is taking the lead to address this issue and I invite you to join the cause and play an integral role as we prevent youth violence from occurring in the great city of Houston.

Sincerely,

Stephen L. Williams, M.Ed., M.P.A.
Director

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April 2019,

To the Houston Community:

One of the cornerstones to enacting change is community engagement. Communities are powerful entities, and they have the power to spur change, ignite momentum, and can carry out great feats.

The Houston community has identified youth violence as a problem. In 2016, 36% of Houston murders involved adolescents. These alarming results show concerns over crime, concerns about a lack of equitable opportunities, worries about school safety, and the shocking development of a new norm. A norm that accepts violence in the community's culture. Beyond all this, youth have also identified violence among adolescents as a concern.

For this initiative, we must push beyond the traditional boundaries of community engagement. It is vital that we integrate youth engagement and youth voice in community engagement work. Youth voice is a powerful tool and this confidence can lead to innovative, responsive, and targeted ways to prevent youth violence. There is no quick fix to preventing violence. It's a problem that is greater than criminal justice, the education field, and the government. It's a problem that requires the work of community partners from all sectors. Community partners can take part in this framework and model in many ways that will yield different levels of influence.

Adolescents, teens, and young adults' engagement will generate ideas and solutions, serving as decision makers, working as advisors, delivering projects and programs, and as users and beneficiaries. Evidence of the impact of prevention/intervention programs is astounding, yet we realize work is still needed.

The World Youth Foundation is proud and excited to work on the Houston Peace initiative as a community partner. We urge our fellow community organizations to get involved with this important work, through innovation and bold steps we can expose students to unimaginable opportunities, while we strive to make sure that the youth in Houston are safe, healthy, and have hope for the future.

Please feel free to contact us at 713-539-5777 or email WorldYouthFoundationInc@gmail.com. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Karen Levingston-Franklin

Karen Levingston Franklin
Chairman/CEO
World Youth Foundation, Inc

CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner, Mayor

Houston Police Department
1200 Travis   Houston, Texas 77002-6000   713/308-1600

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS: Brenda Stardig   Jerry Davis   Ellen R. Cohen   Dwight A. Boykins   Dave Martin   Steve Le   Greg Travis   Karla Cisneros   Robert Gallegos
Mike Laster   Martha Castex-Tatum   Mike Knox   David W. Robinson   Michael Kubosh   Amanda K. Edwards   Jack Christie   CITY CONTROLLER: Chris B. Brown

April 4, 2019

Art Acevedo
Chief of Police

My Fellow Houstonians:

The Houston Police Department works tirelessly to ensure that Houston residents and visitors feel safe in our great city. "*Keep* Houston SAFE" is a citywide public safety campaign involving a collaborative partnership between citizens, businesses, and the Houston Police Department, whose main focus is crime prevention and the implementation of proactive enforcement efforts and measures aimed at the reduction of criminal incidents, rather than responding to them after they have occurred. Simply, the goal of the *Keep* Houston SAFE campaign is to prevent crime. We strive to eliminate crime and violence, and aim to promote and support the development of safe communities and positive community-police relations. Despite our efforts, addressing violence is an issue that is greater than law enforcement.

Accordingly, I am pleased to lend my support to "**Houston Peace**," which is a strategic plan to prevent youth violence in the city of Houston. This comprehensive plan acknowledges that addressing and preventing youth violence is a challenge that extends beyond law enforcement. As such, **Houston Peace** will allow for the involvement of multiple sectors and will encourage violence prevention to begin before the onset of violent behavior by way of addressing risk factors and promoting protective factors.

Our colleagues at the Houston Health Department are taking the lead with the implementation and monitoring of **Houston Peace**, and I am proud that the Houston Police Department will aid in these efforts where possible; namely by providing data, allowing youth to have an active voice in law enforcement issues through the Youth Police Advisory Council, and by helping youth find healthy and positive ways to spend their time. I am also excited to continue elevating this work as we strive to ensure that youth in Houston are safe, healthy, and have hope for the future.

Ultimately, Crime Prevention requires the active collaboration by all members of the community. The Houston Police Department is working hard to catch the "bad guys" and put them behind bars; however, we are counting on you, our residents, to work together in the fight against crime. In fact, the Houston Police Department believes this team effort is so important that it is mentioned in the department's mission statement, which states – in part – that the department will strive to enhance the quality of life in the city of Houston by working cooperatively with the public to prevent crime.

HOUSTON is a dynamic city with hard-working residents who want a safe city, and we need everyone to become involved and be energized in their efforts to protect themselves, their family, and their neighbors.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief of Police

CITY OF HOUSTON

Houston Health Department

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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April 2019

Greetings!

I am excited to reveal Houston's Hope for Peace, a multi-year strategic plan to prevent youth violence. This plan provides a thorough overview of what youth violence looks like in Houston, common forms of violence, and details the approach that we have taken to address it in the best way possible. We have worked with countless partners, youth, stakeholders, and coalition members to ensure that this plan is comprehensive and addresses the various components of youth violence prevention.

This yielded into three goals focused on:

1. Preventing Youth Violence

2. Promoting Youth Health

3. Providing Youth Opportunities

These goals stemmed from the utilization of a public health approach. The public health approach supports developing solutions that benefit the greater population. Frequently, the best way to do this is via prevention or moving upstream. Moving upstream emphasizes stopping the problem from ever happening as opposed to expending resources and energy on rescuing people.

Over the years, prevention has looked like a lot of different things. It's included wearing seat belts in the car to prevent fatalities during car accidents, getting vaccinations to prevent getting a disease, and adding fluoride to drinking water to prevent cavities. We're taking a similar approach to youth violence by moving upstream. We've reviewed and learned about different approaches and policies that aim to minimize the likelihood of violence occurring.

It's important to note, that the upstream approach doesn't lessen the impact and importance of downstream approaches. These approaches focus on providing programs and services at the individual level, and include things like wrap around services and intervention programs.

Our ultimate goal is to prevent youth violence, and in this approach, we've incorporated a variety of ways to best serve the needs of youth in Houston. Throughout this plan, you can find out more great information about the different prevention methods being implemented. I look forward to working with you all as we prevent youth violence in Houston.

Sincerely,

Noël Pinnock, I MPA, CPM, IPMA-SCP

Council Members: Brenda Stardig   Jerry Davis   Ellen Cohen   Dwight Boykins   Dave Martin   Steve Le   Greg Travis   Karla Cisneros   Robert Gallegos   Mike Laster   Martha Castex-Tatum   Mike Knox   David Robinson   Michael Kubosh   Amanda Edwards   Jack Christie   Controller: Chris Brown

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the organizations, community partners and individuals that have contributed to the advancement of our community and to the prevention of youth violence in our city. Your contributions have not gone unnoticed.

Special Thanks to the Following:

Local Partnerships

- African American Police Officers League (AAPOL)*
- Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA)*
- Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse (AVDA)*
- Baker Ripley
- Baylor College of Medicine*
- Big City Gardener*
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Houston
- Change Happens!*
- City of Houston - Houston Health Department*
- City of Houston - Mayor's Office*
- City of Houston – Municipal Courts
- City of Houston – Office of Business Opportunity
- City of Houston – Office of Complete Communities*
- City of Houston – Office of Education
- City of Houston - Parks and Recreation*
- City of Houston – Public Library
- Communities in Schools (CIS) Houston*
- Council on Drugs and Alcohol*
- Crime Stoppers of Houston*
- Goodwill Industries of Houston*
- Greater East End District*
- Harris County – Attorney's Office*
- Harris County – Commissioner Precinct 1
- Harris County – Constable Precinct 1
- Harris County – District Attorney's Office
- Harris County – Department of Education
- Harris County – Juvenile Probation*
- Harris County – Juvenile Probation Court Program*
- Harris County – Protective Services for Children's and Adults
- Harris County Youth Collective*
- Healthy Living Matters*
- Houston Area Women's Center*
- Houston Food Bank
- Houston Independent School District*
- Houston Police Department*
- Houston Youth Violence Prevention Coalition
- Legacy Community Health*
- Mayor's Anti-Gang Office*
- Ministers Against Crime*
- Moms Demand Action*

- My Brother's Keeper – Houston*
- Nature Heritage Society
- North Harris County Substance Abuse Coalition
- Prairie View A&M University*
- ReVision*
- Safe and Supportive School Collaborative
- St. Michael's Learning Academy*
- Teen and Police Service Academy (TAPS)*
- Texas A&M University Agri Life*
- Texas Children's Hospital*
- Texas Criminal Justice Coalition*
- The Providence of Southmore*
- United Against Human Trafficking*
- University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston – School of Public Health*
- University of Texas Medical Branch*
- Urban Enrichment Institute
- Urban Workforce Initiatives*
- Vox Culture
- World Youth Foundation*
- YES Prep Schools*
- YMCA of Greater Houston
- Youth Justice Council

National Partnerships
- My Brother's Keeper Alliance
- Cities United
- American Institutes for Research
- Campaign for Black Male Achievement
- Obama Foundation
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Violence Prevention

(*) denotes involvement in the Youth Violence Prevention Coalition

"One in four 10th-graders [are] violently injured, that's alarming."

Houston Chronicle[38]

Overview

Cities across the United States continue to grapple with youth violence. Houston, unfortunately is no different. As the fourth largest and most diverse metropolitan area in the United States, Houston has a youth population (ages 10-24) of approximately 460,000.[1] This means nearly half a million people face the prospect of witnessing violence and living through it every day. Violence presents in various ways, at varying degrees. One youth defined violence as hearing "gunshots by my house every night." Another youth says it's walking in his community and then getting shot at and robbed; still another by the fear and worry that stems from knowing that a friend is in an abusive relationship. Numerous individuals and organizations work at addressing youth violence. This work is apparent in policy changes, mentoring programs, diversion opportunities, and after-school programs, among others. However, despite these numerous existing resources, ***there is a need to do more***. This can be achieved through city-wide collaboration, a unified vision, and a coordinated approach.

To help coordinate this effort, the Houston Health Department is taking the lead with a ***public health approach*** to prevent further incidents of youth violence. The Houston Health Department (HHD) is experienced at developing programs to prevent youth violence. From 2011-2015, HHD spearheaded the STRYVE (Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere) initiative, with the goal of reducing youth violence in the Sunnyside, South Acres/Crestmont Park, Greater Old Spanish Trail/South Union and Minnetex neighborhoods.

This new effort is built off the foundation laid by the STRYVE initiative and has resulted in the development of ***"Houston Peace,"*** a comprehensive plan for preventing youth violence with a vision that youth in Houston are **safe, healthy, and have hope for the future.** Houston Peace was developed through the collaboration of numerous organizations and individuals in Houston, and with resources such as American Institutes of Research and Cities United. Through Houston Peace, everyone invested in the future of Houston will be invited to work together to ensure that youth in Houston are safe, healthy, and have hope for the future. Houston Peace is designed to be multi-year plan for three years (2019-2021).

To ensure that youth are safe, healthy, and have hope for the future, three goals were identified to best address the risk and protective factors that surround youth violence. These goals and their corresponding objectives and activities are the direct results of the strategic plan work sessions.

1. Prevent Youth Violence   **2.** Promote Youth Health   **3.** Provide Youth Opportunities

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines youth violence as occurring ***"when young people between the ages of 10 and 24 years intentionally use physical force or power to threaten or harm others.[2]"*** Violence can manifest in a variety of forms, including bullying, teen dating violence, murder, gang related violence, and threats with weapons. This wide classification means that adolescents can be involved in youth violence as a victim, offender, or witness. Furthermore, youth violence can result in physical injuries, death, psychological harm, justice costs, and community disruption, among others.[2]

Various factors can increase an adolescent's likelihood of engaging in violence as either a victim, offender, or witness, and they are called risk factors. It's important to note that risk factors are not direct causes of youth violence. Some examples of risk factors include: a history of early aggressive behavior, poor family functioning, low commitment to school and school failure, diminished economic opportunities, and high concentrations of poor residents. Houston Peace targets the following risk factors: cultural norms that support aggression toward others, social isolation/lack of social support, lack of non-violent social problem-solving skills, and poor behavioral control/impulsiveness.[3]

Unlike risk factors, protective factors help decrease the likelihood that youth become violent. They include variables such as religiosity, frequent shared activities with parents, commitment to school, involvement in prosocial activities, and family use of constructive strategies for coping with problems.[3]

Each section of **Houston Peace** targets a necessary component of violence prevention. The project focuses on Houston communities with high rates of youth violence. Local data and community feedback were combined with information from national resources to develop goals and objectives that address prominent forms of youth violence in Houston.

Youth Violence in Houston

Violence poses a serious threat to the safety, health, and future of Houston youth. The outcomes of violence vary, and at the worst can lead to physical and/or psychological harm or even death.[4] Exposure to violence, crime, and their corresponding risk factors affects youth development, a critical time when adolescents form behaviors that will carry into adulthood.[28] The consequences of violence can extend beyond victims and can impact families, communities, and society.[4] For example, high rates of youth violence can significantly impact a community's economic health by impairing the ability of students to focus at school or maintain regular schedules, and employees' ability to function effectively at work.[29]

The impact of youth violence in disadvantaged communities highlights the need to address community level trauma and social inequities, and promote opportunities.[5] Since violence frequently stems from an environment that fosters poverty, unemployment, structural racism, trauma, and disadvantage, it is important that solutions be targeted towards these structural dividers.[5] The breadth of an undertaking such as this highlights the needs for a comprehensive strategic plan to address the ***complex problems of teen dating violence and youth violence*** in Houston.

Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) helps provide an introduction to youth violence in Houston.[8]

Table I: YRBS Data – 2017, Houston, TX, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey[8]			
Indicator	Houston (2017)	Texas (2017)	United States (2017)
Carried a weapon	14%	16.5%	15.7
Carried a weapon on school property	3.3%	Not Available	3.8%
Were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property	7%	7.4%	6%
Were in a physical fight	24.7%	20.9%	23.6%
Were in a physical fight on school property	8.9%	Not Available	8.5%
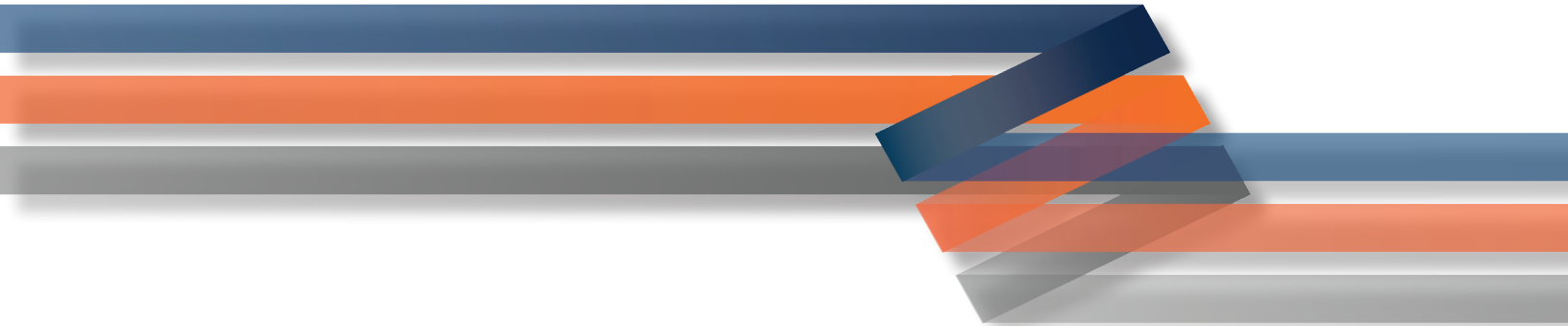
Teen Dating Violence

Teen dating violence is a form of youth violence that occurs between two people in a close relationship.
It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual.[7] Nationally, 33% of teens have been victims of
relationship violence, with a similar number reportedly committing dating violence.[30] Like youth violence,
teen dating violence can have short- and long-term effects, including adverse outcomes such as increased
sexual risk taking, suicidal behavior, adverse mental health outcomes, and substance use.[7] Both males and
females experience and execute teen dating violence throughout relationships. Research varies on the
frequency of victimization. Some research indicates that girls experience a higher rate of victimization,
while other research displays a similar rate of victimization among boys and girls. However, females tend to
experience more severe physical and sexual victimization.[8] Youth who experience teen dating violence also
have a higher victimization of other forms of violence as they enter adulthood.[7]

Teen dating violence is another robust problem in Houston. The YRBS reveals that Houston teenagers
experienced physical dating violence at a rate higher than the national and state average in 2015.[8] Similar
trends were identified for youth who were forced to have sexual intercourse.[8] This corresponds with Harris
County's reporting of the highest amount of cases in the state for adult domestic violence.[9, 10]

"A lot of times we don't know that violence is unacceptable because it happens at home and it doesn't seem wrong."

Table II: Teen Dating Violence[8]

Indicator	Houston (2017)	Texas (2017)	United States (2017)
Were ever forced to have sexual intercourse	10.1%	10.4%	.4%
Experienced physical dating violence	9.4%	7.1%	8%
Experienced sexual dating violence	5.6%	6.1%	6.9%

Gang Violence

Gang violence refers mostly to the illegal and non-political acts of violence perpetrated by gangs against property, ordinary people, or members of other gangs. [32] In some gangs, violence is expected from members.[31] Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo says that the majority of violent crime in Houston is committed by documented gang members.[12]

In Houston, a lot of the youth gang violence stems from gangs and cliques across different communities and neighborhoods. Crimes center on shootings, robberies, burglaries, and jugging, as well as controlling drug territory, prostitution, and immigrants. Organizations tend to recruit youth from schools, apartments, and sometimes parks.[36]

In recent years, social media has played a growing role in gang organization activity. This includes live streaming gang activities. For example, the use of Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and Facebook have created new avenues to threaten and intimidate others, creating acts of ongoing violence.[36]

Gang involved youth are more likely to engage in substance use and high risk sexual behaviors, both of which can result in long-term health and social consequences such as teen pregnancy, delinquency, dropping out of school, and decreases the likelihood of "favorable life-course outcomes.[13]" While gang involvement directly impacts youth, there is also an impact on society. Communities with high rates of gang violence experience a poorer quality of life due to crime and victimization, and are impacted economically as property values decrease and families leave gang-ridden neighborhoods.[13]

Gangs can be attractive to youth for a myriad of reasons:

- **Economics** – The promise of material reward is a significant attraction for youth who join gangs.[15]
- **A support system and sense of belonging** – Some youth perceive gangs as a substitute family.[15]
- **Protection** – Many youth believe that gang membership will protect them from violence in school or the community. Girls who experience physical or sexual abuse at home may believe that being in a gang offers them protection.[15]
- **Status** – Gangs may be viewed as a way to increase status among peers. Through gang membership, they often feel a sense of respect, love, and power.[15]
- **Outlaw mentality** – Many youth want to rebel against traditional societal values.[15]

Similar to other forms of violence, risk factors can play a role in the likelihood of youth's involvement in gangs. Within the community, risk factors include social disorganization, the presence of gangs in the neighborhood, availability of drugs in the neighborhood, conflict with social control institutions, and lack of social capital, among others.[14, 16]

"Approximately 20,000 gang members, belonging to at least 300 gangs, live in the Houston region.[11]"

-Multi-Agency Gang Task Force

Structural Violence

Structural violence refers to a social arrangement that put individuals and populations in harm's way.[33] The Prevention Institute recommends looking at structural violence through the lens of the Adverse Community Experiences framework.[5] This framework highlights three components or symptoms:

- The social-cultural environment[5]
  - The elevation of destructive, dislocating social norms
  - A low sense of political and social efficacy
- The physical/built environment[5]
  - Unhealthy products, such as high volumes of stores selling alcohol in some communities
  - Deteriorated environments and unhealthy, often dangerous public spaces with a crumbling built environment
- The economic environment[5]
  - Intergenerational poverty
  - Long-term unemployment
  - Disinvestment in community

During a focus group with young men of color in northeast Houston, participants explored their experiences with structural violence by noting that the "police don't drive through [my neighborhood]," or they "don't feel safe when I'm walking [in my community]." Others try to find a balance by saying that while the "Family Dollar store gets robbed almost every weekend, they don't break into houses and apartments and they don't take nobody's car and they don't set nobody's house on fire."

Students also express frustration with unequitable opportunity in relation to the school system. This was done through claims such as, "my GPA was 1.7 and I still graduated so you know it's poor down here." Some youth also talked about their teachers. Students perceived a serious lack of care and concern on the teacher's part, claiming that teachers were unmotivated, gave up on students easily, don't take teaching seriously, and weren't invested in the student's future. Much of the student's dissatisfaction may be related to a lack of resources in high risk schools and communities.

Throughout the focus group, youth expressed a desire to have easier access to healthy food; improvements in the buildings in their neighborhood, including relocating people to better housing for a higher standard of living; and more businesses in the community that could increase opportunities for employment and improve the community's economy.
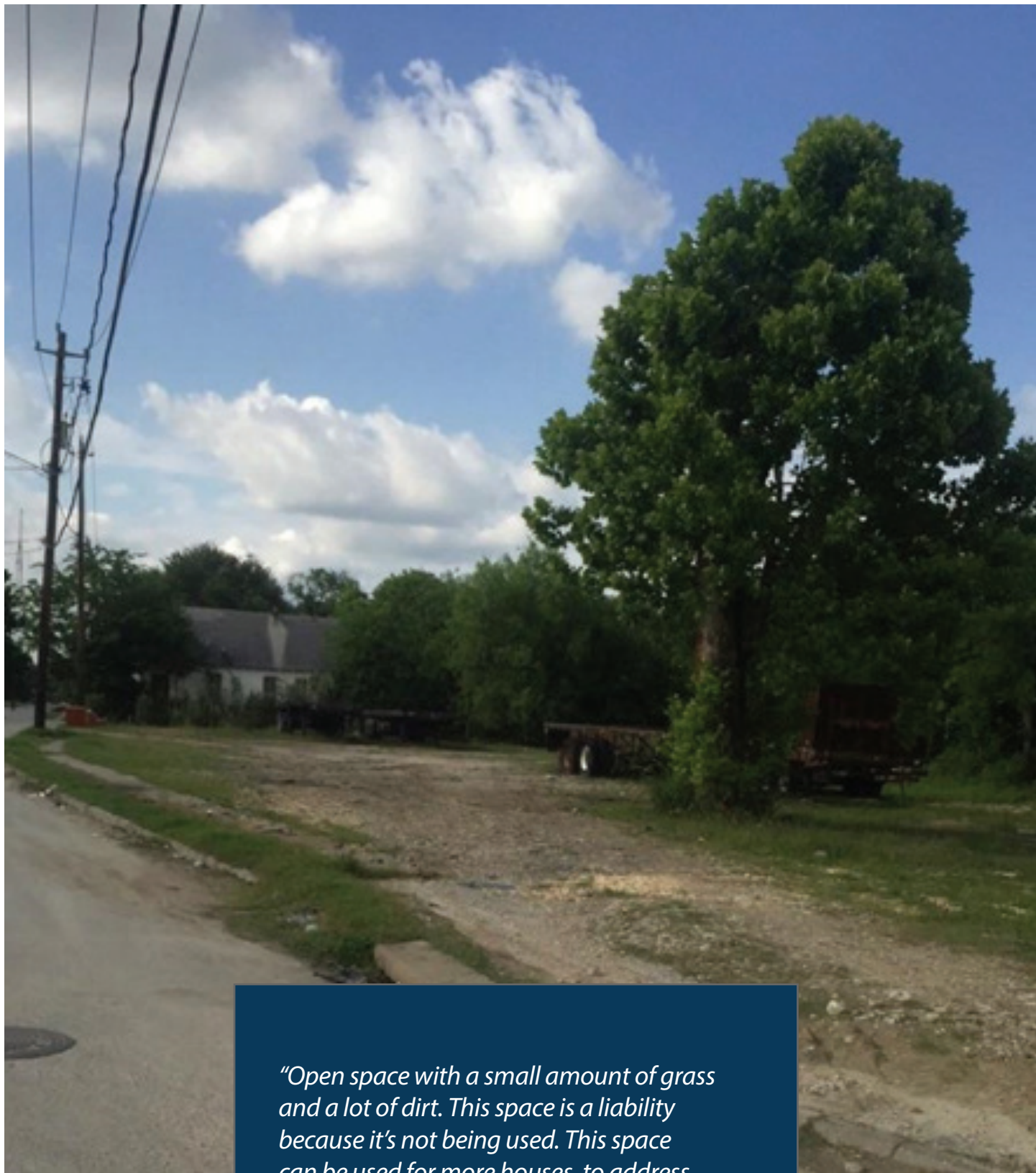
"Open space with a small amount of grass and a lot of dirt. This space is a liability because it's not being used. This space can be used for more houses, to address homelessness, or build a small store."

-Senior, Barbara Jordan High School

Gun Violence

Gun violence is a rapidly growing concern across towns and communities in the United States. On average, 96 Americans are killed by a gun on a daily basis.[17]

Gun violence among adolescents is also a concern. **Youth gun violence occurs when a gun or firearm is present in the process of a youth (ages 10-24) intentionally using force or power to threaten or harm others.** Gun violence can result in homicides (victimization and perpetration), nonfatal injuries, suicides, community violence, and school violence/school shootings.[18] On average, 47 children and teens are shot every day.[19]

Gun violence among adolescents is broad and generally broken into several categories, including:

- **Gun Homicide** – Nationally, homicide is one of the leading causes of death among adolescents, and firearms are the main form of murder weapon, accounting for 86% of homicides. Youth homicide victims are more likely to be 15 – 24 years old, male, African-American or Hispanic, and live in urban areas.[18]

- **Gun Suicide** – Suicide is another leading cause of death in youth 10 to 24 years old. Approximately two-thirds of suicides are carried out with a firearm.[18]

- **Community Gun Violence** –Youth can be exposed to gun violence via victimization or perpetration, and can also be exposed to gun violence by witnessing it in their communities. Although youth exposure to shootings is generally low, youth have a greater likelihood of exposure in urban areas. It's important to note that the influx of school shootings in recent years has greatly increased youth exposure to shootings and firearms.[18]
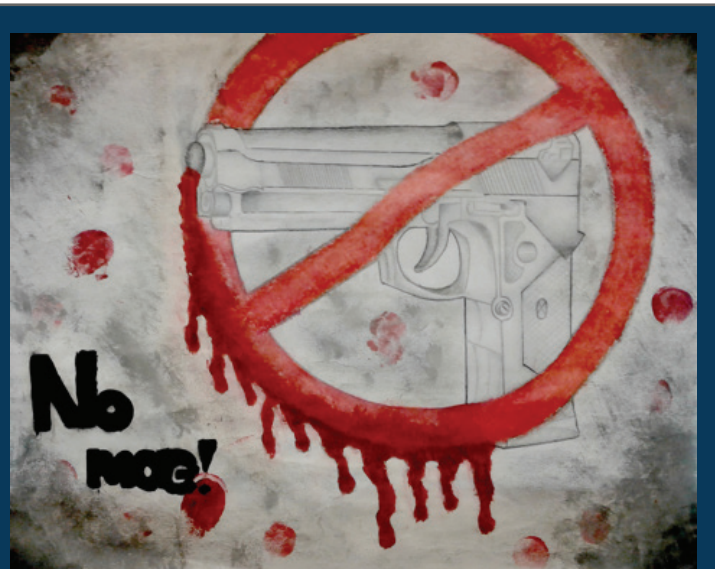
"The purpose of my art piece is to give the allusion of gun violence that is happening all around the U.S. The gray shading in each of the four corners and making its way into the gun shows the darkness and pain every individual suffers when they go through a tragic loss. The red violet color, that is "dripping" from the prohibition sign gives the viewer a sense of what a fire arm could cause, which is blood loss. The "No more!" words on the art piece is what I believe should be done. No more gun violence, no more lives taken away from this earth due to a weapon used for the wrong purpose.... Stop the gun violence!"

Gustavo Coronado

Research surrounding gun violence is limited. Several risk factors are thought to be associated with gun violence, including exposure to violence and access/availability firearms.[18]

There is also limited research on protective factors for guns. The two factors that have been shown to have a slight impact on youth gun violence is parent connectedness and school connectedness. Parents and families can help limit access to firearms by ensuring that any in-house firearms are properly secured and away from youth.[18]

Gun access and gun laws vary significantly by state. In Texas, the following gun laws exist.

Overview of Texas Gun Laws

YES   NO

✅	Are background checks required for all handgun sales?
✅	Are prohibited domestic abusers required to turn in their guns?
✅	Is it required to have a permit to carry a concealed handgun in public?
✅	Is hands-on safety training required to carry a concealed handgun in public?

Table III: 2017 YRBS Data[8]			
	Houston (2017)	Texas (2017)	United States (2017)
Carried A Gun (on at least 1 day during the 12 months before the survey, not counting the days when they carried a gun only for hunting or for a sport such as target shooting)	8.4%	5.9%	4.8%

School Based Violence

For many adolescents, violence may be observed within the school. **School violence is one of the many subsets of youth violence. It includes acts of violence that can disrupt the learning process and have a negative effect on students, the school itself, and the broader community.**[22] Violence that manifests within schools varies. It can include acts such as bullying, pushing, and shoving, which cause more emotional harm than physical harm, but can also include acts such as gang violence and assault, which can lead to more serious injuries.[22]

In recent years, school violence has become synonymous with school shootings. A result of the recurrence of horrific mass shootings at schools such as Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas. Despite these horrendous occurrences, it is important to note that schools are relatively safe. For every shooting in a school, there are 1600+ outside of schools, and a person is 200 times more likely to fall victim to gun violence within a home than on a school campus.[21]

According to the U.S. Department of Justice Nation Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), total victimization in schools, which includes theft and nonfatal violent victimization, has continued a downward trend since 1992, with 29 victimizations per 1,000 students in the 2016 school year. The rate of serious violent victimization against students ages 12–18 was lower at school than away from school in most survey years between 1992 and 2008 and in 2016.[21]

Some schools still have taken a hardened approach to school safety, through enforcing metal detectors, implementing active shooter drills, and increasing police presence on campus.[21] Schools have also enforced zero-tolerance policies that are likely to contribute to the school to prison pipeline and often do not address the underlying reasons for student misbehavior.[23]

The public health approach encourages the use of universal school-based violence prevention programs instead of potentially harmful school hardening and zero-tolerance measures.[24] Often, classroom teachers do not receive adequate training on proactive measures to reduce youth violence in schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 2015–2016 School Survey on Crime and Safety, only 53.4% of teachers say they've received any training on "intervention and referral strategies for students with signs of mental health disorders," and even fewer report training on "recognizing early warning signs of students likely to exhibit violent behavior.[21] " In order to prevent school violence, resources must be dedicated to training school staff on how to meaningfully assess threats of violence through research-based methods such as the Virginia Student Threat Assessment Model.[25] Schools should have personnel in place who can intervene and counsel students who might be exhibiting early warning signs. And, school climate surveys should be regularly administered to keep a running measure of how conected students and teachers are feeling to their campus at large.[25] The development of these various approaches indicates that there are continuous opportunities to prevent school violence and enhance school safety.

Table IV : YRBS Data – 2017, Houston, TX, High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey[8]			
Indicator	Houston (2017)	Texas (2017)	United States (2017)
Carried a weapon on school property	3.3%	Not Available	3.8%
Were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property	7%	7.4%	6%
Were in a physical fight on school property	8.9%	Not Available	8.5%

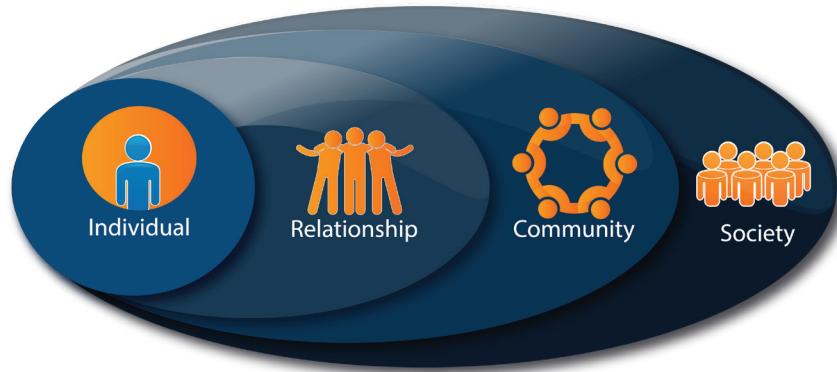# City Response Strategy: Framework & Methodology

Figure 3. the Socio Ecological Model

Houston Peace is rooted in addressing youth violence with a public health approach through use of the socioecological model.[26] The public health approach acknowledges that youth violence is a **public health issue.**[27] According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), youth violence can be reduced through a four-step public health approach that includes[27]:

1. Defining and Monitoring the Problem
2. Identifying Risk and Protective Factors
3. Developing and Testing Prevention Strategies
4. Assuring Widespread Adoption of Prevention Strategies

The socio-ecological model is highly integrated into the public health approach to better understand violence and effect of potential prevention strategies.[26] The socio-ecological model allows for the consideration of the multifaceted relationship between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors.[26]

It is evident by the overlapping rings indicated in the model above, that the various levels influence each other. This highlights the reality that to successfully target youth violence, it is important to work across multiple levels concurrently. It is also important to note that these levels correspond with the levels outlined for risk and protective factors.

Levels of the Socio-Ecological Model[26]

Individual	The first level identifies biological and personal history factors that increase the likelihood of being a victim or perpetrator of violence. Some of these factors are age, education, income, substance use, or history abuse. Prevention strategies at this level are often designed to promote attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that ultimately prevent violence.
Relationship	The second level examines close relationships that may increase the risk of experiencing violence as a victim or perpetrator. A person's closest social circle of peers, partners, and family members, influences their behavior and contributes to their range of experience. Prevention strategies at this level may include parenting or family-focused prevention programs, and mentoring and peer programs designed to reduce conflict, foster problem-solving skills, and promote healthy relationships.
Community	The third level explores the settings, such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods, in which social relationships occur; and seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that are associated with becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. Prevention strategies at this level are typically designed to impact the social and physical environment – for example, by reducing social isolation, improving economic and housing opportunities in neighborhoods, and address the climate, processes, and policies within school and workplace settings
Societal	The fourth level looks at the broad societal factors that help create a climate in which violence is encouraged or inhibited. These factors include social and cultural norms that support violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflicts. Other large societal factors include the health, economic, educational and social policies that help to maintain economic or social inequalities between groups in society.

Source: CDC, The Social-Ecological Model: A Framework for Prevention, Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/overview/social-ecologicalmodel.html

It is important to emphasize that public health differs from traditional medical healthcare in that it focuses on the population, as opposed to the individual. It acknowledges the importance of addressing risk factors for individuals, but highlights that addressing risk factors at the societal or community level allows programs and interventions to have a greater reach.

Methodology

Using these frameworks, Houston engaged youth, key local and national youth violence prevention experts, law enforcement, education, faith-based, juvenile justice, victim services, mental health, and other community based organizations to examine the scope of the problem of youth violence, explore evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies for prevention, and make recommendations for a coordinated action plan to prevent youth violence in Houston.

Exploring the Data

From January through December 2016, there were 302 murders in the City of Houston.[6] Of these murders, 108 or 36% occurred among youth ages 10-24.[7] The Houston Police Department (HPD) Crime Analysis Unit reviewed 2016 adolescent violent crime data and identified ten zip codes that had the highest count of youth involvement in homicide. These zip codes were used as the preface to the work outlined in **Houston Peace.** More information on these zip codes can be found in the appendix.

The following ten zip codes had the highest counts of youth involvement in homicide:

1. 77036	5. 77060	9. 77035
2. 77081	6. 77028	10. 77088
3. 77072	7. 77051	
4. 77016	8. 77053	

After mapping the zip codes with the highest rates of youth violence, the Houston Police Department facilitated ride-along experiences with patrol officers for stakeholders from health, education, public works, juvenile justice, the courts, and faith- and community-based organizations within the target or active zip codes.

Convening Stakeholders

In February 2017, the Houston Youth Justice Council collaborated with an array of organizations to discuss the need and development of a comprehensive youth violence prevention strategic plan. During the work sessions, participants and leaders in various sectors reviewed current data on the prevalence of youth violence in Houston, reviewed mission statements, and developed key strategies for the plan focused on preventing youth violence, promoting youth health, and providing youth opportunities.

A similar work session was conducted with Houston youth. During the session, youth provided their feedback on their experiences with different forms of violence and the impact on their lives. Youth also provided constructive feedback for mechanisms to prevent youth violence, the majority of which were targeted at dismantling structural violence.

Members of both work sessions represented the following sectors.

- Academic Institutions
- Anti-Gang Organizations
- Mental Health Organizations
- Youth
- Workforce Development Programs
- Local School Districts

- Youth Enhancement Programs
- County Juvenile Justice Systems
- Local and County Law Enforcement
- Local Government
- Community Members

Future work sessions will strive to include a more robust representation of sectors, including victim services and substance abuse.

Guiding Principles

1

Youth Voice

When youth engagement and leadership is at its highest level, programs are more innovative, responsive, and targeted. We acknowledge the value of having youth involved in developing solutions, and furthermore, that youth voice allows for adolescents to build a platform to inform, lead, and manage community solutions.

2

Equity

Most of the communities addressed in this plan are victims of structural violence. By helping to minimize some of this structural violence, communities will gradually become more equitable.

3

Existing Resources

Houston is vast. It is important to ensure that existing resources are being utilized to effectively prevent youth violence. The utilization of these resources further solidifies the comprehensiveness of the plan.

4

Prevention

We acknowledge that prevention is a core component of the public health approach to youth violence. This means that the goal is to reach individuals, families, and communities before violence happens. However, prevention can also include addressing violence as it happens to produce a more positive outcome, or assisting those who have committed crimes with resources and opportunities to prevent recidivism.

5

National Standards

Several goals and objectives are mirrored off existing national goals outlined in Healthy People 2020. By paralleling these objectives, we aim to garner support for Houston Peace at the local, state, and national level.

Active Zip Codes for Youth Violence Prevention

Active Approach

To prioritize areas of need for this initial approach, the Houston Health Department reviewed data from HPD on part 1 violent crimes that involved adolescents as either a suspect or complainant. Part 1 violent crime includes murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. After narrowing down the top 10 zip codes, five zip codes were selected for active approaches based on youth violence, existing resources, and capacity.

These zip codes are:

77035
77051
77053
77072
77088

Several of the high schools that serve students who reside in these zip codes, will implement curriculum for the next three years focused on healthy relationships and crime deterrence.

An overview of these active areas is outlined below.

Table V: Demographics of Active Areas, 2017 Estimates[1]						
Zip Code	Neighborhood	Educational Attainment (% high school graduate or higher)	Unemployment Rate	Median Household Income	No Health Insurance	Owner Occupied Housing Units
77035	Willow Meadows/ Willowbend/ Westbury	72.9%	6.7%	$44,546	30.1%	41.2%
77051	Sunnyside	77.8%	21.3%	$26,960	23.9%	40.6%
77053	Fort Bend/ Houston/ Southwest Houston	68%	9%	$45,953	27.5%	65.7%
77072	Alief	61.9%	32.3%	$39,103	32.3%	47.5%
77088	Greater Inwood /Acres Home/ Hidden Valley	70%	27.2%	$42,278	27.1%	62.1%
COH	COH	77.4%	5%	$47,010	25.3%	43.2%

The crime prevention component will be addressed through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED is a multi-disciplinary approach to enhancing community safety through modifying the environment in ways that lessen or prevent crimes. The approach uses design principles to increase visibility, maximize public activities, and make it more difficult for crime and violence victimization to occur. Some overarching activities used in CPTED projects include:

- Raising awareness of crime prevention and safety

- Promoting the value of CPTED through grassroots techniques and civic engagement

- Completing beautification projects with maintenance plans to heighten community ownership

- Improving the standards and quality of environment in neighborhoods

Healthy relationships will be highlighted through the implementation of Fourth R, an evidence based program. Fourth R is a health education curriculum that promotes protective factors for teen dating and youth violence at the individual level. It is designed to teach students how to promote and foster healthy relationships. A few CPTED sessions will be integrated into the Fourth R curriculum to support the youth crime and violence prevention component.

This work is supported by the CDC Preventing Teen Dating and Youth Violence by Addressing Shared Risk and Protective Factors funding source. This cooperative agreement was preceded by HHD work through the STRYVE grant, also funded by the CDC. STRYVE served to guide communities affected by violence to facilitate comprehensive evidence-based strategies addressing youth violence. The bulk of this work was conducted in the Sunnyside Super Neighborhood. An overview of the strategies implemented through STRYVE is available in the appendix.

While this plan exists for the totality of Houston, it is important to note that these two select approaches are occurring in active areas. These approaches are evidence-based and curriculum driven, meaning that they are based on models that have been demonstrated to be effective and are integrated into classroom curriculums. This approach will not inhibit HHD from contributing other forms of assets, such as human resources and youth violence prevention capacity, into work conducted outside of the active areas.

Overview of Goals

Promote Youth Health

Prevent Youth Violence

Provide Youth Opportunities

To ensure that ***youth are safe, healthy, and have hope for the future,*** three goals were identified to best address the risk and protective factors that surround youth violence. These goals and their corresponding objectives and activities are the direct result of the strategic plan work sessions.

All of the associated objectives and activities are linked with corresponding risk and protective factors to ensure that root causes are being addressed. Objectives are also aligned with Healthy People 2020 to link local goals with those at the national level.

Goal 1: Prevent Youth Violence

Youth violence is a significant problem for Houston. It's also a problem that can have a long-lasting impact. This goal works to address the varying forms of youth violence, at the various levels of the socio-ecological model. The goal also acknowledges that there is a need to successfully address violence beyond prevention, and incorporates intervention and re-entry components. Perhaps most impactfully, this goal champions the need for collaboration to ensure successful and comprehensive violence prevention efforts.

Relevant indicators to help gauge the success of Goal 1: Prevent Youth Violence include:

- Percentage of respondents who perceive a decrease in youth violence
- Perceptions of youth regarding teen dating violence
- Perceptions of respondents who perceive an improvement in their structural environment
- Heightened community knowledge about gun safety
- Awareness and understanding of teen dating violence and how to prevent it
- Heightened community connectedness
- Increased capacity among partners and stakeholders to effectively address youth violence
- Awareness and engagement for working with victims of violence and teen dating violence
- Number of organizations, businesses, city departments, and foundations that formally agree to support violence prevention efforts in Houston

Current Resources/Assets:

- Evidence-based interventions
- CDC tools on youth violence, teen dating violence, and risk and protective factors
- Partners to help distribute resources and materials
- Collaborating partners
- Houston Youth Violence Prevention Coalition
- Youth Justice Council

Resources Needed:

- Collaborating partners
- Human and/or capital assistance
- Community feedback
- Staff to assist with the development and implementation of policy or procedures to minimize community and societal risk factors
- Ways to communicate outcomes to the public
- More opportunities for citizens to become familiarized with the goal of preventing youth violence

Goal 1: Prevent Youth Violence

Objective 1.1: Increase awareness of teen dating violence, as it relates to sexual violence, psychological violence, physical violence, and emotional violence in active communities by 2021. The baseline will be established in the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: Reduce violence by current or former intimate partners
Lead Partner:	**Risk Factors:** poor behavioral control/impulsiveness, lack of non-violent problem-solving skills; witnessing violence; history of violent victimization	**Protective Factors:** Skills in problem solving non-violently	**Socio-ecological level:** Individual
Support Partners: University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB); Crime-Stoppers; Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse; Youth Violence Prevention Coalition			

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Implement Fourth R at high schools in communities with high rates of adolescent violence. Fourth R is an evidence based curriculum designed to teach youth how to develop healthy relationships.	# of youth served
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Inform youth about teen dating violence through social and multimedia campaigns focused on increasing education and crime reduction.	# of youth served
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Support enforcement of Texas Education Code 37.0831 (Teen Dating Violence Policy) in local schools by highlighting the policy in district's code of conduct.	# of schools who highlight the code in their code of conduct

Objective 1.2: Decrease perceptions of community disorganization and unsafe communities among youth in active communities by 2021. The baseline will be established in the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: Reduce adolescent and young adult perpetration of, and victimization by, crimes
Lead Partner: HHD	**Risk Factors:** poor neighborhood support and cohesion	**Protective Factors:** community support/ connectedness	**Socio-ecological level:** Individual, community, and societal
Support Partners: Teen and Police Service Academy (TAPS), HPD, Houston Police Athletic League (PALS); Complete Communities			

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Create positive interactions between youth and law enforcement through programs, such as TAPS Academy.	# of youth interacted
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Pilot an extended curriculum for Texas Senate Bill 30, the Community Safety Education Act in the greater Houston area. Texas Senate Bill 30 focuses on the development and introduction of a mandatory curriculum to educate public school students, drivers' education students, and peace officers on interactions between civilians and peace officers.	# of youth who receive the pilot curriculum # of peace officers who receive the pilot curriculum
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Ensure that students can walk and bike safely to school by encouraging infrastructure improvements and creating safe streets	# of policy recommendations
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Engage youth in community improvement activities through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED is an evidence-based program.	# of youth engaged
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Work to create beautiful communities by decreasing illegal dumping, maintaining vacant lots, and organizing clean-ups	# of projects completed focus community beautification
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Spread arts and culture across the community by expanding public art, and hosting celebrations and events	# of new public art fixtures
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Provide well-lit streets by creating partnerships to repair broken lights and identify areas in need of additional streetlighting	# of new light fixtures

Objective 1.3: Increase youth involvement in youth violence and teen dating violence prevention activities by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: Increase the proportion of adolescents who participate in extracurricular and/or out of school activities
Lead Partner: Boys and Girls Club-Greater Houston **Support Partners:** HPD Youth Advisory Council (YPAC); Mayor's Youth Council; YMCA of Greater Houston	**Risk Factors:** social isolation/lack of social support	**Protective Factors:** association with pro-social peers	**Socio-ecological level:** Relationship

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Engage the Houston Police Youth Advisory Council in new and existing work centered on teen dating and youth violence.	# of youth engaged
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Engage the Mayor's Youth Council in new and existing work centered on teen dating and violence.	# of youth engaged
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Encourage youth to sign pledge to engage in youth objectives	# of youth who complete pledge
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Inform youth about teen dating violence through social and multimedia campaigns focused on increasing education and crime reduction.	# of youth reached

Objective 1.4: Build local capacity to address youth violence and teen dating violence by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: N/A
Lead Partner: Youth Violence Prevention Coalition	**Risk Factors:** N/A	**Protective Factors:** N/A	**Socio-ecological level:** Community
Support Partners: HHD; Mayor's Office; Public Works and Engineering (PWE); Complete Communities			

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Build capacity amongst youth serving organizations to better prevent youth violence and teen dating violence through trainings, informational sessions, and opportunities to collaborate.	% of capacity increase
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Develop a list of available trainings for internal and external stakeholders and train staff in methods to prevent youth violence and teen dating violence.	#of staff trained
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Hold community forums to promote youth violence prevention	# of community dialogues in high violence areas.
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Disseminate Houston Peace throughout various Houston neighborhoods.	# of plans distributed
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Develop public safety campaigns that eliminate barriers to reporting local crime	# of campaigns developed
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Create safe and secure neighborhoods by working in partnership with the Houston Police Department and other law enforcement agencies to increase the visibility of patrols, including in area apartment complexes, addressing gangs, gun violence, and loitering in public places	% increase in perception of neighborhood safety

Objective 1.5: Increase the capacity for rehabilitation opportunities instead of punishment at schools and in community-based settings by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: N/A
Lead Partner: **Support Partners:** HHD; Mayor's Office; HISD; HCJPD; reVision	**Risk Factors:** social isolation/lack of social support; lack of non-violent social problem solving skills	**Protective Factors:** skills in solving problems non-violently; community support; coordination of resources and services among community agencies	**Socio-ecological level:** Community

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Build capacity for schools with high low-level offenses to develop a juvenile Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program	# of staff trained in LEAD
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Support the development of school policy to provide opportunities for rehabilitation and mediation instead of punishment, such as the juvenile LEAD program	# of policy changes

Objective 1.6: Provide opportunities for youth previously involved in the justice system to decrease the likelihood of violence to reoccur by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: N/A
Lead Partner: Youth Justice Council **Support Partners:** HHD; Mayor's Office; HISD, reVision; HISD PD; MBK; ReDirect; Community Re-entry Program Network	**Risk Factors:** lack of social and family support, lack of employment opportunities	**Protective Factors:** support from community organizations, teachers, family, religious organizations	**Socio-ecological level:** Community

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Expand the existing juvenile diversion program, ReDirect, to target a larger audience.	# of individuals who go through the juvenile diversion/re-entry program
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Ensure that students are promptly (within 3 school days) enrolled in school following release from a juvenile justice facility	# of youth that re-enter an educational program after involvement in a juvenile justice facility

Objective 1.7: Enhance youth prevention and intervention level activities for gang involvement by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: Decrease the proportion of secondary students who report the presence of youth gangs at school during the school year
Lead Partner: **Support Partners:** TAPS; HPD; Parks and Recreation; Mayor's Office; Multi-Agency Gang Task Force; Anti-Gang Office; PVAMU;	**Risk Factors:** poor neighborhood support and cohesion, gang involvement, family conflict, witnessing violence	**Protective Factors:** community support/ connectedness	**Socio-ecological level:** individual, relationship, and community
Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)			**Performance Measure**
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Implement after hours programming for youth in areas with high rates of gang violence.		# of afterhours programs available in active areas
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Conduct education for parents, law enforcement, schools, etc., on how to recognize gang violence, ways to prevent gang violence and gang methods of recruitment.		# of educational courses offered

Objective 1.8: Increase implementation of violence-prevention trainings and policies across school districts by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: N/A
Lead Partner: Youth Violence Prevention Coalition **Support Partners:** HHD; HISD; Youth Violence Prevention Coalition; Crime Stoppers	**Risk Factors:** N/A	**Protective Factors:** support from community organizations, teachers, family, religious organizations	**Socio-ecological level:** community
Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)			**Performance Measure**
☐ Active ■ City-Wid	Increase school district's capacity to incorporate school campus climate assessment		# of campus climate assessments completed
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Elevate students' needs to improve campus safety		# of schools with threat assessment policies
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Adaptation of threat assessments in schools as a means of prevention		# of schools with threat assessment policies

Goal 2: Promote Youth Health

Youth are in a critical period of rapid biological and socio-emotional development in which they gain independence, take risks and form behaviors that carry into adulthood. This goal is intended to provide youth with opportunities to develop healthy behaviors surrounding their physical, mental, and behavioral health choices. Like the previous goal, this goal also supports comprehensive and collaborative efforts. While health professionals can serve as a great resource for helping to address the health needs of adolescents, numerous other stakeholders and partners can also support this work.

Relevant indicators to help gauge the success of Goal 2: Promote Youth Health include:

- Increased health literacy

- Heightened perceptions by adolescent stakeholders and youth-serving organizations about the importance of adolescent health

- Number of youth who have completed their annual wellness visit through city programs

- Alcohol outlet density in select neighborhoods

Current Resources/Assets:

- Opportunities to gather youth serving and health related organizations

- Youth feedback

- Partners to distribute relevant material

- Collaborating partners

- Consistent implementation of the YRBS for updated and regular health information on Houston adolescents

- Adaption and implementation of substance abuse prevention curriculums

Resources Needed:

- Human and/or capital assistance

- Staff to assist with the development and implementation of policy or procedures to minimize community and societal risk factors

- Collaborating partners

- Ways to communicate outcomes to the public

- More opportunities for citizens to become familiar with the goal of promoting youth health and it's relation to youth violence prevention.

Goal #2: Promote Youth Health

Objective 2.1: Increase the percentage of youth completing their annual wellness visits at partner schools by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			**Related Healthy People 2020 Objective:** Increase the proportion of adolescents who have had a wellness visit in the past 12 months
Lead Partner: HHD **Support Partners:** HISD	**Risk Factors:** N/A	**Protective Factors:** N/A	**Socio-ecological level:** Individual

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Refer students to youth friendly clinics.	# of youth referred
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Implement social media campaigns targeted at increasing healthcare utilization among adolescents and dispelling myths around healthcare.	# of youth reached
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Participate in events that increase awareness of safety net providers and alternative clinics (i.e., mobile clinics).	# of events
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Implement a health literacy curriculum such as Nemours	# of students who receive curriculum
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Promote healthy children and families through enhanced access to preventative and primary healthcare and affordable health insurance through expanding health insurance coverage	% change of residents with health insurance
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Educate youth on the risk of not having an annual exam	# of students educated

Objective 2.2: Increase the number of youth who receive information on substance use prevention by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			**Related Healthy People 2020 Objective:** N/A
Lead Partner: **Support Partners:** North Harris County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition	**Risk Factors:** substance use	**Protective Factors:** access to mental health and substance abuse services	**Socio-ecological level:** Individual

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Conduct workshops on substance use and provide tools for prevention.	# of youth referred
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Navigate uninsured families through the insurance enrollment process	# of families enrolled

Objective 2.3: Increase active communities access to fresh and healthy foods by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.				Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: N/A
Lead Partner:	**Risk Factors:** N/A		**Protective Factors:** N/A	**Socio-ecological level:** Community
Support Partners: HHD; Complete Communities; Houston Food Bank				

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Develop criteria for healthy food displays in corner stores	# stores with implemented criteria
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Incentivize the display and/or purchase of health food choices	# of stores operating with incentives
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Participate and enhance existing gardens	% increase in community engagement in community gardens

Objective 2.4: Increase access to mental health supports by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.				Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: Increase the proportion of children with mental health problems who receive treatment
Lead Partner:	**Risk Factors:** N/A		**Protective Factors:** N/A	**Socio-ecological level:** Community
Support Partners: HHD; HISD; Mental Health America; Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD				

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Educate families that mental health services are normally available through health insurances	# of families educated
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Navigate uninsured families through the insurances enrollment process	# of families enrolled
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Reduce stigma surrounding mental health needs and services	# of individuals educated
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Encourage mental health providers to accept governmental health insurance	# of mental health providers that accept government insurance

Goal 3: Provide Youth Opportunities

Providing youth with opportunities can drastically alter the path of youth. It can help reduce their likelihood of engaging in violence, provide them with workforce training opportunities, and enhance their likelihood to complete secondary education. Strategies in this goal focus on providing youth in active communities with equitable opportunities. Houston Peace calls for the strengthening of educational opportunities and workforce opportunities. These opportunities allow youth to develop and increase protective factors at various levels.

Relevant indicators to help gauge the success of Goal 3: Promote Youth Opportunities include:

- Employment rate of active neighborhoods

Current Resources/Assets:

- Youth feedback
- Partners to distribute relevant material and conduct programs/interventions
- Community organizations that work with youth

Resources Needed:

- Human and/or capital assistance
- Staff to assist with the development and implementation of policy or procedures to minimize community and societal risk factors
- Collaborating partners

Goal #3: Provide Youth Opportunities

Objective 3.1: Increase quality education for learners of all ages by expanding supportive resources for students at area schools, including out of school enrichment and college and career readiness programs, and increasing access to high quality early childcare by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.	**Related Healthy People 2020 Objective:** N/A

Lead Partner:	**Risk Factors:** Low commitment to school and school failure	**Protective Factors:** Exposure to school climates with the following characteristics: intensive supervision, clear behavior rules, consistent negative reinforcement of aggression, engagement of parents and teachers	**Socio-ecological level:** Societal
Support Partners: Complete Communities; MBK; Houston Public Library			

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Develop strong school-community partnerships by improving communication between schools, parents, and other partners working together to enhance student success	# of partnerships
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Create a knowledge community by expanding adult education programs, resources, and programs at the neighborhood library, and by sharing resources between community and higher education facilities.	% increase of programs at neighborhood libraries
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Increase access to high quality and affordable early childcare	% increase in childcare access

Objective 3.2: Increase the number of opportunities for workforce development and job readiness training for youth in MBK and Complete Community areas by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			**Related Healthy People 2020 Objective:** Increase the proportion of adolescents who participate in extracurricular and/or out of school activities
Lead Partner: **Support Partners:** SER Jobs for Progress; Workforce Solutions; Hire Houston Youth; City of Houston;	**Risk Factors:** societal income inequity, diminished economic opportunities/high unemployment rate	**Protective Factors:** involvement in prosocial activities	**Socio-ecological level:** Individual, societal

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		**Performance Measure**
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Conduct workforce development trainings.	# of trainings
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	increase the number of job opportunities for youth in active communities	% increase of jobs
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Refer youth to existing stakeholders for workforce development information.	# of referrals
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Continue implementation of the Mayor's Summer Job Program.	# of youth hired
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Identify agencies capable of hiring and training youth in their communities	# of agencies identified
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Educate workforce providers to be sensitive to the cultural needs of youth through sensitivity trainings	# of workforce providers trained

Objective 3.3 Enhance and improve extracurricular and out of school activities in active communities by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			**Related Healthy People 2020 Objective:** Increase the proportion of adolescents who participate in extracurricular and/or out of school activities
Lead Partner: Boys and Girls Club-Greater Houston **Support Partners:** FWEP; HISD, HHD Youth Hubs	**Risk Factors:** community violence	**Protective Factors:** association with pro-social peers	**Socio-ecological level:** Individual, societal

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Expose and encourage youth to become involved with organizations who offer after school activities.	# of youth reached
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Partner with local organizations to bring extracurricular activities to active communities	% increase of extracurricular activities
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Increase the number of job opportunities for youth in active communities with high rates of youth and teen dating violence.	% increase of jobs
■ Active ■ City-Wide	Offer parks and recreation programming that encourages and supports physical activity	% increase in parks and recreaction programming for adolescents

Objective 3.4 Stimulate economic development in active communities by 2021. The baseline will be established within the first year.			Related Healthy People 2020 Objective: N/A
Lead Partner: Support Partners: Office of Business Opportunity	Risk Factors: societal income inequity; diminished economic opportunities/high unemployment rates; economic stress; neighborhood poverty	Protective Factors: N/A	Socio-ecological level: societal; community

Suggested Strategies (Active Communities or City-Wide)		Performance Measure
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Increase employment opportunities by encouraging employers to offer jobs and job trainings for youth	# of added employment opportunities
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Publicize job opportunities such as the Mayor's Summer Job Program in active communities	% increase of job opportunities advertised
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Expand workforce training and resources by attracting additional job training programs, and by connecting youth to summer jobs and internships	# of training programs
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Create new jobs by attracting new industries in growing sectors of the economy and connecting area youth to job opportunities	#of jobs created
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Support and promote local businesses through events and educational opportunities	# of events
■ Active ☐ City-Wide	Work with the super neighborhood groups and civic clubs to encourage more businesses to move into the target areas	# of businesses moved into target areas

Youth Goals

Objective 1-Youth: Prevent Youth Violence	
Activities (Active Communities or City-Wide)	
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Host regular after-dark programs for peers that focus on positive youth development, such as night basketball
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Create an anti-violence hashtag campaign for you and your friends!

Objective 2-Youth: Promote Youth Health	
Activities (Active Communities or City-Wide)	
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Start a community garden with your friends and family!
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Host an "Ask a Doctor" day at your school or in your community to improve trust with doctor's
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Host a youth centered health fair in your community and share information about adolescent health topics, such as STIs

Objective 3-Youth: Promote Youth Opportunity	
Activities (Active Communities or City-Wide)	
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Start mentoring groups to support younger youth
☐ Active ■ City-Wide	Connect with other youth that are conducting work to support youth

Evaluation Plan

Houston Peace is comprised of strategies that operate independently, while remaining complementary to other activities and objectives occurring concurrently. In addition, independent sectors and programs maintain ownership over different activities. To ensure that implementation of **Houston Peace** follows the project plan and timeline, the team will use a developmental evaluation approach to maintain goals and objectives. Developmental evaluation is a form of evaluation that supports "innovation by collecting and analyzing real-time data in ways that lead to informed and ongoing decision making as part of the design, development, and implementation process.[29]" Furthermore, it allows for a participatory approach to help build relationships, increase capacity, and allow for timely decision-making.[28]

More specific evaluation will be conducted on active approaches, such as those addressing teen dating violence through Fourth R, or those preventing youth violence through the implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design at the community level.

Finally, an accountability system will be used to ensure that individuals, organizations, and sectors maintain fidelity to objectives listed in Houston Peace. **Houston Peace** is a living document and as such allows for modifications as necessary; any changes to activities and objectives will be documented and monitored to ensure that the overarching goals are not impacted. Accountability will be managed by ensuring that metrics are reviewed on a quarterly basis. This quarterly review will also be used to review and evaluate the overarching implementation of the strategic plan. For activities that are not able to produce data on a quarterly basis, material will be produced on a semi-annual calendar. The governance steering committee will receive quarterly reports on implementation, evaluation, metrics, and accountability to aid in their facilitation of the strategic plan.

Capacity & Resources

One of the objectives of **Houston Peace** is to build local capacity to effectively address youth violence and teen dating violence. Increased capacity can help build organizational infrastructure, knowledge, and leadership throughout the community to help implement effective approaches. Increased capacity can also be used to help different systems to collaborate and work across systems. Furthermore, it can help all parties involved understand local youth violence risk and protective approaches, leverage existing resources, and identify new resources.

In order to sustain violence prevention work, the Houston Health Department will prioritize training and capacity building. Training and technical assistance resources will be made available through AIR, Cities United, and local partners. In an effort to build capacity in violence prevention across the community, these resources will be made available to community partners with the support of the Youth Violence Prevention Coalition.

The successful implementation of **Houston Peace** requires the enforcement of several core capacities.

Policy Agenda

The most impactful form of prevention comes from the policy level[37]. This is because policy has a much broader reach than programs that are implemented at schools or in the community. To further buttress the three goals of **Houston Peace**, it is important to have the policy level serve as another component of primary prevention.

The public health approach focuses on addressing the root causes of violence. Root causes include issues associated with the physical/built environment such as deteriorated environments, heightened availability of unhealthy products, and dangerous public spaces.[5] Other root causes can include the adaptation of destructive social norms, long term unemployment, and disinvestment in the community.[5] **Houston Peace** will strive to support and propose new policies focused on the following:

Economic Equity

The results of policy focused on economic equity include adequate living wages, heightened local wealth, and a greater likelihood that youth receive a quality education.[5]

- Developing opportunities for economic empowerment
- Increased opportunities for workforce development
- Investment in the community and in community resources

Restoring the Built Environment

Policy focused on the built environment yields results such as safe parks, increased perceptions of safety, increased availability of health products, and increased availability of quality housing.[5]

- Improving the quality of the built environment
- Creating safe public spaces through improvements that address infrastructure, parks, and housing
- Reclaiming public spaces and using them for community benefit

In addition to championing for upcoming policies, it is important to acknowledge existing policies and continue to elevate their work. **Houston Peace** will continue to elevate policies within local school districts that highlight the following:

- Bullying & Cyber-Bullying
- Gang-Free Zones
- Sexual Harassment/Sexual Abuse/Dating Violence

Communications

Communications objectives for Houston Peace, include the following:

- Increase city leadership understanding of the value and impact of **Houston Peace**

- Emphasize the need to address youth violence and teen dating violence from a public health approach

- Recruit community members and organizations to join the charge

- Provide youth with an outlet to share their concerns surrounding youth violence

- Share and increase knowledge of youth violence activities currently occurring

- Increase understanding of risk and protective factors as they relate to youth violence and teen dating violence

Funding

Houston Peace requires aligning resources from a variety of organizations and sectors. Potential sources of funding include city resources, philanthropic contributions, private contributions, departmental contributions, and grants. Securing the resources to sustain this work is instrumental to effectively preventing youth violence.

Implementation & Governance Structure
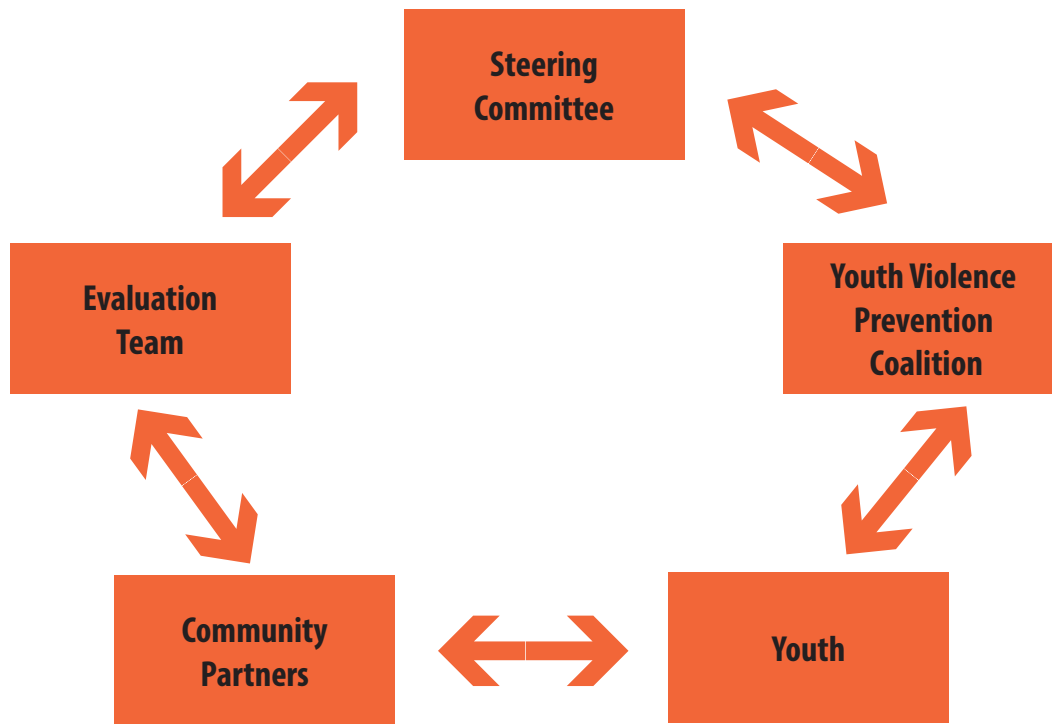
Leadership and oversight for **Houston Peace** will be provided by the Houston Peace Steering Committee, the Mayor's Office, the Houston Health Department, and the Houston Youth Violence Prevention Coalition, in partnership with other local government entities, community organizations, victim services, and academic institutions.

The **Houston Peace** Steering Committee will be accountable for this plan. The implementation of **Houston Peace** over the next three years is based on the communications plan, implementation of goals and objectives, and maintaining fidelity to the evaluation plan. The Steering Committee will meet on a quarterly basis to gauge the effectiveness of the plan, make recommendations to enhance implementation, and determine areas of strength and weaknesses. The findings from the quarterly meeting will be distributed to stakeholders accordingly.

The Houston Youth Violence Prevention Coalition is a multi-sector group focused on elevating youth violence and teen dating protective factors through education, programming, and activities. The objectives of the coalition are:

- Provide input on goals and activities intended to reduce and prevent teen dating violence and youth violence
- Maintain three sub-groups focused on youth violence, youth health, and youth opportunities
- Aid in the implementation of strategies outlined in Houston Peace
- Support and coordinate activities outlined in Houston Peace
- Champion the message of Houston Peace into the community

Partnerships

The complexity of addressing a public health problem such as youth violence, can only be successful when done collaboratively. Agencies, individuals, organizations, and communities, must work together to leverage strengths for the benefit of youth violence. Collaboration can occur at various levels, including 1) networking or exchanging information, 2) coordination or linking existing activities for mutual benefit, 3) cooperation or sharing resources for mutual benefit and to create something new, and 4) collaboration to accomplish shared vision and mission using joint resources.

Collaboration allows for the following benefits:

- Use of shared resources conserves limited capital

- Cost and effort are not duplicated and fewer programs work in silos

- Higher-quality, more integrated outcomes

- Integration of diverse perspectives

- Improved communication

- Increased trust and understanding among individuals and organizations

- Better ability to achieve important outcomes

The partnerships and collaborations that stem from the development of **Houston Peace** and the Youth Violence Prevention Coalition include various levels of collaboration. These partnerships and collaborations radiate from the local level to the national level.

National Partnerships

My Brother's Keeper (MBK) is an initiative developed by former President Obama that calls for work to improve outcomes for young men and boys of color by providing them with the support they need to live a bright and vibrant future. The initiative has six milestones:

1. **Getting a Healthy Start and Entering School Ready to Learn** – all children should have a healthy start and enter school when they are cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally ready

2. **Reading at Grade Level by Third Grade** – all children should be reading at grade level by age 8, the age at which reading to learn becomes essential

3. **Graduating from High School Ready for College and Career** – all youth should receive a quality high school education and graduate with the skills and tools needed to advance to postsecondary education or training

4. **Completing Postsecondary Education or Training** – every American should have the option to attend postsecondary education and receive the education and training needed for the quality jobs of today and tomorrow

5. **Successfully Entering the Workforce** – anyone who wants a job should be able to get a job that allows them to support themselves and their families

6. **Keeping Kids on Track and Giving Them Second Chances** – all youth and young adults should be safe from violent crime; and individuals who are confined should receive the education, training, and treatment they need for a second chance

The City of Houston accepted then President Obama's Community Challenge in 2014 and began to target the majority of their MBK work in the Fifth Ward, Kashmere, and Scarborough neighborhoods.

The MBK milestones align with the goals outlined in *Houston Peace* to varying extents. Because of this alignment, future MBK Houston action plans will take *Houston Peace* into consideration.

The **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** has maintained partnerships with Houston through the implementation of two youth violence centric grants. These grants are administered through HHD. The initial grant, STRYVE focused prevention strategies on Houston Police District 14. These prevention strategies include Youth Empowerment Solutions (YES) and CPTED. The Health Department currently has the Preventing Teen Dating and Youth Violence by Addressing Shared Risk and Protective Factors grant. The grant is implementing two prevention strategies, Fourth R and CPTED, in five active Houston communities.

The Campaign for Black Male Achievement is a network of leaders and organizations across the country committed to building beloved communities for Black men and boys to achieve their fullest potential. Houston is a member city of this consortium and heeds four strategies to advance black male achievement at the local level. The strategies are:

- Increase awareness of the movement for Black Male Achievement
- Monitor and assess organizations working with Black men and boys
- Partner with local leaders dedicated to this initiative
- Support initiatives to increase high school graduation rates

Cities United is a national network of mayors focused on making sure all our children grow up in communities that are safe, healthy and hopeful. Cities United mayors and their teams are committed to reducing the homicide and shooting rates of young Black men and boys ages 14-24 by 50%, by the year 2025.

Local Partnerships

The following sectors have been actively involved in collaboration and the development of partnerships.

Sector	Role
Table VI: Overview of Local Partnerships	
Sector	**Role**
Academic Institutions	Support in conducting youth violence research and providing implementation/evaluation services
Workforce Development	Champion youth opportunity components
Local and County Law Enforcement	Share data on youth violence indicators; support on targeted approaches (CPTED); training on violence and crime prevention for communities and neighborhoods; conduct community education
Local Government	Build political will; provide resources and help build capacity; provide opportunities to prevent youth violence, promote youth health, and provide youth opportunities
Youth	Provide youth voice on all youth violence prevention matters; aid in youth violence prevention campaign development; lead initiatives within their communities; peer support
Juvenile Justice	Provide supports for youth already involved in the justice system; encourage rehabilitation and mediation as opposed to punishment for low level offenses
Community Members	Provide input on plan and community issues; participate in events; disseminate youth violence messaging throughout the community; help highlight areas of need
Substance Abuse	Provide youth and communities with substance use education; provide youth with mentorship and support programs
Mental Health	Provide youth with support programs and refer youth to appropriate and attainable resources
Youth Enhancement	Provide youth with resources that increase their protective factors
Anti-Gang	Provide insight on youth involvement in gangs and relevant data.
Victim Services	Provide youth and community with rehabilitation services and support programs; provide powerful insight of the impact of violence on the individual, family, and society

Additional sector roles and level of collaboration will be added as the work grows.

Conclusion

Houston Peace is a living document and will undergo changes throughout its life based on community needs, feedback, data, and capacity. While this document is housed within the Houston Health Department, it is important to remember that **Houston Peace** is for the residents and youth of Houston. The three goals outlined in this plan, and their corresponding objectives serve as steps to preventing youth violence, however, it is important to remember that they are not the only steps to preventing youth violence. You can help prevent youth violence by mentoring youth, helping to take care of your neighborhood, and promoting opportunities for youth, among others.

Addressing youth violence is an issue that is bigger than any one organization or individual. We're asking for residents, organizations, and youth to join the movement to end youth violence. Houston youth deserve to be **safe, healthy, and have hope for the future**, and we're asking residents, organizations, and youth to join the movement to end youth violence. For more information visit MBKHouston.org, or email HoustonPeace@houstontx.gov.

Get Involved!

1   Listen to youth around you and develop strategies with their input

2   Talk to your neighbors about youth health, safety, and opportunity

3   Seek youth voice for decision-making in your organization

4   Engage your organization in the Youth Violence Prevention Coalition

5   Adopt **best practices** for addressing youth violence—there are a number of resources available to learn about evidence-based/informed strategies and other best practices for youth violence prevention, including

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development
- US Department of Education, Office of Safe and Healthy Students
- US Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- National Institute of Justice

6   Allocate existing resources to the areas of greatest need

7   Talk about how images of violence affect you and others

8   Host a Crime Prevention Through Environment Design (CPTED) project

9   Help schools and organizations hold youth violence prevention and teen dating violence awareness activities

10   Support the Houston Peace movement!

Appendix

Risk & Protective Factors for Teen Dating and Youth Violence

Table VII: Risk and Protective Factors for Teen Dating Violence and Youth Violence[30]		
Risk Factors	**Teen Dating Violence**	**Youth Violence**
Societal risk factors	Cultural norms that support aggression toward others	Cultural norms that support aggression toward others
	Harmful norms around masculinity and femininity	Harmful norms around masculinity and femininity
		Media violence
		Societal income inequity
Community risk factors	Poor neighborhood support and cohesion	Poor neighborhood support and cohesion
		Neighborhood poverty
		High alcohol outlet density
		Community violence
		Diminished economic opportunities/ high unemployment rates
Relationship risk factors	Social isolation/lack of social support	Social isolation/lack of social support
	Poor parent-child relationships	Poor parent-child relationships
	Family conflict	Family conflict
	Associating with delinquent peers	Associating with delinquent peers
	Gang involvement	Gang involvement
		Economic stress
Individual risk factors	Low educational achievement	Low educational achievement
	Lack of non-violent social problem-solving skills	Lack of non-violent social problem-solving skills
	Poor behavioral control/impulsiveness	Poor behavioral control/impulsiveness
	History of violent victimization	History of violent victimization
	Witnessing violence	Witnessing violence
	Psychological/mental health problems Substance use	Psychological/mental health problems Substance use
Protective Factors	**Teen Dating Violence**	**Youth Violence**
Community protective factors		Community-support/connectedness
Relationship protective factors	Family support/connectedness	Family support/connectedness
	Connection to a caring adult	Connection to a caring adult
	Association with pro-social peers	Association with pro-social peers
	Connection/commitment to school	Connection/commitment to school
Individual protective factors	Skills in solving problems non-violently	Skills in solving problems non-violently

Glossary

Term	Definition
Capacity	The maximum amount that something can contain/ the ability or power to do, experience, or understand something.
Complete Communities	Is an urban and rural planning concept that aims to meet the basic needs of all residents in a community, regardless of income, culture, or political ideologies through integrated land use planning, transportation planning, and community design.
Economic Health	The community's engagement with the economy. A healthy economy is vibrant, resilient, and integrates multiple interactions across many stakeholder groups. It provides diverse opportunities for development which acknowledge resource constraints and retain or improve the present quality of life in a city or community.
Gang Violence	Illegal and non-political acts of violence perpetrated by gangs against civilians, other gangs, law enforcement officers, firefighters, or military personnel. Throughout history, such acts have been committed by gangs at all levels of organization.
Gun Violence	Is violence committed with the use of a gun (firearm or small arm). May or may not be considered criminal. Criminal violence includes homicide, assault with a deadly weapon, and suicide, or attempted suicide, depending on jurisdiction.
Healthy People 2020	Attain high-quality, longer lives free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death; achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve the health of all groups, create social and physical environments that promote good health.
My Brother's Keeper	My Brother's Keeper creates grant competition focused on youth violence and mentoring programs, created by President Obama Foundation, the program is aimed at finding solutions to youth violence and increasing the number of mentors for boys.
Physical Violence	When a person hurts or tried to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, or using another type of physical force.
Prevention	The action of stopping something from happening or arising.
Protective Factor	Are conditions or attributes (skills, strength, resources, supports or coping strategies) in individuals, families, communities or the larger society that help people deal more effectively with stressful events and mitigate or eliminate risk in families and communities.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Psychological Violence	The use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to harm another person mentally or emotionally and/or exert control over another person.
Public Health	The health of the population as a whole, especially as monitored, regulated, and promoted by the state.
Risk Factor	Is any attribute, characteristic or exposure of an individual that increases the likelihood of developing a disease or injury. Some examples are underweight, unsafe sex, high blood pressure, tobacco/alcohol consumption, unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene.
Sexual Violence	Forcing or attempting to force a partner to take part in a sex act, sexual touching, or a non-physical sexual event (e.g. sexting) when the partner does not or cannot consent.
Socio-Ecological Model	Is a theory based framework for understanding the multifaceted and interactive effects of personal and environmental factors that determine behaviors, and for identifying behavioral and organizational leverage points and intermediaries for health promotion within organizations.
Stalking	A pattern of repeated, unwanted attention and contact by a partner that causes fear or concern for one's own safety or the safety of someone close to the victim
Structural Violence	Refers to a form of violence where in some social structure or social institution may harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs.
Teen Dating Violence	Is a pattern of behavior that includes physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse used by one person in an intimate relationship to exert power and control over another.
Violence Prevention	The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community,which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.
Youth Violence	Includes aggressive behaviors such as verbal abuse, bullying, hitting, slapping, robbery, rape, assault, homicide or fighting.

Available Trainings

Training	Overview	Link
Connecting the Dots	Different types of violence are connected and often share the same root causes. They can take place under one roof, in the same community or neighborhood, at the same time or at different stages of life	https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/connecting-dots
Dating Matters	Dating Matters: Understanding Teen Dating Violence Prevention helps educators, school personnel, youth leaders, and others working to improve the health of teens.	https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/dating-matters
Principles of Prevention	Principles of Prevention is a free online course that introduces users to the fundamental aspects of violence and violence prevention	https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/principles-prevention
Community Health SIM	Welcome to VetoVille! This game-line experience demonstrates the connections between violence and community issues	https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/community-health-sim
Violence Prevention Basics: The Social-Ecological Model	We use a four-level social-ecological model to help us understand violence and the potential benefits of prevention strategies.	https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/violence-prevention-basics -social-ecological-model

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Data Tables

Table IX: Aggravated Assaults in Houston with Firearm (2015-2017)

Year	Total Number of Aggravated Assaults with Firearm	Total Number of Aggravated Assaults with Firearms Involving Adolescents (10-24)
2015	6120	1948
2016	7142	2184
2017	7115	2069

Table X: Homicides Involving Firearms in Houston (2015 – 2018)

Year	Total Number of Homicides	Total Number of Homicides Involving firearms	Total Number of Homicides Involving Firearms with Adolescents (10-24)
2015	218	146	95
2016	219	139	40
2017	193	113	39

Table XI:	2016 Top 10 Zip Codes Ranked by Murder Count and Total Part 1 Violent Crimes Rates for 2016 & 2017						
Zip Code	Neighborhoods	Number of Homicide Complainants and Suspects Ages 10-24		Adolescent Complainant Part 1 Violent Crime Rate (per 10,000)		Adolescent Suspect Part 1 Violent Crime Rate (per 10,000)	
		2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
77036*	Sharpstown; Westwood	26	15	237.72	203.95	583.09	131.19
77081*	Gulfton	17	6	187.31	167.61	358.66	117.43
77072*	Alief	12	2	141.15	141.69	269.84	83.45
77016	East Little York; Homestead; Trinity; Houston Gardens	11	5	319.7	267.89	568.77	23.37
77060	Greater Greenspoint	11	8	184.98	223.59	454.30	101.54
77028	Settegast	10	1	639.76	343.68	376.31	166.29
77051	Sunnyside	10	8	392.28	410.64	635.12	303.64
77053	Central Southwest; Fort Bend; Houston	8	1	101.95	125.26	157.02	65.73
77035	Willow Meadows; Willowbend Area; Westbury	7	0	185.11	192.85	354.35	114.86
77088	Greater Inwood; Acres Home; Hidden Valley	7	1	131.78	128.45	237.37	111.32
COH	City of Houston	258	178	169.79	167.01	292.81	107.47

Source: Houston Police Department (HPD) Crime Analysis Unit

*Zip codes were also top ten in 2015

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