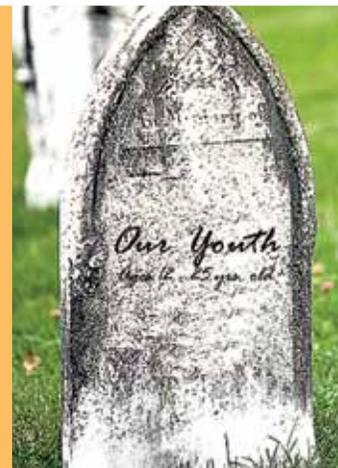




A HIGH PRICE TO PAY: THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COSTS OF YOUTH GUN VIOLENCE IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 2011



INTRODUCTION FROM SUPERVISOR ROSE JACOBS GIBSON

Dear Friends:

Safe streets and parks, schools free of violence, and communities where our children prosper are goals we all share. Yet each year, more than 20,000 children and young adults in the United States are killed or injured by guns in their own neighborhoods. Here in the Bay Area, youth firearm violence, often perpetrated by gang members, is on the rise, threatening the safety and security we all deserve. From the physical, economic, and social costs for the community to the psychological effects experienced by children and their families, firearm violence touches every segment of our society.

As a member of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, I have worked closely with law enforcement and community leaders to improve the safety of our residents through the establishment of programs like Operation Ceasefire and the East Palo Alto Crime Reduction Task Force. During my tenure as Association of Bay Area Government's (ABAG) President, we established a Youth Gun Violence Task Force charged with developing common sense approaches to keep guns out of the hands of young people and to curb youth firearm violence. During my twenty years in public service, I have come to understand that addressing youth gun violence through law enforcement efforts and community-driven prevention programs is the only way to ensure that all children in our community, regardless of their race or socio-economic background, have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

In 2010, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation provided funding to ABAG's Youth Gun Violence Task Force to conduct a youth firearm violence research project. This publication is the outcome of the concerted efforts of many government agencies, community-based organizations, and my office. I hope you find it compelling and that it inspires you to work with me to enhance our efforts to curb youth firearm violence locally and in the greater Bay Area.

My goal continues to be turning this eloquent sentiment recently expressed by a parent in one of our focus groups into reality: "How beautiful it would be, if instead of seeing a wall of graffiti, we saw a young person changed. Look, he's studying now, or going to church, or working. How great that would be..."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rose Jacobs Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rose Jacobs Gibson
Supervisor
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

A HIGH PRICE TO PAY: THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COSTS OF YOUTH GUN VIOLENCE IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

San Mateo County governments and communities are committed to reducing and preventing youth firearm violence.^{1, 2, 3} In an effort to measure the true human and financial impact of youth firearm violence in San Mateo County, the county has analyzed crime, health, and cost data. With the help of community partners, the county also conducted qualitative interviews, focus groups, and surveys of residents and law enforcement in communities with pronounced rates of youth firearm violence, which include Daly City, East Palo Alto, Redwood City, and San Mateo. (See *Appendix for detailed methodology*.) This report summarizes this analysis, providing a reference for policymakers and service providers, as well as a benchmark that may be used to assess the effectiveness of future prevention efforts. The most compelling findings from our research are as follows:

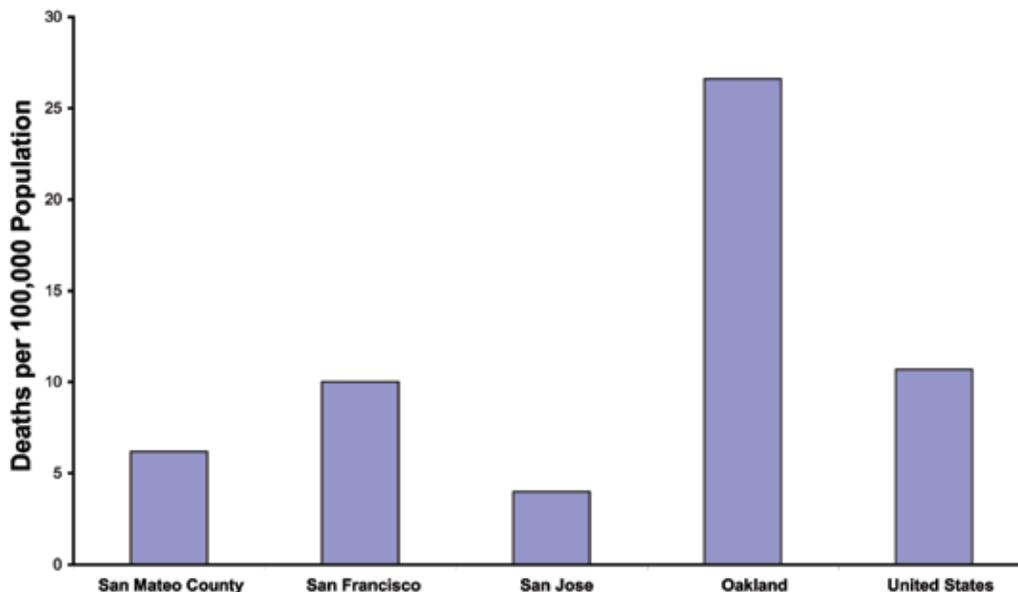
- The firearm violence mortality rate in San Mateo County is 42 percent lower than the United States, 39 percent lower than neighboring San Francisco, but 55 percent higher than San Jose.
- African American males aged 15 to 24 years are up to 18 times more likely than the overall county population and 3.5 times more likely than other San Mateo County youth to be shot and killed. The rate of non-fatal injuries among Latinos aged 15 to 24 years is 14 percent higher than that of other San Mateo County youth.
- The cities of East Palo Alto, Daly City, South San Francisco, and Redwood City comprise 38 percent of the total San Mateo County population, but disproportionately account for 57 percent of non-fatal firearm injuries and 74 percent of fatal firearm injuries.

- Nonfatal and fatal injuries of San Mateo County youth from 2005-2009 will cost society an estimated \$234 million in medical care, criminal proceedings, future lost wages, disability benefits, and lost quality of life
- Eighty-one percent of adults and 56 percent of youth incarcerated* for firearm crime in San Mateo County had been previously arrested.
- Nine out of 18 (50 percent) juveniles incarcerated* and 31 of 75 (41 percent) adults incarcerated* for firearm crime are gang-affiliated.
- The County Gang Intelligence Unit reports that gangs actively recruit disadvantaged San Mateo County youth, as young as 11 years of age, in schools and afterschool programs.
- San Mateo County local governments spend an estimated \$57,000-\$856,000 per crime—depending on crime severity—investigating, prosecuting, defending, punishing, and preventing youth firearm crime.

*These figures are based on the jail and juvenile hall population for a single day in 2011. It is conceivable that these figures vary considering the transient nature of the jail population.

Countywide statistics do not tell the whole story about youth firearm crime and violence. The firearm violence mortality rate in San Mateo County is 6.2 deaths per 100,000 residents per year, 42 percent lower than the United States, 39 percent lower than San Francisco, but 55 percent higher than San Jose (*Figure 1*).

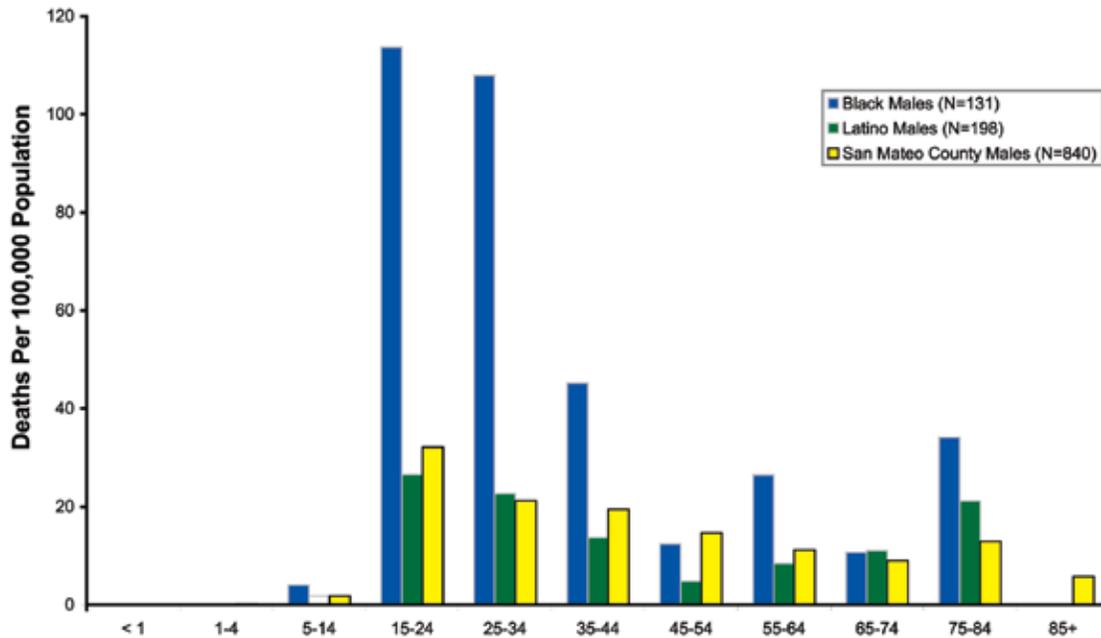
Figure 1: Rate of Violent Firearm Mortality in San Mateo County, the United States and Other Bay Area Cities 2005 - 2009



However, the countywide statistic masks the fact that certain communities and demographic groups within the county suffer a disproportionate impact from firearm crime and violence. For example, young African American males aged 15 to 24 years

are up to 18 times more likely to be shot and killed than the overall county population and up to 3.5 times more likely than other San Mateo County youth to be shot and killed (*Figure 2*).

Figure 2: Mortality Due to Firearms Among Black and Latino Males
Cumulative Unadjusted Data, San Mateo County 1990 - 2009 (N = 329)



Firearm violence in San Mateo County is concentrated in the four cities of East Palo Alto, Daly City, Redwood City, and South San Francisco. Combined, these cities account for 74 percent

of fatal injuries and 57 percent of non-fatal firearm injuries, but only 38 percent of the total San Mateo County population (*Table 1*).

| City | Percent of SMC Firearm Homicides | Percent of SMC Non-Fatal Firearm Injuries | Percent of SMC Population | Ratio of Percent of Homicides to Percent of SMC Population |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| Daly City | 21.2% | 6.7% | 14.2% | 1.5 |
| East Palo Alto | 25.8% | 21.0 % | 4.7% | 5.5 |
| Redwood City | 15.2% | 18.1 % | 10.4% | 1.5 |
| South San Francisco | 12.1% | 11.0% | 8.7% | 1.4 |
| All other SMC cities | 25.8% | 43.2% | 62.0% | 0.4 |

Incarceration and recidivism for firearm crime is also high and concentrated in select communities and demographics. A snapshot of the 75 adults held at the county's correctional facilities for any firearm crime (ranging from possession to homicide) on a single day in 2011 reveals that 45 percent were Latino, 28 percent were African American, and 96 percent were male. Of the 18 inmates held at the juvenile facility for firearm crime on a single day in 2011, 67 percent were Latino, 22 percent were African American, and 94 percent were male. Both adults and youth charged with firearm crimes had a high recidivism rate; 81 percent of incarcerated adults had been arrested before, as compared with 56 percent for youth. Seventy-eight percent of the 18 incarcerated juveniles were from the three communities of East Palo Alto, San Mateo, and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City. While the City of San Mateo has relatively low rates of fatal and non-fatal firearm injuries, it has high rates of incarceration for juveniles engaging in firearm crime.

Members of communities with pronounced rates of youth firearm violence live in an environment of fear, distrust, and diminished opportunities. Youth firearm violence was perceived to occur in the context of a community environment that is unstable, unpredictable, and chaotic. The characteristics of an unsafe community that respondents mentioned included economic deprivation, vandalism and graffiti, drug dealing, frequent interpersonal and family conflict, and gang activity. Unsafe communities were described as "lonesome" places where neighbors don't know one another or watch out for one another. Youth may lack family support as well as educational and employment opportunities, causing service providers to lament that "in this population, kids don't see themselves after high school." When faced with a lack of optimism about the future, youth may become involved in gangs and criminal activity, leading a focus group participant to comment, "If youth don't value their own lives, how can we expect them to value ours?"

Youth firearm violence is driven by gang activity. Based on information provided by law enforcement and corrections personnel, as well as by community members, it is reasonable to conclude that gang activity is the main driver of youth firearm violence in San Mateo County. On a single day in 2011, 50 percent of juvenile inmates and 41 percent of adult inmates incarcerated and charged with a firearm crime in San Mateo County had a known gang affiliation. While gang members commit crimes in nearly all municipalities of the county and often cross city and county lines, in San Mateo County they are concentrated in the following cities: East Palo Alto, Daly City, Menlo Park, Millbrae, South San Francisco, Redwood City, San Mateo, San Bruno, Half Moon Bay, and in unincorporated areas such as the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City. Gang culture glamorizes the use of firearms and encourages youth to gain respect and status through violence and criminal activity. Gang members "take their pictures with their guns and

text it to friends or post it on Facebook," where "kids as young as 14 years old are shown holding their guns with their 'rag and colors.'" (Service Provider)

GANGS TARGET VULNERABLE YOUTH

Even youth who are reluctant to become involved with a gang may be forced to do so. According to Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU) officers, youth are often approached by gang members at school or at afterschool programs. "Youth as young as 11 years old are approached by their school friends to join the gang. Many of these youth come from broken homes, are being raised by a single parent, live in poverty, or face other family issues. Gangs capitalize on this lack of stability by offering the at-risk youth a place or group to belong. Recruiters further entice kids by offering them a chance to earn money and respect on the streets. Otherwise, gangs coerce youth. Refusing to join a gang could result in bullying, intimidation, embarrassing the youth in front of peers at school, or being accused of association with rival gangs, which can have drastic consequences." (GIU Officer).

Reprisals and revenge create a cycle of violence. A service provider described how the typical cycle of violence plays out: "If someone is playing around with the idea of being in a gang and their friend gets shot, all of a sudden it becomes easier for them to retaliate and do harm to someone else...When the shooting happened in South San Francisco, that's something I heard a lot about at Juvenile Hall. Affected youth were declaring that 'we're going to load up on guns, our neighborhood needs more guns.'" Youth described being given firearms by gang members, or even family members, and being asked to take part in reprisals. One young woman recounted a story of resisting pressure to take part in revenge and telling her grandmother, "No, it ain't happening" when she was handed a gun and asked to avenge her cousin's death. Bullying may also be a contributing factor to retaliatory violence in some cases; unfortunately "there is a lack of communication and awareness [about bullying] on the part of parents and staff at school," according to service providers. A pattern of retaliation against "snitching" may be a factor in the reluctance to report firearm crimes; both parents and youth reported that fears of reprisal may keep them from informing law enforcement about firearm crimes in their communities.

Youth firearm violence negatively impacts quality of life in multiple ways. The majority of youth and parents from affected communities who participated in surveys and focus groups believed that they or a loved one could be a victim of firearm violence in the near future. Similarly, 67 percent of youth and 57 percent of parents reported that youth firearm violence was a “very significant” or “somewhat significant” problem in their lives. Youth and parents described their sadness at losing friends and relatives to youth firearm violence, as well as being fearful when shootings happened near their homes. Others reported apathy, helplessness, and desensitization that can occur as a result of frequent exposure to violence. For example, one youth stated, “I’m immune to it now. I’ve gotten used to it. I’ve seen people die, friends die, brothers die, cousins die,” while another noted that firearm violence is “normal” in his community.

Fear of violence leads both youth and adults to lead their lives differently, especially with respect to outside play and walking around their neighborhoods. Sixty-three percent of youth and 38 percent of parents surveyed reported avoiding areas of their neighborhoods they would otherwise pass through, while parents participating in focus groups reported staying in at night and not allowing their children to walk to school or to play in local parks. The majority of youth and parents surveyed felt that youth firearm violence was an important factor in deciding where to live, though parents reported that economic considerations may force them to live in neighborhoods they consider to be unsafe.

Firearm violence has massive hidden financial costs that are difficult to measure. Researchers have attempted to estimate total costs for fatal and non-fatal injuries in the United States. These total costs include not only criminal proceedings, lost productivity and medical care, but also the suffering and decreased quality of life experienced by victims. Such dollar estimates are necessarily inexact, but nonetheless

can be useful for decision-makers as they weigh the cumulative costs of violence against the costs of preventive measures. Values are assigned to parameters such as suffering and decreased quality of life by using benchmarks such as “pain and suffering” jury damage awards and workers’ compensation payments, as well as “Willingness to Pay” methodology.⁴



Based on these methods, each fatal injury costs society an estimated \$6.4 million (range \$3.4 to \$9.1 million), and each non-fatal injury costs society an estimated \$46,000. Using these parameters, the cost of the 36 fatal and 133 non-fatal firearm injuries to youth in San Mateo County from 2005-2009 will total \$234 million over time.

We all pay for youth firearm crime. Although youth firearm violence is concentrated in a small number of San Mateo County communities, the cost of youth firearm crime is shared by all county residents. Local government institutions spend vast public funds responding to, investigating, prosecuting, defending, preventing, and punishing youth firearm crime. Because of the concentrated nature of youth firearm violence, affected police departments must also recruit and train additional officers to investigate gangs and interact with youth. *Table 2* describes these costs and programs.

EASE OF ACCESS TO FIREARMS

Sixty-three percent of youth surveyed felt it was “very easy” or “somewhat easy” to get access to firearms, and the majority of participants in a youth focus group felt that they could get a gun “with one phone call.” Youth most commonly obtained guns by stealing, by illegally purchasing them from an individual on the black market, or “from their homes.” Respondents reported that firearms could be purchased for “as little as \$80 to \$300—depending on the size of the gun.” An intergenerational pattern of gang involvement or criminal activity may lead to youth having access to guns from family members, and being able to borrow or informally barter for guns. Respondents pointed out that getting a gun is “as easy as access to drugs.” This climate of ready gun availability led a service provider to observe that “it seems harder for adults to get legal access to guns than for kids to get illegal access.” This surprising information regarding the ease of youth access to guns is supported by data from the 2007 California Healthy Kids Survey, in which 4.8 percent of San Mateo County 7th, 9th, and 11th graders reported having brought a gun to school, a rate similar to that for the Bay Area overall (5 percent).

Table 2

Estimated Costs to Local Police Departments to Prevent and Respond to Youth Firearm Crime in 2010

| Police Department (n = total youth firearm crime investigations 2010) | Crime Investigation | Crime Prevention | Miscellaneous Overhead | Average Total Cost per Youth Firearm Crime Investigation ⁵ |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Daly City (n = 22) | \$117,900 | \$435,801 | \$88,425 | 36,935 (\$1,283- \$72,430) |
| East Palo Alto (n = 76) | \$6,556,200 ² | 6 | 7 | \$86,265 |
| Redwood City (n = 23) ⁸ | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| San Mateo (n = 17) | \$108,536 | \$1,356,000 | — | \$86,149 |

When police department estimates are combined with those from other County agencies, San Mateo County taxpayers spend from \$57,117 to \$856,323 for their County and City governments to respond to one youth firearm crime (Table 3).

Incarceration represents a significant proportion of these costs, because the average length of detention from pre-trial through completion of sentence for a firearm crime is 297 days for adults (at \$172 per day) and 610 days for juveniles (at \$428 per day).

Table 3

Estimated Range of Costs for one Firearm Crime to San Mateo County Taxpayers for Local Government Law Enforcement Response to Youth Firearm Crime in 2010

| San Mateo County Local Government Agency | Juvenile | Adult |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Youth Services Center Costs to detain a youth from pretrial to sentence for firearm crime (610 days) | \$261,080 | NA |
| San Mateo County Jail Costs to detain an adult from pretrial to sentence (297 days) | NA | \$51,084 |
| San Mateo County Coroner (homicide cases only) Transportation of the deceased, morgue, autopsy, etc | \$7,500 | \$7,500 |
| San Mateo County Superior Court* Costs to try suspects of firearm crime | (\$98-\$1,478) | (\$750-\$5,456) |
| San Mateo County District Attorney Legal costs to prosecute firearm crime | (\$2,000-\$250,000) | (\$2,000-\$250,000) |
| San Mateo County Private Defender Services Legal costs to defend firearm crime | (\$2,000-\$250,000) | (\$2,000-\$250,000) |
| Local Police Department (Response and Investigation, see Table 3) | (\$1,283-\$86,265) | (\$1,283-\$86,265) |
| Estimated cost range of one firearm crime based on severity (i.e. illegal firearm possession to homicide) | (\$266,461-\$856,323) | (\$57,117-\$650,305) |

*Court costs are averages weighted by stage of court proceeding of firearm crime prosecuted by the District Attorney from 2009-July 2011 combined with cost estimates from the Superior Court.

These costs encompass the range of firearm crime severity from illegal possession to murder. Costs for State prison incarceration

are not included here, nor are costs averted because suspects posted bail. The District Attorney provided a range of legal prosecution costs; since we were unable to obtain cost estimates from the Chief of the County Private Defender Program, we assumed defense costs to be comparable to those of the prosecution.

As we have seen, youth firearm violence impacts safety and quality of life, and causes incalculable human suffering. Taxpayers bear the expense for incarceration, court costs, and law enforcement, and society as a whole is burdened by the hidden costs of the death and disability of gun violence victims. Furthermore, the existing law enforcement response mechanisms emphasize extraordinarily costly punitive measures, rather than preventive or rehabilitative ones. Cost effectiveness studies show that the fiscal benefits of youth violence prevention programs are significant, but not generally realized for 15 years or more.⁹ The benefits of prevention are real, but are often delayed and are impossible to link to an individual. While not optimal, fiscal pressures tend to influence policymakers to devote resources to immediate needs instead of a more systematic perspective, which includes wisely investing in critically necessary prevention programs.

Effective strategies to reduce youth violence include programs targeted at young children, their parents, the community, and school environment, and more intensive services for youth who have already committed crimes. In general, research shows that the most effective interventions focus on young children and their families, or youth who have already exhibited criminal behavior. For example, violent and delinquent youth have been found to benefit the most from programs that provide a wide array of support, such as skills and behavioral training, and family therapy. The following proposed solutions represent “best practices” drawn from our experience in San Mateo County and from success stories across the nation, as well as the opinions and recommendations of community members who participated in this study. These solutions should be included in, and strongly connected with, any funding decisions related to public safety.

Breaking the cycle of violence among vulnerable youth: Violence prevention interventions must be a part of a comprehensive effort to create a supportive family and community environment for all children and youth. In addition, however, intensive interventions, both preventive and rehabilitative, specifically directed at youth who are at-risk or already involved in criminal activity, are critical to saving lives and preventing firearm crime. Youth directly affected by firearm violence have the highest risk of becoming perpetrators. In the words of one service provider, the community needs to be there “as a support for those affected, because they are the ones that are more likely to take revenge.” CeaseFire Chicago¹⁰ utilizes prevention, intervention and community mobilization tactics to reduce street violence. The program offers at-risk individuals GED programs, anger management counseling, drug and alcohol treatment, and assistance with finding work and childcare. CeaseFire also hires “violence interrupters” as outreach workers to mediate conflict between gangs. After a shooting, they offer nonviolent conflict resolution alternatives to halt the cycle of retaliatory violence. As a direct result of the program, shootings decreased 16 to 28 percent in four of

the seven targeted areas. The decrease was “immediate and permanent” in three areas and “gradual and permanent” in one area.

This violence interruption program is very similar to the current activities of the Gang Intelligence Unit and Operation Ceasefire in San Mateo County. The San Mateo County Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU) consists of members of the Sheriff’s Office, San Mateo County Probation, and assigned detectives from the local municipalities. GIU’s primary responsibility is collecting and analyzing information and then distributing the developed intelligence to law enforcement agencies in and around San Mateo County, as well as patrolling the streets of all twenty municipalities in the county several days a week to counter gang activity. The GIU is highly effective in countering gang activity. In 2010, the GIU arrested more than 434 individuals engaging in gang activity. To maintain its success, San Mateo County must craft a sustainable funding plan to ensure that the Sheriff’s Department, which funds the GIU, has the resources it needs to continue its support of GIU’s critical efforts in curbing youth firearm violence.



Operation Ceasefire was established by the East Palo Alto Police Department in partnership with numerous law enforcement, government, community-based and faith organizations to implement a violence and drug market reduction strategy. Operation Ceasefire partners with law enforcement and the community to sit down with gang-affiliated individuals and offer them services that provide alternatives to their destructive behavior, and use strategic enforcement programs to hold accountable those who fail to take advantage of the services and continue to victimize the community. Operation Ceasefire is currently based in the City of East Palo Alto. To further enhance the program’s success, San Mateo County should explore Ceasefire’s methods to determine which are most effective and how to best apply them to reduce youth firearm violence in other cities in San Mateo County.

Law enforcement and communities working together: Law enforcement serves as the community’s primary response against armed violence, but can be most effective in the context of a community collaboration. A successful example of this collaboration in San Mateo County is the Violence Prevention Network that brings local police and the Sheriff together with

parents and students in the school setting. Some youth may be more open to addressing issues of violence at school, “because that’s where kids feel safe, and that’s where kids will speak up.” In general, more frequent positive interactions between youth and police in a setting where the power imbalance is reduced help youth become more comfortable with law enforcement and more open to their presence. Law enforcement can take on primary prevention of violence as a critical function. Another critical strategy to break the cycle of violence is law enforcement support to protect youth who make a good faith effort to leave gangs. San Mateo County law enforcement leadership should consider establishing debriefing units to help gang-affiliated youth safely leave gangs. In exchange for providing information about the gang, a youth would receive protection, skill-building, and educational services. The potential benefits of such a program could outweigh the financial costs over time; not only could it make the County’s streets safer, it would provide opportunities for the most at-risk youth to turn away from a life of violence. One young person transformed could result in multiple lives saved. Trust and cooperation generated by programs like these will increase the effectiveness of enforcement efforts in the larger community.

Youth empowerment in the community and educational context:

By valuing youth perspectives, prioritizing youth issues, and incorporating youth voices, communities will be able to reduce youth firearm violence more effectively. Empowering at-risk youth means helping them gain confidence, life skills, and hope for the future. This empowerment can come from active involvement in community service, afterschool programs, sports, creative activities (art, music, theater), dealing assertively with technological aggression (on-line bullying), and job skills training or part-time jobs. By providing youth with more options that promote the constructive use of time, communities keep youth off the streets, let youth know that the community cares, and give youth the opportunity to explore and discover their talents. In addition, many parents and service providers who participated in this study expressed a wish for more mentorship programs led by successful male role models, who originate from low-income communities. These male leaders, “who will fight for our kids,” serve as true-to-life examples that economic background does not necessarily dictate one’s future.

Not surprisingly, research shows that staying in school reduces the risk of violent behavior. The “School Transitional Environment Program” (STEP)¹¹ was developed at the University of Illinois to help schools create a supportive environment that promotes academic achievement and reduces behavioral problems and truancy. Students transitioning to middle school or high school are placed in small cohorts that remain together over time, and teachers partner with families to follow-up on school absences and behavior problems. Participants in the STEP program generally have fewer absences from school, lower drop-out rates, lower rates of delinquency, higher

SELF-CONTROL AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS CRITICAL FOR YOUTH

A strong emotional and behavioral foundation can help youth successfully avoid violence. In general, parents and schools can work together from early childhood to establish boundaries, rules, and expectations for children. Conflict resolution and communication skills in youth are paramount. Two successful programs for younger children at use in communities nationwide show the power of emotional awareness and problem-solving skills in promoting positive behaviors and discouraging violence. “Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies” is aimed at elementary school kids through fifth grade. It trains children in self-expression, self-control, and interpersonal problem-solving skills. The program has yielded positive effects on risk factors associated with violence, including aggressive behavior, anxiety and depression, and conduct problems. The “I Can Problem Solve” program teaches interpersonal problem-solving skills to children of nursery school age through sixth grade. Studies have demonstrated that improvements in impulsivity and conflict resolution were sustained 3 to 4 years after the end of the program. This program has been generally most effective for at-risk children living in poor, urban areas. For youth who have already suffered the harsh effects of violence, there needs to be an increased and systematic use of alternative dispute resolution processes. Such methods include mediation among youth offenders, victims, and others impacted by violence in the community.

grade-point averages, more positive feelings about school, and a better self-image.

Asset building among parents and community members:

Educating parents, youth and community members is essential to curbing youth firearm violence. Several service providers participating in this study suggested that the County educate community members about how easy it is for youth to get guns. This increased awareness may lead community members to play a more active role in advocating for strategies

CONCLUSION

that prevent unlawful youth access to guns. Parents and service providers could also be taught how to look for signs of negative peer influence or gang affiliation. "Right now, parents are concerned about drug use or the way their children dress, and who they hang out with, but they're failing to make the link between the types of influences that can lead to gun use." (Service Provider) Holding community information sessions concerning recognition of these early signs could help parents and service providers better respond to at-risk youth. In addition, parents need to be made aware of the media's influence on children and youth. Subtle messages presented to youth through music and television too frequently promote and glorify guns and violence. Educating parents to assess the media their children come in contact with in order to decrease exposure to violent content could help lessen the appeal of guns and violence.

Just as an unsafe community environment promotes youth involvement in gangs and violence, a positive community environment will promote positive choices and behaviors. Supporting and empowering youth to make mature decisions is a complex task, which requires active contributions from families, schools, neighbors, community organizations, local

government, and law enforcement. More than ever, youth need caring adults to establish rules and boundaries and provide opportunities for education, employment, and healthy social outlets. By giving at-risk youth the support and guidance they need, we can help them lead violence-free lives and give them the confidence and skills to build successful futures.

Listed are the model ordinances and resolutions for cities and counties to pursue.

- Model Ordinance Regulating Firearms Dealers and Ammunition Sellers
- Model Ordinance Requiring Reporting of Lost or Stolen Firearms
- Model Ordinance Prohibiting the Possession of Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines
- Model Resolution Encouraging Law Enforcement to Send Letters to Prospective Handgun Purchasers
- Model Resolution Encouraging Law Enforcement to Obtain and Utilize Department of Justice Information About Prohibited Armed Persons

To view the full electronic version of this publication, please visit:

www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/rosejacobs-gibson and click "Youth Gun Violence publication"

or visit:

<http://www.abag.ca.gov/model-ordinances/>



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APPENDIX: METHODS

Qualitative methods

Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC), a community-based organization that provides problem solving expertise in San Mateo County through mediation, violence prevention, and family engagement, was contracted by the Office of Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson and the Association of Bay Area Governments to collect community input for this project. PCRC and the Office of Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson recruited a demographically diverse convenience sample of participants from local schools, service organizations, and other sites within the communities most affected by youth firearm violence. Surveys were completed by 84 youth, 275 parents, and 115 service providers, faith-based leaders, and law enforcement representatives. In addition, 37 youth, 23 parents, and 9 service providers participated in focus groups and 20 youth, parents, and service providers were interviewed individually or in small groups by PCRC staff. Gang Intelligence Unit personnel were interviewed by San Mateo County staff. Focus group summaries, video and audio interviews, and free text survey responses were analyzed for common themes and concerns. A convenience sample methodology is acceptable in this setting, because the goals of this qualitative analysis were to obtain a deeper understanding of the causes, motivations, and lived experiences underlying observed behaviors and outcomes.

Quantitative methods

Multiple data sources and analytic methods were used for the quantitative portion of this analysis. Countywide emergency room discharge data were obtained from the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development and analyzed to determine the number of firearm injuries over the last 5 years, as well as the demographics of those affected. Firearm death statistics were obtained from death certificates. Demographic and other information such as gang affiliation and recidivism was obtained for inmates incarcerated for firearm crimes at the county's two detention facilities for single "snapshot" days. Local police departments supplied counts of firearm-related arrests, as well as operating budgets and (in the case of one department) costs of responding to individual firearm crimes. The District Attorney, Private Defender, County Superior Court, and County Coroner also contributed cost information. In addition, methodologies for calculating global societal costs for injuries and deaths were obtained from scholarly literature and applied to the San Mateo County youth firearm injury and death counts.

Police Department Notes

Four local police departments provided data on the number and costs of their youth firearm crime response and prevention activities in 2010. These responses attempt to account for all of the officers, detectives, specialized crime investigation and prevention units, school resource officers, and other staff involved in youth firearm crime investigations. Although these data are informal and not standardized, they are the best available considering the few resources available for their collection. Please see the appendix for further police department details.

Daly City Police Department: The Daly City Police Department was able to time survey and calculate the investigation, prevention-program, overhead, and employee benefit costs for the 22 youth firearm crime investigations in Daly City in 2010. The range of costs reflects the severity (i.e. from illegal possession to murder) of crime and the number of personnel hours involved in each. The Daly City prevention costs are lower than the other police department estimates because they only account for the time youth crime prevention staff spent working on the specific youth firearm crime investigations. Prevention programs include the Crime Suppression Unit and School Resource Officer, both of whom are involved in every youth firearm crime investigation.

East Palo Alto Police Department: The East Palo Alto Police Department estimates that as much as 60 percent of its total operating budget is spent on the law enforcement response, investigation and prevention of youth firearm crime.

As many of these enforcement intervention and prevention programs are interrelated, it is difficult to attribute exact costs to each component. Among the numerous firearm prevention and enforcement programs, the Police Department has identified Project Ceasefire (see pages 9-10) as one with significant promise.

Redwood City Police Department: The Redwood City Police Department has worked actively in youth firearm crime prevention. The Department's Juvenile Unit and Street Crime Suppression Team and School Resource Officer have been active in educating schools, at-risk youth and their parents about gangs and have incorporate preventing firearm violence in their presentations.

San Mateo City Police Department: The San Mateo City Police Department's Youth Service Bureau coordinates prevention and enforcement of youth crime. Through this agency, school resource officers, the Police Activities Leagues, the Juvenile detective, and schools work to identify at-risk youth who are candidates for diversion from the juvenile justice system. Through this program, youth are referred to activities in or after school designed to foster his or her positive development and relationships with law enforcement.

| Selected Demographics of <u>Youth Service Provider Respondents</u> to the San Mateo County Youth Firearm Violence Impact Survey 2011 (n = 115) | |
|---|---------|
| Race Ethnicity | Percent |
| Asian and Pacific Islander | 2.6 |
| African American | 8.7 |
| Latino | 24.3 |
| Native American | 0.9 |
| Other | 18.3 |
| White | 45.2 |
| | |
| Household Income | Percent |
| \$10,000-\$29,999 | 4.3 |
| \$30,000-\$59,999 | 18.3 |
| \$60,000-\$79,999 | 14.8 |
| \$80,000-\$99,999 | 17.4 |
| \$100,000 + | 45.2 |

| Selected Demographics of <u>Parent Respondents</u> to the San Mateo County Youth Firearm Violence Impact Survey 2011 (n = 275) | |
|---|---------|
| Race Ethnicity | Percent |
| Asian and Pacific Islander | 5.5 |
| African American | 2.9 |
| Latino | 46.5 |
| Native American | 1.5 |
| Other | 5.5 |
| White | 38.2 |

| Household Income | Percent |
|-------------------|---------|
| 0-\$9,999 | 13.5 |
| \$10,000-\$19,999 | 9.5 |
| \$20,000-\$29,999 | 10.5 |
| \$30,000-\$59,999 | 13.1 |
| \$60,000-\$79,999 | 9.8 |
| \$80,000 + | 43.6 |

| Selected Demographics of East Palo Alto and Redwood City Youth Respondents to the San Mateo County Youth Firearm Violence Impact Survey 2011 (n = 85) | |
|--|---------|
| Race Ethnicity | Percent |
| Asian and Pacific Islander | 3.6 |
| African American | 3.6 |
| Latino | 89.3 |
| Other | 2.4 |
| White | 1.2 |
| | |
| Household Income | Percent |
| 0-\$9,999 | 23.8 |
| \$10,000-\$19,999 | 20.2 |
| \$20,000-\$29,999 | 29.8 |
| \$30,000-\$59,999 | 13.1 |
| \$60,000-\$79,999 | 8.3 |
| \$80,000 + | 4.8 |

¹ "Youth" is defined as youth and young adults from ages 12 - 25 years of age.

² The terms "Firearm" and "Gun" are used interchangeably in this report.

³ "Youth firearm violence" is defined as violence involving a firearm in which the perpetrator and/or the victim is a youth.

⁴ U.S. Department of Transportation Office of the Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy. (2007) Treatment of the Economic Value of a Statistical Life in Departmental Analysis (Accessed July 5, 2011 from <http://ostpxweb.dot.gov/policy/reports/080205.htm>). Washington DC: Peter Belenky

⁵ Average was calculated by dividing the estimated crime investigation, prevention, and overhead costs spent on youth firearm crime by the number of youth violent crimes investigated, except in Daly City. For Daly City, the average cost was weighted based on the frequency and severity of firearm crime investigated.

⁶ Because crime investigation, enforcement, and prevention programs in the East Palo Alto Police Department are significantly integrated, each program's cost contribution to a youth firearm crime investigation could not be separated.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ See appendix for Redwood City information.

⁹ Greenwood, Peter W., Karyn Model, C. Peter Rydell and James Chiesa. *Diverting Children from a Life of Crime: Measuring Costs and Benefits*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1998. http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR699-1.

¹⁰ <http://www.nij.gov/journals/264/ceasefire.htm>

¹¹ <http://www.aypf.org/publications/compendium/C1S18.pdf>

¹² <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/youthviolence/>

¹³ Ibid

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