

NATIONAL NETWORK FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES



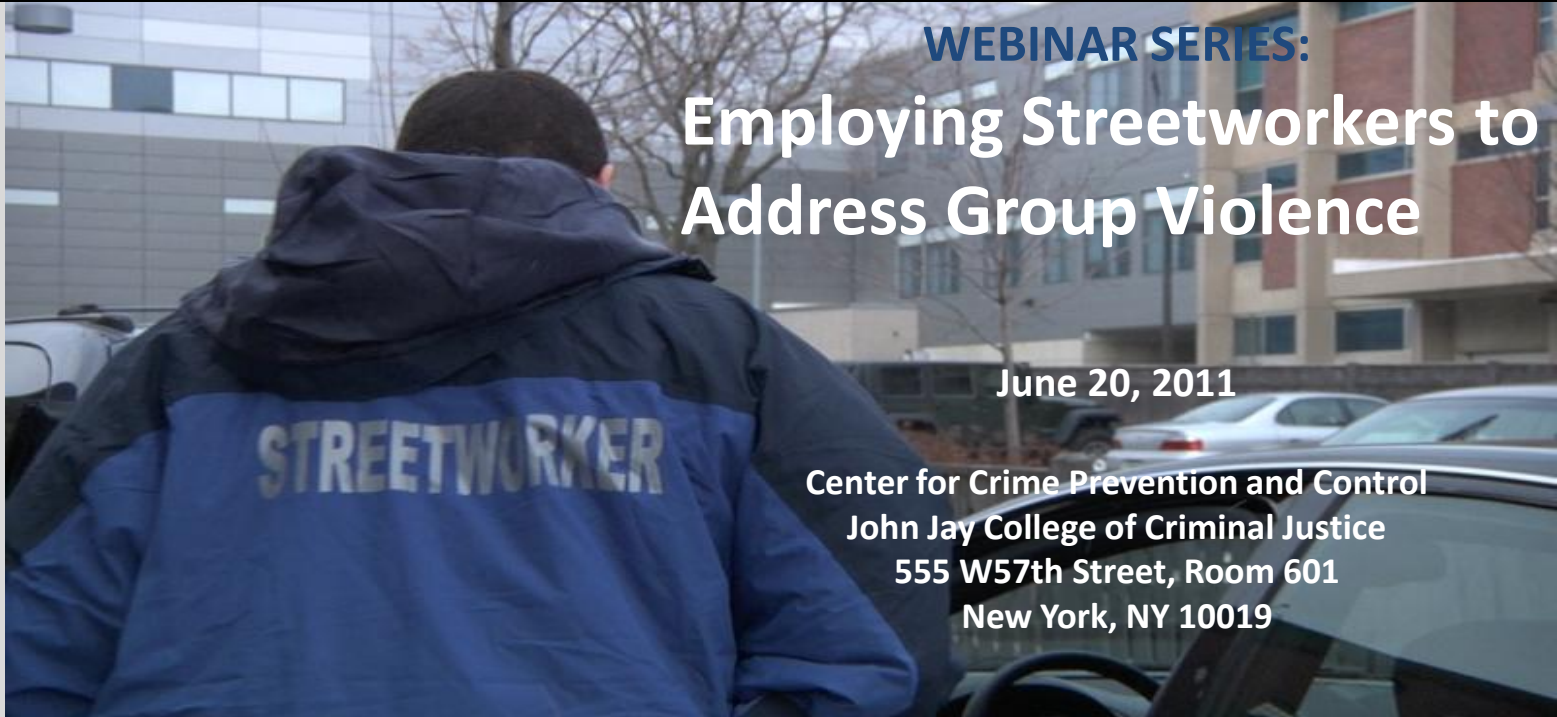
Saving Lives, Saving Communities

WEBINAR SERIES:

Employing Streetworkers to Address Group Violence

June 20, 2011

Center for Crime Prevention and Control
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
555 W57th Street, Room 601
New York, NY 10019



**NATIONAL NETWORK
FOR
SAFE COMMUNITIES**



Supporting jurisdictions around the country in institutionalizing and sustaining two highly effective strategies:

- Group Violence Reduction Strategy
“Ceasefire”
- Drug Market Intervention
“High Point”

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES



- The levels of violence in America are unacceptable.
- The impact of overt drug markets is unacceptable.
- The tensions between the police and minority communities are unacceptable.
- The levels of incarceration in America are unacceptable.

NATIONAL NETWORK FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES



1. Baltimore, MD
2. **BOSTON, MA**
3. **STATE OF CALIFORNIA**
4. Canton, OH
5. **CHICAGO, IL**
6. **CINCINNATI, OH**
7. Cleveland, OH
8. Columbus, OH
9. Concord, NC
10. Dallas, TX
11. Dayton, OH
12. Durham, NC
13. East Palo Alto, CA
14. Graham, NC
15. Greensboro, NC
16. Greenville, NC
17. Hempstead, NY
18. **HIGH POINT, NC**
19. Hillsborough, NC
20. Huntington, WV
21. Lancaster, PA
22. Long Beach, CA
23. **LOS ANGELES, CA**
24. Mesa, AZ
25. Middletown, OH
26. **MILWAUKEE, WI**
27. Mineola, NY
28. Mount Vernon, NY
29. **NEWARK, NJ**
30. **STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**
31. **OAKLAND, CA**
32. Ocala, FL
33. Omaha, NE
34. Oxnard, CA
35. Peoria, IL
36. Pittsburgh, PA
37. Portland, OR
38. **PROVIDENCE, RI**
39. Richmond, VA
40. Rockford, IL
41. Sacramento, CA
42. Salinas, CA
43. Salisbury, NC
44. Seattle, WA
45. Shelby, NC
46. Snow Hill, MD
47. Stockton, CA
48. Toledo, OH
49. White Plains, NY
50. Winston-Salem, NC
51. Yonkers, NY

**NATIONAL NETWORK
FOR
SAFE COMMUNITIES**



Purpose of Webinar Series

- Provide assistance to National Network jurisdictions in specific areas of crime reduction research and practice.
- Provide a venue for sharing cutting-edge innovations among current National Network sites.
- Provide an opportunity to identify emerging issues and opportunities in the community of practice.

**NATIONAL NETWORK
FOR
SAFE COMMUNITIES**



Q & A

- 1. Submit your questions in writing**
- 2. Raise your hand and we will call on you**

Click on “?” icon
if you don’t see
Q&A panel
below

Click on “raised
hand” icon if you
want to ask question
verbally

Type question in
Q&A box

The screenshot displays a video conference interface with several panels. At the top, there is a toolbar with icons for participants, chat, recording (REC), a question mark (?), and a help icon. Below this is the 'Participants' panel, which shows a video feed of the host, 'National Network ... (Host)'. Underneath the video, it indicates 'Panelist: 1' and lists the host as 'National Network for Safe Co... (Host, me)'. Below that, it shows 'Attendee: 0'. A central toolbar contains icons for a raised hand, a green checkmark, a red X, navigation arrows, a smiley face, a printer, and a red eraser. Below the toolbar is a 'Make Presenter' button and a menu icon. The 'Chat' panel is visible below the toolbar, showing a text input field and a 'Send' button. The 'Send to:' dropdown menu is set to 'All Participants'. Below the chat panel is the 'Q&A' panel, which has a question mark icon and shows 'All (0)' questions.



Choose peace.

THE INSTITUTE

FOR THE STUDY

& PRACTICE OF

NONVIOLENCE

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The mission of the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence is to teach by word and example the principles and practices of nonviolence and to foster a community that addresses potentially violent situations with nonviolent solutions.

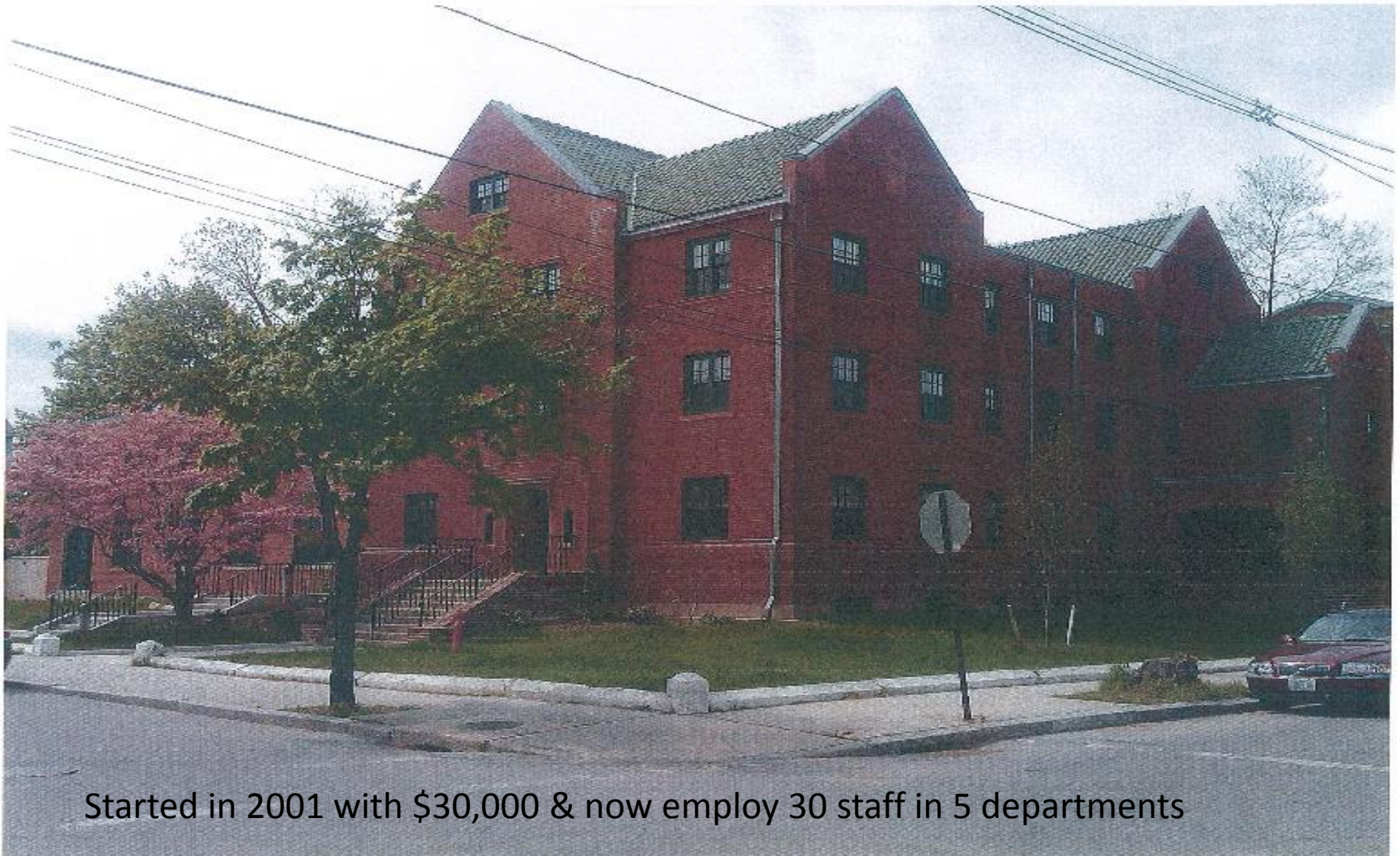
History



Saint Michael's Church



Headquarters



Started in 2001 with \$30,000 & now employ 30 staff in 5 departments

Quick Facts About the Institute

Since it's inception the Institute has:

- Trained more than 1000 students in four communities to use Nonviolence.
- Mediated conflicts in 15 schools in Providence and Central Falls
- Employed and Trained more than 300 youth in the Beloved Community Summer Jobs Program
- Prevented more than 100 acts of retaliatory violence
- Graduated 86 Nonviolence Trainers, including Youth Peer Trainers
- Trained/replicated in cities across the country, plus Belfast, Brazil, and Guatemala



Our Values and Beliefs

- Victims and perpetrators of violence, and their family members, are people of worth.
- The power of love, and listening, can turn lives in a new direction.
- All people have the potential to be valuable assets to their community
- Trusting relationships can heal people



Our Values and Beliefs

- ❖ Environments/communities have a strong effect on individuals. Therefore we do not work with individual clients alone, but with their gangs, their rivals, their families, their support systems, and their communities.
- ❖ Informed by partnership & ideas of 90's work done in Boston with David Kennedy, carried into the present with NNSC

Our Values and Beliefs

Why is Nonviolence so important to the work of the Institute?

- How is it put into practice?
- Why is so important for the Streetworkers to be trained in nonviolence?
- How does Nonviolence lead to productive external relationships for the Streetworkers?

Highlights/ Knowing the Problem



[Back](#)

Providence, RI

- ❖ Providence is the 2nd largest city in New England, after Boston (Our region did however win 7 championships Hockey/Basketball/Football/Baseball in the past decade)
- ❖ Providence is the 3rd poorest city in the country for children (Kids Count/Annie Casey Foundation)
- ❖ Providence is home to 2nd or 3rd largest Dominican immigrant population in the country.
- ❖ Providence is home to the 3rd largest Cambodian, war refugee, population.

Number of Homicide for Providence, RI

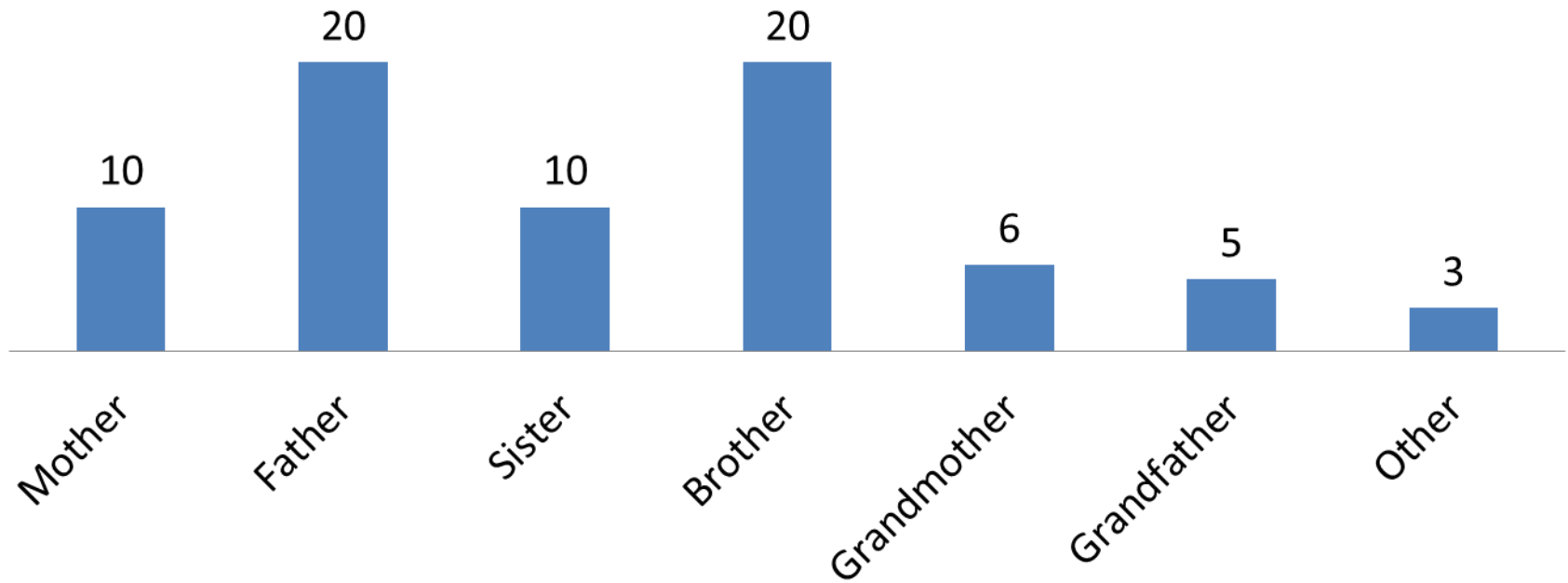
(At inception of Streetworkers as of June, 2011)



Source: 2010, Providence Plan Mapping

Internal Study About Our Summer Youth Participants

79 % Reported having at least one family member in prison in the past or presently



Knowing the Conflicts

The importance of being able to map out conflicts

C- Block vs. MOP/ Clowntown

↙ Hartford vs. Trinitario

Manton vs. Hartford

YIG (Young Infamous Gang)/ Goon Gang vs. YG (Young Gunners)

Chad vs. Eastside

Southside vs. Eastside

Comstock vs. YNIC (Young Niggas in Charge)

HBZ (Hanover Boyz) vs. Dark Side (Juniors of OR)

HBZ vs. YB (Young Bloods)

PSB (Providence Street Boyz) affl. w./ HBZ vs. OR (Oriental Rascals)

PSB vs. Dark Side

LP (Laos Pride) vs. AB

YB (Young Bloods) vs. OCG (Original Crip Gang) vs. MS13

Manton vs. Goon Gang

Lockwood vs. West End

Zone St. vs. Superior St.

High Class Kids vs. Superior St.

Young Money vs. MOP

Cream Boyz vs. C-Block

GMT (Got Money Team vs. TFD (Throw Down for Days)– Squashed

Main Street Soliders (Pawtucket) vs. Central Falls

Prospect Heights (Pawtucket) vs. Central Falls

Bloods vs. Crips (Central Falls)

Latin Kings

Providence gangs vs. other cities/states

1500 Gang members



Program Overview



Nonviolence Training

Since 2001

Nonviolence Training

Directly teaches the **principles and practices of nonviolence** to students, police officers, Max Security jail, and community members. Annually trains new trainers to work in schools and other settings.



Nonviolence Training



- Curriculum based on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 6 principals and steps of nonviolence
- Over 300 Trainings since the program started, most in schools settings
- A total audience of over 1,500 trained in the past year

Nonviolence Training



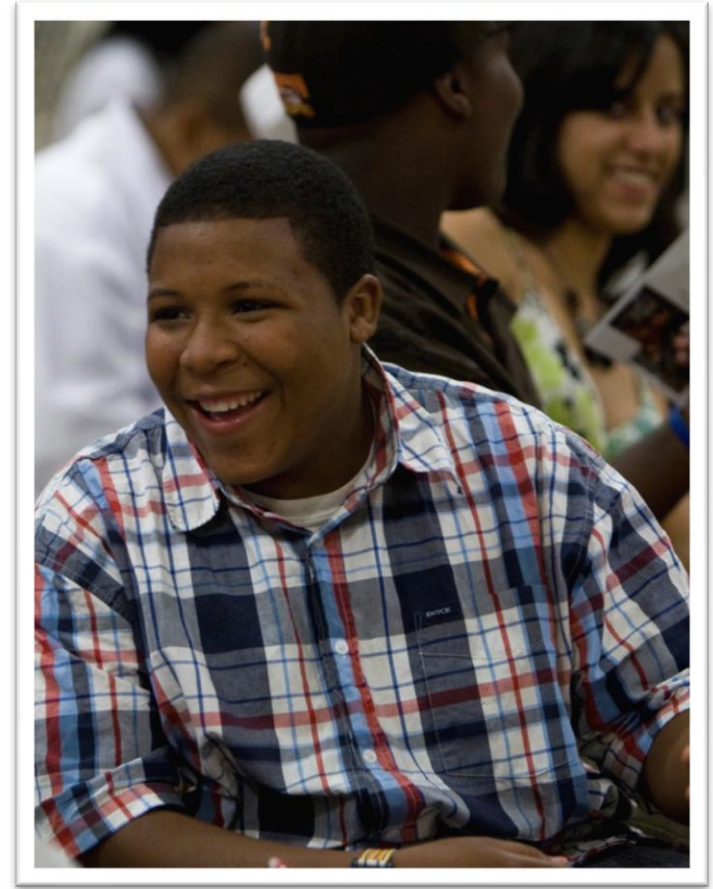
- All Staff including Streetworkers are certified nonviolence Trainers.
- Nonviolence is the base of the work that is performed at the Institute; it is critical to the success of the organization that nonviolence is a part of everything we do.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

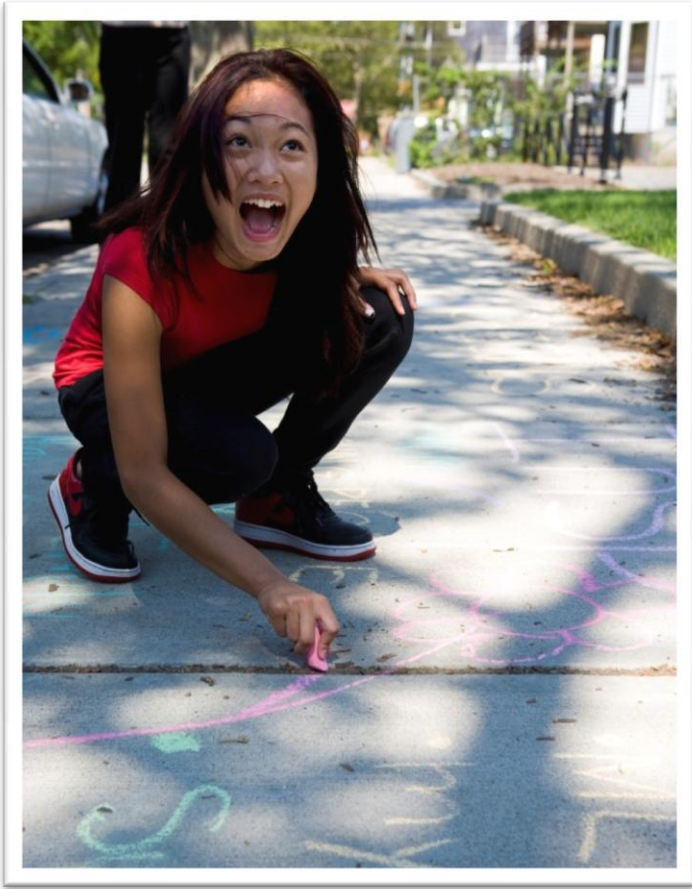
Since 2003

Youth Programs

- Provide positive opportunities for youth in the form of employment, life skills training, leadership development, and safe-space and awareness-raising events.
- This allows for more formal work with young adults than in a Streetworker relationship



Youth Programs



- Has employed 300 youth since the program started
- Now serves over 100 youth aged 14 – 19 annually
- Provides opportunities for year-round employment and engagement
- Builds deeper bonds & loyalties

Juvenile Reentry

Since 2009

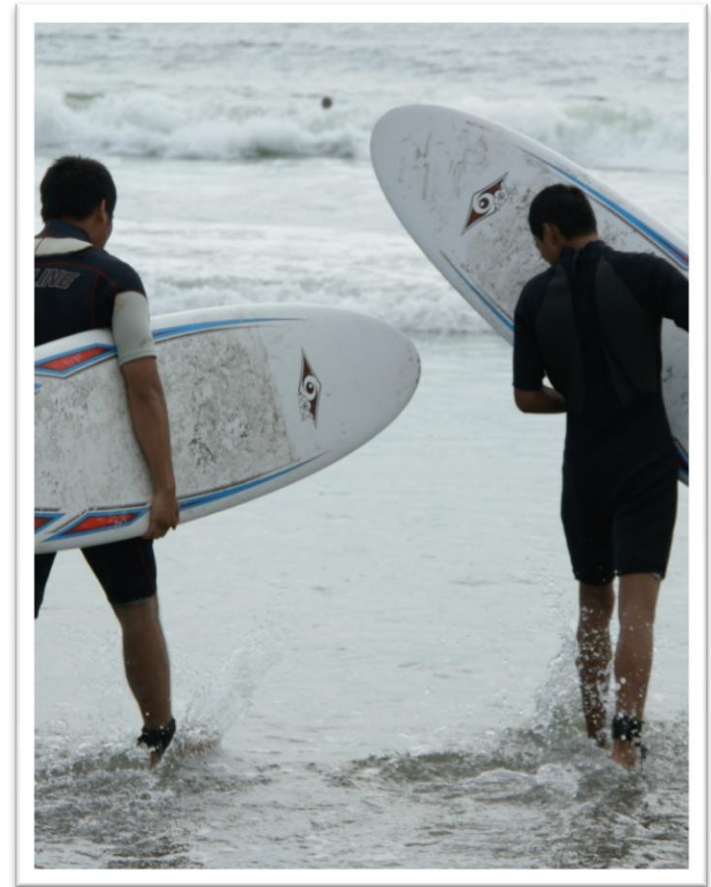
Juvenile Reentry



- Contracted to serve 50 youth per year, has served about half that number to date
- Services about to expand to include discharge-planning in the adult prison

Juvenile Reentry

- Provides a family-centered approach and case management to releasees from the Rhode Island Training School referred by Probation and Parole Officers
- Extreme Sports Program provide exposure & outlets not often available to our youth



Victims Support

Since 2007

Victims Support

Victims support services reaches out to provide services to families and friends of homicide victims, as well as living victims of stabbings and shootings.



Victims Support



- In regular contact with more than 130 families
- Monthly support sessions and workshops, and counseling services are offered
- Provides assistance with victims compensation fund and navigating the legal system
- Helps reduce retaliations by closely working with families, friends, and Streetworkers



Streetworkers

Since 2003

Streetworkers

- Provide advocacy and mentoring, and act as a positive presence in the streets and in the lives of gang-involved or at-risk youth. They build relationships, gather information and mediate conflicts to prevent violence.
- Streetworkers are often former combatants who model a different way of resolving conflict, and a different way to live.



Streetworkers



- Respond to Stabbings, Shootings and Homicides 24/7
- Serves over 2,000 clients per year(@different levels of crisis & intensity)
- Streetworkers are in Providence and Central Falls, and soon to include Cranston and Pawtucket

Streetworkers

Starting a Streetworkers Program

3 questions an organization should ask themselves

- Do we have the organizational culture that is best suited to house a program?
 - *The right culture is important for an organization because a Streetworker Program is a program within a program. (Re-Entry, Recycling of human capital) A Streetworkers Program requires an organizational structure that can deal with the many issues that come up with Streetworkers with love and empathy.*
- What do we need to put into place prior to an organization deciding whether or not to house a program? Staffing? Support?
 - Employee Assistance Programs, Human Resources (just who will help point a Streetworker in the right direction (for many this may be a first job), Time outside of regular meetings to check-in as a group and individually, a discipline policy that is clear, but made out of love and empathy (can allow for some discretion), office space (someplace where the Streetworkers can feel that they are a part of the organization even though they are out on the Streets the majority of the time, it creates a sense of belonging). Financial flexibility.

Streetworkers

- Who will we consult with in our community to gather support for a Streetworker program?



- An organization must be build a large support base for a program. Getting appointments with politicians, Law Enforcement, CEOs, long-time community people who have always been positive and well respected. Bring Streetworkers with you to these meetings, let them be real and tell their stories.

Streetworkers

Hiring of a Streetworker

- ❖ **Characteristics being looked for?**
 - Team player. A desire to learn, flexibility, strong voice, humor, has a sense pride in their work, sense of mission, humility, a willingness to continue to work on their own personal journey of change, etc
- ❖ **How much time after being released from prison is recommended before a person should be considered?**
 - 1 year is recommended but with everything there are expectations
 - Consider having Streetworkers who are not significantly older than the young people they serve
- ❖ **What types of background checks are recommended and what are you looking for?**
 - Regular Background Checks, police input, and a very thorough street check

Streetworkers

Sample questions asked during interview

Hiring continued: Sample Questions

- At what point in your life you decided that this is the type of work you want to do?
 - How do you think you would perform working under extreme pressure, for that fact, a variety of different pressures? For example, at a crime scene doing crisis management, public demand, agency demands, former crew/ gang demands.
 - Will you be able to go back to your neighborhood, crew or gang and be seen as not “in the life anymore” or trying to move on? Do you have open conflicts?
 - What do you do to relieve your stress? Hobbies? Fishing? Etc
 - Do you understand that if you are hired you represent this agency on and off the job?
 - How would people who know you describe you?
- ❖ **Who/ how many people should you interview?**
- Following your organizations hiring policies is fine, however, at some point involving a community member (creates buy-in), board member (who truly understands the role of a Streetworker)
 - Important note: TAKE YOUR TIME, to become a Streetworker at the Institute takes months. Do NOT be afraid to ask people you are interested in show up for events or take trainings, you want the person who is the most dedicated to the work.

Streetworkers

Following a Nonviolence Streetworker Training, what should the first few months for a new Streetworker consist of?

- ❖ **Shadowing other Streetworkers (go to other cities if needs be)**
- ❖ **Be introduced to...**
 - Schools
 - Key police staff (Schools Resource Officer – SRO)
 - Hospital response
 - Community Centers
 - Recreation Centers
 - Board Members
- ❖ **Attending Trainings (computer classes, Streetworker training, youth development trainings, etc)**
- ❖ **It is important to not overestimate trainings. Culture of an organization, and the wrap-around effect of staff on Streetworkers is critical. Create a sense of belonging.**
- ❖ **Regardless of how ‘tough’ was a Streetworker previously on the streets, there is a varied learning curve when one becomes a Streetworker.**

Streetworkers

Day to Day of a Streetworker

❖ **How are Streetworkers deployed?**

- Consider the “Hot Spots” of the city, KNOW the conflicts that have the most potential to be deadly and if something should happen will create a real sense of crisis in the city. Consider the reason why you brought a certain Streetworker on, was it to help an area or work with a particular crew/ gang. Take an inventory of the team’s strength and determine if the group could collectively squash something. Consider where do the “clients” of the Streetworkers appear to be coming from, a particular school, street, side of town, etc
- Managing a Streetworker team is like driving a race car: you need a good engine, a good mechanical team, but at the end, you need to make thousands of adjustments at the wheel.

❖ **Is it best to have Streetworkers that are generalists or specialists?**

- It can be tricky deciding if you should have Streetworkers responding to everything. Referring back to how you will deploy your team. Typically Streetworkers are generalists but Program Directors should know what Streetworker is best suited to handle a particular conflict and assign accordingly.

Streetworkers

Day to Day of a Streetworker Continued...

- ❖ **How do you make the call to pull Streetworkers off one conflict or focus area and re-assign them to another?**
 - The main goal is to save lives, if there is a life or lives that are in serious jeopardy of being lost then re-assign. If a partner is not supporting you in a manner that you feel is needed in order to save lives, then re-assign the Streetworker(s) so they can be effective. Important Note: You may have brought a Streetworker on to work in a certain area but it may seem that the Streetworker is better at dealing with another conflict, so, re-assign.
- ❖ **What is the role of a Streetworker in Schools and Courts?**
 - Advocacy is the first thing in both settings. Relationship building is key element to a successful program, Streetworkers need to be aware of the settings and act appropriately. You will find that some Streetworkers are not suited to interact in certain settings and that is FINE.

Streetworkers

Frequent Q's about Streetworkers

- ❖ **How do you walk the fine line of being part of a system that is heavily law-enforcement and the inherited & inherent 'No Snitching' culture ?**
 - Being clear about what Streetworkers cannot do: Streetworkers do not solve crimes. Streetworkers do not gather intelligence for police.
 - Streetworkers are not 'moral relativist' by working with active gang-members. They are a 'soft' tool that helps people change, & provide supports when they want to.
 - We prefer strong policing. This provides clear consequences, and pushes offenders to try to change, where we can be of help.
 - Streetworkers are not miracle workers, they rely on natural occurrences and capitalize on them: evictions, arrests/jail, shootings, age.
 - Why we selected to not just work on the streets, but also in schools, and even middle-schools?
 - Do we use volunteers as Streetworkers? That's easy: NO!

Streetworkers

Day to Day of a Streetworker Continued...

- ❖ **What does a Streetworker staff meeting look like?**
 - Weekly meetings are suggested, it allows the team to debrief the previous week, publicly set goals for the team to hear, strategize around conflicts, support each other both professionally and personally.
 - Other departments get to report on their clients who became victimized, are acting-up, or changing for the better.
 - Streetworker Staff meetings must be seen as useful to the team, involve them in the planning or ask for feedback often, remember some Streetworkers do not possess the professional skills to understand how meetings can be helpful to accomplishing the overall goals.

Streetworkers

Firing of a Streetworker

- **What type of discipline policies are in place?**
 - Make sure ALL discipline policies are CLEAR to the Streetworkers
 - Write ups, suspension, individual sit-downs, access to the next level, etc

- **What role does “love” play in a firing?**
 - Love in firing is an interesting thing, try to stay focused on the reasoning for the firing. Understand that Streetworkers with particular backgrounds could see this as another failure in their lives, be sensitive to that fact, keep the door open for the Streetworker to reach out to you and ask for your support in other ways
 - Consider multiple chances. Weigh it against the negative effect on the team & Org

- **Examples of the types of issues that have resulted in a Streetworker being fired**
 - Relapse with addiction, violence, not really out of the “life”, mental stress, not a hard worker, not a team player, dishonest, not proper with clients, etc

Streetworkers

Public/ Media Relations

- **Why is it important that Streetworkers are in the news or being written about?**
 - Informs the public that they are a service to them and that they are working, it highlights the needs of re-entry programs, shows that people can change and give back, etc

- **“No Comment” vs. Openness and Honesty**
 - No comment can be seen as “ you are hiding something”. consult different types of people before commenting on issue. If you want to have a real sense of trust with the public, being open and honest during the difficult times as well can go a long way to creating legitimacy for the work the Streetworkers are doing.

- **Selling a program to the public?**
 - Health Crisis, Economic reasons, Re-Entry, etc

- **The Importance of a ride a-long**

Streetworkers

Key Partnerships for a successful Streetworkers Program

****Partnership must be worked on continuously****

City Hall

Police

Gang Unit, School Resource
Officers (SROs), Youth Division

Schools

Elementary, Middle, High,
College, Charter, Job Corps,
YouthBuild

Courts

Youth, Family, Public
Defenders

Community Organizations

Food Banks, Clothing Banks,
Job Skill Training

Local Businesses

Hospitals

Religious Groups

**Attorney General, U.S.
Attorney, Dept of Corrections**

Final Thoughts

- ❖ Streetwork is a wonderful tool that suggests empowerment, community self-help, and redemption
- ❖ Evaluation is important, but it cannot be the only tool to make management or funding decisions with

Final Thoughts

- ❖ Streetwork leadership is an under-studied area
- ❖ Lack of stability of funding has created havoc in Streetworker programs around the country
- ❖ Law Enforcement understanding of Streetworker programs is uneven



United States Attorney General Eric Holder visits the Institute in June 2011

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We are glad to answer any questions...