

Project Restore Bed-Stuy **Evaluation**

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Report Purpose

Project Restore Bed-Stuy (PRB), a gang-violence intervention pilot program, concluded in January 2024.

This report summarizes the key Learning and Evaluation findings of PRB, from January 2023 to June 2024.

This report was produced by Professor Geraldine Downey, Director of Columbia University's Center for Justice (CFJ), in conjunction with the CFJ Monitoring and Evaluation Research team.

The methods used to inform the evaluation and this report include:

- 30 Participant Intake Interviews
- Weekly Monitoring Data (6,600 Total Data Points).
- Weekly observations and conversations with leadership and management staff.
- The New York City Police Department COMPStat Crime Data.
- Mid- and Post- Program Participant Interviews.
- Interviews with community stakeholders.

This report reflects the mixed-methods outlined and focuses on both process and outcome evaluation.

Key questions asked were:

- How was the program developed and structured?
- How does the program effectuate change?
- Did the program achieve its objectives?
- Was the program effective in engaging those most impacted by cyclical and retaliatory violence in Bedford-Stuyvesant?
- Was the introduction of PRB associated with a change in the number of shooting incidents, felony assaults, and homicides in treatment Precincts?
- How did PRB influence the personal and professional development of participants?
- Is PRB a cost-effective approach to gang- and gun-violence reduction and improved community safety?
- What lessons can be learned from this program to inform future programs?

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Introduction & **Overview**

Executive Summary

Overview

Project Restore Bed-Stuy (PRB) was a 12-month community based gang-violence intervention program developed on the premise that violence prevention is best achieved through addressing barriers to personal growth, including economic insecurity, disconnection from education and employment, a lack of role models, and unhealed trauma.

Implemented by a team that included formerly incarcerated and gang-involved individuals, in collaboration with university and district attorney's office stakeholders, PRB was intended to serve as a pilot program for violence interruption in New York City, with scalable potential.

PRB supported 30 young men connected to rival street crews (locally affiliated gangs) in Bedford-Stuyvesant (Precincts 79 and 81), who were impacted by cyclical and retaliatory gun violence. Participants were provided with the opportunity to transform their lives through increasing their personal and professional skills, addressing deep rooted personal trauma, and developing a commitment to community safety and peaceful coexistence.

Three PRB Core Objectives:

01

To reduce gang-related violence and improve community safety by de-escalating inter-gang conflict in impacted communities.

02

To alter the life trajectories of participants and support their transition towards successful adulthood (e.g. employment, education, stable housing, and community engagement).

03

To reduce participant contact with the criminal justice system.

Outcomes Summary



01. Program Completion

All 30 participants successfully completed the program with zero incidents of arrests for gun violence involvement, incarceration, or violent retaliation.



02. Engagement and Personal Progress

Participants showed high engagement (average >75%) and made significant progress across education, employment, and community involvement.



03. Improved Community Safety

PRB was associated with an estimated 28% reduction in shooting incident victims and 22% reduction in felony assaults in Bedford-Stuyvesant.



04. Incarceration Prevented

The King's County District Attorney (KCDA) estimates that PRB prevented approximately 12 years of incarceration through non-carceral case resolution.



05. Retaliatory Shootings Prevented

PRB helped to prevent retaliatory shootings following five incidents in which PRB participants or their peers were seriously injured or killed.



06. Public Safety Working Group

Leaders from the rival street crews formed a Public Safety Working Group with the objective of maintaining peace within their communities.



07. Community Partnership

PRB created an innovative, sustainable community/university/district attorney's office partnership dedicated to supporting youth at risk of gun and gang violence.



08. Benefit to Cost Ratio

PRB achieved a strong Benefit-Cost Ratio of 6.7 to 1, driven by estimated cost savings from the prevention of incarceration and retaliatory shootings, along with increased participant earnings after program completion.

Project Background

Project Restore Bed-Stuy originated from a 2019 policy proposal jointly drafted by New York City officials and legal system-impacted youth participating in the Justice Ambassadors Youth Council (JAYC)¹ program at Columbia University Center for Justice (CFJ). The proposal detailed a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary intervention aimed at preventing gun-related gang violence by addressing its underlying causes.

Long-term investigations, arrests, and prosecutions targeting those directly responsible for shooting incidents and homicides play a critical role in improving community safety and de-stabilizing gang and street-crew leadership in the short-term. However, within a few months, younger street-crew members invariably fill these positions renewing retaliatory cycles of gang violence, making it clear that law enforcement responses alone cannot provide safety for communities.

– King's County District Attorney's Office (2020)

In 2021, following the takedown of two rival street crews operating in Bedford-Stuyvesant, the Kings County District Attorney, Eric Gonzalez, reached out to community leaders to explore strategies for redirecting young people from gang life. This effort was in line with KCDA's *Justice 2020 strategy* commitment to "prevent gun violence and gang affiliation by working with community groups to intervene after a gang takedown." During this process, he was presented with the JAYC community-violence intervention proposal.



In 2022, a partnership was forged between Columbia University's CFJ, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ), the KCDA, Bridge Street Development Corporation, and Inside Circle to launch a pilot program in Bedford-Stuyvesant inspired by this proposal. Following extensive planning, PRB began in January 2023.

1. JAYC is a 12-week seminar that brings together government officials with legal system impacted youth to co-develop policy proposals focused on supporting healthy development within the most under-served neighborhoods (Daniels et al., 2023).

Costs of Gun Violence

\$557 billion

Cost of Gun Violence/ Year in the United States

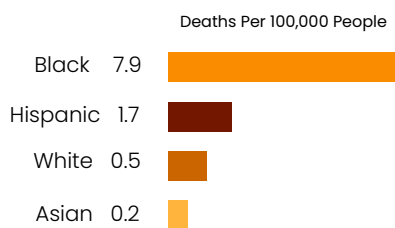
- Gun violence costs the United States \$557 billion annually, or 2.6% of gross domestic product per year (Song, 2022).

20,958

2021 Firearm Homicides in United States

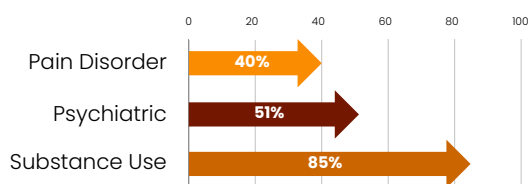
- The firearm homicide rate in the U.S. is nearly 25 times higher than other high-income countries (Grinshteyn & Hemenway, 2016).
- In 2021, 81% of murders in the United States - 20,958 out of 26,031 - involved a firearm (Pew Research Center, 2023).

Gun Homicide Rate/ Ethnicity in New York



- Gun violence has a disproportionate impact on Black communities.
- In New York City, Black people are 16 times more likely to die by gun homicide than white people (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014-2018).

Health Diagnoses among Shooting Survivors



- Gun violence has a devastating, life-long effect on individual victims and families, increasing the likelihood of mental health disorders and substance abuse disorders (Song, Zubizarreta, Giuriato, et al., 2022).

\$53.8 billion

Survivor and Perpetrator Work Loss/ Year

Everytown Research & Policy. (2022)

- The negative consequences also impact entire communities, eroding public health, causing economic disruption, and contributing to lasting individual and community traumas.

Neighborhood Health Conditions

The distribution and burden of gun violence is overwhelmingly concentrated within under-resourced neighborhoods and is carried out by a small number of young people (Semenza et al., 2023). Neighborhood characteristics, such as poverty, and a lack of access to healthcare, education, employment, and safe housing, are key determinants of gun violence. Rates of gun violence are at least two times higher in high-poverty neighborhoods when compared to lower-poverty neighborhoods (Bhatt et al., 2023).



Both in New York and nationally, gun violence impacts Black and Hispanic communities at higher rates than white communities... These numbers are driven by a small subset of neighborhoods that continue to experience a disproportionate burden of gun violence due to historic disinvestment, racist policies, and systemic oppression.

- New York State Department of Health (n.d.)

Bedford-Stuyvesant, located in northern Brooklyn, exemplifies such a neighborhood. From 2015 to 2022, Bedford-Stuyvesant experienced the highest incidents of shootings in New York City (CBS News, 2022). The neighborhood risk indicators (Figure 1) underscore the need for programming to support the healthy development of at-risk youth.

	NYC Average	Brooklyn Average	Bedford-Stuyvesant
Elementary School Absenteeism	22%	21%	34%
Poverty	18%	19%	21%
Unemployment	6%	6%	18%
Incarceration (Per 100,000)	196	210	472
Non-Fatal Assault Hospitalizations	59	59	117

Figure 1: Comparison of Risk Indicators (New York City Department of Health, n.d.)

Theoretical Framing

Holistic Interventions

Research demonstrates that the most impactful and sustainable mechanism to reduce violent crime is to invest in preventative, public health approaches to community safety (Branas et al., 2020; David-Ferdon et al., 2016). Holistic programs that address the deep-rooted personal, community, and socio-economic factors leading to violent crime demonstrate profound social and economic value (Avram et al., 2024; Buggs et al., 2022; Hobson et al., 2022).

For example, research by New York City Council’s Data Team has shown that precincts with Cure Violence (CV) programs experience an immediate and sustained reduction in shooting incidents (Avram et al., 2024). CV is a public health initiative that treats violence as an epidemic, aiming to interrupt its transmission through violence interrupters, behavior change programs, and community mobilization. The Crisis Management System (CMS), a component of the Cure Violence model, involves a coordinated effort among various community-based organizations and public agencies to manage and respond to violence in real-time.

PRB was designed to complement and enhance the impact of CV and CMS by:



Engaging young people facing the highest risk of perpetrating or falling victim to gun violence in intensive holistic programming guided by psychological research on youth desistance from crime.



Mobilizing an influential partnership of community, university, and district attorney’s office stakeholders to create an ecology of support that helps young people to succeed.

Addressing Needs

Safety, belonging, and being valued are vital needs that young people typically meet through their community and peers in education and employment (Arnett, 2023). However, in disadvantaged areas, the lack of accessible educational and economic opportunities often leads youth to seek security, identity, and belonging through street crew membership (White et al., 2023). Unfortunately, these affiliations impede healthy development and lead to unpredictable income, a lack of effective support, and, ultimately, an increased risk of gun violence and incarceration.

Research identifies social bonds and supports, emerging aspirations in work and education, and positive shifts in identity as critical pull factors, or “hooks for change”, which can motivate individuals away from gang involvement toward pro-social, successful adulthood (Dumornay et al., 2022; Giordano, 2022; Maruna, 2016). In this way, PRB was designed to pull young people away from gang-life entrenchment by providing participants with a non-judgmental environment, financial stability, viable routes to attractive life trajectories, and a network committed to community advancement and personal development (Burrows et al., 2023).



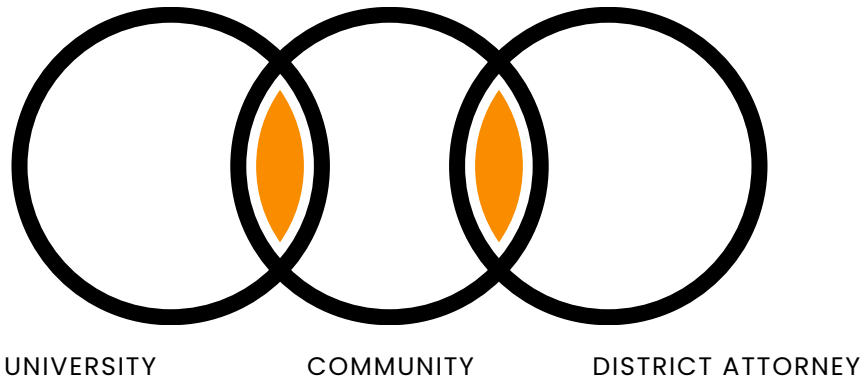
PRB provides evidence based, targeted support to address the critical needs of young people at the highest risk of future gun violence involvement.



Program Design & **Implementation**

Stakeholders

PRB operated as an innovative university, community, district attorney's office partnership:



- The KCDA received \$2.4 million in funding from MOCJ to administer PRB.
- Bridge Street Development Corporation, an established non-profit within the Bedford-Stuyvesant area, was engaged as the principal community partner organization to oversee day-to-day engagement and service provision.
- Inside Circle, a transformative trauma rehabilitation team specializing in guiding system-impacted individuals to heal from trauma and lead change within their communities, was recruited to facilitate Restorative Justice Healing Circles.
- Justice Ambassadors Youth Council was employed to lead educational and skill-based sessions focused on developing critical thinking and enhancing professional development. The CFJ also provided research and administrative support.
- The KCDA proactively addressed issues and incidents as they emerged by swiftly mobilizing its resources, using discretion to handle participants' criminal legal matters in ways that encouraged continued program engagement, and connecting participants to essential supports, such as sourcing temporary housing for participants at risk of being shot.

Staff Breakdown



The strength of PRB's community-based staff with deep connections and shared lived experiences with participants was critical to obtaining buy-in from participants and supporting engagement.

Role	Description
Social Workers (2)	Assessed participants' immediate needs at the beginning of the program and helped them develop short and long-term goals.
Case Managers (3)	Connected participants to appropriate resources and helped them establish and maintain progress toward life goals/ milestones.
Credible Mentors (7)	Used their lived experience to guide mentees and collaborated with case managers to support participants' pursuit of goals/ milestones.
Program Directors (2)	The Program Director and Associate Director managed programming activities and staff, with support from Bridge Street Development Corporation.
Both Sides of the Violence (BSV)	The Director of BSV, a non-profit focused on addressing and mitigating violence by engaging with perpetrators and victims, supported various aspects of the program.

Program Structure

PRB consisted of 44 weeks of program activity, including case management, credible mentorship, restorative justice, life skills development, and education/ employment (Figure 2). Participants were paid a stipend of \$25/hour of engagement (maximum 20 hours/week).

Program components operated simultaneously on parallel tracks for the two rival street crews (Group A and Group B) and were hosted in separate locations, with safety protocols in place, to mitigate the possibility of violence.

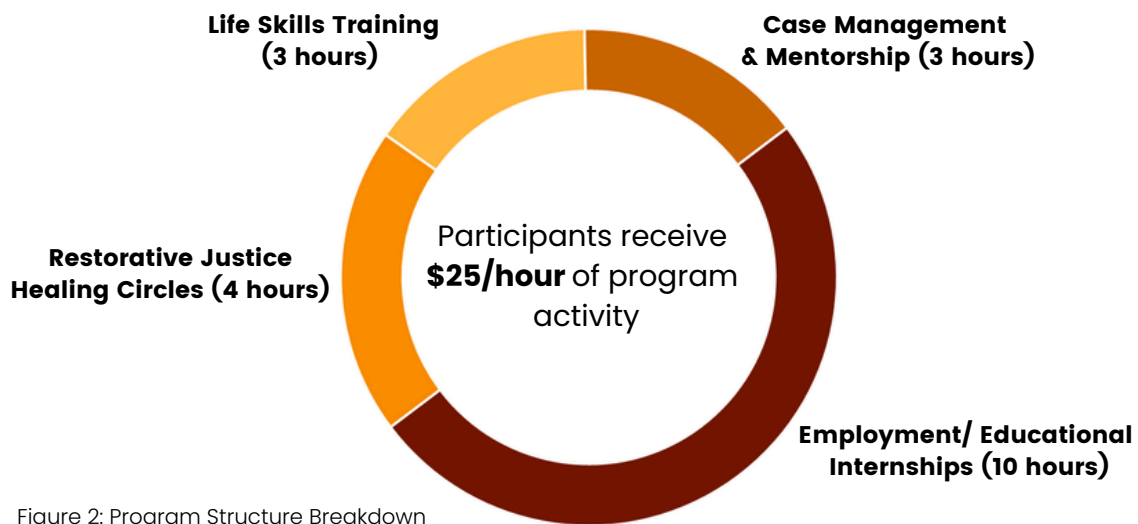


Figure 2: Program Structure Breakdown



01. Life Skills Training

- Life Skills Training focused on equipping participants with essential critical thinking and practical skills needed for success in adulthood. This included job readiness components, such as resume-writing workshops, mock interviews, along with essential sessions on financial literacy and conflict resolution.
- The evidence-based curriculum was taught by facilitators with relevant lived experience who have transitioned from incarceration into valued community-serving roles.



02. Restorative Justice Healing Circles

- Restorative Justice Healing Circles focused on supporting healing from trauma, assuming responsibility for past behaviors, and building social and emotional competencies that foster personal growth and a sense of community.
- The Healing Circles were led by trained facilitators with expertise in conflict resolution and trauma-informed care, who have been incarcerated themselves. These sessions helped participants process their experiences and learn constructive ways to address conflicts.



03. Case Management & Mentorship

- Participants had weekly one-on-one mentorship and case management sessions.
- Case management sessions involved providing participants with individualized support, coordinating services, and helping participants navigate resources to address their specific needs.
- Mentors supported participants in navigating personal and professional challenges and attaining specific milestones such as education, employment, and housing stability. This mentorship was crucial in providing guidance and support tailored to each participant's unique needs.



04. Internship Opportunities

- Participants engaged in two internships to develop relevant professional experience and marketable skills.
- This experience was crucial in helping participants obtain future employment opportunities, as it demonstrated their capacity, reliability, and skills, making them more competitive candidates.
- Internships provided participants with a sense of purpose, helping to keep them off the street and out of legal trouble.

Phases of Change

Program activity was divided into three phases to provide a structured pathway towards independence. The phased approach facilitated gradual adjustment and reinforcement of positive behaviors, supporting stable and sustained growth for participants. The provision of a stipend throughout was essential, as it removed the financial burden of participation and promoted consistent engagement.

Phase 1: Building Trust and Stability

In this initial phase, the focus was on laying the groundwork for change by building participants' trust in PRB staff, providing economic security and employment experience, establishing a consistent weekly routine, and beginning the process of healing from trauma. By addressing these core needs, Phase 1 provided participants with the stability necessary to engage meaningfully in the program, commit to personal growth, and begin confronting the challenges of change. This foundation created a platform for participants to launch their personal and professional development in later phases.

Component	Summary
Case Management	Assistance with documentation, employment opportunities, job applications, reference letters, etc.
Credible Mentorship	Consistent support and encouragement from role models leveraging their relevant lived experiences.
Restorative Justice Healing Circles	Developing awareness of recurring themes in their lives, understanding where they originate from, and how they affect their behavior. Learning to understand emotions and to communicate authentically
Life Skills Training	Learning how their identities are shaped by personal, community, and societal ecology and history. Considering what they want their legacy to be.
Internship Opportunities	Placement in relevant job roles (ranging from construction to research assistant positions at Columbia University) to provide professional experience and support economic stability.

Phase 2: Empowering Growth and Resilience

In this phase, the focus was on building participants' confidence and competence in navigating public institutions, fostering personal accountability, and managing relationships in a constructive manner. Participants expanded their positive social networks while developing resilience to overcome setbacks through self-correction. This phase reinforced the progress made in Phase 1, further solidifying the participants' growth trajectory and enhancing their readiness for lasting change.

Component	Summary
Case Management	Support in obtaining essential government documentation and navigating bureaucracies (such as education, housing, food support).
Credible Mentorship	Consistent support and building positive momentum through 'small wins'.
Restorative Justice Healing Circles	Learning to challenge self-defeating beliefs, set and achieve small goals, develop accountability, self-correct when facing challenges, recognize progress, and value individuality.
Life Skills Training	Development of a 5-year plan. Trainings focused on gaining the skills and connections required to make progress (e.g., financial literacy workshops, and college/ employment preparation training)
Internship Opportunities	Developing relevant professional skills to enhance resumes.

Phases of Change

Phase 3: Preparing for Post Program Success

This phase focused on equipping participants with the skills and experiences necessary for sustained progress and peaceful coexistence beyond the program. Emphasis was placed on securing employment and education opportunities for participants while continuing their personal development. This phase also featured planned retreats and graduation ceremonies, offering participants the chance to reflect on their growth and celebrate their achievements, marking the culmination of their journey with PRB.

Component	Summary
Case Management	Enhancement of and progress toward 5-year plans and support in positive life transitions (such as employment and education) and connecting participants with post-program opportunities.
Credible Mentorship	Guidance and support through personal challenges, with individuals who have successfully navigated similar challenges.
Restorative Justice Healing Circles	In-depth self-reflection and peer engagement sessions, focused on goals, struggles, pressures, how to recover from setbacks, and coping with loss. Bringing rival street crew leaders together to discuss peaceful coexistence.
Life Skills Training	Focus on self-accountability and community relationships, including training in peacebuilding, negotiation, and conflict resolution.
Internship Opportunities	Application of skills to real-world challenges and supporting the transition to full-time employment.

Sustained Engagement and Transitional Support Post-Program

Stable ongoing support is crucial for sustaining the positive changes brought about by gang violence interventions (Richardson, Newman, & Berry, 2023).

Ideally, PRB's first year of intensive programming would have been followed by an additional year of lower-dosage support, including continued assistance with employment and education transitions, and long-term engagement with a comprehensive community-based organization.

Unfortunately, PRB was unable to secure sufficient funding to cover this support model. As a result, PRB staff and stakeholders prioritized identifying and partnering with multiple community-based service providers who could offer ongoing supports to participants post-intervention. The BRO Experience, RiseBoro Community Partnership, ManUp! Inc., and NextGen - Center for Community Alternatives committed to providing this sustained support.

Columbia University's CFJ offered dedicated support to twelve street-crew members, who are part of a Public Safety Working Group, through an 8-month paid skills-building internship. The CFJ also supported other PRB graduates on an ad hoc basis.

The KCDA secured funding in mid-2024 to hire the Director and Associate Director of PRB to provide ongoing support to participants and their community safety mission. This assistance is crucial to reinforce and sustain participants' growth and support those still experiencing situational insecurity.

Theory of Change

PRB's Theory of Change (Figure 3) illustrates how providing holistic support to youth in disadvantaged, high-crime areas leads to a sustainable reduction in interpersonal and community violence through building youth capacity for positive engagement in adult roles.

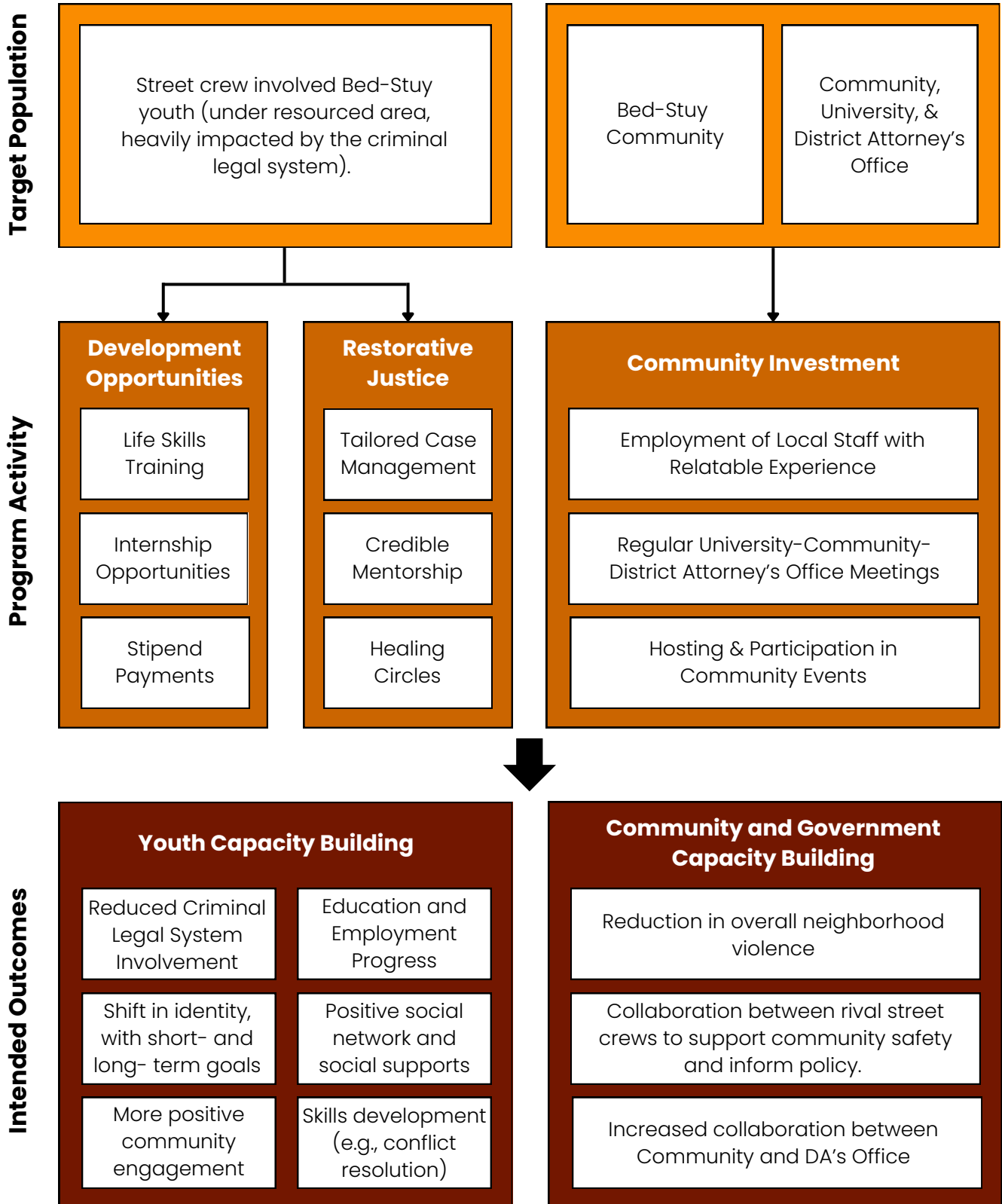


Figure 3: Project Restore Bed-Stuy Theory of Change



Program Impact **Evaluation**

Participant Characteristics

PRB aimed to support young men at high risk of future gun violence or incarceration by providing resources to improve their lives. Participants were identified through collaboration with Community-Based Organizations, community leaders, and the KCDA. The KCDA used its knowledge of gang hierarchies and investigative intelligence to identify individuals most likely to perpetuate violence or fill power vacuums after gang takedowns. The KCDA vetted suggestions from community partners, excluding only those with open criminal cases. By taking this approach, the KCDA proactively engaged high-risk individuals in programming—an important advancement over the traditional post-hoc prosecution model. Figure 4 shows participant characteristics at the program’s outset.

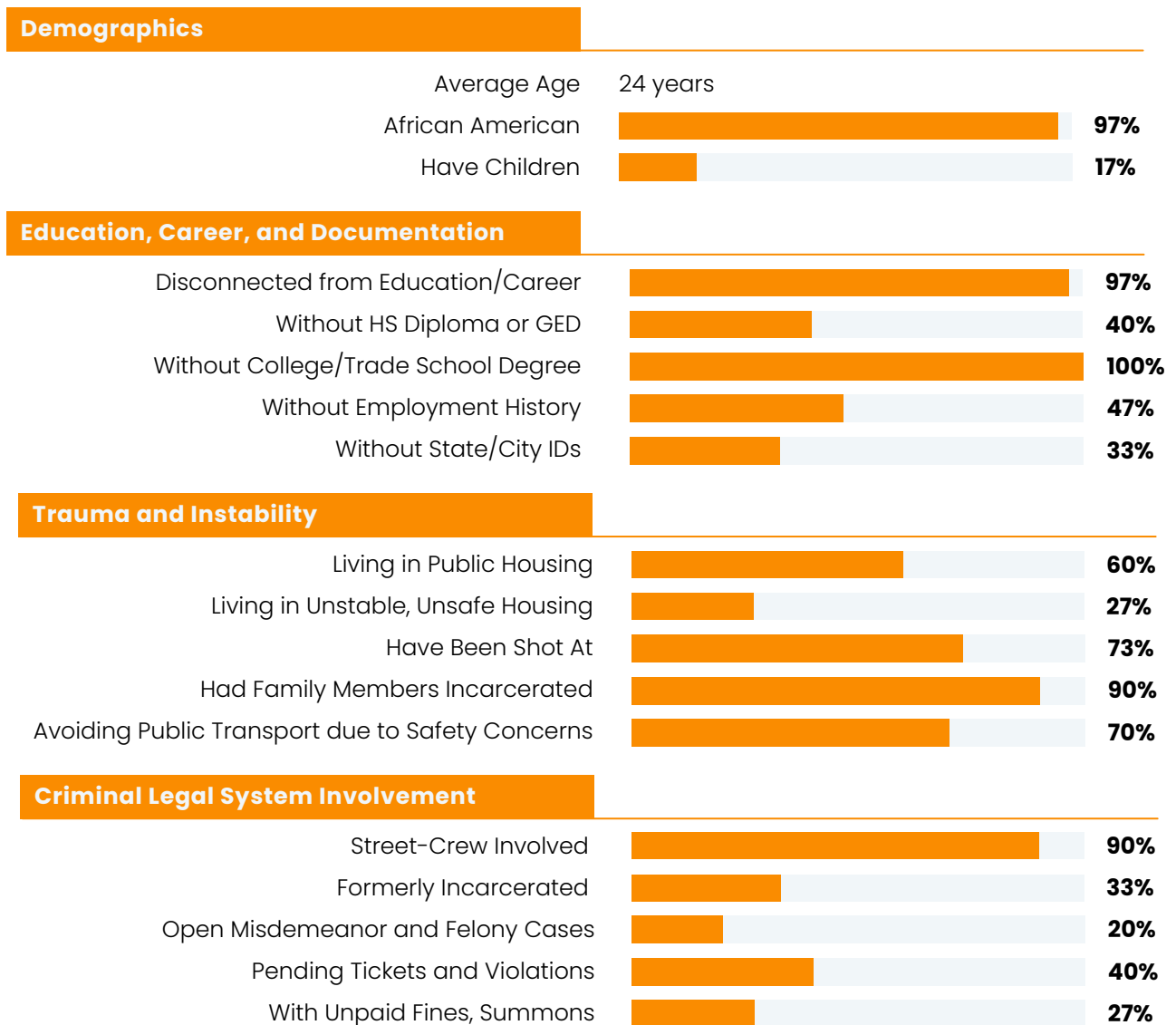


Figure 4: Participant Characteristics at Intake

A third of participants entered the program without identification, leaving them functionally unable to access state support. Almost all participants were disconnected from education and employment, with relatively few having recent work experience or a high school credential. They had experienced multiple traumas in their lives, including incarceration; incarceration of family members; housing instability; and exposure to gun violence. Such adverse experiences are linked to long-term negative impacts on mental and physical health, overall well-being, and an increased likelihood of future involvement with the criminal justice system (Felitti et al., 1998).

A lack of employment and education, exposure to gun violence, unhealed trauma, and street-crew involvement drives young people to illicit activities and heightens the risk of involvement in gun violence. Participants faced barriers in overcoming economic and housing instability, open legal cases, and criminal records on their own, which limited their ability to escape illicit behaviors and cycles of gun violence.

Participant Engagement

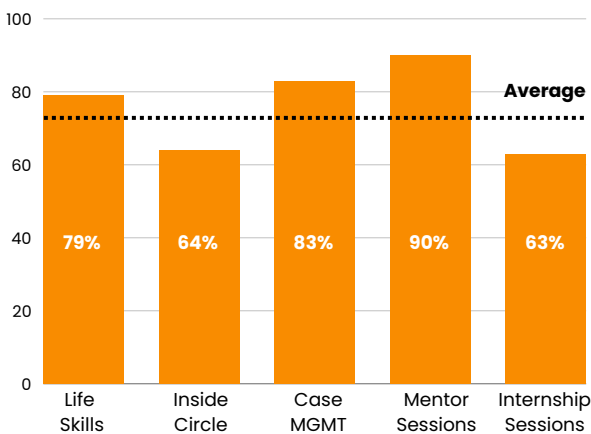


Figure 5: Average Attendance per Component

In mentorship and case management sessions, participants had the opportunity to navigate personal and professional challenges and work towards specific milestones (e.g., education, employment, and housing) with a mentor who had persevered against similar challenges and could speak from direct, lived experience. Figure 6 illustrates the ten most frequent topics participants discussed with their mentors.

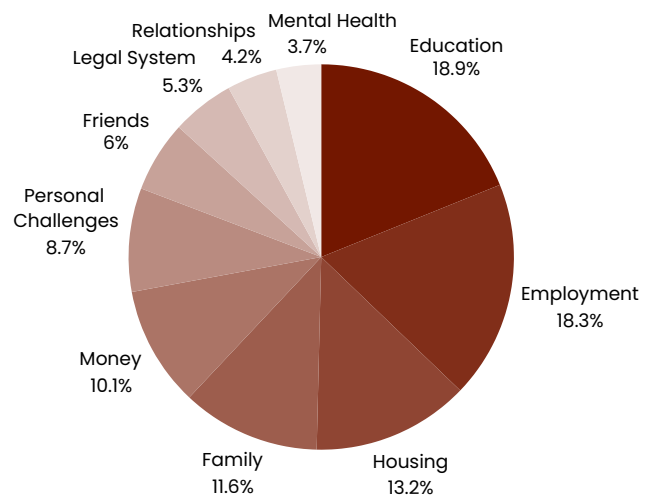


Figure 6: Breakdown of 10 Most Frequent Topics with Mentors

Community Engagement and Trips

PRB provided participants and staff with opportunities to contribute to their community and experience new environments. Events and trips, ranging from job fairs to panel presentations, fostered the development of strong networks among participants and community organizations. These activities extended participants' experiences beyond their neighborhoods, broadening their worldviews and fostering new perspectives.

In response to the tragic loss of peers due to shooting incidents, two restorative retreats were swiftly organized in upstate New York. These retreats offered a crucial respite and a safe space for participants to process their trauma, while also helping to reduce the risk of retaliatory violence by distancing participants from potential conflicts with street rivals.

Participants' accomplishments were celebrated at several events, reinforcing their achievements throughout the program. Graduation from the initial Life Skills component of PRB was held in June 2023, with family members, community leaders, and elected officials in attendance. Additionally, participants organized a celebratory dinner to share their future plans with their families. PRB's formal graduation celebrated in January 2024 was attended by local elected officials, NYPD representatives, the District Attorney, and the Director of MOCJ. This event highlighted the participants' achievements and the collaborative effort of participants, staff, and city officials in their success.

Progress Markers

Over the course of PRB, participants demonstrated overwhelmingly positive life trajectory growth. Figure 7 outlines the accomplishments of program participants to date.

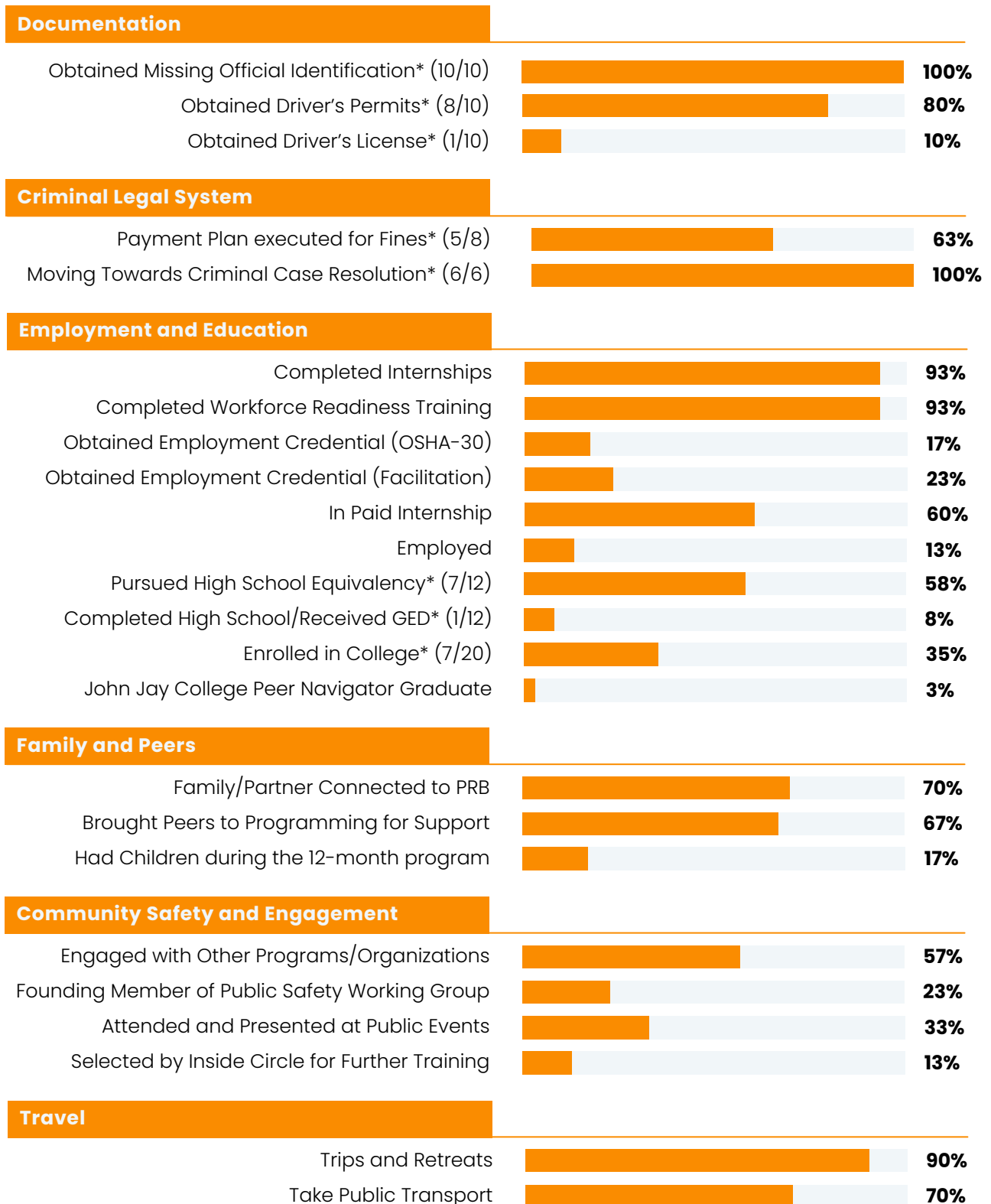


Figure 7: Participant Accomplishments throughout PRB

Descriptors marked with an asterisk (*) refer to a subset of participants for whom the data point is relevant. For example, 'Obtained Missing Identification' only refers to participants 'Without State/City ID' at program outset, and 'Pursued High School Equivalency' includes participants 'Without College/Trade School Degree' at program outset

Employment, Education, & Community

Participants demonstrated significant progress towards economic self-sufficiency and independence, with notable achievements across employment, education, and community engagement.

Employment

- Participants developed critical skills and experience needed to make progress in securing and maintaining employment.
- 80% developed resumes, 40% completed mock interviews, and 43% attained employment credentials (e.g. OSHA-30).
- 93% gained relevant professional experience through the completion of two separate internships. For many, this was their first sustained experience of legal employment.
- The internships provided valuable experience and connections, and a sense of purpose that helped to keep participants off the street and out of legal trouble.
- On completion of the program, 13% of participants were employed, and an additional 60% were taking part in paid skill-building internships.

Education

- Participants made significant educational progress, a key determinant of lifetime earnings.
- One participant completed high school and an additional three participants enrolled in GED programs.
- Seven participants are enrolled in college programs at Kingsborough Community College, the Borough of Manhattan Community College, and Columbia University's School of General Studies.
- One participant graduated from the Peer Navigator Program at John Jay College which prepares students for employment in human services..

Community

- Participants became assets to their communities, actively contributing towards community safety.
- 33% of participants presented at public events, using their lived experiences to advance community dialogue and safety initiatives, while improving their public speaking skills.
- Participants took the initiative to organize multiple community initiatives, such as basketball tournaments, toy drives, and charitable events, demonstrating a newfound commitment to engaging with and giving back to their community.
- 70% of participants connected their families or partners to the program, and 67% connected similar peers/ community members to the program. These individuals received support to access social services, craft resumes, and apply for jobs.
- Group A participants engaged with their local police precinct to foster a better mutual understanding of how to support community safety.

51

SPEAKING EVENTS

82

COMMUNITY EVENTS
SUPPORTED

4

COMMUNITY
CONVERSATIONS HELD

Personal Progress

PRB had a meaningful impact on participants' identity and outlook on life. 87% of participants assessed their personal growth throughout the program.

Before



Only 7% of participants had concrete plans for the future.



Many expected to be in jail or dead within the next five years.



Days were unstructured, largely spent hanging out on the street.



Participants were viewed negatively within their communities.

After

Participants developed a structured daily routine and began to look forward to what they could achieve each day.

"PRB gave me a real schedule and a real sense of time, a real purpose."

Participants became hopeful for the future, setting attainable 5-year goals.

"It's helping me take control over my life and make it what I want it to be."

Participants developed an ability to regulate their emotions and to respond to challenges in a healthy way.

"I learned to be more emotionally aware, to see how I'm feeling and see where it's rooting from instead of just acting based off of emotion."

Inside Circle supported participants to take responsibility for their actions.

"I improved a lot... I learned a lot of self-responsibility and I learned to take accountability."

Many participants transformed from perceived troublemakers to community assets.

"Now I am really thinking about bettering my community."

Participants developed a positive, pro-social network, strengthening connections that created opportunities while distancing themselves from negative influences.

"The best thing about the program? I feel the connection that we have between the staff and me. They all made sure we were all good and doing something positive, on the right route."

Participants' sense of self was transformed.

"Before, I felt like since I was used to going back and forth to jail, that that's who I am. But now since doing the program, it has made me feel like I'm somebody. I feel like I'm a person... It is bettering me. So now I feel great."

Overall, all 26 participants interviewed viewed the program extremely positively. Many advocated for its expansion to other communities facing similar challenges and to younger groups to support them before they become involved in street-crews.

Staff Progress

PRB not only had a significant impact on participants, but also contributed to the professional and educational advancements of its community-based, system impacted staff.



100%

Of staff advanced in pursuing their career and employment goals



4

Formerly incarcerated staff enrolled in graduate or undergraduate programs



6

Formerly incarcerated staff secured full-time, long-term employment, with increased earnings



2

Program staff hired by KCDA to provide ongoing support to participants and advance community safety.

Community Safety

A Difference-in-Difference (DID) analysis was conducted to address the question: ‘Was the introduction of PRB associated with a reduction in the number of shooting incidents, felony assaults, and homicides in treatment Precincts (79 and 81)?’

- **Shooting Incidents:** Shooting incidents include all events where a firearm is discharged, resulting in injuries or fatalities, encompassing both shooting-related homicides and felony assaults involving gunfire.
- **Felony Assaults:** Felony assaults refer to serious physical attacks that cause significant injury to the victim, including instances where individuals are shot but survive.
- **Homicides:** Homicides are instances of unlawful killings, which include both gun-involved deaths and those caused by non-firearm means.

DID analysis is a statistical technique that estimates the changes associated with an intervention by comparing the changes in outcomes between pre- and post-intervention periods for a treatment group and a control group (Cunningham, 2021). The PRB analysis compared the changes in outcomes from the pre-intervention period (2012 to 2022) to the duration of the program and follow-up period (January 2023 to June 2024) for the treated precincts (Precincts 79 and 81) and the control group (all other precincts in New York City). The DID methodology built upon the approach used by the New York City Council Data Team to assess the efficacy of Cure Violence (Avram et al., 2024). Appendix 1 provides a detailed overview of the approach used and methodological adaptations. Appendix 2 provides the raw regression results.

Results

Treatment Group

Analysis of the treatment group examines the aggregate effect of PRB across the 79th and 81st precincts combined. PRB was associated with a statistically significant reduction in shooting incidents and felony assaults in the treatment group (Figure 8). Specifically, PRB is associated with a 28.4% reduction (Figure 9) in the number of shooting incident victims (approximately 30 victims) and a 22.3% reduction (Figure 10) in felony assault victims (approximately 305 victims) during the 18 months following its launch. A 21.5 % reduction in homicides (approximately 6 victims) was observed, but is not statistically significant.

	Percentage Change	95% Confidence Interval	Count Change	Statistical Significance
Shooting Incident Victims	-28.4%	(-50.5%, -11.3%)	≈-30 (-58, -7)	p < 0.01**
Felony Assaults	-22.3%	(-43.7%, -8.9%)	≈-305 (-396, -218)	p < 0.001***
Homicides	-21.5%	(-27.1%, -17.0%)	≈-6 (-21, +4)	Non-Significant

Figure 8: Treatment Group Post-Intervention Changes

Community Safety

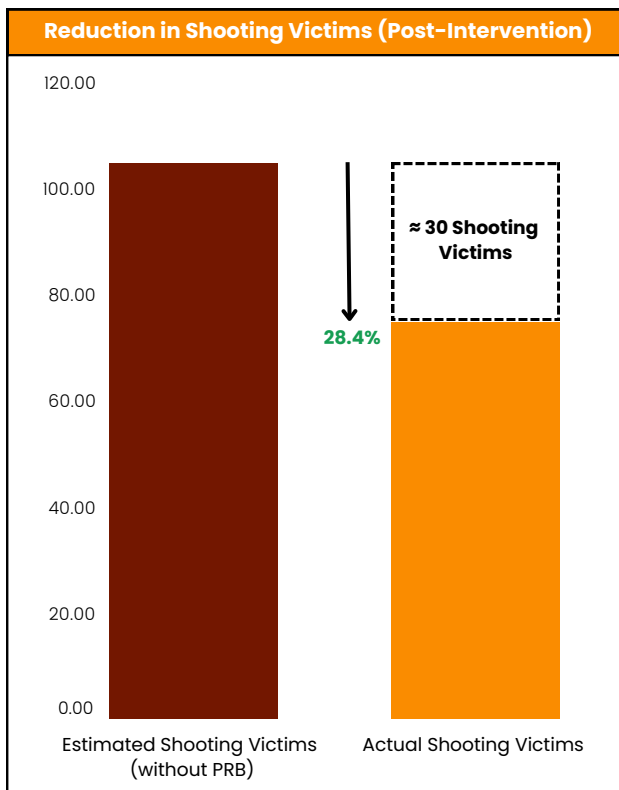


Figure 9: Reduction in Shooting Victims

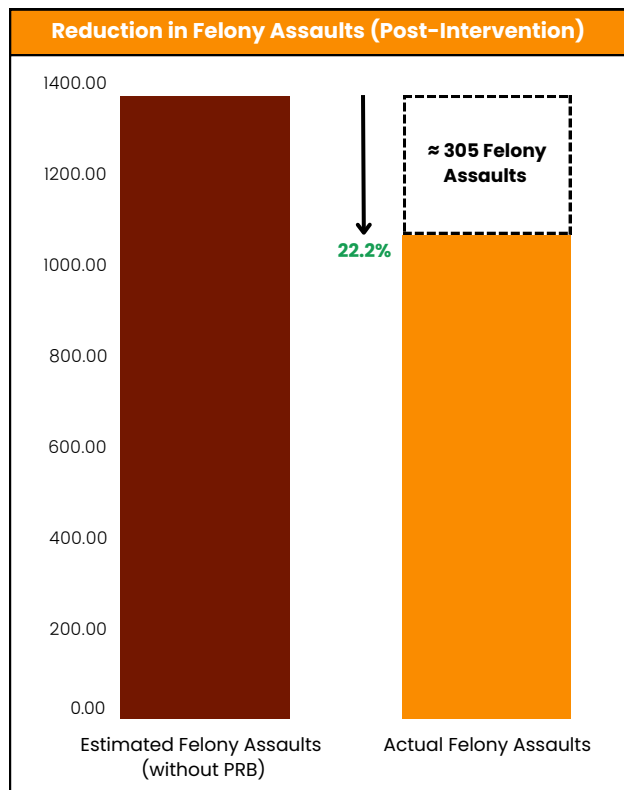


Figure 10: Reduction in Felony Assaults

Separate analyses were conducted for the 79th and 81st Precincts to examine the varying magnitude of the effects of the program across the two precincts.

81st Precinct

PRB was associated with a statistically significant reduction in shooting incidents and felony assaults in the 81st Precinct (Figure 11). Specifically, PRB is associated with a 39.1% reduction in the number of shooting incident victims (approximately 19 victims) and a 26.1% reduction in felony assault victims (approximately 161 victims) during the 18 months following its launch. A 26.8% reduction in homicides (approximately 3 victims) was observed, but is not statistically significant.

	Percentage Change	95% Confidence Interval	Count Change	Statistical Significance
Shooting Incident Victims	-39.1%	(-58.0%, -11.3%)	≈-19 (-41, -4)	$p < 0.01^{**}$
Felony Assaults	-26.8%	(-32.9%, -18.3%)	≈-161 (-224, -103)	$p < 0.001^{***}$
Homicides	-26.1%	(-63.4%, +46.2%)	≈-3 (-16, +3)	Non-Significant

Figure 11: Precinct 81 Post-Intervention Changes

Community-Safety

79th Precinct

PRB was associated with a statistically significant reduction in felony assaults in the 79th Precinct (Figure 12). Specifically, PRB is associated with a 19% reduction in felony assaults (approximately 143 victims) during the 18 months following its launch. An 18.5% reduction in the number of shooting incident victims (approximately 10 victims) and 16.6% reduction in homicides (approximately 2 victims) were observed, but are not statistically significant.

	Percentage Change	95% Confidence Interval	Count Change	Statistical Significance
Shooting Incident Victims	-18.5%	(-40.2%, +11.0%)	≈-10 (-30, +4)	Non-Significant
Felony Assaults	-19.0%	(-25.6%, -11.8%)	≈-143 (-210, -21)	p < 0.001***
Homicides	-16.6%	(-54.6, +53.1%)	≈-2 (-14, +4)	Non-Significant

Figure 12: Precinct 79 Post-Intervention Changes

The individual analyses suggest that the estimated impact of PRB is stronger in the 81st Precinct than the 79th Precinct. The reason for this difference has not been determined. One possibility is that the 79th Precinct has a number of street-crew rivalries in addition to the specific rivalry targeted by the PRB intervention.

Limitations

The conclusions drawn regarding the impact of PRB on precinct-level crime measures should be interpreted with caution due to several design features that may constrain the robustness and generalizability of the results.

Randomized Controlled Trials

Neither participants nor precincts were randomly selected for PRB. Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs) are widely regarded as the gold standard for evaluating interventions because randomly assigning participants and/or precincts to treatment or control groups eliminates selection bias and helps control for confounding variables. However, the ideal experiment is often impractical, infeasible, or unethical (Bueno de Mesquita & Fowler, 2021).

In the case of PRB, which targeted groups of connected individuals in high-crime precincts, employing an RCT was all three:

- **Impractical:** Identifying a suitable control group with characteristics similar to the treatment group (involvement in gangs, criminal history, and high risk of future violence or incarceration) would have been extremely difficult. Randomly assigning individuals who face such unique and severe risks would undermine the specificity of the recruitment process.
- **Infeasible:** The tight social networks within these communities, along with PRB's goal to foster peaceful co-existence among participants, their peers, and rival street crews, would be disrupted by individual-level randomization. The intervention was intended to influence broader community dynamics, making it difficult to isolate individuals for random assignment.
- **Unethical:** Withholding the intervention from individuals at high risk of future gun violence or incarceration raises significant ethical concerns, particularly in vulnerable populations.

Given these factors, randomization would have undermined PRB's network-based approach and its broader goal of promoting peace and support in high-risk communities.

Community Safety

Parallel Trends Assumption

DID is a standard approach used to identify the causal effects of treatments when randomization is not feasible and unmeasured confounding is a potential problem (Roth, Sant'Anna, Bilinski, & Poe, 2023). However, the lack of randomization implies a need for caution in attributing the observed effects solely to the intervention, since other factors could also influence the outcomes.

The validity of DID hinges on the parallel trends assumption—the idea that, in the absence of the intervention, the difference between the treatment and control groups would have remained constant over time. If this assumption holds, any post-intervention differences in trends can be more confidently attributed to the intervention itself (Lechner, 2011). Appendix 3 presents plots of the pre-intervention trends for both the treatment and control groups. Visual inspection supports the parallel trends assumption for shooting incidents and felony assaults, a finding further validated by an assessment of the correlation between the pre-intervention data for each indicator in the treatment and control groups.

Nevertheless, factors beyond the intervention may have contributed to the post-intervention differences in crime rates. Notably, PRB was implemented in Precincts 79 and 81 following a spike and subsequent decline in shooting incidents linked to retaliatory gang violence, followed by a takedown of rival street crews. Therefore, caution is warranted when interpreting the observed reductions in shooting incidents, felony assaults, and homicides as solely attributable to PRB, as some changes may reflect ongoing pre-existing trends. This caution is particularly important given that PRB focused on supporting 30 participants across two precincts. With a small participant pool, the overall magnitude of the program's impact on broader community violence may be overestimated; however, it is important to note that gun violence is typically perpetrated by a relatively small number of interconnected individuals.

Generalizability

The DID results may have limited generalizability due to the focus on only two treated precincts (79 and 81). The unique characteristics of these precincts, including demographic factors, crime patterns, and community dynamics, could significantly influence the results, making it challenging to apply the findings to other areas with different contexts.

Short-Term Nature of Follow-Up

The post-intervention data currently encompass only the 18 months following the launch of the PRB. This limited timeframe necessitates a cautious interpretation of the findings, as it remains unclear whether the observed changes in crime rates will be sustained over the long term. Future assessments should aim to evaluate the persistence of these effects beyond the initial period, as longer follow-up durations are essential for understanding the enduring impact of PRB on community safety and violence reduction.

Violence Prevention and Legal Involvement

Violence Prevention

During the program, two participants were shot and injured by members of non-participating street crew, and three close peers of participants lost their lives to gun violence. PRB played a crucial role in de-escalating and preventing potential cycles of retaliatory violence following these incidents. Staff increased programmatic engagement, offering group meetings and activities to channel participants' grief while intensifying case management and mentorship. This approach reinforced values of personal growth and accountability, which stood in direct opposition to retaliation. Program participants attribute the prevention of at least five retaliatory shootings to PRB.

During the program, five participants were arrested for gun possession, a Class C violent felony in New York, carrying a mandatory minimum sentence of 3.5 years in prison. Upon these arrests, KCDA leadership involved in PRB were immediately notified and quickly informed the Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs) assigned to prosecute each case, ensuring they were aware of the participants' involvement in the program. KCDA leadership then worked to determine whether the arrests indicated ongoing violent behavior or represented setbacks in participants' progress toward making healthier choices that could be overcome through renewed commitment to the program. Since none of the participants had fired

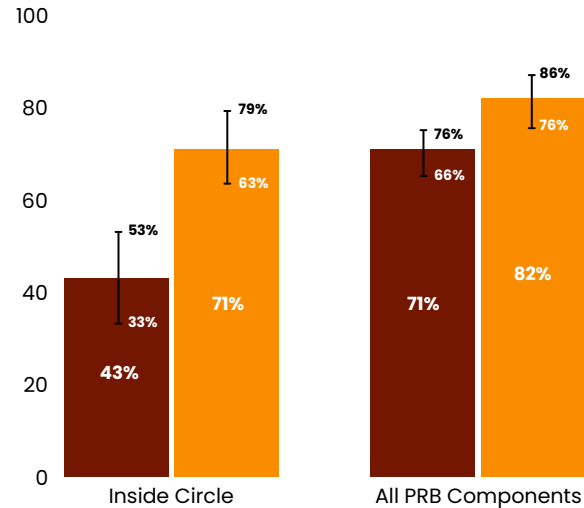


Figure 13: % Change in Attendance after Charges

their weapons, and after conducting a thorough review of each case, the KCDA decided to allow these participants to remain in the program. This decision was based on their record of positive engagement and potential to benefit from continued participation. The decision, coupled with increased outreach by program staff, resulted in a sustained rise in attendance at weekly sessions for those charged with gun possession (Figure 13), particularly at Inside Circle Sessions.

No participants faced charges for acts of violence, underscoring the program's role in fostering a non-violent environment and behavior among its participants.

Criminal Legal System Involvement

The KCDA estimated that PRB prevented twelve years of incarceration. The KCDA calculated this figure by comparing the outcomes of PRB participants' cases to the typical sentencing outcomes for individuals with comparable charges. Participation in PRB was not a get-out-of-jail-free card. Instead, the KCDA considered active involvement in PRB, progress towards meaningful life goals, and positive community engagement in resolving participants' open cases. This approach aligns with the KCDA's Justice 2020 Strategy, focused on achieving the best resolution for defendants, victims, and the community.

Participants entered PRB with 18 pending legal issues, including 6 misdemeanor and felony cases, and 12 pending tickets and violations. Despite 13 participants being arrested during the program, all cases from before and during the program were resolved or close to resolution by its conclusion, a significant improvement in participants' legal standing. The KCDA expedited the resolution of these cases—avoiding incarceration whenever possible—to remove barriers that hindered participants from pursuing employment and educational opportunities.

Seven participants satisfied court requirements and had their cases diverted to probation, community service, or alternative-to-incarceration programs.

Public Safety Working Group

Background

PRB aimed to bring the rival street crew leaders together to discuss peaceful coexistence in restorative circles facilitated by Inside Circle and PRB staff. Towards the end of the program, as participants gained trust in the initiative and demonstrated a commitment to personal development and community safety, a sit-down was organized between three leaders from each rival street crew.

The rival leaders came together to discuss the most pressing issues affecting their communities in a safe environment under the guidance of program staff. The leaders shared life experiences and had similar perspectives on the challenges facing their communities. Following several structured meetings, and with support from PRB staff, a Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) was formed, with leaders demonstrating a shared commitment to advancing community safety in their neighborhoods. The stated aim of the PSWG is to “squash all beefs in Brooklyn”.

Founding members of the PSWG were invited to undertake training in peer mentorship and group facilitation, and to participate in an 8-month paid internship provided by Columbia University’s CFJ. The CFJ also encouraged founding PSWG members to identify and invite additional crew members to engage in the PSWG and to partake in internships provided by the CFJ. The PSWG now includes ten members committed to ending violence within their neighborhoods.

The PSWG meets weekly to address community challenges and to plan positive community engagements. For example, the PSWG has delivered 10 presentations focused on the role of community-based initiatives in supporting healthy development and improving community safety.

Impact

1 Maintaining Peace

Former street crew rivals are collaborating to improve community safety in their neighborhoods, mitigating the likelihood of future inter-crew violence.

2 Raising Awareness

Presentations by the PSWG are helping to spread awareness of how community violence intervention programs can improve public safety to diverse audiences.

3 Expanded Impact

Expanded access to program support is helping more street-crew involved young people in Bedford-Stuyvesant, amplifying the program’s impact

4 Sustaining Success

The PSWG and internships are playing a critical role in sustaining program impact beyond the 12-month intervention period.

KCDA Involvement

The KCDA established a precedent for how a District Attorney's Office can directly support CVI programs in the community to maximize impact.

Benefits

- The KCDA was uniquely positioned to support PRB due to its authority within the criminal legal system and access to extensive resources. This positioning enabled the KCDA to respond in restorative ways to participants' setbacks, such as new arrests, while also leveraging government resources to address participants' evolving needs. These efforts helped keep participants on track in their pursuit of positive life changes.
 - Over the course of 45 strategic planning meetings, the KCDA, MOCJ, Columbia University's CFJ, Inside Circle, and Bridge Street Development Corporation formed valuable networks and relationships.
 - The unique partnership provided participants with the agency and opportunity to have their voices heard in the development and implementation of public policies affecting their lives.
 - The KCDA's visible support of PRB helped to increase community trust in the KCDA.
 - Involvement in PRB and witnessing the transformative impact on the lives of participants, provided the KCDA staff with a new perspective and is contributing to shifting the Office's culture.
-

Outcomes

Network of Change-Makers

PRB mobilized a network of community, university, and district attorney's office stakeholders with a shared commitment to improving community safety in under-resourced areas.

Employment

Following program completion, the KCDA hired two of PRB's community-based staff members to support participants and community engagement.

Raising Awareness

The KCDA is actively promoting the effectiveness of PRB and the essential role a district attorney's office can play in supporting community-based gang violence intervention programs.

Replication Program

The KCDA has committed to leading a replication project in another under-resourced area with support from partner organizations, subject to adequate funding.

Cost Benefit Analysis

Following the completion of PRB, a Cost-Benefit Analysis was conducted to assess its economic viability as a community violence intervention program. This analysis compares the total program implementation costs with the estimated benefits from the prevention of incarceration and retaliatory shootings directly attributable to PRB, combined with increased participant earnings post-program.

Program Costs	Program Benefits	Benefit-Cost Ratio
\$2,400,000	\$16,144,456	6.7 to 1
	CI: \$13,046,184 - \$19,242,728	CI: 5.4:1 -8.0:1

Sources of Estimates	PRB Outcomes	Total
Costs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program implementation costs amounted to \$2,400,000, representing the total funding allocated to partner organizations for both programming activities and administrative costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The KCDA received \$2,400,000 in funding from MOCJ to administer PRB. 	\$2,400,000
Total Program Costs		\$2,400,000
Benefits		
Incarceration Prevented		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2019, New York State spent \$115,000 per year to incarcerate one person in state prisons (Vera Institute of Justice, 2021) According to the New York City Comptroller (2021) the annual cost to incarcerate one person in New York City was \$556,539 in 2021. Scaled for inflation these costs range from \$137,182 to \$636,894 in 2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The KCDA estimated that PRB prevented 12 years of incarceration through non-carceral case resolution. 	\$4,644,456 (\$1,646,184 to \$7,642,728)
Retaliatory Shootings Prevented		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ludwig and Cook (2001) estimate the cost per gun assault (including deaths) to be \$1.2 million in 1998. Scaled for inflation, this equates to \$2.24 million in 2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants attribute the prevention of five retaliatory shootings to the intervention of PRB. 	\$11,200,000
Increased Earnings/Productivity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total economic impact of the additional income of participants can be estimated by: $(\text{Increase in Income}) \times (\text{Economic Multiplier}) \times (\text{Income Spent Locally})$ Conservative economic estimates assume an economic multiplier of 1.5 (Range: 1 to 2) in disadvantaged communities, with 80% of income spent locally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The estimated increase in post-program earnings for participants totaled \$250,000 in FY24. This figure is independent of the stipend payments received by participants during the program. 	\$300,000 (\$200,000 to \$400,000)
Total Program Benefits		\$16,144,184 (\$13,046,184 to \$19,242,728)
Benefit-Cost Ratio		6.7 to 1 (5.4 to 1 -8.0 to 1)



Program Insights & **Direction**

Lessons Learned

Reflecting on the strengths and challenges of the PRB pilot program can inform how best to implement future programs.

Engaging Community Leaders

- During participant recruitment, system-impacted young people and adults were wary of law enforcement involvement due to prior negative experiences and institutional mistrust.
- The strong community standing of key staff was crucial in establishing program credibility and encouraging individuals to engage with the program, bridging the gap between participants and a program that involved law enforcement personnel.

Recommendation

Future programs should prioritize engaging influential community leaders and partnering with local community-based organizations. These partners can leverage their local knowledge to tailor support to neighborhood-specific challenges and provide long-term support to participants after graduation.

Relations with the New York Police Department (NYPD)

- A critical challenge faced by participants and the broader community was tense relations with police.
- Participants were wary of being monitored, stopped and frisked, or charged with minor offenses, such as loitering, due to the heavy police presence in their neighborhoods.
- Bureaucratic delays in processing minor offenses impeded participants' pursuit of employment, increased distress, and eroded trust in the criminal legal system.
- PRB was proactive in forging relationships between the participants and their local precincts. Inside Circle facilitated a meeting between Group A and officers at their local station, with support from a dedicated NYPD liaison. Group B members indicated that a similar meeting would have been beneficial.

Recommendation

Constructive engagements (such as sit-downs or co-created training workshops) between participants and police officers at the program's outset would foster a greater understanding of public safety from each others' perspectives, helping to mitigate the likelihood of negative encounters which could affect participants' growth trajectory.

Sustained Progress in Education and Employment

- Participants entered PRB disconnected from employment and education and without the documentation, soft skills, or work experience needed for sustained workforce or educational participation.
- Although participants made significant progress, most were still working towards their educational and employment goals when the program ended.
- Family emergencies, housing instability, and unresolved cases present the most significant challenges in attaining education and employment goals.
- Individuals are vulnerable to regressing to the path they were on prior to PRB in the absence of continued support, particularly if progress is not stabilized.

Recommendation

Participants should be provided with long-term support from a specialist community-based organization to ensure the achievements from PRB transfer to longer-term success. Partner organizations should facilitate this by actively creating an ecology of support that sustains beyond program completion.

Lessons Learned

Budget Flexibility and Diversity:

- Government funding is contingent on programs adhering to strict guidelines and approval processes to ensure taxpayer money is spent appropriately. As a result, the use of MOCJ funds was restricted to pre-approved budgets, limiting the program's ability to respond quickly to changing circumstances or unexpected needs. For instance, providing participants with food – a critical economic and trust-building component – was not included in the original budget and could not be covered by government funds.
- Gang-violence intervention programs require flexibility and agility to respond effectively to crises, such as shooting incidents and community traumas. The lack of discretionary or contingency funding for unexpected incidents posed a risk to program success. For example, the essential restorative retreats following shootings were only made possible by the urgent efforts of KCDA, Columbia University's CFJ, and program staff to secure the required funding.

Recommendation

While government funding should remain a cornerstone of the PRB approach, approximately 20% of the budget should come from private funding to increase flexibility and adaptability to changing circumstances.

Additional Funding Requirements:

- The initial budgeted staffing levels underestimated the personnel and funding required to effectively deliver program components, leading to challenges in maintaining consistent participant experiences.
- PRB was also supplemented by a significant volume of voluntary contributions, including costs for graduation ceremonies, food, transportation for trips, ad-hoc expenses, and labor from select CFJ personnel.
- Due to a city budget crisis, the funding required for sustained engagement and transitional support could not be secured. Staff and stakeholders worked tirelessly to ensure participants were connected to additional service providers to support continued progress.

Recommendation

Future programs should increase staffing and allocate dedicated funding for additional programming and transition support. This will better assist participants in solidifying their progress and transitioning to new economic and educational opportunities.

Role of District Attorney's Office:

- The KCDA's non-intrusive involvement in PRB allowed participants to engage without fear of retribution or constant oversight, encouraging participation.
- KCDA staff, aware of participants' efforts to change, used their authority to advocate for less punitive sentencing when participants faced criminal legal issues.
- The KCDA also intervened on several occasions with parole officers to provide context, helping participants avoid parole revocation.
- This approach strengthened relationships, built trust with the community, and supported the KCDA's public safety mission while offering high-risk individuals a chance to improve their lives.

Recommendation

District Attorney's Offices nationwide should consider the significant impact they can have by actively supporting holistic community violence interventions that effectively address retaliatory gang violence and promote community safety.

Lessons Learned

Role of Columbia University's Center for Justice:

- Colleges and universities play a crucial role in promoting economic mobility by equipping individuals with the education, skills, and credentials needed to access higher-paying jobs and advance in their careers.
- Initially, no program participants saw higher education as a feasible option, nor did they anticipate any future opportunity to pursue it. Now, seven participants are enrolled in college programs, with others in the process of submitting applications.
- Participants largely credit this significant shift to Columbia University's CFJ's involvement in PRB. Through the program, participants received mentorship from relatable Columbia graduates, visited the campus, audited classes, and engaged in a seminar-style learning environment as part of the Life Skills component. This exposure broadened their perspectives, making higher education seem like an attainable and empowering pathway for personal and professional development.
- Additionally, program staff provided invaluable support in navigating the complexities of college applications and bureaucracy.

Recommendation

Universities and colleges across the country should explore ways to better support young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, whose aspirations for higher education may have been hindered by personal or community challenges. By offering tailored opportunities and guidance, institutions can empower marginalized young people to succeed, breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty and fostering socio-economic mobility.

Next Steps

Three core activities have been identified to reinforce and scale PRB's demonstrable impact on gun violence across New York City, with additional funding required to support these initiatives.

1 Investing in the Public Safety Working Group

- **Expand Membership:** Secure funding to expand PSWG membership to include more street-crew-involved young people, ensure ongoing participant support, and diversify internship offerings.
- **Sustain Collaboration:** Continue PSWG's efforts to address community challenges, raise awareness, and expand access to support services, thereby amplifying program impact and visibility.

2 Supporting Strategies to Enhance Impact – Train the Trainer

- **Implement Facilitation Courses:** Continue to run Train the Trainer (ToT) Facilitation Courses, focused on peer mentorship and group facilitation, to enable program participants to leverage their lived experiences and newfound commitment to community safety to magnify program impact.
- **Build Competent Instructors:** Use the ToT model to build a pool of skilled instructors who can teach critical skills to young people in disadvantaged communities.
- **Mobilize Instructors:** Mobilize the eight certified participants to lead training sessions and provide mentorship, following their recent graduation from the CFJ's first ToT Facilitation Course in March 2024.

3 Considering Future Program Replication/ Implementation

- **Develop Replication Guide:** Create a Program Replication Guide with input from the PSWG to provide a framework for future iterations of the PRB intervention model.
- **Expansion Plan:** Plan and support the KCDA's proposal to replicate the model in Brownsville, Brooklyn, subject to the availability of sufficient funding.
- **Replication Project:** Develop a replication of the PRB model including sustained support and enhanced monitoring and evaluation, to further demonstrate PRB's impact as a long-term, sustainable intervention for gun violence across New York City.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Advocate for the integration of the PRB approach into New York City's broader strategic response to violence. The PRB model is aligned with the strategic priorities and public safety methodology outlined in the 'Blueprint to End Gun Violence' report by New York City's Gun Violence Prevention Task Force and has the potential to become a key element in the city's efforts to address gun violence.
- **City-Wide Replication:** Advocate for the integration of the PRB model within a designated government department, with permanent staff responsible for program administration and the coordination of a community-university-district attorney's office coalition. Ensure funding is baselined in the department's budget to support consistent programming across multiple precincts in response to critical needs.

Conclusion

PRB successfully achieved its core objectives, with evidence to date supporting the view that PRB’s community - university - district attorney’s office model is effective in violence interruption in New York City and has scalable potential.

Retaliatory Violence

PRB successfully interrupted the retaliatory cycles of violence perpetrated by the two rival street crews. This is evidenced by zero incidents of gun violence involvement, incarceration, or violent retaliation by program participants.

Community-Safety

PRB was associated with a measurable improvement in community safety (reduced shooting incidents and felony assaults) in Bedford-Stuyvesant. The newly founded PSWG will help to actively support community safety going forward.

Legal System Involvement

Through PRB, participants' outstanding legal issues were notably reduced, with all cases resolved or nearing resolution by the program's conclusion, significantly improving their criminal legal standing.

Personal Progress

Participants demonstrated significant personal and professional growth, laying a strong foundation for their transition to successful adulthood.

6.7 to 1

PRB’s strong Benefit-Cost Ratio support the effectiveness of PRB from an economic perspective.

Ultimately, investment in and replication of the PRB model in other under-resourced communities, with enhanced monitoring and evaluation, is crucial to provide more robust evidence of PRB’s effectiveness in addressing the gun violence epidemic afflicting New York City.



Appendix

Appendix 1: DID Methodology

The analysis for PRB builds on the approach used by the New York City Council Data Team to assess the reduction of shooting incident victims associated with Cure Violence programs in New York City (Avram et al., 2024). Using NYPD historic shooting incident data from 2006 to 2023, Avram et al., (2024) compared the number of shooting victims in 28 precincts with Cure Violence programs to 48 control precincts (without Cure Violence programs). The findings indicate that, relative to the counterfactual, the presence of Cure Violence programs is associated with a 14% reduction in shooting victims, an effect that occurs immediately upon program implementation and remains stable over time.

A Cost-Benefit analysis based on the estimated reduction in shooting victims due to Cure Violence, calculates a net social surplus of \$2.45 billion, equating to a benefit-cost ratio of 6.5:1.

Cure Violence Methodology

Avram et al. (2024) employs a quasi-experimental design using Difference-In-Difference analysis to estimate the impact of Cure Violence programs. The model uses a Poisson Regression framework, which is appropriate for count data, such as shooting incident victims, homicides, and felony assaults, that shows considerable variability across precincts and years. This approach controls for unobserved heterogeneity and temporal effects that might influence the outcomes. By incorporating both precinct and year fixed effects and estimating robust standard errors to adjust for overdispersion in the count data, the analysis provides a robust estimate of Cure Violence's impact.

The formula used in their analysis is summarized below:

$$\log(E[y_{it} | a_i, \delta_t, T_{it}]) = a_i + \delta_t + \gamma T_{it}$$

Outcome Variable (y_{it}):

- y_{it} represents the number of shootings in precinct i in year t . This is the dependent variable that the model aims to predict or explain.

Precinct Fixed Effects (a_i):

- a_i represents precinct fixed effects. These are unique to each precinct and account for time-invariant characteristics that might influence the number of shootings. By including precinct fixed effects, the model controls for any constant differences between precincts.

Year Fixed Effects (δ_t):

- δ_t represents year fixed effects. These control for any year-specific effects that might influence the number of shootings across all precincts. This could include city-wide policies, social trends, or other factors that vary over time but affect all precincts similarly.

Treatment Indicator (T_{it}):

- T_{it} is the treatment indicator variable. It indicates whether the Cure Violence program has been implemented in precinct i during year t .

Coefficient (γ):

- γ is the coefficient that measures the association between the treatment (Cure Violence Program) and the number of shooting incident victims. Specifically, it indicates the average percentage change in shooting incident victims associated with the implementation of the Cure Violence program, after controlling for precinct and year fixed effects.

Logarithmic Transformation ($\log(E[y_{it} | a_i, \delta_t, T_{it}])$):

- $\log(E[y_{it} | a_i, \delta_t, T_{it}])$ represents the expected number of shootings in logarithmic form. This transformation enables the coefficients to be interpreted in terms of percentage changes. It also facilitates the calculation of the number of shooting incident victims prevented by comparing the actual number of shooting incidents with the expected number in the absence of the intervention.

Appendix 1: DID Methodology

Project Restore Bed-Stuy Methodology:

The PRB analysis adjusts the approach used by Avram et al. (2024) to estimate the effect of PRB on community safety (shooting incident victims, felony assaults, and homicides) within the 79th and 81st Precincts. The adjusted analysis accounts for population and demographic differences and the impact of 'Cure Violence' programs.

The PRB analysis is based on NYPD historical crime data (2012 to 2023), NYPD historic shooting incident data (2012 to 2023), and NYPD CompStat year-to-date crime data (January 2024 to the week ending 06/23/2024).

The Project Restore Bed-Stuy model is applied separately to Shooting Incident Victims, Homicides, and Felony Assaults. The model aims to estimate the effect of PRB since the intervention began (January 2023 to June 2024) compared to control precincts and the pre-intervention period.

The adapted formula used in this analysis is summarized below:

$$\log(E[y_{it} | \alpha_i, \delta_t, X_{it}]) = \alpha_i + \delta_t + \beta_1 \text{YearsCV}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{PRB}_{it} + \beta_3 \text{PNW}_{it} + \log(\text{Pop}_{it})$$

Outcome Variable (y_{it}):

- y_{it} represents the number of incidents (Shooting Incident Victims, Felony Assaults, or Homicides) in precinct i in year t . This is the dependent variable that the model aims to predict or explain.

Precinct Fixed Effects

- α represents precinct fixed effects. These are unique to each precinct and account for time-invariant characteristics that might influence the number of incidents. By including precinct fixed effects, the model controls for any constant differences between precincts.

Year Fixed Effects (δ_t)

- δ_t represents year fixed effects. These control for any year-specific effects that might influence the number of incidents across all precincts. This could include city-wide policies, social trends, or other factors that vary over time but affect all precincts similarly.

Years Since Cure Violence Implemented (YearsCV $_{it}$)

- YearsCV $_{it}$ represents the number of years since the Cure Violence program was implemented in precinct i during year t . The coefficient β_1 quantifies the impact each additional year of Cure Violence has on the number of incidents.

Project Restore Bed-Stuy Implemented (PRB $_{it}$):

- PRB $_{it}$ is a binary variable indicating whether PRB was implemented in precinct i during year t . The coefficient β_2 measures the impact of the program on the number of incidents and is the key parameter of interest, as it estimates the specific effect of PRB on the outcome variable.

Proportion Non-White (PNW $_{it}$)

- PNW $_{it}$ accounts for the demographic composition of the precinct. The coefficient β_3 measures the impact of the proportion of non-white residents on the number of incidents.

Population ($\log(\text{Pop}_{it})$):

- $\log(\text{Pop}_{it})$ represents the logarithm of the population size in precinct i during year t . This is used as an offset term to adjust for population size, converting the counts into rates per population unit, providing a more accurate measure of incident rates.

Appendix 2: DID Raw Regression Results

Figures 13, 14, and 15 display the raw Poisson regression results for the Treatment Group, 81st Precinct, and 79th Precinct.

	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	95% Confidence Interval	Statistical Significance
Shooting Incident Victims	-0.334	0.1228	(-0.574, -0.094)	p < .01**
Felony Assaults	-0.251	0.03319	(-0.316, -0.186)	p < .001***
Homicides	-0.242	0.2348	(-0.705, 0.221)	Non-Significant

Figure 13: Treatment Group Regression Results

	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	95% Confidence Interval	Statistical Significance
Shooting Incident Victims	-0.4948	0.1906	(-0.867, -0.123)	p < .01**
Felony Assaults	-0.3011	0.05013	(-0.399, -0.203)	p < .001***
Homicides	-0.3123	0.3530	(-1.004, 0.380)	Non-Significant

Figure 14: Precinct 81 Regression Results

	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	95% Confidence Interval	Statistical Significance
Shooting Incidents	-0.2052	0.1579	(-0.514, 0.104)	Non-Significant
Felony Assaults	-0.2111	0.04377	(-0.297, -0.125)	p < .001***
Homicides	-0.1810	0.3096	(-0.788, 0.426)	Non-Significant

Figure 15: Precinct 79 Regression Results

Converting Coefficients to Percentage Changes:

The Poisson regression coefficients represent the natural logarithm of the expected change in the outcome variables (shooting victims, felony assaults, and homicides) for a one-unit change in the predictor variable. To translate the coefficients to a percentage change:

1. Exponentiate the Coefficient (i.e., convert from the log scale back to its original scale):

$$\text{Formula: } \text{Exp}(\beta) = e^{\beta}$$

2. Convert to Percentage Change:

$$\text{Formula: } \text{Percentage Change} = (e^{\beta} - 1) \times 100$$

Converting Percentage Changes to Count Changes:

The actual count data for each outcome variable post-intervention is utilized to estimate what the expected count of each would have been if PRB had not been implemented. This allows for the calculation of the estimated count reduction directly attributable to the PRB intervention:

1. Actual Count:

$$\text{Formula: } \text{Adjusted Count} = \text{Actual Count} / (1 - \text{Decimal Percentage Change})$$

2. Count Change:

$$\text{Formula: } \text{Count Change} = \text{Adjusted Count} - \text{Actual Count}$$

Appendix 3: Parallel Trends Assumption

Figures 16, 17, and 18 show the model-adjusted weighted average counts of shooting incident victims, felony assaults, and homicides in treatment precincts compared to all control precincts during the pre-intervention period (2012-2022). For reference, weighted average counts for Cure Violence precincts are also provided, although they were not included separately in the DID analysis. The control and treatment lines exhibit relatively similar time trends, with some divergence observed at different points in time.

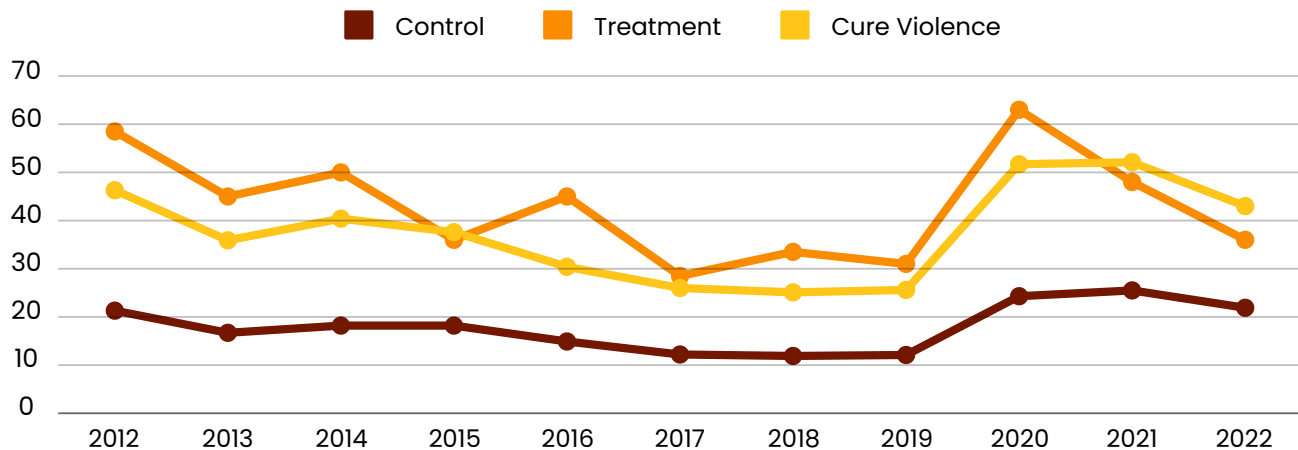


Figure 16: Weighted Average Number of Shooting Incidents (Pre-Intervention)

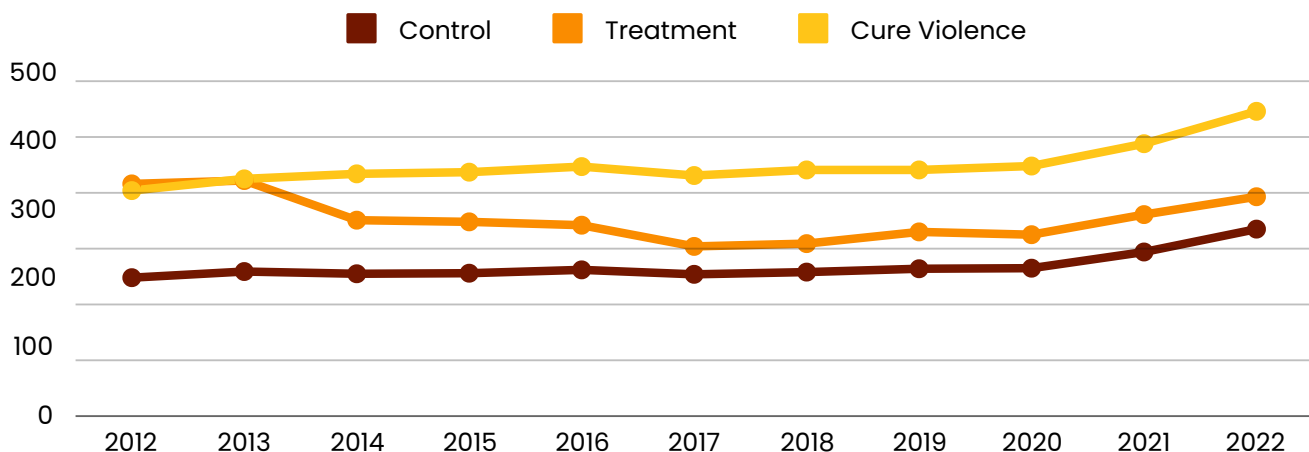


Figure 17: Weighted Average Number of Felony Assaults (Pre-Intervention)

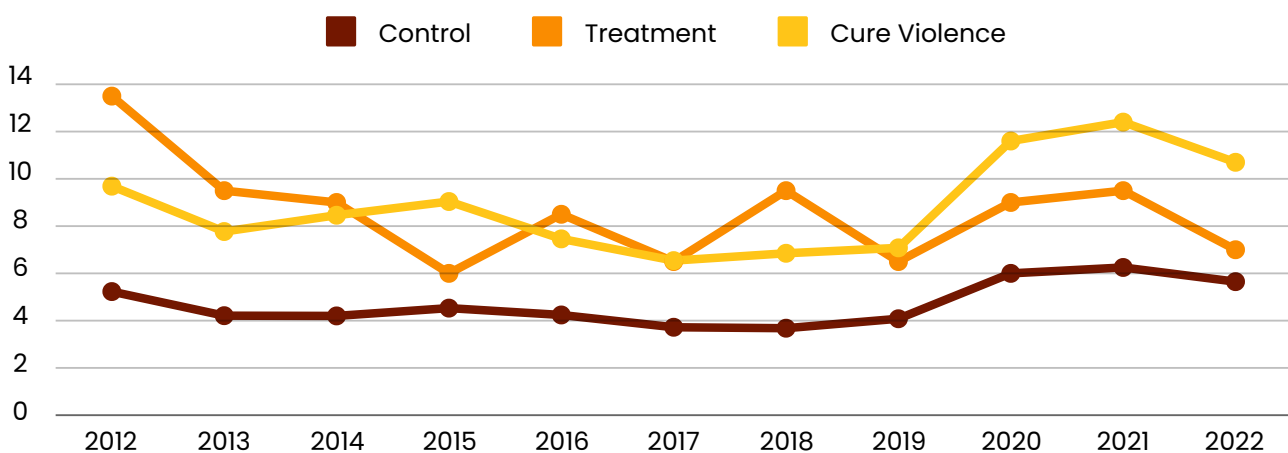


Figure 18: Weighted Average Number of Homicides (Pre-Intervention)

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Acknowledgements

Dedication

We would like to dedicate this report to a participant who tragically lost their life to gun violence after completing PRB. We honor their memory and remain steadfast in our mission to create safer communities.

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- Columbia University - Center for Justice
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- Bridge Street Development Corporation
- Inside Circle

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to reduce gun-related violence.

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