Realizing the Dream to be the *Healthiest Nation*: The Imperative of Ensuring the *Safest Cities*

“Violence is not the problem of one neighborhood or group, and the response and solutions are not the responsibility of one sector of the community or of one agency, professional group, or business. Coming together and owning this problem and the solutions are central.”

-Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Harvard School of Public Health

Had enough?

*Oakland the state murder capital*

*Patio robbed in takeover heist at Oakland eateries*

*Oakland’s daily tragedies surpass school shootings*

*City’s worrisome homicide tally fails to allay the public outcry, official action it deserves*

*Piano student, 10, partially paralyzed after shooting in Oakland*  

*Mother killed by stray bullet*

*Oaklanders want Dellums to be more aggressive fighting crime*

*Oakland’s mayor politics as people are killed*  

Cities are striving to prevent violence and they need support.

Let’s Make Our Neighborhoods Safe!
Making the Case: *Why Safety Impacts the Health of Communities*

Violence increases the risk of other poor health outcomes:

- Violence and maltreatment in early life are among the major risk factors for the leading causes of illness and death in the United States. (*Adverse Childhood Experience Study*).

- Women who have experienced intimate partner abuse have significantly higher health care utilization and costs than women without this history, and this continues long after the abuse ended.

- Violent conditions that plague some neighborhoods affect other determinants of health, including whether or not parents will allow their children to be physically active.
Making the Case: *Why Safety Impacts the Health of Communities*

Public Health addresses the health and safety of a population:

“All violence is every bit as much a public health issue for me and my successors in this century as smallpox, tuberculosis, and syphilis were for my predecessors in the last century.”

- Surgeon General Everett Koop

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Making the Case: *Why Safety Impacts the Health of Communities*

Violence is a leading cause of injury, disability and premature death:

- In 2004, homicide was the leading cause of death for young people ages 10 to 24 years old. (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*)

Violence is a significant disparity, disproportionately affecting young people and people of color:

- Among 10-24 year olds, violence is the leading cause of death for African Americans, the second leading cause of death for Latino males, and the third cause of death for American Indians. (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*)
What Is Needed?

A Comprehensive Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention

A Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention:

- Is *population-based*
- Works to *increase protective factors*
- Attempts to *reduce risks*
- Has a focus on *prevention*

UNITY (Urban Networks to Increase Thriving Youth) through Violence Prevention

- A national initiative designed to strengthen and support cities in preventing violence before it occurs.
- Based on the principle that violence is preventable, UNITY provides a comprehensive and sustainable public health approach to violence prevention.
UNITY Partners

Lead Partners
- Prevention Institute
- Harvard School of Public Health

Supported by
- CDC
- The California Wellness Foundation

National Consortium
Nearly 500 members from cities, national and state organizations, and community based organizations.

UNITY Co-Chairs
- Billie Weiss, MPH
  SCIPRC, UCLA School of Public Health
- Deborah Prothrow-Stith, MD
  Harvard School of Public Health
- Larry Cohen, MSW
  Prevention Institute

www.preventioninstitute.org/UNITY
UNITY Activities

- **Assessment**: What do cities need?
- **Peer Network**: Connecting cities with each other
- **Capacity Building**: Training, tools, consultation
- **City efforts**: Highlighting what works
- **Framing**: Making the case for preventing violence
- **National Strategy**: Policies and resources to support urban areas

UNITY Assessment

"An Assessment of Youth Violence Prevention Activities in USA Cities"

**Objective**: To determine the magnitude of the youth violence problem, and current status of youth violence prevention activities

**Methodology**: Fifteen of the 45 largest cities participated in the assessment (3 pilot and 12 informant). Interviews were completed with 45 of 48 informants (The Police Chief, Health Director, School Superintendent and Mayor in each city) identified for a response rate of 94%.
UNITY Assessment

“An Assessment of Youth Violence Prevention Activities in USA Cities”

Findings:

- Informants identified youth violence as a serious issue for their city.
- Cities’ responses to youth violence are not perceived to be highly effective or adequate.
- Few reported that their city uses primary prevention to stop violence before it occurs.
- Informants lack a shared knowledge of existing youth violence prevention resources available in their city.
- Public Health Departments are not generally included in city strategies.

UNITY Peer Network

UNITY Meeting with City Representatives
UNITY Peer Network

UNITY Meeting with City Representatives

**Purpose of the Meeting:**
- Identify national priorities
- Identify actions to build national support and momentum
- Obtain city input on UNITY

**Key Outcomes:**
- Prioritized a set of strategies to prevent violence
- Affirmed the elements and utility of the UNITY RoadMap
- Identified key opportunities to influence violence prevention priorities at the local and national levels

UNITY Cities’ Priority Strategies

**UP FRONT**
- Positive early care and education
- Positive social and emotional development
- Social connections in neighborhoods
- Quality after school programming
- Parenting skills
- Youth leadership
- Quality education
- Economic development

**IN THE THICK**
- Mentoring
- Mental health services
- Family support services
- Conflict resolution/interruption

**AFTERMATH**
- Mental health services
- Successful reentry
UNITY Capacity Building
UNITY Training, Tools, and Consultation

Our efforts are designed to meet the needs of cities and to get to solutions.

♦ Tools and Strategy Development: UNITY RoadMap

♦ Trainings: Where is UNITY in 2008?

UNITY Capacity Building
UNITY RoadMap for Preventing Violence

♦ A comprehensive framework that answers the who, what, and how of violence prevention.
  - Partnerships
  - Prevention
  - Strategy

♦ A web-based tool for cities
  - Gauge Tool
  - City Efforts
UNITY Roadmap
UNITY RoadMap: Comprehensive Framework

WHO?
WHO? WHO? WHO?

WHAT?
WHAT? WHAT? WHAT?

HOW?
HOW? HOW? HOW?

Strategic plan
Data & evaluation
Funding

UNITY Roadmap
UNITY RoadMap: Web-Based Tool

UNITY (Urban Networks to Increase Thwarting Youth Violence Prevention)
UNITY is designed to strengthen and support cities in preventing violence before it occurs and to help sustain their efforts. Young people are mtomentarily expected to violence and those who live in urban areas are disproportionately affected. It is time to consider a few questions that could reverse existing patterns and provide sustainability: are we preparing a generation well – thus programs to?

Many cities do not have a collaborative plan for a clear strategy for preventing violence before it occurs. They need help to move effectively prevent violence and increase the times of paragraphs in our cities. Others are well underway and see their success and further strengthen their efforts. All of these need effective policies and resources at the federal level to reinforce and sustain their programs. UNITY has been awesome to help.

UNITY Activities
- Foster effective communication: People need to be able to communicate and understand prevention. It is important to establish a common language, to develop a shared understanding, and to develop new tools and resources for better communication. 
- Prevent violence: All communities need to prevent violence and help people to change their behavior. This is a matter for the criminal justice system to protect the public after the fact. 
- Conduct an assessment: We have assessed what cities already have in place and what they need to do to be more effective. This is helping our technical assistance.

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WHO does it take to prevent violence before it occurs? Partnerships

- Using the Mayor's Bully Pulpit
  - Minneapolis

- Incorporating a Youth Voice
  - Nashville

- Using Federal Partnerships
  - New Orleans

What does it take to prevent violence before it occurs? Prevention

- Fostering Prevention while Responding to a Crisis
  - Cleveland

- Making the Economic Case
  - Los Angeles
  - San Diego

- Fostering Sustainable Neighborhood Strategies

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HOW can we maximize and sustain efforts to prevent violence before it occurs? Strategy

BALLOT INITIATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE REVENUE SOURCES

★ Oakland

★ Philadelphia

★ Boston

USING DATA USING STATE MONEY

Where is UNITY in 2008?

ASTHO-NACCHO joint conference

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Legislative Conference

American Public Health Association Annual Meeting

U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting

California Latino Legislative Caucus and California Correctional Peace Officer's Association (CCPOA) Summit

World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion

Congressman Bobby Scott Media Roundtable

National League of Cities Web-Audio Conference
Come Join Us: UNITY Reception

The National Association of County & City Health Officials, Prevention Institute and UNITY are pleased to invite you to our upcoming reception

Realizing the Dream to be the Healthiest Nation: The Imperative of Ensuring the Safest Cities
September 10, 2008 5:30-7 pm, Tofanelli Room, Sheraton Grand Sacramento

This event features:

Adewale Troutman MD, MPH, MA, Director of Louisville Metro Public Health; and
Larry Cohen MSW, Founder of Prevention Institute and Executive Director and Co-Chair of UNITY.

To Join the UNITY Network

◆ Receive information on new violence prevention-related activities, resources, and events.
◆ Get the latest updates on UNITY.
◆ Visit us at preventioninstitute.org
◆ Email us at unity@preventioninstitute.org.
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