Overview

VIP invited more than 400 people to attend listening sessions and about 50 participants gave feedback during four listening sessions from late September 2021 – early October 2021. Listed below are their responses:

Q. What are your goals in the areas of gun violence intervention, interruption and street outreach activities?

➢ Outreach team provides services, shares peer-related story, builds trust and shares resources (2)
➢ More folks reaching out to community members
➢ Community informed information on needs within community
➢ Often people involved in gangs won’t come to a meeting like this. As a result, what’s needed are Outreach Teams gathering information on what they want/need
➢ Active gang members call a truce; come together; think about what we need to do then comes back around
➢ Group and gang intervention needs to be in the plan
➢ Community, community, community – if we’re not talking about it, forget it
➢ Collaborative program approach – city, county, state
➢ Three prong targeted outreach approach: young people, families and communities
➢ Do prevention work sooner instead of later; use data
➢ How do we connect with the “soon to be shooters?”
➢ More community referrals
➢ Be proactive in finding who are the people committing the crimes
➢ See numbers and affect crimes going on
➢ Having law enforcement present is scary and problematic
➢ Sometimes the violence is perpetrated by law enforcement; this jeopardizes the credible messenger
➢ Look at requests for temporary restraining orders that have risen to level of violence or eminent harm
➢ Advertise programs to community
➢ Mothers Demand Action has been focused on policy; opportunity to get involved in direct action
➢ Is there an opportunity to do more education in schools about guns?
  ○ Curiosity factor is an issue
  ○ Only reactive measures are in place now, like active shooter training

What are your goals in forming a community-based service provider network for long-term services?

- Connect network to itself - Survey who provides services to create an asset map (4)
- Provide services to those experiencing poverty
- Connect City and County resources
- Systems are so complicated to navigate. There are so many programs in ABQ that are similar. There is a need to connect people in a more direct way,
- Albuquerque Adult Learning Center Inc
- Education is critical to this work; additional resources need to be in place for participants to be successful
- Do we have capacity to provide these services? If not, look to telehealth for providers who look like us and are culturally competent
- How do we normalize seeking help?
● Shift language to mental health and wellness instead of mental illness
● Services in different languages needed for helping different populations
● Be more flexible with street outreach
● Some nonprofits are just 9am – 5pm; how do we offer services beyond that?
● There’s a lot of root causes to gun violence; trauma is one of them
● What I find are moms, babies and young children under the age of 3; they don’t know where to go or what’s available to help them
● We do a poor job coordinating information and resources
● Enhance program through schools, offer wrap around services since we have a lot to build on
● Many people who have been in the system don’t know how to navigate healthcare systems and other systems of support
  o Need to bring services to the target community with real-time face-to-face connection and help connecting dots
  o Break down the wall of separation between their lived experience (trauma, trust issues etc.) and the systems
● Prison programs are another avenue to build peer networks.
● Community colleges are one path to support formerly incarcerated people to learn about peer networks and become peer mentors.
● Peer networks bring a sense of belonging and trust to formerly incarcerated individuals, former gang members and others with a strong sense of affiliation.
● There are various credentials available for peer educators (example: behavioral credential for peer recovery and engagement).
● Need to figure out how to financially support peer workers in the short term; long-term vision is to have community-based organizations employ peer educators.

What are your goals among restorative, mediation and de-escalation practices?

● Trainers train community members to intervene and use de-escalation practices (4)
● More of this because it works
● Peace making is an Indigenous term; Tribe wants to make peace
● Restorative justice circles
● Ceasefire program
● Programs for inmates coming out of the system
● Love to see this strategy integrated into each of the other strategies
● Community members need to know they have other alternatives to mediate disagreements

What are your goals in formalizing a public health approach to gun violence reduction?

● Trauma and recovery center for all around violence – physical, emotional and mental health and resources (2)
● Bring in Native practices, healing, spirituality, peacemaking
● It’s important that POC professionals are involved
● Helpers have lived experiences
● Others involved must be culturally open at least and culturally competent at best
● Dreamt about – the way gun violence is talked about on the news. How can we train news anchors and journalists on language use in a public health way? What questions would we ask viewers to think about? Maybe they would be open to different way of reporting
● Change common language
● All about prevention – teach young people about gun safety
• Public health education for everyone
• Follow CDC gun violence research
• Look at root causes
• Talk with people about their behavior and teach coping skills
• End school to prison pipeline
• Remove police officers from schools
• Less crime-fighting attitude
• Funding communities that are historically underfunded
• Educate young people about harmful behaviors and mortality
• Funding from Bernalillo County behavioral health initiative could be used to support the trauma recovery center concept
  ○ Psychiatric departments at hospitals are trying to build in follow-up for patients once released; could be a model to think about
• Fentanyl abuse has become a major issue exacerbating the gun violence problem

What did we miss?

• Accessibility of guns
• Poverty
• Use social media to connect with young people
• NM Stronger Together Coalition is a FB group I administer that has over 2,000 members and represents 34 activists groups in NM

What else do you want to say?

• All important and all interlinking. Poverty must be addressed. A community gets the program it insists on.
• Everytown For Gun Safety is a huge clearinghouse for data on gun violence in the US. Everytown.org
• Would also love to see implementation of Hospital Based Violence Interruption Programs locally.
• We need concrete strategies to put things in place

What vision do you have for VIP beyond what we’ve shared?

• A model outside of the government that is funded.

Demographics (n=16; 12 in person + 5 electronic survey)

How do you racially/ethnically identify?
  3 - Black of African American
  6 - Hispanic or Latino/a/x
  1 - Native American
  6 - White or Caucasian

What is your age?
  2 – 18 to 26
  3 – 27 to 36
  6 – 37 to 46
  5 – 57 to 66
  1 - 67+
What is your self-identified gender?
10 - Female
7 - Male

In what area of the city do you live?
1 - Foothills
5 – Northeast
1 - Northwest
7 - Southeast

Name your cross streets
● Trumbull and California
● Zuni and Louisiana
● Girard and Central
● San Mateo and McLeod
● International District
● Valencia and Southern
● KAFB
● South Valley