

REIMAGINE

PUBLIC SAFETY ILLINOIS



OFFICE OF
FIREARM VIOLENCE
PREVENTION

2022 END OF THE YEAR REPORT

Report Developed by University of Illinois Chicago:
Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE) in Collaboration with the OFVP.

December 2022

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Introduction

The Reimagine Public Safety Act (RPSA or “the Act”) was passed by the Illinois legislature in June 2021 and amended in November 2021 (430 ILCS 69/35). It established a new Office of Firearm Violence Prevention (OFVP) in the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and directed the OFVP to take a public health approach to firearm violence prevention. The OFVP’s mission is to address the statewide public health emergency that is firearm violence through increased community capacity to (1) address root causes of violence (2) provide those most at-risk with access to evidence-based and trauma-informed services and (3) advance equity and racial justice.

Pursuant to the Act the OFVP must report on its activities to the legislature biannually. This report covers activities of the OFVP from January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022. Included is a summary of OFVP activities, program data for calendar year 2022, an update on programs under development, a section on feedback from grantees, and a description of the OFVP agenda in 2023.

The RPSA also established the Firearm Violence Research Group (FVRG), which serves as an advisory body to IDHS and provides research advice to the OFVP. Pursuant to the Act, the FVRG convened in August 2021 to help determine the State’s most concentrated areas of firearm violence with the highest rates of firearm victimization, excluding self-inflicted shots. The FVRG applied this process to determine the Chicago Community Areas and Greater Illinois municipalities that are eligible for RPSA funding, as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Eligible Illinois Municipalities and Chicago Community Areas

Municipalities in Greater Illinois:	Community Areas in Chicago:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aurora • Belleville Cluster (Includes Belleville, East St. Louis, and Cahokia Heights) • Berwyn-Cicero Cluster • Calumet City Cluster (Includes Calumet City, Harvey, Dolton, Riverdale, South Holland, Markham, Lansing) • Chicago Heights Cluster (Includes Chicago Heights, Park Forest, and Sauk Village) • Danville • Decatur • Joliet • Kankakee • Maywood-Bellwood Cluster • Peoria • Rockford • Springfield • Urbana-Champaign Cluster • Waukegan-North Chicago Cluster 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auburn Gresham • Austin • Burnside • Chatham • Chicago Lawn • East Garfield Park • Englewood • Fuller Park • Greater Grand Crossing • Humboldt Park • New City • North Lawndale • Riverdale • Roseland • South Chicago • South Lawndale • South Shore • Washington Park • West Englewood • West Garfield Park • West Pullman • Woodlawn

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Per the Act, the OFVP was given discretion to recommend five additional communities (or community clusters) to be added as eligible for RPSA funding according to similar firearm violence victimization data in Chicago and Greater Illinois. In April 2022, the following communities were added in Chicago and Greater Illinois after review and approval from the FVRG, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Additional Eligible Illinois Municipalities and Chicago Community Areas	
Additional Municipalities in Greater Illinois:	Additional Community Areas in Chicago:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock Island 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northside Cluster (Includes Belmont Cragin, Hermosa, Logan Square, Avondale, Irving Park, Albany Park) • Southwest Side Cluster (Includes Lower West Side, Brighton Park, Gage Park, McKinley Park) • Ashburn • South Deering

2. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The Reimagine Public Safety Act (RPSA) was passed by the Illinois legislature in June 2021 and amended in November 2021 (430 ILCS 69/35). It established a new Office of Firearm Violence Prevention (OFVP) in the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) and directed the OFVP to take a public health approach to firearms violence prevention. The OFVP’s mission is to address the statewide public health emergency that is firearm violence through increased community capacity to (1) address root causes of violence (2) provide those most at-risk access to evidence-based and trauma-informed services and (3) advance equity and racial justice.

Pursuant to the Act the OFVP must report on its activities to the legislature biannually. This report covers activities of IDHS and the OFVP from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

B. Eligible Municipalities and Chicago Community Areas

Pursuant to the requirements in RPSA, the Firearm Violence Research Group (FVRG) convened in August 2021 to help determine the State’s most concentrated areas of firearm violence for investment. After consideration of the requirements of the Act and available data sources, the FVRG developed a process for recommending eligible community areas in Chicago and municipalities in Greater Illinois as per the requirements of the Act¹. The FVRG applied this process to determine the Chicago Community Areas and Greater Illinois municipalities that rate highest in firearms victimization, excluding self-inflicted shots.

Eligible municipalities in Greater Illinois:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Aurora | 7. Decatur |
| 2. Belleville Cluster (Includes Belleville, East St. Louis, and Cahokia Heights) | 8. Joliet |
| 3. Berwyn-Cicero Cluster | 9. Kankakee |
| 4. Calumet City Cluster (Includes Calumet City, Harvey, Dolton, Riverdale, South Holland, Markham, Lansing) | 10. Maywood-Bellwood Cluster |
| 5. Chicago Heights Cluster (Includes Chicago Heights, Park Forest, and Sauk Village) | 11. Peoria |
| 6. Danville | 12. Rockford |
| | 13. Springfield |
| | 14. Urbana-Champaign Cluster |
| | 15. Waukegan-North Chicago Cluster |

Eligible Community Areas in Chicago:

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| • Auburn Gresham | • Englewood | • North Lawndale | • Washington Park |
| • Austin | • Fuller Park | • Riverdale | • West Englewood |
| • Burnside | • Greater Grand Crossing | • Roseland | • West Garfield Park |
| • Chatham | • Humboldt Park | • South Chicago | • West Pullman |
| • Chicago Lawn | • New City | • South Lawndale | • Woodlawn |
| • East Garfield Park | | • South Shore | |

¹ RPSA Eligible Community Areas/Municipalities and Associated Programming.

2. INTRODUCTION

Per the Act, the OFVP was given discretion to recommend five additional communities (or community clusters), to be added as eligible for RPSA funding according to similar firearm violence victimization data in Chicago and Greater Illinois. In April 2022, the following communities were added in Chicago and Greater Illinois after review and approval from the FVRG.

Additional Eligible Communities in Greater Illinois, based on rate of firearm violence incidents:

- Rock Island

Additional Eligible Community Areas in Chicago, based on rate of firearm violence incidents adjusted for race/ethnicity:

- Northside Cluster: Belmont Cragin, Hermosa, Logan Square, Avondale, Irving Park, Albany Park
- Southwest Side Cluster: Lower West Side, Brighton Park, Gage Park, McKinley Park
- Ashburn
- South Deering

C. Structure and Requirements of RPSA

The RPSA is designed to support communities in Chicago and municipalities across Illinois that are disproportionately impacted by firearm violence with community-based supports that address the following:

- 1. High-risk youth intervention** programs that have been proven to reduce involvement in the criminal or juvenile justice system, referrals of teens into therapeutic programs that address trauma recovery and other mental health services.
- 2. Violence prevention services**, including street-based violence interruption work, emotional or trauma related therapy, housing, employment, job training/placement, family engagement, and wrap-around support services.
- 3. Youth development programs**, including after school and summer programming to increase school attendance and school performance, reduce criminal justice system involvement, and build social-emotional persistence and intelligence.
- 4. Trauma recovery services for young people**, funded by Medicaid, designed and implemented by the Department of Healthcare and Family Services, to address trauma recovery from chronic exposure to firearm violence. A team-based model of care will include case management and school support services, group and individual therapy, and evidence-based family systems interventions.

2. INTRODUCTION

Governor J.B. Pritzker issued Executive Order 2021-29 in November 2021, which allocated \$250 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to the implementation of RPSA. OFVP has worked since that time to disseminate these dollars while adhering to the requirements of the Act, which include:

In Chicago:

1. Make grants to violence prevention organizations for evidence-based violence prevention services. Per RPSA Eligible Chicago community, the OFVP can fund no fewer than 2 and no more than 6 violence prevention organizations.
2. Make grants to youth development organizations for evidence-based youth after-school and summer programming. Per RPSA Eligible Chicago community, the OFVP can fund no fewer than 4 and no more than 8 youth development organizations.
3. The OFVP shall identify municipal blocks where more than 35% of all fatal and nonfatal firearm-shot incidents take place and focus youth development service grants to residents of these identified blocks in the designated eligible service areas.
4. Make grants to high-risk youth intervention organizations to provide evidence-based intervention services that reduce involvement in the criminal and juvenile justice system, increase school attendance, and refer high-risk teens into therapeutic programs that address trauma recovery and other mental health improvements. High-risk youth intervention grants shall be issued to no less than 2 and no more than 4 youth intervention organizations across Chicago.
5. Identify an experienced violence prevention organization to serve as the Lead Violence Prevention Convener for each eligible Chicago community and coordinate monthly meetings between violence prevention organizations and youth development organizations under this Act.
6. Select, when possible and appropriate, no fewer than 4 and no more than 6 approved technical assistance and training providers to deliver technical assistance and training to the violence prevention and youth development organizations that request to receive approved technical assistance and training.

In Greater Illinois:

1. The OFVP shall create local advisory councils for each eligible municipality with less than 1,000,000 residents for the purpose of obtaining recommendations on how to distribute funds in these areas to reduce firearm violence incidents. Local advisory councils shall have a minimum of 5 members with specified expertise.
2. Each local advisory council shall make recommendations on how to allocate distributed resources for its area based on information provided to them by the OFVP, local law enforcement data, and other locally available data.
3. The OFVP shall consider the recommendations and determine how to distribute funds through grants to community-based organizations and local governments.

In addition, the act requires that the Department of Healthcare and Family Services design; seek approval from the United States Department of Health and Human Services; and subject to federal approval and State appropriations for this purpose; implement a team-based model of care system to address trauma recovery from chronic exposure to firearm violence for Illinois adults.

D. OFVP Administrative Structure

As discussed, the Office of Firearm Violence Prevention (OFVP) was created under the Reimagine Public Safety Act (RPSA) (430 ILCS 69/35). Chris Patterson was appointed as the Assistant Secretary for the Illinois Department of Human Services Office of Firearm Violence Prevention and leads the activities of the office. The OFVP is closely aligned with the IDHS Division of Family and Community Services Bureau of Violence Prevention Services, which manages the solicitation, execution, and management of grant agreements. IDHS Violence Prevention responsibilities are outlined below:

OFVP: The OFVP provides broad oversight and approval for grant making processes and grantee monitoring and engagement. The OFVP builds and maintains relationships with community stakeholders and providers on the topic of violence prevention / reduction, particularly in targeted community areas, to ensure funded interventions are making an impact. The OFVP utilizes Reimagine Conveners to inform OFVP strategy and monitor progress. The OFVP also provides oversight for research and evaluation efforts and management of University of Illinois Chicago: Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE) as well as the Firearm Violence Research Group (FVRG). The OFVP also developed and manages the Greater Illinois Local Advisory Councils (LACs).

IDHS Division of Family and Community Services Bureau of Violence Prevention Services:

Responsible for awarding and monitoring funding to all RPSA grantees. They provide program oversight and oversee technical assistance and training so that community organizations can develop and implement high-quality services.

University of Illinois Chicago: Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE):

IPCE, under the direction of the OFVP, is responsible for providing research and evaluation support for the project. This includes managing the Firearm Violence Research Group (FVRG) which meets bi-monthly to advise on evaluation goals and program outcomes. In addition, IPCE is responsible for supporting all OFVP program reporting and soliciting grantee and program participant feedback to inform the program model. The following report was designed under their direction with additions from the OFVP.

3. OFVP ACTIVITIES

OFVP has actively been engaged with community stakeholders, holding townhall meetings, individual meetings, and faith-based collaboration meetings to educate identified RPSA communities on the funding, how to apply for it, and how to access IDHS trainings. The office has also engaged with the Latino Caucus and Black Caucus, including through individual meetings, to keep them abreast of what funding is available in their communities and where partnership and capacity existed. OFVP has had the oversight of the Conveners and held monthly meetings with them. All the Conveners have met individually with OFVP to discuss their roles, responsibilities, community collaboration efforts, develop emergency responses to crisis, provide recommendations, discuss completed needs analysis, and share lessons learned. The Conveners role continues to be one of great importance and is expansive, so OFVP continues to build on these partnerships by connecting Conveners to valuable community resources. More importantly, OFVP provides professional and lived experience guidance to the communities being served and the providers working in these areas.

OFVP has organized multiple collaborations to address root causes of violence and provide community organizations with needed resources, such as social services, education, employment and training. The office has ensured connections with the following agencies:

- Department of Children and Family Services Family Support Program-provides supports for guardianship support in cases of loss of parent of a youth along with other housing supports to maintain child in family's care,;
- Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity- provides employment supports, LIHEAP, weatherization programs, and Mental Health Collaboration-emergency/crisis response teams,
- Department of Juvenile Justice- which operates a pilot allowing providers to enter secured facilities to connect with highest risk youth and begin linkage prior to discharge;
- And, OFVP has connected the communities with all relevant IDHS services.

OFVP has met with each violence prevention grantee to ensure the voices and needs of those impacted by violence and the communities they come from are understood and being addressed and incorporated. Recommendations from each of the grantees is discussed with the Bureau of Firearm Violence Prevention.

A. Funding Distribution

Since launching the OFVP and Reimagine Public Safety Initiatives in late 2021, IDHS is pleased to report the following progress in distributing the \$250M ARPA investment that has been allocated to RPSA community violence prevention initiatives.

- The OFVP has released over \$230M in funding through 14 NOFO solicitations to communities and municipalities in Chicago and across the State that are disproportionately impacted by firearm violence.
- As of today, the OFVP has successfully committed \$71.5M in ARPA funding towards violence prevention and youth development efforts, statewide:
 - \$62.3M = Chicago
 - \$9.2M = Greater Illinois
- This includes 118 grants distributed to 70 grantees.
- Within the first quarter of calendar year 2023, the OFVP anticipates committing another \$72M in ARPA funding.
- By the end of FY23, the OFVP anticipates it will have committed approximately \$150M of the total \$250M ARPA allocation and will have another \$100M to commit in FY24.

The chart below lists all NOFOs distributed during the first year of OFVP operation.

NOFO	Release Date	Due Date
RPSA Violence Prevention Training, Technical Assistance and Support	12/10/2021	1/19/2022
RPSA Youth Development Training, Technical Assistance and Support	12/10/2021	1/19/2022
Reimagine Public Safety Act Conveners	1/21/2022	2/23/2022
Violence Prevention Services Chicago – Release 1	2/02/2022	3/9/2022
Youth Development Services Chicago – Release 1	2/16/2022	3/21/2022
RPSA High Risk Youth Intervention Services	2/18/2022	3/30/2022
Violence Prevention Services Chicago – Release 2	5/2/2022	Open and Rolling
Youth Development Services Chicago – Release 2	5/2/2022	Rolling but Closed 9/8/2022
Violence Prevention Greater Illinois	8/8/2022	9/16/2022
Youth Intervention Greater Illinois	8/18/2022	9/19/2022
Greater IL Trauma Informed Behavioral Health Services (GI-TIBHS)	9/9/2022	10/14/2022
Youth Intervention Chicago (RYDIS)	9/7/2022	10/19/2022
Greater IL Training, Technical, Assistance & Support (GI-TTAS)	9/30/2022	11/2/2022
Greater IL Youth Intervention and Trauma Informed TA	10/9/2022	11/2/2022
Greater IL Violence Prevention Council Coordinator (GI-VPPC)	10/7/2022	11/9/2022

3. OFVP ACTIVITIES

Each NOFO was competitively solicited and reviewed. IDHS worked to build a diverse and robust merit review process that involved both internal IDHS staff as well as external experts to provide thorough review of all applications. All applications needed to meet basic eligibility criteria including: receipt by due date; GATA pre-qualification; and submission of required documents. In addition, some NOFOs had geographic and/or experience eligibility criteria which applicants provided in their submission. The “rolling” NOFOs had a minimum point threshold of 75 to be recommended for funding. Please see a summary of applications received and the merit review process below:

RPSA Number of Applications and Awardees							
Notice of Funding Opportunities	Number of Apps Received	Number eligible for Review	Number of awarded grants	Number of awarded organizations	Number of Teams	Number of Reviewers	Percent of Reviewers are persons of color
Greater Illinois Trauma Informed Behavioral Health Services	18	14	11	11	2	6	67%
FY22 RVP Training and Technical Assistance	4	4	3	3	1	3	67%
FY22 RYD Training and Technical Assistance	5	5	3	3	1	3	67%
FY22 Reimagine Conveners	10	10	9	5	1	3	67%
Conveners - Exceptions	24	13	9	6	OFVP selections		
FY 22 Violence Prevention Services	52	48	37	22	6	18	67%
Violence Prevention Services Rolling (Rounds 1-4)	51	19	10	5	5	15	73%
Greater Illinois Violence Prevention Services	22	21	14	14	3	9	44%
FY 22 Youth Development Services	30	26	22	16	3	9	44%
Youth Development Services Rolling	46	18	12	10	4	12	92%
FY 22 High Risk Youth Services	5	4	4	4	1	3	25%
Greater Illinois Youth Intervention Services	30	28	16	11	4	12	42%
Chicago Youth Development and Intervention Services	35	32	24	21	4	12	58%
Greater Illinois Training and Technical Assistance	7	5	3	3	1	3	33%
Greater Illinois Violence Prevention Council Coordinator	11	9	4	4	2	6	33%
TOTALS	350	256	165	127	38	114	

*29 unduplicated submissions

3. OFVP ACTIVITIES

Throughout solicitation process, IDHS incorporated several new innovations in its grantmaking to ensure responsiveness to grantee feedback about its NOFO processes. After releasing the first round of NOFOs, IDHS conducted a feedback survey among potential applicants of the NOFO opportunities that were released to understand how to improve its processes. From that survey, IDHS gleaned the following key takeaways:

Application was complex and lengthy: Respondents felt the existing NOFO application, consisting of 5 main forms and 20 attachments, was difficult to navigate, too long, and had technical difficulties.

- Opportunity: Shorten and simplify application - Narrow the questions, streamline the application, and consider not requiring organizations to meet all program components.

Not enough time to complete: Considering the requirements of the application, respondents felt that a month-long application window was not enough time to submit.

- Opportunity: Provide more time for response - Open application window for at least 45 days, or 6–10 weeks. Consider rolling deadlines.

Lack of awareness: Many organizations that did not apply for NOFOs claimed lack of awareness of the NOFO opportunity as the greatest barrier to participation.

- Opportunity: Build awareness - Share NOFO opportunities via a variety of communication channels (e.g., sister agency websites, newsletter, social media, etc.)

Based on this feedback, IDHS adjusted its 2nd release of these NOFO opportunities by:

- **Streamlining and simplifying the application content as much as possible.** Though it was not possible to remove most required forms, IDHS worked to streamline questions and make the application more readable and accessible.
- **Increasing the amount of time for response by introducing 2nd Round Chicago Violence Prevention and Statewide Youth Development as rolling NOFOs.** IDHS obtained a Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) exception to be able to release and leave open these NOFOs for applications until the OFVP determined a sufficient response had been received. This allowed grantees greater flexibility in achieving the administrative requirements that are needed to apply as well as manage the staffing needed to complete and submit the grant. The intent of this change was to ensure application accessibility to smaller organizations that might lack the grant writing infrastructure to turn around a successful application quickly.
- **Elevating the NOFO marketing approach through engagement with a marketing firm and purchasing paid media promoting NOFOs.** Following the feedback received, OFVP engaged with a professional marketing practice to develop collateral that could be distributed widely and through paid marketing channels to ensure the widest possible awareness of OFVP opportunities. Collateral developed to this end can be found in Appendix A – Communications and Marketing Collateral.

In addition to this initial NOFO feedback, IDHS regularly met with community stakeholders and received extensive input from the OFVP's local advisory councils (described in section 3D below) regarding challenges presented by the current NOFO models and opportunities for improvement. In particular, IDHS received feedback that RPSA Youth Development, which was modeled after the existing Teen Reach Program, was inaccessible to those organizations who are providing youth development programming but not doing so against the strict Teen Reach requirements. Stakeholders expressed that the Teen Reach model was also only available to school engaged youth and left other at-risk youth who had been disengaged from the school system out. As a response, IDHS developed a more flexible model for providing youth development services under RPSA and released the more flexible Youth Intervention Model in both Greater Illinois and Chicago. The Youth Intervention model includes mentoring, employment skills development, life skills development, assistance with accessing education/ vocational programming and employment, as well as other activities that promote positive engagement for high-risk youth ages 11-24.

B. Additional Investment Strategies

In addition to the ARPA investments detailed above, several other critical funding sources have contributed to the OFVP's overall community violence impact. The OFVP continues to leverage the work and success of its traditional youth development funders under the Division of Family and Community Services. Investments for those programs are listed below:

In FY 23, the state invested \$67.6 million in non-RPSA/ARPA youth development and community violence response:

- \$20.9 million in Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services
- \$13.7 million in teen reach services
- \$19 million in youth employment programs
- \$7.4 million to assist homeless youth
- \$6.6 million for Redeploy Illinois programs

In FY 22, the state invested \$73.6 million in non-RPSA/ARPA youth development and community violence response:

- \$21.7 million in Comprehensive Community Based Youth Services
- \$17.4 million in teen reach services
- \$21.4 million in youth employment programs
- \$7.1 million to assist homeless youth
- \$5.6 million for Redeploy Illinois programs

These investments included an additional \$26 million that was distributed to these organizations to promote additional services and activities to occur over the summer of 2022 as the OFVP was working to distribute ARPA resources. This "summer surge" funding strategy contributed to providing services to 7643 additional youth across Illinois in Summer 2022.

Additional violence prevention efforts:

1. Summer surge funding of \$26 million to youth development organizations that can quickly increase capacity.
2. \$16.2M investment in Chicago Public Schools Back to our Future Program
 - **Flat Lining Violence Inspires Peace (FLIP):**
 - \$15M investment to be executed in December 2022
 - IDHS will fund a continuation of a four-year-old Chicago CRED and Communities

FLIP leverages the influence of community residents by partnering with young men and women who live in neighborhoods that are at a high risk for violence. These individuals are given a stipend to act as peacekeepers and mediate conflict in their own communities. They are also provided with training to de-escalate conflict.

Cook County Partnership (pending approval):

- ~\$25M investment

IDHS will provide funding to Cook County to fund an excess of applications they received for violence prevention services through their Justice Advisory Council RFP process. IDHS can quickly distribute funds to these providers who will deliver similar services to those identified in the RPSA.

3. OFVP ACTIVITIES

C. Program Administration:

DHS staff worked with each of the awarded grantees to review and approve grant budgets and In July 2022, DHS hosted a kick-off event with the RPSA grantees to provide the information needed to begin implementing their programs. The grantees selected a Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) provider which provided program specific or general capacity building trainings to the grantee staff. The TTA providers are also convening their grantees at least quarterly. In 2023, the TTA providers and DHS will convene grantees by program on a quarterly basis.

It is important that grantees are aware of other RPSA providers to share resources and learn from each other. DHS is implementing Groupsite, an innovative, online communication method grantees use to share and discuss issues across communities and grant programs.

Finally, DHS staff have received and reviewed quarterly program and monthly fiscal reporting materials from grantees. Staff work collaboratively with the grantees to answer questions and solve issues.

D. Local Advisory Council Convenings and Greater Illinois NOFO Strategy

The OFVP's Firearm Violence Research Group identified 15 municipalities or continuous geographic areas with the greatest concentration of firearm violence victims. These locations were identified by the volume and per capita rate of fatal/non-fatal firearm-shot victims in each municipality, excluding self-inflicted incidents, from 2016 through 2020. An additional community was selected in March 2022 as the 16th in rank order of concentrated firearm violence.

In accordance with the RPSA, the following municipalities with less than 1,000,000 residents are considered "eligible greater Illinois municipalities" and qualify for grants under the Act.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Aurora | 7. Decatur |
| 2. Belleville Cluster (Includes Belleville, East St. Louis, and Cahokia Heights) | 8. Joliet |
| 3. Berwyn-Cicero Cluster | 9. Kankakee |
| 4. Calumet City Cluster (Includes Calumet City, Harvey, Dolton, Riverdale, South Holland, Markham, Lansing) | 10. Maywood-Bellwood Cluster |
| 5. Chicago Heights Cluster (Includes Chicago Heights, Park Forest, and Sauk Village) | 11. Peoria |
| 6. Danville | 12. Rockford |
| | 13. Springfield |
| | 14. Urbana-Champaign Cluster |
| | 15. Waukegan-North Chicago Cluster |

The RPSA required that the OFVP create "local advisory councils" (LACs) for each of these designated service areas for the purpose of obtaining recommendations on how to distribute funds to reduce firearm incidents in municipalities with less than 1,000,000 persons.

Since March 2022, OFVP has convened LACs with the required member representation¹ in each municipality or continuous geographic area. The OFVP provided each LAC with firearm related data and the best available evidence on how to address the social determinants of health to reduce firearm violence. In turn, in May 2022, the LACs provided recommendations to the OFVP on how to allocate violence prevention resources based on information provided by the OFVP, local law enforcement and other available data.

Immediately following receipt of these recommendations, OFVP reviewed and consolidated all feedback into a comprehensive report that summarizes recommendations across municipalities. Details of the report can be reviewed at: [RPSA Local Advisory Council Summer 2022 Recommendations](#) Based on these consolidated recommendations, the OFVP developed a Greater Illinois funding strategy that includes releasing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to provide Youth Intervention programming in the eligible Greater Illinois communities identified above. The RPSA also requires the OFVP to allocate funding to Greater Illinois communities utilizing a formula approach. This approach considers fatal/non-fatal firearm-shot victim data along with other identified factors.

E. Research and Evaluation

The Firearms Violence Research Group (FVRG) serves as an advisory body to IDHS and provides research advice to the OFVP. The FVRG meets virtually every other month via Zoom and is composed of experts from various disciplines whose work focuses on violence prevention. Members are asked to attend meetings, review any materials shared, contribute to any papers or collective products created by the group, and provide advice to the office. As this is a public body, each meeting is livestreamed and open to public comment as required by the Illinois open meetings act. Current FVRG members are listed below.

Current FVRG Members as of December 2022

Name	Role	Title	Institution
Joe Hoereth	Member/ Chair	Director, Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement	University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)
Tammy Kochel	Member	Professor, Criminology and Criminal Justice	Southern Illinois University (SIU)
Darryl Kroner	Member	Professor, Criminology and Criminal Justice	Southern Illinois University (SIU)
Timothy Lavery	Member	Director, Research & Analysis Unit	Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA)
Soledad McGrath	Member	Co-Director, Neighborhood and Network Initiative	Northwestern University
David Olson	Member	Professor, Co-Director, Center for Criminal Justice	Loyola University Chicago
Andrew Papachristos	Member	Professor, Sociology	Northwestern University
Dr. Jon Patterson	Member	Assistant Professor, Criminology	Chicago State University
Eric Reinhart	Member	Political Anthropologist, Physician	Northwestern University/ Harvard
Kim Smith	Member	Director of Programs, Crime Lab and Education Lab	University of Chicago Crime and Education Labs
Dr. Lance Williams	Member	Assistant Director, Assistant Professor College of Education	Northeastern Illinois University

3. OFVP ACTIVITIES

The RPSA required that the first task of the research group be to develop a process to define the initial areas within Illinois eligible for funding. The FVRG approved the municipalities and community areas listed in Section 2 in December 2021, shortly after the body was created by an order of the governor. The FVRG held a total of 13 meetings, with 8 meetings in 2022. The meetings in 2022 were on February 1, February 15, March 15, May 17, July 19, September 20, and November 15. The group currently meets bi-monthly.

The research group has advised, discussed, or contributed directly to the following topics or tasks for the OFVP :

1. A review of research sources on root causes of firearms violence, and public health approach models to violence prevention
2. A review and discussion of potential intake assessment tools for violence prevention and youth development programs
3. A review of OFVP grantee performance measures, types of data to be collected, method and frequency of data collection
4. Discussed the need to limit the data collection burden on grantees, as well as to align OFVP data collection with that of potentially overlapping programs at the County and municipal levels
5. Reviewed and offered recommendations on data profiles for LAC municipalities
6. Discussed approaches to intermediate and long-term evaluation of violence prevention programming
7. Advised on methodology for a “Research Brief,” which encompasses the summary of program data and focus groups with grantees included in this report

One of the major challenges facing firearms violence research in Illinois is a lack of readily available data, both at the state or any centralized level, as well as the local level. Over the first quarter of 2023, the FVRG will engage in a study “Assessing Firearms Violence in Illinois”, with the goal of establishing a methodology for regularly generating a comprehensive set of data from a variety of sources that can be used to track the trends in firearms violence in Illinois on an annual and long-term basis.

F. Intergovernmental Collaboration

On June 21, 2021, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle sent a letter to the Governor and Mayor asking for their partnership in aligning and coordinating these historic investments in a meaningful and sustainable way over the next three to five years.

In response, all three units of government identified executive level staff to be part of an Intergovernmental Municipal Working Group (“Intergovernmental Group”) charged with the strategic planning and coordination, decision-making and execution of ARPA related investments. Several initial meetings were held to identify shared priorities including violence prevention, infrastructure (capital improvements, water infrastructure, transportation), mental health and economic development.

As the work evolves, there will be a need for resourcing the Intergovernmental Group (particularly the Violence Prevention sub-group) to scale up and deepen the impact of its coordination including project management support, thought partnership on evaluation (including development of shared outcomes/metrics, data systems and reporting) and the development of capacity building programs and services for organizations applying for public funding.

- i. The Group has had several meetings with the Partnership for Safe and Peaceful Communities (PSPC) to discuss these needs and identify opportunities to align and resource their overlapping violence prevention efforts in the short and long term.

On behalf of the collaboration group, the County requested the pro-bono assistance of the Civic Consulting Alliance (CCA) to help with the initial scope and formulation of the VP coordination and they graciously agreed to do so on a short-term basis.

- i. In August-October 2021, CCA facilitated three workshops where representatives from the City of Chicago, Cook County, and State of Illinois met to coordinate strategies to reduce violence in Cook County leveraging the significant the ARPA relief dollars.

ii. Over the three workshops, the group:

- a. Established common definitions for violence reduction efforts, using a public health lens
- b. Reviewed data on current year funding at the program, grantee and geographic level
- c. Shared priorities for upcoming funding (including ARPA)
- d. Agreed on two priorities for coordination going forward, and
- e. Launched two working groups to focus on these priorities (begin meeting in Nov).
The established working groups over-arching goals are to:

Coordinate and share information on funding solicitations for community-based street outreach and intervention services for youth and adults at highest risk of violence, to maximize targeted impact of funding and streamline the process for applicants/recipients develop an integrated approach to capacity building for current/potential community-based recipients of public violence prevention funding, to avoid duplicative efforts and maximize support for recipients to scale and achieve outcomes

G. Capacity Building

IDHS/OFVP has been intentional in capacity building efforts, especially for smaller, grassroots organizations. In order to assist in building up providers, attracting new organizations, and being more transparent, IDHS initiated multiple capacity building approaches:

- i. Legislative Outreach, Trainings, and Listening Sessions
- ii. GATA Equity Initiatives
- iii. Prequalification Support for RPSA Applicants
- iv. Extensive Training and Technical Assistance for Grantees
- v. Expert Consultation for Applicants and Grantees

H. Communications and Marketing

The Illinois Department of Human Services Office of Firearm Violence Prevention has partnered with DCC Marketing, to provide aid across eligible RPSA communities, municipalities, and associated programs. With the support of DCC's analytical excellence and supportive consulting framework, OFVP's communications plan will enhance awareness and increase engagement with RPSA programs in the 26 RPSA Communities. This partnership will leverage DCC's marketing and communication strategies to ensure messaging remains relevant. To bring awareness to the Office of Firearm Violence Prevention, DCC Marketing has prepared communication and marketing strategies/campaigns by utilizing the following approaches:

1. Social media initial awareness campaign (8/17 to 9/23)

- i. Facebook/Instagram
 - Target: Work in community and social services industries; community & club page admins, upload list of pre-qualified programs
- ii. LinkedIn
 - Target: Work at one of the pre-qualified programs, part of relevant member groups, job title in this field
- iii. Twitter
 - Target: Keywords

2. Press releases (IDHS)

3. GATA pre-certified email (IDHS)

4. Public service announcement (DCC)

5. Community based organizations email (DCC)

6. Cook County Suburban Publishers, Inc. PSA email (DCC)

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DATA

A. Background and Overview of Program Data

The summary of data in this report reflects the first period of program data collection under RPSA. The data presented comes from reports submitted by grantees to the OFVP for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2022 (April through June) and the first quarter of fiscal year 2023 (July through September). Based on reports for the first two quarters of programming, the activities and accomplishments of grantees and the OFVP include:

1. Nearly 5,000 individuals (4,968) received services from OFVP grantees, including 2,536 individuals from Violence Prevention grantees and 2,432 individuals from Youth Development grantees
2. Roughly 28% of individuals served were identified as Hispanic or Latino of any race, 58% were non-Hispanic or Latino, and 14% of the total individuals served did not demographic information about race/ethnicity. Non-Hispanic Black /African American individuals comprised 53% of total individuals served and over 91% of those who did not identify as Hispanic or Latino.
3. A total of 20 active Youth Development grantee sites served youth in FY2022 and FY2023, with an average of 758 youth in daily attendance in Q4 FY2022 and 988 in daily attendance in Q1 FY2023.
4. A total of 1,968 individuals receiving services from violence prevention grantees were served through street outreach initiatives.
5. A total of 93 comprehensive trainings were provided by Training, Technical Assistance, and Support (TTAS) Providers to Violence Prevention grantees in FY 2022 and FY 2023. Additionally, a total of 78 meetings and 32 events were held in Q1 FY2023 by the chosen RPSA Conveners.

B. Notes on Program Data

The program data presented in this report has some limitations, which is common in the early stages of a new grant cycle. In order to collect program data as soon as grantees began providing services, the OFVP provided grantees with program-specific forms to manually input program data. This process resulted in some errors and discrepancies that could not be resolved prior to this report. As a result, the totals do not sum up in every program table, primarily due to individuals receiving multiple services from the same provider and inconsistency in data entry. Any details regarding specific data issues are outlined in footnotes throughout this report. Nevertheless, the data in this report represents the latest and best estimates of service outputs for these grant programs and the OFVP is taking steps to improve and more fully automate the data collection and reporting system for future quarters.

C. Violence Prevention – Chicago

The purpose of RPSA violence prevention services is to provide comprehensive violence prevention programming intended to mitigate, reduce, and prevent violent behavior, in particular firearm violence. OFVP sought and selected applications from organizations with the ability to connect with those individuals at highest risk of harming someone or being harmed by firearm violence. The comprehensive violence prevention program is inclusive of the three required program components: street outreach, case management, and victim services. This program also includes collaboration with law enforcement and events to foster community cohesion.

OFVP awarded a total 36 RPSA violence prevention grants to 22 organizations under the RPSA NOFO 22-444-80-2774. Grants were awarded for a 27-month period through June 30, 2024. In order to provide more opportunities to community-based agencies, OFVP posted the first ever “rolling NOFO” which reviews applications in an on-going basis and is still currently open to eligible applicants in Chicago. Through this rolling NOFO, OFVP awarded another 16 RPSA violence prevention grants to 10 organizations. Most importantly, 7 of these 10 would not have received funding if not for this Rolling NOFO approach. In addition, three RPSA Chicago communities, New City, Northside Cluster and Riverdale, now have violence prevention providers because of this Rolling NOFO.

Grantees are required to report quarterly on their grant activities for that period, through submission of Periodic Performance Reports (PPRs), which includes a wide range of program data. To date, the OFVP has received two quarterly reports for violence prevention grantees – fourth quarter of fiscal year 2022 (referred to as “Q4 FY2022”) which includes April, May, and June of 2022, and first quarter of fiscal year 2023, which includes July, August, and September 2022 (referred to as “Q1 FY2023”). At the time of this report, reports for the second quarter of fiscal year 2023 were not yet due.

Because these reports covered the initial program set up period as well as implementation, grantees varied in the amount of progress they were able to report on program activities. Some grantees were engaged in hiring and program set up during Q4 FY2022 and were unable to provide data on individuals served, while others utilized funding to support work that was already underway. As a result, program data is limited for FY2022. Most groups provided more robust data in their second PPR for Q1 FY2023.

Collectively, over 36 grantees provided services to 2,536 unique individuals through street intervention, case management and victim services for the two reporting periods. In these same two quarters, 1,968 individuals received street outreach services, 778 received victim advocacy services, and 784 received case management services. Some individuals received multiple services and thus are counted in each of the totals for the services they received. This program data is summarized from grantee reports and is presented in Table 1 below.

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DATA

Table 1. Violence Prevention Program Data, Q4 FY2022 and Q1 FY2023²

Program activity - Violence Prevention	Q4FY22	Q1FY23	
<i>New Individuals Served by Quarter</i>	1389	1147	
<i>Continuing Individuals Served by Quarter</i>	N/A	393	
<i>Total Individuals Served by Quarter</i>	1389	1540	
	Q4FY22*	Q1FY23*	Total*
Individuals Served by Street Outreach	989	979	1,968
Individuals Served by Victim Services and Advocacy	304	474	778
Individuals Served by Case Management	N/A	784	784
Individuals referred by Victim Advocacy or Outreach Services	657	N/A	657
Individuals referred by Outreach Workers or Victim Advocacy during the Report Period with a Case Plan in place	210	452	662
Individuals served during the Report Period with a Case Plan currently under development	N/A	302	302

** Some individuals received multiple services and thus are counted in each of the totals for the services they received*

Grantees were also required to report on the demographics of individuals they served. Tables 2 through 4 below break down the data from quarterly grantee reports by race and ethnicity, age, and on gender identity of individuals served, respectively.

² Note: The race/ethnicity data from one grantee was omitted from this table due to a presumed error in its reporting. This issue will be clarified in the next reporting cycle.

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DATA

Table 2. Violence Prevention by Race and Ethnicity, Q4 FY2022 and Q1 FY2023²

<i>Race and Ethnicity of Individuals Served</i>	FY22	%	FY23	%	Total	%
Hispanic or Latino						
American Indian / Alaska Native	25	2%	70	6%	95	4%
Asian	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Black / African American	99	7%	219	19%	318	13%
Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	21	2%	0	0%	21	1%
Multiple Races	117	8%	74	6%	191	8%
White	54	4%	216	19%	270	11%
Total Hispanic or Latino	316	23%	579	50%	895	35%
Non-Hispanic or Latino						
American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Asian	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Black / African American	454	33%	554	48%	1,008	40%
Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	4	0%	0	0%	4	0%
Multiple Races	3	0%	0	0%	3	0%
White	49	4%	7	1%	56	2%
Total Non-Hispanic or Latino	510	37%	561	49%	1,071	42%
Missing / Unknown	563	40%	7	1%	568	22%
Total Individuals Served	1,389		1,147		2,536	

Table 3. Violence Prevention Grants by Age, Q4 FY2022 and Q1 FY2023

Age	FY22	FY23	%	Total	%
18 and under	N/A	197	17%	197	17%
19-24 years old	N/A	280	24%	280	24%
25-30 years old	N/A	238	21%	238	21%
31-40 years old	N/A	165	14%	165	14%
41-50 years old	N/A	142	12%	142	12%
51-60 years old	N/A	79	7%	79	7%
61+ years old	N/A	45	4%	45	4%
Missing / Unknown	N/A	1	0%	1	0%
Total reported by Age	N/A	1,146		1,146	
Total Individuals Served	N/A	1,147		1,147	

² Note: The race/ethnicity data from one grantee was omitted from this table due to a presumed error in its reporting. This issue will be clarified in the next reporting cycle.

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DATA

Table 4. Violence Prevention Grants by Gender, Q4 FY2022 and Q1 FY2023

Gender	FY22	FY23	%	Total	%
Female	N/A	401	35%	401	35%
Male	N/A	727	63%	727	63%
Non-binary, Transfemale, Transmale, Other	N/A	0	0%	0	0%
Missing / Unknown Gender	N/A	19	2%	19	2%
Total Reported by Gender	N/A	1,128		1,128	
Total Individuals Served	N/A	1,147		1,147	

D. RPSA Conveners - Chicago

The RPSA called for meaningful community and provider engagement that supports a strong infrastructure for violence prevention providers. OFVP NOFO #22-444-80-2773, known as the “RPSA Reimagine Conveners” grant, provided grants to 18 organizations charged with bringing stakeholders together to help strategize and make plans to address the issues most impacting them. The Reimagine Conveners are expected to work with the OFVP to help build capacity within Chicago’s most impacted community areas to reduce firearm violence by encouraging effective, collaborative working relationships across providers in such disciplines as violence prevention, mental health, and youth development.

Conveners are asked to report on their activities, which include meetings with providers, community events, and meetings with other conveners. Table 5 summarizes conveners program activity.

Table 5. RPSA Convener Grant Select Program Data, Q1 FY2023³

Program activity - Conveners	Q1 FY23
Number of Monthly, Emergency, or Other Meeting	78
Number of total events held (all types)	32
Number of Reimagine Convener Meetings with OFVP	4

³ Note: The OFVP switched from a monthly reporting format to quarterly for Conveners grants during these two periods, likely resulting in some of the data discrepancies in the reports. Where there were discrepancies, we prioritized the data actually entered by participants themselves. Q3 reports are expected to be more complete.

E. Youth Development - Statewide

The goal of the Reimagine Youth Development program (RYD) is to provide youth with safe environments and caring adults to guide them toward educational success, to empower them with the social and emotional skills necessary to forge paths toward healthy development and disengagement from high-risk behaviors. The RYD provides engaging social, physical, and personal development activities intended to build resilience and the skills associated with healthy social, emotional, and identity development.

The program provides the following menu of prevention-focused, youth development areas of service around which the RYD program will be designed:

1. Improving academic performance
 2. Life skills education
 3. Caregiver involvement
 4. Recreation, sports, and cultural and artistic activities
 5. Positive adult mentors
 6. Service learning
 7. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Learning
- Additional services appropriate to the youth and/or their community may also be provided.

OFVP awarded a total of 22 RPSA youth development grants to 20 organizations under the RPSA NOFO 22-444-80-2775. Grants were awarded for a 27-month period through June 30, 2024. Similar to the violence prevention NOFO process, DHS issued a “rolling NOFO” for the youth development program. Through this rolling NOFO, OFVP awarded another 11 RPSA youth development grants to 7 organizations. Most importantly, 4 of these 7 would not have received funding if not for this Rolling NOFO approach. In addition, 5 RPSA communities, Austin, Englewood, Southwest Cluster, Waukegan Cluster and West Pullman, now have youth development providers because of this Rolling NOFO.

Grantees are required to report quarterly on their grant activities for that period, through submission of Periodic Performance Reports (PPRs), which includes a wide range of program data. To date, the OFVP has received two quarterly reports for youth development grantees – fourth quarter of fiscal year 2022 (referred to as “Q4 FY2022”) which includes April, May, and June of 2022, and first quarter of fiscal year 2023, which includes July, August, and September 2022 (referred to as “Q1 FY2023”). At the time of this report, reports for the second quarter of fiscal year 2023 were not yet due.

Because these reports covered the initial program set up period as well as implementation, grantees varied in the amount of progress they were able to report on program activities. Some grantees were engaged in hiring and program set up during Q4 FY2022 and were unable to provide data on individuals served, while others utilized funding to support work that was already underway. As a result, program data is limited for FY22. Most groups provided more robust data in their second PPR for Q1 FY2023.

The scale of service delivery for youth development programs can be measured by the number of youth enrolled, the number of sites that served youth through these grants, and average daily attendance at those sites. Table 6 below shows this data for OFVP youth development grantees.

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DATA

Table 6. Youth Development Grant Program Data, Q4 FY2022 and Q1 FY2023

Program Activity - Youth Development Grants	FY22	FY23	Total
Number of Sites	20	20	20
Youth Enrolled	991	1,441	2,432
Average Daily Attendance	756	988	872
Actual Days Open	631	1,003	1,634

Table 7 summarizes race and ethnicity data reported by youth development grantees, while Table 8 presents data on gender and age of individuals served in FY22 Q4 and FY23 Q1.

Table 7. Youth Development Grants by Race and Ethnicity, Q4 FY2022 and Q1 FY2023^{4,5}

Race and Ethnicity of Individuals Served	FY22	%	FY23	%	Total	%
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>						
American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0%	0	0%	12	0%
Asian	0	0%	2	0%	2	0%
Black / African American	63	6%	156	11%	219	9%
Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Multiple Races	20	2%	30	2%	50	2%
White	25	3%	194	13%	219	9%
Total Hispanic or Latino	125	13%	382	27%	507	21%
<i>Non-Hispanic or Latino</i>						
American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0%	2	0%	2	0%
Asian	9	1%	81	6%	90	4%
Black / African American	724	73%	891	62%	1,615	66%
Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	7	1%	0	0%	7	0%
Multiple Races	31	3%	37	3%	68	3%
White	6	1%	9	1%	15	1%
Total Non-Hispanic or Latino	810	78%	1,020	71%	1,797	74%
Missing / Unknown	89	9%	39	3%	128	5%
Total Individuals Served	991		1,441		2,432	

⁴ Note: One grantee did not report demographic data and one grantee's demographic data was omitted due to a presumed error in its reporting. This issue will be clarified in the next reporting cycle.

⁵ In FY22, one grantee created a new racial category labeled Latino/Hispanic, which included 17 individuals. These individuals are included in the Total of Hispanic or Latino individuals of any race, but are not listed in the subcategories listed above.

4. SUMMARY OF PROGRAM DATA

Table 8. Youth Development Grants by Gender and Age, Q4 FY2022 and Q1 FY2023⁶

<i>Gender and Age of individuals served</i>	FY22	%	FY23	%	Total	%
<i>Male</i>						
6 to 10 years old	129	13%	218	15%	347	14%
11 to 13 years old	232	23%	276	19%	508	21%
14 to 17 years old	132	13%	210	15%	342	14%
Other	1	0%	33	2%	34	1%
Total Male	494	50%	737	51%	1,231	51%
<i>Female</i>						
6 to 10 years old	132	13%	240	17%	372	15%
11 to 13 years old	170	17%	244	17%	414	17%
14 to 17 years old	99	10%	149	10%	248	10%
Other	2	0%	29	2%	31	1%
Total Female	403	41%	662	46%	1,065	44%
<i>Nonbinary</i>						
6 to 10 years old	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
11 to 13 years old	4	0%	2	0%	6	0%
14 to 17 years old	1	0%	1	0%	2	0%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total Nonbinary	5	1%	3	0%	8	0%
Missing / Unknown	89	9%	39	3%	128	5%
Total Individuals Served	991		1,441		2,432	

⁶ Note: One grantee did not report demographic data and one grantee's demographic data was omitted due to a presumed error in its reporting. This issue will be clarified in the next reporting cycle.

F. Training and Technical Assistance Support (TTAS) - Chicago

The Illinois Office of Firearm Violence Prevention selected RPSA Violence Prevention Training, Technical Assistance, and Support (RVP-TTAS) providers to deliver training, technical assistance, and support to IDHS-funded RPSA Violence Prevention Organizations in the eligible areas. These providers were expected to provide comprehensive, racial equity-influenced, and culturally responsive training, technical assistance, and support to RPSA Violence Prevention Organizations requesting assistance.

In addition to TA provided by TTAS providers, OFVP staff visited and met with grantees as well. Tables 9 and 10 summarize TTAS trainings and the number of OFVP staff site visits and meetings.

Table 9. Trainings Provided by TTAS Providers to Youth Development and Violence Prevention Providers, Q1 FY2023	
<i>Program activity – TTA Training Sessions</i>	Q1 FY23
Youth Development Providers	49
Violence Prevention Providers	44
Total TTA Training Sessions	93

5. PROGRESS OF PROGRAMS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

A. High Risk Youth Intervention Services – Chicago

The goal of the Reimagine - High Risk Youth Intervention Services (HRYIS) program is to serve high-risk youth in identified Chicago communities with highly concentrated firearm violence. The HRYIS program requires program participants receive “nationally recognized mental health assessment delivered by a qualified mental health professional certified to provide services to Medicaid recipients (430 ILCS 69/35) In addition, the RPSA directs the HRYS grantees to receive referrals from the Youth Development grantees. Four grantees were selected through RPSA NOFO 22-444-80-2776. During FY 23, the HRYS grantees were able to high qualified mental health professionals and receive training and technical assistance. The HRYS grantees are providing mental health services to the violence prevention grantees, in addition to working with youth development grantees. Data for this program is still pending.

B. Violence Prevention Services – Greater Illinois

Like the Chicago Violence Prevention grant program, the Greater Illinois Violence Prevention Services program is to provide comprehensive violence prevention programming intended to mitigate, reduce, and prevent violent behavior, in particular firearm violence. OFVP sought and selected applications from organizations with the ability to connect with those individuals at highest risk of harming someone or being harmed by firearm violence. The comprehensive violence prevention program is inclusive of the three required program components: street outreach, case management, and victim services. This program also includes collaboration with law enforcement and events to foster community cohesion.

In the fall of 2022, OFVP awarded 11 RPSA violence prevention grants to 11 organizations under the RPSA NOFO 22-444-80-2774-03. These grants will serve 10 Greater Illinois Areas, will receive training and technical assistance from a RPSA VPS TTA grantee and will be funded through June 30, 2024. OFVP plans to reissue this NOFO in early 2023.

C. Trauma Informed Behavioral Health Services – Greater Illinois

To goal of the Trauma Informed Behavioral Health Services (TIMBHS) grant program seeks to address the strong correlation between exposure to violence and detrimental mental and physical health outcomes by funding a variety of trauma informed behavioral health services including mental and behavioral health interventions that address trauma recovery and other mental health improvements, specifically to mediate the high correlation between family adversity, trauma and violence, and subsequent involvement in gun related activity. Required activities include screening and assessment; evidence-based approaches to psychoeducation including psychological first aid; resource navigation/ service linkage; and behavioral health therapy. Grantees will also be funded to provide community training and outreach focused on recognizing and reacting to signs of trauma.

In the fall of 2022, OFVP awarded 11 RPSA TIBHS grants to 11 organizations under the RPSA NOFO 23-444-80-2600. These grants will serve 5 Greater Illinois areas, will receive training and technical assistance from a RPSA TTA provider selected under NOFO 23-444-80-3014 and will be funded through June 30, 2024. OFVP plans to reissue this NOFO in early 2023.

D. Youth Intervention Services Greater Illinois

The goal of the Youth Intervention Services grant program seeks to fund a variety of Youth Intervention Services that utilize evidence-informed programming and services which will improve youth outcomes and decrease risk factors associated with firearm violence. These services include mentoring, caregiver engagement; life skills development; employment readiness, skills development and support; as well as other activities that promote positive youth outcomes. This flexible approach was a direct result of the Greater Illinois Local Area Council's funding priorities and overall community feedback.

In the fall of 2022, OFVP awarded 16 RPSA YIS grants to 11 organizations under the RPSA NOFO 23-444-80-3005. These grants will serve 13 Greater Illinois areas, will receive training and technical assistance from a RPSA TTA provider selected under NOFO 23-444-80-3014 and will be funded through June 30, 2024. OFVP plans to reissue this NOFO in early 2023.

E. Chicago Youth Development and Intervention Services

OFVP received feedback that a more flexible youth development NOFO was needed for RPSA communities. To that end, the Chicago Youth Development and Intervention Services grant program seeks to fund a variety of Youth Development and Intervention Services that utilize evidence-informed programming and services which will improve youth outcomes and decrease risk factors associated with firearm violence. Instead of being prescriptive on the type of program required, RPSA allowed providers to submit the type of programs they determined were effective in reducing violence and creating better outcomes for youths in their communities. These services include mentoring, caregiver engagement; life skills development; employment readiness, skills development and support; as well as other activities that promote positive youth outcomes.

In the fall of 2022, OFVP awarded 25 RPSA CYDIS grants to 21 organizations under the RPSA NOFO 23-444-80-3007. These grants will serve 15 Chicago communities, including 4 communities that had not previously received youth development funding. These communities are Burnside, East Garfield Park, Northside Cluster and South Lawndale. All 25 RPSA CYDIS grants will be funded through June 30, 2024. OFVP plans to reissue this NOFO in early 2023.

F. Training, Technical Assistance & Support – Greater Illinois

The purpose of the Training, Technical Assistance and Support grant (TTA) program for Greater Illinois is to deliver training, technical assistance, and support to IDHS-funded RPSA Youth Intervention Services and Trauma Informed Behavioral Health Organizations in the sixteen Greater Illinois areas. The TTA providers have:

- Demonstrated experience expertise delivering training, technical assistance and support to a wide variety of youth serving organizations on the front lines of service delivery.
- Experience delivering organized training to adult and emerging adult learners that includes experience training non-provider staff.
- Demonstrated history of ensuring high quality programming and efficient program delivery.

In the fall of 2022, OFVP awarded three RPSA TTA grants to 3 organizations under the RPSA NOFO 23-444-80-3014. These grants will be funded through June 30, 2024. OFVP plans to reissue this NOFO in early 2023.

G. Violence Prevention Council Coordinator- Greater Illinois

The purpose of the Violence Prevention Council Coordinator (VPCC) will encourage effective, collaborative working relationships across providers in such disciplines as violence prevention, mental health, and youth development. They will continue and expand each municipality's LAC, under the new name Violence Prevention Coordinating Council (VPCC), to build consensus around community priorities and resource needs related to reducing firearm violence and increasing public safety. VPCC coordinating organizations will also help inform and/or represent their municipalities in public safety forums, support planning to reduce firearm violence, and convene emergency response meetings that require immediate attention. Additionally, they will help coordinate more integrated services in their community through formalized agreements among providers.

In the fall of 2022, OFVP awarded 4 grants to 4 organizations under RPSA NOFO 23-444-80-3023.

OFVP plans to reissue this NOFO in early 2023.

- Be slower as organizations adapt to new roles and expanded services. Some concrete examples include grant-writing support and allowing additional time for planning and reflecting on program quality.

6. GRANTEE LEARNING

IPCE held focus groups in October 2022 with OFVP grantees who are working directly with individuals at the community level. These grantees shared their insights and perspectives on what aspects of RPSA programming is working well, challenges in their work, and different ways that the OFVP might better support providers moving forward. The goals of the focus groups were to 1) identify and understand critical ingredients of success and 2) identify and understand barriers to success.

- 1. 21 total focus group participants represented the following OFVP grantees:**
- 2. 18 individual organizations (note that some organizations have multiple grants):**
 - a. 2 Technical Assistance providers
 - b. 14 Youth Development
 - c. 5 Violence Prevention
- 3. 69 total grants represented, including:**
 - a. 4 High risk youth services grants
 - b. 25 Youth development grants
 - c. 40 Violence prevention grants

The focus group discussions included questions regarding the following topics:

1. Critical Ingredients/Barriers and Impact of OFVP Funding
2. Case Management
3. Street Intervention
4. Trauma-informed Services
5. Evaluation/Measures of Success

The research team at IPCE conducted a thematic analysis of detailed focus group notes using the qualitative data analysis software QDA Miner. After coding the documents separately, the research team came together to discuss codes and consolidate them into prevalent themes with common threads between conversations.

One of the goals of the focus groups was to understand the critical ingredients for success of violence prevention. Three chief elements grantees identified were:

1. addressing root causes to violence;
2. community outreach and social capital;
3. collaboration with other organizations

It should be noted how well these factors align with the current holistic approach and emphasis of the full range of current OFVP grants.

Barriers to success included issues that prevented grantees from optimizing these three critical factors. Those included:

1. funding challenges, particularly how grantees were allowed to spend funds;
2. collaboration challenges, particularly when engaging with local schools; and
3. overemphasis on programmatic availability rather than administrative capacity.

It should be noted that several providers expressed positive feedback for the Office of Violence Prevention. Providers appreciated that the OFVP is supporting their programming and enabling them to deliver services to hundreds of additional youth. The emphasis on barriers stemmed from the recent launch of programming. Providers saw an opportunity to discuss how these emerging programs and support services could improve in their future collaboration with the OFVP. The sections that follow provide additional details on these growth opportunities, as expressed by individuals working on the front lines of violence prevention.

A. Critical Ingredients for Success

Grantees identified critical ingredients for success of youth development and violence prevention programming. This section describes three of those ingredients, which provide context for understanding why the barriers described (in section 6b below) were inhibitive to organizations.

1. Addressing Root Causes and Basic Needs

Addressing root causes to violence was a driving factor for most respondents' work and a fundamental component of programs. Grantees recognize the long-term impact of community disinvestment as a root cause of violence and want to build comprehensive services, safe spaces, and available resources. Providers identified food, housing, and other unmet needs as underlying risk factors for getting involved with violence, for example:

People can't pay their rents, their bills.....They are the ones that are most susceptible to being involved with violence. We have to engage them.

A youth development grantee framed their impact in terms of both immediate safe haven for youth and a glimpse into potential opportunities for young people's future:

Providing young people with a positive safe place [is] number one....Offering them opportunities—showing young people so much more than what they have seen or experienced with their community limitations.

2. Social Capital & Community Outreach

Having social capital in a community allows grantees to maximize impact of violence prevention activities. Social capital refers to the trust and relationships with community residents that grantees work continuously to build through engagement and service activities. Community-entrenched organizations that have deep understanding of the violence problem and can operate “organically” as one participant put it. This participant suggested that organizations who do not have this depth of understanding or social capital may have limited impact.

When violence happens in the community, it is almost an organic way that [people] reach out to us [with] the intricacies that are happening in the neighborhood. It's incumbent on us...and because we have a bit of social capital with the community, we can utilize relentless outreach.

Community outreach refers to activities typically delivered in the aftermath of a shooting that aim to support victims and families while preventing potential retaliation in critical moments. An example of community outreach is crisis intervention, as one violence prevention participant described:

We receive notice when there is a shooting or violent act. Our [crisis response] team that is on call 24 hours, they go out to the actual hospital to make a connection with the victim or victim's family. In the midst of that you have a lot going on, grief, anger, family members and friends have a tendency of showing up there. We send two members from our staff there to try to calm people down...it's important that we work together to diffuse the situation.

Another component of community outreach—victim advocacy—is also critical for success. Several participants mentioned the importance of being able to bring food and drinks to victims' families and friends who spend long hours in the hospital after a shooting happens:

[We] try to bring resources with us, something tangible, food and drink...That's the initial meet and greet...You are walking into a hostile situation, not in a negative way, just emotions are high. You have to understand and assess. If we come with a table and coolers, we start feeding people, and they let their guard down.

3. Interagency Collaboration

Collaboration can enhance the collective capacity of providers working in underserved communities.

From the grantees' perspectives, violence crosses neighborhood boundaries where organizations operate, which necessitates partnerships, as one provider explained:

We have to bring in community stakeholders...Shootings are happening with individuals from different communities. And we know that if we don't communicate with each other [across neighborhoods and organizations] all we are doing is perpetuating the cycle.

Many of the grantees discussed the need to partner with schools despite providing programming outside of the school day. Success in school partnerships varied among grantees, but those who had built a trusting relationship with a school partner considered that a victory critical to the overall impact of violence prevention efforts.

B. Barriers to Success

This section describes the barriers to success perceived by grantees. These barriers directly impeded grantees' abilities to maximize the critical ingredients of success. One additional barrier that grantees identified was inadequate administrative support to complement programmatic growth.

1. Funding Challenges

Grantees expressed the need for more consistent funding with fewer restrictions on spending.

Spending restrictions, particularly on housing and food, burdens organizations trying to address root causes of violence and prevents them from building social capital in a community. According to providers, these restrictions contradict organizations' efforts to build prevention infrastructure. Some participants talked about spending from their own salaries to compensate for grant restrictions on food. Restrictions on spending grant money for housing was also a hindrance.

A lot of the time, this stuff comes from our pockets. We will go buy them groceries, that's what we do, that's who we are as people. When families are hungry, we need to be able to bring them food.

The grant may not cover food—some of those grants don't allow you to provide or allocate money for food.

The biggest problem we see all the time is housing. So many restrictions for housing, a lot of it is temporary...We need a holistic approach that touches every single component of a person's life. It can't be piecemeal, it has to be holistic. It's not about trying to give away money, it's about helping people be sustainable on their own.

Consistency of funding was a barrier to hiring and retaining staff. Smaller, low-capacity organizations face the risk of losing people they hire with grant money if that money runs out after a couple years. Organizations in the violence prevention space need to hire people with lived experience who are trusted and respected in the community as part of building and maintaining social capital. Staff turnover damages community trust, compromising a critical component of the work.

2. Collaboration Challenges

Collaboration, while critical for success, takes time and effort to establish. Competition between organizations presented barriers to collaboration. Collaborating with schools was particularly challenging, as several of the grantees pointed out:

It's been very difficult...we have to go through the superintendent for each district. They have not reached out to us since June even to say that they are interested —no communication.

Collaborating with schools had unique challenges, including logistics (i.e. when was space was available for programming) and philosophy (restorative vs punitive practices). One provider said that schools would not allow youth with behavioral issues to participate in programs, which excludes a big part of the target population of violence prevention services. In another instance, a provider explained how funding restrictions can inhibit the ability for organizations to collaborate with schools because of limitations on the ability to modify components of the violence prevention model that the grant supports. Implementation restrictions tied to funding, in this case, hindered collaboration with the school:

Working with the schools, that's a tremendous challenge...The school would like us to partner with them and do more wrap-around services. We will come around and do life skills, and de-escalation. But of course the grant will not allow us to do that...Even when the schools tell us, we love what you are doing, but it is in conflict with what the grant wants us to do.

3. Administrative Support

Although the grants allow for some administrative costs, providers expressed the need for additional training and support to build their capacity. This was particularly important for smaller community-based organizations that have the social capital to engage in violence prevention work. The funder's emphasis on maximizing programmatic hours and other tangible outputs may take away from program quality and ultimately, from the impact of violence prevention efforts.

You gotta be able to invest, take a chance and trust that an organization will grow. Of course you can also provide technical support, like training, maybe systems. Helping smaller organizations with systems when it comes to growth and building their capacity... The best thing to note is that funders need to recognize that organizations need administrative support too, not just programmatically.

A youth development provider elaborated on the need for more support, more realistic expectations about timing of impact, and more emphasis on evaluation:

Our funders need to recognize that sometimes they put these outrageous expectations around the time that you can facilitate a program. The days that you have to be open, and I get it, they want to make sure we are providing as much service. But the reality is that people in general need to take care of themselves, people need to take time off...The other thing, it does not allow for quality and robust programming, if you do not allow time for them to prepare or for professional development. All these things take time. I get it, you want young people in a safe place, but if you want to make an impact you have to invest in the people and the program. You have to allow time. If we break things down, prep, implement, and sit back and reflect and document and learn, and then you do it all over again. Allowing people more time for a better program is a resource we don't have. Because we are always pushing to meet more days. It ends up being a hindrance. It hinders a quality program.

C. Early Stage of Grantee Activity

All grantees are in the early stages of their grant activity, even though many organizations operated pre-existing violence prevention programming prior to receiving the grant. Some programs are relatively new— in operation for under a year. At the time quantitative reports were received and focus groups were conducted, many participants had just a few months of program activity under their belts. Therefore, it was difficult for some to connect their reflections to many specific examples. Despite this, information from this report can serve as a validation for future action plans and reveal opportunities for the OFVP.

It is notable that critical factors to success identified by focus group participants already align well with existing TA supports that OFVP is making available. Although many newer organizations may not yet be aware of those supports, OFVP will continue to reinforce the support that is available to grantees over the course of the next year.

D. Recommendations Based Feedback from Grantees

The section that follows includes recommendations that came directly from grantees and speaks to the issues discussed in this report.

- **Apply greater flexibility in spending and ensure predictability of funding.** Addressing immediate needs of community members and building an infrastructure of prevention requires budget predictability and spending flexibility. Grantees specifically mentioned food and housing as a gap that they could not address through these grant programs.
- **Consider holistic and innovative approaches to violence prevention.** Firearm violence has complexities that cannot be resolved by a narrow model of implementation. Flexibility and adaptability need to be built into IDHS's grantee expectations. One participant called this a "watershed moment" that necessitates a paradigm shift in violence prevention efforts.
- **Ease the administrative burden of grant reporting.** The current grant reporting form that grantees have to complete is cumbersome. Participants called it excessive and repetitive, especially the narrative component. One grantee expressed frustration in the lack of a functioning database system that would ease data collection and reporting burden on the part of the grantees.
- **Support and facilitate partnerships.** Some of the grantees requested help for establishing partnerships, particularly with schools. Some of the schools did not allow organizations a foot in the door even to pitch their programming.
- **Invest in building organizational capacity.** While the grants have allowed organizations to grow programmatically, they have not had the same impact when it comes to administrative capacity. Administrative growth tends to be slower as organizations adapt to new roles and expanded services. Some concrete examples include grant-writing support and allowing additional time for planning and reflecting on the quality of a program.

7. LOOKING FORWARD

Build upon the year one foundation to advance and solidify the State's future role:

- Increase community based coverage to larger interventions and high need, low capacity areas
- Develop innovative strategies for reaching the highest risk, hardest to reach target population
- Expand measurement of objectives to measuring impact
- Develop sustainability plan, e.g., strengthen Medicaid waiver
- Unite state agencies to address root causes of firearm violence
- Determine the Chicago approach and the State's role

APPENDIX A COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING COLLATERAL

REIMAGINE
PUBLIC SAFETY ILLINOIS

Create a better future today and make a lasting impact in the lives of our youth. Illinois is making unprecedented investments in youth development and violence prevention through community-based organizations across the State. Brought to you by the Illinois Office of Firearm Violence Prevention.

2023 NOFO GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE
Starting: August 2022

1 ARE YOU A QUALIFYING AGENCY?
Community-based organizations can apply for funding to help support violence prevention, health services, and recovery services. **Organizations must be 501(c)(3) nonprofit in reality.**

2 ARE YOU IN A QUALIFYING LOCATION?
You are located in one of our Staffing Order Areas. **Organizations must be 501(c)(3) nonprofit in reality.**

3 FIND A FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (GRANT)
Eligible community-based organizations can apply for grants of **\$250,000 annually** to bring their knowledge and action to the following three areas of focus: **Click here to learn more about program requirements.**

4 APPLY NOW
Visit dhs.illinois.gov/rpsa

5 BE AWARDED & CREATE CHANGE

Apply at dhs.illinois.gov/rpsa
Funding provided by the Reimagine Public Safety Act (RPSA) from the Illinois Office of Firearm Violence Prevention (OFVP).

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OVERCOME BOUNDARIES
END VIOLENCE
CUT THROUGH THE NOISE
CHANGE SYSTEMS
ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES

FIND PROGRAMS
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Break the cycle.
Change the life of a child through opportunity, youth development and violence prevention programs.

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FIND PROGRAMS
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SPORTS
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STEM LEARNING
LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION
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FIND PROGRAMS
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Across Illinois, community-based organizations are offering youth development and violence prevention programs.
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