Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE)
Evidence-Based Policing Strategies

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Introduction

Administered by the state Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS), the Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) initiative provides funding and support to 20 police departments and their law enforcement partners in 17 counties to reduce shootings and save lives.

GIVE requires these agencies to implement evidence-based strategies, and New York is unique among states for its commitment to providing training and technical support that helps these agencies implement proven practices as intended.

DCJS has developed these strategy summaries in consultation with subject-matter-experts to serve as a resource for all police agencies that seek to enhance their policing model by incorporating evidence-based practices, and to inform the community about the work that police agencies across New York are engaged in.

For more information about GIVE, please navigate to the DCJS website located at:

http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/impact/index.htm

For any questions, please call DCJS at: (518) 402-8455

Problem-Oriented Policing (POP)

Summary: In 1979, Herman Goldstein advocated for a paradigm shift in policing that would replace the primarily reactive, incident-driven model of policing with one that required police to proactively identify underlying problems that could be targeted to alleviate crime at its roots. He termed this new approach "problem-oriented policing" (POP). Using this approach, police manage a range of problems in the community through criminal law enforcement in tandem with civil statutes and municipal and community resources. Eck and Spelman's SARA model was developed in 1987 and expanded upon Goldstein's approach. SARA describes four steps police should follow when implementing POP: (1) Scanning: identify and prioritize potential problems; (2) Analysis: thoroughly analyze the problem(s) using a variety of data sources; (3) Response: develop and implement interventions designed to solve the problem; and (4) Assessment: determine whether the response worked and construct new responses. Police agencies implementing POP have widely accepted and adopted the SARA model.

Evidence: Weisburd, Telep, Hinkle, and Eck (2010) conducted a review on the effects of POP on crime and disorder, finding a statistically significant impact among 10 experimental and quasi-experimental studies. Studies that showed less significant impacts had implementation issues that may have been affected by lack of fidelity to the POP model; sites that implemented more successful models tended to show stronger effects. Additionally, Weisburd et al. (2010) examined less rigorous but more numerous pre/post studies without a comparison group, which showed positive findings.

Critical Components: Careful analysis and clear understanding of problems that result in tailor-made solutions is essential to problem-oriented policing. The Center for Problem-Oriented Policing has created more than 70 problem-specific guides for police that provide recommendations on how agencies can address different problems. Weisburd, Telep, Hinkle, and Eck (2008) also provide guidance on the types of POP interventions proven to be most effective:

1. Hot-spots policing interventions that use POP have shown successful results. In the studies conducted, it is difficult to determine whether problem solving or the focus on small geographic areas is driving the success, but the two strategies seem to work well in concert.
2. POP is most effective when police officers and department staff are on board and fully committed to its tenets.
3. Program expectations must be realistic. Officer case assignment must be kept to a manageable level and police should not be expected to tackle major problems in a short period of time.
4. Limited evidence shows that collaboration with outside criminal justice agencies appears to be an effective approach in POP.
5. Under the SARA model, the analysis and assessment phases are particularly important. In-depth problem-analysis, rather than merely a peripheral analysis of crime data with a largely law enforcement-oriented response, is required. The assessment phase provides a framework for agencies to consistently learn from and improve their problem-solving projects.

Source: Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, George Mason University

Procedural Justice

Summary: Procedural justice is rooted in the idea that individual regard for the criminal justice system is related more to a person's encounter with the system and their perception of the fairness of the process rather than the fairness of the outcome. Research suggests that procedural justice in police-citizen encounters is an important precursor to perceived police legitimacy. There also is a connection between these perceptions of legitimacy and compliance behavior, which suggests a possible link between community outreach efforts that build legitimacy and reduced crime. Aspects of community policing can be combined with other successful interventions in ways that may increase their overall effectiveness. For example, Braga and Weisburd (2010) describe a community-oriented approach to hot-spots policing in which the community was consulted on tactics used in those hot spots to ensure those tactics did not damage police-resident relationships. Procedural justice and community policing were both emphasized in the recommendations of President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015).

Evidence: Recent studies examining procedural justice evaluated officer interactions that utilized key elements of the strategy – decision-making neutrality, voice, and respect – and how those interactions affected citizens' compliance and perceived fairness. Similar to studies conducted in other criminal justice settings, such as courts and corrections, these studies showed that individuals who expressed overall satisfaction with their interaction were more compliant with police orders. In a systematic review, Mazerolle, Bennett, Davis, Sargeant, and Manning (2013) examined police interventions that were designed to enhance procedural justice and/or to increase citizen perceptions of police legitimacy. Mazerolle et al. also used one of the components of procedural justice in their study. There was some evidence that these interventions increased citizen satisfaction, cooperation, and levels of procedural justice, however, the overall effect of these programs on perceived legitimacy was not statistically significant.

Critical Components: Yale Law School Professor Tom Tyler's research focuses on procedural justice in police-citizen encounters as the key antecedent of legitimacy. According to Dr. Tyler, procedural justice includes four components:

1. Citizens need to participate in the decision process (i.e., be given a voice).
2. Neutrality is a key element of procedural justice. Citizens tend to view a situation as fairer when officers are transparent about why they are resolving a dispute in a particular way.
3. Individuals want to be treated with dignity and respect.
4. Citizens are more likely to view an interaction as fair when they trust the motives of the police (i.e., an officer shows a genuine concern for the interests of the parties involved).

Survey and observational research generally suggests that when officers incorporate these components of procedural justice into their interactions with the public, individuals are more likely to comply with police directives and the law because they see the police as more legitimate. As a result, increased legitimacy has the potential to reduce crime because it increases compliant behavior.

Source: Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, George Mason University

Hot-Spots Policing

Summary: Over the past two decades, research has suggested that police can effectively address crime and disorder by focusing on hot spots: small units of geography with high rates of crime. Known as hot-spots policing or place-based policing, this strategy stands in contrast to traditional policing and crime prevention activities, which are typically focused on people. Hot spots or places are specific locations, such as addresses, blocks, or clusters of addresses or blocks, within larger geographic areas: beats, precincts, communities and neighborhoods. Hot-spots policing uses a range of tactics rooted in the idea that crime prevention is maximized when police focus their resources on places where crime is highly concentrated.

Evidence: There is a strong evidence base for hot-spots policing. A National Research Council (2004: 250) review noted, "studies that focused police resources on crime hot spots provided the strongest collective evidence of police effectiveness that is now available."   A review by Braga et al. (2012) also found that the vast majority of hot spots studies have shown statistically significant findings; 20 of 25 tests from 19 experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations reported noteworthy crime or disorder reductions. These results show that when police focus on hot spots, they can have a significant impact on crime in these areas. Further, there was little evidence to suggest spatial displacement of crime as a result of hot spots interventions; in other words, crime did not shift from hot spots to nearby areas.

Critical Components: Studies have shown that increased police presence alone leads to some crime and disorder reduction. Koper (1995) found that each additional minute officers spent in a hot spot increased the amount of time after those officers departed before disorderly activity occurred. The ideal time spent in the hot spot was 14 to 15 minutes. The best approach is for police to travel among hot spots in an unpredictable order, so that potential offenders recognize a greater cost of offending in these areas because enforcement could increase at any moment.

Having officers adopt principles from problem-oriented policing (POP) is another promising component utilized in hot-spots policing. While studies have shown that problem-solving approaches may take more time to show beneficial results, the resulting successes may be more long-lasting. In their systematic review, Braga and colleagues (2012) conclude that problem solving may bring about longer-term crime control gains than increased enforcement alone.

Source: Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, George Mason University

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Summary: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) examines how environmental features create opportunities for crime and how those features can be adjusted to eliminate those opportunities. Adjustments can be implemented to: 1) control or make access more difficult; 2) deter offenders by increasing the risk of apprehension; 3) increase visibility; 4) increase or encourage guardianship; 5) regulate or adjust behaviors and routines; or 6) reduce the rewards for crime. Examples of environmental features that could create opportunities for crime include: trees and shrubbery that block visibility; lack of lighting; traffic direction or lack of signaling; abandoned buildings; alleyways or cuts in between buildings; and empty lots hidden from the street. Adjustments that address these features may include cutting down shrubs to increase visibility; adding lighting to a dark alley; boarding up abandoned homes; or improving traffic conditions by adding signage, signals and speed bumps.

Evidence: Contemporary approaches to address crime, including CPTED, emerged from research on the relationship between crime and place, known as environmental criminology, situational crime prevention, rational choice theory, or routine activities theory. Each of these theories focuses on the crime and how the offender understands and uses the environment to commit that crime. The research supports the ideas that: crime is specific and situational; the distribution of crimes is related to land use and transportation networks; offenders are opportunistic and commit crimes in places they know well; opportunity arises out of daily routines and activities; and places with crime are often also places without observers or guardians.

Critical Components:

- CPTED focuses on the design and productive use of space, not safety and security (e.g., locks, guards and alarms). Target hardening and security measures are not the primary means for improvement.
- While crime, fear and victimization are important considerations, an environmental evaluation requires police to gather and analyze data and information beyond the scope of law enforcement (e.g., land use and zoning, housing code or health code violations, or traffic volumes and pedestrian activity).
- Quality of life issues, such as trash, weeds, vacant lots, and declining property values, also are considered because these problems often have a debilitating impact on a community and can be symptoms of, or precursors to, crime.
- CPTED is frequently considered the responsibility of police, but many of the tools and techniques fall outside the purview of policing. Depending on the crime problem being addressed, individuals or organizations with expertise on issues related to traffic and transportation, transit, parks and recreation, housing and redevelopment, and economic development may be essential. As a result, CPTED is a team effort, one in which officers participate, but which they do not control.
- It is important that stakeholders engage in analysis and planning. While the problem, circumstances and location will determine which stakeholders to engage, they can include representatives from schools, cultural facilities, and nonprofit organizations, and residents of the neighborhood. These individuals can contribute critical information because they are familiar with the place and problem, may recognize crime-environment relationships that can explain events and anticipate trends not revealed through data. Broad community support also enhances the potential for success during implementation.

Source: [Center for Problem-Oriented Policing](#)

Focused Deterrence

Summary: Focused deterrence strategies allow police to increase the certainty, swiftness, and severity of punishment by directly engaging with known offenders, often gang members or those who traffic in illegal drugs, and communicating clear incentives for compliance and consequences for that criminal activity. Many of these strategies employ the "pulling levers" framework popularized in Boston with Operation Ceasefire. Under this model, law enforcement selects a specific crime problem, such as gun violence or drugs; conducts research to identify key offenders or groups of offenders; and engages in direct, strategic communication with these group members through call-ins and custom notifications. At call-ins, law enforcement, community members, and social service providers come together to deliver the message that violence will no longer be tolerated, and if violence does occur, every available legal lever will be pulled to bring an immediate and certain response. This "hard" message, usually delivered by police and prosecutors, is accompanied by a "soft" message that emphasizes the community's willingness to help individuals change, and the availability of services (e.g., job training, drug treatment) for those interested in engaging in more pro-social behavior. Custom notifications are home or street visits that communicate this message to specific people, and can be conducted quickly to help interrupt cycles of violence and address retaliation and active disputes.

Evidence: A 2018 systematic review of focused deterrence strategies by Braga, Weisburd, and Turchan shows that focused deterrence strategies can have a significant impact on crime reduction. The meta-analysis incorporated 24 quasi-experimental evaluations, which is more than double the number included in a 2012 systematic review by Braga and Weisburd (2012). Nineteen of those 24 evaluations found a statistically significant effect on crime reduction. Further, the authors concluded that strategies were most effective when used in programs designed to reduce serious violence by gangs and criminally active groups. Programs designed to reduce repeated offending by highly active individual offenders showed moderate effects, which suggests that the effectiveness of a focused deterrence strategy will vary depending on the population targeted by the intervention.

Critical Components: Focused deterrence strategies are a subgroup of problem-oriented policing interventions and, as a result, should address the specific gang, gun, or drug crime problems that a jurisdiction faces. It is important that police establish a working group of representatives from local government and social service agencies to analyze underlying issues and customize strategies to the jurisdiction. This process is key to the pulling levers and other focused deterrence approaches. Also important is an emphasis on the word *focused* in focused deterrence strategies, which can be accomplished by narrowing the focus of an intervention to specific offenders and specific geographic areas. These strategies are successful in part because they create a credible deterrent threat.

Braga and Weisburd (2012: 22) emphasize that "In the focused deterrence approach, the emphasis is on not only reducing the risk of offending but also decreasing opportunity structures for violence, deflecting offenders away from crime, increasing the collective efficacy of communities, and increasing the legitimacy of police actions." Thus, increasing the likelihood of detection can be combined with other program components such as situational crime prevention, to reduce opportunities; social service programs, to divert offenders away; engaging with the community, to build collective efficacy; and using procedural justice in communications with offenders, to build or enhance legitimacy.

Source: Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, George Mason University

Street Outreach

Summary: Derived from earlier public health models of gun violence, the New York State SNUG Street Outreach program is an evidence-based, violence reduction initiative that treats gun violence like a disease by identifying its causes and interrupting its transmission. The program identifies high-risk individuals who engage in gun violence; addresses the issues that prompt those individuals to use a gun; and aims to change community norms and attitudes that accept violence as a part of life. The program employs street outreach workers who live in the communities where they work, many of whom had previously been engaged in street-level violence and served terms of incarceration. They are viewed as credible messengers because they have had similar experiences as the youth they aim to help: predominantly, boys and young men who are 14 to 25 years old who are at high-risk for involvement with guns and violence. Street outreach workers respond to shootings to prevent retaliation, help detect conflicts and work to resolve them peacefully before they lead to additional violence; and respond to hospitals to assist family members of those who have been injured or killed. They engage the community, religious organizations and clergy, and local businesses through rallies and special events, and meet with high-risk youth involved with the program to set goals and connect them with assistance to improve their educational and job opportunities. Services include drug and alcohol treatment; education and college preparations; resume building; job training, readiness and referrals; anger management courses and other resources to promote positive life skills.

Evidence: A recent study by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy (2010) describes how using street outreach workers is an effective strategy to reach and engage youth with the goal of violence prevention and intervention. Click HERE to view the report.

Critical Components: A Rochester Institute of Technology implementation study was conducted of the program and modifications were made, which resulted in direct oversight by DCJS of how the project was managed. DCJS employs a statewide SNUG Director whose responsibility is to oversee the funded programs, coordinate training, serve as a liaison between funded programs and law enforcement in each community, and connect the funded programs with each other to share information and best practices. DCJS also employs a SNUG Training Director who works with Site Administrators, Program Managers, Street Outreach Worker Supervisors and Street Outreach Workers. The Training Director develops training programs for all SNUG staff. The Training Director monitors the street outreach teams in the field, to ensure that staff is performing work as trained. Outreach staff document their efforts in the NYS DCJS SNUG Outreach database. DCJS funds 11 NYS SNUG Outreach sites across New York, from Buffalo to Wyandanch. NYS SNUG Outreach program has several critical components that work well:

- Connecting local crime analysts and a police liaison to each SNUG program manager to help outreach staff to reach the most active violent offenders.
- Working with police officials to educate them about SNUG and how SNUG operates, stressing one-way information flow from the police to SNUG. This allows outreach staff to be trusted by participants and not be seen as working for the police. In the community, police should only engage if first approached by the outreach staff.
- Conducting monthly site visits at each SNUG site by the SNUG Director and Training Director, to ensure compliance in deployment, engagement with participants, and interaction with the community to change norms.
- Monitoring the daily data input from SNUG Staff to ensure the work is accurately reflected in the database.

Source: Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, August 23, 2010

Rochester Institute of Technology Center for Public Safety Initiatives July, 2013

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Criminal Justice Knowledge Bank

The Division of Criminal Justice Services developed the Criminal Justice Knowledge Bank to provide additional support and resources to help police, prosecutors and community corrections professionals improve local practices using data-driven and evidence-based approaches.

The Knowledge Bank provides a forum for these professionals to share promising and innovative practices; learn from peers and foster collaboration; access national research; and connect with academic researchers.

Knowledge Bank Features

Programs: Summaries of programs and initiatives submitted by agencies and organizations that detail the problem they were designed to target, implementation details, outcomes and lessons learned.

Research Consortium: Connects criminal justice professionals with academics who can analyze programs and initiatives to help assess effectiveness and use data to support new approaches and ideas to address crime.

Resources: Links to national research and information on evidence-based criminal justice programs and practices.

To learn more, contact the Knowledge Bank: KnowledgeBank@dcjs.ny.gov or (518) 457-7301