
Findings From the *Middle District of NC Project Safe Neighborhoods* 2007 Youth Services Roundtable

Self Help Building
122 N. Elm St
Greensboro, NC



Prepared by
The Center for Community Safety of Winston-Salem State University

Background and Purpose

In North Carolina, the Middle District of NC Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) sites (Alamance, Cabarrus, Durham, Greensboro, High Point, Salisbury, Winston-Salem) work in close partnership with the the NC Governor's Crime Commission; US Attorney's Office, Middle District of NC; the Center for Community Safety of Winston-Salem State University; Center for Youth, Family and Community Partnerships of UNC Greensboro; and community and law enforcement partners from all seven sites to strategically reduce gun and gang related crime and violence.

In the spring of 2007, the US Attorney's Office, Middle District of NC, and the Middle District PSN sites recognized the need to come together to hold a facilitated and focused discussion among the seven-site partnership. The team wished to hold the session in a roundtable forum - as a facilitated, focused discussion among invited participants. UNCG and CCS organized and facilitated a youth services roundtable, held June 25, and hosted by Win-Win Resolutions at the Self-Help Building in downtown Greensboro.

Generally, roundtables aim to fill the gap in knowledge on issues by convening a diverse group of practitioners and researchers and conducting a "scan of practice" of a determined program or practice. Through a roundtable, existing knowledge can be summarized, analyzed, or disseminated through formats useful for implementers, advocates, or researchers. Roundtable discussions also yield opportunities to answer questions where information may be lacking or not validated. It can engage front-line practitioners, researchers, and experts in action-research centered on concerns pertaining to -- in this instance -- local youth service providers, researchers, and advocates. The result is participant consensus that helps guide the development of, and prioritize, future lines of work.

On June 25, PSN partners came together for the first of a series of roundtables to share information to help address problems on a systematic level, to begin the process to encourage policy change that will help address recidivism and youth violence, and to support youth prevention and intervention programs that are strong and that do not duplicate services.

Members of the roundtable included representation from staff from the Middle District of NC's training and technical assistance provider, the Center for Community Safety of WSSU; researchers from UNCG; youth service providers/practitioners; law enforcement officers; PSN coordinators; community members; and the faith community. Middle District of NC US Attorney Anna Mills Wagoner and Assistant US Attorney Rob Lang were also participants of the roundtable.

The programs presented were considered as "effective practices" in the area of prevention and intervention for youth at-risk. Youth program participants were given an opportunity to present their programs before the roundtable. Each presentation was followed by a question and answer session, for an opportunity for participants to garner further knowledge and promote further discussion and ideas.

The document below incorporates the information gathered from the roundtable discussion, as well as from research and other meetings where information was shared and presented. Information below can serve as a resource to any site wanting to begin or enhance a youth services program. Individuals who are working within the program can serve as peers to other sites, and are listed as well.

Cabarrus County: StreetSMART

Program Overview

Cabarrus County's *StreetSMART* (Skills Mastery and Resistance Training) of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America is a prevention tool; a skills mastery and resistance training program to counteract the negative lures of gangs, violence, and "street" influences on adolescents. While building awareness and resistance skills, participants develop the confidence and knowledge to make intelligent choices or elementary and middle school aged youth age 11-13 and especially those from particular communities (Logan) not already coming in or being brought to the Boys and Girls Club. The *StreetSMART* program is housed at three different sites around Cabarrus County: Boys & Girls Club of Cabarrus County, Logan Community Center in Concord, and the Kannapolis Intermediate School.

The program consists of four modules: how gangs work/how to resist being recruited; how to recognize and resolve conflicts peacefully; how to become positive peer helpers; and how to recognize and respect the similarities and differences of others. While building awareness and resistance skills, participants develop the confidence and knowledge to make intelligent choices.

Classes are held once a week. Participants reinforce what they have learned and share it with others by organizing community events that promote the program's positive messages. During their course youth work together to plan a culminating community event and in the course learn leadership skills. Prior to the program conclusion youth are allowed to present what they learned to an audience of their peers.

About the Population Served

StreetSMART provides programming to girls and boys ages 11-13. During the 2006-07 school year, the pilot group had 25 youth with the following demographics: 39% ethnic minority, 68% living in single parent home, 61% on free or reduced lunch. The sex breakdown is 42% male and 58% female. Project capacity for *StreetSMART* for the 2007-08 school year is 75 students, split equally to each of the different locations (25 students per site).

Program Support and Structure

StreetSMART was funded originally through the Boys and Girls Club of Cabarrus County money, PSN, and \$10,000 in support from the City of Concord. Efforts will continue in the three original locations, with 25 youth each, and will begin in new communities as well as at an after school program in Kannapolis. If there is not a Boys & Girls Club in place in an area, an interested community organization may host the program.

Linkage to other Initiatives

StreetSMART was developed in partnership with PSN, Concord Police, Kannapolis Police, and Cabarrus County Sheriff's Office.

Evaluation Component

The materials provided by Boys & Girls Clubs of America include pre- and post-tests for each of the four *StreetSMART* modules to evaluate the programs success.

For More Information Contact: Jodi Ramirez, Project Safe Cabarrus jramirez@ci.kannapolis.nc.us and Valerie Melton, Cabarrus Boys & Girls Club vmelton@bgclubcab.org.

Durham: North Carolina Child Response Initiative

Program Overview

In North Carolina, (2005–2006) 111,150 children were assessed for child abuse and neglect according to statistics from Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina. To improve safety and security among children and their families who are affected by violence and trauma, the *North Carolina Child Response Initiative (NCCRI)* was established in 2005 as a partnership between Durham Police Department and Duke University's Center for Child & Family Health–North Carolina (CCFH-NC). This police-mental health partnership is designed to provide rapid crisis intervention and support to children and families who have witnessed domestic or community violence, to help them feel safe from physical danger and deal with psychological stress. The *NCCRI* team also helps with other services such as therapy for the adult or child; assistance with legal matters; referrals to community resources; and referrals to specialist related to domestic violence, education, and juvenile justice. It also educates families about the effects of childhood exposure to violence or trauma. Police incidents where children are present are followed up jointly by an officer and a clinician in order to educate families about violence and trauma among children and increase their ability to access mental health consultation and services. A group of police officers, CCFH staff and Social Services staff meets every week to discuss specific cases.

Participating police officers and mental health clinicians prepare by participating in multidisciplinary training including child posttraumatic stress and child-oriented community policing strategies to address ways that both professions may assist children who are victims and witnesses of violence.

The *NCCRI* team includes: The Center for Child and Family Health and the Durham Police Department, in partnership with Duke University, Durham Department of Juvenile Justice, Durham Department of Social Services, Durham Community Collaborative, Durham Public Schools, NC Central University, NC Governor's Crime Commission, the Durham Center, and UNC-Chapel Hill.

About the Population Served

Since May 2005, NCCRI served 250 families in need, which most likely traditionally would neither have sought nor received services. These families and individuals were able to obtain acute assessment, treatment, and psycho-education about children's reactions to trauma. The *NCCRI* also conducted 20 community canvasses – accompanying law enforcement door-to-door following a homicide or other violent crime in a neighborhood.

Program Support and Structure

On June 30 2007, CCFH was awarded more than \$145,000 to continue *NCCRI* from the Governor's Crime Commission. CCFH is a second-time grantee.

Linkage to other Initiatives

The program uses data-driven strategies and is part of Durham's PSN strategy; works in coordination with the DPD. It has been highlighted at other PSN trainings and meetings, most recently at the November 8th Middle District PSN training.

Evaluation

The Center collects and tracks data that captures the numbers of victims being served and locations of crimes. A Judicial Order ensures sharing of information. The Center also provides evaluation to the project.

For More Information Contact: Trip Ake, Ph.D., Psychologist, Center for Child & Family Health NC george.ake@duke.edu and Jim Bjurstrom, Major, Durham Police Department jim.bjurstrom@durhamnc.gov.

Greensboro: Win-Win Resolutions, Inc./C.R.E.W. (Conflict Resolution Enrichment Workshops)

Program Overview

Win-Win is located in the Self Help Building in downtown Greensboro and is a nonprofit organization dedicated to violence prevention by developing conflict resolution skills using theatre education and peer mediation programs. *Win-Win* reduces violence and prejudice in schools and communities by teaching conflict resolution and positive social skills through interactive drama for youth and adults.

The objective of *Win-Win Resolutions, Inc.* is to provide:

- Conflict Resolution programs and training through theatre arts education for grades K-12
- Middle/High School-based peer mediation programs
- Parent/Teacher Conflict Resolution Training Classes

The staff of *Win-Win* is comprised of theater instructors and professional counselors who are trained in conflict resolution and diversity sensitivity awareness. Counselors provide on-site assessment in order to identify and serve at-risk students. *Win-Win Resolutions'* goal is to guide students to develop positive interactive skills that they will continue to use throughout their lives, specifically focusing in areas of anger management, preventing rumors that escalate into violence, and reinforcing the importance of respecting each other by embracing diversities.

Win-Win Resolutions provide services to youth during the day in Head Start centers, Title I public schools, private schools; and in evening programs and summers with adults, teachers, and children in the Salvation Army Boys' & Girls' Clubs, YMCAs, YWCAs, library branches, and the city parks and recreation centers. The program is also expanding into surrounding counties and school districts within NC, and is developing programs for special needs youth populations.

Win-Win provides *Conflict Resolution Outreach Workshops*, called *C.R.E.W.* As the heart of what *Win-Win Resolutions* does, the *CREW* programs are individually designed to reach pre-school, elementary, middle/high school students, and adults. Utilizing puppets, original scripts, and "role playing" exercises, each workshop completely engages the participants in the process of discovering conflict resolution techniques. Workshops vary in purpose, length, and target audience, but all have the same objectives.

The objectives of *C.R.E.W.* are to focus on crucial areas of student development such as creative problem solving/self-awareness/teamwork/self-esteem/communication tools.

Population Served

Win-Win's programs serve pre-school through high school-aged youth of primarily economically disadvantaged populations; schools with the highest percentage of minority youth; and students on free/reduced lunch. It also targets schools with the highest student code infractions. *Win-Win* also offers to adults corporate team building, diversity awareness, and employee conflict resolution training.

A breakdown of the programs *Win-Win* offers is as follows: pre-school *C.R.E.W.* contains up to 20 students per workshop with 2 instructors and 5-10 mentor volunteers; elementary *C.R.E.W.* contains up to 100 students with 8 instructors, who are divided among four age groups; middle/high *C.R.E.W.* contains up to 30 students per workshop with 2 instructors; parent/teacher/student *C.R.E.W.* contains up to 30 participants per workshop with 8 instructors divided among four age groups.

Support and Structure

Primarily, *Win-Win* received grant funding from the organizations below to introduce programs in the aforementioned youth institutions.

- American Express
- Guilford County Schools
- Cemala Foundation
- Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro
- Weaver Foundation
- NC Governor's Crime Commission Juvenile Justice Planning Committee
- United Arts Council of Greensboro and High Point
- Gannett Foundation
- Winston-Salem Foundation
- One Step Further, Inc.
- Guilford Child Development Services Head start Grant
- Target Stores
- Moses Cone & Wesley Long Foundation
- Jefferson Pilot Foundation
- Kay, An Ecolab Company
- Landmark Foundation
- Mary Lynn Richardson Foundation
- High Point Community Foundation
- Friends of Greensboro Public Library
- United Way Bryan Foundation Community Enrichment and Venture Grant
- NCCJ (National Conference for Community and Justice)
- Sisters of Mercy Foundation
- Tannenbaum-Sternberger Foundation
- Communities in Schools of High Point
- Greensboro, High Point & Winston-Salem Parks and Recreation Centers
- YMCA's & YWCA's in Guilford and Forsyth Counties
- The Salvation Army Boys' & Girls' Clubs in Guilford & Forsyth Counties
- S.A.V.E. (Students Against Violence Everywhere) National Organization
- University of North Carolina in Greensboro, Center for Youth, Family & Community Partnerships
- Weaver Foundation
- Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

Win-Win has also received paid-for-program income from sites, including ACES after school programs and summer youth institutions. Guilford County Schools has also contracted with the program to provide programs during the school day which target whole grade levels in full Title I public schools.

Linkages with Other Initiatives

Win-Win has been associated with PSN as a member agency of the GVCTF (Greensboro Violent Crime Task Force) for over three years. The executive director is also the chair of PSN's youth sub-committee. One example of a collaborative activity is the GVCTF holding student forums in selected middle and high schools to gather feedback and solutions from youth and give them a safe place to offer viable solutions to administrators on how to make their schools a safer place.

Evaluation

To incorporate an evaluation component, UNCG (Center for Youth, Family and Community Partnerships) has created an outcome measure in *Win-Win Resolution's* pre- & post-test/survey format given to participants 3rd grade and above. This survey measures emotional intelligence and knowledge of curriculum content. Evaluations have shown a consistent decrease in aggressive behavior and increase in assertive behavior across the age groups. High school freshmen who completed the initial 15-week program in the four schools with the highest student code infractions saw up to a 46% reduction in these infractions. Videotaping (especially for pre-K through 2nd grade) and participant surveys are also used as evaluation measures.

For More Information Contact: Deb Vigliano, Executive Director Win-Win Resolutions, debra@winwinresolutions.org

High Point: Comprehensive Youth Activities

Program Overview

One *Weed and Seed* program offered during the summer months is late-night basketball and includes a three-hour open forum (6-9pm) in which Family Services, Mortuary Services, County Court systems, High Point PD, and other service programs come in to participate in and help facilitate discussion regarding various issues youth face. Youth who age out of the program often return to provide mentor support as well as serve as ambassadors of the program within their communities.

The High Point partnership working with youth is also setting up *Youth Councils* in each program area with the Salvation Army, Boys and Girls Club, and Family Services of the Piedmont. Youth trained at a Weed & Seed Conference are working with new youth programs in different communities. Although all programs will continue to be housed in different communities, they come together to partner and collaborate.

Youth program participants are asked to voluntarily respond to inquiries and simple questionnaires at various times. One question recently responded to was regarding what effect arrests of parents (especially fathers) have on the youth and/or their siblings. This issue will also be addressed at an upcoming Weed & Seed meeting. Plans are to expand services that are already in place and fill in service gaps by following patterns already proven and in use at other locations. Programs that are already established do have evaluations tools in place.

Efforts are underway to work with schools regarding possible structure issues as youth demonstrate a willingness to participate in late night basketball but not go to school. In one instance when transportation was cut off, youth from throughout the city continued to participate.

Population Served

Programs are comprehensive and serve a wide range of youth.

Support and Structure

Youth efforts do not fall under one particular umbrella, but rather several different individual programs. High Point, being one of the oldest sites in the PSN Middle District, attributes its sustainability to its strong support, collaboration, and partnership with the High Point Police Department and community neighborhood groups. The forming of the High Point VCTF (now a non-profit called *High Point Citizens Against Violent Crime*) and committees formed at the beginning are not under the direction of the City of High Point; however, the Resource Coordinator position, formerly a grant funded position has been picked up and is fully funded by the city of High Point. Superintendents and principals were initially at the table, and efforts are being made to get them more involved. There are 13 structured neighborhood associations.

Linkage with Other Initiatives

Linkages with other agencies and initiatives are overarching in High Point. A strong connection is with the community and police officers who spend time and build relationships with the community by serving as coaches and mentors and attending community meetings. High Point Citizen's Against Violent Crimes (HPCAV) group is also kept apprised of PSN meetings and they assist in bringing in agencies and police together to work in the communities. Gang Detectives speak to with parents and youth about gangs and signs of gang involvement. Also, the Recreation and Parks Division and the Community Development Housing Dept. have a neighborhood group that works within the community. Strong linkages to PSN, Weed and Seed, High Point's DMC committee and other local initiatives have helped create and sustain an effective partnership and importantly, a level of trust within the community.

For More Information Contact: Gretta Bush, President High Point CAV gretta.bush@highpointnc.gov and Michelle McNair, Community Resource Manager, Community Development Department, City of High Point, michelle.mcnair@highpointnc.gov.

Salisbury: Project Safe Salisbury Youth Initiative

Program Overview

Salisbury's *Project Safe Salisbury Youth Initiative* is an educational outreach effort that teaches youth about gun safety, drugs, and gangs. The main efforts of this program encompass the signing of a gun pledge, taking juveniles to adult Notification sessions, and Project Hope. Youth are referred to Project Safe Neighborhoods Youth Initiatives from various camps, churches, and schools. The PSN Resource Coordinator conducts many of the educational presentations and events. Most of these youth are elementary-school aged, though some are in middle-school.

A key component of Salisbury's youth initiative is the involvement of at-risk youth in Notifications to make kids aware of the negative consequences of being in the criminal justice system as an offender. They are brought by the Juvenile Court Counselors, debriefed by the Assistant U.S. Attorney about Notification, and are present for the law enforcement message. Two weeks later, the youth are brought in to discuss the impression that the Notification has had on their life.

Another component, Project Hope, is an ongoing faith outreach where pastors host community events for youth and residents, in which pastors give discussions to youth on gun violence. Also successful adults who have been notified speak to the teenagers about positive actions.

Population Served

The PSN Resource Coordinator is proactive and recruits youth and her educational and anti-gun program to camps, churches and both elementary and middle schools. Some youth are required to become involved because of their involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Support and Structure

The PSN Resource Coordinator, housed in the Salisbury Police Department coordinates the activities with the Salisbury Police department, the school system, the Mayor's office, McGruff, and a number of highly involved faith-based groups, and an informative website that serves as a medium for information. Nine churches are involved in, and support, Project Hope.

Linkages with Other Initiatives

Project Safe Salisbury is a key component of the PSN, and is closely aligned with other faith-based initiatives.

For More Information Contact: Teresa Vinson, Project Safe Salisbury Resource Coordinator, tvins@salisburync.gov.

Winston-Salem: Operation Reach

Program Overview

Operation Reach was active until 2006, when the program ended to assess the program and revamp the outreach. It identified and visited six to nine of these youth per month. *Operation Reach* youth were tracked by the Police Department for one year for criminal involvements. Current plans in Winston-Salem are to reinstate *Operation Reach*. It was staffed with volunteers from local law enforcement, clergy, community-based agencies, and other non-traditional partners. The program was created as a SACS (Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative) intervention tool. It served as the primary youth intervention tool in Winston-Salem's Project Safe Neighborhoods strategy.

Population Served

Operation Reach served at-risk youth (17 and under) identified as emerging young offenders or associates of known violent gun offenders.

Support and Structure

Operation Reach was housed at the Center for Community Safety at Winston-Salem State University and supported by the Winston-Salem Police Department and the outreach teams. It received no direct funding support, but rather was supported by volunteers and in-kind time from reach teams.

Linkages to Other Initiatives

Operation Reach was a tool used in Winston-Salem's PSN strategy, focusing resources on a targeted group of at-risk youth.

For More Information Contact: John Leone, Detective, Winston-Salem Police Department, jleone@wspd.org.

Winston-Salem: Youth Crime Watch

Program Overview

The Housing Authority of Winston-Salem has a youth prevention program called Youth Crime Watch (YCW). There are seven sites located throughout Winston-Salem, where YCW meetings and activities are held. All YCW sites are located in public housing properties which provide children and youth with safe, positive, and structured after school and weekend programming. Components of the program include tutorial support, behavior modification and conflict resolution courses, field trips, and recreation. The street strength of YCW is that the site managers at each location utilize and develop positive older youth who demonstrate leadership qualities to be peer mentors to other youth in the program.

Population Served

Each site has about 20 kids, ages 11 to 18 years of age.

Linkage with Other Initiatives

Objectives of other Winston-Salem crime reduction strategies are leveraged against the Youth Crime Watch programming. There are intervention/prevention programs of the Weed and Seed effort, Project Safe Neighborhoods and an outreach intervention program, called Streetworkers.

For More Information Contact: Bill McClain, Youth Services Director, Housing Authority of Winston-Salem, bmcclain@haws.org.

Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Davie and Davidson County: C.O.R.E. (Collaborative for Offender Reentry Enhancement)

Program Overview

The *C.O.R.E.* juvenile reentry effort is a voluntary intensive aftercare program for juvenile serious and drug offenders which offers community reentry and integration to youth returning from NC Youth Development Centers to Guilford, Forsyth, Davie, and Davidson Counties who were committed to state facilities because of serious and violent offenses (A-E crimes). *C.O.R.E.*'s purpose is to fill service gaps in reentry, to greatly enhance the success of those youth that return to our communities from institutions. Community Support Coordinators (CSCs) in these counties work with youth while they are in the Youth Development Centers, on post-release supervision, and after post-release supervision has ended. They also work with the families of youth. *C.O.R.E.* began as a SVORI pilot program.

C.O.R.E. has three goals: 1) To enhance public safety by preventing re-offending; 2) To leverage community resources and 3) To support youth in avoiding crime and encouragement of pro-social behaviors/activities.

Key objectives in implementing *C.O.R.E.* include: lowering recidivism rates among participants; providing ongoing individualized community support to participants; enhancing partnerships among appropriate community stakeholders and improving mental health and well-being of participants.

Support and Structure

In Guilford County the program is housed in the Family Services of the Piedmont. In Forsyth, Davidson, and Davie counties, *C.O.R.E.* it is housed at Embrenche.

C.O.R.E. is funded by a Governor's Crime Commission grant through a contract with the Center for Community Safety of Winston-Salem State University. Other funding is leveraged through the Guilford Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) with matching funds through Family Service of the Piedmont. The Center for Community Safety provides administrative oversight.

Population Served

C.O.R.E. has the capacity to serve 12-14 high-risk high-needs youth in each of four counties: Forsyth, Guilford, Davie, and Davidson Counties.

Linkage with Other Initiatives

In Guilford County, the *C.O.R.E.* program has been aligned with the PSN project since 2003. The Greensboro Community VCTF initially served as the Community Accountability Board for *C.O.R.E.* in Guilford County. The *C.O.R.E.* Community Support Coordinator (CSC) works with the Greensboro PSN Resource Coordinator to identify and develop resources for all offenders re-entering the community, both adult and juvenile. The CSC attends the PSN activities in Guilford, and takes youth from his caseload to adult notifications, to observe the call-ins and then processes the information with them afterwards.

In Winston-Salem, the *C.O.R.E.* CSC has been a part of the Winston-Salem-Forsyth County Community Safety Partnership, a 30+ member group that come together to address community safety issues through both partnership efforts and through programs and processes such as Weed and Seed and Project Safe Neighborhoods.

Evaluation

C.O.R.E.'s evaluation involves UNCG's Center for Youth, Family and Community Partnerships serving as the evaluator for the *C.O.R.E.* project.

For More Information Contact: Alvin Atkinson, Director, Center for Community Safety of Winston-Salem State University, atkinsona@wssu.edu.