

Collaborating
to Deliver
Results

THE GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION TASK FORCE

PARTNER AGENCIES & OFFICES

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW


The Gun Violence Prevention Task Force (GVPTF), established in June 2022, is tasked with stopping the rise in violence by using a public health and community development approach to address root causes: long-term disinvestment in the programs and services that make and keep New York City’s neighborhoods safe. From housing to jobs, mental health, policing, vibrant public spaces and opportunities for the youngest New Yorkers to thrive, the Task Force’s goal is to prevent gun violence now and into the future. Since its inception, the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force has operated under the belief that gun violence is a symptom of a lack of access to economic, social, educational, and healthcare resources. To that end, the GVPTF sets an ambitious vision and mission for New York City:

Vision: All New Yorkers live in safe communities and are free from gun violence.

Mission: Address the upstream causes of violence in impacted communities to reduce shooting incidents and ensure that children and their families, young adults, and formerly incarcerated New Yorkers have full access to the opportunities that help them thrive.

The Gun Violence Prevention Task Force formalizes the commitments in the Blueprint to End Gun Violence, which lays out the strategies the City is using to reduce gun violence throughout New York City. The Blueprint to End Gun Violence outlines key multi-agency strategies that address the root causes of gun violence and mobilizes jurisdictions across multiple levels and branches of government to collaborate to pass effective and comprehensive gun reform.

While the Blueprint to End Gun Violence focused largely on immediate causes of gun violence, GVPTF additionally launched the Blueprint for Community Safety in July 2023, which intentionally takes a public health approach to addressing gun violence by focusing on the root social determinants of gun violence. Certain neighborhoods face a disproportionate amount of social and economic challenges that impair residents’ health and produce trauma. Left unaddressed, this trauma yields violence that spurs more trauma and perpetuates a lethal cycle. The six neighborhoods with the highest rate of gun violence in the City reflect the historic disinvestment and quality of life challenges that GVPTF seeks to address. GVPTF attempts to interrupt this cycle of disinvestment, lack of resources, and inequities through partnerships between multiple agencies and the community, adding up to a holistic approach to healing, prevention, and care tailored to each precinct. GVPTF is responsible for coordination and collaboration among government agencies and between City agencies, elected officials, community-based organizations and key community stakeholders to deliver on this goal.

-  NYPD
-  DOHMH
-  DYCD
-  ACS
-  OCME
-  DOC
-  DHS
-  DOP
-  HHC
-  HPD
-  HRA
-  NYCHA
-  DPR
-  SBS

- | Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice
- | New York City Public Schools
- | Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity
- | Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence
- | Mayor’s Office of Equity and Racial Justice
- | Mayor’s Office of Food Policy
- | NYC Talent

This chapter addresses both the strategies laid out in the Blueprint for Community Safety, with its public health approach, and the Blueprint to End Gun Violence, with its law enforcement approach.

BLUEPRINT FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

- The Blueprint for Community Safety was introduced by the New York City Gun Violence Prevention Taskforce on July 31, 2023. It outlines a comprehensive strategy to address gun violence by prioritizing investments and resources in six precincts that experienced the highest rate of gun violence in 2022. The plan includes strategies focused on prevention, early intervention, housing, employment, mental health services, and community-police relations. The Blueprint was developed through extensive engagement with community residents and represents a \$485 million investment to create safer, more resilient communities and build upon the City’s efforts to reduce gun violence and improve public safety.

THE SIX PRECINCTS OF FOCUS:

- Precinct 40 – Port Morris, Mott Haven, and Melrose
- Precinct 42 – Morrisania, Claremont, and Crotona Park
- Precinct 44 – Grand Concourse, Bronx Terminal Market, and Yankee Stadium
- Precinct 47 – Wakefield, Woodlawn, Baychester, and Williamsbridge
- Precinct 73 – Brownsville and Ocean Hill
- Precinct 75 – East New York and Cypress Hill

Blueprint for Community Safety Strategies	
Early Intervention	\$118.3 million to increase early supports, including mentorship opportunities, for young people to prevent them from becoming involved in gun violence.
Housing	\$57.5 million to improve existing housing conditions, especially for public housing residents, and increase access to transitional, supportive, and permanent housing units.
Navigation & Benefits	\$67.8 million to help New Yorkers access public benefits they deserve and provide better assistance to justice-involved individuals and families navigating benefits programs.
Community Vitality	\$8.64 million to invest in public spaces, including parks, playgrounds, and community centers to make neighborhoods safer and more vibrant.
Employment and Entrepreneurship	\$118.5 million to target opportunity and skills training for young New Yorkers and justice-involved individuals to give them pathways to sustainable, well-paying jobs.
Trauma-Informed Care	\$106.66 million to bolster mental health resources for young people and others with a diagnosed mental illness and ensure appropriate crisis response to those suffering from mental health episodes.
Community & Police Relations	\$2.6 million to strengthen bonds of trust between police and communities by allowing greater collaboration on neighborhood safety initiatives, ensuring more effective policing that balances the twin imperatives of safety and justice.

BLUEPRINT FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVES

Project Pivot Expansion

- Project PIVOT is an initiative that provides participating students access to resources, including mentoring, leadership, career readiness, attendance support, and enrichment through arts, sports, and more, in an effort to assist them in reaching their full potential. New York City Public Schools collaborates with Community-based Organizations to support participating students who have demonstrated challenges but are ready to pivot towards their personal and academic success. Project PIVOT partners, in addition to the aforementioned activities, engage participating students in strategies that strengthen violence-intervention and prevention techniques. As of October 31, 2023, 240 of 257 schools (93 percent of cohort), including 40 of the 87 schools in the GVPTF precincts, have selected at least one preferred community partner, initiated/completed the procurement, and/or have begun engaging with participating students providing direct service support.

Work, Learn, Grow Expansion

- CareerReady Work Learn Grow (WLG) offers young people ages 16 to 21 from select public schools in New York City an opportunity to strengthen work readiness skills, explore careers, and receive academic support, including guidance on postsecondary education and the potential to earn college credit. The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) assessed the scale of in-school participants in the six target precincts and set a goal to have at least 2,000 participants enrolled in the program through those precincts. In September, DYCD worked with providers to assess their capacity and announce the precinct focus. As of October 24, 2023, there are 2,226 participants enrolled who live in the six precincts, and overall there are over 6,300 participants enrolled.

Advance & Earn Expansion

- Advance & Earn is an innovative training and employment program for young adults from the ages of 16 to 24. Advance & Earn helps young adults develop their career pathways with employer-recognized trainings, classes towards credentials and certifications, paid internships, and comprehensive High School Equivalency (HSE) test preparation. For the fall 2023 cohort of Advance & Earn, GVPTF has set targets of 38 students enrolled per provider for a total of 228, 78 of which are expansion slots, or new slots that directly target GVPTF priority neighborhoods. At the end of the reporting period, enrollment was 217. For the winter 2023-2024 cohort, providers are expected to enroll 50 each for a total of 300 slots, 150 of which will be expansion slots. Across both cohorts, DYCD expects to serve 228 out-of-school young adults through expansion of advanced training slots for Fiscal 2024.

B-HEARD

- B-HEARD is the Behavioral Health Emergency Assistance Response Division, an interagency collaboration between the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) and NYC Health + Hospitals with oversight from the Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health (OCMH). B-HEARD is part of New York City's commitment to treat mental health crises as public health matters - not public safety issues. For the first time in New York City's history, teams of health professionals - including EMTs/paramedics and mental health professionals - are responding to 911 mental health calls through a pilot program that launched in spring 2021. B-HEARD teams are operational in all six GVPTF precincts as of October 2, 2023, with the sixth precinct joining the B-HEARD program in its October 2023 expansion.

Atlas

- The mission of Atlas is to improve public safety and to enhance the capacity of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to serve system-impacted people who are at the highest risk of violence. Atlas partners with trusted CBOs to provide a suite of services including family therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, opportunities for employment and education, and additional free and voluntary resources to people with open or recent court cases residing in the community. At the same time, Atlas improves the vitality and safety of a community by strengthening the capacity of local organizations and elevating community-driven public safety solutions. As of October 2023, 415 youth were served by the Atlas program and of those 415, 176 were new cases.

NeON

- The Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON), launched in 2011, has earned national recognition. NeON is a citywide network of community-based centers, guided by a philosophy of effective intervention, in the seven neighborhoods of NYC where large concentrations of people on probation reside. Each NeON has a local Stakeholder Group, open to the community at large, and usually comprised of a diverse array of community members, including members of local community-based organizations, clergy, and local business owners. At NeON sites, people under supervision can meet with their probation officers and receive a wide range of services such as HSE classes, employment preparation, mentoring, healthcare, literacy programs, and arts and sport programming selected by the Stakeholder Groups as being particularly relevant to their communities. Many of the programs are also free and open to other neighborhood residents. During the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the Brownsville NeON site was reopened at 1709 St. Marks.

Summer Youth Employment Program Expansion

- To address a pattern of increased gun violence and gun crimes during summer months, the Blueprint for Community Safety proposed the launch of an unprecedented expansion of the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), resulting in the increase in program slots to serve 100,000 youth aged 14-24. SYEP is designed to introduce and prepare youth for the workforce, to help youth explore career interests and acquire positive work habits and skills, and to provide supplemental income. During the summer of 2023, DYCD furthered SYEP's expansion with 95,563 young people served, representing a five percent increase over the previous summer. DYCD worked in collaboration with sister City agencies to ensure the goal of 100,000 youth served citywide. In order to reach as many youth as possible, DYCD launched the SYEP application in early February 2023, extended the lottery period, prioritized youth who reside in NYCHA housing in the lottery and expanded non-lottery opportunities to at-risk youth.
- The SYEP expansion included partnerships with businesses and corporations across the City, who worked with SYEP providers to offer a wide variety of in-person employment and educational experiences, as well as virtual and hybrid (combination virtual and in person) opportunities. Participants engaged in career exploration and work readiness training through a mobile platform designed to motivate youth to explore, experiment with, and prepare for a wide range of career pathways, then participated in six weeks of paid project-based learning experiences and internship placements in a wide range of sectors. The program offered innovative professional internship, educational opportunities and civic engagement experiences at a total of 17,203 sites. In addition to SYEP's expansion over summer 2023, the City also announced the expansion of the school-year Work, Learn, and Grow (WLG) program, focusing on SYEP participants who live and attend schools in neighborhoods identified in the Blueprint for Community Safety.

Performance Indicators	Agency	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
		FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Eligible Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) applicants placed in compensated internships (%)	DYCD	26%	49%	55%	*	*	55%	54%
Participants in Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)	DYCD	35,198	74,884	91,270	95,000	95,000	91,270	95,563
Total SYEP stipends and wages paid (\$000,000)	DYCD	\$24.7	\$97.4	\$117.6	*	*	\$117.6	\$124.6

Fair Futures Expansion

- During the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the ACS Fair Futures Program served 3,303 young people ages 11–26, a 22 percent increase from 2,716 during the same period in Fiscal 2023. Through Fair Futures, ACS connects young people to services, programming, and opportunities that help them achieve their educational, career, and housing goals, and successfully transition from foster care to permanency or independent living.
- New York City is the first jurisdiction in the nation to implement an initiative for youth in foster care of this breadth and scale. The program has been successfully implemented, scaled, and integrated into ACS service delivery, providing professional coaching across the system. The expansion of Fair Futures to the juvenile justice population and to youth between the ages of 21 and 26 continues in Fiscal 2024. It remains a key part of ACS's strategic plan to help young people connect to quality, best-fit high schools and colleges, stable housing, internships, and gainful employment. To ensure the quality of the service delivery and programming, ACS collaborated with the Fair Futures team to launch the Center for Fair Futures, the administrative arm that delivers a full suite of professional development training, technical assistance, and data reporting to all 25 foster care agencies and now juvenile justice providers.

Performance Indicators	Agency	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
		FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Number of youth in foster care receiving Fair Futures services	ACS	2,946	3,172	3,932	*	*	2,716	3,303

BLUEPRINT TO END GUN VIOLENCE STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES:

PRECISION POLICING

Neighborhood Safety Teams

- The New York City Police Department (NYPD) employs a multifaceted deployment strategy that integrates crime reduction, precision policing, and community engagement to address all crime conditions that impact the public safety and quality of life in New York City. The Department has heightened police presence on City streets and subway stations citywide, and deployed precinct-based neighborhood safety teams (NSTs) and borough-wide community response teams (CRTs) to proactively address violent crime and persistent quality-of-life complaints, and reduce gun violence. These deployments stem from data-driven analysis and community intelligence gathering by precinct-level neighborhood and youth coordination officers, as well as field intelligence officers.
- NYPD established neighborhood safety teams (NSTs), units consisting of highly trained officers responsible for addressing violent street crimes, specifically pursuing perpetrators who carry and use illegal firearms. They are deployed in locations within the precinct, based on current crime trends and statistics. In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, there were 28 active neighborhood safety teams (24 precincts and four police service areas) citywide, staffed with 147 uniformed members of the service. All officers serving on NSTs receive enhanced training prior to deployment, which includes tactical training and risk management. NSTs also wear uniforms that identify them as police and are equipped with body-worn cameras. Community engagement efforts involve NST members liaising with key stakeholders within their respective commands, including local elected officials, community council or district boards, community residents, and prominent clergy members.

Neighborhood Safety Teams by Patrol Borough	
Patrol Borough	Command
Manhattan North	23, 25, 28, 32, 34, PSA 5
Bronx	40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, PSA 7
Brooklyn South	67, 69, 71
Brooklyn North	73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, PSA 2, PSA 3
Queens South	101, 103, 105, 113
Queens North	114
Staten Island	120

Quality-of-Life Enforcement Initiative

- In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the Department continued to enhance the City’s Citywide Crime and Quality-of-Life Enforcement Initiative by implementing borough-wide CRTs. These teams are actively addressing quality-of-life crimes and community complaints within each borough. This initiative expands beyond 911 calls and includes proactive engagement with offenders who commit violations that lead up to an act of violence—whether on the streets, in the transit system, or in the City’s public housing developments
- For the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the Department’s combined efforts resulted in an overall decrease of shooting incidents by 28 percent. Notably, there were 191 fewer victims of gun violence in Fiscal 2024, a 31 percent decrease when compared to the same reporting period in Fiscal 2023. Additionally, major felony arrests increased 10 percent and quality-of-life summonses increased by 69 percent.

MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATION

Seizing Ghost Guns

- The City’s fight against illegal guns includes traditionally manufactured and sold firearms in addition to “ghost guns,” which are fully functioning weapons with no traceable markings or serial numbers. These guns are usually sold online in parts and assembled at home. Many ghost gun parts are made of polymer plastic, which are undetectable by metal detectors.
- New York State laws (Scott. J. Beigel Unfinished Receiver Act and the Jose Webster Untraceable Firearms Act), prohibit the sale or possession of un-serialized frames or receivers, and other ghost gun components.
- NYPD’s ghost gun investigations begin at the point of the online purchase of ghost gun kits, additional parts, and other means to assemble these weapons at home and result in search warrants and seizures.

FORMATION OF DNA GUN CRIMES UNIT

- In June 2022, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME), which operates North America’s largest and most advanced public DNA crime laboratory, launched the nation’s first DNA Gun Crimes Unit. Within one year of its formation, the DNA Gun Crimes Unit successfully met its announced goal of testing DNA gun crime evidence in under 30 days, and within the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the unit maintained a turnaround time of 29 days. The unit is funded by a \$2.5 million investment from the City and has hired and trained 24 new forensic scientists dedicated solely to gun crime evidence testing. This unprecedented achievement has increased OCME’s capacity to swiftly deliver precise and impartial analysis to the legal system. These findings play a crucial role in convicting the guilty, exonerating the innocent, and enhancing community safety by contributing to the fight against gun-related violence.

Performance Indicators	Agency	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
		FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Median time to complete DNA gun crime cases, from evidence submission to report (days)	DOHMH	NA	65.0	24.0	*	*	NA	29.0

EXPANDING HOSPITAL-BASED VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS (HVIPS)

- Hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIPs) aim to reduce the risk of readmissions for violent injuries among patients who are admitted to the hospital following non-fatal assault. HVIPs operate from the premise that there is a unique opportunity to contact and effectively engage victims of violent injury while they are recovering in a hospital. These programs recognize the critical importance of supporting the health and broader social needs of violence survivors. They combine the efforts of medical staff with trusted community partners to provide safety planning, social services, and trauma-informed care. This is accomplished through bedside conflict mediations conducted by culturally affirming intervention specialists (hospital responders/credible messengers) who are called in by participating hospital staff to establish a relationship with the patients. These specialists from community-based organizations work with violently injured patients to reduce violent retaliations, reinjuries, and criminal justice involvement by providing culturally sensitive, comprehensive, and multifaceted interventions. Credible messengers also provide regular follow-ups with patients while in the hospital, discharge plans, linkages to services (e.g., medical, mental health, housing, education), and regular follow-ups after patients’ discharge from the hospital. The City’s HVIP program currently operates in nine locations, with coordination between the City through the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), hospitals, and community-based organizations.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the number of eligible patients who received conflict mediation services increased due to the continuing expansion of the program. However, the reach of the program, the percentage of eligible patients who received conflict mediation services, decreased by eight percentage points (to 68 percent) compared to the same period during Fiscal 2023. The first four months of Fiscal 2024 saw challenges linked to the ongoing onboarding of new partnerships (e.g., finalizing eligibility criteria and program protocols), maintaining staffing levels at current partnerships, and community violence trends outside the control of the HVIP partnership.

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- DOHMH continues to provide hospital partners with ongoing technical assistance, protocol development, and professional development trainings. The Agency increased the annual number of HVIP trainings offered from two during the first four months of Fiscal 2023 to four during the first four months of Fiscal 2024 to meet the needs of an expanding program, strengthen program partnerships, and support staff retention and institutional knowledge. The number of HVIP training participants decreased from 50 to 16 as DOHMH provided more targeted trainings. The decline in training participants is a result of a strategic shift towards smaller customized training sessions. While the quantity of participants may have decreased, the emphasis on quality and personalized training is expected to yield more impactful outcomes for the program.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2024, DOHMH developed a comprehensive professional development series, featuring continuing education sessions and learning collaboratives specifically crafted to elevate the skills and knowledge of the HVIP workforce. The professional development series promises to serve as dynamic supplements, designed to reinforce and expand upon the core competencies already acquired during the core HVIP training program. They will offer an engaging and interactive learning experience, providing participants with a refresher on key concepts, updating them on pertinent changes in the field, and delving into advanced trainings in specific areas. These boosters and learning collaboratives launched in December 2023.
- DOHMH showcased the impactful HVIP efforts underway in New York City during the annual 2023 Safe States Conference in Denver, CO in September. This event provided a platform for DOHMH to share insights, strategies, and outcomes with national partners. Attendees gained valuable perspectives on innovative approaches to addressing and preventing community violence in the most impacted communities. The presentation not only highlighted the collaborative efforts in the City but also fostered a broader exchange of ideas and best practices in the field of violence prevention. This national platform allowed for the dissemination of effective methods, fostering collaboration among partners working towards a common goal of curbing community violence. The exchange of insights at the conference contributed to a broader understanding of successful interventions applicable across diverse environments.

Current Partnerships

Hospital	Community Partner
Kings County Hospital Center	Kings Against Violence Initiative; Man Up! Inc.
Harlem Hospital	Street Corner Resources; Stand Against Violence East Harlem (SAVE)
Lincoln Hospital	Guns Down, Life Up; Save Our Streets Bronx
Richmond University Medical Center	True 2 Life
Jacobi Medical Center	Stand Up to Violence
St. Barnabas Hospital	Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence
Woodhull Medical Center	Los Sures
Jamaica Hospital Medical Center	Life Camp, Inc.; King of Kings Foundation; Rock Safe Streets
Brookdale Hospital	Elite Learners Inc.

Performance Indicators	Agency	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
		FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Number of eligible hospital-based violence intervention program (HVIP) patients who received conflict mediation services	DOHMH	1,330	1,202	1,175	*	*	453	540
Percentage of eligible hospital-based violence intervention program (HVIP) patients who received conflict mediation services at partner hospitals	DOHMH	76%	83%	69%	*	*	76%	68%
Number of hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIPs) trainings	DOHMH	4	4	8	*	*	2	4
Number of hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIP) training participants	DOHMH	65	72	316	*	*	50	16

CONCLUSION

The overarching goal of GVPTF's work is to prevent gun violence and save lives. GVPTF plans to work hand in hand with partners in communities towards that goal. One of the core beliefs of the GVPTF is that public safety is achieved by communities with the support of government. Gun violence is a public health issue with many root causes, so GVPTF began its work with the premise that many agencies of government have ways of impacting the issue. GVPTF identifies approaches that have been proven to work and invites conversation with residents about how these strategies could be most effective in their respective communities. As the strategies are implemented, GVPTF is committed to accountability through consistent engagement and community-driven evaluation, including surveys and other community-centered data-collection strategies. GVPTF is striving for a City government better positioned to partner with communities to make investments in proven violence and crime prevention strategies.

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- This chapter was renamed from 'The Blueprint to End Gun Violence' to 'The Gun Violence Prevention Task Force' to reflect the work towards both the Blueprint to End Gun Violence and the Blueprint for Community Safety.
- The indicator 'Individuals who, after reporting a crime, received support to deal with the emotional, physical and financial aftermath of crime through the Crime Victim Assistance Program' was removed. This indicator was sourced from the Office of Community Mental Health, which is not engaged in ongoing work targeted towards either Blueprint, having concluded its work with Fiscal 2023's review of Kendra's Law (New York State Mental Hygiene Law § 9.60) Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) efforts.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information go to:

- Blueprint for Community Safety:
<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2023/Blueprint-Community-Safety.pdf>
- Blueprint to End Gun Violence:
<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2022/the-blueprint-to-end-gun-violence.pdf>
- Press release for the Blueprint for Community Safety:
<https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/555-23/mayor-adams-gun-violence-prevention-task-force-release-a-blueprint-community-safety-#/0>
- Website for the Summer Youth Employment Program:
<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/services/jobs-internships/summer-youth-employment-program-syep.page>