

# Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention



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YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION CENTERS



***“Decades of research on preventing violence points to a few key lessons. One is that strong families are essential to preventing youth violence. But families often need some support, particularly those living in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods.”***

— Deborah Gorman-Smith, CCYVP

## THE TOLL OF YOUTH VIOLENCE

Youth violence is a serious public health problem. Homicide is a leading cause of death for youth aged 10–24 years. Each day approximately 13 youth die from homicide and more than 1,300 are treated in emergency departments for nonfatal injuries. Youth violence has lasting harmful effects on young people, their families, and their communities. Research by

CDC’s National Centers of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention (YVPCs) shows prevention is possible. In communities that are experiencing some of the nation’s highest rates of youth violence, YVPCs are:

- Partnering with community organizations, schools, law enforcement, and other community stakeholders with the common goal of reducing youth violence
- Rigorously evaluating prevention strategies
- Working to ensure effective strategies can be adapted and used in other communities

## THE MISSION

The Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention (CCYVP) brought together researchers, community representatives, practitioners, and policy makers in Chicago for almost two decades.



These collaborations resulted in reductions in youth violence and promoted the healthy and safe development of youth and families in several area schools and neighborhoods. In one neighborhood, Humboldt Park, substantial declines in homicides resulted from using a comprehensive set of implemented youth violence prevention strategies.

## THE COMMUNITY

The CCYVP has long-standing relationships with many neighborhoods in Chicago. In 2015, the CCYVP began a partnership with Bright Star Community Outreach, a community-based organization in the Bronzeville neighborhood, located in southeast Chicago. In the early 20th century, Bronzeville was known as the “Black Metropolis,” one of the nation’s most significant landmarks of African American urban history with a thriving economy and rich culture. Bronzeville’s population and economic base have since declined significantly, resulting in lost services and opportunities. In 2016, more than one third of Bronzeville residents lived in poverty, and the overall crime rate was twice the Chicago average.

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

To prevent the violence in Bronzeville, researchers from the CCYVP are collaborating with the University of Chicago, Bright Star Community Outreach, Northwestern University, and faith-based and other community organizations. They are building a community prevention approach by empowering residents to combine resources and form partnerships. This unique academic-community partnership is implementing the *Communities That Care (CTC)* model. *CTC* engages the

community to use data to understand youth violence and identify, implement, and evaluate existing and new evidence-based, community-led solutions. These solutions reduce violence and promote healthy development for children, youth, and families. CCYVP and the community are also determining:



How to better use research to inform community violence prevention.



Ways to ensure the knowledge and experience of people living and working in the community are included in the research and program delivery process.

## EVALUATING IMPACT

CCYVP and its partners are evaluating the impact of *CTC* in Bronzeville, one of the first evaluations of this model in an urban environment. This knowledge will further inform local solutions as well as add a strategy to the youth violence prevention evidence base that can be used in other communities across the country. CCYVP will:



Assess the impact of *CTC* in an urban environment on school- and community-level youth crime and violence via student and neighborhood surveys and archival crime records.



Analyze how prevention strategies driven by community partnerships affect youth violence and other forms of violence among youth, such as teen dating and intimate partner violence.



**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
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**Deborah Gorman Smith, PhD, Principal Investigator**  
The University of Chicago  
[debgs@uchicago.edu](mailto:debgs@uchicago.edu)  
<https://ssascholars.uchicago.edu/chicago-center-youth-violence-prevention>  
Find us on Facebook: Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention