

City Government at Work: Keeping Young Men Alive & Free

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Gun violence is a public health problem

- Acts like an epidemic
- Is transmitted by a small group of people
- Can be stopped
 - Interruption of transmission
 - Behavior change of transmitters
 - Transforming of group norms

City of Richmond: Office of Neighborhood Safety (“ONS”)

- A non-law enforcement department within the City Governmental Structure of the City of Richmond California.
- ONS provides and coordinates targeted intervention services to and on behalf of those identified as **most likely to be perpetrators of gun violence** in Richmond, hereafter noted as the “ONS Population” or “Active Firearm Offenders”

Office of Neighborhood Safety (“ONS”) – Private Resources

- ONS Secures Resources for Advocacy
- ONS Secures Resources for Program Development and Implementation
- ONS Secures Resources to Build Services Capacity within NGO’s/CBO’s/FBO’s
- ONS Secures Resources to improve Services Coordination
- ONS Secures Resources for Evaluation

“ONS” GOALS

- Reduce Gun Violence (Shootings & Homicides)/Firearm Assaults
- Reduce firearm related hospital/trauma center re-entry
- Reduce retaliatory shootings between rival groups
- Establish effective link to culturally competent social services, improve the social and emotional health & wellness of identified clients.

“ONS” VALUES and BELIEFS

- Victims and perpetrators of gun violence and their family members are people of value and worth;
- The power of love and listening can turn lives around;
- Trusting relationships can heal people;
- Goodwill influences behavior;
- The Relationship is the Intervention, and the intervention is the relationship.

BACKGROUND

- **2003-2007: 200 Firearm Related Homicides, 767 Firearm Assaults**
- 2006 City Council Debates Possible Solutions
- ONS Approved by City Council in July 2007
- ONS Opens late October 2007
- Launched Street Outreach Strategy - April 2008

TODAY

- 2008-12 (-30%) Reduction in Homicides vs. 2003-07
- 2008-12 (-17%) Reduction in Firearm Assaults vs. 2003-07
- 2012:: 14 Firearm related homicides, 82 Firearm Assaults (lowest in two decades).

Lesson Learned

- 2009 Spike: 45 homicides, 170 firearm assaults with injury – Limited ONS Outreach assets required to focus citywide creating a “lost focus”;
- January 2010 LE Assumptions per 2009 Gun Violence;
- 15 People :: 70 Percent Rule

Lesson Learned

- **January 2010** - City Funds three (3) additional Neighborhood Change Agents
- **March 2010 ONS Directive – FOCUS:** from “hotspots” to “hot people;”
- **June 2010 ONS Peacemaker Fellowship Launch;**
- **RESULT: 2010** - 21 homicides, 118 firearm assaults with injury (-53% & -31% reductions respectively between 2009 & 10).

“ONS” VALUE

“In my opinion the impact of the ONS and the Fellowship cannot be overstated. Targeting individuals for services by category is not new...the Fellowship has taken this targeting strategy a step further and focused on the individuals who are the most likely to be catalysts or instigators of gun violence.

“ONS” VALUE

In truth, the ONS is the only program in this city that targets the “one percenters” for services. “One Percenters” are the individuals who create the risk for everyone else within the community. The benefits of the Fellowship can be felt everywhere, but nowhere is the impact more visible than in the overall reduction in violent crime in our city.” -Gang Commander, RPD

ONS Primary Strategies

- **STREET OUTREACH & SOCIAL SERVICE REFERRALS**
- **OPERATION PEACEMAKER FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Street Outreach

- **Intervention/Interruption Strategy**
 - Employs outreach workers to take programming to rival group members
 - Build relationships with the "ONS Population"
 - Make daily contact with the "ONS Population"
 - Provides life coaching/counseling
 - Promotes positive alternatives to violence
 - Mediates conflicts and broker truces
 - Serves as bridge between systems of care and "ONS Population"

Street Outreach: Role and Activities

- Role of Street Worker (Pro-social Adults):
 - Reach out to those who create risk;
 - Communicate effectively with those who create risk;
 - Link to community services and institutions
 - Play transformative role in the lives of those served;
 - Intimate understanding of street culture;
 - Are respected by those who create risk;

OPERATION PEACEMAKER FELLOWSHIP

The Office of Neighborhood Safety Operation Peacemaker Fellowship is a deliberate and intentional service provision and assistance strategy directed at a group of young men at highest risk for perpetrating gun violence. These young men are traditionally isolated from healthy social, educational, social service and economic development prospects.

OPERATION PEACEMAKER FELLOWSHIP

- The Fellowship:
 - Establishes a positive support system
 - Creates a healthy sense of empowerment
 - Imparts new/healthier boundaries and life expectations
 - Facilitates a constructive use of time
 - Motivates a commitment to learning
 - Instills positive/healthy values
 - Expands social competences, encourages and celebrates positive identity

OPERATION PEACEMAKER FELLOWSHIP - VALUE

“... ONS engages the most dangerous young men in our community and gives them an alternative to a violent lifestyle. For every killing they prevent, human capital is preserved, negative social costs are minimized, and millions of dollars are saved... were it not for their efforts more young men would have been shot and killed in our city.”

-Richmond Gang Cop

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

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