

## BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO PHILADELPHIA'S GUN VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC

On Tuesday, March 14, the Stoneleigh Foundation convened city officials, community organizers, representatives from law enforcement and the judiciary, physicians, advocates, researchers, journalists, and funders for a day of candid conversation, civil exchange, and problem-solving around Philadelphia's gun violence epidemic. The goal of the event was to expand the way we think and talk about gun violence and to identify effective and lasting solutions for our city. The convening featured Stoneleigh's Fellows, grantees, and partners working on gun violence, who shared diverse perspectives on the root causes of the crisis and how these perspectives impact the ways we choose to prevent, address, and resource the issue. In addition, participants engaged in three problem-solving sessions focused on *improving coordination of services and access to data*, *changing the gun violence narrative from inevitable to preventable*, and *building community agency and authentic partnerships*. The following document provides a summary of the ideas and suggestions generated during those discussions.

**The goal of this summary is to elevate the voices, viewpoints, and visions of the convening attendees. As you will see, the enclosed list of ideas is extensive. These suggestions are not itemized or prioritized in any particular order, nor do they represent a comprehensive strategy for tackling Philadelphia's gun violence epidemic. Rather, this resource is intended to document the creativity and collective wisdom of participants and to spur further brainstorming, collaboration, and action among Philadelphia's violence prevention and intervention stakeholders. The Stoneleigh Foundation is committed to finding ongoing opportunities to work with you on this critical issue.**



## FACILITATE BETTER COORDINATION OF SERVICES AND ACCESS TO DATA

*What are your ideas, suggestions, and solutions for addressing practical barriers to data integration and collaboration, as well as your future visions for a fully integrated violence intervention ecosystem in Philadelphia?*

### IMPLEMENTING PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO BETTER COORDINATION

- ❖ Create standard and transparent citywide procedures for data requests and sharing data across agencies
- ❖ Standardize data-sharing MOUs across city agencies to improve efficiency and efficacy
- ❖ Mandate that the City's Law Department allow data integration, using Allegheny County as a model
- ❖ Establish clarity related to privacy requirements and what can/cannot be shared
- ❖ Create a central data hub through which the heads of each relevant agency can connect their systems
- ❖ Develop a leadership board/commission responsible for data integration, cooperation, and confidentiality
- ❖ Utilize Cloud-based systems for data integration
- ❖ Ensure that all data systems include a consistent identifier that can be used to match records across databases
- ❖ Create a public codebook that defines the key data metrics for tracking and preventing gun violence
- ❖ Institute a threshold question for mayoral appointees related to data-sharing agreements
- ❖ Document violence intervention and prevention services within electronic medical records
- ❖ Share information and improve coordination between and among funders
- ❖ Promote United Way's 211 Hotline for information about non-emergency local resources and services

### CREATING A VISION FOR AN INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM

- ❖ Develop a clear, citywide, data-driven strategy for tackling the gun violence epidemic
- ❖ Foster a shared understanding and language for metrics and outcomes among city leadership
- ❖ Ensure that those who are most impacted by gun violence are central to the development of a fully integrated violence prevention and intervention ecosystem
- ❖ Establish an integrated fund to focus on chronic citywide problems, using federal, state, and local funding
- ❖ Prioritize significant reinvestment in Philadelphia's schools, housing stock, and community services
- ❖ Track and assess how trauma affects families impacted by gun violence
- ❖ Develop a performance measurement system with agreed-upon outcome measures
- ❖ Standardize the quality and types of data collected across violence prevention and intervention organizations
- ❖ Develop a holistic timeline and an integrated narrative for individuals impacted by gun violence that can be accessed and referenced across city agencies
- ❖ Create a live prevention dashboard (to complement the current victimization dashboard) that highlights available prevention and intervention services, resource navigation supports, dollars invested, individuals engaged, etc.

## CHANGE THE NARRATIVE AND CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND DECISION-MAKING

*What are your ideas, suggestions, and solutions for changing the gun violence narrative from inevitable to preventable, and how might a prevention narrative be incorporated into your daily work and decision-making?*

### REIMAGINING THE MEDIA

- ❖ Abolish the crime beat at news organizations
- ❖ Create a certification in violence prevention reporting
- ❖ Provide reporters with trauma-informed training
- ❖ Educate media on the root causes of gun violence
- ❖ Fund a journalism award for community safety reporting
- ❖ Include media executives in the process of changing the gun violence narrative
- ❖ Provide resources for victims and perpetrators of harm within articles about gun violence
- ❖ Create a “Do No Harm” pledge for reporters, editors, and producers
- ❖ Provide historical and structural contextualization of gun violence in relevant reporting
- ❖ Ensure media coverage of gun violence is proportionate to firearm-related incidents in the city
- ❖ Invest in local, community-produced media
- ❖ Encourage reporters to do follow-up articles that allow survivors and co-victims to share their stories

### PROMOTING SOLUTIONS

- ❖ Move away from episodic, police-centric reporting toward more thematic, solutions-oriented reporting
- ❖ Highlight specific, actionable investments that can revitalize communities and prevent gun violence
- ❖ Spotlight violence prevention successes in reporting
- ❖ Elevate successful gun violence prevention programs in other jurisdictions around the country
- ❖ Invest in a public health campaign that uplifts the prevention narrative

### CENTERING CREDIBLE NARRATORS

- ❖ Listen to, respect, and elevate the voices and experiences of those who are most impacted by gun violence
- ❖ Provide opportunities for greater community input in reporting requests
- ❖ Ask what survivors, co-victims, and community members want in gun violence reporting
- ❖ Host regular community conversations focused on reframing gun violence from inevitable to preventable
- ❖ Avoid deficit-based language when reporting on communities impacted by gun violence
- ❖ Center the personal stories of those impacted by gun violence while still contextualizing the broader problem
- ❖ Support narrative change multimedia projects driven by community organizations
- ❖ Work with the Police Department’s Public Information Officers to redefine their role and refine key messages

### CHANGING PRACTICE

- ❖ Engage in transparent and participatory budget development at all levels of city government
- ❖ Provide trauma-informed training to school-based staff (to change the narrative within schools)
- ❖ Increase connections between schools and service providers, community-based organizations, etc.
- ❖ Invest in youth programs that focus on conflict de-escalation and prosocial activities
- ❖ Reduce the wholesale marketing of violence to young people (via video games, films, music, etc.)

## BUILD COMMUNITY AGENCY AND FOSTER MORE AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS

*What are your ideas, suggestions, and solutions for cultivating and supporting more authentic partnerships with communities to address the gun violence epidemic?*

### BROADENING THE TABLE

- ❖ Define clearly who/what we mean by “community partners”
- ❖ Involve those who are most impacted by gun violence—especially young people—in key decision-making
- ❖ Approach stakeholders across disciplines and communities with humility and curiosity
- ❖ Increase community member representation and power in programming and policy decisions

### BUILDING TRUST AND TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Listen to community members when they share what they need
- ❖ Do not ask questions that you are not interested in honest answers to
- ❖ Continue to engage youth and police through positive interactions and conversations
- ❖ Have upfront discussions about roles and expectations with community-based partners
- ❖ Host open information and dialogue sessions with community members
- ❖ Educate community members about decision-making processes and constraints
- ❖ Create safe spaces for undocumented and mixed-status families to engage in community conversations without fear of reprisal or public disclosure

### DEPLOYING RESOURCES EQUITABLY AND STRATEGICALLY

- ❖ Pay community members for their time and expertise and cover expenses that could prohibit their participation, such as transportation, childcare, and digital access
- ❖ Deploy institutional sponsorships for hyperlocal organizations
- ❖ Disentangle funding for community-based organizations from political cycles
- ❖ Ensure that research grants have community co-investigators who are properly compensated and who are included in key decisions
- ❖ Support community-based participatory research
- ❖ Build trust by providing upfront funding (as opposed to reimbursement or IOUs)

### CREATING NEW ROADMAPS FOR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

- ❖ Move beyond traditional service provision settings; bring services directly to communities that need them
- ❖ Create consistent community engagement language across government agencies, foundations, universities, and service providers
- ❖ Remove structural barriers to funding new ideas, such as complex applications, evidence-based and reporting requirements, and multi-year financial statements
- ❖ Highlight community-based efforts that are *already* working
- ❖ Support more cross-sectional opportunities for stakeholders to connect over shared meals
- ❖ Map and organize available resources by key audiences and end users