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# YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACTION TABLE

## END-OF-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

DECEMBER 15, 2021

# Today's Agenda

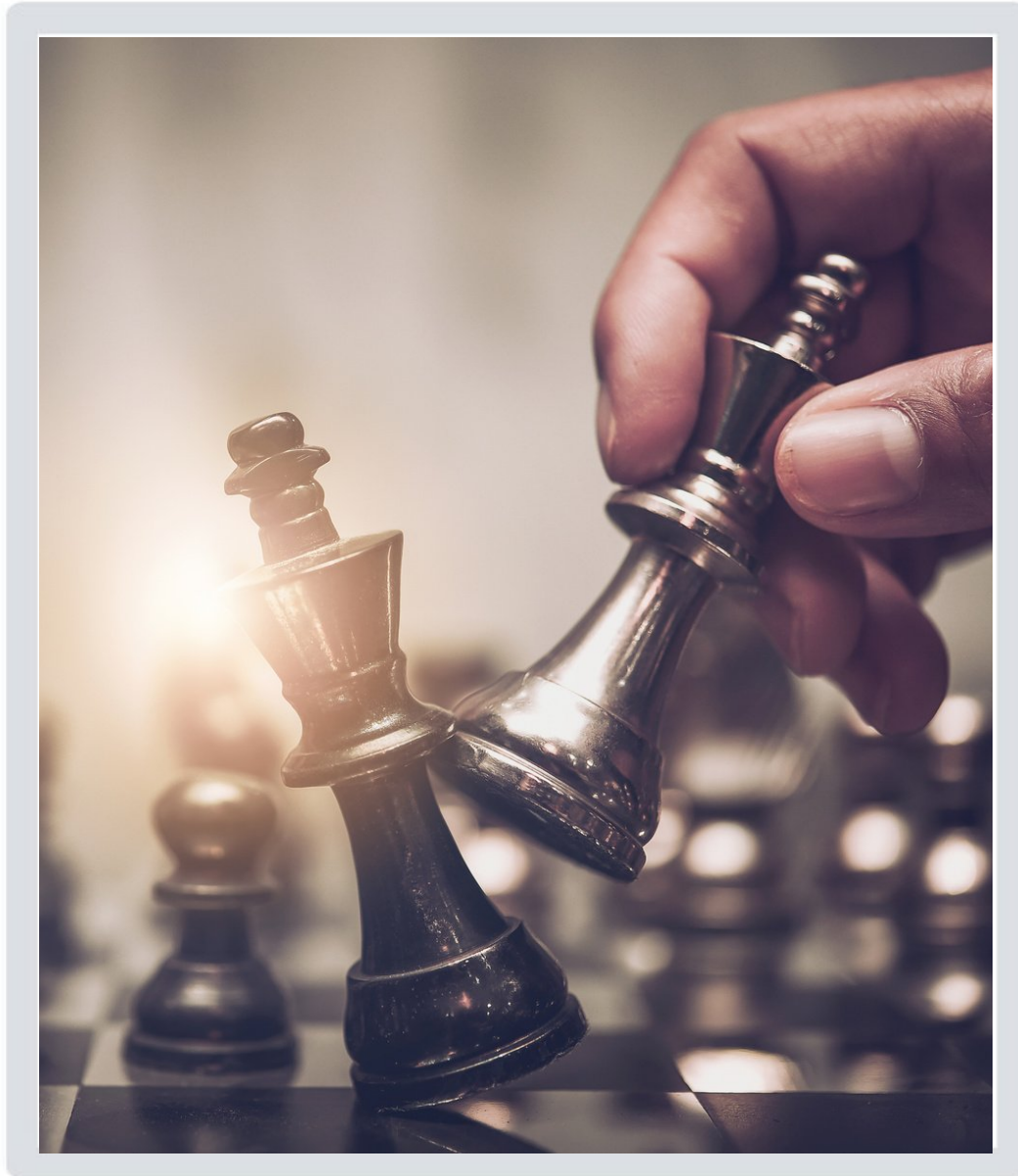
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- Youth Voice - Youth Panel Discussion
- Mayor Hancock
- The Vision in Action (synopsis of what's been accomplished)
- First-Year Wins and Highlights
- Review Strategies Currently In Progress
- Recognizing Youth Violence Prevention Champions
- What's Going On: Strategies in the Pipeline

# Today's Agenda

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- Get Out Of The Way: Challenges and Barriers
- Workgroup Breakouts
- Denver Public Schools
- Denver Parks and Recreation
- Regional Compact
- Unpacking and Processing
- Closing



# YVPAT: Year 2

WHY WE'RE HERE

**To create a working  
strategic plan for 2022  
and beyond.**



# Situation Update

Where we are today.

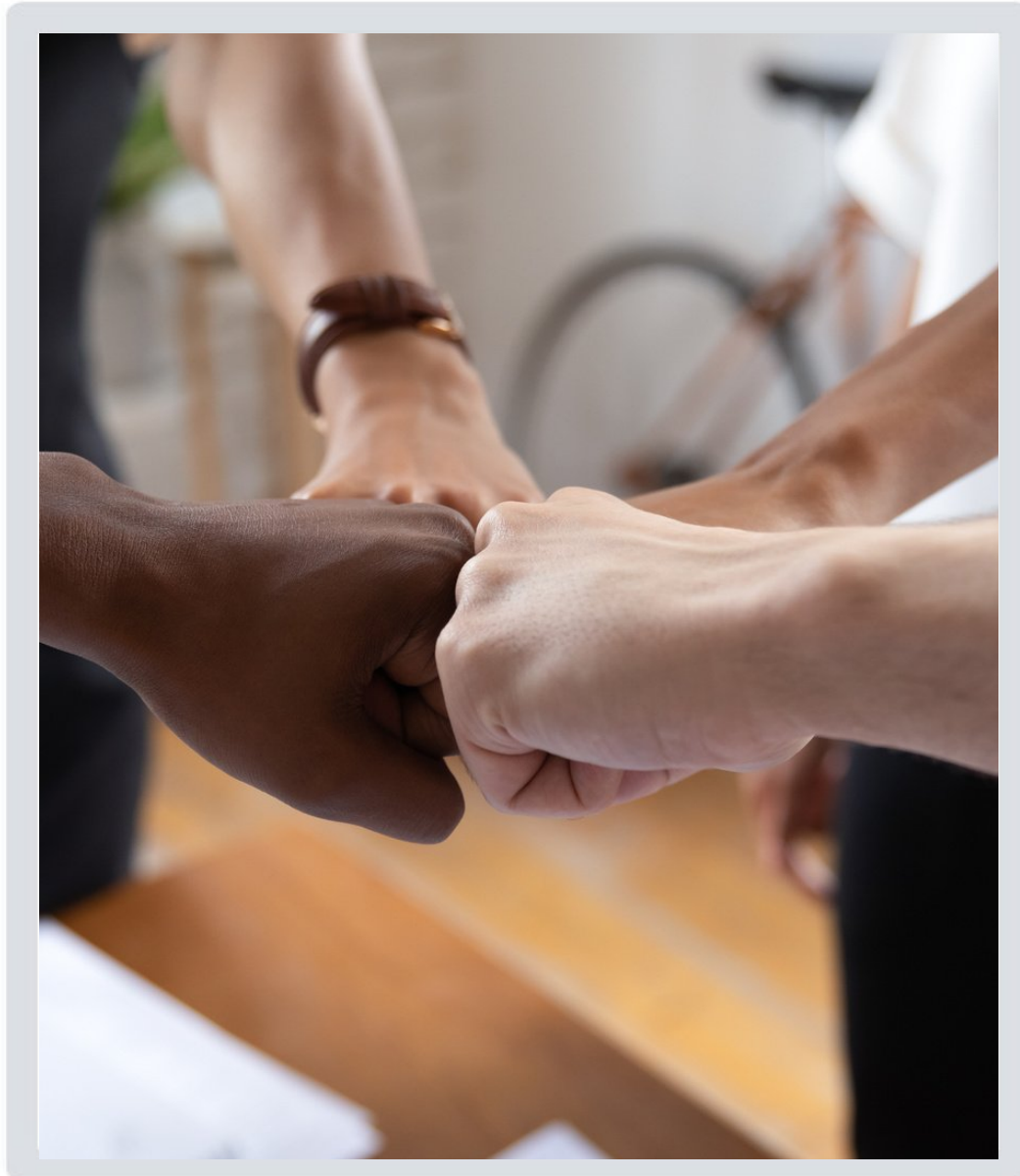
	Youth Crime - Youthful Offenders/Victims					
	2021 YTD	Nov 2021	2020 YTD	Nov 2020	2019 YTD	Nov 2019
Number of Violent Crime (Part 1) committed by youth under 25	877	59	972	97	976	85
Number of Violent Crime (Part 1 ) with victims under 25	1785	151	1746	154	1704	141
Homicides committed by persons under 25	30	4	25	0	15	1
Homicide victims under 25	31	5	30	0	18	0
Youth (Under 18) arrested for gun possession	103	9	95	6	134	12
Non-fatal shootings with victims under 25	95	8	112	9	65	10
<b>*YTD is through November 30th.</b>						

# Youth Panel



Youth voice is a critical, uncompromising component of Denver's Youth Violence Action Table.

Please give your attention to the panel of young people who have committed themselves to finding and creating solutions to an issue that impacts them directly.



## ▶ We Got A Lot Done!

Several key foundational pieces were laid in the first year of strategy implementation. The work was rooted into the infrastructure of a major city agency and strong leadership was hired to direct the ongoing work.

Over \$400 million dollars was invested right back into the community to support culturally aware, responsive and authentic youth violence prevention work.

# Projects Completed

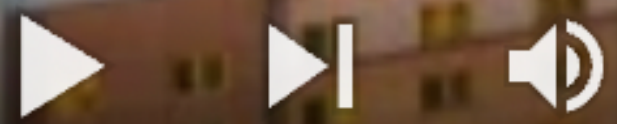


# 8TH ANNUAL CITIES UNITED CONVENING

MADE FOR THIS MOMENT:  
INVESTING IN THE VISION



cities  
united

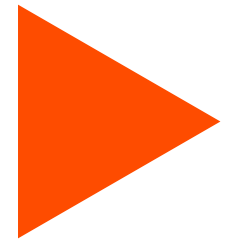


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# Completed Strategies



## **Expand the YVP Micro Grant Program**

- The Youth Violence Prevention Micro Grant Program is an example of Denver's city-supported, community-led strategy and is a way for the city to support and sustain community-led public health focused youth violence prevention programming.
- In 2021 The YVPAT made a recommendation to increase funding and create a \$250,000 budget line item in the 2021 budget which was approved by the mayor and city council and OCA.



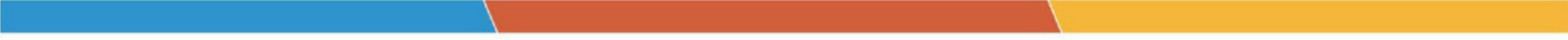
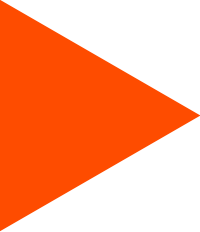
# Completed Strategies



## **Expand the Safe Zone Project to increase the frequency of events in communities where youth violence is more likely to occur.**

- In the summer/fall of 2020, PSYP and OCA funded a proposal from a small collaborative made up of 10 community-based organizations to plan and host Safe Zone events on weekends.
- In 2021 The YVPAT awarded 16 community-based organizations \$178,200 which supported over 60 events May-June.
- The title of the events was changed from "Safe Zones" to Youth Zones to reflect the focus on the youth rather than to imply neighborhoods were only safe when the events were being hosted.

# Completed Strategies

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- The city will create a position dedicated to supporting the implementation of the YVP Strategic Plan.**
  - Jonathan McMillan was hired to oversee the implementation, coordination, and evaluation of Denver's Comprehensive Youth Violence Prevention Plan in coordination with the YVPAT. He works across public, private, and non-profit sectors to leverage and/or enhance existing YVP resources. Additionally, Jonathan also works to expand YVP resources through fundraising strategies including grant writing and partnerships with the philanthropic and business communities.

# Completed Strategies



**The city will promote the Youth Program Locator and encourage community-based organizations and treatment providers to increase the number and type of services included in the database.**

- The YVPAT began promoting the use of the Youth Program Locator developed by the Denver AfterSchool Alliance (DAA) in collaboration with OCA.
- The Youth Program Locator allows users to search for programs by type and location using a geo-mapping format.
- In order to be eligible for YVP specific funding, Community Based Organizations were required to list themselves in the database.

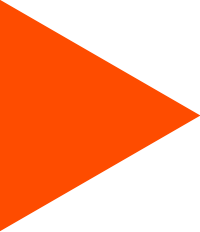
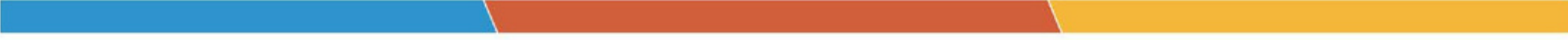
# Completed Strategies



 **The city will designate a city agency to serve as the lead agency to support and lead the implementation of the YVP plan.**

- The city has selected OCA to coordinate youth violence prevention efforts including the implementation of the recommended strategies.
- OCA has been the lead agency for the MBK Program which is where the current youth violence prevention effort began. OCA implements strategies and programs that cover the “cradle to career” continuum and is well positioned to be able to guide the implementation of the youth violence prevention plan utilizing a comprehensive approach.

# Completed Strategies

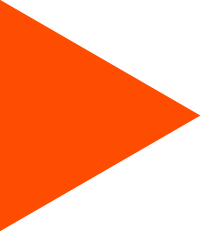
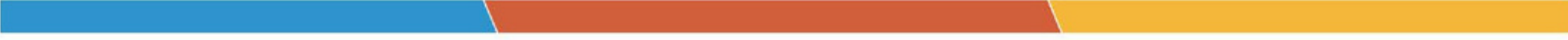


**The city will pursue partnerships with local higher education institutions to support essential operations related to research, data collection and analysis, and project evaluation as well as supporting strategies that focus on academic and/or vocational support for young people.**

- The YVPAT partnered with CU Denver CityCenter to complete the needs assessment which included an extensive review of youth violence prevention research literature; a review of crime data from DPD; identification of existing data sets that can help understand root causes of violence in communities. AND ...



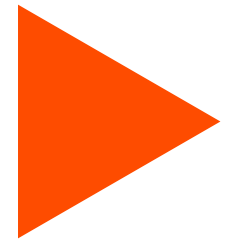
# Completed Strategies



**The city will pursue partnerships with local higher education institutions to support essential operations related to research, data collection and analysis, and project evaluation as well as supporting strategies that focus on academic and/or vocational support for young people.**

- More recently, the YVPAT has partnered with the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado – Boulder to collaborate in grant applications to further both community level prevention and evaluation of the implementation of the YVPAT strategies.

# Completed Strategies



**The city will work with Denver Parks and Recreation to support programming and operations that enhance safety in and around recreation centers.**

- The YVPAT is working with the DPR to expand the operations of "Night Moves" programming which provides after-hour rec center and pro-social support access to youth.
- The YVPAT is also coordinating additional wrap-around services and supports from city agencies and community organizations for youth and their families, especially during out-of-school times.
- DPR is now a critical support partner for the Youth Zones by providing priority access and support to community partners hosting YVP Youth Zone events.

# Wins & Highlights | Funding and Collaborations

## 2022 Budget

The City and County of Denver's 2022 budget has been approved by Mayor Hancock and City Council. Youth Violence Prevention received an additional \$665,000 to the base of \$428,000 for a total of \$1,093,000.

## DDHPE ReCAST Grant \$5 million Award

DDPHE was 1 of 8 organizations nationally awarded the RECAST grant from SAMHSA. The goal of the ReCAST Program is for local community entities to work together in ways that lead to improved behavioral health, empowered community residents, reductions in trauma, and sustained community change.

## CSPV National Youth Violence Prevention

The CSPV project will implement and evaluate 3 youth violence prevention strategies and include a Youth Advisory Council to oversee project activities, and funding to build a pipeline of early youth violence prevention researchers from communities most impacted by youth violence.



# Wins & Highlights | Youth Empowerment Center

## DEDO Purchases Building

In October of 2020 Denver's Office of Economic Development and Opportunity used \$3 million of Community Development Block Grant funding to purchase the former Police Activities League to house a youth empowerment center in the Valverde neighborhood to address youth violence.

## Short-Term Programming

Mid-2021 multiple City & County of Denver agencies began utilizing a community responsive model of service provisioning in the building. These agencies included Department of Safety Youth Programs, Denver Department of Human Services, and the Office of Children's Affairs.

## Long-Term Oversight Committee

An oversight committee comprised of community members, youth advisors and City of Denver representatives was created to ensure programming and services provided in the YEC stays within fidelity to the vision and intention with which the building was obtained.

# Wins & Highlights | Youth Empowerment Center

## Operations Vendor Selected

Through a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process, the city released a request for proposals in September 2021. In November Life-Line Colorado was selected to operate in the space to provide wrap-around/trauma-informed programming to resonate with youth and families in the community.

## GO Bond Approval

In November 2021, Denver voters approved \$6.9 million measure in a general obligation bond to support current renovations for the Youth Empowerment Center. These renovations including the build-out of a kitchen which can be used for a variety of purposes including culinary classes and community meals.

## Partnership with Comcast

Comcast Colorado joined the Office of Children's Affairs to launch their Lift Zone in Colorado. They will advance the city's YVP initiatives and ensure more people have a safe space to connect to educational opportunities, acquire digital skills, and access city services.





**YOUTH** DENVER  
EMPOWERMENT CENTER





# Wins & Highlights | Pop-Up Youth Zones

## Dedicated Budget

In the summer of 2020 the Public Safety Youth Programs and the Office of Children's Affairs supported a pilot series of 'Safe Zones' with a limited budget of approximately \$20,000. Based on the success of those events, the YVPAT requested \$178,200 which supported over 60 events May - June of 2021.

## Expanded City Support

Community-Based Organizations, which hosted pop-up Youth Zones received support at their events from city agencies, including the Department of Human Services, the Department of Economic Development and Opportunity, Denver Public Health & Environment, and Denver Public Library.

## Expanded Private Sector Support

Support came from the private sector in the form of the Denver Metro Chamber's Leadership Denver program. They produced a video highlighting the positive impact the Youth Zones had in the community. The video can be used as a fund-raising tool for Community-Based Organizations and to recruit volunteers.

# Summer Youth Zone Pop-Up Events

*Safety Starts with Me*

Play (k)



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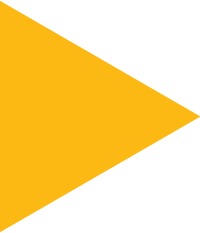
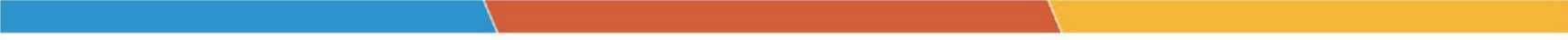
## ▶ We're Getting Even More Done!

In addition to all of the foundational work that was laid there has been a lot more key strategies launched that either require ongoing maintenance or require multiple phases of implementation. These are the strategies which require all hands on deck and a enduring resolve to see through to complete implementation.

# Projects In Progress



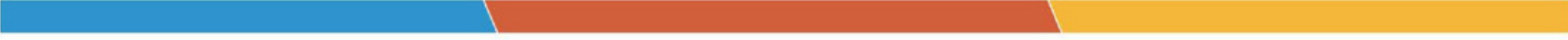

# Strategies in Progress



**The city will invest in community-led youth violence prevention efforts and will work with community-based organizations working to prevent youth violence to enhance communication and collaboration between the city and community.**

- The Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP), which is the city's liaison to the nonprofit community, needs to support community-based organizations and can work with other city agencies to connect nonprofits to OSP for support.

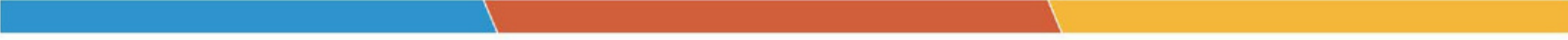
# Strategies in Progress


  


**Several community-based organizations who participated in the needs assessment survey and interviews noted that while funding is a critical need, they had other ideas of how the city can engage and support their efforts including:**

- Making connections with city agencies to learn about city programs and identify points of contact for each program.
- Engagement with higher levels of city leadership beyond just agency staff.
- Aiding with strategic planning and grant writing. And ...

# Strategies in Progress



 **Several community-based organizations who participated in the needs assessment survey and interviews noted that while funding is a critical need, they had other ideas of how the city can engage and support their efforts including:**

- Providing space for community-based organizations to operate programming and/ or have office space for staff.
- Implementing flexibility in city funding to allow a small percentage of awarded funding to be advanced in order to assist with startup costs related to programming instead of adhering to a reimbursement-only format.



# Strategies in Progress


## **Expand access to parenting resources and family skill development programs.**

- Currently, there are a handful of city agencies and community-based organizations that have family or parenting skill building programs in their menu of services so there is a foundation in place to support this strategy.
- To support this strategy, the YVPAT should complete a feasibility study to determine: level of need and areas of the city that would benefit the most from these programs; readiness and willingness of community-based organizations to facilitate interventions; and the level of increased funding support that will be required to expand and sustain these programs.

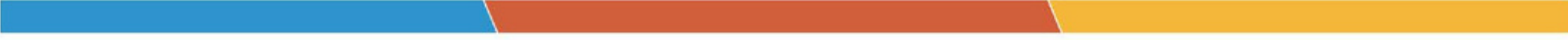
# Strategies in Progress

**Create a network of youth centers in communities where young people are facing barriers to success.**

- The long-term goal is to have multiple centers in other Denver communities with a demonstrated need for wrap-around services for youth.



# Strategies in Progress


**The city will engage local public health agencies to support implementation of strategies focused on supporting youth violence prevention efforts.**

- Increase coordination and support with Denver Public Health's At-Risk Intervention and Mentoring (AIM) Project.
- Expand usage of Cardiff model.
- Continue engagement with local public health agencies to support implementation of strategies focused on supporting youth violence prevention efforts.



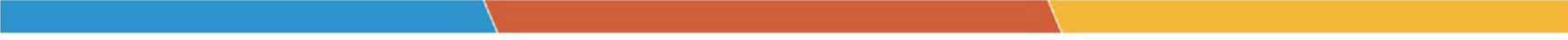

# Strategies in Progress

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## **Enhance early identification and response protocols for supporting youth at higher risk to experience or perpetrate violence.**

- Expand the use of the VIPRS to more school-based clinics, community health centers, and other youth program settings.
- Expand Multi-disciplinary teams (MDT's) model to include a focus on supporting youth who are at risk of system involvement.

# Strategies in Progress

**The city will work with existing youth violence prevention programs or initiatives to identify opportunities to align effective strategies that can be expanded or enhanced.**

- The YVPAT will continue to work with OCVS\* (formally GRID), DATA\*\*, CSPV\*\*\* and other programs or initiatives that address youth violence to find opportunities to support and leverage existing efforts to avoid duplication of programs or services and recommend strategies that can prevent multiple forms of violence.



\*\*Office of Community Violence Solutions

\*\*Denver Anti-Trafficking Alliance

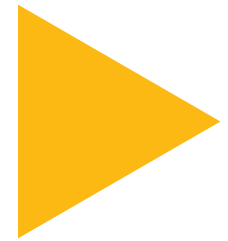
\*\*\*Center for the Study & Prevention of Violence



# Strategies in Progress

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- The city will work with other metro cities/counties to identify opportunities to work collaboratively to prevent youth violence.**
- Expand the Regional Compact to include other cities.
  - The YVPAT should continue to explore ways to lead regional collaboration with other municipalities and counties with tangible, specific actions.

# Strategies in Progress

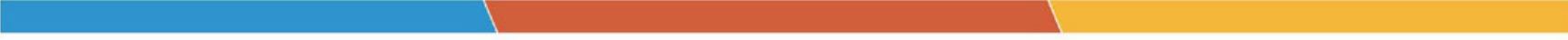


**The YVPAT will work with municipal and district juvenile court systems to support strategies that reduce the number of youth entering the system and improve outcomes for those who have.**

- The YVPAT should work with juvenile court systems to identify opportunities to support proven interventions such as diversion and problem-solving courts that improve outcomes for youth in the juvenile justice system.
- The YVPAT is a representative of the CCPC\*, the Juvenile HIP\*\*, and PNI\*\*\* steering committees/boards.

Crime Control & Prevention Commission  
\*\*Juvenile Handgun Intervention Program  
\*\*\*Place Network Investigations

# Strategies in Progress

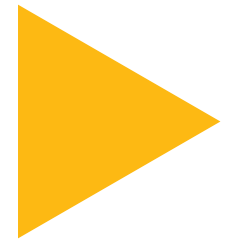
  


**The Denver Department of Public & Environmental Health (DDPHE) will dedicate agency resources to incorporate youth violence prevention strategies into the agency's strategic plan.**

- DDPHE launched an initiative to raise awareness about suicide prevention which is one of the leading causes of death for young people between the ages of 10 - 24.
- DDPHE also promotes trauma informed approaches and has been providing training to community-based organizations and nonprofits on creating a trauma-informed approach within all levels of programming.
- DDPHE received funding that will support innovative ways to serve Denver youth who have been negatively impacted by social unrest events over the last year and a half.



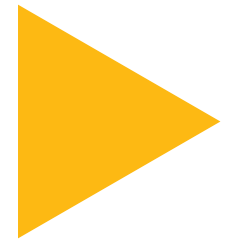
# Strategies in Progress



**The city will engage youth as subject matter experts to ensure YVP strategies are youth informed.**

- Department of Safety Youth Programs has funded The Youth Leadership Team (formally the Youth Advisory Council of Denver) for 2021 and 2022.
- Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence in partnership with community coalitions Park Hill Strong and Steps to Success are funding "The Power of One" social norming campaign to align with the YVPAT comprehensive plan.

# Strategies in Progress

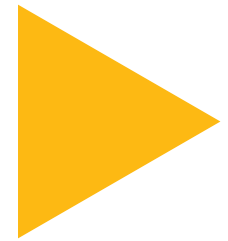


**The city will work with community-based organizations to reduce barriers to behavioral health treatment and expand access to services.**

- Continue to build off the work of the Community Involvement and Behavioral Health Literacy Work Group.
- Enhance access to effective services including tailoring the assessment/referral process to the best fit the unique situation of the individual and family\*.
- Advocate for Telehealth to continue as a billable service will allow people to continue to access those services And ...

\*This idea could be merged with the City Corps strategy that engages young people between the ages of 18 - 26 to serve as peer navigators for youth.

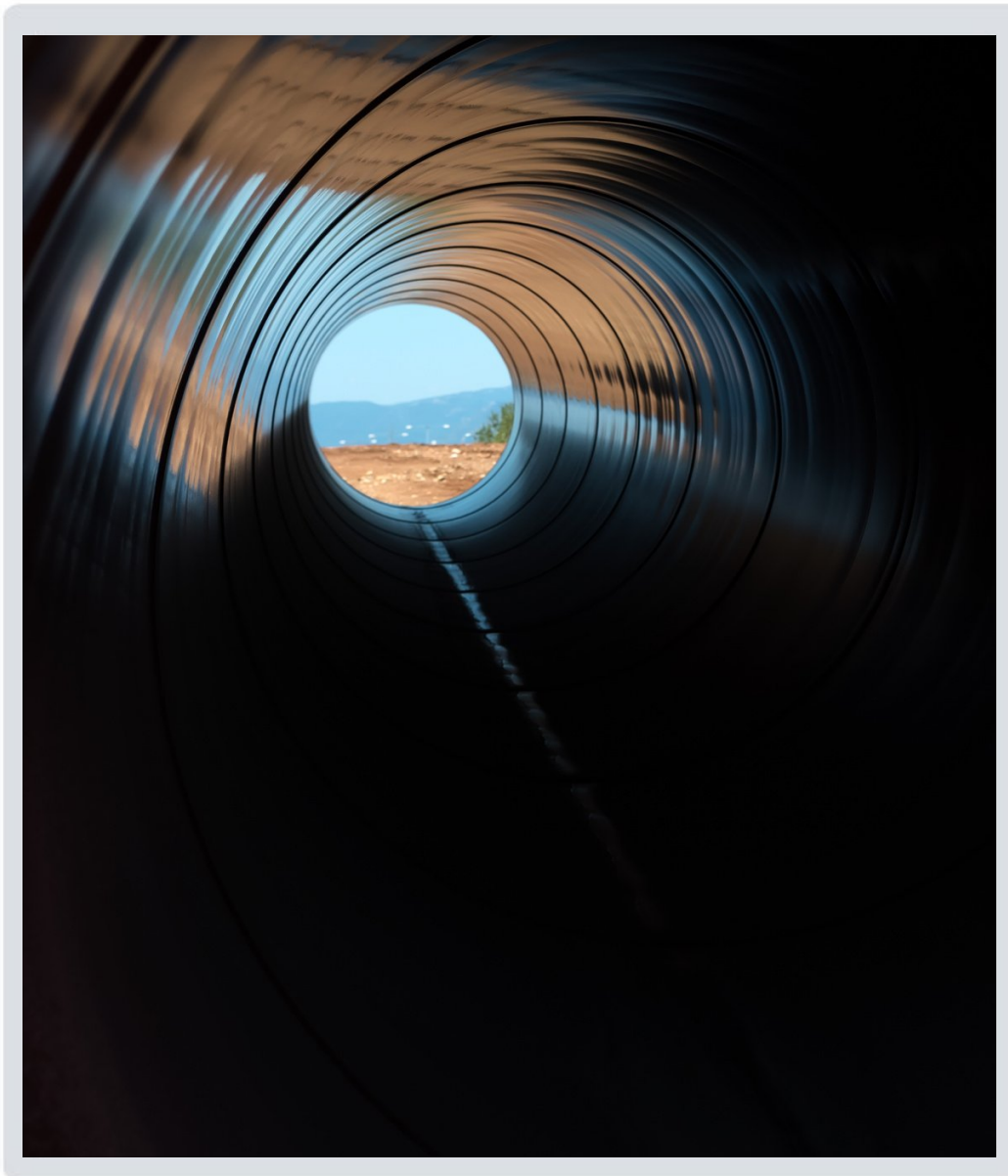
# Strategies in Progress



**The city will work with community-based organizations to reduce barriers to behavioral health treatment and expand access to services.**

- Create financial supports for low-income individuals and families so they can access the technology needed for telehealth will be important as well.
- Connecting resource locators (like 211 and Colorado Crisis Services) with community-based organizations who provide behavioral health supports will allow them to tailor their services to the unique needs of the the residents in their communities.



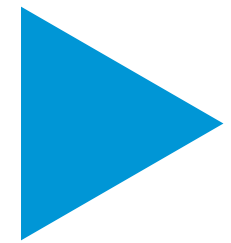


## ▶ Still More To Get Done!

The Youth Violence Prevention Action Table is not done. Only a few strategies have yet to be initiated. But these will require organizational change, resource allocation, and buy-in to be successfully integrated into Denver's infrastructure. These are some of the more difficult and complex strategies, which require committed disruptors to get the job done. *Alright ... who's in?*

## Projects In the Pipeline

# Strategies in the Pipeline



## **Increase access to mentoring for young people through the implementation of a city employee mentoring program.**

- The YVPAT needs to complete a feasibility study to determine the financial impact of a mentoring program, the willingness of city agencies to allow employees to participate, and the interest level of city employees to commit to the program.
- Employees would need to complete a training program to improve their skills sets around mentoring and coaching and knowledge of adolescent brain development and positive youth development practices.

# Strategies in the Pipeline

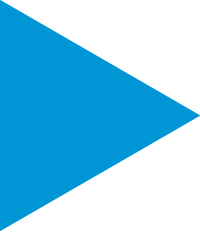
  


**Create a City Corps program that employs young people between the ages of 18 - 24 to serve as peer mentors for other young people and youth.**

- The framework references two existing programs that employ peer navigators to connect individuals to services: behavioral health navigators with the Denver Department of Public Health & Environment and peer navigators working with Denver Public Library.
- This strategy combines peer mentoring and peer navigation services to support to youth at risk of experiencing violence. The City Corps model will hire young adults, ages of 18 - 24, to provide support to other youth and young adults. And ...



# Strategies in the Pipeline



**Create a City Corps program that employs young people between the ages of 18 - 24 to serve as peer mentors for other young people and youth.**

- To advance this strategy, the city should connect with local mentoring programs to map out the necessary infrastructure and funding needed to implement this strategy.
- A City Corps program could be housed within a city agency or it could be administered by a community-based organization through a competitive bid process.

## A Message From Our Founders

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**“Denver is prepared for this. We have the right leaders in place and a comprehensive plan with strategies that are community-led, city-supported and youth informed.**

Denver City Attorney - Kristin Bronson

# Challenges and Potential Barriers to Full Success

## **Rigid City Policies Negatively Impact Community Partners Financially**

The top challenge in transforming a community led - city supported philosophy into an actual methodology was the inability for city bureaucracy to get out of the way of progress. Too many of community partners were asked too often to do the important work of increasing protective factors while waiting for payment that was either promised to them and delayed or was awarded with the assumption they would be able to wait to be reimbursed. This inability or unwillingness to engage in actual organizational change destroys trust. Without earning and keeping the trust of our Community Partners, all YVP efforts will fail.

## **Lack of Understanding the Purpose/Value of YVPAT**

Another regrettable and avoidable challenge has been not all partners, whether they be internal or external understand what the YVPAT is. Without that understanding they are hesitant to fully buying into the vision and resist participating in and contributing to the collective impact model that is the Action Table.



# Challenges and Potential Barriers to Full Success

## Resistance to Organizational Change

That's just the way 'The City' does business is no longer an acceptable answer to any question. The way large government currently operates has historically worked great for a few, adequately for most, and against way too many. The policies which create and support social and racial inequities which are the root causes of violence are so integrated into the fabric of lives they almost seem reasonable, normal and even convenient to the "natural order" of things. That is how insidious of a system racism is.

The truth is, to create safe, healthy, hopeful communities and equitable opportunities for all of Denver's youth we will have to not only change things at an organizational level but commit to disrupting and dismantling the system with take hard, intentional work to remove and replace the policies which supports it.

# Challenges and Potential Barriers to Full Success

## Transition in Key Roles

The work of building the YVPAT and the guiding comprehensive report and plan required consistent leadership from individuals who made youth violence solutions a priority. In 2021 key leaders and champions for Youth Violence Prevention in the Office of Children's Affairs, the Mayor's Office and Denver Public Schools left their roles for other opportunities which left created vulnerabilities for the work to be disrupted. Fortunately, the legacy those leaders left and the strong foundation which they help lay proved beneficial for the leaders who came after to continue to build and evolve the work.

A lesson to be learned from these departures is this: Denver's Youth Violence Prevention work needs to be so strong and woven into the fabric of the City's infrastructure that it's success is not dependent on one or two particular individuals to lead the work and can remain resilient to inevitable personnel changes.

# Challenges and Potential Barriers to Full Success

## Identifying the right person to represent each YVP category

My grandmother had a saying that went something like "There's a key for every lock." which was her way of explaining how odd couples were formed. I believe the same sentiment applies to the execution and implementation of strategic plans. The YVPAT is a very large, very complex collective impact organization or in human services speak - a Multi-Systems Team. And everyone knows - a team needs to have the right players in their correct positions in order to be effective. Implementing the many strategies which cross sectors from employment, to social services, to education, to juvenile justice, to social - emotional- and mental health, and beyond, will require many folks with skills which aren't as apparent. Yes, there is an obvious need for recreation center specialist but there is a need for people who specialize in contract administration and creative minds who can help think us out of the bureaucratic corners in which we often find ourselves stuck.



## Unpacking and Processing the Day

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- What was the most interesting thing you learned today?
- Which VYP Strategy can you or your organization directly support?
- In what way can you or your organization support?



## Unpacking and Processing the Day

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- Name a specific person you will connect with by January to discuss YVP collaboration.
- What's their phone number and email?

# Unpacking and Processing the Day

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- Name at least one way safety starts with you.





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# THANK YOU!

- Mayor Michael Hancock and Staff
- The Youth Advisory Council of Denver
- The Office of Children's Affairs
- The Entire Youth Violence Action Table and Partners
- Denver Office of Public Safety and Public Safety Youth Programs
- Denver Police Department
- Denver Human Services



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# THANK YOU!

- Denver Department of Public Health & Environment
- The Youth Empowerment Center The Youth Advisory Council
- The Youth Advisory Council of Denver
- Denver Department of Safety Youth Programs Youth Leadership Team
- The Power of One Youth Leaders
- Denver City Attorney's Office
- Denver Office of Economic Development and Opportunity



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# THANK YOU!

- Denver Office of Human Rights & Community Partnerships
- Denver Public Schools
- All of our Community Based Organization Partners
- The Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
- Denver Metro Chamber Leadership Foundation
- Comcast
- Denver Juvenile Judicial Partners





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# AND, THANK YOU FOR ROLLING UP YOUR SLEEVES, TODAY!

Stay informed, visit  
[denvergov.org/youthviolenceprevention](https://denvergov.org/youthviolenceprevention)

For questions, email  
[jonathan.mcmillan@denvergov.org](mailto:jonathan.mcmillan@denvergov.org)