



“Moving from Complaint to Possibility...from Planning to Implementation”

### Street Level Outreach

Anyone who works at the street level helps reduce violence by providing outreach, activities and services. Therefore, they should:

- **Begin** by developing personal, individualized relationships with young people and adults who might benefit from their guidance and interaction.
- **Help** youth get the services they need by identifying support services and developing individualized goal-oriented plans.
- **Serve** as advocates for youth. Be a link between youth and community stakeholder groups by providing those organizations with solutions to current issues and problems and bringing youth to the appropriate resources for help.
- **Provide** crisis intervention by serving as a liaison to offset violent incidents both before youth get involved with the police and afterwards to begin the healing process. This could also include the involvement of street level workers in resolving conflicts between youth from various neighborhoods, preferably before police intervention becomes necessary.
- **Look** for opportunities to prevent or diffuse conflict and to help youth learn to resolve their issues in new and less violent ways. Special emphasis should be placed on introducing them to mediation and conflict resolution skills.
- **Support** the community restorative justice system. Assist mediators in developing relationships with members of the community.
- **Help** keep children and youth in school. Reach out to youth who may need extra help to stay in school and introduce them to appropriate resources such as medical services, mental health services, substance abuse services, and alternative education programs designed for youth.
- **Encourage** *all* adults to stop fearing our youth. Invite people from the various neighborhoods to join street level workers to gain a better understanding of the problems youth face. This could include forming neighborhood block watches; holding community celebrations and picnics; engaging youth constructively; or simply by coming out to stand on one's porch. Don't be afraid to talk with our youth.
- **Encourage** the community *at large* to talk with youth and bring to them one's concerns with understanding and respect

- **Show** youth how to use their “street skills” (hustling, etc.) in constructive, productive and legitimate ways. This will boost their self-esteem and validate their self-worth. Doing so contributes to preventing our youth from entering the criminal justice system.
- **Participate** in setting up and/or supporting family and youth hotlines and other emergency services.
- **Integrate** street-level initiatives with neighborhoods and families by connecting them with resources such as educational, vocational, legal services, and services provided by religious organizations.
- **Create** opportunities for youth who have overcome life obstacles to become role models for higher risk peers.
- **Identify** opportunities to educate youth about the ways in which emotions related to trauma and loss can be dealt with constructively.
- **Provide** community forums and educational opportunities for other adults to learn more about what they can actually do impact the violence that permeates the streets of *our* communities.
- **Conduct** voter registration and education programs. Organize the youth to vote and participate in positive political activities such as voter registration, flyer distribution, and making phone calls for getting out the vote. This provides an opportunity for youth *and* community empowerment.