

Investing in
ATLANTA'S
Community Violence
Intervention Ecosystem





Contents

- 03** Introduction
- 05** Atlanta Violence Reduction Ecosystem
- 07** CVI Investment at a Glance: National and Local Efforts
- 09** A Synthetic Case Study of the Impact of Atlanta's CVI Ecosystem
- 10** The Impact of Budget Cuts on Atlanta Violence Reduction Organizations
- 16** Conclusion
- 17** Appendix A

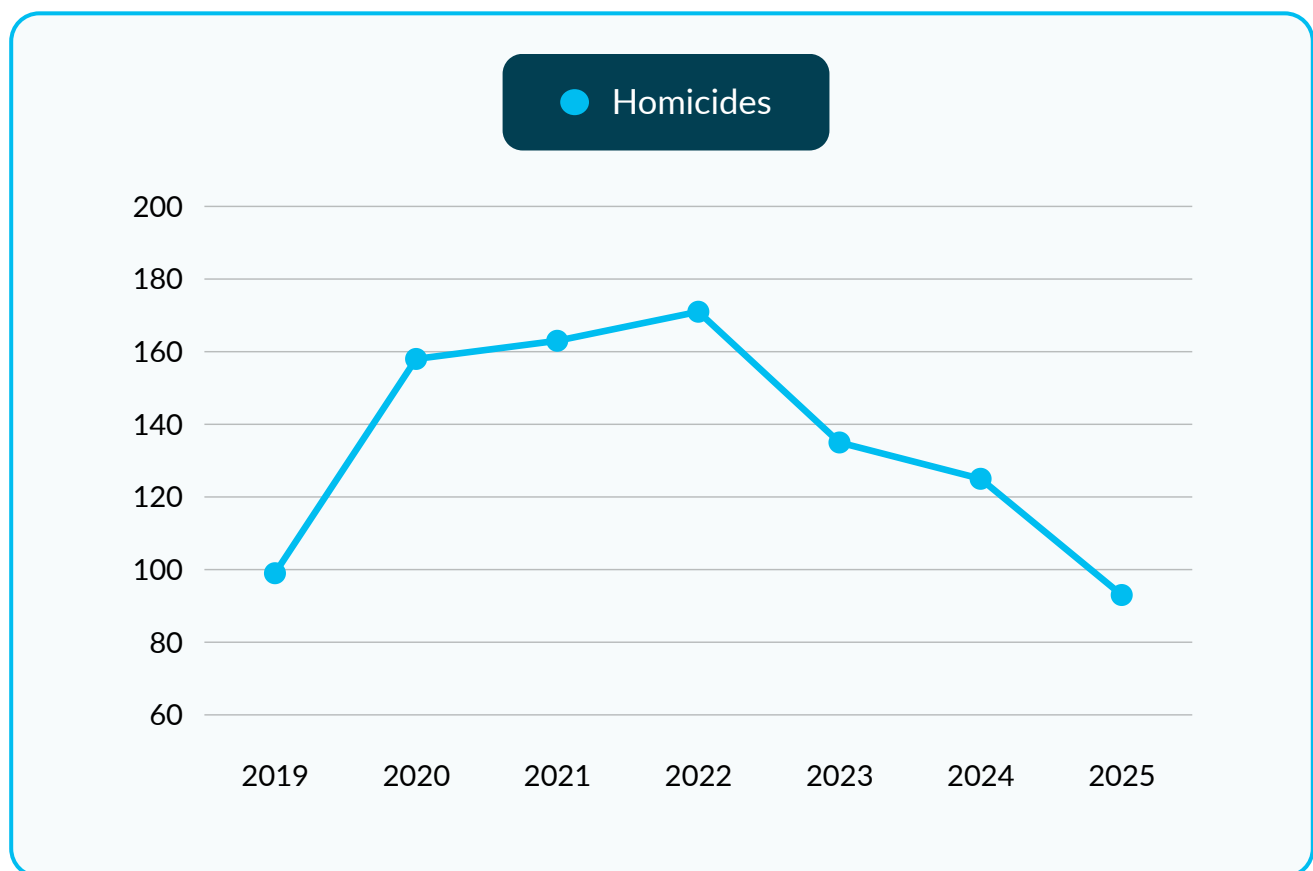


Introduction

The City of Atlanta is known as the Gateway to the South, Black Hollywood, and the home of Martin Luther King, Jr. Atlanta has more than 500,000 residents, of whom 47.6% are Black, 40.8% White, 5.4 % Latino, and 4.9% Asian.¹ A cultural mecca and civil rights hub, Atlanta has long been recognized for its place in history, but the city has more recently been challenged with the displacement of Atlanta natives, poverty, a racial wealth gap, and housing affordability issues, all while navigating gun violence.

Like many US cities, Atlanta experienced a surge in homicides at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a 59% increase from 2019 to 2020.² This trend continued through 2022, when the city reached 171 homicides, before declining to 135 in 2023.^{3,4} Atlanta saw further declines in 2024, with 125 homicides, and 2025, when there were 94 homicides,⁵ marking the first year since COVID that the city experienced fewer than 100 homicides.

Atlanta Homicides, 2019–2025



¹ [US Census Bureau Quick Facts: Atlanta, GA](#)

² [Atlanta Police Department \(APD\) Year-End Report 2020](#)

³ Throughout the report, “fatal shooting” and “homicide” are not used synonymously. “Fatal shooting” refers to a shooting incident resulting in the death of the victim; “homicide” refers to all homicides in general.

⁴ [APD Year-End Report 2023](#)

⁵ [APD Cobra Report, City Wide, Week Ending 12/27/2025](#)

Atlanta's progress in reducing violence has been supported by the development of a comprehensive violence reduction ecosystem. This multilayered approach is grounded by the Circle of Safety (COS), which brings together more than 70 organizations conducting a variety of community violence intervention (CVI) efforts across the city and metropolitan area. COS is anchored by the hospital-based violence intervention program (HVIP) within Grady Hospital, the Interrupting Violence in Youth and Young Adults (IVYY) Project. Prior to the COS and the IVYY Project, most violence reduction work in Atlanta and the metropolitan area sat with entities such as the Metropolitan Atlanta Violence Prevention Partnership (MVAPP); Egress Consultants and Services; Creativity, Honor, Respect, Integrity, Safety (CHRIS) 180; Atlanta Neighborhood Planning Unit V (NPU-V) an Annie E. Casey Civic Site.

While the ecosystem has expanded and community programs have transformed throughout the years, community and safety have remained at the forefront of Atlanta's violence reduction efforts. COS has continued to cultivate collaborative partnerships to serve Atlanta and the surrounding metropolitan area. Additionally, the ecosystem has significantly expanded the reach of street outreach workers and violence interrupters, all of whom are committed to saving lives and ensuring those at highest risk have resources and opportunities to thrive. COS members have increased their operations, sought national technical assistance, and brought on academic researchers to ensure Atlanta's strategies are effective and align with best practices.

Despite these strategic strides, the sustainability of the ecosystem is at risk. The recent elimination of federal funding from several community-based organizations (CBOs) and a lack of local funding threaten to dismantle the infrastructure that serves those at highest risk for gun violence.^{6,7} There is an urgent need to restore and expand funding to ensure the continued reduction of violence in Atlanta.

In addition to funding, Atlanta's violence reduction ecosystem is in need of coordination and collaboration between the COS and the Mayor's Office of Violence Reduction (MOVR). Each entity plays a very specific role within the city's violence reduction landscape, and as collaboration and coordination between both entities grows, the community will thrive from the support.

The following report documents the establishment of the Atlanta violence reduction ecosystem over the past several years. Included in the analysis are descriptions of key government and community-based organizations that have led this work, as well as community partners that have joined the effort. The report also provides a synthetic case study demonstrating how entities within the Atlanta community violence intervention ecosystem collaborate. Lastly, the report concludes with a call to support organizations and initiatives that engage those who are at the highest risk for involvement in gun violence.

⁶ [Community violence intervention programs take action amid federal funding cuts](#)

⁷ [Gun violence prevention groups disqualified from grants built around their work](#)

Atlanta Violence Reduction Ecosystem

What is Community Violence Intervention?

Community violence intervention is an approach that uses evidence-informed strategies to reduce near-term violence through tailored, community-centered initiatives. CVI strategies include street outreach, violence interruption, hospital-based violence intervention, life coaching, peace fellowships, violence-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, and others. These multidisciplinary strategies involve intensively engaging individuals and groups to prevent and disrupt cycles of violence and retaliation. They also involve establishing relationships between individuals and community assets to deliver services that save lives; address trauma; provide opportunity; and improve the physical, social, and economic conditions that drive violence.⁸

Violence prevention, another established component of violence reduction work, can include upstream efforts such as youth-focused mentoring and afterschool programming. Many of the organizations and initiatives mentioned throughout this report encompass both intervention and prevention efforts. NICJR's report calls for funding and coordinated and collaborative efforts to ensure the Atlanta violence reduction ecosystem can thrive and expand its impact.

Violence Reduction Initiatives

Atlanta's CVI ecosystem is characterized by a diversity of experience. It includes legacy organizations that pioneered CVI long before the field was formally recognized, as well as emerging partners eager to support existing efforts. As this ecosystem continues to evolve, its success remains contingent upon the active involvement of organizations and individuals with access, proximity, and deep-rooted connections to violence-impacted communities. This community involvement is necessary to sustain and accelerate the city's downward trends in violence reduction.

Circle of Safety

Circle of Safety was launched in 2023 by the IVYY project,⁹ with a focus on convening organizations actively involved in gun violence reduction and community violence intervention. COS is a collaborative, community-rooted convening and coordination table that helps align providers, relationships, resources, referrals, strategy, and shared learning across more than 70 organizations and individuals.¹⁰ COS's structure is grounded in trust and proximity to organizations that serve those at the greatest risk of gun violence. COS is now operated separately from the IVYY Project and has a dedicated staff focused on reducing violence in Atlanta, with community foremost in mind.

Atlanta's CVI ecosystem relies on a unified front of credible messengers, trauma responders, and clinical professionals, all of whom are vital for preventing and interrupting violence. The effectiveness of this coordination is most visible in the quarterly COS meetings, where the atmosphere is one of

⁸ This definition of CVI was developed at a national CVI Action Plan convening and derived from the definition included in the full [Community Violence Intervention Action Plan](#).

⁹ [Emory University School of Medicine: Projects](#)

¹⁰ See Appendix A for additional information on partners within the Atlanta CVI ecosystem.

collaboration rather than competition. The meetings play an important role in continuity of care for individuals involved in CVI services, as they allow organizations to share real-time data and engage in warm handoffs for referrals, ensuring that individuals at the highest risk do not fall through the cracks of a fragmented system.

Other COS goals include solidifying its structure and membership, increasing member awareness about CVI principles and public health approaches to reducing gun violence, and developing a Violence Reduction Strategic Plan for the Atlanta metropolitan area.

Through COS, the Atlanta violence reduction ecosystem has been able to achieve high-level coordination with a deeply grassroots approach. Unlike traditional top-down mandates, this ecosystem was built from the ground up, recognizing that no single solution can address the collective problem of gun violence. However, this sophisticated infrastructure is currently at a point of vulnerability as funding cuts for grassroots organizations place a strain on the ecosystem's capacity. Continued funding of COS and its members is critical for the city to sustain its success.

Mayor's Office of Violence Reduction

In 2021, then-Mayor Keisha Lance-Bottoms convened an Anti-Violence Advisory Council to review existing actions and plans related to addressing violent crime and provide immediate recommendations. The Council comprised a broad range of stakeholders, including law enforcement, violence prevention organizations, community and neighborhood representatives, business leaders, and members of the justice system.¹¹ The Council recommended the creation of a Mayor's Office of Violence Reduction to help centralize violence reduction leadership and oversight. It further advised a \$70 million investment to launch, continue, and expand other critical initiatives focused on the individuals and locations most impacted by violence.¹²

MOVR uses a three-pillar model to reduce violence across Atlanta: prevention, intervention, and community trust-building. Prevention works to address precursors to violence and keep at-risk individuals from becoming involved in violence.¹³ Intervention works by engaging individuals who are most likely to be involved in violence in the near term as well as mediating and disrupting violent conflicts. Community trust-building lays the groundwork for prevention and intervention by building relationships between the community, law enforcement, and CBOs.

MOVR acts as the City's hub for violence reduction and community-based intervention, orchestrating a comprehensive campaign to mitigate violence, particularly involving firearms. The Office has seven programmatic areas: CVI, Group violence Intervention, Recidivism and Reentry, Youth Violence Reduction, Research, Social Media Digital Anti-Violence, and Public Awareness Campaigns.

Both COS and MOVR are devoted to reducing gun violence through community-driven and local government-led initiatives. Coordination, communication, and collaboration between COS and MOVR are essential to Atlanta's ongoing reduction of violence.

¹¹ [Mayor Bottoms' Anti-Violence Advisory Council Named](#)

¹² [Mayor's Anti-Violence Advisory Council Delivers Recommendations to Address COVID Crime Wave](#)

¹³ [City of Atlanta Executive Offices: Office of Violence Reduction](#)

CVI Investment at a Glance: National and Local Efforts

Federal CVI Funding

Beginning in 2021, significant amounts of federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI) massively increased investment into CVI programs and initiatives across the country. Like many other cities, Atlanta leveraged these funds to expand and solidify its CVI ecosystem.

However, the federal funding landscape has since shifted dramatically. All ARPA funding had to be obligated at the end of 2024 and must be spent by the end of 2026, and since early 2025, the US Department of Justice has eliminated hundreds of millions of dollars in grants. This included CVIPI funding that supported grassroots, evidence-based violence reduction programs in cities across the country. Over 550 organizations were impacted by these cuts,¹⁴ forcing layoffs and a national reduction in the CVI workforce. The loss of funding continues to threaten service continuity for communities that are disproportionately impacted by violence. Although many other cities have used state and local dollars to fill these gaps, Atlanta has not yet made any such pledges.

Investment in the Atlanta Ecosystem by National Partners

One of the first national partners to invest in Atlanta's violence reduction efforts was the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which acknowledged gun violence as a public health issue and funded solutions with a focus on public health approaches. Beginning in 2016, the Foundation worked alongside the Atlanta Neighborhood Planning Unit V and supported Atlanta Cure Violence programming.¹⁵ Prioritizing community trust and local leadership, the Foundation supported the establishment of a formalized trauma response network that centers the voices of those most impacted by violence. This process helps bridge the gap between emergency services and the neighborhoods, utilizing a structured notification system and a coordinated response rubric to ensure that community leaders and trauma responders provide immediate, localized support to families affected by violence.

In September 2023, Everytown Gun Safety awarded the IVYY Project \$100,000 to sustain its critical violence intervention services.¹⁶ With this grant, the IVYY Project expanded its efforts within Atlanta's only Level 1 Trauma Center. Through survivor-centered support and comprehensive wraparound services, the project continued to provide the critical intervention needed to break the cycle of violence in other Atlanta and metropolitan area communities.

¹⁴ [Trump Cuts to Violence Prevention Programs Likely to Increase Deaths](#)

¹⁵ [Preventing Gun Violence with a Public Health Approach](#)

¹⁶ [The IVYY Project at Grady Awarded \\$100,000 Grant from the Everytown Community Safety Fund to Sustain Critical Gun Violence Prevention Work in Atlanta](#)

In October 2023, through support from Microsoft and the Public Welfare Foundation, the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) provided grants to five organizations in Atlanta serving those at highest risk for involvement in gun violence: Cure Violence, Girassol Wellness, The Black Man Lab, Cultural Tribes Peace Network, and the Inner-City Muslim Action Network. These grants supported the organizations' work to intervene in gun violence and provide wraparound resources to mitigate violence. The grants allowed for additional programming, mental health resources, staffing, and training to ensure that personnel were equipped with the requisite knowledge to continue saving and transforming lives.

In 2024, the Coalition to Advance Public Safety (CAPS), a collaboration between four Black-led national organizations—NICJR, the Community Based Public Safety Collective, Cities United, and the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention—selected Atlanta as one of its core cities.¹⁷ CAPS provided funding, technical assistance, and training as well as research and local coordination support for Atlanta CVI efforts. Five organizations each received a portion of \$500,000 in CAPS funding: Circle of Safety, HOPE Hustlers, Wii Care, Girassol Wellness, and Atlanta Victim Assistance. These CBOs are all key leaders in fostering a thriving CVI ecosystem.¹⁸ With CAPS funding, organizations significantly broadened their support systems, hiring dedicated staff to connect participants with emergency housing, food resources, and reliable transportation. This funding also fueled youth and young adult programming covering everything from immediate medical expenses and school supplies to community-building events such as weekend barbecues that provide safe alternatives to the streets. The CAPS initiative sunsets at the end of 2026, and funding to Atlanta organizations is due to expire at that time.

Investment in the Atlanta and Metropolitan Area Ecosystem by Local Partners

The Emory Hillandale Hospital Violence Prevention Program (VPP) was established in 2024 with investments from the DeKalb County government, which was awarded \$11 million for improvements at Emory Hillandale Hospital, plus an additional \$2 million allocated to specifically support the VPP for two years.¹⁹ This investment was driven by the more than 80 gunshot victims from the Lithonia and Stonecrest areas who were transferred to Grady Hospital and later supported by the IVYY Project. In direct response to insights from community listening sessions, the VPP was designed to address the safety needs of the greater Atlanta area. By combining immediate intervention and long-term healing with deep-rooted partnerships, the VPP effectively disrupts cycles of violence while supporting impacted individuals and families. This localized investment underscores the vital role of community voices and the necessity of leadership that is responsive to the specific needs of residents.

¹⁷ [National Coalition to Advance Public Safety Convenes Key Stakeholders to Reduce the \\$262 Million Cost of Gun Violence in Atlanta](#)

¹⁸ [National Community Violence Intervention Coalition Announces \\$500,000 for Organizations in Atlanta Ecosystem to Reduce Community Violence by 15%](#)

¹⁹ [Emory Hillandale's Violence Prevention Program experiences growth and impact after first year](#)

A SYNTHETIC CASE STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF ATLANTA'S CVI ECOSYSTEM

Over the last five years, fiscal and human investments in Atlanta's CVI ecosystem have enabled the creation of a system of care for responding to and preventing gun violence. Atlanta's CVI providers have spent years fostering relationships to create an effective continuum of care, connecting with community members to build trust, and bringing resources to the communities and people who need them most. However, funding cuts threaten the existence of the ecosystem.

The following synthetic case study, compiled based on the experiences of CVI participants in Atlanta, offers an example of how this system has worked cohesively to prevent harm.



Elijah

Elijah was born and raised in Mechanicsville, Atlanta's oldest neighborhood. Due to historic redlining and other discriminatory practices, the area is known for serious disinvestment, poverty, and elevated levels of crime and violence. Elijah is the middle child of five, with two brothers and two sisters. He and his siblings were primarily raised by their grandmother. While Elijah is grateful to have her in his life, he has struggled with the trauma of missing his parents, the instability of the family not always being able to make ends meet, and judgment from his teachers at school because of his family's circumstances.

In high school, Elijah was often truant as a result of his family's instability. By his junior year, his grades suffered and he began to skip school. Elijah eventually dropped out of high school and started taking odd jobs to meet his immediate needs and help support his grandmother and younger siblings.

When Elijah was 19, one of his friends, Jacobi, became increasingly enmeshed in disagreements with young men from surrounding neighborhoods. One afternoon, while hanging out with Jacobi, Elijah got into a physical altercation with two young men and was shot in the shoulder. The police and Elijah's grandmother were called and came to the scene. His grandmother was unsure what hospital he had been taken to, and she did not know what happened or why her grandson had been shot. She was in crisis. Trained advocates from Atlanta Victim Assistance (AVA) were deployed to the scene, where they met with Elijah's grandmother and provided crisis intervention, giving her a safe, quiet place to become calm enough to be escorted to the hospital to see her grandson.

Elijah had been taken to Grady Memorial Hospital, where he was treated by medical staff. Later that evening, specialists from the IVYY Project met with him at his bedside and offered him intensive case management, an immediate food voucher, an Uber to take him and his grandmother home, connection to HOPE Hustlers for life coaching, and linkage to the IVYY Outpatient Clinic, where he could receive additional services. IVYY committed to meeting with Elijah every two weeks and continuing to support him in meeting his immediate needs.

Once Elijah returned home, a Life Coach with HOPE Hustlers reached out to him to explain how life coaching could help him to make a positive change in his life and meet his goals. Like many young men recently victimized by gun violence and still reeling from the trauma, Elijah initially declined the offer of support. However, the next day, the Life Coach reached out again to check on him and his grandmother, see if they needed anything, and let Elijah know that life coaching was still an option. Elijah was still unsure about receiving services, but his grandmother encouraged him to talk to the Life Coach. An advocate from IVYY also visited Elijah two weeks after his return home and encouraged him to give life coaching a chance.

A few days after Elijah returned home, an AVA advocate called his grandmother to check in on them. She told the advocate she was worried they would not be able to pay their bills this month with Elijah injured and unable to find work. The AVA advocate brought the family food and toiletries and helped them file for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and victim compensation.

While Elijah was home recovering, rumors about the shooting began circulating in the neighborhood. Jacobi told his friends he was going to retaliate against Elijah's shooter. Violence Interrupters from Dream Builders of Atlanta, a CVI program, heard about what Jacobi was saying, connected with him, and encouraged him to not retaliate. They acknowledged that Jacobi felt disrespected and met him where he was to help him work through those feelings. He agreed to stay away from the shooter and his friends and not to engage in retaliatory violence.

After several weeks of the Life Coach from HOPE Hustlers reaching out to Elijah and building trust, he started meeting with the Life Coach regularly. They discussed his goals and needs, and they identified immediate challenges following his injury that needed to be addressed. In particular, he had not been able to afford the supplies to keep his bandages clean, his family's electric bill and rent were due soon and he had been unable to work, and he had missed multiple doctor appointments because he did not have a car. During his bi-weekly call with an IVYY advocate, Elijah was reminded about the IVYY Outpatient Clinic. He and his Life Coach met with an IVYY advocate to get Elijah connected to utility and rent assistance as well as transportation assistance and to get the medical supplies he needed.

After months of getting to know his Life Coach and building trust, and with his shoulder mostly healed, Elijah confided in his Life Coach that he has been having nightmares about getting shot and had not been sleeping well. His Life Coach connected him with Girassol Wellness, which provided Elijah with a licensed mental health clinician who could treat his trauma symptoms.

As Elijah worked with his mental health clinician and continued to stay in daily contact with his Life Coach, he began to improve. Elijah also told his Life Coach he was worried about his little brother, who was in middle school and had been getting involved with the wrong crowd, getting suspended, and struggling to keep his grades up. The Life Coach told Elijah and his brother about Chance2Change, which provided the younger brother with a mentor of his own to help him deal with the trauma he had endured.

Once Elijah's basic needs had been met and his family could pay its bills, Elijah and his Life Coach began to work toward his other life goals. His Life Coach connected him to Dream Builders for workforce development services, and they connected him with a local business that provided job training. This led to Elijah's first full-time job, as a cook.

Two years after Elijah was shot, he still has the full-time job, is working with a mental health clinician, and knows who to contact anytime he needs help. He completed the life coaching program with HOPE Hustlers, but his Life Coach still checks in on him occasionally. Elijah also volunteers with HOPE Hustlers and Dream Builder community events, and he regularly attends the Mothers Against Gang Violence Healing Circle to share his story, learn from others who have had similar experiences, and connect with people he can relate to. Multiple organizations working together supported Elijah and his family toward a successful outcome.

The Impact of Budget Cuts on Atlanta Violence Reduction Organizations

Federal funding cuts and expired philanthropic grants have had serious impacts on CVI organizations in Atlanta. CBOs have been forced to quickly secure new funding. Others have had to end or significantly reduce CVI programming, leaving a massive gap in services for those at highest risk for gun violence. One Atlanta CVI provider stated, “There’s still a need; the problem never got solved, but the funding was taken away.”

Many CVI professionals who have been in the field for many years are now without jobs. In some organizations, only leadership and a few support staff remain, and many of them have taken significant pay cuts. Some have had to take on additional jobs, and others are providing violence interruption, street outreach, and mentoring services without any pay. As one CVI leader stated, “It takes a toll on the daily operations when we can’t go into the community because we’re having to do other jobs to survive.”

These cuts have had serious, life-changing consequences for the individuals these organizations serve. A CVI leader noted, “The hours the kids were in [services] gave them some time off the street—now that’s gone.” For example, Dream Builders was forced to end its free youth sports programs, transportation assistance to help families access services, community garden, and violence interruption services. Although some staff have stayed on to continue violence interruption work, they are currently volunteering.

Offender Alumni Association (OAA), an organization that provided youth and young adults with violence intervention services and worked with those at highest risk for gun violence, had to sunset its street outreach and violence interrupter work. OAA had to lay off eight staff members who had specifically supported violence mitigation—a significant loss to the local CVI ecosystem. Three former staff members continue to provide safe passage services at Booker T. Washington High School on a voluntary basis. Although these individuals are no longer receiving compensation, OAA supports their efforts by providing snacks for the students involved. One OAA leader noted, “Recent funding cuts have had a meaningful impact on the violence reduction ecosystem, including our ability to sustain consistent community-based support, staffing, and program continuity. Even when primary roles remain funded, reductions in anticipated or supplemental funding streams affect the capacity to fully serve youth and families at the level our communities need.”

CBOs have also faced significant impacts to their administrative funds, with many organizations left with no income to cover overhead costs. In addition to not being able to pay staff, organizations have fewer resources for building rental, staff development, and functions such as data management and grant writing (both of which are essential for seeking additional funding).

In Atlanta, because the Circle of Safety and the larger CVI ecosystem rely on a network of community-based organizations, the loss of funding for key partners can disrupt the network’s tremendous impact on violence reduction.

Call to Action: Invest in Atlanta's Future by Fully Funding Violence Reduction Programs

Community violence intervention is a smart investment for cities. By providing intensive interventions to individuals at highest risk for gun violence, CVI programs effectively reduce gun violence and improve living conditions in neighborhoods that need it most. If CVI is not adequately funded, the City of Atlanta risks retreating into a reactive response to gun violence with costs that outweigh those of a proactive CVI safety net. Sustainable progress will require investment reaching the frontline organizations, credible messengers, hospital responders, life coaches, youth development partners, and trauma-informed supports that uphold a comprehensive violence reduction ecosystem.

The cost of gun violence is a staggering burden that a city either pays for up front at a discount through proactive prevention and intervention or much more expensively after tragedy. An Atlanta Cost of Gun Violence analysis completed by NICJR in 2024 found that a fatal shooting involving one victim and one suspect has a taxpayer cost of \$1,571,246.08, and a nonfatal shooting costs \$652,640.04.²⁰ That means the 94 homicides Atlanta experienced in 2025 will ultimately cost taxpayers \$147,697,131.50. This includes immediate expenses such as emergency medical care, police response and investigation, and court proceedings, as well as the long-term costs associated with loss of life and long-term incarceration.

²⁰ [Atlanta Cost of Gun Violence Report 2024](#)



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The City of Atlanta should prioritize CVI funding in the next budget cycle.

Atlanta should allocate local funding to sustain and grow high-impact CVI coalitions and programs such as Circle of Safety. Additionally, there should be a significant investment in violence interrupters, life coaches, hospital response teams, mentorship networks, and restorative justice collaboratives, especially as federal funding remains uncertain. This funding is necessary at the city, county, and state level.

Research from local experts indicates that a fully functioning CVI ecosystem in Atlanta requires a budget of \$31,946,731.²¹ This budget is based on the estimated number of individuals at highest risk for community violence (according to the city's population size) and the recommended number of CVI staff for each function within the ecosystem. Below are the following recommended costs for a fully functioning ecosystem.

- **Frontline CVI workers:** \$7,372,692
- **CVI supervision and office of violence prevention staff:** \$2,621,402
- **Staff training and technical assistance:** \$2,498,523
- **Additional wraparound support:** \$17,955,000
- **Evaluation and data support:** \$1,499,114

The experts noted that 120 staff positions are needed to support a fully functioning ecosystem. This includes the MOVR, case managers, life coaches, street outreach workers, hospital-based violence intervention program staff, victim advocates, family case managers, and more. Many other cities of a similar or slightly larger size have more than 200 CVI staff.

Many CBOs and agencies are doing this work with significantly smaller budgets, and many are funding the work through their own personal dollars. While their impact has been mighty, their reach can go further with increased funding from local partners. The level of coordination, collaboration, and care amongst community-based organizations within the COS has contributed tremendously to the success of the reduction of gun violence within Atlanta. A fully funded ecosystem can sustain these reductions.

²¹ [Atlanta, Georgia, Location Data](#)

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City leadership should advocate for federal grant restoration and support existing CVI programming.

In collaboration with Georgia's Congressional delegation, community partners, and national advocacy coalitions, the City should continue to urge Congress and the Department of Justice to reinstate and expand life-saving CVI funding, which is consistent with the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

In light of federal cuts, this is the perfect time for the local government to supplement CVI funding in as many ways as possible. CVI is a fundamental tool to keep communities safe and divert those at the highest risk of engaging in violent behavior. Collaborative efforts at the grassroots level should expand to include government agencies. To reduce the duplication of services, City officials should support existing community-based, community-focused organizations in their efforts and collaborate with organizations to ensure a unified front in combating violence and mitigating pathways to risky behaviors. CVI organizations and their initiatives need to be uplifted by those with political power and included among the various initiatives that are underway across the city.

In May 2026, Atlanta City Council members developed and unanimously accepted a resolution urging the Mayor and governing authorities of Atlanta to identify and prioritize sustained funding for local CVI initiatives, affirming the City's commitment to evidence-based, community-driven public safety strategies.²² The resolution directly states how individuals at the highest risk of involvement with gun violence are directly harmed when access to wraparound services are inconsistent and unavailable due to funding instability, and how the community bears the consequences of fragmented violence prevention systems. The resolution also highlights that failing to establish recurring funding mechanisms for CVI risks the destabilization of proven intervention strategies, heightened workforce burnout and turnover, and negative impacts to community trust. This resolution not only calls for dedicated funding but continued collaboration and partnership with existing ecosystem members to alleviate the aforementioned risks. The City Council also encouraged the exploration of recurring funding mechanisms, intergovernmental partnerships, grant opportunities, and other long-term investment strategies to strengthen violence prevention infrastructure and expand access to trauma-informed intervention and wraparound services. This resolution highlights the need and desire for continued community-based engagement and investment in public safety.

²² ELMS #40420 Resolution put forth by Councilman Jason Dozier



Conclusion

Atlanta has long stood as a leader in civil rights and justice reform, often setting the standard for communities across the country. The City once again has an opportunity to lead the way. How the City responds to this critical juncture will undoubtedly influence Atlanta's journey toward equitable public safety and community well-being. The City should dedicate funding to support organizations leading community violence intervention within Atlanta, and there should be consistent collaboration and coordination between the MOVR and COS.

Atlanta is strongest when community and City leadership move in alignment. Continued resilience in tackling gun violence will require financial investment, investment in partnerships, and investment in saving lives. Recent local reductions in gun violence are the fruit of collaborative efforts to support those at highest risk for violence involvement. As Atlanta continues to navigate gun violence reduction and ensure that it is indeed a safe city, collaboration and alignment at the community and City level must be the core elements of any such efforts.

Appendix A

Atlanta CVI Community-Based Organizations

While the following list is not exhaustive, it provides an overview of the community-based organizations serving those in Atlanta who are at highest risk for gun violence involvement. Many of these organizations also have programmatic efforts to engage with youth impacted by violence and offer resources to fill gaps related to education, mentoring, and transportation, among other services for those in immediate need of safety and prevention resources. The goal of this appendix is to highlight established entry points where individuals and families can find urgent assistance while navigating the broader landscape of violence reduction.



100 Black Men of Atlanta Inc. was established in 1986.²³ The organization provides group and one-on-one mentorship to students from preadolescence through college.²⁴ The Mentorship Program teaches youth skills in social, emotional, and communication development; provides tuition assistance; and helps college students secure internships and professional mentorship.

Atlanta Victim Assistance supports victims of crime by providing victim advocacy services that include services referrals, victims' rights information, and system navigation. AVA's Law Enforcement Advocacy Program (LEAP) provides on-scene support to victims of crime and their families. Through LEAP, AVA provides referrals to services, basic essentials, and ongoing support, including providing hospital bedside support through partnership with IVYY.²⁵ AVA also utilizes a one-of-a-kind mobile unit to provide an on-site safe space for victims of crime.²⁶

Chance2Change was established in 2018 with the mission of creating pathways to hope for at-risk children.²⁷ The organization works to break down systems like the school-to-prison pipeline and address the harms of mass incarceration. Led and staffed by credible messengers, Chance2Change provides services to youth who are at risk for justice system involvement through mentoring, discussion groups, and organization of experiential learning opportunities. The organization teaches financial literacy and practical skills, in addition to facilitating discussions about the unique experiences of youth who themselves or through their families have been impacted by the justice system.

Creativity, Honor, Respect, Integrity, Safety 180 uses a Cure Violence model to prevent violence in Atlanta's highest-risk neighborhoods.²⁸ CHRIS 180 partners with credible messengers to mediate conflict, provide life coaching for very high-risk individuals, and shift community norms away from violence. The organization also engages communities that have experienced traumatic events through its Trauma Response Network, which works with volunteers to bring support to the entire community following an incident, as well as through healing circles that bring community members together to strengthen connectedness. CHRIS 180 also provides violence prevention services through its Teen Violence Reduction program, which provides case management and programming to prevent at-risk youth aged 12–17 from becoming involved in gangs or gun violence.

²³ [100 Black Men of Atlanta Inc.: Mission & History](#)

²⁴ [100 Black Men of Atlanta Inc.: Mentorship Program](#)

²⁵ [Atlanta Victim Advocacy: Law Enforcement Advocacy Program](#)

²⁶ [Atlanta Victim Advocacy: Programs and Services](#)

²⁷ [Chance2Change: Home](#)

²⁸ [CHRIS 180: Violence Prevention Programs](#)

Dream Builders Atlanta works with boys and young men aged 15–21. The organization is led by credible messengers who work with young people to prevent engagement in gun violence and promote well-being despite systemic barriers. Dream Builders provides participants with workforce development training and stipends to teach important skills for employment; engages them in leadership training to help their peers de-escalate conflicts; and involves them in projects to give back to their community, such as a community garden. Credible messengers work with participants to normalize receiving mental health and other supportive services and remove the shame of asking for help. Dream Builders also works with those at high risk for involvement in gun violence to interrupt disputes and stop violence before it occurs through mediation and violence prevention training.

Emory Hillandale Hospital's Violence Prevention Program was established in 2024 with the support of the Dekalb County government. VPP uses a C3 approach (Comprehensive Care, Community Engagement, and Collaboration) to support individuals and families impacted by gun violence. Comprehensive Care includes immediate victim support following a violent injury. VPP uses trauma-informed, client-centered care planning to provide the victim with wraparound services. Within Community Engagement, VPP teaches de-escalation skills and promotes alternatives to violence and fosters a community voice that denounces violence and retaliation to violence. Under Collaboration, VPP works to eliminate silos across the greater Atlanta violence intervention ecosystem, increase support for at-risk individuals, and improve continuity of care.

Gangstas to Growers (G2G), established in 2016,²⁹ provides mentorship, job training, and employment opportunities for youth who are formerly incarcerated or otherwise at risk. Youth in the program perform paid work on Black-owned farms, gaining on-the-job experience in agriculture and entrepreneurship. Youth also receive mentorship focused on empowerment, healing trauma, and reducing recidivism. Additionally, G2G youth sell hot sauce they make from ingredients they have harvested. Proceeds from the hot sauce support G2G's programming. Through this program and partnerships with local farms, G2G is establishing worker-owned cooperatives that help build communities and promote a Black-run local food system.

Georgia Coalition for Safe Communities (GCSC) brings together advocates from across the state to promote policy, research, and education to prevent gun violence.³⁰ GCSC has recently advocated for gun-control reform legislation, including expanded background checks and prohibition of firearm ownership for individuals with misdemeanor family violence convictions or protective orders at both the state and federal levels, as well as legislation to take an evidence-based public health approach to gun violence.

Georgia Harm Reduction Coalition (GHRC) works across the state to promote health, wellness, and dignity in vulnerable populations.³¹ GHRC provides culturally appropriate and confidential services to individuals involved in high-risk behaviors.³² The Coalition covers a broad spectrum of needs, including sexual health, clean syringe exchanges and medication-assisted treatment, job readiness, legal aid, food, rapid rehousing, and more. Through these services, GHRC is meeting immediate needs and providing wrap-around services for individuals who are at risk of violence.

²⁹ [Gangstas to Growers: Our Story](#)

³⁰ [About the Georgia Coalition for Safe Communities](#)

³¹ [Georgia Harm Reduction Coalition: Home](#)

³² [GHRC Programs & Services](#)

Girassol Wellness is a mental health provider specializing in services for survivors of gun violence and working with violence prevention professionals.³³ The organization also hosts monthly Brave Space Community Healing events to provide a safe space for gun violence survivors to process trauma through culturally relevant wellness services.³⁴ Girassol Wellness provides services on a sliding scale to help break down financial barriers for those in need.

HOPE Hustlers is a public health violence prevention initiative that uses the Cure Violence model. Credible messengers engage in street outreach and violence interruption, identifying high-risk situations and mediating conflicts before they escalate to violence. The organization also engages very high-risk individuals in life coaching and the development of individualized plans for support and growth, helping participants to reach their goals. HOPE Hustlers also works with the community more broadly to shift cultural norms around violence and transform neighborhoods.³⁵

Interrupting Violence in Youth and Young Adults Project is a hospital-based violence intervention program that serves individuals aged 14–34 who are treated for gun violence injuries within the Grady Health System.³⁶ IVYY provides services to survivors of gun violence and their families starting at the hospital bedside and continuing with outpatient support. The Project provides holistic services and service referrals to meet the unique physical, mental, and emotional needs of gun violence survivors.

Jared's Heart of Success provides violence prevention services, working with youth impacted by trauma with a focus on healing and transforming lives.³⁷ The organization connects youth with positive role models, teaches conflict resolution skills and restorative practices, and provides a safe space to process trauma and address mental health needs. Jared's Heart of Success also offers several programs that help youth build leadership skills and confidence to make a positive impact on their community.

Metropolitan Atlanta Violence Prevention Partnership (MAVVP) is a cross-sector coalition dedicated to implementing a comprehensive Peace Plan. Founded in 2006 at the Morehouse School of Medicine, the coalition bridges the gap between science and community insight to prevent violence. Foundational to the Partnership is a long-term, regional Six-County Violence Prevention plan developed at its inception. In 2023, MVAPP renewed its mission to ensure all partners—including CVI leaders, faith-based organizations, public health experts, academia, and policymakers remain aligned and coordinated in their efforts.

Mothers Against Gang Violence (MAG Violence) provides support services to youth who are at risk for gang involvement and/or impacted by gun violence and their families.³⁸ MAG Violence services for youth and families impacted by gun violence include healing circles, justice system and social services navigation assistance, crime scene cleanup and burial arrangements assistance, mentoring, and referrals to counseling and employment.³⁹

³³ [Girassol Wellness: Client Services](#)

³⁴ [Brave Space ATL](#)

³⁵ [HOPE Hustlers: What We Do](#)

³⁶ [Interrupting Violence in Youth and Young Adults \(IVYY\) Project](#)

³⁷ [Jared's Heart of Success: Programs](#)

³⁸ [Mothers Against Gang Violence: About Us](#)

³⁹ [Mothers Against Gang Violence: Services](#)

Music Education Group (MEG) is a workforce development program that provides education in music, film, digital media, and screen printing to underserved youth.⁴⁰ The program offers hands-on experience and opportunities for certification and connection with industry professionals. MEG also partners with local schools to bring music and technology education to students.

Offender Alumni Association provides violence intervention, reentry, community engagement, and youth programming.⁴¹ OAA draws on the lived experiences of credible messengers to establish trust and promote healing for survivors of violence, formerly incarcerated individuals, and their families. OAA's violence intervention services focus on mediating conflicts and stopping violence before it continues. The organization's peer-to-peer model for reentry helps those coming out of incarceration navigate systems and reintegrate with their family and community. OAA also works with the families and communities of returning individuals to resolve challenges and help them move forward, as well as with youth to help them make safe decisions and pursue their goals.

Policing Alternative and Diversion Initiatives partners with the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, and community-based partners to improve community safety and wellness. This includes providing care navigation to individuals diverted by law enforcement. PAD addresses the needs of people experiencing concerns related to substance use, mental health, and extreme poverty; reduces police engagement and incarceration of people experiencing these concerns; and increases connections to supportive services, housing, and other resources.

The Rocket Foundation works to reduce gun violence in Atlanta and across the country by building a platform for CVI leaders, investing in CVI CBOs, and partnering with organizations to amplify their work.⁴² The Rocket Foundation provides microgrants to Atlanta-based CVI organizations to help build up the city's CVI ecosystem. The foundation also partners with OAA to bring violence prevention work to at-risk youth aged 13–17, focusing on mentorship, family support, and providing opportunities.

Wii Care provides prevention, intervention, and leadership development services to youth and young adults who have experienced or are at risk for gun violence, including leadership and life skills training and hands-on work experience.⁴³ In partnership with Girassol Wellness, Wii Care works with youth to build resilience, mental health awareness, and relational skills such as conflict resolution and emotional regulation.

⁴⁰ [Music Education Group: About Us](#)

⁴¹ [Offender Alumni Association: Home](#)

⁴² [The Rocket Foundation: Home](#)

⁴³ [Wii Care: Our Programming](#)



Investing in
ATLANTA'S
Community Violence
Intervention Ecosystem