



National Network For Safe Communities at JOHN JAY COLLEGE

Group Violence Intervention [Virginia Crime Commission](#)

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Focused Deterrence

What it is:

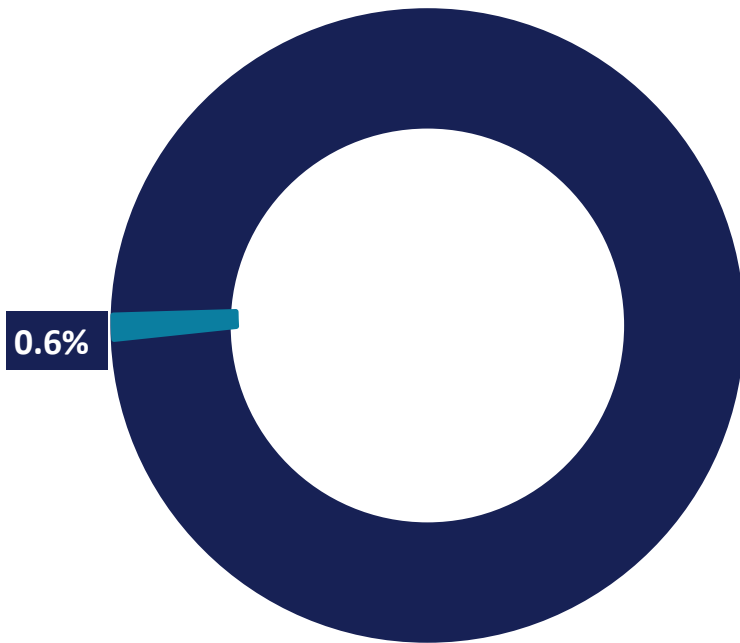
- Focus on those actively driving violence
- Use of clear communication
- Deter violent behavior
- Use enforcement strategically
- Community Moral Voice
- Support and Outreach

Most serious violence driven by small number of people

- **0.5%** of the city drive **50%-70%** of the homicides
- In most dangerous neighborhoods
 - About 5% of high-risk male age group
 - Only about 10-20% of those are impact players

Connection between violence & groups

The most important finding here is simple: there is a profound and so far invariant connection between serious violence, and highly active, extremely high-risk groups.



Representation in population



Representation in homicides

Street Groups

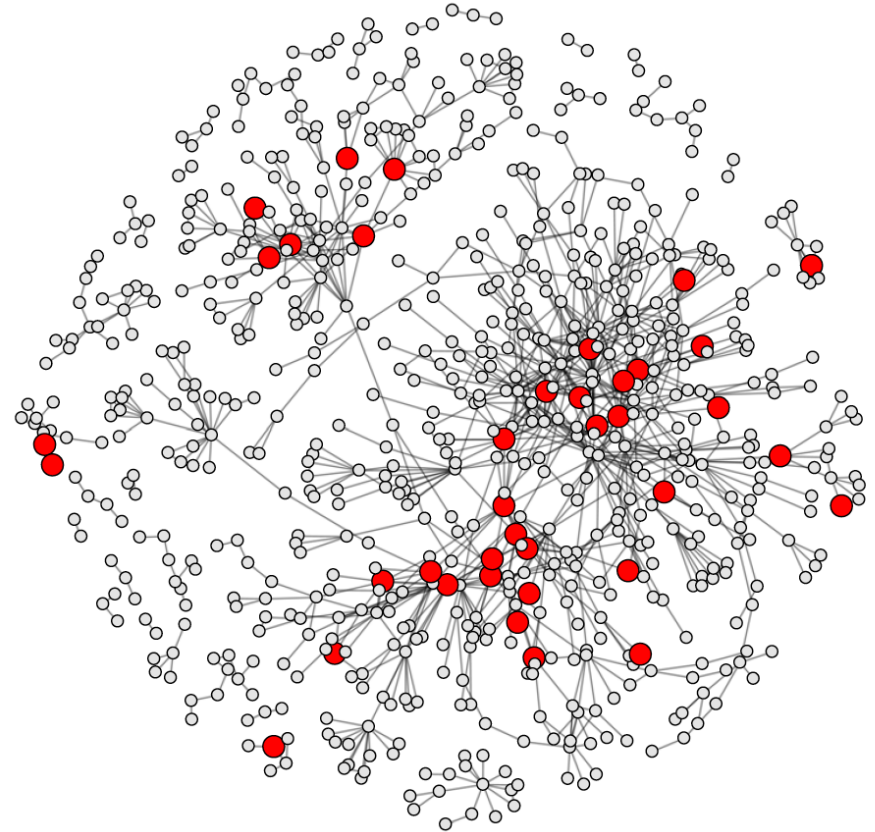
Core offenders are few and identifiable

Groups drive a huge share of the action

- Around 0.5% of overall population; disproportionate rate of victimization/offense
- Cycle of vendetta and retaliation
- Peer pressure, “pluralistic ignorance”

Social network analysis and other tools have shown that, in the most dangerous neighborhoods:

- About 5% of high-risk male age group
- Only about 10-20% of those are impact players



The social network of high-risk individuals in Cape Verdean community in Boston, 2008

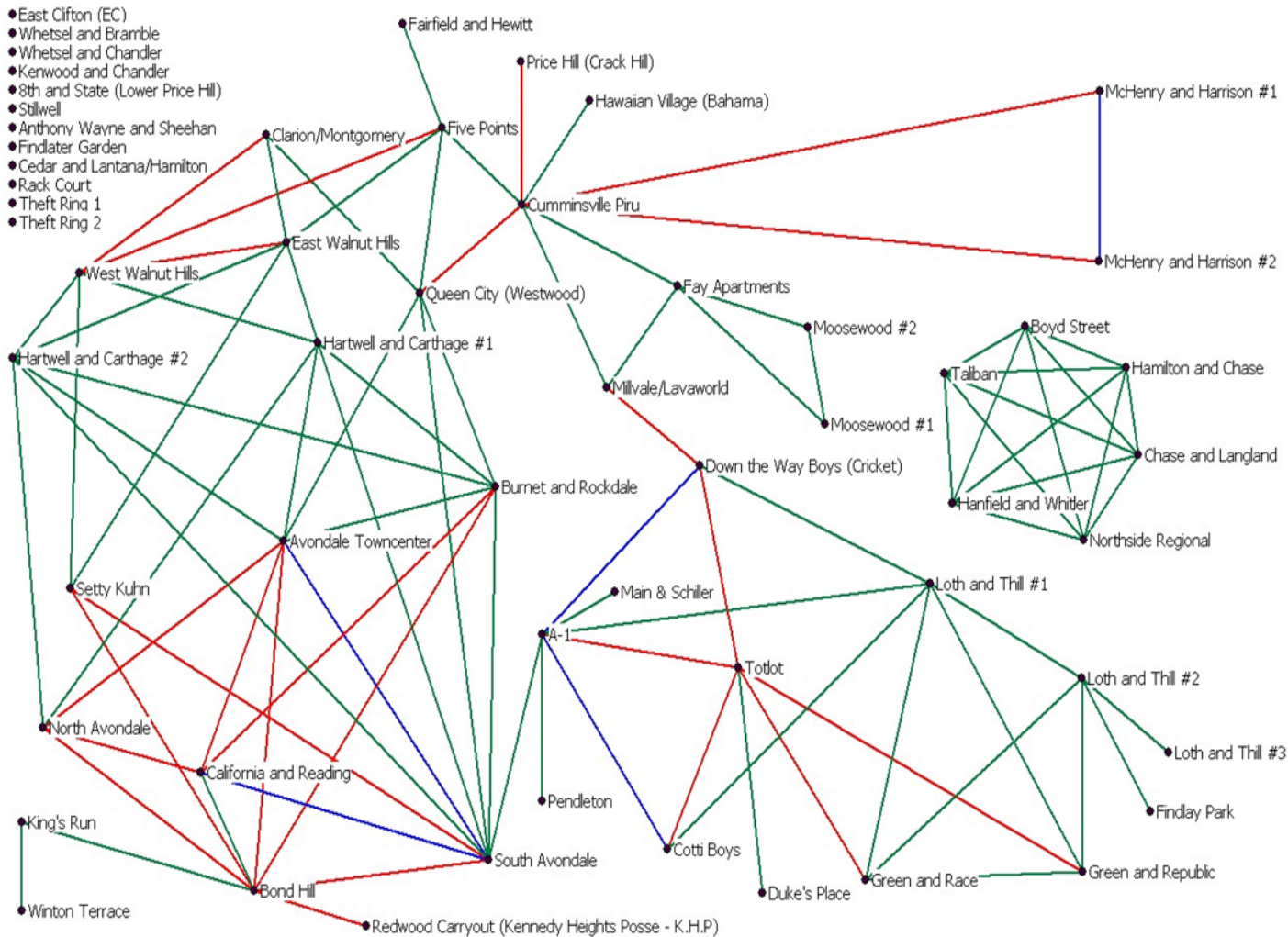
Source: Papachristos, Braga, & Hureau

Why Groups Matter

Group dynamics drive the action:

- Vendettas, alliances, and beefs
- Peer pressure and “pluralistic ignorance”

CIRV Network Analysis of sets



Source: University of Cincinnati Policing Institute



Strategic Intervention

Framework

Direct, sustained engagement by community leaders, social service providers, and law enforcement:

- Focused on small number of those at highest risk
- Grounded in a partnership standing and acting together
- Focused explicitly on **homicide and serious violence**.

Core elements:

- Clear, prior notice of group-level sanctions for homicide
- Moral engagement
- Offer of help

1. Focused Law Enforcement

- Group accountability for group violence by any legal means:
 - “Pulling levers”
- Specifying Enforcement Trigger
 - “First group/worst group” promise
 - First homicide after call-in
 - Most violent group
 - After each call-in, if no group wants to be first or worst, everybody stops

Deterrence, Not Enforcement

- GVI uses enforcement as a **last resort**.
- We want **compliance**, not arrests and sentences.
- Actual enforcement is (mostly) a sign of failure.
- GVI aims to:
 - Make consequences so **clear and certain** that nobody wants them.
 - Keep offenders and communities **safe**.
 - Provide an “**honorable exit**.”

Strategic Law Enforcement

These actions use available legal and informal sanctions strategically.

- Vigorously enforcing conditions of probation/parole
- Serving outstanding arrest warrants
- Performing drug buys/executing drug arrests
- Serving warrants for outstanding child support
- Enforcing traffic citations and other infractions
- Checking group members for unregistered cars
- Enforcing housing codes
- Reviewing current cases for state enhancements and/or federal adoption
- Federal RICO and conspiracy cases

Low-Level and Non-Legal Measures Can Be Preferable

- Violent group of juveniles in Peoria, IL
- Enforce daytime curfew
- Compulsory school attendance
- Enforce existing laws against juvenile possession of tobacco
- In park “turf,” added lighting and no trespassing signs and added password to WiFi from nearby Starbucks

Shooting Reviews

- Operational, frontline meetings to discuss all incidents of serious violence
- Includes core operational law enforcement partners:
 - PD, DA, USAO
 - Other units/agencies central to law enforcement
- Regular and frequent
- Purpose:
 - Gather best intelligence on group involvement in most serious violence
 - Identify most violent groups and group members
 - Track changing dynamics, emerging groups, etc.
 - Share information among all operational partners

Shooting Reviews

What this does:

- Makes a big, nebulous problem small and concrete
- Surfaces real, actionable, current intelligence on violence dynamics in real time
- Creates accountability among frontline law enforcement partners
- Informs direct, immediate engagement with priority groups and individuals

2. Moral Engagement with Group Members

- Group members can and will make rational choices, should be treated as responsible human beings
- Challenge the street code
- There's right, there's wrong: no gray area
- Activates agency: group member is now in control of outcomes
- Treats group members with respect: procedural justice
- Enhances law enforcement legitimacy
- Mobilizes community partners

Community Moral Voice

- Clear, direct community stand from respected local figures, parents, ministers, mothers, activists:
 - “We need you **alive and out of prison.**”
 - “You’re better than this.”
 - “We hate the violence.”
- Offenders and ex-offenders:
 - “Who helped your mother last time you were locked up?”
 - “Who thinks it’s okay for little kids to get killed?”
- Outreach workers are among the very best at all of this

3. Support as a Moral and Practical Obligation

- “We are here to keep you **alive and out of prison.**”
- Address trauma
- Protect from enemies
- Offer “big small stuff” – crucial real-time needs
- Save havens
- New relationships and “sponsors”
- New ideas to replace “street code”
- Link traditional social services: education, work, etc.
- Street outreach an important way to do all this

Cincinnati Resource Cards

Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Date of Birth	
SSN	

	Yes	No
Do you have child support issues?		
Is your license currently suspended?		
Do you have any outstanding warrants?		
Do you have health insurance?		
Do you have anything on your record that needs to be expunged?		
Are you currently employed?		
If not, are you interested in employment?		

The work in practice

Take these basics and adapt and apply to particular settings

- Core working group
- Research the problem
 - Qualitative
 - Quantitative
- Design intervention
- Implement/adapt/assess/evaluate



Research and Results

Emerging Consensus

A Campbell Collaboration Systematic Review ... concluded that there is now **“strong empirical evidence”** for their crime prevention effectiveness.

Braga, A., & Weisburd, D. (2012). The Effects of “Pulling Levers” Focused Deterrence Strategies on Crime. Campbell Systematic Reviews.

“Focused deterrence...has the **largest direct impact on crime and violence**, of any intervention in this report.”

Abt, T. & Winship, C. (2016, February). What Works in Reducing Community Violence. United States Agency for International Development.

“Focused deterrence strategies can have a significant impact **even in the most challenging of contexts.**”

Corsaro, N., & Engel, R.S. (2015). Most Challenging of Contexts: Assessing the Impact of Focused Deterrence on Serious Violence in New Orleans. Criminology & Public Policy, 14(3).

Focused deterrence interventions “achieve a **dramatic crime reduction** effect while subjecting smaller numbers of people and groups to criminal justice intervention.”

Papachristos, A. V., & Kirk, D. S. (2015). Changing the Street Dynamic: Evaluating Chicago’s Group Violence Reduction Strategy. Criminology & Public Policy, 14(3).

GVI Results

Published, peer reviewed studies with control groups

36.4%

**reduction in gang shootings
among gangs treated with
crackdowns**

Boston (MA) Operation Ceasefire
(Braga, 2014)

32%

**reduction in victimization among
factions represented at call-ins**

Chicago Group Violence Reduction Strategy
(Papachristos & Kirk 2015)

32%

**decrease in group member-
involved homicides**

NOLA Group Violence Reduction Strategy
(Engel & Corsaro 2015)

41.4%

**reduction in group member-
involved homicides**

Cincinnati CIRV
(Engel, Tillyer, & Corsaro 2013)

27.4%

**reduction in gang-involved
shootings among gangs that
received warnings**

Boston Operation Ceasefire
(Braga 2014)

50%

**reduction in violent offending
among notified parolees**

Chicago PSN
(Wallace, et al 2015)

GVI Results

Published, peer reviewed studies with control groups

63%

reduction in youth homicide

Boston (MA) Operation Ceasefire
(Braga, Kennedy, Waring, and Piehl, 2001)

42%

reduction in gun homicide

Stockton (CA) Operation Peacekeeper
(Braga, 2008)

37%

reduction in neighborhood-level homicide

Chicago (IL) Project Safe Neighborhoods
(Papachristos, Meares, and Fagan, 2007)

44%

reduction in gun assaults

Lowell (MA) Project Safe Neighborhoods
(Braga, Pierce, McDevitt, Bond, and Cronin, 2008)

34%

reduction in homicide

Indianapolis (IN) Violence Reduction Partnership
(McGarrel, Chermak, Wilson, and Corsaro, 2006)

23%

reduction in overall shooting behavior among factions represented at call-ins

Chicago Group Violence Reduction Strategy
(Papachristos & Kirk 2015)



Statewide Initiatives

Project Longevity-CT

Project Longevity is a statewide initiative to reduce gun violence through the **implementation of GVI**

- It is funded as part of the **annual state budget** and monies dispersed through OPM
- Three sites; **Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven** are the current focus of the GVI effort
- There is a **executive team** made up of the **Chiefs, US Attorney's Office, Mayors** and other executive-level leadership from the three cities

Project Longevity-CT

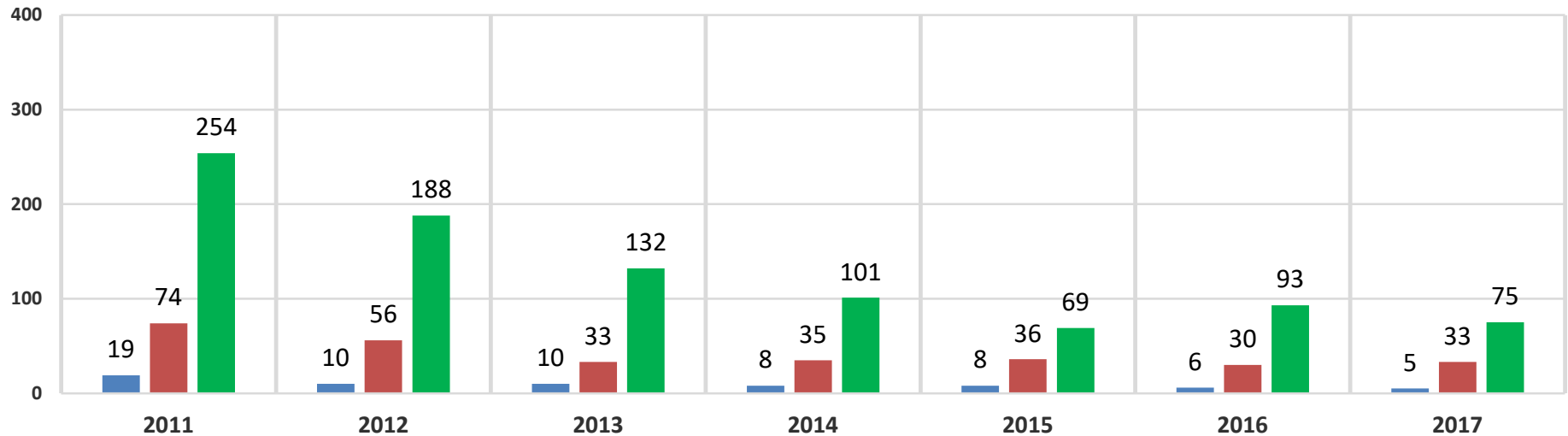
- There is a **statewide coordinator** who acts as the liaison between cities and OPM
- The coordinator also **manages all PL staff** and reports outcomes back to OPM and the executive team
- Each city has a **Project Manager and Support and Outreach Coordinator**, funded through the state
- Each city is given funds to **cover costs** for call-ins as well as support and outreach services

City of New Haven

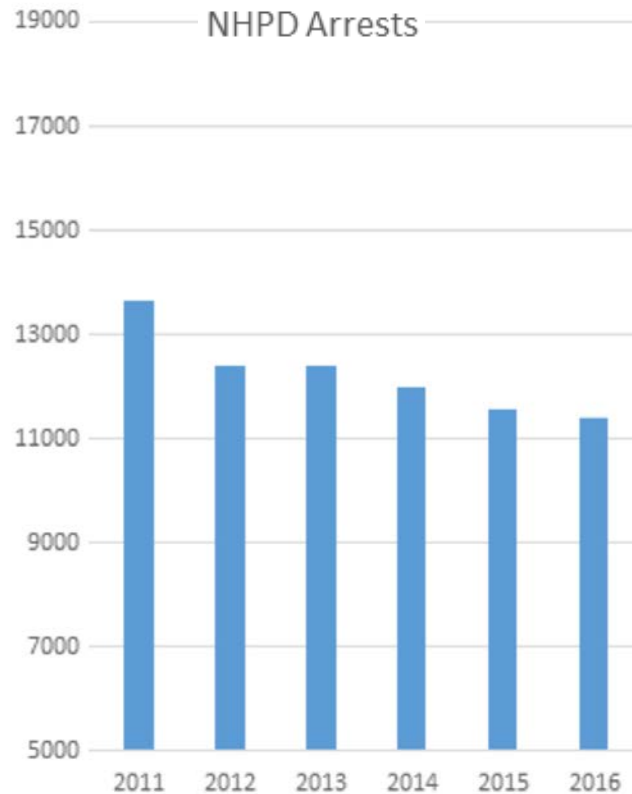
HOMICIDE, NON-FATAL SHOOTING VICTIMS & SHOTS FIRED

JAN 1 - JUL 23 COMPARISON (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017)

- HOMICIDE
- NON-FATAL SHOOTING VICTIMS
- SHOTS FIRED



City of New Haven



GIVE-NY

The **Gun Involved Violence Elimination** program as a statewide program that provides grant money to counties with high levels of gun violence.

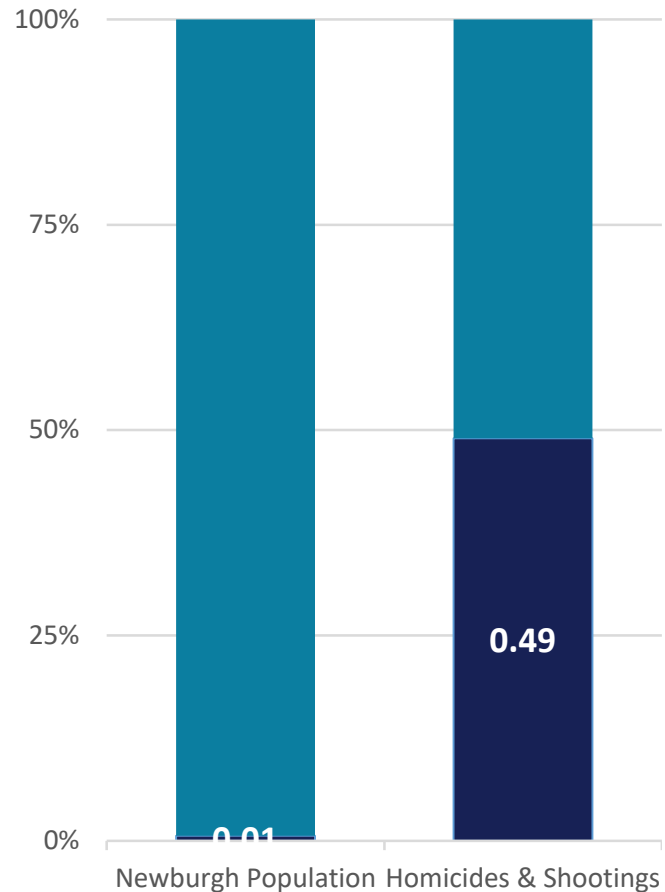
- The grant is offered and managed through the **NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)**.
- As part of the grant, counties can choose **evidence-based strategies** to implement with GVI as an option.
- Cities **submit an application** detailing the scope of work planned and positions to be funded.

GIVE-NY

- **Funded positions** include Project Manager, Support and Outreach Coordinator, dedicated prosecutors, investigators, crime analysts, as well as **overtime** for police, probation, and parole officers.
- **Outcomes** are reported to DCJS who provides site-specific support through program representatives that work for DCJS' GIVE program.
- DCJS also utilizes NNSC to **provide workshops, training, and advising** to specific sites and the state as a whole.

Newburgh, 2014

- Total population: 28,480
- Group Member Involved (GMI): Between 171-185
- Groups: 13



Newburgh Shooting Data

January 1 – December 31	Homicides	Non-Fatal Shootings	Total
2016	5	43	48
2017	4	13	17
2018	2	6	8



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nnscommunities.org