

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Oakland's Human Services Department plans and administers violence intervention programs and services for city residents. This network of programs and services, housed under the name "Oakland Unite" is undergoing a comprehensive strategic planning process. This report highlights the opportunities to enhance service delivery for those at highest risk of offense or re-offense in Oakland Unite's four violence intervention strategies: Focused Youth Services, Family Violence Intervention, Young Adult Reentry Services, and Incident/Crisis Response. It incorporates:

- 1) A qualitative analysis of focus group discussions with providers of violence intervention services.
- 2) A municipality comparison of promising practices used by professionals in the field.
- 3) A literature review of city-led violence reduction strategy reports.

It concludes with recommendations on how to refine the City of Oakland's violence intervention model and improve service delivery practices to better serve the highest risk youth and young adults. Recommendations are made with short and long-term considerations.

In the short-term, Oakland Unite should:

- Invest in After School Programs for young people to offer more options for extracurricular involvement
- Research risk assessment tools
- Staff a grants manager to apply for and administer external funding resources

In the long-term, Oakland Unite should:

- Reorganize its referral network to leverage neighborhood, place-based service delivery (i.e. services in East Oakland might be different than those in West Oakland)
- Increase Oakland Unified School District support to provide onsite mental health, case management and additional services for young people at the highest risk for re-offense
- Adopt a standardized risk assessment
- Apply for state, federal and philanthropic funding to increase resources for service delivery

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

The focus groups uncovered some cross cutting themes with specific implications for each strategy area.

STRATEGY PRACTICES				
THEMES	Focused Youth Services	Family Violence Intervention	Young Adult Reentry Services	Incident/ Crisis Response Services
Case Management Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oakland Unified School District • Probation • Family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oakland Police Department • Family • Social Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers • Probation • Family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Hospital
Case Management for Stability and Crisis Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Re-enrollment • Youth Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation for Safety • Temporary Housing • Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Drivers License • Identification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation for Safety • Victims of Crime Applications • Section 8 Extensions
Trauma and Mental Health Status and Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities • Trauma Informed Care • Long-Term Service Delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe Trauma • Abuse • Distrust • Fear • Short-Term Service Delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe Trauma • Hospitalization • Anger • Short-Term Service Delivery
Poor Academic Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truancy • Low Reading and Math Levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School Incomplete • GED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School Incomplete
Family & Environment Risk Assessment and Readiness Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative Influences • Mental Health • Peer Influence • Family Support • History 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative Influences • Mental Health • Physical Health • Stability • History 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies • Mental Health • Motivation • Work Experience • History 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative Influences • Stability • Peer Influence • History
Leveraging Partnerships for Additional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After School Programs • Field Trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health • Employment • Shelter Subsidy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer Engagement • Paid Job Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives • Field Trips • Life Skills Course

FOCUSED YOUTH SERVICES

Focused Youth Services providers support clients with intensive case management and employment services. It is the largest of the four strategies and engages key stakeholders: the Juvenile Justice Center, Probation, and the Oakland Unified School District.

Challenge	Opportunity
Case management loads are high.	Everyone does not need intensive case management services. Service delivery should be streamlined service based on level of risk: low, medium, and high.
Referring out for services present retention challenges for clients.	Provide onsite resources whenever possible. Schools would be the ideal location.
Partnerships are relationship-driven.	Enhance system wide referral and management practices through staffing or a retooling of the intake and referral system.
Environments are unchanging and antisocial.	Cultivate peer support within youth development programs to build trust and foster encouragement.
Limited resources for field trips and other forms of engagement.	Providers can pool resources and collaborate to offer exposure activities for their clients.
Providers do not have the capacity to attract new employers.	Plan opportunities to promote the youth employment strategies to potential employers.
Relationships facilitate client motivation to participate in programs.	Relationships take time to build but there should be internal tracking to target “readiness” for program participation and expend resources accordingly.

FAMILY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION

The family violent intervention strategy provides case management support and legal services for clients involved in domestic violence, and wraparound and safety-planning services for commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC). The key stakeholders in this strategy are the Juvenile Justice Center and the Oakland Police Department.

Challenge	Opportunity
Housing is an integral part of crisis intervention and safety planning.	The City has to identify resources for safe housing and long-term shelters through affordable housing development incentives.

The Foster Care System is the only agency that has resources for CSEC survivors that were foster care youth.	Government agencies have not specifically allocated resources for CSEC and DV survivors.
Case management services are focused on crisis intervention.	Case managers should only plan for short-term service delivery and coordinate follow up through other entities.
Families are not always the safest places for survivors.	Family supports should be included in short-term case management.
There is a shortage of available training resources for agencies and other stakeholders that work with survivor populations.	Oakland Unite can help to promote training participation and raise awareness about the uniqueness of survivor issues.

YOUNG ADULT REENTRY SERVICES

This strategy focuses primarily on young adult males and provides employment services for its clients. The key stakeholders are the probation department and employers.

Challenge	Opportunity
Assessment is critical in determining readiness for job placement.	Clients that are not ready for job placement should be rerouted to another agency.
Demeanor, attitude, and environment are factors that determine success.	Anger management and counseling should be available to those that would like to work through these challenges.
Job placement works best when clients have a choice.	Job Developers make clients a part of their own case planning and conduct an assessment of their interests.
Case management is not comprehensive but is directly related to employment success.	Every client does not need case management but those who do need intensive case management.
Continued education presents a challenge on both the individual and systematic levels.	Onsite education services integrated into program planning and employer engagement would build a system of support around continued education.

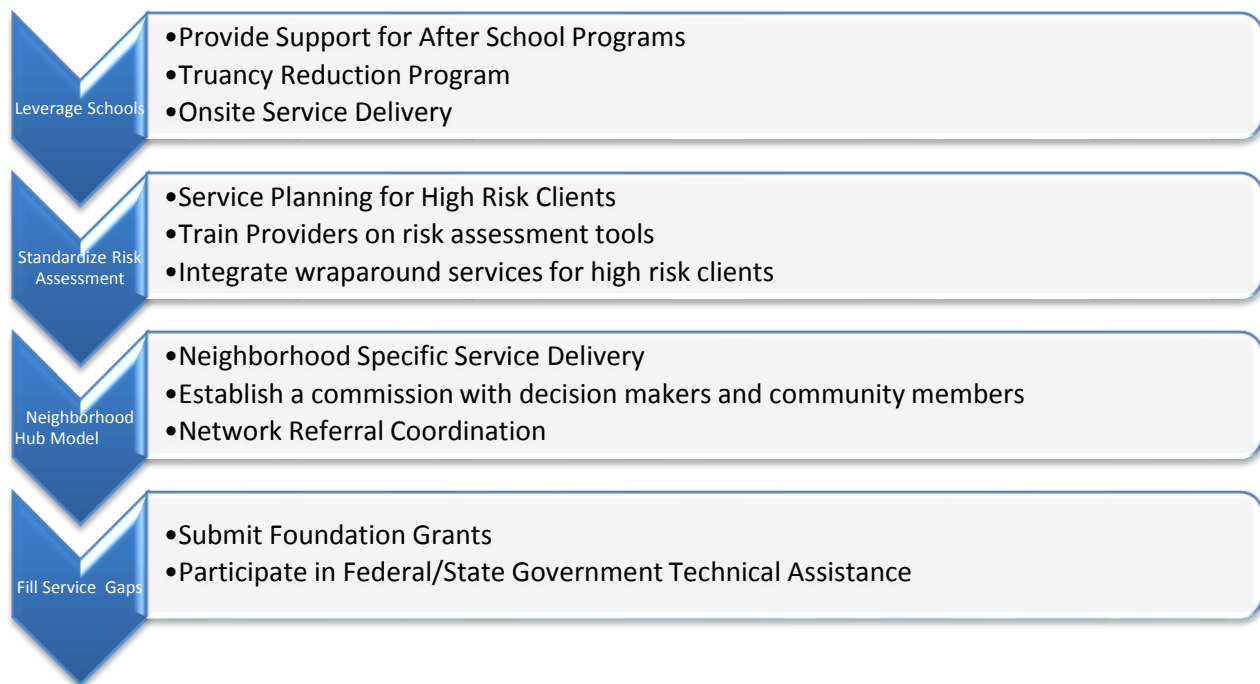
INCIDENT/CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES

The Incident/Crisis Response Services is comprised of two core programs: the Crisis Response Support Network and the Oakland Street Outreach. These two programs are based on evidence

based practice models that involve the Highland hospital first responder and crisis intervention, along with Ceasefire and Cure Violence strategies for violence interruption. Providers serve the highest risk actors for violence, the victims, and the families of victims. The key stakeholders are the Highland Hospital, Alameda County Probation Department and the Oakland Police Department.

Challenge	Opportunity
Case Management is focused on crisis intervention and immediate priorities.	Focus case management services on strengthening collaboration and partnership with entities that clients will have to engage during their immediate recovery.
Resource allocation for housing and safety planning is scarce.	Oakland Unite can help identify new avenues for resource support in order to strengthen service delivery.
Government agencies do not know how to work with victims of crime and their families.	Special training should be offered for government officials to strengthen engagement of families in unique circumstances.
High risk actors often have poor relationship with schools.	Create new peer support systems that integrate skill building into spaces that are comfortable and familiar.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OAKLAND UNITE



Standardize Risk Assessment

Targeted Case Planning and Resource Allocation

Standardized risk assessments are useful tools in discovering where a client ranks (low, medium, or high) prior to administering case management services. Clients that have been assessed at low and medium risks do not need intensive case management services and those resources are preserved to provide extra attention to those at highest risk. In reentry employment strategies, risk assessments are used to streamline training and job placement services according to the level of risk.

Streamlining services according to risk allows providers to better address highest risk clients for violence through customizable training that is longer and incentivized, which reduces the likelihood to recommit violence. Also, in Seattle and Los Angeles, risk assessments are used to determine where a client should be placed prior to enrollment in a program.

