



THE ONS QUARTERLY
(July 2012 – September 2012)

“Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process – gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures. And however un-dramatic the pursuit of peace, that pursuit must go on.” – JFK

STREET OUTREACH

The primary strategy of the Office of Neighborhood Safety (“ONS”) is its **Street Outreach Strategy**. Each day the city’s street outreach team (Neighborhood Change Agents or “NCA’s”) directly engages those on a face-to-face basis who are most likely to commit gun violence in Richmond (aka -“the ONS population”). NCA’s work to build healthy and consistent relationships with identified individuals, serving as their mentors and credible messengers who provide examples of healthy lifestyles. The ONS also works to expand access to quality opportunities, exposures, resources, and services that build on the identified populations strengths in an effort to reduce their involvement in gun violence.

In the Third quarter of 2012 (July –September), **93** outreach contacts were made with **81** individuals identified as being at highest risk for being involved in gun violence in Richmond. **37** of the individuals contacted received attention intensive support and mentoring by ONS staff and NCA’s walked **12** of these individuals into and through a support services opportunity (hard referral) facilitated by a local/regional non-governmental organization. Thus far in 2012, the ONS has provided services to 154 different individuals who are at risk of being involved in gun violence.

OPERATION PEACEMAKER FELLOWSHIP

An extension of the ONS street outreach strategy is the **Operation Peacemaker Fellowship program**. “The Fellowship” is a Transformative Mentoring Intervention designed for those most likely to be involved in gun violence. This intervention works to transform the attitudes and behaviors that have given rise to the selected individual’s involvement in gun violence. The Fellowship is representative of those individuals who are most resistant to change and/or are chronically unresponsive to the traditional range of services offered or available in the Richmond community. In addition to the public safety concerns that these individuals pose, they are among the most expensive population to serve in policing, incarceration, hospitalization and social services. Enabling them to right their life trajectory will have a collateral and positive effect on their communities, families and peers, in addition to saving tax payer dollars.

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The Fellowship provides program incentives for participation and positive behavior as a gateway to developing intrinsic motivation that arises from internal and not external rewards. **Financial support/stipends, supportive services and costs for educational/career/life exposures associated with the Fellowship are funded by grants and private resources.**

Due to the Summertime Gun Violence Interruption Initiative (SG7), Operation Peacemaker Fellowship activities were intentionally limited. However, during this period, ONS Fellows traveled to San Diego to participate in site visit activities recommended by The California Endowment. Fellows and staff visited with local violence prevention leaders and were provided a tour of San Diego's Second Chance Program. San Diego Second Chance mission is to empower people to change their lives. San Diego Second Chance accomplishes this through job readiness, employment placement, housing placement, connecting community resources, and providing supportive services. San Diego Second Chance supports the ongoing success of their clients through education, enhancing life skills, and establishing long term stable relationships.

During this period, ONS staff began to develop and recruit for its third Operation Peacemaker Sr. Fellowship cohort. Beginning 2013 pending funding availability, ONS will also launch the Operation Peacemaker JR. Fellowship for young men at highest risk for gun violence between the ages of 13-17 years of age.

LIFE SKILLS COMMUNITY TRAINING

This Life Skills Community Training opportunity is sponsored by the Office of Neighborhood Safety and the Community Presbyterian Counseling Center of Danville California. This training opportunity is currently hosting eighteen (18) individuals representing city staff, community advocates and clergy who work closely and intimately with crisis and trauma related situations. The eight (8) week training curriculum facilitates a skills building, trust building, emotional healing and reflection process that enhances skill sets in the areas of negotiating trauma, working effectively with those who are grieving or dealing with anger, abuse, domestic violence, mood disorders, addictions, and personality disorders. This training session began on September 18th and will conclude on November 6, 2012. We anticipate the facilitation of a future Life Skills Community Training cohort to begin in early 2013.

ONS SUMMERTIME GUN VIOLENCE INTERRUPTION INITIATIVE ("SG7")

On August 31, 2012 ONS concluded its Summertime Gun Violence Interruption Initiative (SG7)/'Occupy North Richmond'. During the months of June thru August 2012 ONS focused most of its street outreach activities and resources in North Richmond. The goal was to contribute to reducing firearm activity during the summer months by intervening/interrupting more directly in ongoing firearm related feuds between North and South/Central Richmond personalities and rival groups. ONS deployed Neighborhood Change Agents and Peacekeepers around the clock into North

Richmond in an effort to reduce summertime gun related homicides in 2012 as compared to 2011 by 75%-100% (ONS goal).

In 2011 between the months of June and August, there were 17 firearm related homicides and 32 firearm assaults with an injury, many believed to be the result of ongoing feuds between South/Central and North Richmond personalities.

This summer 2012 between the months of June and August, there were 4 firearm related homicides and 27 firearm assaults with an injury. This represents a 76% reduction in summertime firearm related homicides, and a 16% reduction in summertime firearm assaults with an injury. **NOT ONE FIREARM RELATED HOMICIDE OCCURRED IN NORTH RICHMOND THIS SUMMER!!!**

We are very grateful to our many youth and young adult partners who when confronted with conflict during the summer months - made better decisions with regard to their responses to those conflicts.

“Celebration of Life” Talent Show sponsored by the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) and Richmond Police Activities League (RPAL)

The City of Richmond put on its first "Celebration of Life" Talent Show for youth on August 18, 2012.

"It was a very entertaining talent show that demonstrated the skills and talents of our youth in the great City of Richmond", said ONS Sr. Peacekeeper Charles Muhammad.

The Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) Peacekeepers facilitate a myriad of peace keeping activities throughout the year. The talent show was their brainchild and each ONS Peacekeeper involved was sincere and serious about getting the talent show off the ground.

Putting on the talent show consisted of several months of auditions with a variety of contestants city-wide. Months were spent planning, raising resources and getting the word out about the event.

The Director of the Office of Neighborhood Safety DeVone Boggan supported the desire and efforts of the ONS Peacekeepers to put on center stage the extraordinary talent of the Richmond community and also to highlight the phenomenal community work of his ONS Peacekeepers. The ONS Peacekeepers help the ONS in facilitating peace keeping activities such as providing community and school-based intervention services, parole and probation support, parent support and Neighborhood Council support. "It's an honor to have access to community members who work daily to make a difference in their individual communities without a lot of fan fair, its a gift to be able to provide support towards those individual efforts that combined together make Richmond a healthier city" said Boggan.

"In my opinion, the event was absolutely a dynamite event. The ONS team, families of the contestants, as well as several friends were all there to offer support for the kids and the event. Team work really showed its head in this endeavor and I was very proud to be a part of its success", added Muhammad.

There were twelve final contestants and twelve winners. "All of our children won! When we invest the time and necessary resources in our children, we create the opportunity for their growth and development that paves the way for them to cultivate their "God given talents", said one very excited parent about the city's role in this event.

A BIG Congratulations goes out to the event planners for their hard work and dedication. The event not only brings the community together in a fun and safe way, but also highlights the otherwise often overlooked talent and brilliance that the City of Richmond has to offer from its youth.

MENTORING NEWS

The City of Richmond was provided up to \$1.2 Million from the United States Department of Justice (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) to provide mentoring services to East Bay youth.

A partnership that includes Richmond Police Activities League (RPAL), Bay Area Community Resources, Oakland Police Athletic League, the East Bay Asian Youth Center, Be A Mentor Incorporated, and the City of Richmond Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) was provided one of ten grants awarded nationwide for the Fiscal Year 2012 Mentoring Enhancement Demonstration Program out of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). This was a very competitive grant funding opportunity.

ONS served as the applicant agency for the grant proposal.

Through this national program and resource, youth mentoring opportunities will be expanded and volunteer opportunities will be increased on behalf of the Richmond community. As a result of the program, 400 additional East Bay youth will be provided a mentorship relationship and opportunity with a caring adult mentor.

A BEYOND VIOLENCE RICHMOND HIGHLIGHT

Title:
Crystal's Courage

September 23, 2012 text conversation between female caller (BVI Client) survivor and ONS Neighborhood Change Agent/BVI Interventionist

Caller (BVI Client):
Hi, I just want to tell you that today is my ex-boyfriend who passed away birthday.

Next Day

Interventionist:

How did it go? Tomorrow will be the day my Mom passed away. So, I feel your loss, but know this...U can still smile when U think of Him, now THAT'S 4EVER!

Caller (BVI Client):

It's hard but I'm strong I can make it thru

Interventionist:

Yea! U R Strong and Yes U will make it thru! Peace Brings that!

Caller (BVI Client)

Yes...

In November of 2011 19y/o Crystal and her boyfriend were walking from the bus stop, a car drove slowly towards them and began shooting, female first and upon seconds from falling to the ground her boyfriend sustained mortal wounds and "fell dead next to her".

Two young people, in love, both in Special Education Programs through the Oakland/Alameda School systems and both diagnosed as "developmentally challenged", both new to the area and totally oblivious to the dangers of some streets in Richmond. As they were walking they were planning a celebration of a "promise ring" he had just given her.

ONS responded to John Muir Trauma Center's referral of consent and in addition to the standard response, ONS staff were asked to deliver to her the news of the death of her boyfriend. The John Muir Trauma Center request was met with honor.

Now as this story began it appears bleak and you are probably thinking "where is the success and feel-good to this story".

Since the shooting, it's been tough for our young victim. She has /does /is struggling through periods of physical discomfort, fear/paranoia, grief/sorrow, the full spectrum of trauma. It has been 10-months since the attack that traumatized this child-like young girl. The feel good or success exhibits itself with a simple word-in the last communication between caller and interventionist.

She simply replies "yes" - Crystal's "yes" represents the gradual but hurtful reality that her life MUST push forward. Her "yes" is also a celebration of growth.

Can you imagine – "What if I were her"? Could you say a simple "yes" to peace? To life?

Story written by: ONS Neighborhood Change Agent, Diane Gatewood

Beyond Violence Richmond is modeled after Caught in the Crossfire, a program of Youth Alive - a hospital-based peer violence intervention program for violently injured youth and young adults under 25 years old.

ONS STAFF TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

The Office of Neighborhood Safety staff members are provided ongoing training opportunities that allow them to increase their knowledge base and skill levels associated with the work they facilitate in order to maximize their output and increase their effectiveness.

In the third quarter of this year, ONS staff participated in the following trainings:

Edward Anderson Anger Management Facilitator Certification Training [10]

National Center for Victims of Crime

Life Skills Community Training