Enhancing Law Enforcement's Role in Community Violence Interventions

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Executive Summary

The number of firearm-related homicides in the United States reached a record high in 2021, with nearly 21,000 deaths that year (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024). This figure represents a 40 percent increase from three years prior, and it underscores the severity of gun violence. Traditionally, efforts to address this issue have been led by law enforcement; however, cities are increasingly adopting community-led programs — referred to as community violence interventions (CVIs). CVI strategies seek to address the root causes of community violence by fostering relationships with, delivering social services to, and addressing the trauma experienced by those at the greatest risk of being victims or perpetrators of violence (BJA, 2022; Center for American Progress, 2022; Dholakia & Gilbert, 2021; Everytown, 2023). A growing body of evidence reveals that this approach can prevent and reduce gun violence (Butts et al., 2015; National Network For Safe Communities, 2020; Shibru et al., 2007).

The role of police in CVI strategies varies. Whereas some CVIs operate independently of law enforcement, others include law enforcement as robust or equal partners. To improve the understanding of law enforcement's involvement in these strategies, the Police Executive Research Forum conducted a two-part study funded by The Joyce Foundation. The first part involved a national survey of law enforcement agencies that inquired about their support for and involvement in CVIs. Part two brought together a panel of experts, including law enforcement and civilian violence prevention practitioners, for a workshop to identify how the police can effectively partner in CVIs.

Two hundred twenty-six (226) law enforcement agencies completed the survey during the summer of 2023. Questions inquired about law enforcement's knowledge of, support for, and involvement in CVI strategies. The findings demonstrate a readiness among law enforcement to actively support CVI strategies, as nearly every respondent indicated that community stakeholders have a role in addressing community violence. This readiness has led to agencies' involvement in CVIs, with almost half of the sample reporting that their agency had participated in a CVI strategy. This appetite for supporting CVIs is robust, existing among both the agencies that have engaged in this work and those that have not. The survey results reveal an opportunity

From left to right: Aqeela Sherrills, Chuck Wexler, Kevin Lucey, Ken Duilio, Louisa Aviles, David Feldmeier, Dustin Richardson, Meagan Cahill, Anthony Brooks, Crystal Miller, Mike Hanifin, Monique Brown, David Boysen, Shantay Jackson, Karl Jacobson, Ryan Whiteman, Cory Jones (Not pictured: Ruth Abaya)

for law enforcement and civilian violence prevention practitioners to unite in their shared goal of improving community safety.

Despite law enforcement's interest in supporting CVI strategies, agency leaders have little guidance on how to do so effectively. To provide direction, PERF convened 13 experts in violence reduction for a workshop in March 2024. They engaged in group discussions to develop a list of key considerations for agency leaders seeking to engage in CVI work, along with suggestions for addressing those considerations. The considerations and suggestions describe how agency leaders can 1) foster an organizational culture conducive to CVI work, 2) contribute to implementing CVI strategies, 3) secure buy-in among officers and community members, and 4) establish partnerships within the community.

This guidance should not be viewed as prescriptive nor interpreted as an insistence that law enforcement personnel be involved in all aspects of developing and implementing CVIs. Instead, readers should view the following suggestions as *promising practices* outlined by practitioners with extensive experience in this field. Ultimately, key community stakeholders and their local law enforcement must determine the level of partnership that works best for their community. This report can help police leaders do exactly that.

Introduction

Firearm violence in America was declared a public health crisis by the United States Surgeon General in June 2024 (Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, 2024). In 2021, the United States experienced 20,958 firearm-related homicides, higher than any other year on record and representing a 40 percent increase from three years prior (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024). This violence is highly concentrated and disproportionately impacts marginalized communities; over half of all firearm homicides reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 2023 occurred in just 42 cities[1] (Everytown Research & Policy, 2024). While efforts to reduce firearm-related violence have historically been led by police, public health- and community-led programs are becoming more popular (McManus et al., 2020). Among these approaches are community violence interventions (CVIs).

Former Surgeon General
Vivek Murthy

Community-driven violence intervention strategies use evidence-informed approaches to address the root causes of community violence (Bureau of Justice Assistance [BJA], 2022; Dholakia & Gilbert, 2021). This work involves building relationships with local stakeholders (e.g., residents and community organizations) to improve community conditions, deliver social services, and address the trauma experienced by those at the greatest risk of being victims or perpetrators of violence (BJA, 2022; Center for American Progress, 2022; Dholakia & Gilbert, 2021; Everytown, 2023). These strategies have existed for decades (National Criminal Justice Association [NCJA], 2021), yet they have become more common in recent years due, in part, to the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act of 2022 that dedicated

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1 Crime data reported to the FBI in 2023 covered over 94 percent of the U.S. population (FBI, 2024).

Cities and Counties with
CVIPI AWARDS

Source: Office of Justice Programs

$250 million over five years for the Department of Justice's Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI).

The role of police in these interventions varies. Some CVIs operate independently of law enforcement, while others include law enforcement as robust or equal partners. To improve the understanding of law enforcement's involvement in CVI strategies, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) conducted a two-part study funded by The Joyce Foundation. The first part involved a national survey of law enforcement agencies that asked about their support for and involvement in CVIs. Part two brought together a panel of experts, including law enforcement and civilian violence prevention practitioners, to identify how the police can effectively partner in CVIs. This report provides the results of the survey along with the key considerations and suggestions for police leaders that were developed by the panel. These findings improve the field's understanding of CVIs and can be used to guide researchers and law enforcement leaders looking to support CVI work.

Community Violence Interventions

CVIs use a public health approach to reducing gun violence (Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, n.d.). Programs focus on the individuals at greatest risk of being victims or perpetrators of gun violence, and solutions are tailored to the unique needs of each community. Though each CVI strategy differs in its approach to violence, these multidisciplinary initiatives generally:

> ...engage individuals and groups to prevent and disrupt cycles of violence and retaliation, and establish relationships between individuals and community assets to deliver services that save lives, address trauma, provide opportunity, and improve the physical, social, and economic conditions that drive violence. (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2023, para. 2)

CVIs attempt to reduce gun violence by providing services and resources rather than relying primarily — or, in some cases, at all — on arrest, prosecution, and incarceration. Several strategies fall under the CVI umbrella, including violence interrupter programs, hospital-based violence intervention programs, and focused deterrence-based strategies.

Violence Interrupter Programs

Violence interrupter programs are led by violence interrupters — typically former offenders from the community — who mediate conflicts at the street level to prevent them from escalating and by outreach workers who build relationships with those affected by gun violence to connect them with services and resources (Butts, Roman, et al., 2015; NCJA, 2021). Violence interrupters and outreach workers collaborate without the help of police, though both try to avoid undermining law enforcement. An example of this type of program is Cure Violence, which uses a public-health approach by breaking up the cycle of violence, changing the thinking of those responsible for gun violence, and changing community norms related to violence (Butts et al., 2015).

Violence interrupter programs have been studied extensively in the United States and other countries. Generally, these researchers found positive effects, including reductions in both

homicides (Corburn et al., 2022; Henry et al., 2014; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013; Webster et al., 2013) and shootings (Delgado et al., 2017; Maguire et al., 2018; Phalen et al., 2020; Roman et al., 2017; Webster et al., 2013). However, some evaluations have produced conflicting results (Fox et al., 2015; Skogan et al., 2009) or found that the intervention led to an increase in gun-related assaults (Wilson & Chermak, 2011).

Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs

Hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIPs) are led by medical providers and trusted community-based partners who support violently injured victims by capitalizing on "teachable moments" (The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention, 2024). HVIPs seek to provide victims of gun violence with safety planning, services, and trauma-informed care while they are in the hospital recovering from their injuries, and this support continues after the patient has been released. Victims tend to be more receptive to accepting support and being dissuaded from retaliation when receiving treatment immediately following their injury. Nationally, HVIPs coordinate through The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (The HAVI), whose network boasts 50 member programs and more than 30 emerging sites in more than 85 cities across the United States (The HAVI, n.d.-a).

THE
HEALTH ALLIANCE
for **VIOLENCE**
INTERVENTION

Evaluations of HVIPs have revealed reductions in arrest (Becker et al., 2004; Cooper et al., 2006), criminal involvement (Becker et al., 2004), violent behavior (Shibru et al., 2007), and violent reinjury (Juillard et al., 2015, 2016; Thomas et al., 2022; Zun et al., 2006). The ability to prevent violent reinjury has been estimated to save hospitals hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in addition to the societal cost savings this produces (Juillard et al., 2016; Purtle et al., 2015). Despite evidence of success, a meta-analysis of 10 studies failed to find evidence that HVIP programs were more successful than standard treatment at improving outcomes (e.g., violent reinjury, arrests), though the included studies suffered from several significant methodological limitations (Affinati et al., 2016).

Focused Deterrence-Based Interventions[2]

Focused deterrence-based strategies involve police as a core partner (and sometimes key coordinator) alongside service providers and community leaders. These strategies seek to "[reduce] homicide and gun violence, [minimize] harm to communities by replacing enforcement with deterrence, and [foster] stronger relationships between law enforcement and the people they serve" (National Network for Safe Communities, 2020, para. 1). With these aims in mind, partners deliver a three-pronged antiviolence message to highly active street groups. Law enforcement alerts groups that their continued involvement in group violence will have consequences; respected community members deliver a credible message against violence; and service providers extend an offer to help those who want it. The National Network for Safe Com-

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2   There is some debate regarding whether focused deterrence-based strategies should be classified as "community violence interventions." While some classify them as such (e.g., Dholakia & Gilbert, 2021; Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, n.d.; National Criminal Justice Association, 2021), others do not, given their reliance on law enforcement. This report refers to violence interrupter programs, HVIPs, *and* focused deterrence-based strategies as CVI strategies for uniformity.

munities (NNSC) and the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) have supported cities in implementing focused deterrence-based strategies throughout the country.

Evaluations have consistently shown that focused deterrence-based strategies are an effective mechanism for combating violent crime (Braga et al., 2019). They are most effective when targeting group violence (Braga et al., 2019), and have been shown to reduce homicides by 63 percent in Boston (Braga et al., 2001), 42 percent in Stockton (Braga, 2008), 35 percent in Cincinnati (Engel et al., 2010), and 34 percent in Indianapolis (McGarrell et al., 2006). This approach has also been responsible for reductions in shootings and gun assaults (Braga et al., 2008; NNSC, 2020). Focused deterrence-based strategies are less effective when targeting individual offenders (Boyle et al., 2010) and drug markets (Corsaro et al., 2009; Corsaro & Brunson, 2013; Saunders et al., 2015) as several studies have failed to observe them having an effect on violent crime.

Law Enforcement's Role in Community Violence Interventions

The CVI approach differs from traditional violence reduction efforts by not relying solely, or even primarily, on law enforcement to provide public safety. Instead, law enforcement agencies may co-lead CVI strategies with community-based partners, support community organizations leading these strategies, or be excluded altogether. In the latter scenario, law enforcement may still wish to be cognizant of the CVI's operations and where it may intersect with law enforcement despite the agency not having an operational role in the strategy. Given the diversity of CVI strategies and the relative recency with which many have been implemented, there is often a lack of clarity regarding law enforcement's role in these interventions.

With focused deterrence-based strategies, the role of law enforcement is relatively well defined. Police co-lead the interventions alongside community-based partners that deliver support and services. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding law enforcement's role in violence interrupter programs and HVIPs. Organizations implementing these programs may involve police in the hiring and vetting of outreach workers, rely on them to gather information related to violent crime, or expect them to attend meetings with offenders (Butts et al., 2015; Fox et al., 2015). Conversely, police may not be involved at all. Some research has documented violence interrupter programs experiencing challenges related to coordination with law enforcement and hostility between outreach workers and law enforcement (e.g., Wilson & Chermak, 2011).

While some law enforcement leaders may be unfamiliar with, or reluctant to engage with, CVI work, law endorsement and community-based public safety practitioners share the goals of reducing violent crime and, in most cases, building trusting relationships between police and communities affected by violence. CVI strategies seek to intervene in real time with those at greatest risk for committing violence, ideally by providing engagement and services but sometimes relying on arrest as a last resort. This is the crux of CVI work. By focusing on the individuals at highest risk, law enforcement and community leaders can ensure that swift action is taken against those who continue to cause harm while supporting those who wish to disengage from violence. By engaging the community in non-enforcement activities, law enforcement agencies can build trust and break down barriers.

Survey of Law Enforcement Agencies

CVI strategies have proliferated recently, in part because of a growing belief that police should not be the sole providers of public safety and in part due to a growing awareness of the complex drivers of cyclical violence. While law enforcement has the primary responsibility for addressing crime, little is known about their role in CVI strategies. To explore this issue, PERF surveyed a national sample of law enforcement agencies during the summer of 2023. The sample was taken from the census of PERF's executive members[3] (e.g., chief, sheriff) and non-PERF-member law enforcement agencies employing 150 or more sworn officers[4] (N = 807). A total of 226 agencies responded for a 28 percent response rate.

Survey questions inquired about agencies' knowledge of, support for, and involvement in CVI strategies. The findings reveal law enforcement's inclination to support CVI strategies and give an overview of their involvement in CVIs. The appendix provides more detailed information, including what motivated agencies to participate in CVIs, how they funded their participation, and their roles in developing and implementing strategies.

Survey findings demonstrate participating agencies' readiness to actively support CVI strategies. These agencies recognize the community's integral role in ensuring public safety and the value of CVI strategies in enhancing community well-being and safety. Moreover, they acknowledge that law enforcement agencies should not be the sole providers of public safety, with 85 percent of participants reporting that community stakeholders share responsibility for addressing violence. Four out of five respondents stated that their agency prefers to support community organizations that are leading CVI strategies or that they have no preference for whether a community organization or their agency leads the strategies. One in five agencies prefer to *lead* a CVI strategy.

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3 A PERF member must have a four-year college degree and must subscribe to a set of founding principles, which emphasizes the importance of research and public debate in policing, adherence to the Constitution and the highest standards of ethics and integrity, as well as accountability to the communities that police agencies serve.
4 According to the 2023 National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators

Law enforcement's positive view of CVI work has led to their active involvement in these strategies. Nearly half (45 percent) of the sample reported that their agency has participated in a CVI strategy.[5] Most of this involvement has started recently, with more than half of agencies (55 percent) beginning to engage in this work in 2020 or later. Agencies were more likely to have supported a focused deterrence-based strategy (38 percent) than violence interrupter (31 percent) or HVIP strategies (16 percent). Of note is their willingness to work alongside outreach workers with a criminal history[6], with four out of five agencies being likely or very likely to support CVI strategies employing these paraprofessionals.

Support for CVI strategies exists among both the agencies that have engaged in this work and those that have not. Of the 102 agencies that have supported a CVI strategy, just two would not do so again, and their reasoning is a lack of necessary funding and staffing to reengage in this work. Among the full sample only five agencies have refused to participate in a CVI strategy they were asked to support.[7] Justifications for the refusals include lacking sufficient funding, not believing the strategy aligned with the agency's mission, and already engaging in another strategy. Of the agencies that have not yet engaged in CVI work (n=108), approximately half would be willing to support a strategy that was *led by* a community organization, with only 13 percent saying they would not. The remaining one-third of agencies without CVI experience were unsure if they would support a community-led CVI strategy. A better understanding of what the work involves and how it can reduce violent crime could lead to even stronger support among law enforcement for CVI strategies.

The survey results reveal law enforcement agencies' significant interest in working alongside communities to address violent crime. Despite this interest, some agency leaders are likely unsure how to effectively support CVI strategies. To address this knowledge gap, PERF convened a panel of CVI experts across law enforcement and the CVI profession to develop a list of key considerations and suggestions for agency leaders seeking to engage in this work.

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5   Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of agencies were familiar with CVI strategies and have supported one.
6   These were described as "individuals whose position in the community or prior criminal involvement enables them to reach people involved in or at high risk of violence to help prevent ongoing disputes from escalating into shootings."
7   One agency was denied participation in a CVI strategy due to concerns on the part of two community organizations that working with law enforcement would harm their credibility in the community.

Expert Panel Workshop

PERF convened a panel of experts to identify key considerations for police leaders interested in supporting CVI strategies (see Table 1 for a list of panelists and their organizations). These considerations were paired with promising practices, as identified by panelists, for developing, implementing, and sustaining viable CVI strategies in partnership with community-based leaders and organizations. The panel consisted of 13 practitioners from the law enforcement and the CVI professions who met for a single-day workshop. The law enforcement practitioners all work closely with community partners to implement and/or operate CVI strategies in their agencies. Three of the CVI practitioners — the Community-Based Public Safety Collective (CBPS), The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (The HAVI), and the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) — provide CVI-related training and technical assistance (TTA) nationally. The fourth CVI practitioner — Baltimore's Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE) — is one of the most robust CVI systems in the country. Collectively, these panelists are national leaders in the CVI field.

Ahead of the workshop, PERF staff conducted virtual interviews with each participant to explore issues related to law enforcement involvement in CVI strategies. These interviews identified four key domains — organizational culture, implementation, buy-in, and partnerships — participants discussed and refined at the workshop.

As part of MONSE's Coordinated Neighborhood Stabilization Response efforts in one community, members of the Balitmore Police Department participate in a "praise tunnel" to welcome students back on the first day of school.

Following the workshop, panelists had the opportunity to review and provide additional feedback on the list of considerations and suggestions. The final list is discussed below.

TABLE 1: Expert Panel

Representative	Organization
Ruth Abaya	The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention
David Boysen	Kalamazoo (MI) Department of Public Safety
Anthony Brooks	Metropolitan Nashville Police Department
Monique Brown	Baltimore Police Department
Ken Duilio	Portland (OR) Police Bureau
David Feldmeier	Milwaukee Police Department
Mike Hanifin	Aurora (CO) Police Department
Shantay Jackson	National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform
Karl Jacobson	New Haven (CT) Police Department
Corey Jones	Miami–Dade Police Department
Crystal Miller	Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (Baltimore)
Aqeela Sherrills	Community Based Public Safety Collective
Ryan Whiteman	Los Angeles Police Department

Understanding These Considerations and Suggestions

This section identifies key considerations for police leaders aiming to support CVI strategies and provides suggestions for how to effectively partner in these initiatives (see the list on page 12 for an overview). This discussion should *not* be interpreted as a "how to" or "best practices" guide; research does not yet exist to support prescriptive recommendations. Instead, readers should view the following suggestions as *promising practices* outlined by practitioners with extensive experience in this field. These suggestions do not represent an exhaustive list of actions agency leaders can take to support the successful implementation of CVI strategies.

The following suggestions do not constitute an insistence that law enforcement personnel be involved in all aspects of the development and implementation of CVI strategies. Law enforcement's role varies across CVI strategies. With some strategies, law enforcement may take on a reduced role, merely providing support to their community-based partners when needed, while other strategies may be co-led by law enforcement agencies. Ultimately, agency leaders and their partners must determine what works best for their community.

Key Considerations and Suggestions for Law Enforcement Agency Leaders Interested in Participating in CVI Strategies

- **Organizational Culture:** Does the agency foster a culture of community engagement that encourages officers to engage in acts that build trust and strengthen relationships with the community?
  - Hire and promote individuals who exemplify the agency's mission to increase community engagement.
  - Reward behaviors that exemplify the agency's mission to increase community engagement.

- **Implementation:** Does the agency have the capacity to meaningfully contribute to a CVI strategy?
  - Leverage the expertise of training and technical assistance providers when first implementing a CVI strategy.
  - Conduct a capacity assessment *before* agreeing to support CVI strategies.
  - Establish community partnerships at the outset.
  - Educate stakeholders about the CVI strategy.
  - Task the appropriate stakeholders with implementing the CVI strategy.
  - Establish data collection standards at the outset.

- **Buy-In:** Does the agency have support from officers and the community for the CVI strategy?
  - Promote the work within the agency and throughout the community.
  - Explain to officers *why* the agency is supporting a CVI and *how* it will benefit them.
  - Address officers' questions and concerns about the CVI strategy.
  - Deliver on promises to the community.
  - Establish reasonable expectations.

- **Partnerships:** Does the agency have the necessary partnerships with key community stakeholders in place?
  - Develop and maintain the necessary partnerships.
  - Build trust and accountability in the community.
  - Establish parameters for information sharing.
  - Support partners who are service providers.

Organizational Culture

The primary consideration for agency leaders seeking to engage in CVI work is their organization's culture and whether the agency sufficiently embodies CVI values. Historically, relationships between the communities most impacted by violence and local law enforcement have been contentious due, in part, to concentrated enforcement efforts that invoke community perceptions of racial profiling, excessive use of force, and other practices that disregard civil rights (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Though often well-intentioned, these practices can arouse community resentment, making it challenging to build trust and establish partnerships. To counter these harms, increase public safety, and improve community relations, the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) urges law enforcement agencies to engage in community policing, "a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime" (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014, p. 1).

While agencies must sometimes prioritize enforcement-focused crime fighting, the CVI approach operates on the principles of police legitimacy, procedural justice, mutual trust, and cooperation, much like community policing. CVIs also incorporate values like relationship-building and shared responsibility with the community. By participating in CVI strategies, law enforcement agencies can improve both public safety and public relations. However, to effectively engage in this work, their organizational culture will need to be one that enforces the law fairly and equitably and strengthens community confidence in police.

Leaders may want to consider whether their agency's culture "emphasizes building relationships between the police and the community through positive, non-enforcement contacts" (McLean et al., 2020, p. 1099). Certain agency staff may understand what CVIs require and already incorporate CVI-like principles and values into their leadership approach. Local CVI champions will be those within the agency who understand the need to balance crime fighting with community collaboration and partnerships, and that the two goals are not mutually exclusive. Agency executives can benefit from identifying officers with this understanding and encouraging them to develop a CVI approach within their district or beat. Leaders can foster a culture of community engagement among their officers by encouraging and rewarding appropriate behavior.

President Barack Obama meets with members of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing for a group photo in the Oval Office on March 2, 2015. Official White House Photo.

Applying CVI values on a small scale before implementing a CVI agencywide tests the approach within an agency's existing culture, reducing risk of failure. If the approach succeeds on a small scale, agency executives can better plan for taking the approach to scale agencywide. While the idea of policing alongside the community may not appeal to some officers, agency leaders can communicate the importance of doing so — and, ultimately, evolve their organizational culture — by encouraging behaviors that promote community engagement and pointing to the initial small-scale CVI as evidence of its success.

Hire and Promote Individuals Who Exemplify the Agency's Mission to Increase Community Engagement

Encouraging these behaviors begins with hiring individuals who believe in community participation. Many of the agencies represented on the panel attribute the success of their participation in CVI strategies, in part, to hiring officers who understand the value of community involvement. To further foster the requisite culture, the officers tasked with implementing the agency's CVI strategies should have a record of engaging the community in positive, non-enforcement ways. One panelist noted that the community can often be instrumental in identifying these officers. Officers assigned to CVI strategies might be rewarded with a promotion or pay raise. One of the panelists noted that his agency promotes officers to the rank of corporal and provides them with a 5.5 percent pay increase over their patrol salary when assigned to the CVI unit.

Reward Behaviors that Exemplify the Agency's Mission to Increase Community Engagement

Agency leaders can also effect cultural change by rewarding officers who work to promote community partnerships. Traditionally, officers have been rewarded for acts of bravery that placed them at risk of injury or resulted in their sustaining a physical injury (e.g., the Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery). Agency leaders can promote a culture of community engagement by recognizing and rewarding officers who build trust and strengthen relationships in the community; at least one of the panel agencies does this. Recognition and rewards communicate the importance of CVI work, encourage officers to participate in it, and help foster a culture of community engagement.

Implementation

When implemented correctly, a CVI strategy can be a powerful tool for law enforcement agencies seeking to reduce violence in their communities. Before engaging in this work, however, agency leaders must consider whether their organization has the capacity to contribute meaningfully to a CVI. Does the agency a) understand what the work entails, b) possess the necessary resources, and c) have the appropriate partnerships in place? The panel made the following five suggestions to support implementation.

Use the Expertise of Training and Technical Assistance Providers when Implementing a CVI Strategy for the First Time

Traditional policing differs significantly from CVI work; under CVIs, officers rely less on enforcement and more on community engagement and service provision. Therefore, agency leaders might wish to utilize the expertise of training and technical assistance (TTA) providers when first implementing a CVI strategy. This expertise can help leaders assess their agency's capacity to engage in the work and correctly implement the strategy. CVI TTA providers offer education on what CVI work entails, gun violence problem analysis, and partnership development and management, among other topics.

Every law enforcement workshop participant noted that the support their agency received from TTA providers was invaluable for implementing CVI strategies. While resource guides can be helpful for a city undertaking a CVI strategy, they may not offer sufficient support for law enforcement agencies seeking to lead or meaningfully contribute to such a strategy. Importantly, agencies should implement their strategy according to the initial blueprint, making adjustments only *after* the agency has had time to evaluate what is and is not working. One law enforcement panelist stated, "Our [CVI strategy] has worked because we stuck to the plan." Agency leaders can also draw on the expertise of peer agencies or cities operating CVI strategies.

Conduct a Capacity Assessment before Agreeing to Support CVI Strategies

Agency leaders might consider whether their agency has experience with a similar strategy before engaging in CVI work. If so, they can reflect on the initiative's successes and shortcomings; if not, they can consult with TTA providers and observe other cities' CVI strategies to decide whether the work is something to which they can contribute, either as a leader or partner. Consider current staffing levels: Can the agency participate without neglecting other duties? Do staff members have the willingness and competency to conduct the work? By assessing their agency's capacity up front, police leaders can determine whether they are better positioned to co-lead a CVI or adopt a support role.

Establish Community Partnerships at the Outset

Despite the widespread adoption of community policing practices in law enforcement, agencies sometimes do not incorporate their communities into their crime control strategies. The CVI approach requires community involvement every step of the way. Collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve fosters a relationship of mutual trust and respect, ultimately leading to less conflict over the agencies' response to violence.

If an agency does not have a relationship with its community before implementing a CVI strategy, its leaders are encouraged to establish a connection. Allowing the community's various perspectives to help shape the strategy from the beginning will help agencies build the relationships needed for the CVI program. To gather this input, agencies can host public safety listening sessions or conduct community sentiment surveys. One panel agency conducts these surveys regularly, using a third party to ensure neutrality and respondent anonymity. This helps the agency understand which issues are most important to community members and which services and resources are most desired.

Because law enforcement has the primary responsibility for addressing violent crime, the panel suggests that police leaders take the initiative in partnering with community leaders and organizations on CVI programs.[8] The most appropriate first step will depend on each agency's existing community relations. It could involve acknowledging past harm caused by the agency. It might also entail sharing information about individuals committing violence and allowing community organizations an opportunity to address these individuals before police resort to enforcement. Such a show of goodwill communicates that the agency's culture fosters community engagement.

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8   Although law enforcement agency leaders are encouraged to take the first step toward establishing partnerships, CVI strategies are most effective when agencies and their community-based partners coordinate efforts to engage in violence reduction simultaneously. It is important that law enforcement personnel remain patient with the delivery of services to those engaging in violence so that the individuals have a reasonable opportunity to discontinue offending before the agency resorts to enforcement.

Educate Stakeholders on What the CVI Strategy Entails

Because the CVI approach to violence reduction differs from traditional policing strategies, all stakeholders involved will need instruction as to what the work is and is not. This instruction will include a description of what the CVI approach entails, the desired outcomes of the strategy, the roles of each partner, and their approaches to fulfilling those roles. This guidance should be shared before the strategy is implemented and reinforced regularly.

CVIs are a *complement* to policing, not an alternative; achieving community safety requires *both* law enforcement *and* community-based strategies. Under the CVI approach, law enforcement officers will realize that they are not the sole providers of community safety. A vast system of public safety practitioners — including outreach workers, victim service providers, medical professionals, and other service providers — can provide critical support for law enforcement officers by providing information about the neighborhood, connecting with individuals it may be difficult for officers to reach, and offering services that police do not provide. Many police officers have come to appreciate this support. Therefore, it can be worthwhile to ensure officers understand that CVIs enhance the criminal justice system rather than undermine it. Moreover, all CVI practitioners should understand that the CVI approach has benefits beyond violence reduction. It also helps victims heal by providing them with services such as physical therapy, wage replacement, emergency moves, and coverage of funeral costs.

Educating community members on what the CVI strategy entails is another vital component of the implementation process. Agency leaders can share information about the strategy through social media and during community meetings in schools, churches, and other public venues. If all partners share this message, the community will sense a solidarity that lends credence to the strategy.

Task the Appropriate Stakeholders with Implementing the CVI Strategy

Successful implementation of a CVI strategy requires a champion for the approach. In law enforcement, as in most industries, initiatives are frequently implemented with little input from the frontline staff who will carry them out. However, the panel noted that CVI strategies are more likely to succeed when the staff tasked with implementation are champions for community engagement. The ideal champion is a supervisor with strong ties to both the community and the rank and file who has experience with violence reduction efforts. Similarly, line-level officers most appropriate for this work are those with experience in violence reduction. One law enforcement panelist noted that he was selected for his agency's CVI strategy because of his experience in the gang unit. His time in this unit familiarized him with the community the CVI strategy focused on, and he had seen how badly violence "tears communities apart." It can also be productive to involve officers who are actually *from* the neighborhood. Another law enforcement panelist pointed to his upbringing in the neighborhood as immensely helpful for developing relationships with community members and organizational partners.

Partnerships are the heart of CVIs. In one city represented on the panel, many in the community were initially unwilling to support the law enforcement agency's involvement in the CVI. However, the agency was able to partner with a community leader who explained to the community, "I'm not helping the police lock people up. I'm helping people stay out of jail." Over time, this relationship and education about what the work entailed elicited the community's support. Likewise, strong partnerships with governmental agencies (e.g., mayor's office, public health department) equip agencies with both the operational and the political support needed to successfully implement the strategy.

Establish Data Collection Standards at the Outset

Quantifying the success of CVI strategies can be challenging. It requires measuring violence that *has not happened* — a challenge that is compounded by many outreach workers' inexperience with data collection. Moreover, some CVI practitioners believe that an exclusive focus on quantitative data risks undervaluing the impact on real lives and relationships (Obbie, 2024). Despite these challenges, continued support from funders, policymakers, and the public hinges upon the availability of rigorous evidence demonstrating that CVI strategies effectively reduce violence (Obbie, 2024).

Establishing data collection and evaluation standards at the outset ensures that CVI strategies are measurable and data-driven, and therefore more likely to be sustained. These standards will be most beneficial if they outline which data should be collected, establish procedures for training stakeholders in proper data collection, and identify how confidentiality will be maintained. In Baton Rouge, for example, outreach workers categorize every interaction on the streets (i.e., mediation, intervention, prevention) and record who was talked to, what was said, and what the next steps should be (Obbie, 2024). CVI stakeholders might consider using a data management system, such as Apricot, used by the Newark Community Street Team, to track their outreach work. Though it can be challenging to determine what data to collect and how to collect it, CVI TTA providers can be a valuable resource when establishing data collection standards.

Buy-In

Buy-in is an essential component of all successful initiatives. With it, individuals are more *receptive* to change, and without it, they are more *resistant* (Blair et al., 2021; Silin & Schwartz, 2003; Sousa et al., 2016; Yoon, 2016). Project leaders will need to assess the level of buy-in from their agency and the community. Stakeholders will need to know how the initiative will benefit them. Suggestions for achieving this include promoting the work, addressing concerns, and following through on promises.

Promote the Work within the Agency and throughout the Community

Effective promotion of law enforcement involvement in CVIs begins with strong leadership. Agency leaders can generate buy-in when they explain to their officers and the community why the agency engages in CVI work and how it will benefit all involved.

Agency leaders can emphasize the importance of CVI work by including its tenets (e.g., community engagement) in the agency's policies and procedures. Several agencies represented on the panel have integrated CVI tenets into their operating procedures by including a CVI module in their recruit training curriculum. Doing so highlights the importance of building relationships early in officers' careers and molds the agency's culture to provide more support for CVIs.

Agencies can also communicate the importance of CVI work by *incentivizing* it. For example, at one of the panel agencies, officers receive increased rank and pay when assigned to the CVI unit; officers are promoted to corporal and given a 5.5 percent pay increase. As officers are promoted out of the CVI unit, they will likely encourage and model the work in their new units.

In addition to promoting the CVI strategy within the agency, it is important to promote it throughout the community. The CVI approach is likely to be novel in many communities and counter to the traditional law enforcement-focused approach to violence reduction. To raise awareness and secure buy-in for this community-centric strategy, agency leaders can publicly

Kalamazoo, MI, CVI group on December 5, 2024, as the city commission accepted a $1.25 million community policing grant.
Source: Provided

promote it and acknowledge its value. A few of the panelists believed it was tremendously helpful when the Baltimore Police Department's former commissioner, Michael Harrison, publicly recognized the work of Safe Streets' violence interrupters and attributed the city's reductions in violent crime to their efforts (see Simms & Duncan, 2023).

Explain to Officers Why the Agency Is Supporting a CVI and How It Benefits Them

Employees should understand their organization's direction and vision and believe that any new initiative, including a CVI, addresses their needs and concerns (Snyder et al., 2019; Thomson et al., 1999). Law enforcement agencies may wish to participate in a CVI for numerous reasons (e.g., violence reduction, strengthening community relationships). Whatever the justification, officers may be more willing to support their agency's involvement in a CVI if they understand *why* they are being asked to engage in the work. Similarly, officers will be more likely to support the CVI if they believe the CVI can help them be more effective. Without these understandings, officers may view the CVI strategy as little more than extra work.

Address Officers' Questions and Concerns about the CVI Strategy

Employees are more likely to buy into an initiative when they believe they are a meaningful part of it (Boden et al., 2020; Brazeal & Couch, 2017; Yoon, 2016). In addition to explaining the "why" and "how" to officers, agency leaders can make their staff feel like an integral part of the CVI strategy by providing them with a voice in its development and implementation (Boden et al., 2020; French-Bravo & Crow, 2015; Joram et al., 2020). To do this, the panel suggests that agency leaders allow their officers to ask questions, express concerns, and make program suggestions.

Members of the panel said common officer concerns include the perceived legitimacy of CVI work, its ability to serve justice, and reliance on community stakeholders. Within some agencies, some officers may view CVIs unfavorably because they believe they are more capable of addressing violence than the community and do not need assistance. Similarly, some officers, particularly veterans, are resistant to CVI work because they do not believe it is "real police work" and think others can do that work. When concerns about the legitimacy of CVI work arise,

it can be helpful to partner with other law enforcement agencies that are engaged in this kind of work. Officers at peer agencies can share how their CVI strategies have improved their quality of work (e.g., reduced violence, lower caseloads). With resistant veteran officers, agencies can also discuss how, in many ways, CVI work is a return to the "old style" of policing where officers got to know their communities and community members were treated as people rather than numbers (i.e., arrests). A few of the officers on the panel admitted to being initially resistant to their agency's CVI strategy until they realized the overlap between it and their own attempts to build relationships with the community.

According to the panel, another common concern among officers relates to justice, as some officers may believe that the CVI approach will allow violent offenders to avoid consequences. Officers will need to see that those who have engaged in violence have stopped offending and are using the services offered by the CVI. This can show that the CVI approach "leads to fewer arrests and more of the *right* arrests."

While the survey results indicate that most agencies would be willing to support a CVI strategy that employed former offenders, some officers still express reservations about sharing information with these individuals. Several panel participants noted that TTA providers can help address this concern by communicating how the CVI strategy will operate and sharing success stories. Beyond that, it can be helpful for resistant officers to witness information sharing between former offenders and the agency so they can see firsthand how the relationship works. At one of the panel agencies, officers were convinced of CVIs' value when a murder suspect met with an outreach worker and agreed to surrender, specifying that he would only do so to the agency's CVI officer.

Deliver on Promises to the Community

Engaging in CVI work is a promise to the community that the agency will police differently, placing less emphasis on enforcement and more on addressing the root causes of violence. Support for the program should increase in the community and with agencies as the effort is established. Until then, community members may be wary of the agency's claims.

Strong partners are invaluable for delivering on promises to the community. Agency leaders can position their agency for success by engaging respected community leaders and organizations early in the design process to discuss the shared goal of reducing violence and collaborating on a response to the issue. Moreover, it can be beneficial to have community stakeholders observe the agency interacting with those involved in violence in non-enforcement ways. Importantly, agencies must allow their community partners opportunities to address violence *before* attempting to address the problem with enforcement.

The initial delivery of promises may garner optimism from the community; however, efforts will need to be sustained in order to establish lasting community buy-in. Stability — and trust, by extension — takes time to establish. Though agencies may be eager to move forward with the widespread adoption of their CVI strategy, patience is beneficial. One of the panelists described the calculated approach to implementation taken by their agency and its community partners. They introduce their CVI strategy to a single neighborhood and establish the program before expanding to other neighborhoods. This has generated considerable community support.

Establish Reasonable Expectations

New initiatives are typically introduced when the traditional approach to a problem has been unsuccessful. Hopes run high that the new program will make a great difference. Understandably, agencies, communities, elected officials, and other stakeholders may be eager to see reductions in violent crime when a CVI strategy is implemented. Still, it is wise to temper expec-

tations. CVI strategies have a proven track record of reducing violence; however, they take time to realize success. It helps to stress this reality with all stakeholders at the outset.

Partnerships

Partnerships are the bedrock of the CVI approach. Strong partnerships unite stakeholders in pursuing a shared goal: saving lives. Historically, law enforcement has been tasked exclusively with providing public safety, but this approach is less effective than establishing a partnership between law enforcement *and* the community. Agency leaders interested in supporting a CVI strategy must first consider whether their agency has the necessary relationships and partnerships in place, or the capability to establish them. Drawing on their experience, the panel provided several suggestions for agency leaders seeking to build the requisite partnerships.

Develop and Maintain the Necessary Partnerships

One CVI practitioner panelist described the CVI approach as a "resident-driven strategy that is rooted in relationships." This description underscores the importance of solid relationships with the community. To establish these relationships, law enforcement agencies must build trust within the community. Building trust, like ensuring public safety, cannot be achieved by law enforcement alone.

When law enforcement and community-based organizations present a unified front, it signals a new approach to public safety in the community. According to the panel, this is "priceless" for building trust and legitimacy within the community, thereby increasing the likelihood of the CVI strategy's success. When identifying community partners, it is useful to consider the age and geography of the individuals targeted by the intervention. Occasionally, those with a reputation for doing great work in the community are not in touch with young adults or are only known in certain neighborhoods, which can limit their broader credibility. The goal is to find grassroots neighborhood leaders.

Given the history of policing, it can be challenging to develop partnerships in some communities despite an agency's desire to change its approach to violence. Several law enforcement panelists noted that their agencies encountered community organizations doing impactful work through a CVI strategy that were unwilling to partner with law enforcement. Panelists urged these agencies to "keep their doors open" to these organizations.

Community partners need not be "pro-police"; they must simply trust officers enough to collaborate with them in addressing violence. Likewise, officers must trust their community partners. Law enforcement involvement in CVI strategies almost always involves sharing sensitive information with outreach workers about who is engaging in violence. These workers play an invaluable role in CVI strategies. Their knowledge of the community and, for many, prior involvement in violence allow them to reach community members in a way that law enforcement often cannot, but it is this experience with violence that can make officers suspicious of outreach workers.[9] To help build trust, agency leaders can work with their community partners' leadership to ensure a transparent hiring and vetting process that verifies outreach workers have discontinued their involvement in criminal activity.

Law enforcement's involvement in the hiring and vetting process varies across CVI strategies. The hiring process typically begins with community organizations identifying prospective

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9 Several of the law enforcement panelists encourage officers to acknowledge that outreach workers may make the occasional mistake and to be patient with those missteps, as long as they do not involve engaging in violence or another serious offense.

outreach workers. If involved, law enforcement can investigate the individual's criminal history for recent offending or open investigations. From this point, the process tends to vary, with some organizations opting to have prospective outreach workers interview with a panel of key community and law enforcement stakeholders. Other organizations require candidates to shadow veteran outreach workers for a time before the CVI's board determines whether to approve them. Whatever the process entails, mutual trust between law enforcement and their community partners is vital for the success of CVIs.

Build Trust and Accountability in the Community

Before law enforcement agencies can establish partnerships with community-based organizations, they will need to have instituted trust and accountability in their communities. Building trust lays a foundation that fosters strong relationships, while accountability can help preserve relationships. The panel suggested specific actions for increasing trust, including acknowledging past harm, enhancing cultural competency, and developing accountability mechanisms.

Current and historical interactions with law enforcement have shaped the culture in Black and Brown communities (Johnson, 2016) such that Black and Brown Americans generally hold negative views and are distrustful of the police (Ekins, 2020; Monmouth University, 2020; Pew Research Center, 2020). This is likely because "For too many poor citizens and people of color, arrest and imprisonment have become an inevitable and seemingly unavoidable part of the American experience" (Stevenson, 2006, pp. 341–342). One way agency leaders can help these communities heal is by acknowledging past harm. The National Network for Safe Communities notes that:

Acknowledgements of harm — clear and specific statements about the harmful impacts of policing, delivered by police leaders — are the first step towards creating meaningful conversations about repair. Stating plainly that what happened was real and matters, when those truths have so often been swept under the rug, lends credibility to commitments to change and collaboration. Just as in interpersonal relationships, when harms go unnamed, they continue to create tension and distrust. By openly taking responsibility for these harms on behalf of their department and the broader institution of policing, police leaders make their work to build legitimacy more effective. (2024, *para. 1*)

In October 2024, Baltimore's MONSE conducted a Coordinated Neighborhood Stabilization Response following the tragic double shooting that claimed the life of a 14-year-old young man. The outreach effort focused on ensuring the safety of young people traveling after school on public transportation. Source: Instagram

Equal Justice USA's (2019) *Trauma to Trust* is one example of how police leaders can publicly acknowledge past harm caused by their agency.

Law enforcement leaders can also build trust and accountability by providing cultural competency training for their officers. Cultural competency training helps officers understand the community's history and culture, enabling them to interact

more effectively with community members. Although it can be helpful to provide this training for the entire department, offering it to the officers engaging in CVI work is a good first step.

Regular meetings with community-based partners are another powerful means to build and maintain strong partnerships. One example is the Newark Community Street Team's (2022) public safety roundtable, which brings together law enforcement, elected officials, business owners, social service providers, and residents to engage the community in the public safety process. Law enforcement identifies where violence and other crimes are occurring and discusses potential solutions with residents. Together, stakeholders hold one another to account for the community's safety. Many of the panel's law enforcement practitioners meet weekly with community partners to maintain accountability.

Establish Parameters for Information Sharing

Information sharing is usually the most contentious, challenging, and sensitive aspects of CVI strategies that involve law enforcement. Should the information flow be one-way, with law enforcement providing partners with information about individuals involved in violence? Or should it be two-way, with community partners also supplying law enforcement with information? To address this issue, agency leaders and their community partners can establish parameters for sharing information at the outset of the CVI strategy. These parameters — which create a clear understanding of what information will be shared and by whom — can significantly enhance the strategy's likelihood of success. Some communities may formalize parameters through a memorandum of understanding, whereas others may opt to establish them informally.

Regardless of whether a CVI strategy uses the one-way or two-way approach to information sharing, all panelists agreed that law enforcement should share information with their CVI partners and that they should take the initiative in doing so. With information about violence in the community, community organizations can intervene through conflict mediation and service provision to prevent further incidents. Referring individuals who are at the greatest risk of engaging in violence to services can be a powerful tool for strengthening the CVI approach. Moreover, trust around information sharing is built over time and, by sharing information with CVI workers, law enforcement can establish a solid foundation for a trusting partnership.

CVI practitioners and law enforcement often do not agree on whether information sharing should happen in both directions, and both sides present legitimate concerns about how and what information should flow between the two. Those who argue that CVI workers should *not* share information with law enforcement contend that doing so can be interpreted as "snitching" in the community, potentially undermining those partners' credibility among community members and jeopardizing their safety. While law enforcement officers generally understand that outreach workers cannot disclose *who is involved in violent crime*, workers' reluctance to divulge *how they use the information provided by law enforcement* can cause concern and lead to frustration among officers. For instance, officers may worry that sharing information with community partners could compromise investigations. They may also worry that the information could be used for criminal purposes. For example, knowledge of who was responsible for a shooting could prompt retaliation if outreach workers fail to keep this information confidential.

While community-based organizations may not be obligated to share any information with their law enforcement partners, the partnership is better served if they do. Sharing information can address officers' concerns about how their contributions are being used and provide police with justifications for continued CVI funding. Additionally, it can reassure officers that justice is being served by demonstrating that offenders who are not arrested have ceased their violent activities and are engaged with the offered services.

Should community-based organizations opt to share information with law enforcement, officers must understand that CVI practitioners are not their confidential informants. Outreach

workers' primary duty is to reduce violence by supporting those most impacted by the issue, not to help the police solve crimes. As one of the law enforcement practitioners put it, "We never ask our CVI partners for information. It's our job to figure that out." Moreover, the expert panel suggests that officers avoid speaking directly with outreach workers, given the threats to the latter's credibility and safety doing so would pose. Instead, law enforcement practitioners are encouraged to speak directly with their partner organizations' leaders, since these individuals are seldom engaged in street outreach. The panel emphasized that leaders of community organizations and CVI TTA providers must explain to law enforcement agencies why outreach workers cannot disclose who is involved in crime and why maintaining distance between the two groups is necessary.

It is important to note that the information-sharing parameters will vary across each CVI strategy and community. With focused deterrence-based CVIs, the law enforcement role is more pronounced, and the community is aware of that. Therefore, the community is likely to accept a more involved relationship between local law enforcement and outreach workers in those CVIs than they would in CVIs where the police have a lesser role. Furthermore, what works in a large community may not work in a smaller one. If an officer is the only one working in a community, they may not be able to avoid interacting with an outreach worker. Ultimately, law enforcement agencies and their community-based partners must determine what works for their community.

Support the Service Arm

Service providers are integral to the success of CVIs, but they often lack the funding of their law enforcement counterparts. As one panelist questioned, "Outreach workers have the same goal as law enforcement, so how do we reconcile that officers make a living wage and outreach workers don't?" Despite often receiving little or no pay for their efforts, outreach workers are exposed to a high rate of gun violence (Hureau et al., 2022). In Baltimore (Reed, 2021; WBAL, 2021), Brooklyn (Hickey, 2024), and Chicago (Molina, 2023), outreach workers have been shot while in the line of duty.

Though agency leaders do not decide how tax dollars are spent, it can be worthwhile for the interacting agencies to advocate for adequate resources for the service arm of CVIs. Without genuine investment in these providers, the effort will be reduced to an enforcement-only approach. Law enforcement agencies can pursue grants or lobby political leaders to secure funding for community services and salaries for outreach workers.

In some communities, CVI practitioners have been embedded in the local government—such is the case with Baltimore's MONSE. This provides salaries and benefits to outreach workers who expose themselves to trauma and danger in pursuit of violence reduction. Being situated within a governmental organization helps CVI practitioners develop stronger partnerships with law enforcement. It also builds community trust and relationships with other government agencies.

It is important to note that there is some concern within the CVI field about "overprofessionalizing" the work too quickly. Many of the individuals who are suitable to engage in community outreach carry significant emotional trauma and may not understand formal workplace expectations. Regardless, these paraprofessionals possess numerous strengths that can serve to build relationships and reduce violence. Training programs such as The Brotherhood Unified for Independent Leadership Through Discipline (BUILD) Program's Professional Community Intervention Training Institute (PCITI) (BUILD Program, 2025) can increase the capacities of these workers while being mindful of their skillsets and backgrounds.

Conclusion

The ideas shared in this paper represent a survey and a one-day discussion among professionals. The field is just beginning to understand the most effective means for law enforcement to support CVIs, and there is much more to be learned about these promising strategies. Law enforcement, community organizations, and researchers should continue eliciting and distributing information about the most effective ways for public safety professionals to unite for a shared goal: reducing violence.

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Appendix
Law Enforcement Agency Survey Results (n = 226)

Is the agency familiar with CVI strategies?	#	%
Yes	139	61.5
No	44	19.5
Unsure	42	18.6
Missing	1	0.4

Do the agency's officers believe community stakeholders should share responsibility for responding to community violence?	#	%
Yes	193	85.4
No	12	5.3
Unsure	16	7.1
Missing	5	2.2

Would the agency prefer to lead a CVI or support a community group leading the CVI?	#	%
We would prefer to lead the intervention.	39	17.3
We would prefer to provide support for the intervention.	112	49.6
We have no preference.	69	30.5
Missing	6	2.6

Has the agency ever participated in a community violence intervention?	#	%
Yes	102	45.1
No	108	47.8
Unsure	13	5.8
Missing	3	1.3

Has the agency ever participated in a focused deterrence-based violence intervention program?	#	%
Yes, currently	75	33.2
No, but did so previously	11	4.9
No, but aware of one (or more) in jurisdiction	15	6.6
No, and not aware of any in jurisdiction	113	50.0
Unsure	9	4.0
Missing	3	1.3

Has the agency ever participated in a hospital-based Violence intervention program?	#	%
Yes, currently	34	15.0
No, but did so previously	3	1.3
No, but aware of one (or more) in jurisdiction	15	6.6
No, and not aware of any in jurisdiction	153	67.7
Unsure	17	7.5
Missing	4	1.8

Has agency ever participated in violence intervention program that employed violence interrupters?	#	%
Yes, currently	69	30.5
No, but did so previously	2	0.9
No, but aware of one (or more) in jurisdiction	18	8.0
No, and not aware of any in jurisdiction	123	54.4
Unsure	11	4.9
Missing	3	1.3

When did the agency become involved with a community violence intervention (of any type)? [NOTE: only agencies that participated in a community violence intervention were asked this question]	#	%
Year	88	2017.5 (6.0)
Range	1998	2023
Missing	14	7.3

Would the agency participate in another community violence intervention? [NOTE: only agencies that participated in a community violence intervention were asked this question]	#	%
Yes	63	61.8
Presumably so, but don't make these decisions	27	26.5
No	1	1.0
Presumably not, but don't make these decisions	1	1.0
Unsure	6	5.9
Missing	4	3.9

Why would the agency refrain from participating in another community violence intervention?* [NOTE: only participants who answered "No" or "Presumably not" to the previous question were asked this question]	#	%
Lack manpower	2	100.0
Lack funding	2	100.0
Doesn't think they're effective	0	0.0
Lack confidence in community partner	0	0.0
[Other, specify] "Not agency's primary role"	1	50.0
Missing	0	0.0

Is the agency willing to participate in a community violence intervention? [NOTE: only agencies that have *not* participated in a community violence intervention were asked this question]	#	%
Yes	64	51.6
No	16	12.9
Unsure	43	34.7
Missing	1	0.8

How likely is the agency to participate in a community violence intervention that employs former offenders as violence interrupters?	#	%
Very likely	60	26.6
Likely	119	52.7
Unlikely	38	16.8
Very unlikely	3	1.3
Missing	6	2.7

Has the agency ever declined to participate in a community violence intervention that it was invited to be part of?	#	%
Yes	5	2.2
No	122	54.0
Unsure	95	42.0
Missing	4	1.8

Why did the agency decline to participate in a CVI initiative?* [NOTE: only participants who answered "Yes" to the previous question were asked this question]	#	%
Lacked manpower	0	0.0
Lacked funds	1	20.0
CVI didn't align w/agency mission	2	40.0
[Other, specify] "Too expensive to partner with [organization]"	1	20.0
[Other, specify] "Already had plan in place"	1	20.0
Missing	0	0.0

Has the agency ever been denied participation in a community violence intervention it sought to be part of?	#	%
Yes	1	0.4
No	147	65.0
Unsure	74	32.7
Missing	4	1.8

Why was the agency denied participation? [NOTE: only participants who answered "Yes" to the previous question were asked this question]	#	%
[Other, specify] "Were told by two groups that police presence would ruin their street credibility"	1	100.0
Missing	0	0.0

Which strategies does the agency consider to be part of a community violence intervention?*	#	%
Hot spots policing	153	67.7
Problem-oriented policing	187	82.7
Community-oriented policing	201	88.9
Weed and seed	48	21.2
Focusing on high-risk offenders	167	73.9
None	5	2.2
Missing	4	1.8

Number of sworn personnel (full- and part-time) the agency employs	#	Mean (SD)
Sworn	211	574.6 (1025.8)
Range	38	9108
Missing	15	6.6

Number of non-sworn personnel (full- and part-time) the agency employs	#	Mean (SD)
Non-sworn	212	239.0 (497.8)
Range	10	5546
Missing	14	6.2

Annual average # of homicides the agency's jurisdiction reported (2020–2022)	#	Mean (SD)
Homicides	183	28.5 (54.8)
Range	0	386
Missing	43	19.0

Annual average # of aggravated assaults the agency's jurisdiction reported (2020–2022)	#	Mean (SD)
Aggravated assaults	168	1086.3 (2452.1)
Range	3	19616.3
Missing	58	25.7
Annual average # of robberies the agency's jurisdiction reported (2020–2022)	**#**	**Mean (SD)**
Homicide #	168	399.0 (936.6)
Range	0	8544
Missing	58	25.7

* Participants were asked to "select all that apply." The number of responses will exceed the number of respondents. Percentages reflect the number of respondents who selected the option.

Questions Asked of Agencies Participating in CVIs.

	Focused Deterrence-Based Intervention Programs (n = 86)		Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (n = 37)		Violence Intervention Programs Employing Violence Interrupters (n = 71)	
When did the agency's involvement with the community violence intervention begin?	#	Mean (SD)	#	Mean (SD)	#	Mean (SD)
Year	75	2017.49 (6.07)	26	2017.58 (5.88)	60	2017.53(6.55)
Range	2000	2023	2003	2023	1990	2023
Missing	11	12.79	11	29.73	11	15.49
How did the agency's involvement with the CVI begin?	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agency created it	29	33.72	4	10.81	15	21.13
Agency was asked to join	30	34.88	12	32.43	30	42.25
Agency requested to join	12	13.95	3	8.11	6	8.45
Unsure	14	16.28	19	51.35	18	25.35
Missing	1	1.16	3	8.11	2	2.82
Which factors motivated the agency to participate in the community violence intervention?*	#	%	#	%	#	%
Changes in local crime trends	57	66.28	18	48.65	42	59.15
Desire to improve community relations	64	74.42	22	59.46	57	80.28
Desire to build a partnership with community organizations	66	76.74	24	64.86	51	71.83
CVI's alignment with agency's mission	48	55.81	15	40.54	38	53.52
Pressure from local government (e.g., mayor, city council, governor)	14	16.28	1	2.70	12	16.90
Effort by CVI champion within our agency	16	18.60	6	16.22	9	12.68
Receipt of grant funding to participate in the CVI	19	22.09	9	24.32	13	18.31
Missing	4	4.65	5	13.51	6	8.45
What did the CVI target?	#	%	#	%	#	%
Specific locations	48	55.81	5	13.51	43	60.56
Specific offenders	63	73.26	14	37.84	49	69.01
Specific types of crime	58	66.28	31	83.78	44	61.97
Missing	3	3.49	4	10.81	5	7.04

Questions Asked of Agencies Participating in CVIs.	Focused Deterrence-Based Intervention Programs (n = 86)		Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (n = 37)		Violence Intervention Programs Employing Violence Interrupters (n = 71)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
What type of crime did the CVI target?* [NOTE: only participants who answered "Specific types of crime" to the previous question were asked this question]						
Homicide	46	53.49	17	54.84	34	77.27
Gun violence	56	65.12	25	80.65	42	95.45
Other violence	19	22.09	11	35.48	14	31.82
Drugs	15	17.44	2	6.45	8	18.18
Other	8	9.30	0	0.00	6	13.64
Missing	25	29.07	0	0.00	0	0.00
Did the agency have dedicated staff who participated in the community violence intervention?						
Yes, dedicated staff member	20	23.26	7	18.92	14	19.72
Yes, dedicated team/unit	33	38.37	3	8.11	20	28.17
No, various staff members supported agency's role as they were available	30	34.88	22	59.46	28	39.44
Unsure	2	2.33	4	10.81	6	8.45
Missing	1	1.16	1	2.70	3	4.23
Who from the agency participated in the community violence intervention?*						
Civilian employees	43	50.00	11	29.73	29	40.85
Line-level officers	43	50.00	6	16.22	26	36.62
Detectives	44	51.16	18	48.65	25	35.21
Members of specialized unit (e.g., community policing, gang unit)	66	76.74	11	29.73	39	54.93
Command staff (e.g., sergeant, lieutenant, captain)	62	72.09	9	24.32	44	61.97
Executive-level staff (e.g., chief, sheriff, assistant chief)	47	54.65	5	13.51	30	42.25
Missing	2	2.33	6	16.22	9	12.68

Questions Asked of Agencies Participating in CVIs.	Focused Deterrence-Based Intervention Programs (n = 86)		Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (n = 37)		Violence Intervention Programs Employing Violence Interrupters (n = 71)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Which external organizations/individuals participated in the community violence intervention?*						
Community organization	72	83.72	21	59.46	49	69.01
Hospital	20	23.26	27	72.97	14	19.72
Public health organization	24	27.91	11	29.73	15	21.13
Prosecutor's office	51	59.30	6	16.22	24	33.80
Other government organization	44	51.16	14	37.84	24	33.80
Local school	22	25.58	2	5.41	12	16.90
Clergy	35	40.70	6	16.22	23	32.39
Private business	11	12.79	1	2.70	6	8.45
Non-profit organization	56	65.12	18	48.65	43	60.56
Former offenders	36	41.86	4	10.81	30	42.25
Missing	2	2.33	2	5.41	6	8.45
How did the agency fund its participation in the community violence intervention?*						
American Rescue Plan funds	9	10.47	2	5.41	7	9.86
Other federal grant funds	21	24.42	5	13.51	13	18.31
Local or state grant funds	30	34.88	11	29.73	23	32.39
Private grant funds	5	5.81	3	8.11	7	9.86
Agency budget	56	65.12	18	48.65	38	53.52
Missing	3	3.49	6	16.22	6	8.45
Before implementing the community violence intervention, what was the agency's role in developing it?*						
Provide intelligence/data to CVI members	39	45.35	12	32.43	25	35.21
Identify high-risk offenders	54	62.79	10	27.03	30	42.25
Identify high-risk locations	50	58.14	8	21.62	31	43.66
Identify partners to participate	34	39.53	7	18.92	16	22.54
Facilitate relationships among stakeholders (e.g., community organizations, schools)	53	61.63	12	32.43	28	39.44
Missing	13	15.12	18	48.65	24	33.80

Questions Asked of Agencies Participating in CVIs.	Focused Deterrence-Based Intervention Programs (n = 86)		Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (n = 37)		Violence Intervention Programs Employing Violence Interrupters (n = 71)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
After the community violence intervention began, what was the agency's role in implementing it?						
Provide intelligence/data to CVI members	56	65.12	18	48.65	39	54.93
Attended regular meetings with CVI members	65	75.58	16	43.24	44	61.97
Assisted in recruiting, vetting, and/or hiring community members to participate in the CVI	24	27.91	4	10.81	17	23.94
Provided support services to victims of violent crime	34	39.53	12	32.43	24	33.80
Conducted targeted enforcement and investigative activities	59	68.60	13	35.14	39	54.93
Checked in with high-risk offenders (e.g., call-in meetings, home visits)	36	41.86	5	13.51	27	38.03
Missing	6	6.98	9	24.32	12	16.90
What kind of intelligence or data did the agency provide?* [NOTE: only those who selected "Provided intelligence/data to CVI members" for the previous question were asked this question]						
Calls for service	37	66.07	13	72.22	28	71.79
Incident reports	28	50.00	11	61.11	22	56.41
Information on offenders	43	76.79	9	50.00	22	56.41
Information on victims	30	53.57	10	55.56	19	48.72
Missing	2	3.57	1	5.56	3	7.69
Did the agency evaluate the impact of the community violence intervention on crime or other outcomes?						
Yes	44	51.16	13	35.14	17	23.94
No	16	18.60	16	43.24	31	43.66
Unsure	23	26.74	7	18.92	19	26.76
Missing	3	3.49	1	2.70	4	5.63

Questions Asked of Agencies Participating in CVIs.

	Focused Deterrence-Based Intervention Programs (n = 86)		Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (n = 37)		Violence Intervention Programs Employing Violence Interrupters (n = 71)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
What outcomes were measured?† [NOTE: only participants who answered "Yes" to the previous question were asked this question]						
Crime	30	68.18	6	46.15	7	41.18
Outcomes for individuals receiving services or being monitored (e.g., contacts, use of services, recidivism, retaliation, re-victimization, cooperation)	22	50.00	8	61.54	7	41.18
Community perceptions (e.g., safety, quality of life, police relations, quality of CVI, other community issues)	9	20.45	1	7.68	2	11.76
[Participant's response was unclear]	6	13.64	0	0.00	0	0.00
Missing	9	20.45	5	38.46	6	35.29
Did the agency work with a partner to evaluate the community violence intervention? [NOTE: only participants who stated that their agency evaluated their CVI were asked this question]	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	23	52.27	6	46.15	8	47.06
No	18	40.91	5	38.46	8	47.06
Unsure	3	6.82	2	15.38	0	0.00
Missing	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	5.88
Who did the agency partner with for its evaluation? [NOTE: only those who answered "Yes" to the previous question were asked this question]	#	%	#	%	#	%
University	14	60.87	4	66.67	6	75.00
Non-profit organization	5	21.74	3	50.00	1	12.50
Government organization	3	13.04	3	50.00	2	25.00
Internal civilian researcher/analyst	4	17.39	2	33.33	1	12.50
Hospital	0	0.00	2	33.33	0	0.00
Respondent's answer was unclear	4	17.39	0	0.00	2	25.00
Missing	1	4.35	1	16.67	1	12.50

* Participants were asked to "select all that apply." The number of responses will exceed the number of respondents. Percentages reflect the number of respondents who selected the option.

† Participants' responses were open-ended and could include multiple answers. Responses were grouped for clarity.

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