

National OVP Network

January 2026 Newsletter

From the Director

Happy 2026, NOVPN!

We hope you were able to rest and recharge over the holidays. As we begin the new year, we want to congratulate the Offices of Violence Prevention across our Network that achieved measurable reductions in gun violence in 2025. This work is complex and demanding, and your commitment and results matter. As the work continues, we remain optimistic about sustained declines in violence nationwide.

Our 2026 theme, Strength in Systems: Uniting Policy, Practice, and People, reflects our commitment to advancing NOVPN's three-year strategic plan. In the months ahead, we will release the Violence Reduction Continuum, host our first virtual convening and the Western and Pacific Northwest Regional Convening, update our website, release Version 2 of the OVP Toolkit, and roll out several new initiatives.

We are also excited that applications for Cohort 2 of the Violence Reduction Management Institute (VRMI) are now open! If you are interested in learning more about the VRMI and submitting an application, you can do so [here](#). NICJR will also be hosting an informational webinar on February 10, 2026. To sign up for this session, [click here](#).

We look forward to advancing this work together and to the progress and insights we'll achieve collectively. Wishing you all a fantastic start to an impactful year!

Shantay Jackson
 Director, National Offices of Violence Prevention Network
 National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform

The Successful Gun Violence Reduction Strategy



NICJR's latest report, "The Successful Gun Violence Reduction Strategy" outlines our distinctive strategy for significantly and consistently reducing gun violence in a given jurisdiction. This report details the five core components of our Gun Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) and the community violence intervention (CVI) theory of change that is integral to engaging individuals at the highest risk of being involved in gun violence.

Event Calendar

Find all important Network events here! **NOTE: Events are invitation only.** [Let us know if you haven't received an invitation.](#)

- 2/19/2026: Q1 Virtual Convening
- 3/19/2026-3/20/2026: Western / Pacific Northwest Regional Convening, King County, WA
- 4/9/2026-4/10/2026: Southeast/Southwest Regional Convening, Columbia, SC
- 5/21/2026: Q2 Virtual Convening
- 6/25/2026-6/26/2026: Eastern/Mid-Atlantic Regional Convening, Hartford, CT
- 7/16/2026-7/17/2026: Midwestern Regional Convening, Milwaukee, WI
- 8/20/2026: Q3 Virtual Convening
- 9/8/2026-9/10/2026: Annual Convening, Harris County, TX
- 11/19/2026: Q4 Virtual Convening

In the News



[St. Louis homicides continued a downward trend in 2025 — dropping 7%](#)

[Baltimore City leaders tout 2025 crime reduction, emphasize work needs to continue in 2026](#)

[Richmond recorded its lowest ever murder rate in 2025](#)



[How Oakland cut its homicide rate by 52% in two years](#)

[Detroit's new neighborhood safety office will lead with community residents](#)

[Newport News reveals first-ever community safety plan](#)

OVP Spotlight

NOVPN sends a big hat tip to the [Office of Community Safety \(OCS\)](#) in Fayetteville, NC! As a newly established office, OCS is leading the city's efforts to coordinate non-enforcement, civilian-led responses to complex community safety challenges, with a focus on reducing harm, building trust, and creating safer neighborhoods for all. Through alternative responses to noncriminal emergencies, strong community partnerships, and data-driven strategies that address underlying social conditions, OCS is already demonstrating meaningful impact. In just its first quarter of operations, OCS participated in 59 community engagement events, including three Youth Night Out events that reached more than 150 young people with programming designed to support youth development and build practical life skills. NOVPN is excited to continue our partnership with OCS as we support the development of its multi-year violence reduction strategic plan and advance a safer, more connected Fayetteville for all residents.

On the Front Lines

Join us in applauding the [United Mentoring Program \(UMP\)](#) in Lansing, MI! UMP's violence intervention program at an [Ingram Academy](#) supports students returning to school after release from a youth detention center. Within this 15-week, group-based program, UMP meets weekly with students to address real-time conflicts within the school, examine decision-making and consequences, and build practical strategies for managing anger and reducing reactive behavior. These sessions are paired with a comprehensive curriculum focused on life skills, academic growth, community service, and career development, equipping young people with the tools they need to succeed in school and beyond.

Proud of one of your OVP's on-the-ground partnerships? [Tell us about it!](#)

TTA Tip of the Month

Social media and the internet have fundamentally changed how Offices of Violence Prevention communicate, creating new opportunities to engage communities in real time. Every OVP should, at a minimum, maintain an official website and active accounts on a small number of strategically selected social media platforms. These tools are essential for sharing timely updates, elevating resources, and highlighting impact while also creating space for two-way communication with the community. That said, digital engagement should never stand alone. Effective communication requires a balanced approach: Written press, radio, and television remain critical, particularly for reaching residents with limited or inconsistent internet access. Strong OVP communications meet people where they are, using multiple channels to build trust, visibility, and inter-generational connection. You can utilize the [strategic communications checklist](#) in the [OVP Toolkit](#).

Grant Opportunities Job Board

Check out these funding opportunities:

- [Dr. Scholl Foundation Grant](#) (LOI due 1/31; foci include social services and civic and cultural programming, but they are open to considering a range of projects)
- [Ben and Jerry's Foundation National Grassroots Organizing Program](#) (2/18; focus: unrestricted, general operating support for community-based, grassroots organizations confronting social and environmental injustice)
- [Bob Barker Foundation Grant](#) (Rolling deadline; focus: reducing recidivism)
- Search [Candid's Philanthropy News Digest](#) for national and local private grant opportunities

Here are some violence reduction-related positions open within the Network:

- [Community Health Education Specialist, Community Health Services, Harris County, TX](#)
- [Institute Partnership and Strategy Manager, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, MI](#)
- [Program Associate, Criminal Justice Services - New York, NY](#)

Got an opening? [Share it with us!](#)

Thank you to our Funders and Partners!



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