

Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement's Violence Interrupter Program

- ONSE contracts three community-based organizations to lead violence intervention efforts in 20 District neighborhoods deemed to be high-priority. These neighborhoods suffer from higher rates of community violence, particularly gun violence.
 - Collaborative Solutions for Communities is contracted to serve priority neighborhoods in Wards 1, 4, and 5.
 - Training Grounds is contracted to serve priority neighborhoods in Wards 6 and 7.
 - Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative is contracted to serve priority neighborhoods in Ward 8.
- Violence Intervention Initiative FY20 Budget
 - The FY20 budget for all 3 Violence Intervention contractors is approximately \$3.4 Million.
- Violence Intervention Initiative Impact
 - The Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement's (ONSE) Violence Intervention Initiative has been in operation for a little less than two years.
 - In 2019, 5 ONSE priority communities had zero homicides.
 - In 2019, assaults with a dangerous weapon (AWD) went down in 11 of our 22 priority communities, and 7 of these 11 communities experienced a decrease in AWD of at least 20%. ONSE currently has 38 Violence Interventionists (VIs) working across the District. VIs are supported by Case Managers.
- The initiative as a whole tackles community violence from two angles - people and groups.
 - The person-centered approach focuses on delivering highly customized interventions to community members at high and/or imminent risk of becoming involved in, or victim of violent crime. Through this approach, VIs help high-risk individuals:
 - Challenge thoughts and feelings that lead to destructive behaviors and process alternative conflict resolution strategies;
 - Identify personal goals and develop plans to meet them; and,
 - Connect to more intensive intervention programs like the ONSE Pathways Program or other supports and services needed to address critical needs.
 - The group-centered approach works to identify sources of dispute or conflict and implement group interventions, including ceasefires and mediations, that interrupt the cycle of retaliatory violence.
- Violence Interventionists are responsible for:
 - Building positive relationships with high-risk community members
 - Staying abreast of community and interpersonal conflicts that have the potential to escalate to violence
 - Developing partnerships with community organizations to implement violence intervention strategies
 - Facilitating and supporting neighborhood meetings, events, and activities
 - Assisting with the facilitation of ceasefires and mediations
 - Responding to critical incidents of community violence

(The DC Department of Parks and Recreation, not ONSE, oversees the Roving Leaders program. Roving Leaders utilize recreation and leisure time activities as the intervening vehicles for redirecting antisocial and aggressive behaviors.)
- COVID-19 Response
 - Since the start of the District's public health emergency, ONSE contractors have responded to over fifty incidents of critical community violence.
 - Since the start of the District's public health emergency, ONSE staff and contractors have taken on additional duties including:
 - Provided additional safe passage support at over 13 DC School Meal Sites.
 - Distributing food and essential items to families and elders in need.

