

# OVC SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) joins the Bureau of Justice Assistance, National Institute of Justice, and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in a collaborative approach to help ensure jurisdictions have access to expertise and resources to address community violence.

## Discretionary Grant Projects and Programs

### Community Based Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative

[bja.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-bja-2022-171282](https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-bja-2022-171282)

This initiative seeks to prevent and reduce violent crime in communities by supporting comprehensive, evidence-based violence intervention and prevention programs based on partnerships among community residents, local government agencies, victim service providers, community-based organizations, law enforcement, hospitals, researchers, and other community stakeholders. Through this initiative, OVC awarded more than \$11.7 million to the following programs:

- **The Black Mental Health Alliance** will use credible messengers to engage residents in Baltimore City's hotspots for violent crime to offer violence prevention messaging, violence intervention, mental health services, youth entrepreneurship training, and case management to decrease violence and crime. This strategy is based on evidence-informed practices such as case management, mental health services, and near-peer mentoring. The project's goal is to reduce and prevent violent crime and promote community healing.
- **BOSS (Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency)** plans to provide violence intervention and prevention services to the Bay Area of California, including gun, gang and gender-based violence prevention and response; community healing and restorative justice programs; and cognitive behavioral interventions through the Center of Excellence: Trauma Informed Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative. The center will add multidisciplinary staff including licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and credible messengers to provide services such as treatment and recovery services for crime victims; mental health treatment; assertive community-based outreach; clinical case management; care coordination among medical and mental health care providers; and services to homicide survivor family members and loved ones.
- **The Harris County, Texas, Public Health Department's Community Health and Violence Prevention Services (CHVPS)** will expand the ACCESS Harris initiative to allow for additional community and hospital program staff to be hired; and for more targeted risk assessment based, coordinated care plans through ACCESS Harris. CHVPS outreach specialists, also known as credible messengers, are trained to detect and interrupt violent conflicts and intervene to stop cycles of violence by working with individuals at the highest risk of becoming victimized by or perpetrating community violence.
- **Jersey Shore University Medical Center** at Hackensack Meridian Health seeks to expand and enhance the program offerings of its hospital-based violence intervention program (Project HEAL) and community-based violence intervention program (Elevate, established in 2022). JSUMC plans to collaborate with a research partner to design strategic enhancements to its programs; enhance current partnerships by developing and implementing a coordinated community response approach to create a formal working group called CVIPI-Team; expand the programs' services through targeted community outreach; and make the program self-sustainable.
- **The Kansas City, Missouri, Health Department's Aim4Peace Program (A4P)**, modeled after the Cure Violence program, aims to remove barriers to access and opportunity for the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities served. A4P will strengthen the existing multidisciplinary team, conduct a new needs assessment, create a new Violence Reduction Strategic Plan, develop a sustainability plan, and ultimately prevent and reduce violent crime.
- **Council Against Youth Violence (CAYV)** provides a robust, coordinated human services response for youth victims of gang and community violence using a collaborative multidisciplinary team model. With this funding, CAYV plans to streamline services to victims through effective case management; coordinate services across multiple providers; enhance the safety of at-risk youth and youth victims; reduce



their risk of (re)victimization; and increase understanding of community violence and its effects to promote trauma-informed responses and interventions among youth-serving professionals. To do this, it will onboard additional program partners/service providers; create a support group to provide peer and professional support for youth exposed to violence; and add 24-hour crisis response capability to support the state's FBI office in serving youth crime victims during weekends/off-hours.

- **Roca**, a program that focuses on young people at the center of urban violence, will implement and expand a combination of planning, community partnership, and services to increase the number of people receiving violence intervention and response services in Baltimore and its surrounding communities, thereby creating sustainable behavior change in those served and reducing community violence. The project will restructure and expand its existing Baltimore Young Adult Violence Planning Committee and create a similar committee in each community served; its After Shooting Protocol, a data-driven outreach approach that in pilots has proved exceptionally impactful in engaging young people; and its intervention and response services for those at highest risk of being a victim or perpetrator of violence.

### Advancing Hospital-Based Victim Services

<https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-ovc-2022-171238>

This program ensures that trained victim service providers are on hand in hospital emergency rooms to connect victims of violence in underserved communities with the services and support needed to aid in their healing. OVC is funding The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (<https://www.thehavi.org/>) to support the violence intervention programs connected to this initiative and promote equity for victims of violence.

### National Center for Culturally Responsive Victim Services

<https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-ovc-2021-32002>

The center, managed by Ujima, Inc.: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community (<https://ujimacommunity.org>), in partnership with The National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault ([sisterslead.org](https://sisterslead.org)), facilitates the delivery of high-quality training and technical assistance to increase access to victim services and victim compensation for victims of crime who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by inequality. The center will also administer microgrants to victim-serving organizations run by and for the communities they serve to increase the number of victims accessing services in underserved communities.

## RESOURCES

### The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit

[ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/introduction](https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/introduction)

This toolkit includes resources tailored to victim services, emergency medical services, fire services, and law enforcement that provide the knowledge and skills necessary for organizations to address vicarious trauma. OVC also provides funding to support a training and technical assistance initiative with the International Association of Chiefs of Police to build a sustained response to vicarious trauma in community implementation sites across the country.

### Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime

[ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/model-standards/6/index.html](https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/model-standards/6/index.html)

This e-publication provides three sets of standards—Program Standards, Competency Standards, and Ethical Standards—and guidelines and suggestions to help victim service practitioners and program administrators improve the quality and consistency of their response to crime victims; and to strengthen organizational capacity by defining the types of policies and practices that victim-serving organizations should have in place.

### VOCA Victim Assistance Funds May Support Community Violence Intervention Efforts

[https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/media/document/ovc-community-violence-intervention-bulletin-9.20.21\\_0.pdf](https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/media/document/ovc-community-violence-intervention-bulletin-9.20.21_0.pdf)

OVC issued this bulletin to clarify that Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance formula funding may be used to support community violence intervention efforts. The VOCA statute and the VOCA Victim Assistance Program Rule do not prohibit using VOCA Victim Assistance formula funding for community violence intervention programs.