

Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Needs Assessment

City of Seattle • Human Services Department

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Executive Summary

Background

The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI) constitutes the City's core programming in youth violence prevention with an annual budget of approximately \$5.8 million per year. SYVPI is intended to be a coordinated violence prevention and intervention program providing wrap-around services for youth between 12- 17 years who are involved in or thought to be at risk of becoming involved in violence. However, while SYVPI has been operating since 2009, it has been unable to clearly articulate how its program works to reduce youth violence.

In 2013, the City Council asked the City Auditor to conduct an "Evaluability Assessment" of SYVPI with the goal of developing a rigorous evaluation of the program. In October 2014, the City Auditor issued a report by MEF Associates that concluded SYVPI could not be evaluated due to several operational and program design issues. MEF identified several issues that would need to be addressed before SYVPI could be evaluated (while MEF was asked to focus on an evaluation design for SYVPI, the problems it identified have broader implications for SYVPI's efficacy). MEF also recommended the City conduct a youth violence needs assessment. This report is in response to this recommendation.

Findings

A. City's current approach to youth violence lacks an overarching strategic vision

The City's current approach to youth violence prevention lacks an overarching strategic vision that recognizes the complexity and multi-faceted nature of youth violence. A substantial body of research recommends viewing youth violence through a public health lens, which posits youth violence can be prevented before it occurs. Adopting a public health approach means viewing the problem from a systems perspective and recognizing the environments in which youth grow and develop have the ability to influence norms and behaviors. A public health perspective also acknowledges that no stand-alone program or entity can effectively address youth violence. Thus, an effective strategy will seek to identify the relative strengths and respective roles and responsibilities of different institutions and systems that play a role in youth violence prevention. Ideally, this will lead to more effective partnerships, the identification of shared goals, and improved service alignment and coordination across systems.

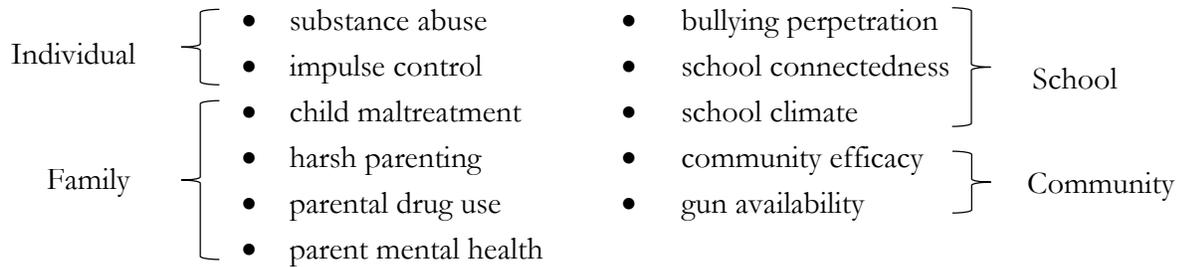
B. SYVPI's programming is limited in scope

SYVPI is largely focused on the provision of pro-social activities for individual youth between 12-17 years. As noted in a recent City Auditor report on SYVPI, "While these services are important for youth who might otherwise have barriers to these opportunities, this strategy does not address issues with the criminal justice system or schools."¹ In addition, research has identified several risk

¹ Office of the City Auditor, Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative: Two Key Conclusions, October 14, 2015

factors associated with youth violence, many of which SYVPI programming does not address (and will require more than a single, stand-alone program to effectively tackle). Several of these risk factors indicate a strong attachment to family and school is key, thus interventions focused solely on individual youth will have limited impact.

Risk factors found to have a strong or moderate association with violent behavior include the following:



Other aspects of SYVPI, such as case management and street outreach, depend on the ability of providers to develop positive relationships with youth over an extended period of time, which can be difficult outside the context of close coordination with key leverage points, e.g. schools, caregivers. In addition, many SYVPI program components are not available “on demand” and youth may not be immediately connected to services as a result. Aside from these issues, the MEF report documented numerous operational and program design problems with SYVPI. The City will need to decide whether it wants to invest in fixing these problems and then evaluate SYVPI accordingly, or re-think its current programming in an effort to develop a more comprehensive youth violence prevention strategy to directly address the risk factors outlined above.

C. Crime data indicates several areas warrant special attention

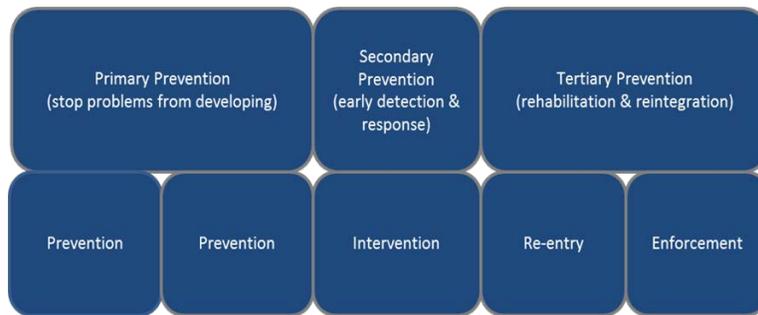
1. 18- 24 year olds: The crime data indicates the majority of youth violent crime involves young adult males 18- 24 years old. This cohort is also much more likely to be involved in homicide events, either as victims or offenders.
2. Juvenile domestic violence: A large percent of youth under 18 years are involved in juvenile domestic violence offenses involving a family member.
3. African American/Black youth: African American/Black youth are disproportionately represented in the crime data relative to their share of Seattle’s population.

Potential Opportunities for Action

When selecting specific interventions, the City, in partnership with the community and other stakeholders, should consider the following questions:

- What risk factors resonate most in the community?
- Where along the prevention spectrum—primary, secondary, tertiary—is there a desire to act?

Prevention Spectrum



- Who is the intended target population?
- What are the respective roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders and government jurisdictions that operate along the spectrum of prevention, e.g., schools, law enforcement, criminal justice, public health and mental health agencies, and non-profit providers?
- Are there evidenced-based programs or strategies available to address the identified problems and target populations?

These questions alone, however, are insufficient for identifying appropriate interventions. It will be difficult to make headway on youth violence without acknowledging the ways in which structural racism in systems and institutions limits access and opportunity, leading to inequitable racial outcomes for youth of color and their families. The issues surrounding youth violence also have a great deal of overlap with those related to the recent community dialogue around disproportionality in youth detention.

To this end, the City should use its Racial Equity Toolkit to evaluate any substantial programmatic changes in its current youth violence prevention activities and in the creation of new programming. One key aspect of the Racial Equity Toolkit involves engaging those in the community who are most impacted by the particular issue in question. In this case, youth and families who are disproportionately impacted by violence should be consulted. Thus, the table on the following page, which summarizes potential opportunities for action, represents only a possible starting point of potential ideas for community dialogue and subsequent program planning. The emphasis is on system change improvements over specific programs and services, though the latter are important too and will need to be identified as part of an overarching strategy.

Potential Opportunities for Action

Primary Prevention Stop Problems from Developing
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure all youth, regardless of income, have access to quality out-of-school-time programming 2. Continue to strengthen safety net for low-income families 3. Ensure Nurse-Family Partnership is reaching all eligible low-income first time mothers 4. Inventory existing family and parent support services provided by the City and its partners that seek to promote and build healthy parent-child relationships. Consider investing in family focused evidenced-based programs if these are not already available 5. Review the City's Families and Education Levy investments to identify additional opportunities to support and encourage whole school transformation efforts at Seattle Public Schools with the goal of improving school climate, discipline practices and policies, and teacher-student relationships 6. Consider providing support for schools to consistently implement evidenced-based curricula to reduce bullying, improve resistance to negative peer behaviors, promote healthy teen dating relationships, and reduce alcohol/drug abuse consumption 7. Work with school based health clinic providers to identify stronger referral pathways for youth in need of cognitive behavioral therapy and substance abuse treatment while partnering more closely with school administrators, parents and caregivers 8. Consider expanding school-based health clinics to cover all elementary and middle schools, which could help ensure strong referral pathways to services for youth and families 9. Carefully track implementation of Seattle's Preschool Program 10. Explore partnership opportunities with Seattle Public Schools to see what career supports can be provided to students who will graduate from high school but are not college bound 11. Continue to work on reducing access to illegal firearm possession 12. Continue to improve relationships between SPD and the community 13. Review community-led place-based crime prevention strategies and implement where appropriate
Secondary Prevention Early Detection & Response
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Work with partners to review referral and access points for youth who could benefit from substance abuse and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to understand if and how connections are being made and appropriate services are available 15. Strengthen the City's case management services to ensure more consistent implementation of best practices, service quality, and youth experience 16. Consider developing case management approaches that involve parents/families 17. Focus secondary prevention efforts on Interagency Academy students 18. Identify effective strategies for addressing juvenile domestic violence 19. Review referral and access points for parents who need substance abuse and mental health treatment 20. Ensure trauma based therapy interventions are available that address family dysfunction and/or improve parent-child bonding 21. Work with Seattle King County Public Health to review existing mental health supports for youth and family and strengthen where appropriate 22. Determine how the City can best partner to support the Road Map Project's efforts to re-engage youth who have dropped out/are pushed out of school 23. Request the Seattle Police Department monitor and disseminate youth crime data on at least an annual basis 24. Consider asking SPD to issue an annual report on the number and nature of youth homicides
Tertiary Prevention Rehabilitation & Reintegration
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 25. Work with Washington State DOC on re-entry alignment pilot 26. Collaborate with King County Juvenile Court to identify potential gaps in services for youth on probation or who have been released after a stay in detention 27. Review the City's programming associated with GOTS, CURB, Co-Stars

General Recommendations

The City currently funds various programs and services intended to foster healthy youth and resilient communities. These include but are not limited to, youth employment, recreation, high quality pre-school, K-12 investments, and Career Bridge, which the City should continue to support. In addition, as part of creating a more cohesive and strategic vision for youth violence prevention, the City could make more general changes to the way it does business that should help improve service quality and client outcomes across the board. These include:

- Conducting an environmental scan of other stakeholder activities before creating new programs and initiatives to avoid replicating programs and services already being provided.
- Improving internal coordination and alignment between City departments to avoid service duplication and working at cross purposes.
- Implementing evidenced-based strategies where possible while piloting new ideas and incorporating a monitoring and evaluation plan upfront.
- Creating a one-stop repository where City staff can access data on basic socio-economic, criminal justice, and equity indicators (education, health, etc.) that are reliable, current, and Seattle-specific.
- Setting higher performance standards in City contracts tied to meaningful outcome measures and then holding contractors accountable for meeting them.
- Creating a small fund to support and encourage promising new ideas as they arise, increasing the ability to act more nimbly and flexibly.
- Investing in strategic capacity building so more community-based organizations can be in a competitive position to bid on City contracts.
- Making more focused investments, as opposed to spreading limited dollars broadly or in a piecemeal fashion.
- Strengthening the City’s partnership with Seattle Public Schools.

Conclusions

The City cannot effectively address youth violence acting solely on its own. In fact, many areas that have an impact on this issue do not fall within the City’s direct sphere of influence. In these cases, the City may want to consider how it can best support and work with its partners, or it may decide to focus resources on those activities where the City has more direct control. In either case, there is value in considering the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders as the City’s ability to prevent youth violence is partly dependent on the actions of others. Thus, a longer-term goal should be to identify a variety of appropriate strategies along the spectrum of prevention in concert with a range of stakeholders while clearly delineating roles and responsibilities and holding each other accountable for results.

Introduction

What is a needs assessment?

A needs assessment is intended to identify gaps in a current state or condition compared to what is desired. A needs assessment can be used to understand barriers and constraints associated with effectively addressing the needs of a particular target population or it can be used to identify gaps in operational and organizational capacities.

This youth violence needs assessment is a bit of a hybrid in that it identifies several operational and conceptual issues associated with the City's primary programming for youth violence while also examining more broadly the needs of Seattle youth who may be involved in violent behavior or who are at risk of violent behavior. It also contemplates what the City's competitive advantage might be vis-à-vis other stakeholders while considering the research base for effective strategies. This report is organized to address the following points:

- I. What is the nature and magnitude of youth violence in Seattle?
- II. What services are provided by the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI), the City's core youth violence prevention programming?
- III. How well does SYVPI programming align with the crime data findings and risk factors?
- IV. What are promising prevention strategies and evidenced-based programs to address youth violence?
- V. Given the above, what are opportunities for action by the City?
- VI. Concluding observations and general recommendations.

Methodology

The information in this report draws upon the following data:

1. 2012- 2014 crime data collected by the Seattle Police Department. SPD provided this data to researchers from the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, Department of Criminology, Law and Society at George Mason University (GMU). GMU cleaned, analyzed, and organized the data into various violent crime categories. The data provided by GMU was then used to develop the charts and graphs provided in this report.
2. Information from the SYVPI database. SYVPI's database manager provided raw data from SYVPI's database. This data was then organized and analyzed to obtain demographic and enrollment information on SYVPI youth.
3. SYVPI historical documents and budget information. A review of SYVPI related information was also conducted, including past budget documents, summit financial reports, Council Central Staff memos, related legislation, and Office of City Auditor memos and reports. This needs

assessment draws heavily upon findings within the MEF Associates report issued in October 2014, *Supporting a Future Evaluation of the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative*².

A literature review was conducted with a focus on reports and research institutions that consolidate and synthesize research on youth violence. The literature review also included a review of strategy documents created by member cities of the National Forum for Youth Violence Prevention as well as a review of several databases that identify evidenced-based violence prevention strategies.

Several unstructured and semi-structured interviews and discussions were conducted with SYVPI staff, providers, and partners, along with other relevant stakeholders. A deliberate effort was made not to replicate the research already completed by MEF Associates, though many discussions led to additional insights into SYVPI's program challenges. Interviews were conducted with the following:

- King County Juvenile Court Staff (3)
- School administrators from Chief Sealth High School (2) and the Interagency Academy (2)
- Chief Sealth High School students enrolled in SYVPI (4)
- SYVPI case management agency supervisor (1)
- SYVPI network coordinators and intake and referral specialists (6);
- SYVPI street outreach supervisor (1)
- Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation staff (2)
- Seattle Youth Employment Program staff (1)
- HSD case management staff who oversee SYVPI case management contracts (2)
- Members of SPD's gang unit, including a ride-along (4)
- SPD homicide detective (1)
- SPD civilian employee working in SPD's domestic violence advocate program (1)
- SPD School Emphasis Officers (2)
- Department of Education and Early Learning staff (2)
- Public Health Seattle King County staff (4)
- Head of the City Prosecuting Attorney's Criminal Division (1)
- Washington State Department of Corrections staff (1)
- UW researchers involved in developing SYVPI's risk assessment tool (1)

In addition to interviews, at least ten SYVPI meetings were attended, including three Whole Team meetings involving all SYVPI providers, four network coordination meetings, a case manager supervisor meeting, and numerous internal City staff meetings. Perhaps most illuminating was participating in real-time discussions with SYVPI staff and providers regarding issues and challenges associated with the risk assessment tool, engaging youth in services, internal communications among network providers, operational protocols, and data collection. Finally, between January and June 2015, there were several informal and on-going discussions with SYVPI management and staff regarding SYVPI operations.

² Glosser, A., Obara, E., Dyke, A., Harris, A., Kim, E., Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative- Evaluability Assessment, October 7, 2014

I. What is the nature & magnitude of youth violence in Seattle?

A. Overview

This section of the report draws upon three years of Seattle Police Department (SPD) crime data from 2012- 2014. Several takeaways from the data include the following:

- The majority of youth violent crime offenders, regardless of crime type, involved young adults between 18- 24.
- Black youth were disproportionately represented in the violent crime data relative to their proportion of the population in Seattle.
- A large percent of youth violent crime offenders under 18 years were involved in a domestic violence related crime.
- The vast majority of youth homicide victims and offenders were between 18-24 years and male.
- African American/Black youth were disproportionately represented as homicide victims and offenders.
- Approximately 500 unique offenders per year were under 18 years while 1,100 were between 18- 24 years. These numbers include youth who were arrested and youth who were suspected of a crime but not arrested.
- Approximately 80% of offenders under 18 years and 67% of offenders between 18- 24 years live in Seattle with the balance originating from outside Seattle³.

B. Important definitions and notable data limitations

Important definitions and notable caveats and limitations associated with the SPD crime data are outlined below. In general, given the various limitations, caution should be applied when using the data for program planning purposes.

How is youth violence defined in this report?

Various definitions of youth violence exist, both in terms of the nature and scope of what constitutes violence as well as the age range of who is considered a “youth”. The City’s current youth violence prevention program, the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI), targets youth 12- 17 years old. This needs assessment adopts the Center for Disease Control’s (CDC) definition of youth violence, which is defined as such:

When a young person between the ages of 10- 24 years old intentionally uses force or power to threaten or harm others⁴

³ Based on home addresses recorded by SPD.

⁴ David-Ferdon C., Simon TR., Preventing Youth Violence: Opportunities for Action, Atlanta GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014.

Brain science research suggests young people’s brains are not fully developed at 18 years. Risk-taking and impulsive decision-making do not automatically subside when a youth becomes a legal adult. From this perspective, the CDC age bracket of who constitutes a youth makes sense. Thus, references to “youth” in this report mean young people between the ages of 10-24 years while an “adult” means a person 25 years and older.

Youth between 10- 24 years constitute approximately 17% of Seattle’s overall population of 641,000. The table below breaks out Seattle’s 10- 24 youth population into two age groupings by race (note: the 18- 24 category includes a large subset of college students who move to Seattle each year).

2014 Seattle Population Estimates by Age & Race					
10-17			18-24		
race/ethnicity	#	%	race/ethnicity	#	%
Pacific Islander	359	1%	Pacific Islander	540	1%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	475	1%	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	794	1%
Multiple race	4,143	11%	Black	5,118	7%
Hispanic (any race)	4,175	11%	Multiple race	5,523	8%
Black	5,244	14%	Hispanic (any race)	6,645	9%
Asian	5,955	16%	Asian	14,932	20%
White	20,620	56%	White	46,536	63%

It’s important to keep in mind that youth involved in violent crime offending 18 years and older are treated differently in Washington State’s criminal justice system than youth under 18 years. The consequences of violent offending can be more significant for young adults between 18- 24 years and the challenges with re-entry can be more difficult. In addition, youth under 18 years are generally still in school, while most youth 18 years and over are either on the cusp of graduating or no longer in high school. This is an important distinction that has implications for the strategies and interventions selected in terms of where and how to reach and engage youth and young adults. At the same time, effective youth violence prevention strategies start early in a child’s life. Thus, the target population for certain strategies may be much younger than either teens or young adults who are currently involved in violent crime offending.

What constitutes a “violent” crime?

For the purposes of this report, the following categories, which are all felonies with the exception of simple assault, are classified as violent crimes unless otherwise noted:

- Robbery
- Rape
- Homicide
- Aggravated Assault
- Simple Assault

Many of the above crimes have different “degrees” or levels of severity associated with them but these are not distinguished in this report. Brief definitions of each are provided below.

Robbery: The taking or attempted taking of anything of value from another person by force, threat of force and/or by putting the victim in fear.

Rape: When a person engages in sexual intercourse with another person by forcible compulsion.

Homicide: The killing of a human being by the act, procurement, or omission of another, death occurring at any time, and is either 1) murder, 2) homicide by abuse, 3) manslaughter, 4) excusable homicide, or 5) justifiable homicide.

Assault: An unlawful attack by one person on another for the purpose of inflicting bodily injury. The type of assault is classified by degrees. In general, there are two types of assault.

- *Simple Assault:* Involves bodily force or threat of bodily force with little or no injury to the victim.
- *Aggravated Assault:* If a weapon is used, or if there is serious injury, or the threat of serious injury to the victim(s).

Both the extent of the injuries caused, as well as the degree to which a victim was threatened (based on a reasonable person standard defined by case law), can influence whether an offense is deemed a simple or aggravated assault. It should be noted that simple assault is a gross-misdemeanor and it is not counted as a violent crime for the purposes of calculating a person’s criminal history. Simple assault can involve a wide range of behaviors, including unwanted touching or harassing behavior in which no physical contact is made.

Offenders include both arrestees and suspects

To obtain a more accurate understanding of the size of the offending population, both offenders *and* suspects are included in the offender data. Offenders are suspects who have been arrested, while suspects have not been arrested but are thought to be involved in a crime based on various criteria used by police. For simplicity, the term “offender” used in this report refers to either an offender who has been arrested or someone who is suspected of a violent crime but has not yet been arrested. It is important to note that not all offenders included in the data would have been ultimately convicted of a crime.

SPD collects limited race/ethnicity information

SPD’s data system captures only four categories of race: White; Black/African American; Asian; and Native American. Moreover, this information is based on the officer’s best guess. Information is not available for other races or Hispanics/Latinos. This is a significant data limitation. For example, it is

not possible to distinguish between African American youth and Black youth of East African descent. Nor is it possible to determine the number of Hispanic youth, who may be counted as “White” or another race.

Repeat offenders are included in most counts

For the most part, the data in this report includes repeat offenders. That is, where offenders are being referenced, these numbers do not represent the number of unique individuals who are offending. A section in the appendix of the report, however, does disaggregate unique offenders from repeat offenders. Thus, this section should be consulted for question regarding the number of unique youth involved in offending.

Note: GMU identified repeat offenders by looking at the number of youth who had a repeat offense within 12 months of their initial offense. Using a 12-month window makes sense with only a 3-year data set, but it likely undercounts the true number of repeat offenders in the data. This is because research indicates recidivism is more likely to occur within an 18 month window⁵.

Incidents and offenders are different units of analysis

The number of incidents is not the same thing as the number of offenders and these two categories should not be confused. Incident data is counting *events* while offender data is counting *people*. Incident data includes all events that involve at least one victims and/or offender 24 years old and younger. Multiple people could be involved in one event.

Violent crime incidents prioritized by most serious offense

Violent crime incidents can involve multiple offenses. The GMU researchers selected the most serious offense to define the incident. Violent crimes (assaults, robbery, homicide, rape) were prioritized over property and other crimes. All incidents classified as violent by the researchers and all offenders involved in these violent incidents are included in this report.

Age groupings for data analysis differ slightly from “youth”

While this report uses the CDC age range of 10- 24 years old in terms of who constitutes a “youth”, GMU researchers disaggregated SPD’s crime data by the following age brackets: 13 years and under; 14-17, 18- 24. On average, the researchers found only seven youth under 10 years old in the data provided by SPD. With so few offenders under 10 years, there was little impact in leaving these youth in the dataset.

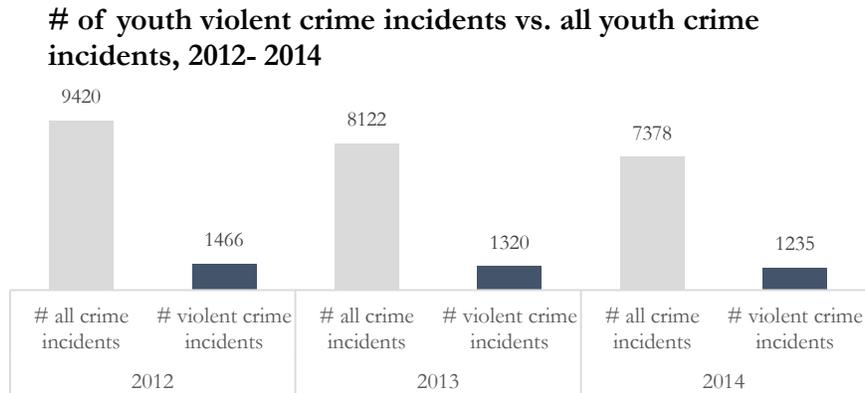
⁵ 180 Workshop Program Evaluation, October 2014, King County Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget

C. 2012- 2014 youth violent crime trends: incident data

The next section focuses on SPD incident data, which counts *events*, not individuals. Events can include both offenders and victims.

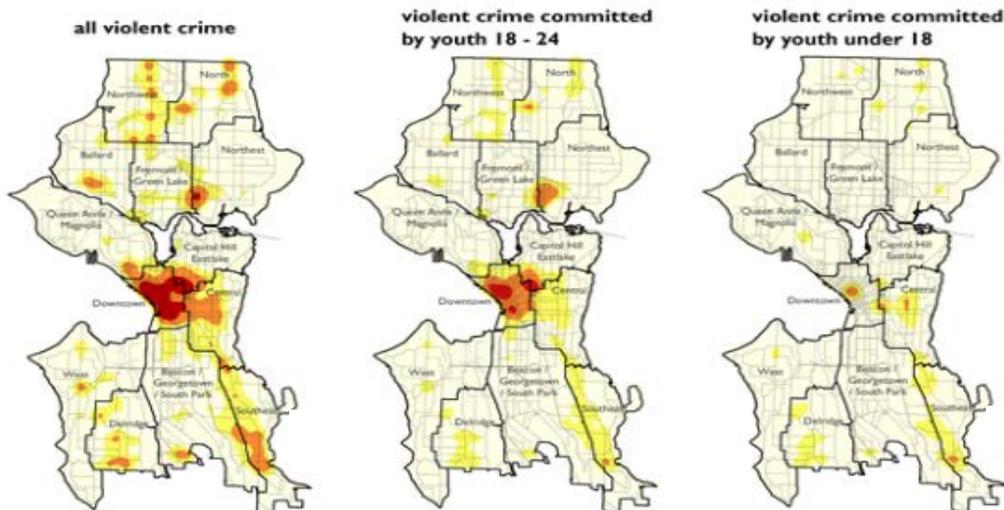
1. Youth violent crime incidents constitute 16% of all youth crime

Between 2012- 2014, 16% of incidents involving a youth offender were violent in nature.



2. Youth violent crime locations mirror adult crime locations

The following hotspot maps are useful to the extent they compare *relative* concentrations of crime. That is, an area with a small number of violent crime incidents can look “hot” compared to an area with even fewer incidents. The maps show the location of violent crime incidents and also include threats, harassment, and weapons offenses, broken out by age groups.



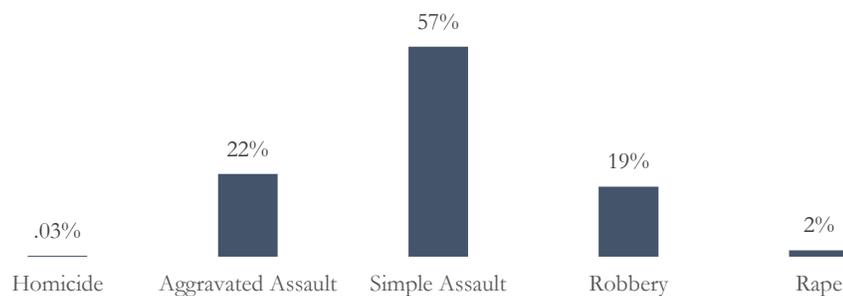
3. Youth violent crime incidents are largely diffuse

In general, the locations of youth violent crime incidents are spread across the city. Only a handful of census tracts have relatively high concentrations of youth violent crime incidents (see appendix A). Between 2012- 2014, the top three census tracts (out of 132 tracts) with the highest concentrations of youth violent crime experienced between 3%-6% of incidents (tract 81 in downtown Seattle, tract 75 in Capitol hill and tract 118 in southeast Seattle). The percent of youth violence incidents in each of the remaining census tracts was under 3%.

4. Simple assault was the most common youth violence incident

The majority of youth violent crime incidents (offenders and victims) involved simple assault, which is a misdemeanor. The other violent crime categories (rape, homicide, robbery, and aggravated assault) are felonies. Rape and homicide comprised a relatively small share of youth violent crime.

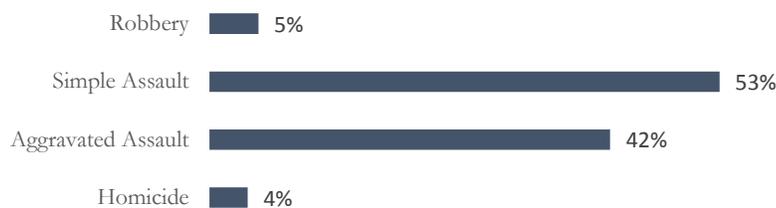
% of youth violent crime incidents by crime type, offenders & victims, 2012- 2014



5. A substantial percent of incidents were DV-related

If certain crimes involve a family or household member, SPD will tag these crimes as domestic violence (DV) related. Between 2012- 2014, SPD classified 41% of all youth violent crime incidents as DV-related. More than half of simple assaults and a significant portion of aggravated assault incidents were DV-related.

% youth violence incidents involving domestic violence, 2012- 2014



D. Youth violent crime trends: offender data

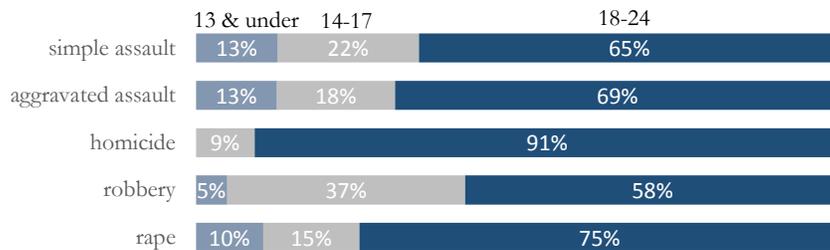
This next section examines youth violent offender data, including offender demographics and crime types.

1. Most offenders were male, 18-24, & either Black or White

Between 2012- 2014, youth 24 years and under comprised 30% of violent crime offenders. While the youth violent offender profile varies by crime type and demographics, overall, the following observations can be made based on information recorded by SPD:

- Nearly 2/3 were male
- 84% were either African American/Black (45%) or White (39%)⁶
- 43% were involved in a DV-related offense, primarily simple assault
- 18-24 year olds were the largest youth violent crime offender group, regardless of crime type

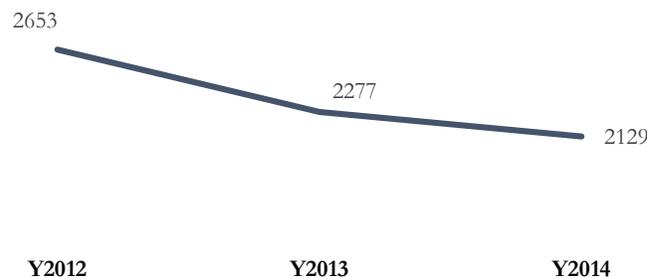
% youth offenders by crime type and age, 2012- 2014



2. The number of offenders has decreased

Between 2012 and 2014, youth violent crime offenders declined by 20%.

Annual # of youth involved in violent crime



⁶ As SPD race categories are limited, the extent to which White offenders include other races/ethnicities, is unknown.

3. The number of youth violent crime offenders was relatively small. The number of unique (non-repeat) violent crime offenders between 2012- 2014 was relatively small. These numbers reflect both youth who were arrested and not arrested (suspects). Moreover, not all youth who were involved in a violent crime offense in Seattle live in Seattle. Approximately 20% of youth under 18 years and 33% of youth between 18- 24 years had a home address outside of Seattle.

- The average annual number of unique offenders under 18 years was approximately 521 youth, approximately 1.4% of Seattle youth population between 10- 17 years.
- The average annual number of unique offenders between 18- 24 years was 1,097 young adults, approximately 1.5% of Seattle’s young adult population between 18- 24 years.

While these numbers suggest a small share of Seattle’s youth population is involved in violent offending, the repercussions from violent offending, for both victim and offender, can be severe. Thus, these numbers should not be used to minimize the problem but to bring greater focus on identifying those youth at risk.

E. Youth homicide

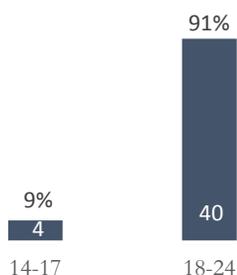
1. Offenders

While the vast majority of youth violent offenders were involved in robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault, it is worthwhile to examine homicide more closely given the severity of the crime.

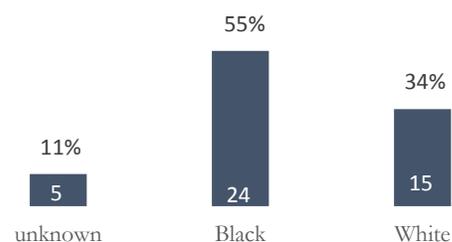
Between 2012- 2014:

- 44 youth offenders were involved in a homicide, constituting approximately 35% of all known homicide offenders of all ages.
- The vast majority of youth offenders involved in homicide were between 18-24 years.
- For the 41 homicide offenders where gender was recorded, 66% were male and 34% female.
- Blacks were disproportionately represented in the homicide offender population, comprising 55% of offenders while making up just 7% of Seattle’s 18-24 population.
- The majority of youth homicide offender’s victims were also youth, primarily 18-24 years.

% and number youth homicide offenders by age, 2012- 14



% and number of youth homicide offenders by race, 2012- 14

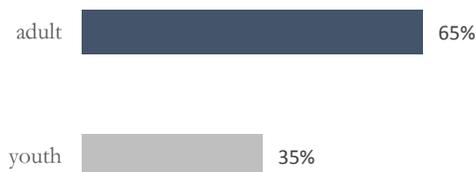


Between 2012- 2014, SPD recorded a total of 78 homicides in Seattle. This number includes adults and youth. 74% of homicides involved a firearm.

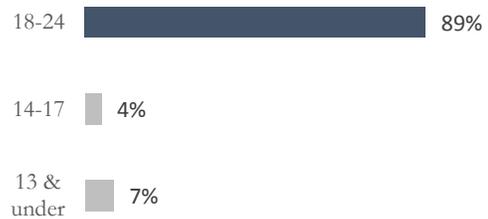
Between 2012- 2014:

- The majority of homicide victims were adults 25 years and older (51/78).
- 27 out of 78 homicide victims were youth under 25 years.
- 26 out of 78 youth victims, or 33%, were killed by a youth offender
- The vast majority of youth homicide victims were between 18-24 years old.
- For the 25 youth homicide victims where gender was recorded, 80% were males and 20% were females.
- For the 22 youth homicide victims where race was recorded, Black youth comprised the majority of homicide victims.

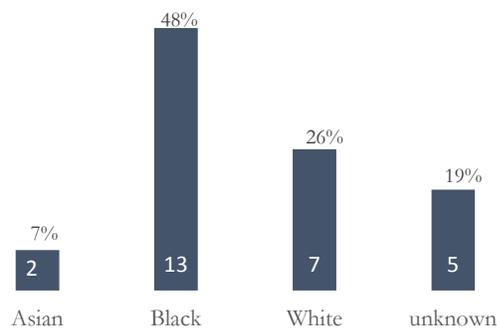
% of homicide victims by adults vs. youth status, 2012- 2014



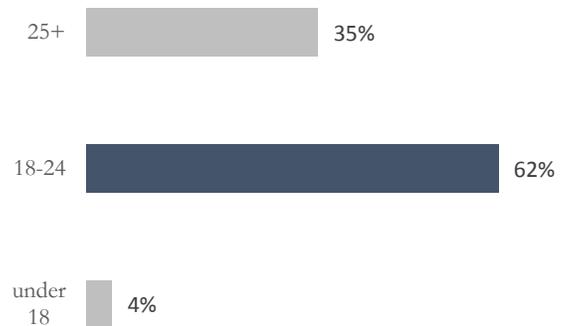
% youth homicide victims by age, 2012- 2014



% and number of youth homicide victims by race, 2012- 2014



% homicide victims killed by a youth offender, by victim age, 2012- 2014



F. Gang crime

For various reasons, SPD reports that it does not keep records of the number of gangs and suspected gang members in Seattle, and thus, it does not have reliable statistics on gang-related violent crime⁷. The following observations are based on interviews with SPD's gang unit and other readily available information.

- A lieutenant from SPD's gang unit believes today's gangs are relatively fluid in nature, both in terms of membership and location. It is not unusual for young gang members to change affiliations or allegiances. This is a change from the type of gangs active in Seattle in the 1980's and 1990's, when several California gangs operated in Seattle. In addition, over the years, more gang activity has migrated south of Seattle's borders. The lieutenant further believes the majority of gang-involved youth under 18 years are not serious violent offenders but often engage in behavior that mimics older gang members.
- SPD's homicide unit believes four of the nine youth homicides in 2014 were gang related. All four suspected gang-related homicides involved black male victims between 19- 24 years who were killed by a gun.
- The Center for Children and Youth Justice (CCYJ) published a report in January 2014 that examined the number and type of gangs operating in South King County. Of the ten gangs profiled in the report, five appeared to have some cross-over membership in Seattle, with two located "primarily in the Rainier Valley". Ages of gang members with some presence in Seattle ranged from 17- 25 years. Of the five gangs with Seattle membership, two were thought to comprise predominantly African Americans, two Hispanic, and one Asian. The largest gang was estimated to have 400- 450 members while the smallest between 50- 75 members. Since all five gangs with some presence in Seattle also had members in other cities, it is difficult to know how many of these estimated gang members actually live and actively operate in Seattle.
- In the CCYJ report, the King County Prosecutors' Office estimated approximately 40% of "high impact juvenile offenders" were gang-involved, or 28 out of 71 youth. As these statistics were for all of King County, some number likely lived outside of Seattle.
- According to the 2014 Healthy Youth Survey, which is a national survey administered every other year in schools across the country, 6% of Seattle Public School 8th graders (~206 students) self-identified as gang involved.
- In June 2015, a vice-principal at Chief Sealth High School estimated between 20- 30 students were gang involved, which is 1.6%- 2.4% of Chief Sealth's 2013- 14 student population of 1,259.

It is problematic to draw conclusions about the scope and magnitude of Seattle's gang problem given the available data and conflicting statistics. Without on-going and reliable tracking of

⁷ There is no universally accepted operational definition of gangs or gang members. The National Institute of Justice notes many jurisdictions use definitions unique to their local circumstances. It is unclear if SPD has an official agreed upon operational definition.

suspected gang activity in Seattle, it will be difficult to effectively address problems and track progress if the issue itself is not well-defined or understood. In October 2015, the City Auditor issued a report with specific recommendations for improving SPD’s data collection of suspected gang activity and identified how the City’s investments in street outreach could be strengthened.

II. SYVPI budget and programming

The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI) constitutes the City’s core programming in youth violence prevention. This section provides a general overview of SYVPI, including its annual budget, programming, and enrollment.

A. SYVPI overview

SYVPI is intended to be a coordinated violence prevention and intervention program providing wrap-around services for youth at-risk of violence. It was launched in 2009 and initially located in what was then called the Office of Policy and Management before it was transferred to the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) in 2010. Within DON, SYVPI fell under the oversight of the Office for Education, which in 2015, became the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL), where SYVPI is currently housed⁸.



SYVPI’s programming is organized by three geographic areas in Central, Southeast (SE), and Southwest (SW) Seattle, which are referred to as the Central, SE, and SW “networks”. The networks are intended to act as a gateway and referral source for youth between 12- 17 years who are involved in or at risk of becoming involved in violence. According to SYVPI, youth who are eligible for SYVPI services should meet one of the following four criteria⁹:

1. Convicted multiple times and released from supervision or under minimal supervision and at-risk to re-offend.
2. Arrested for crimes that do not meet juvenile detention intake criteria and released.
3. Middle school students at risk of chronic truancy (absent 9 or more days per semester) or have had multiple suspensions as a result of violent behavior.
4. Gang-involved youth.

⁸ SYVPI will be moved to the City’s Human Services Department in 2016.

⁹ These criteria are not strictly adhered to in practice.

SYVPI's primary services are outlined below with the department responsible for program delivery or contract oversight indicated after each service category¹⁰:

2015 Contract Oversight and/or Program Delivery by Department

- Case management HSD
- Aggression Replacement Training HSD
- Job training & employment HSD
- Mentoring HSD
- Street outreach DEEL
- Community Matching Grants DEEL
- Recreation DEEL
- Network coordination DEEL

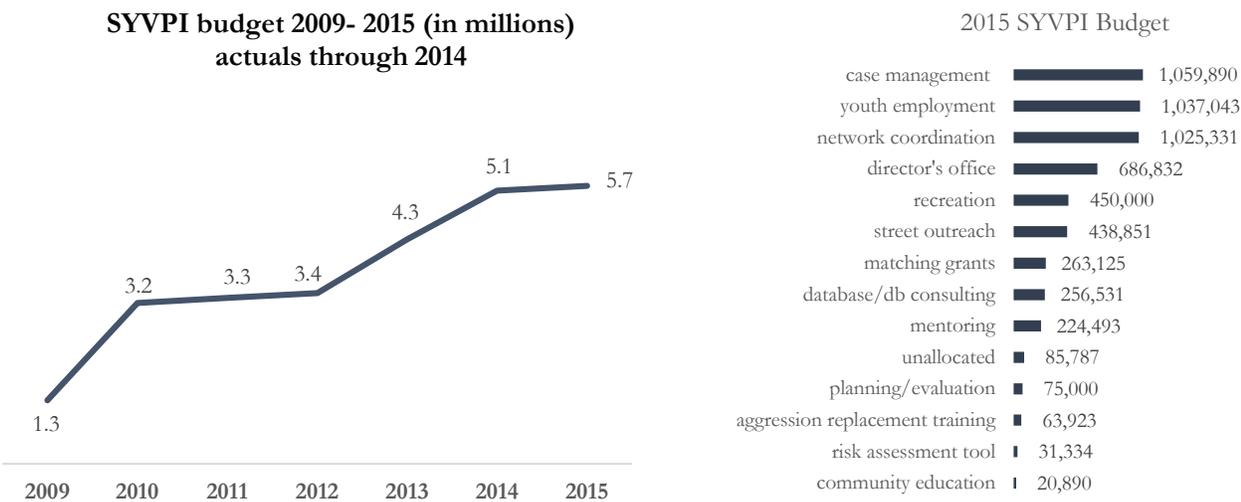
Many of the above services are not available “on demand”. For example, the majority of employment opportunities are offered during the summer, and Aggression Replacement Training (ART) is only offered 2- 3 times a year and serves approximately 38 youth in total, or 2.5% of SYVPI's enrolled youth. Thus, while a youth may be referred and enrolled in SYVPI, some period of time may pass before they are able to engage in any particular service or programming. SYVPI has also struggled to engage youth in SYVPI specific recreation activities.

In addition to SYVPI's core programming, the Seattle Police Department funds four School Emphasis Officers (SEO) who work in Denny, Washington, South Shore K-8, and Aki Kurose middle schools. SEO's are often shown as part of SYVPI's programming, but the connection between the SEO's work and SYVPI is not always clear. The SEO's refer youth to SYVPI, but the SEO's do not typically attend SYVPI organizational meetings and there is no feedback loop between providers and SEO's regarding SEO referred youth. SEO officers report a cordial but distant relationship with most SYVPI providers.

¹⁰ The Mayor's 2016 Budget proposes to transfer SYVPI into HSD, which would serve to consolidate contract oversight within HSD.

B. SYVPI budget

SYVPI's 2015 budget is approximately \$5.7 million. Between 2009 and year-end 2015, SYVPI has or will have expended approximately \$26 million. The graph on the left shows SYVPI's budget over time, including actual expenditures through 2014 while the one on the right shows 2015 expenditures by major program category.



Since 2010¹¹, SYVPI's budget has grown by 73%. Through the City's annual budget process, the McGinn administration requested an increase of approximately \$1.9 million for 2013 and \$2.3 million in 2014, bringing SYVPI's proposed budget to nearly \$5.3 million in 2013 and \$5.6 million in 2014. The rationale given for the request was that more youth were enrolled in SYVPI than anticipated and the additional budget authority would allow SYVPI to expand the number of youth served from 1,050 youth per year to 1,500 youth (500 per network)¹².

Conversations with SYVPI staff suggest the projected increase in the number of youth who could be served was largely budget-driven; that is, SYVPI arrived at 1,500 youth based on the amount of available budget and associated services and slots that could be funded vs. an estimate of the number of youth at risk for violence. SYVPI's actual expenditures in 2013 and 2014 were approximately \$1 million less than the adopted budget amounts of \$4,952,282 in 2013 and \$5,629,288 in 2014.

The following table provides a brief description of SYVPI's primary program areas along with the 2015 budget, associated FTEs, and the number of youth expected to be served.

¹¹ SYVPI's initial 2009 budget was deliberately under-budgeted in recognition of the time needed to ramp up.

¹² SYVPI staff have indicated the request for an increase to SYVPI's budget was not initiated or desired by SYVPI staff.

SYVPI Key Program Components & Associated Staffing/Budget

Program/ Service	Targets/goals: # SYVPI youth served annually*	FTE		2015 Budget	Description
		City	Non-City		
Network Coordination	500 enrolled per network (1500 total)	included in City admin.	13.8	1,025,331	Network coordinators recruit youth, conduct intake & referral using risk assessment tool, help connect youth with other SYVPI services, provide limited direct youth programming.
Case Management	319	included in City admin.	14.5	958,483	Case managers help connect youth to services and have been described as “life coaches” and “mentors”.
Youth Employment	248 (80% completion rate)	1.3	6.25	922,591	Job training and internships for youth. Most jobs are available in summer. The City's youth employment program provides 45% of the slots while various non-profits provide the remainder.
Mentoring	Group mentoring: 36 youth (70% completion rate); individual: 100 youth, with at least 50% of matches lasting 1 year	included in City admin.	3.1	216,835	HSD contracts with three mentoring agencies to provide 1:1 mentoring and group mentoring.
Aggression Replacement Training (ART)	38 (70% completion rate)	included in City admin.	0.78	63,923	A 10-week evidenced-based program based on cognitive behavioral therapy principles. Provides training in social skills, anger control and moral reasoning. It has been shown to reduce recidivism when implemented with fidelity.
Street Outreach (YMCA)	90 youth served at any one time	included in City admin.	7.3	438,851	Street Outreach targets youth involved in gangs, violence, and juvenile justice system. Street outreach workers work to engage and connect youth to needed services.
Office of Arts & Culture Youth Employment	38 youth (78% completion rate)	0.25	n/a	114,452	90 hours of work readiness training
Community Matching Grants	~100 unduplicated youth per year	included in City admin.	n/a	263,125	Annual grant-making program. Funds various non-profits to provide programming specific to SYVPI youth, usually during the summer. Programs vary in length and hours. Average cost per youth is \$2,630.
Recreation	at least 450 unduplicated youth participate in one recreation program	0.6	2.0	450,000	Up until 2015, the Department of Parks & Recreation was SYVPI's primary recreation provider. SYVPI began contracting with the YMCA and the Boys and Girls club to also provide recreation in 2015. Programming varies.
City Administration	n/a	4.8	n/a	612,452	Includes director, contract management, training, administration.

These are goals/targets vs. actuals

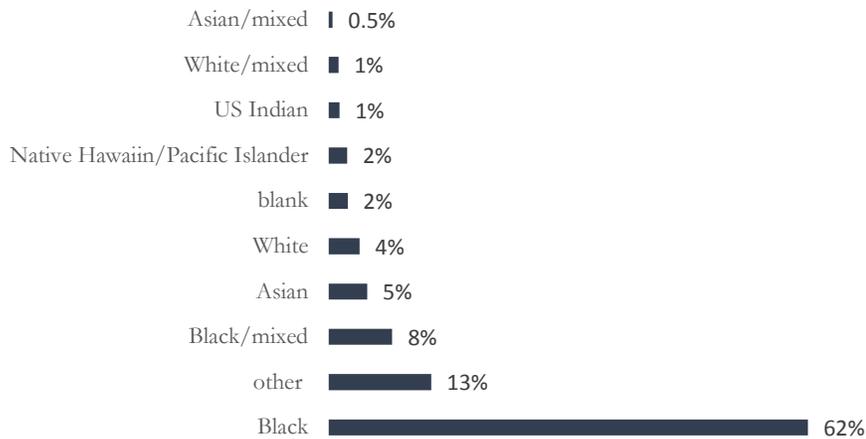
C. SYVPI enrollment

This next section provides SYVPI demographic and programmatic information. This information is based on various extractions from the SYVPI database during June 2015 and thus represents only a snapshot in time. For the purposes of this report, programmatic and demographic information that refers to “currently enrolled” youth are youth who were enrolled in SYVPI as of June 23, 2015.

1. Youth demographics

As of June 23, 2015, approximately 1,420 youth were enrolled in SYVPI. 55% of currently enrolled SYVPI youth are male and 45% are female. The average age is 16.5 years. The majority of SYVPI enrolled youth are African American/Black¹³. Approximately 17% of youth are Hispanic¹⁴.

% currently enrolled SYVPI youth by race



2. Overall enrollment and exit trends

SYVPI has enrolled approximately 3,217 unique youth over the life of the initiative. Approximately 2,000 youth have been exited from SYVPI over the 6.5 years it has been in operation, including 400 youth who have been exited and re-enrolled in SYVPI, i.e., enrolled a second time¹⁵.

The following chart shows how many youth are currently enrolled in SYVPI and how many have been exited by the year in which they were initially enrolled. For example, in 2009, a total of 617 youth were enrolled and since that time, 573, or 93% of those youth, have since been exited while 42 youth remain enrolled. As shown, a greater number of enrollments occurred in the early years as SYVPI was ramping up and fewer in more recent years as youth who were previously enrolled continue to remain on SYVPI’s docket. Approximately 55% of SYVPI’s currently enrolled youth were enrolled prior to 2014.

¹³ SYVPI providers do not consistently ask youth to self-identify their race/ethnicity. Thus, it’s unclear to what extent the demographic data is an accurate reflection of how youth self-identify.

¹⁴ Approximately 13% of Hispanic youth are reported to be Black or Black/mixed, 9% White, and 76% “other”.

¹⁵ 2009- June 2015

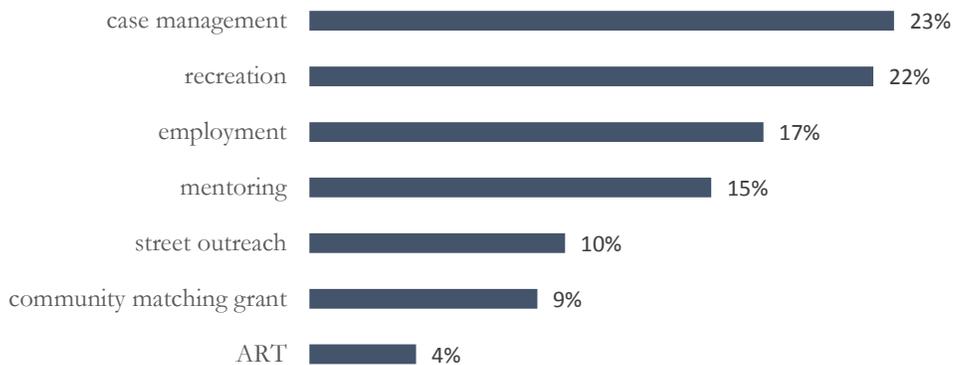
SYVPI youth enrollment status by year enrolled



3. Program & service enrollments

The total number of program and service enrollments average approximately two programs per youth. In reality, some youth are enrolled in more than two programs while others are enrolled in fewer than two. The percent of youth enrollments by program category is shown in the chart below. This includes all enrollments over multiple years depending on the length of time a youth has been in SYVPI.

% of SYVPI enrollments by program category for all currently enrolled youth, spans multiple years



It should be stressed that enrollment in a particular program or service does *not* reflect actual youth program participation or completion. To illustrate this point, it is useful to examine enrollment and participation rates for SYVPI's recreation programming in 2014. Information in SYVPI's database indicates approximately 239 youth were enrolled in a recreation program in 2014. Yet, according to SYVPI staff, only 93 unduplicated youth participated in a SYVPI sponsored recreation program in 2014. Both the enrollment number (239) and the actual participation number (93) are much lower

than the goal set by SYVPI, which is to have at least 450 unique youth per year participate in recreation programming (budgeted at \$450,000)¹⁶.

Unfortunately, in most cases, because the City has not required providers to track youth participation and completion rates in the SYPVI database, it's not possible to readily compare youth enrollment numbers to actual participation and completion rates. For this same reason, it would be difficult and time consuming to try to reconstruct and verify this information¹⁷.

¹⁶ SYVPI in general has struggled to engage youth in recreation-related activities; consequently, some network staff pay youth financial incentives to participate, a practice that should be reviewed if it is to continue.

¹⁷ In 2015, staff report that SYVPI began tracking recreation completion rates in the database, but this does not apply to other SYVPI program components.

III. Gaps in SYVPI programming

This next section examines the following:

- A. The extent to which SYVPI's target population and programming aligns with the crime data findings.
- B. The extent to which SYVPI services are responsive to various risk factors associated with youth violent offending.
- C. Operational & program design concerns related to SYVPI.

A. Alignment of SYVPI and crime data findings

The SPD crime data indicates at least two gaps in SYVPI programming: 1) domestic violence involving youth and family members, and 2) services for 18- 24 year olds. This does not necessarily mean, however, that SYVPI is the appropriate mechanism by which to address these gaps. Moreover, some services already exist for youth domestic violence and “disconnected” young adults outside of SYVPI and these should be accounted for in the design of any new City funded programming.

1. Juvenile domestic violence

Between 2012- 2014, a significant portion of youth violence was DV-related. Earlier research conducted by the Seattle Office of the City Auditor indicated the majority of *reported* juvenile domestic violence for youth under 18 years involves a family member, as opposed to intimate dating partners¹⁸. Interventions to address juvenile domestic violence should involve family members as well as the offending youth. This type of intervention likely requires a licensed therapist who is in a position to mediate and address complex family dynamics, dysfunction and conflict. The referral points for engaging with youth and families experiencing this type of violence would likely involve training for police officers responding to calls for service as well as civilian staff with expertise in juvenile domestic violence who can help connect families to appropriate therapeutic services.

2. 18- 24 year olds

As noted by the crime data, SYVPI currently enrolls youth 12- 17 years, though youth who enroll in SYVPI prior to their 18th birthday may continue to be served after they turn 18. In general, most of SYVPI's current programming is not appropriate for 18-24 year olds, who face different challenges and repercussions for violent crime offending than youth under 18 years. Moreover, it could be problematic, for a variety of reasons, to mix young adult populations who may no longer be in school and would be treated as an adult in the criminal justice system with youth under 18 years.

¹⁸ The nature of DV-related crime involving 18- 24 year olds cannot be discerned from the data, thus, additional follow up research on appropriate interventions for this age cohort is needed.

Thus, if the City is interested in further exploring gaps in services for young adults 18- 24 year olds, it may want to consider an alternative delivery model apart from SYVPI.

3. Additional observations

African American/Black youth

- The findings from the SPD crime data indicate Black/African American youth are disproportionately represented in the violent crime offender data relative to their share of Seattle's population¹⁹. On this front, SYVPI has done a good job enrolling a large share of Black/African American youth into the initiative. Given that youth of color in Seattle experience a variety of disparities in health, education, and employment, continued focus on this population is appropriate.

Areas for further research

- The race data collected by SPD is extremely limited and therefore, the percent of youth SPD categorizes as "White" likely includes a certain percent of Hispanic youth²⁰. Thus, while White youth under 18 years comprise the second largest offender group as reported by the SPD data, more precise demographic information is needed to understand this part of the offender population better.
- Some SYVPI providers indicated there can be tension between East African and African American youth and consequently, some East African CBO's may be reluctant to refer their youth to SYVPI. Only one SYVPI case manager has an East African background and there are no SYVPI street outreach workers who speak an East African language. Thus, while there is anecdotal evidence suggesting some East African youth in Seattle (in itself a diverse group) are gang involved, it's unclear to what extent SYVPI is equipped to provide them with culturally appropriate services. In addition, while the SYVPI database allows for providers to distinguish between different Black and Asian populations, SYVPI providers do not reliably input this data so it is not possible to obtain an accurate understanding of these particular demographic groups and their enrollment in SYVPI based on information in the SYVPI database.

B. Alignment of SYVPI with risk factors

Research suggests youth violent crime offending is linked to a variety of "risk factors" that may increase a young person's propensity to engage in violent crime. Thus, many prevention and intervention strategies seek to reduce these risk factors. The risk factors linked to youth violence fall within several "domains", including Individual, Family, Schools, and Community. This view of youth violence is based on the belief that a youth's environment can influence norms and behaviors, either negatively or positively. It's important to keep in mind that risk factors are not predictive of

¹⁹ While this report does not attempt to explain the reasons for this disproportionately, some community members believe Black youth are disproportionately targeted by police.

²⁰ Currently, 4-5% of youth enrolled in SYVPI are reported to be White and 17% are Hispanic.

violence but are thought to increase the likelihood of it. In addition, the risk of violence is greater for youth who experience multiple risk factors and few protective factors, which can have a cumulative and interactive effect²¹.

1. SYVPI investments related to individual domain risk factors

The following risk factors associated with individual youth have been linked to violent offending by either the CDC or Child Trends, a non-profit, non-partisan research organization.

- Substance abuse
 - Self-control
- } Per Child Trends (risk factors with moderate-high association with violence)
-
- Attention deficits, hyperactivity, learning disorders
 - History of early aggression
 - Deficits in social cognitive or information processing abilities
 - Substance abuse
 - Poor behavioral control
 - Anti-social beliefs and attitudes
 - High emotional distress
 - Low IQ
 - History of violent victimization
- } CDC

How well does SYVPI programming respond to individual risk factors?

SYVPI’s programming does not directly address many of the risk factors listed above. While SYVPI is almost exclusively focused on individual youth, much of its programming seeks to provide and engage youth in “pro-social activities” rather than address the specific risk factors outlined above.

Perhaps SYVPI’s most salient programming related to the individual risk factors noted above is the Aggression Replacement Training (ART) program. ART is a 10-week evidenced-based program that provides training in social skills, anger control and moral reasoning. It employs Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) principles and has been shown to reduce a youth’s risk of recidivating when implemented with fidelity²². ART is only expected to serve approximately 38 SYVPI youth a year and receives the least amount of program funding. According to the MEF report, most SYVPI youth who participate in ART are referred by their school, which sometimes require students to enroll in a behavior modification course as part of disciplinary action.

²¹Moore, KA., Stratford, B., Caal, S., Hickman, DT., Schmitz, H., Thompson, J., Horton, S., Shaw, A., *Preventing Violence, A review of Research, Evaluation, Gaps, and Opportunities*, Child Trends, February 2015, p. i

²² Washington State Community Juvenile Accountability Act and Quality Assurance Committee, Evidence Based Programs Effective Practices, January 2011.

SYVPI also has three other program components that *may* indirectly address some of the above individual risk factors (though without further review, this is largely speculative). These three program components, Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring, case management, and street outreach, are described briefly below.

- Big Brothers Big Sisters: Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program supports positive youth development by providing youth with a caring adult role model. Although it is not directly focused on addressing problematic youth behaviors related to violence, the mentoring approach used by Big Brothers Big Sisters has been shown to have a positive impact on youth behaviors.
- Case management: Case managers help connect youth to services and have been described as “life coaches” and “mentors”. SYVPI funds 14.5 case managers through various community based organizations with a capacity to collectively serve 319 SYVPI youth at any point in time. This constitutes approximately 21% of the 1,500 SYVPI youth who can be enrolled in SYVPI.

SYVPI does not have consistent criteria or written protocols in place to guide decisions about which youth are referred to case management. The MEF Report noted that SYVPI providers suggested youth are referred to case management if they have issues with school, are court-involved, or need “out of network services”, such as mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment. Thus, SYVPI youth assigned to a case manager youth should, at least in theory, have an increased likelihood of being connected to needed services to address behavioral health or substance abuse issues. SYVPI, however, does not have a reliable tracking system in place to systematically monitor youth and ensure they receive and complete needed services

- Street Outreach: SYVPI funds six street outreach workers through the YMCA’s street outreach program. Street outreach workers attempt to develop relationships with harder to serve youth involved in gangs, violence, and the juvenile justice system. The goal is to develop a trusting relationship so outreach workers can eventually persuade youth to engage in needed services. Currently, street outreach workers generate the majority of their own referrals (as opposed to receiving referrals from SYVPI’s Network Coordinators). The six outreach workers have a total caseload of 90 youth who can be served at any point in time.

It is unclear to what extent these programs are connecting youth with needed therapeutic services. It can be a significant challenge to persuade teens to engage in these types of services, especially outside the context of family or school involvement. Moreover, since SYVPI’s programming consists primarily of pro-social activities, behavior and mental health related services would typically be provided “out of network”. SYVPI providers, however, do not consistently track out-of-network services in SYVPI’s database, so it is not possible to obtain reliable information on the extent to which youth have been successfully connected to these services.

2. SYVPI investments related to family domain risk factors

The following risk factors associated with a youth’s family have been linked to youth violence.

- child maltreatment
 - harsh parenting
 - parental drug use
 - parent mental health
- } Child Trends (risk factors with moderate-high association with violence)
-
- poor monitoring and supervision of children
 - low parental involvement
 - poor family functioning
 - poor parent-child emotional attachment
 - parent criminality
 - low parental income and education
- } CDC

How well does SYVPI programming respond to family risk factors?

SYVPI does not fund any direct services for parents or families, though some of the non-profit agencies contracted to serve SYVPI youth also have therapeutic services available for the broader community. In theory, these agencies could offer “out-of-network” services (non-SYVPI contracted services) to families of SYVPI youth. Discussions with SYVPI staff, however, suggest family outreach is inconsistent and occurs infrequently, so it’s unclear how families would be connected to out-of-network services offered by SYVPI providers.

At least one case management agency contracted to serve SYVPI youth conducts home visits for youth assigned to their caseload, but most case management agencies have no policies or protocols in place for doing home visits and many indicated they prefer not to do them. That said, even if SYVPI created a more formal family engagement strategy, this would not address the family-related risk factors outlined above. Moreover, it’s unclear if SYVPI’s current delivery model could be effectively modified to be responsive to family related risk factors.

Given the myriad and unique needs of families at different points in time, adopting a “systems perspective” may be more effective than a singular program. This would require the City and various providers and partners to strengthen and increase referral pathways and align and coordinate evidenced-based services and programs that are responsive to a variety of needs and situations, e.g. parenting classes, mental health and substance abuse treatment, education and employment services, etc. These services would not only address several of the risk factors noted above, but produce various benefits beyond violence prevention.

3. SYVPI investments related to school domain risk factors

Youth under 18 years spend a great deal of time in school. School environments can have a significant impact on youth, both in terms of their feelings of attachment towards school, peer group formation, and academic performance. Risk factors associated with the school domain include:

- bullying perpetration
 - school connectedness
 - school climate
 - anti-social peers
- } Child Trends (risk factors with moderate-high association with violence)
-
- low commitment to school
 - school failure
 - social rejection by peers
 - lack of involvement in conventional activities
 - gang involvement
 - association with delinquent peers
- } CDC

How well does SYVPI programming respond to school risk factors?

While SYVPI recruits youth from central and south end schools, SYVPI providers have varied and inconsistent relationships with specific schools in their networks. Several SYVPI providers identified a close working relationship between one particular middle school and an SYVPI network, but this is not the norm. And while some case managers and SYVPI providers report helping youth with individual goals related to academic performance, SYVPI is inherently limited-- through no fault of its own-- in what it can do to address the bulk of school domain risk factors.

Successful strategies to address school climate and connectedness will require the consistent implementation of school-based curricula related to behavioral expectations and youth problem-solving skills. It will also involve whole-school transformation efforts designed to reduce suspensions and expulsions and minimize their adverse impacts on youth. Thus, individual external efforts to assist youth with school-related risk factors will have limited impact if larger school climate and discipline issues are not addressed at the school/district level.

C. SYVPI operational and program design issues

The preceding sections identified gaps in SYVPI programming relative to the crime data findings and the various risk factors associated with youth offending. This next section outlines several operational and program design concerns raised about SYVPI over the years. Moving forward, the City will need to decide whether to invest additional resources to fix these issues, or whether to reconsider its current approach as part of a broader overhaul of the City's youth violence prevention investments.

SYVPI's strengths include the following:

- SYVPI has done a good job building strong relationships between the City and Federal agencies that work in youth violence prevention. As a result of these outreach efforts, the City has been invited to become part of the National Forum for Youth Violence Prevention.
- SYVPI has been pro-active in pursuing additional grants and forming research partnerships, including work with University Washington researchers to create a risk assessment tool.
- SYVPI has excelled in enrolling African American/Black youth into the initiative and working with a diverse mix of community based organizations who are passionate about their work.

Over the years, however, the City Council's policy staff and the Office of the City Auditor have raised questions about SYVPI's ability to prevent youth violence. These questions were largely prompted by the following concerns:

1. Several components of SYVPI's programs and services have weak or no connection to evidenced-based violence prevention strategies and much of SYVPI's programming is focused on youth development opportunities, such as jobs, recreation, and mentoring (which should, theoretically, be available to all youth in the City).
2. SYVPI's average costs per enrolled youth are high, approximately \$8,125 per youth²³. (In contrast, a promising Cognitive Behavior Therapy intervention in Chicago costs \$1,200 per youth.)
3. SYVPI has been unable to articulate a plausible and consistent theory of change that demonstrates a link between SYVPI's activities and programming and its selected outcome measures (reduction in juvenile court referrals and school suspension rates). That is, it's difficult to see how SYVPI's approach and activities directly exerts a positive influence on these selected outcomes. These outcome measures, moreover, are impacted by a variety of external actors, policies, and conditions, many of which have more direct influence over these outcomes than SYVPI. Yet various iterations of SYVPI's theory of change do not account for this or attempt to identify what SYVPI's unique contribution may be in reducing violence.

²³ Based on 3,200 unduplicated youth served and \$26 million spent or budgeted from 2009- 2015

Consequently, in 2013, the City Council directed the City Auditor Office to hire an independent evaluator to assess the feasibility of conducting a rigorous evaluation of SYVPI. In October 2014, the City Auditor released a report authored by MEF Associates (referred to herein as the “MEF report”) that identified a host of problems related to SYVPI’s program design and implementation²⁴. Many of the observations documented in the MEF report echoed the City Council’s initial concerns and have implications that extend beyond the question of SYVPI’s evaluability.

Specifically, the MEF report found SYVPI:

- Does not clearly explain how its program design and various components exert influence over the desired outcomes.
- Is unsubstantiated with empirical evidence that clearly defines and measures the problem it seeks to address.
- Lacks an infrastructure of policies, procedures and mechanisms to implement a systematic and holistic approach, one that includes a systematized referral, intake, and assessment process, matching of clients with appropriate services, and an exit procedure.²⁵

While the MEF report focused on whether SYVPI had the necessary structure in place to be evaluated (it concluded it did not), the questions raised in the report have implications that extend beyond SYVPI’s evaluability. One primary question raised in the MEF report is whether SYVPI as a whole is greater than the sum of its separate services and programs:

“Our work suggests that, despite the intended function of the Networks – to coordinate services, components, and local resources – we observed a lack of communication across Networks and a lack of a unified infrastructure that is consistently applied to all Networks and providers. This limits SYVPI’s ability to function as a singular initiative as opposed to serving as a provider of discrete services.”²⁶

Here, MEF Associates is questioning the effectiveness of SYVPI’s network approach, which is intended to coordinate youth services and track youth across providers. In practice, however, MEF Associates observed a lack of communication and consistency between networks, calling into question the coordination function of the networks.

The MEF report also identified a host of additional SYVPI operational issues, including:

- Vague and expansive entry criteria
- Limited tracking of youth across providers
- Varying and poorly defined approaches to client exits

²⁴ Glosser, A., Et Al.

²⁵ Glosser, A, Et. Al., p. 18

²⁶Glosser, A., Et. Al., p. Overview-2

- Misalignment between service mix and logic model
- Lack of data systems to track outcomes and ensure adherence to initiative wide standards

In addition, SYVPI requires youth to meet certain criteria and undergo a risk assessment to enroll in SYVPI. This might make sense if SYVPI's services were specifically tailored to the needs of individual youth and focused on addressing violence-related risk factors. However, because many SYVPI services (employment, recreation, mentoring, etc.) could benefit all types of youth, regardless of risk level for violent offending, it's unclear why a risk assessment is needed for youth to receive these services. Indeed, many services provided by SYVPI are available to Seattle youth through other means. That is, many Seattle youth have access to similar services, or even the same programming, without being enrolled in SYVPI, including the Seattle Youth Employment Program, mentoring, recreation, and case management²⁷. Even in cases where services may be unique to SYVPI, it's not clear a network approach, where youth must first enroll in a network before accessing services, is the most efficient delivery model, especially if systematic coordination and tracking between program providers is absent. For example, street outreach workers generate almost all of their own referrals, yet youth must first enroll in SYVPI via the networks before they can access street outreach services. This represents an extra “hoop” for youth to jump through.

Concluding Observations on SYVPI

While it's often possible to fix operational problems if the leadership, will, and capacity to do so exists, the City will need to consider whether it should “double down” on SYVPI's current program model. SYVPI has been operating for nearly seven years and has yet to establish consistent operational protocols and metrics that would allow it to systematically track youth across providers, readily measure program participation and completion rates at an individual and programmatic level, establish consistent exit criteria, etc. Moreover, significant resources will be needed to address the operational issues that currently render SYVPI unevaluable.

Of greatest concern, however, are conceptual flaws with SYVPI's underlying program design, which cannot be addressed solely through operational fixes. The MEF report found SYVPI's service mix lacked cohesion and consisted of services that were cobbled together primarily because they had already existed-- as opposed to being the most appropriate mix of services for addressing youth violence. As stated in the MEF report:

Our fieldwork raises concerns regarding the appropriateness of the various programmatic components included in SYVPI. While we heard from SYVPI management and staff that the goals... included a reduction of community-level youth violence, the services provided... center more on the personal development of individual youth.

The service mix offered through SYVPI does not offer one cohesive model of programing that focuses on, for example, decreasing

²⁷ Also provided by the City and/or other non-profits and youth serving organizations in Seattle.

suspensions and expulsions or decreasing community-level violence. As told to us by multiple staff and practitioners, the host of services included in SYVPI was pieced together because most had already existed in some form within the communities identified at the time of the development of SYVPI, or the programs already had city funding via other types of programs... thus many of the programs were included under the umbrella of SYVPI services due to convenience.²⁸

Aside from the findings in the MEF report, there are other reasons, perhaps even more compelling, for the City to re-consider its approach to youth violence prevention. Specifically, the City's current approach lacks an overall strategic vision that:

1. Effectively accounts for the complexity of the problem and the broader eco-system in which youth live and learn, i.e., families, schools, communities
2. Coordinates and aligns the City's own investments and actions across departments
3. Fully considers the roles and responsibilities of external partners

That said, certain characteristics of SYVPI programming may be worth retaining in some form, e.g., Aggression Replacement Training and mentoring. In addition, SYVPI has done an outstanding job enrolling a large number of Black/African American youth. Given the disproportionate representation of African American/Black youth in the criminal justice system, coupled with documented disparities in education, income, and health, a continued focus on African American/Black youth (and other youth of color) will remain paramount. The City, however, may want to consider a different delivery model that would enable youth to directly connect to needed or desired services rather than being required to enroll via a network, which may in some cases pose more of a barrier to certain services rather than a facilitator.

²⁸ Glosser, A, Et. Al., p. 23

IV. Promising prevention strategies & evidenced-based programs

This next section outlines the elements of a successful youth violence prevention strategy. It also identifies several specific evidenced-based programs thought to be effective in preventing youth violence.

A. General strategies to address youth violence

While the knowledge base continues to evolve, an ample body of research on effective youth violence prevention strategies has accrued over the years. A public health approach to prevent youth violence has gained widespread credibility and traction among researchers and practitioners alike. A public health approach posits that youth violence can be prevented before it occurs. Adopting such an approach also underscores that no single government entity or stand-alone program can effectively address the myriad facets associated with youth violence. Thus, stakeholders (schools, courts, law enforcement, public health, local and regional governments, social services, and community based organizations) are encouraged to coordinate and align specific evidenced-based strategies along the “spectrum of prevention” continuum to increase information sharing, avoid costly and inefficient service duplication, and ensure gaps are covered²⁹.

Spectrum of Prevention



The spectrum of prevention includes two general areas of action:

- Strategies that stop youth violence before it occurs.
- Strategies that respond to youth violence after it occurs.

Within these two broad areas are gradations for action, often distinguished by primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention strategies. Research indicates certain personal characteristics, risk factors, and

²⁹ The term “spectrum of prevention” is used in a variety of public health contexts and includes different models depending on the context. The “Spectrum of Prevention” graphic contained herein is modeled after one contained in the City of Minneapolis’ youth violence prevention strategic plan and is used primarily for illustrative purposes.

trauma can all play a part in why a youth may become involved in violent offending and behavior (see Appendix B for more information). A large body of research also identifies programs and strategies thought to be effective in responding to these challenges. Several online clearing houses consolidate and disseminate information on effective, evidenced-based interventions. In general, the CDC believes a successful youth violence prevention strategy will comprise the following:

- Strategies and policies that promote safe and healthy institutions and settings in which young people grow and develop, e.g. schools, homes, communities. (In other words, not just focusing on individual youth).
- Leadership from different stakeholders with varying skills, perspectives, and areas of expertise.
- Evidence-based prevention approaches found to be effective through rigorous evaluation.

In terms of the last point, in order for a program or strategy to be deemed “evidenced-based”, it should undergo several rigorous evaluations in different settings with different participants. As noted by the CDC, several youth violence prevention programs have met this test:

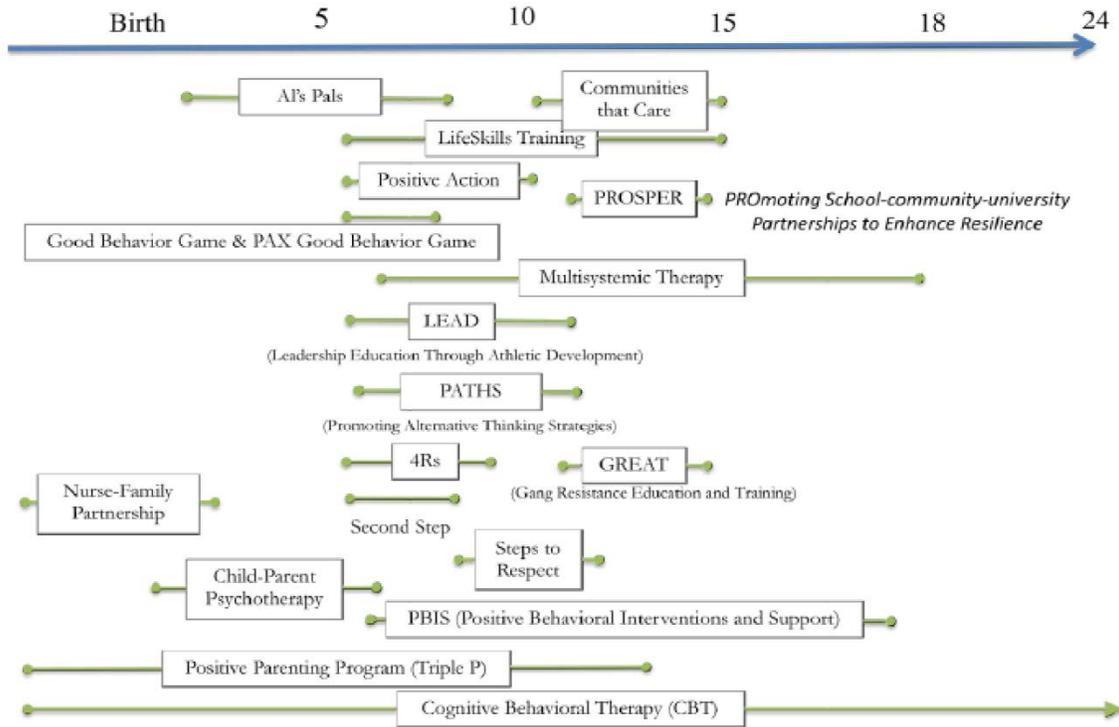
“A strong and growing research base demonstrates there are multiple approaches to preventing youth violence that are cost-effective, scientifically supported, and proven to work.”

The National Forum for Youth Violence Prevention (NFYVP), a consortium of communities and federal agencies committed to reducing youth violence, encourages similar strategies. The NFYVP states the following three principles are necessary to have an impact and make the most of limited resources.

- Multidisciplinary partnerships are key to tackling this complex issue – police, educators, public health and other service providers, faith and community leaders, parents, and kids, must all be at the table.
- Communities must balance and coordinate their prevention, intervention, enforcement and reentry strategies.
- Data and evidence- driven strategies must inform efforts to reduce youth violence.

B. Evidenced-based interventions

Once an overarching strategy is developed, the next step will be to select specific evidenced-based programs and interventions to address the identified priorities. The Child Trends graphic below highlights several evidenced-based programs to address various risk factors associated with youth violence.



According to the CDC, the more effective youth violence prevention programs entail behavior modification interventions for youth (problem-solving, impulse control, and anger management skills) and relationship-building interventions between caregivers and children³⁰. Universal school based prevention programs, such as Life Skills Training and Good Behavior Game, teach conflict resolution skills and change how youth think about violence. Evidenced-based programs that fall under this domain can result in a 15% reduction in violent behavior³¹.

Evidenced-based programs focused on improving parenting practices include Strengthening Families, the Incredible Years, and Guiding Good Choices. In addition, nurse-family partnership, a home visitation program for low-income first time mothers that promotes parent-child bonding and healthy parenting practices, garners frequent mention in the literature as having secondary benefits on reducing youth violence. The Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) has calculated the benefit-costs of several programs included in the Child Trends graphic and found a positive return on investment for many. For example, WSIPP estimated that for every dollar spent on Life Skills Training, \$11.50 is saved on avoided downstream costs³².

³⁰ CDC Grand Rounds: Preventing Youth Violence, February 27, 2015, p2

³¹ David-Ferdon C, Simon TR, Preventing Youth Violence: Opportunities for Action, p12

³² David-Ferdon C, Simon TR, Preventing Youth Violence: Opportunities for Action, p27

Many effective interventions that target individual youth behavior are based on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) techniques, which have been shown to be effective in addressing impulse control issues, one of the primary risk factors in the Individual Domain. Two Chicago non-profits developed an in-school and after-school program called Becoming a Man (BAM) that is grounded in these principles. BAM specifically aims to address “social cognitive skills”, including emotional regulation and interpersonal problem solving. A recent randomized control trial by the Chicago Crime lab indicates it is a promising strategy for reducing youth violence (and relatively inexpensive at \$1,100 per participant).

Other strategies

Research on other types of programming and interventions is mixed; that is, some research found a positive link between violence reduction and certain types of programming while other research did not. Areas where this is the case include youth employment, street outreach and gang intervention programs.

Employment

To date, the bulk of research on the effectiveness of youth employment as a violence prevention strategy has been mixed. If done well, youth employment can have positive effects, but context and details matter. A recent Chicago study found that youth who participated in a summer employment program, where they worked 25 hours a week for eight weeks, experienced reductions in violent offending compared to youth who were not in the program³³. The number of arrests for property crimes, drugs, and other nonviolent offenses did not differ between the two groups, however, and no differences were found in school performance. Yet, given the reduction in violent offending, the researcher involved in the study found the results “encouraging”. The researcher also stressed the need for youth jobs to provide meaningful experiences, that is, youth jobs should come with high expectations and responsibility: “Youth are smart... They know when you’re making work for them just for the sake of doing work. And you must imagine that that’s a lot less rewarding...”³⁴

Moreover, employment programs for youth should be designed to strengthen the youth’s commitment to school, or at least not weaken it. For example, working long hours during the school year could have negative effects on academic performance and participation in after school activities. King County Juvenile Court staff also identified potential issues with employment for youth already involved in juvenile offending. Some youth may delay dealing with difficult issues, like substance abuse treatment, if they are distracted by a job. Or, a job may interfere with other important goals court-involved youth need to focus on, such as re-enrollment in school. In these cases, employment may be more appropriate as a reward for progress made towards other goals, as opposed to an intervention strategy in and of itself.

³³ Heller, Sara B, Summer jobs reduce violence among disadvantaged youth, Science, December 5, 2014

³⁴ <http://www.chicagomag.com/city-life/December-2014/How-a-Chicago-Summer-Job-Program-Reduced-Violent-Crime>

Gang Interventions

According to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), some gang intervention strategies that focus on individual gang members and/or on the community have shown promise while others have been shown to be ineffective. Interventions that involve people working directly with gang members on the street to provide counseling and advocacy have been shown to either be ineffective or increase gang crime (called a backfire effect)³⁵. The BJA notes that the more effective gang intervention models will involve police, outreach workers, and probation officers who “team up” to work intensively with gang-involved youth³⁶. In addition, the CDC underscores the necessity of preventing youth from joining gangs in the first place by adopting prevention strategies that address youth problem-solving skills, family functioning, academic performance, school safety, and violence in the home and community.

Business Improvement Districts

According to the CDC, Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) have shown some success in reducing crime. BID’s work by addressing aspects of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, (CPTED), which posits that changes in the physical environment, such as neighborhood order and maintenance, formal and informal social control, and community cohesion, can reduce violent crime.

V. Potential opportunities for action

This section outlines potential opportunities the City may want to consider when designing a more comprehensive youth violence prevention strategy. It also identifies, in general terms, related investments the City is already making. This section is organized as follows:

- A. Sample primary, secondary, and tertiary youth violence prevention strategies implemented by a variety of stakeholders in a community.
- B. Current City investments (in addition to SYVPI) that may have a direct or indirect impact on violence prevention.
- C. Potential areas of opportunity for the City.

A. Sample primary, secondary, tertiary prevention strategies

A brief list of “sample” youth violence prevention strategies follows. It should not be considered inclusive or exhaustive. Several sample strategies fall outside the City’s direct sphere of influence. Thus, the City’s ability to impact this issue in a comprehensive way is partly dependent on the actions of other stakeholders. The City may want to consider how it can best support and influence these stakeholders to adopt appropriate actions; alternatively, the City may decide to focus resources on those activities where it has more direct control.

³⁵ <https://www.bja.gov/evaluation/program-crime-prevention/gangs2.htm>

³⁶ In October 2015, the Office of the City Auditor released recommendations for improving SYVPI’s Street Outreach programming and also included additional research on effective gang prevention and intervention strategies.

Sample Prevention Strategies

(not City specific, assumes other partners)

Domains	Sample Primary Prevention Strategies Stop Problems from Developing
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teach children problem solving, conflict resolution and socio-emotional skills at an early age b. Provide high quality pro-social out-of-school activities for all youth regardless of income, including recreation and skill-building activities, academic support, and job training that reinforces the importance of educational credentials
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Promote healthy parenting practices and strong parent-child bonding via Nurse-Family Partnership and other evidenced-based interventions d. Provide access to teen health services and birth control to reduce unintended teen pregnancies e. Increase access to socio-economic opportunities to support strong families and future parents f. Ensure parents and caregivers who may need extra help with parenting and supervision skills have access to relevant services, e.g., Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Implement school-wide transformation efforts that pro-actively set consistent behavioral expectations resulting in a positive school climate and declines in school discipline h. Ensure all youth graduating from high school have a clear path forward for college or career i. Provide a set of consistent academic and mental health supports across all schools
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> j. Improve relationships between law enforcement and teens k. Support improvements in community efficacy and socio-economic opportunities l. Reduce access to firearms
	Sample Secondary Prevention Strategies Early Detection & Response
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify youth with substance abuse issues and connect them to treatment b. Provide cognitive behavioral therapy for youth who are exhibiting aggressive behavior, or who are having problems with impulse control, classroom disruption, and risky-decision-making c. Ensure appropriate counseling and trauma-based care is available for youth who have suffered from a traumatic event or situation
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Create strong referral pathways (schools, faith-based organizations, primary care providers) to identify parents who need substance abuse and/or mental health treatment e. Coordinate and align services and programming to address family dysfunction and poor parenting practices and identify ways in which families can be connected to services f. Provide Functional Family Therapy, Multi-systemic Therapy, and other evidenced-based intervention services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system*
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. Strengthen early warning systems to identify students needing more academic support or are at risk of dropping out h. Create a system of strategies and supports to re-engage students who have dropped out i. Implement tiered school-wide behavioral based prevention and intervention programming, such as Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS), to identify and help students in need of more intensive behavioral interventions
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> j. Implement a mix of placed-based community and law enforcement strategies in high-crime or hot spot locations
	Sample Tertiary Prevention Strategies Rehabilitation & Reintegration
	Mobilize interdisciplinary, collaborative leadership teams convened by corrections agencies to guide reentry efforts
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Offer services and job training to detainees prior to release b. Provide intensive post-release services for at least six months to those who need additional support, including job training, housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment c. Focus not just on job acquisition but retention as well
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Involve family members in transition efforts where possible
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Connect individuals to vocational training and college
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Work with the faith community to help with re-integration g. Have a strong network of potential employers to call upon

*King County Juvenile Court provides these services now. They are noted here to underscore these are evidenced-based programs.

B. Current City investments

The following section provides a brief description of related City's investments by domain. As services associated with SYVPI were discussed earlier, this section primarily focuses on other City investments. Similar to observations about SYVPI, some of these City investments do not directly address specific risk factors associated with youth violence but instead provide "pro-social" opportunities for youth.

1. Current City investments related to primary prevention

The City has several investments in programming that could be considered primary prevention, though many of these are not specifically focused on youth violence prevention.

Pro-social activities/Recreation: The City's Department of Parks and Recreation offers a wide variety of recreation and skill building programming and partners closely with many Seattle Public Schools to provide out-of-school time activities. The City's Families and Education levy (F&E) also provides some funding for sports activities at certain schools. HSD also funds several positive youth development programs specific to Seattle's South Park Neighborhood.

Job training and employment: Several City departments offer job training, internships, and service learning opportunities for youth, primarily during the summer months.

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP): NFP is an evidenced-based intervention for first time low-income mothers. It entails frequent home visits between a nurse and a first time mother, beginning before birth and continuing for two years. NFP has been shown to be effective in promoting positive parenting practices and healthy parent-child bonding when fidelity to the program model is followed.

Family Resource Centers (FRC): HSD oversees contracts for six FRC's in Seattle. The FRC's are intended to promote healthy families through parenting classes and support groups, parent-child play groups, resource and referral, family advocacy and community engagement events. While open to all, the FRC's primarily serve low-income families of color, including immigrant and refugee families. Four FRC's also provide services for pregnant and parenting teens.

Seattle Preschool Program: Seattle's new preschool program is intended to provide high quality all day preschool with free tuition for families earning less than 300% of the federal poverty level. The preschool program is in the early demonstration phase, with 2,000 children expected to be served by 2018.

Families and Education (F&E) Levy: The City's Department of Education and Early Learning manages the Families and Education levy, which provides supplemental funding to Seattle Public Schools with the goal of improving academic achievement and closing the achievement gap. The Families and Education Levy also helps support United Way's Parent Child Home Program which is a home visiting program for 2-3 year olds focused on early literacy.

Teen Health Clinics at Seattle Public Schools: The Families and Education Levy contributes approximately \$5 million in annual funding for 26 school-based health clinics, which are managed by Public Health Seattle King County (PHSKC). The school-based health clinics are located in ten comprehensive high schools, seven middle schools (including a K-8), six elementary schools, Seattle World School, NOVA, and the Interagency Academy. The Middle and high schools are generally staffed with one full-time mental health provider (licensed clinical social worker), one full-time medical provider, and one full-time clinic care coordinator. The elementary schools do not have full-time staff.

Business Improvement Areas (BIAs): There are currently ten BIA's in the city, which are supported by the Office of Economic Development.

2. Current City investments related to secondary prevention

Once youth and families start to exhibit risk factors associated with violence, including family dysfunction, parent mental health problems, or youth involvement in violent offenses, other jurisdictions and stakeholders may become involved, including the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Child Protective Services, Seattle-King County Public Health (for alcohol/drug and mental health treatment and services), King County Juvenile Court, and school administrators. That said, some of the City investments outlined below may be considered appropriate secondary interventions, though they are not specifically focused on youth violence. Most would appear to be related to or address individual-level risk factors.

Youth/family mental health support: HSD provides funding for culturally appropriate mental health services for youth and their families who are not Medicaid eligible or do not have private insurance. HSD contracts with community-based agencies to “provide services at their offices, in community settings and in middle and high schools in Central, South and West Seattle. Mental health services are coordinated with case management, academic support, and other forms of assistance to youth and their families.”³⁷

Case Management: Both DEEL (via the Families and Education Levy and SYVPI) and HSD contract with various non-profit agencies to provide case management services to youth who need help accessing services and navigating various systems.

Mental health support for Seattle preschool students: The Seattle Preschool Program includes supplemental funding for students who may need additional mental health support.

School-based health clinics: The school-based health centers, which receive 2/3 of their funding from Seattle's Families and Education levy, provide on-site mental health counselors.

³⁷ 2015 Youth and Family Empowerment Book of Business, Seattle Human Service Department

Restorative justice pilot project for young adults 18- 24: The Seattle City Attorney's Office is currently sponsoring a restorative justice pilot program for young adult misdemeanor offenders between 18- 24 years.

Partnership with Harborview Medical Center: The City will be providing funds to Harborview's Injury Prevention & Research Center to pilot a hospital-based intervention for gun-shot wound victims. Earlier Harborview research indicated approximately 110 individuals are admitted to King County hospitals for gunshot wounds each year. Harborview found that gunshot wound victims are at increased risk of re-hospitalization for another firearm related or assault-related injury, future criminal offending, and being murdered within five years after their initial hospitalization. Intervening with this relatively small number of individuals has the potential to reduce their disproportionately high risk of recidivism, violence, and crime perpetration.

3. Current City investments related to tertiary prevention

Between 2011- 2014, the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) released approximately 400 adults annually in Seattle; many were involved in violent offenses. 91% were male. Only 44% of those released were supervised. Approximately 18% were homeless. HSD oversees two program areas that serve individuals over 18 years who have been involved in the criminal justice system (not necessarily violent crime offending). These include:

GOTS, CURB, Co-STARS: These three programs serve adults 18 years and over who have a history of involvement with the criminal justice system including involvement with drugs, the sex industry or gang-related activities; are struggling with chemical dependency and mental health conditions; and are homeless. HSD contracts for services with three non-profit organizations that provide access to treatment, recovery services, housing, employment and training and case management support. The City's total annual investment is approximately \$1 million. Collectively, these investments serve 175 adults per year.

Career Bridge: Career Bridge was created to connect African-American men and other men of color who experience multiple barriers to employment, education and training with jobs, and other necessary support. Many Career Bridge participants have been involved in the criminal justice system. HSD contracts with the Seattle Urban League to implement the program. Career Bridge's annual budget is approximately \$400,000. It serves 50 new adults per year plus 60 -90 carry-over participants.

C. Moving forward: potential areas of opportunity for the City

The following list identifies potential areas of opportunity for the City in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. To the extent that some actions listed below are already being implemented, they are listed here if potential actions can be taken to improve current efforts.

1. Primary prevention opportunities

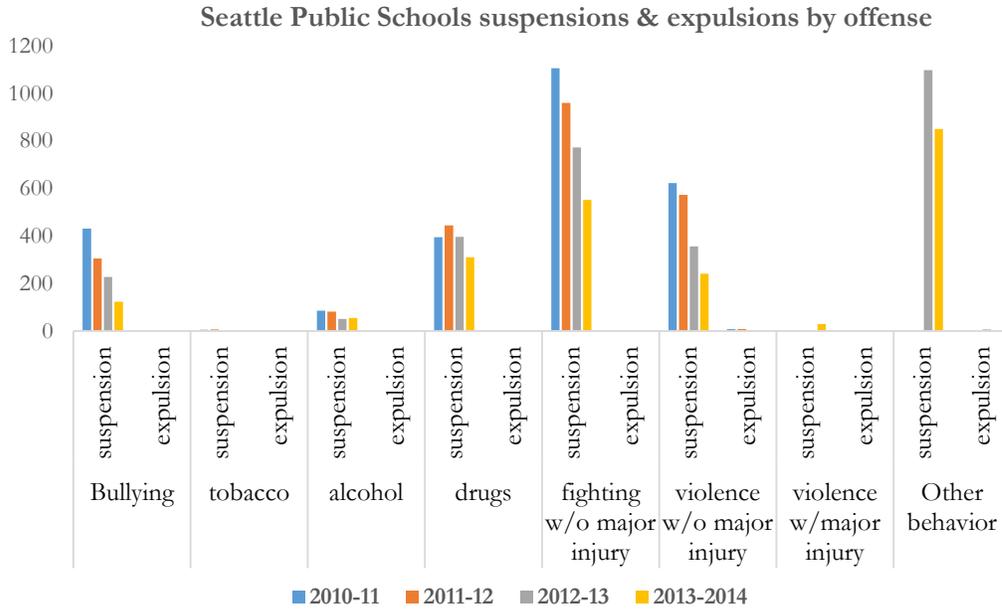
Potential primary prevention partners include:

- Seattle Public Schools
 - Seattle-King County Public Health
 - private and non-profit health care providers
 - non-profits and community-based organizations serving youth and/or families
 - faith based organizations
 - private foundations
- a. Ensure all youth, regardless of income, have access to out-of-school-time recreation opportunities: This could include the following activities:
- Review the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) outreach efforts to low-income youth and families and make improvements as necessary.
 - Evaluate DPR’s current strategies to obtain youth input into programming, ensuring feedback is collected regularly and systematically via diverse channels from families and youth of various ages with the goal of offering relevant and compelling out of school time programming.
 - Inventory DPR partnerships with Seattle Public Schools to ensure all interested students have access to recreational activities after school and during the summer.
 - Explore if there are ways to increase access for youth who qualify for free and reduced price lunch without filling out scholarship applications for individual programs.
 - Assess DPR policies to ensure they are not inadvertently preventing barriers to access. For example, DPR currently requires youth who attend late-night activities to have a photo-ID on hand. Some police officers reported this requirement reduces the number of youth participating in late night programming and is unnecessarily burdensome given officers are on-site.
- b. Continually work to strengthen the safety net for low-income families. This does not necessarily entail a new program per se, but better coordination and alignment of existing services and referral points for financial assistance, job training, crisis intervention, mental health treatment, housing services, etc. Adding new programs and services is sometimes the easier thing to do, but even when there is adequate funding, identifying, engaging, and *successfully* connecting families to existing services remains an on-going challenge.

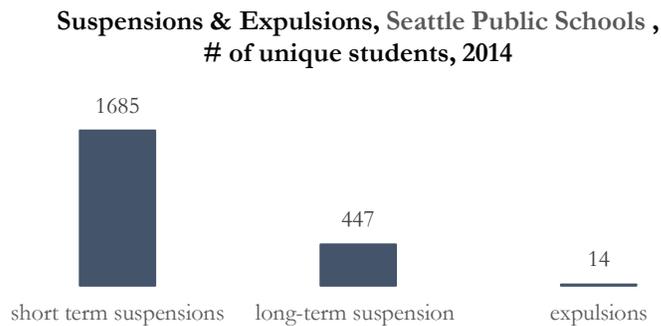
- c. Ensure Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is reaching all eligible low-income first time mothers. Seattle's NFP program has funding for 408 expectant mothers at any point in time. However, Public Health- Seattle King County (PHSKC), which administers the program on behalf of Seattle, has not been able to fully fill these slots. This is not due to a lack of demand. PHSKC estimates approximately 900 eligible low-income mothers in Seattle could benefit from NFP. But while PHSKC is currently reaching approximately 86% of eligible mother's 17 years and younger in Seattle (a superb take-up rate for this population), it has had trouble expanding beyond teen mothers. According to PHSKC staff, the primary challenge has been developing robust referral pathways, which PHSKC is working to address. The City should closely monitor PHSKC's progress to fully fill the current number of funded slots and once this has been achieved, assess any outstanding gaps.
- d. Inventory existing family and parent support services provided by the City and its partners that seek to promote and build healthy parent-child relationships. Consider investing in family focused evidenced-based programs, such as Triple P, if these are not already available. Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) is an evidenced-based program that provides parenting support and strategies for dealing with a range of behaviors for children from birth through their early teens. Some studies have found parents who use Triple P feel less depressed, stressed and use fewer harsh disciplinary techniques while other studies show Triple P slowed rates of child abuse and reduced foster care placements.
- e. Carefully track implementation of Seattle's Preschool Program (SPP). Scaling up a new, complex program is no easy task and there are sure to be bumps in the road and lessons to be learned. In general, the City should ensure it has systems in place to track its progress in growing the SPP so that course corrections and improvements are made in real-time.
- f. Ensure the Seattle Preschool Program has the necessary policies and training in place to support age-appropriate and fair and consistent discipline practices. The City is in a position to implement model policies across SPP providers to create welcoming, safe, and warm classroom environments in which positive behaviors are taught and modeled and discipline is age-appropriate and fairly and consistently applied.
- g. Review the City's Families and Education Levy investments to identify additional opportunities to support and encourage whole school transformation efforts at Seattle Public Schools with the goal of improving school climate, discipline practices and policies, and teacher-student relationships.

School discipline is an on-going concern within the community and SPS is currently under investigation by the Department of Education for disproportionate discipline rates involving students of color. The longer students are away from school, the more difficult it is to catch up and stay engaged upon return. Even a relatively short-time away could have adverse impacts on school performance. The graphs below, based on data from the Office of Superintendent of

Public Instruction, shows that suspensions and expulsions have been declining overall, but a large number of suspensions continue to involve unspecified “other” offenses.



In 2014, 1,695 students (out of 51,744 students who were enrolled as of October 2014) had short-term suspensions and nearly 51% of these students were suspended more than once. The average length for a short-term suspension was four days. 447 students had a long-term suspension and 15% of these students were suspended more than once. The average length of a long term suspension was 42 days.



Data Source: OSPI

- h. Consider providing support for schools to consistently implement evidenced-based curricula to reduce bullying, improve resistance to negative peer behaviors, promote healthy teen dating relationships, and reduce alcohol/drug abuse consumption. Some Seattle schools offer programs

to address these issues, but they are not consistently implemented across schools, nor does the District track which programs are implemented in what schools.

- i. Work with Public Health Seattle King County and school based health clinic providers to identify how health clinic staff can work with school administrators to create stronger referral pathways for youth in need of cognitive behavioral therapy and substance abuse treatment while partnering more closely with parents and caregivers.

According to Child Trends, research indicates that “...School Based Health Centers are a preferred access point for care for teens from racial and ethnic minorities..., as well as for teens seeking mental health services. Teens reported they were 10- 21 times more likely to seek mental health services at a school based health center than a traditional HMO or a community based organizations...”³⁸

- j. Consider expanding school-based health clinics to cover all elementary and middle schools, which could help ensure strong referral pathways to services for youth and families.
- k. Strengthen high school transition support: According to a Road Map Project report, few college and career supports exist for students who graduate from high school but do not enroll directly in postsecondary education.³⁹ Given that a large percentage of youth violent offending involves 18- 24 year olds, many of whom are likely not in school and not working, high school transition planning for this population is key. The City may want to explore partnership opportunities with Seattle Public Schools to see what can be done to support graduating high school students who are not college bound.
- l. Reduce access to illegal firearm possession: Between 2012- 2014, 74% of youth homicides in the City involved a firearm.
- m. Continuing to improve relationships between SPD and the community, especially with teens and young adults. This may involve specific training focused on police interactions with teenagers and training in teenage brain development.
- n. Review community-led place-based crime prevention strategies, similar to the effort implemented in Rainier Beach as part of a Department of Justice Byrne Justice Innovation Grant, to determine whether these strategies may be worth replicating in other Seattle neighborhoods.

³⁸ Moore, KA., Stratford, B., Caal, S., Hickman, DT., Schmitz, H., Thompson, J., Horton, S., Shaw, A., p.40

³⁹ The Road Map Project, Building a Regional System to Reconnect Opportunity Youth, p.3

2. Secondary prevention opportunities

When attachments to school and family start to fray, or when youth start to exhibit problematic behaviors, it is important to intervene early. Effective strategies will acknowledge and align with other institutions and relationships that impact youth. Many youth can be difficult to engage, thus, caregivers and schools should be involved whenever possible so that different leverage points can be used to exert positive influence.

Potential secondary prevention partners include:

- Interagency School (Seattle Public Schools)
 - Seattle-King County Public Health
 - State Department of Health and Human Services
 - King County Juvenile Court
 - King County and Seattle Prosecutor offices
 - private and non-profit health care providers
 - non-profits and community-based organizations serving youth and/or families
 - faith based organizations
- a. Work with partners to review referral and access points for youth who could benefit from substance abuse treatment to understand if and how connections are being made and appropriate services are available. One possible partner in this effort are school-based health centers.

As part of the OJJDP’s Pathways to Desistance study, researchers found substance abuse “stands out among the risk factors”. Moreover, having a substance abuse problem exacerbated other risk factors linked to offending⁴⁰. The study also found that treatment was more effective when family members were included and the process lasted more than three months.

- b. Identify possible partnership opportunities with Seattle Public Schools to provide on-site and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) interventions. CBT has been shown to be effective in addressing impulse control issues, one of the primary risk factors associated with youth violence. The City may want to explore with Seattle Public Schools whether and how to co-sponsor some type of school-based CBT classes or suite of CBT based services more consistently across schools to ensure all youth who could benefit from this service receive it. This work may involve reviewing promising practices elsewhere.

One program worth highlighting is Chicago’s Becoming a Man (BAM) program. BAM is an in-school dropout and violence prevention program for at-risk male students in grades 7- 12 in Chicago. According to the non-profit youth serving organization that developed the program,

⁴⁰ Slowikowski, J., OJJDP Juvenile Justice Fact Sheet, *Highlights from Pathways to Desistance: A longitudinal Study of Serious Adolescent Offenders*.

“BAM is grounded in research that shows a large share of homicides of Chicago youth stem from impulsive behavior – young people with access to guns “massively” over-reacting to some aspect of their social environment. This is consistent with a growing body of research showing that social-cognitive skills such as impulse control, future orientation, and conflict resolution are predictive of a wide range of key life outcomes such as school success and crime involvement.”

A randomized control trial by the University of Chicago found BAM reduced violent crime offending and increased school achievement. The Chicago Crime Lab website states that BAM costs approximately \$1,100 per youth.

- c. Strengthen City-funded case management services to ensure more consistent implementation of best practices, service quality, and youth experience with the goal of developing individualized case management plans that address specific risk factors⁴¹. Clarification and expectations in the following areas is recommended:
- Purpose and goals of case management, including a theory of change
 - Characteristics and presenting issues of youth who will benefit most from case management
 - Case worker’s roles, responsibilities, qualifications and experience levels
 - A rubric of what successful case management looks like at various stages of youth engagement, including how and when to successfully transition youth from case management
 - Creating a quality assurance process to ensure all youth have a consistent and positive experience when working with a case manager
- d. Consider developing case management approaches that would involve parents/families. Initial engagement would likely begin with the caregiver in these cases instead of the youth.
- e. Identify effective strategies for addressing juvenile domestic violence. Work with the Seattle Police Department, the City’s existing domestic violence experts, and King County (King County juvenile court and prosecutor’s office) to identify effective intervention strategies for juvenile domestic violence and clarify roles and responsibilities.
- f. Review referral and access points for parents who need substance abuse and mental health treatment to ensure these connections are being made and services are being provided.
- g. Ensure trauma based therapy interventions are available that address family dysfunction and/or improve parent-child bonding. One example is Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), an evidenced-based intervention for children from birth through age five who have experienced at least one traumatic event and as a result are experiencing behavior, attachment, and/or mental

⁴¹ Assuming this aspect of SYVPI is maintained

health problems. CPP is designed to restore the child's sense of safety and attachment and to improve the child's cognitive, behavioral, and social functioning by creating stronger parent-child bonds⁴².

- h. Work with Public Health Seattle King County to review existing mental health supports for youth and family. The region's mental health system has a reputation for being fragmented and underfunded and consequently, difficult to navigate and access.
- i. Determine how the City can best partner to support the Road Map Project's efforts to re-engage youth who have dropped out/are pushed out of school. Youth are entitled to state funds to help them obtain their degree until they are 21 years. The Roadmap Project is helping to support the creation of a regional entry, referral, and navigation system for these youth to take advantage of this funding entitlement but there are challenges with re-engaging these youth and designing appropriate educational programming and supports.
- j. Focus secondary prevention efforts on Interagency Academy students. One population that is likely at elevated risk for violence, either as victims or offenders, are students at Seattle Public School's Interagency (IA) Schools. In the past year, three IA students have died by homicide and three by suicide. Many IA students have multiple and overlapping risk factors for violence and other negative life outcomes, including low attachment to school and family, substance abuse issues, homelessness, and involvement with the juvenile justice system. There are ten IA sites across the City, mostly in downtown or south Seattle with two sites serving incarcerated or detained youth.
- k. Request the Seattle Police Department (SPD) monitor and disseminate youth crime data on at least an annual basis so that baseline data can be tracked and stakeholders involved in prevention and intervention strategies will have access to reliable data. While SPD has made progress in using more data to help inform policing efforts, it does not appear to collect key metrics on youth crime on a regular and consistent basis.
- l. Consider asking SPD to issue an annual report on the number and nature of youth homicides in the City. To the extent known, the report could address the circumstances surrounding each incident, such as location, relationship of victim and offender, victim and offender demographics, cause of death, etc. Given that some cases will be under active investigation still, the ability to publicize certain information associated with some cases may be limited. That said, an on-going accounting of even basic youth homicide data would be useful and the details of what this would consist of could be determined in collaboration with SPD.

⁴² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), National Registry of Evidenced-based Program and Practices, <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=194>

3. Tertiary prevention opportunities

Effective re-entry strategies should help youth and young adults successfully re-engage with their families, schools, and communities through education and job training/employment opportunities and a system of supports to address substance abuse, mental health, housing, and parenting assistance.

Partners in tertiary prevention efforts include:

- Washington State Department of Corrections (youth 18- 24 years)
 - King County Juvenile Court (youth under 18 years)
 - non-profits and community-based organizations serving youth and/or families
 - faith based organizations
- a. Work with Washington State DOC on re-entry alignment pilot. The Washington State Department of Corrections is currently working on a pilot project in King County to align and coordinate the myriad re-entry programs available in King County. According to a DOC representative involved in this effort, the problem is not so much a lack of re-entry programs, but a problem of quality, coordination, and alignment. Seattle has been invited to participate in this effort.
- b. Collaborate with King County Juvenile Court to identify potential gaps in services for youth on probation or who have been released after a stay in detention.
- c. Review the programming associated with GOTS, CURB, Co-Stars, including the theory of change and the metrics used to track success. Consider conducting an implementation evaluation to gauge how well the programs are being implemented and obtain some sense of how well they are meeting identified outcomes.

VI. General observation & conclusions

The following observations and conclusions speak more broadly to the City’s policymaking, program implementation, and service delivery efforts, which impact the efficacy of a range of City programming and policies, including youth violence prevention.

A. Consider role of systems coordination

1. Identifying and connecting youth and families with specific needs to appropriate services is an on-going challenge. This could be said about Seattle’s social service sector in general. Thus, improved coordination and alignment across the City and service providers would itself constitute an effective strategy for preventing youth violence if, for example, more caregivers had access to evidenced-based parenting interventions and mental health counseling when needed, or more youth with impulse control problems and poor decision-making skills are connected to cognitive behavioral therapy programs. In other words, creating an overarching strategy based on a systems perspective is needed, with specific evidenced-based interventions made available through a variety of referral pathways and providers.

B. Seek strategic partnerships

1. No single stand-alone program can prevent youth violence. Strategies and programs should recognize, and work in concert with, other institutions and stakeholders that play a role along the spectrum of prevention—schools, families, law enforcement, prosecutors, local and regional governments, community based organizations, non-profits, and youth.
2. Fostering and sustaining external partnerships is important, but equally important is the need for City departments to partner well with each other. Too often, departments don’t acknowledge or recognize areas of overlap. This creates redundancies, which are inherently inefficient.
3. When considering new programs and initiatives, the City should conduct an environmental scan to determine the extent to which other jurisdictions and/or agencies are already delivering services to the target population. Too often, the City only assesses gaps in services based on its own investments, without considering what external partners are doing. For example, over the last several months, City staff have mentioned a desire to ‘do more re-entry’ programming; yet Washington State DOC staff note the biggest challenge isn’t a lack of programs-- “if someone can’t find a re-entry program in King County, they aren’t looking hard enough”-- but a lack of alignment and coordination and to some extent, efficacy.
4. The City may do well to invest its limited resources in fewer areas along the prevention spectrum, bringing a concentrated focus to its efforts, as opposed to spreading limited dollars broadly and/or in a piecemeal fashion. This will require creating strategic partnerships in which other stakeholders assume lead responsibility and are held accountable for progress in those arenas that represent their area of expertise and in some cases, legal obligations.

5. The City's comparative advantage will be in its ability to leverage dollars to fund primary prevention strategies, such as creating access to high quality preschool, supporting strong families through programs like nurse-family partnership and Triple P, and promoting healthy youth development opportunities more generally. That said, as the City is also responsible for public safety, law enforcement responses should figure into any overarching strategy.
6. School-based prevention strategies are critical as this is where youth spend a great deal of their time learning, growing, and socializing. School wide strategies involving whole school transformation approaches to student behavior and discipline, as well as the more consistent implementation of specific school-based curricula, could have a significant long-term impact. Thus, while the relationship between the City and school district has its challenges, the benefits for overcoming these challenges are significant.

C. Build capacity for sound program design, monitoring, and evaluation practices within City and with City partners

1. The City lacks a central repository where staff can readily access current data on basic socio-economic, criminal justice, and equity indicators at a meaningful unit of analysis. This type of data is often needed to inform sound program planning. Yet City departments currently collect data in silos and usually for specific point-in-time purposes. It is often not widely shared and difficult to track down. This leads to constant re-invention of the wheel, which is time-consuming and duplicative. And while county-level data is often accessible from federal and state databases, there can be significant differences between Seattle and the county as a whole. Indeed, there can be significant differences between adjacent neighborhoods *within* Seattle. The City should consider creating a lean and dedicated staffing unit that can disseminate up-to-date, reliable data at a census block level (or some other meaningful unit of analysis) on a variety of indicators for use by all City departments.
2. The research recommends that organizations prioritize evidenced-based programs that have been shown to be effective in reducing youth violence. There may be, however, legitimate reasons for testing unproven ideas at times. When funding untested ideas, the City should pilot first and build-in a plan to monitor and evaluate upfront, which will help establish expectations regarding program performance.

On-going monitoring and evaluation will also help policymakers make informed decisions about whether to continue funding. That said, it is often politically difficult for the City to roll back funding for programs once they are up and running, even if the program in question proves ineffective. The inability to reprogram existing funds represents a significant opportunity cost: of money that could be invested more effectively; of additional money that must now be found to seed new ideas; and finally, of clients who are not as well served as they could be, resulting in unmet needs and problems that continue unabated.

3. When creating new programs or strategies designed to solve difficult social problems, the City should exhibit more consistent discipline in applying sound program design principles. This starts with requiring such programs to be accompanied by a “theory of change”. In general, a theory of change creates a collective understanding of the program goals, how they will be reached, and what metrics will be used to measure progress towards achieving identified goals.

If done well, the exercise of developing a theory of change is itself valuable because it requires program staff to surface underlying assumptions about how the program will cause the desired changes to come about, in individuals, families, and/or communities. A theory of change should also address how many individuals need to be served, what type of services are needed and in what amount, and who should deliver them and in what setting. An inability to come up with a clear and convincing theory of change that is both plausible and realistic (in terms of an intervention being able to influence the outcomes) suggests the program will not be able to deliver on the desired outcomes. Thus, the act of thinking through the “logic” of a program may help the City avoid investing in programs that are fundamentally flawed at the outset.

4. The City needs to track program implementation more closely. Even if a program is well designed, bringing about change, in people or conditions, is difficult work. A lot can go wrong. Absent closer tracking of implementation, however, implementation issues can go unaddressed, sometimes for years. Closely linked to this is the need to foster a culture of reflection and transparency, rewarding inquisitiveness, critical thinking, and continuous improvement while discouraging defensiveness or the mistake of confusing good press for results.

D. Reform contracting practices

1. The City may want to re-think its contracting and request for proposal processes. Too many organizations that receive funding for a certain purpose assume it will continue regardless of performance. The City should set higher performance standards tied to meaningful outcome measures that truly measure results and then hold organizations accountable. In addition, the City needs to cultivate partnerships with agencies that are open to critical assessment and evaluation. Too often, on-going service contracts create an entitlement mentality, making it difficult, if not impossible, for the City to pivot to more effective strategies or allow new populations to be served. Thus, change only comes about incrementally and often requires new, additional funds while existing funds continue to flow to ineffective programs and services.
2. The City should consider setting aside funds that can be used to support and encourage promising new ideas as they arise, increasing the ability to act more nimbly and flexibly.
3. The City should consider investing in strategic capacity building so that more community-based organizations can be in a competitive position to bid on City contracts.

Youth violent offender profiles by age

The section disaggregates the offender population by: 13 and under⁴³, 14-17, and 18-24. It's important to keep in mind that SPD collects limited crime data by race. It does not record ethnicity.

1. 13 years & under violent offender profile

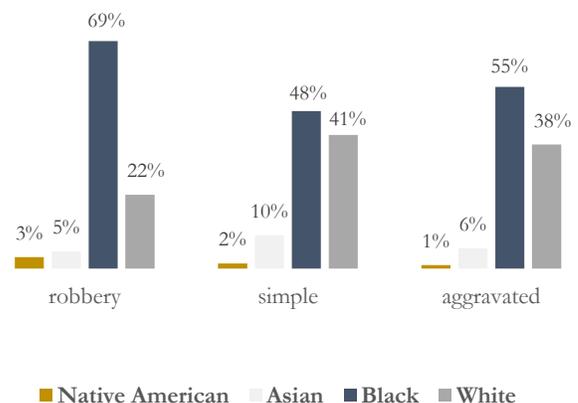
Between 2012- 2014:

- The average annual number of *total* offenders was approximately 263
- The average annual number of *unique* offenders was approximately 208
- On average, at least 56 out of 263 youth, or 21%, were involved in repeat offending
- Black youth were disproportionately represented relative to their share of Seattle's youth population

The vast majority of violent offenders aged 13 years and under were involved in simple assaults, a misdemeanor that can involve a wide range of behaviors.

Average annual # of violent offenders 13 & under, 2012- 2014		
crime type	avg. annual # offenders	% by crime type
simple assault	172	65%
aggravated assault	69	26%
robbery	20	7%
rape	2	1%
homicide	0	0
total	263	100%
Avg. annual # unique offenders	208	

13 & under, % violent offenders by race & crime type, 2012- 2014

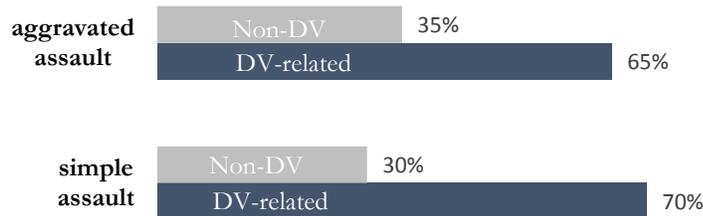


⁴³ George Mason University researchers, who cleaned and analyzed the SPD data, noted that only a handful of violent offenders in the 13 and under age bracket were under 10 year old; thus, while the focus of this report is on youth 10- 24 years, given the small number of youth under 10 years found in the data, a determination was made to leave these in (hence, the age category 13 & under is used vs. 10- 13 years).

Under 13 years youth violent offender profile, continued

63% of violent offenders 13 years and under were involved in DV-related offenses and the vast majority of these were either simple or aggravated assault. Based on prior research conducted by the City Auditor Office in spring 2015, it is thought that majority of these DV-related offenses for youth under 18 years involve a family member as opposed to an intimate partner⁴⁴. The following chart breaks out the percentage of violent offenders 13 years old and under by assault type and DV status.

**Domestic violence status by assault type,
2012- 2014**



The table below shows the estimated average annual number of offenders by race and crime type⁴⁵. These estimates includes both one-time and repeat offenders.

	13 & under, estimated average annual # of offenders by race & crime type, 2012- 2014			
	Robbery	Simple assault	Aggravated assault	Total by race
Native American	1	3	1	4
Asian	1	17	4	23
Black	14	82	38	134
White	4	70	26	100
Total by crime	20	172	69	261

⁴⁴ Intimate partner violence involving youth under 18 years is believed to be under-reported.

⁴⁵ The numbers in the tables are estimates derived by calculating the percentage of recorded offenders by race involved in each particular crime and then multiplying it by the total number of offenders in each crime category. This was done because race was not recorded for a small number of offenders. As these are estimates, actual numbers could vary slightly. For example, the actual average annual number of Blacks and Whites involved in aggravated assaults between 2012- 2014 where race was recorded was 36 and 24 youth respectively, while applying the percentages of race recorded to the total number of offenders yielded 38 Blacks and 26 Whites.

2. 14-17 youth violent offender profile

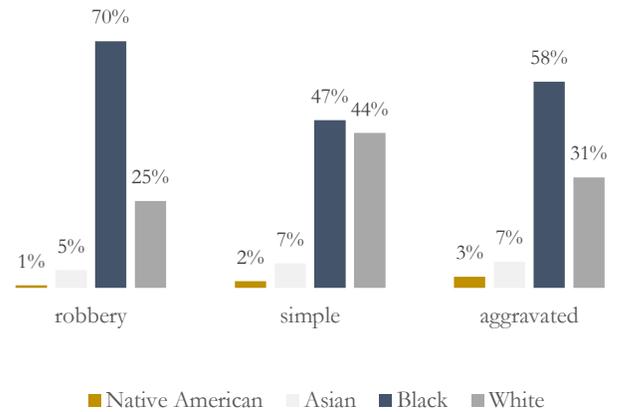
Between 2012- 2014:

- The average annual number of *total* offenders was approximately 553
- The average annual number of *unique* offenders was approximately 313
- At least 240 out of 553 youth, or 47%, were involved in repeat offending
- Black youth were disproportionately represented relative to their share of Seattle’s youth population

Simple assault was the most common crime type, though a large share of 14-17 year olds were also involved in robberies and aggravated assaults. A larger percentage of 14- 17 year olds were involved in robberies than younger or older youth.

Average annual # of violent offenders 14-17, 2012- 2014		
crime type	avg. annual # offenders	% by crime type
simple assault	297	54%
aggravated assault	101	18%
robbery	150	27%
rape	3	1%
homicide	1	0%
total	553	100%
Avg. annual # unique offenders	313	

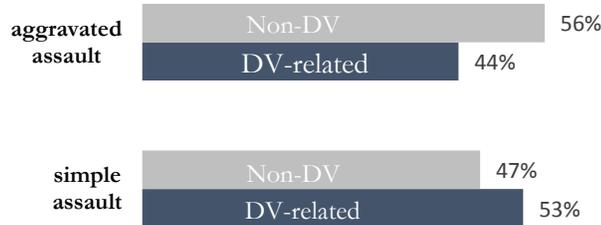
14-17, % violent offenders by race & crime type, 2012- 2014



14-17 youth violent offender profile, continued

14- 17 year olds were involved in a lower percentage of DV-related offenses than youth 13 years and under, but DV-related offenses still comprised a large percent and the majority of simple assaults were DV-related.

Domestic violence status by assault type, 2012- 2014



The table below shows an estimated average annual number of offenders by race and crime type⁴⁶. This table includes both one-time and repeat offenders.

	14-17, estimated average annual # of offenders by race & crime type			
	Robbery	Simple assault	Aggravated assault	Total by race
Native American	1	6	3	10
Asian	8	21	7	36
Black	105	141	59	304
White	37	130	32	198
Total by crime	150	297	101	549

⁴⁶ The numbers in the tables are estimates derived by calculating the percentage of recorded offenders by race involved in each particular crime and then multiplying it by the total number of offenders in each crime category. This was done because race was not recorded for a small number of offenders. As these are estimates, actual numbers could vary slightly. For example, the actual average annual number of Blacks and Whites involved in aggravated assaults between 2012- 2014 where race was recorded was 36 and 24 youth respectively, while applying the percentages of race recorded to the total number of offenders yielded 38 Blacks and 26 Whites.

3. 18- 24 violent offender profile

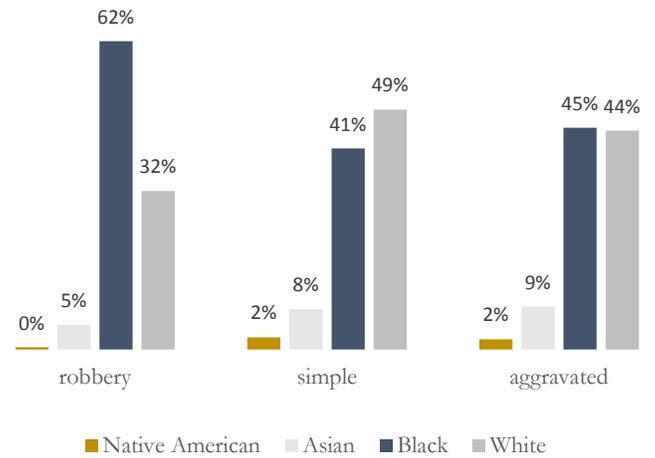
Between 2012- 2014:

- The average annual number of *total* offenders was approximately 1533
- The average annual number of *unique* offenders was approximately 1097
- At least 436 out of 1533 youth, or 28%, were involved in repeat offending
- Black youth were disproportionately represented relative to their share of Seattle’s youth population

Simple assault was the most common crime type for 18-24 year olds, followed by aggravated assaults and robberies.

Average annual # of violent offenders 18-24, 2012- 2014		
crime type	avg. annual # offenders	% by crime type
simple assault	887	58%
aggravated assault	380	25%
robbery	237	15%
rape	17	1%
homicide	13	1%
total	1533	100%
Avg. annual # unique offenders	1097	

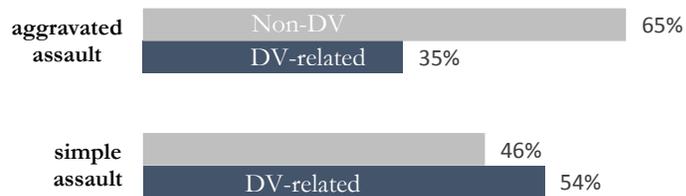
18-24, % offenders by race & crime type, 2012- 2014



18-24 youth violent offender profile, continued

A majority of simple assault offenders between 18- 24 years were involved in DV-related offenses while a higher percent of aggravated assaults were non-DV related. It cannot be determined from the data the extent to which DV-related offenses for 18-24 year olds involve family members or intimate partners.

Domestic violence status by assault type, 2012- 2014



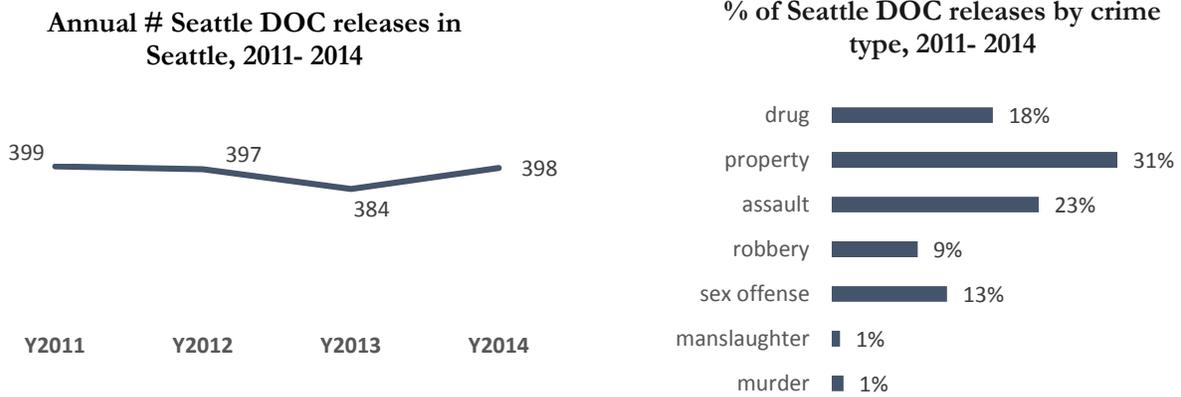
The table below shows the estimated average annual number of offenders by race and crime type⁴⁷. This table includes both one-time and repeat offenders.

	18-24, estimated average annual # by race & crime type			
	Robbery	Simple assault	Aggravated assault	Total by race
Native American	22	1	8	31
Asian	73	12	33	117
Black	361	148	170	679
White	431	76	168	675
Total by crime	887	237	380	1503

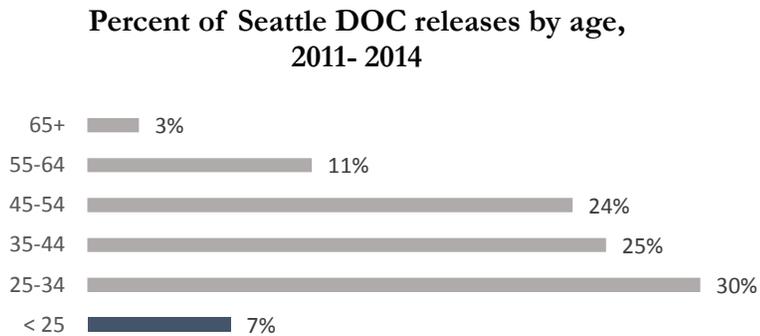
⁴⁷ The numbers in the tables are estimates derived by calculating the percentage of recorded offenders by race involved in each particular crime and then multiplying it by the total number of offenders in each crime category. This was done because race was not recorded for a small number of offenders. As these are estimates, actual numbers could vary slightly. For example, the actual average annual number of Blacks and Whites involved in aggravated assaults between 2012- 2014 where race was recorded was 36 and 24 youth respectively, while applying the percentages of race recorded to the total number of offenders yielded 38 Blacks and 26 Whites.

Washington State DOC Re-entry statistics

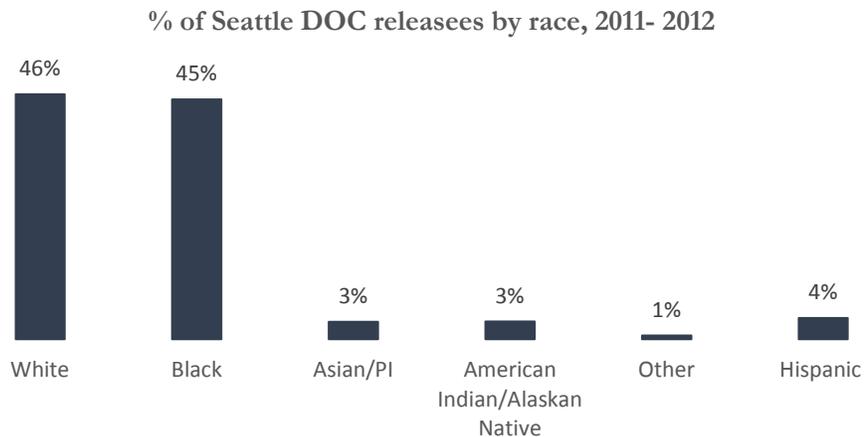
Between 2011- 2014, the Department of Corrections (DOC) released approximately 400 adults annually in Seattle; many were involved in violent offenses. 91% were male. Only 44% of those released were supervised. Approximately 18% were homeless.



Just 7% were between 18-24 years old (<25).



Whites and Blacks comprised the majority of offenders released in Seattle between 2011- 2014.



Violent Crime by Census Tract

In general, the locations of youth violent crime incidents are spread across the city. Only a handful of census tracts have relatively high concentrations of youth violent crime incidents. Between 2012-2014, the top three census tracts (out of 132 tracts) with the highest concentrations of youth violent crime experienced between 3%-6% of incidents (tract 81 in downtown Seattle, tract 75 in Capitol hill and tract 118 in southeast Seattle). The percent of youth violence incidents in each of the remaining census tracts was under 3%.

% OF VIOLENT CRIME BY CENSUS TRACT

Percent of youth crime by year & census tract				Percent of youth crime by year & census tract				Percent of youth crime by year & census tract			
tract	2012	2013	2014	tract	2012	2013	2014	tract	2012	2013	2014
1	2.03	1.62	1.69	41	0.12	0.18	0.13	80.01	1.47	1.44	1.43
2	0.69	0.86	0.63	42	0.46	0.58	0.66	80.02	1.08	1.01	1.16
3	0.39	0.63	0.40	43.01	0.39	0.48	0.53	81	5.55	5.98	6.15
4.01	1.29	1.49	1.06	43.02	0.48	0.43	0.55	82	1.87	1.60	1.21
4.02	0.53	0.71	1.03	44	1.45	1.01	1.24	83	0.39	0.30	0.45
5	0.07	0.10	0.08	45	0.37	0.35	0.05	84	1.50	2.18	1.98
6	1.43	1.32	1.40	46	0.14	0.20	0.42	85	0.97	1.17	1.40
7	0.74	0.86	0.95	47	0.92	0.94	0.79	86	1.20	1.29	1.50
8	0.09	0.15	0.13	48	0.16	0.25	0.16	87	1.70	1.39	1.21
9	0.09	0.15	0.05	49	1.06	0.56	0.40	88	1.38	0.91	1.00
10	0.39	0.43	0.61	50	0.44	0.41	0.37	89	1.47	1.22	1.40
11	0.12	0.25	0.24	51	0.12	0.18	0.26	90	0.81	1.04	0.90
12	1.40	1.93	1.93	52	0.90	0.71	0.69	91	0.76	0.61	0.90
13	0.97	0.79	0.90	53.01	2.16	2.46	2.74	92	1.06	1.70	1.82
14	0.74	0.58	0.45	53.02	0.05	0.10	0.08	93	2.58	1.70	1.93
15	0.02	0.10	0.05	54	0.23	0.28	0.21	94	1.17	0.96	0.98
16	0.60	0.43	0.69	56	0.12	0.20	0.29	95	1.57	1.80	1.32
17.01	0.51	0.66	0.42	57	0.32	0.20	0.18	96	0.51	0.53	0.24
17.02	0.32	0.63	0.58	58.01	0.14	0.38	0.32	97.01	0.28	0.33	0.53
18	0.67	0.81	0.77	58.02	0.30	0.15	0.37	97.02	0.23	0.23	0.26
19	0.44	0.41	0.40	59	0.21	0.33	0.24	98	0.60	0.53	0.66
20	0.14	0.10	0.03	60	0.21	0.15	0.16	99	0.81	0.79	0.92
21	0.41	0.48	0.21	61	0.12	0.23	0.16	100.01	1.04	0.79	0.77
22	0.12	0.18	0.03	62	0.12	0.15	0.08	100.02	0.69	0.30	0.29
24	0.05	0.05	0.24	63	0.14	0.15	0.26	101	1.89	1.85	1.82
25	0.14	0.08	0.16	64	0.02	0.15	0.21	102	0.39	0.43	0.66
26	0.21	0.20	0.32	65	0.21	0.08	0.26	103	1.22	1.75	1.69
27	0.44	0.43	0.24	66	0.51	0.51	0.18	104.01	0.78	0.96	0.82
28	0.18	0.23	0.08	67	0.46	0.48	0.34	104.02	0.67	0.53	0.63
29	0.07	0.10	0.13	68	0.30	0.18	0.26	105	0.83	0.94	0.74
30	0.32	0.46	0.26	69	0.74	0.30	0.48	106	0.60	0.56	0.45
31	0.23	0.33	0.50	70	0.46	0.46	0.50	107.01	0.97	0.96	1.00
32	0.41	0.25	0.13	71	0.55	0.66	0.82	107.02	1.38	1.11	0.63
33	0.51	0.41	0.37	72	2.40	2.08	1.37	108	0.99	0.81	0.63
34	0.12	0.08	0.08	73	1.68	1.37	1.61	109	0.62	0.53	0.61
35	0.18	0.05	0.26	74.01	0.48	0.41	0.48	110.01	1.54	1.19	1.27
36	0.30	0.35	0.37	74.02	0.81	0.79	1.24	110.02	0.78	0.73	0.77
38	0.14	0.15	0.26	75	2.16	3.70	3.62	111.01	1.40	1.32	1.06
39	0.12	0.08	0.08	76	0.35	0.43	0.45	111.02	0.90	0.56	0.82
40	0.39	0.25	0.34	77	0.60	0.53	0.34	112	1.27	1.01	1.27
				78	0.18	0.28	0.37	113	1.34	1.37	1.08
				79	0.90	0.76	0.63	114.01	1.52	1.37	1.53
								114.02	1.34	1.85	1.79
								115	0.32	0.25	0.26
								116	0.37	0.35	0.42
								117	1.22	1.09	1.13
								118	3.48	3.88	3.77
								119	1.20	1.22	1.21
								120	0.28	0.13	0.05
								121	0.07	0.05	0.18

Research on contributing factors related to youth violence

Different theories exist as to why some youth become involved in crime. A few are outlined below.

1. A General Theory of Crime

One oft cited theory, referred to as the “General Theory of Crime”⁴⁸, states that a lack of self-control is at the heart of most offending:

“Persons with high self-control consider the long-term consequences of their behavior; those with lower self-control do not. Such control is learned, usually early in life, and once learned, is highly resistant to change.”⁴⁹

In March 2015, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) issued a research brief based on a study called *Pathways to Desistance*. This study examined why some serious juvenile male offenders between 14- 25 years desisted from offending while others did not⁵⁰. Some of the key findings in the OJJDP brief include the following:

- “Youth whose anti-social behavior persisted into early adulthood were found to have lower levels of psychosocial maturity in adolescence and deficits in their development of maturity compared with other anti-social youth.
- The vast majority of juvenile offenders, even those who commit serious crimes, grow out of anti-social activity as they transition to adulthood. Most juvenile offending is, in fact, limited to adolescence.
- ...the process of maturing out of crime is linked to the process of maturing more generally, including the development of impulse control and future orientation.”⁵¹

These findings are consistent with the General Theory of Crime in that, for the same reasons a youth might become criminally involved (poor self-control), youth are also likely to desist once they reach psychosocial maturity. The OJJDP Brief also notes that youth who continued to offend into early adulthood were “significantly less psychosocially mature than youth who desisted...”⁵² Psychosocial maturity, as noted in the OJJDP brief, is marked by the following characteristics⁵³:

Temperance. Ability to control impulses, including aggressive impulses.

⁴⁸ Gottfredson, M.R., Hirschi, T., A General Theory of Crime, Stanford University Press, 1990

⁴⁹ Gottfredson, M.R., Et. Al., Stanford University Press website.

⁵⁰ The study involved interviews with 1,354 youth offenders seven years after their convictions.

⁵¹ Steinberg, L., Cauffman, E., Monahan, K., *Psychosocial Maturity and Desistance From Crime in a Sample of Serious Juvenile Offenders*, March 2015, p1.

⁵² Steinberg, L., Et. Al, K., p3.

⁵³ Steinberg, L., Et. Al, p3.

Perspective. Ability to consider other points of view, including those that take into account longer term consequences or that take the vantage point of others.

Responsibility. The ability to take personal responsibility for one’s behavior and resist the coercive influence of others.

2. Risk Factors

The General Theory of Crime and related research focus primarily on the psychosocial maturity of the individual youth. Other research suggests youth violent crime offending is linked to a variety of “risk factors” that may increase a young person’s propensity to engage in violent crime. Thus, many prevention and intervention strategies seek to reduce these risk factors.

The risk factors linked to youth violence fall within several “domains”, including Individual, Family, Schools/ Peers, and Community. These risk factors are grouped as such in recognition that a youth’s behavior can be influenced and shaped by their environment. Some of the more commonly cited risk factors for each domain are listed in the following table, which is drawn from a CDC youth violence prevention publication⁵⁴.

Risk Factors associated with Youth Violence (source: CDC)

Individual	Family	School/Peer	Community/Society
History of violent victimization	Authoritarian child-rearing practices	Association with delinquent peers	Diminished economic opportunities
Attention deficits, hyperactivity, learning disorders	Harsh, lax or inconsistent disciplinary policies	Involvement in gangs	High concentrations of poor residents
History of early aggressive behavior	Low parental involvement	Social rejection by peers	High level of transiency
Involvement with drugs, alcohol, tobacco	Low emotional attachment to parents or caregivers	Lack of involvement in conventional activities	High level of family disruption
Low IQ	Low parental education and income	Low commitment to school and school failure	Low levels of community participation
Poor behavioral control	Parental substance abuse		Socially disorganized neighborhood
Deficits in social cognitive or information processing abilities	Parental criminality		Community social norms support using violence to solve problems
High emotional distress	Poor family functioning		Gender norms that link masculinity with aggression
History of treatment of emotional problems	Poor monitoring and supervision of children		
Anti-social beliefs and attitudes			
Unsupervised access to firearms and weapons			
Exposure to violence & family conflict			
Poor academic performance			

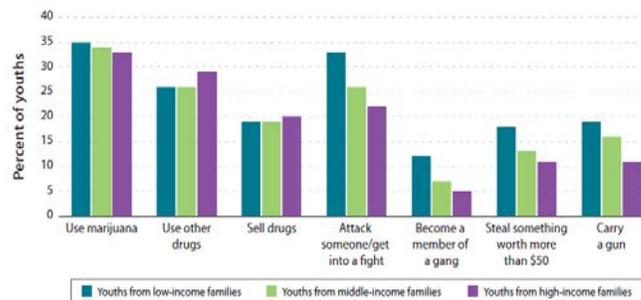
⁵⁴ David-Ferdon C, Simon TR, *Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE)*: CDC’s National Initiative to Prevent Youth Violence: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s national initiative to prevent youth violence foundational resource. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2012.

The link between risk factors and youth violence is complex; therefore, the following caveats should be kept in mind:

- Risk factors are not predictive of violence but are thought to increase the likelihood of it.
- The risk of violence is greater for youth who experience multiple risk factors and few protective factors, which can have a cumulative and interactive effect⁵⁵.
- Some risk factors are more malleable than others and research recommends focusing on those that most likely can be changed.
- Not all risk factors are equally significant and some may have a stronger link to violence than others.
- Youth may respond differently to different risk factors depending on age, gender, and race. For example, attachment to parents is more influential when children are younger, but strong parental supervision becomes more important as children age⁵⁶.
- The research is not as well established on the influence of “protective factors” and their relationship to youth violence, but these are thought to act as a buffer against youth violence. Protective factors include access to pro-social activities, the involvement of a caring adult, and religious affiliation.
- The degree to which risk factors exist varies between and within neighborhoods, schools, and families. Concentrated extreme poverty, high unemployment, and low educational attainment can increase individuals and communities exposure and involvement in violence.⁵⁷ The chart below shows differences in adolescent risk behaviors by family income, with low income youth more likely to be involved in crimes that target other people⁵⁸.

Adolescent Risk Behaviors by Family Income Level

Although youths from low-income families are as likely to use or sell drugs as are their higher-income counterparts, the former are significantly more likely to engage in criminal activities that target other people.



Source: Kant 2009.
 Note: Original data are derived from the 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. Adolescent risk behaviors are measured up to age eighteen, except for marijuana usage, which is measured up to age sixteen. Low-income families are those whose incomes are at or below 200 percent of the the federal poverty level (FPL). Middle-income families have incomes between 201 and 400 percent of the FPL. High-income families have incomes at or above 401 percent of the FPL.



⁵⁵Moore, KA., Stratford, B., Caal, S., Hickman, DT., Schmitz, H., Thompson, J., Horton, S., Shaw, A., *Preventing Violence, A review of Research, Evaluation, Gaps, and Opportunities*, February 2015, p. i

⁵⁶ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3375078>

⁵⁷ Moore, KA., Et. Al., p.i

⁵⁸ Kearney, M.S., Harris, B., Jacome, E., Parker, L., Ten Economic Facts about Crime and Incarceration in the United States, The Hamilton Project, Policy Memo, May 2014.

In February 2015, Child Trends, a non-profit non-partisan research center, identified several risk factors associated with youth violence by the strength of the evidence linking them to certain types of violence⁵⁹. The following table summarizes this research for three types of youth violence. A “blank” means Child Trends found no research to support either a strong or weak link. A “weak” designation means Child Trends found some evidence indicating a weak association between a particular risk factor and violent behavior.

Risk Factors Linked to Youth Violence (source: Child Trends)

Domain	Risk Factor	Delinquency/ Crime	Gang Violence	General Aggression
Individual	substance abuse	strong		moderate
	self-control	moderate	weak	moderate
	youth mental health	weak	weak	weak
	hostile attribution bias	weak	weak	moderate
	dysregulated sleep			moderate
Family	child maltreatment	strong		strong
	harsh parenting	strong		strong
	parent mental health	moderate		
	parent drug use	strong		moderate
	Domestic violence	moderate		moderate
School	bullying perpetration	weak	weak	moderate
	anti-social peers		moderate	
	school connectedness	moderate	moderate	moderate
	school performance	weak		
	school climate	weak	weak	moderate
Community	collective efficacy		moderate	moderate
	gun availability	moderate	strong	

A note about mental illness as a risk factor

Parental mental health is a risk factor for youth violence but child mental health is not. This is consistent with the research that finds a weak link between youth mental illness and violent crime offending. Youth substance abuse, however, is *strongly* linked to youth offending (a finding consistent throughout the literature) and substance abuse and mental health disorders are often co-occurring conditions. Thus, it may be hard to disentangle their effects. Moreover, several mental health treatments, particularly Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) techniques, have been shown to reduce youth violence by helping youth learn to control impulses and regulate emotions. Other mental health treatments that help repair the negative effects of trauma, which can impact brain development and lead to behavioral issues, may also be appropriate.

⁵⁹ Moore, KA., Et. Al.

3. Trauma

The premise underpinning the General Theory of Crime and the psychosocial school of thought suggests most youth outgrow their offending behavior once they mature. Yet, not all behavioral problems linked to crime are associated with maturity and can simply be outgrown. Some behavioral problems identified as risk factors in the Individual Domain may stem from early child abuse and trauma, the negative effects of which can last a lifetime if left untreated. A recent Seattle Times article noted that children growing up in homes with alcoholism, mental illness, domestic violence and other family dysfunction may experience trauma. Children impacted by trauma exist in a “simmering state of emergency”, and exhibit problems with impulse control, edginess, and aggression⁶⁰. The chart below summarizes the effects of trauma on brain development, which identifies several behaviors linked to violent offending⁶¹.

<p style="text-align: center;">Trauma’s Impact on Brain Development</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Exposure to chronic, prolonged traumatic experiences has the potential to alter children’s brains, which may cause longer-term effects in areas such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Attachment: Trouble with relationships, boundaries, empathy, and social isolation2. Physical Health: Impaired sensorimotor development, coordination problems, increased medical problems, and somatic symptoms3. Emotional Regulation: Difficulty identifying or labeling feelings and communicating needs4. Dissociation: Altered states of consciousness, amnesia, impaired memory5. Cognitive Ability: Problems with focus, learning, processing new information, language development, planning and orientation to time and space6. Self-Concept: Lack of consistent sense of self, body image issues, low self-esteem, shame and guilt7. Behavioral Control: Difficulty controlling impulses, oppositional behavior, aggression, disrupted sleep and eating patterns, trauma re-enactment <p style="text-align: center;">Source: Cook, et al, 2005</p>

⁶⁰ <http://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/you-are-more-than-your-mistakes-teachers-get-at-roots-of-bad-behavior/>

⁶¹ *Children’s Services Practice Notes*, Volume 17, No.2, May 2012, North Carolina Division of Social Services and the Family and Children’s Resource Program