Northwestern | INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

POLICY RESEARCH BRIEF
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Preliminary Neighborhood Level Impact Analysis Communities Partnering 4 Peace

OVERVIEW

In the summer of 2017, eight outreach organizations in Chicago joined together to create a comprehensive, long-term intervention to combat gun violence and gang activity. The initiative, **Communities Partnering 4 Peace (CP4P)**, is mobilizing a four-pillar approach to violence.

A Four-Pillar Approach to Violence

1. Preventing and intervening in violence through street outreach services
2. Professionalizing street outreach work through the Metropolitan Peace Academy
3. Empowering communities to reclaim safe spaces through Light in the Night events
4. Coordinating services to build capacity among partner organizations

CP4P's research partner, The **Northwestern Neighborhood and Network Initiative (N3)**, is implementing an external evaluation. Their collaborative goal is to understand if CP4P's four-pillar intervention reduced shootings among participants in their home communities. This brief presents preliminary results of a community-level analysis, looking at what happened to gun violence trends in CP4P treatment communities from 2017–19. These are preliminary results and do not reflect the final evaluation or precise causal estimates, but rather offer some initial insights into the program's potential impact on neighborhood patterns of gun violence. Individual-level results of CP4P's impact on its participants are forthcoming.

2017–19 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Though it is too early to determine CP4P's full impact, initial findings suggest several promising developments in the neighborhoods targeted by the initiative (see Figure 1, p. 2).

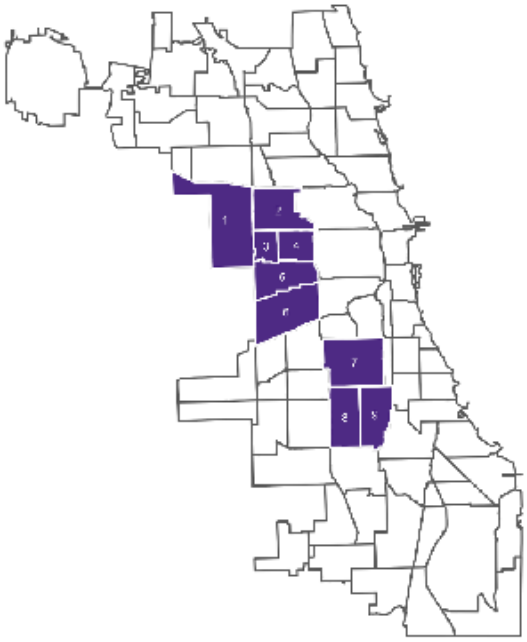
First, the results show that CP4P participants are at extremely high levels of risk for gun violence, even compared with other members of their community (see Figure 2, p. 3). Of all CP4P participants, 78% are male, 73% are Black and 20% are Hispanic, with an average age of 28. CP4P communities endure more crime and gun violence—at rates three times higher—than the rest of Chicago. Residents of CP4P communities bear some of the highest risks for gunshot injuries in the city. Within those communities, CP4P participants run a 370% greater risk of being shot than their neighbors.

Continued on p. 2

FACTS AND FIGURES

- CP4P participants are **370% more likely to become gunshot victims** than other members of their communities.
- Since CP4P's start, **shootings and homicides have declined an average of 1% per month in the CP4P areas**, whereas shootings and homicides were increasing 2% per month before CP4P.
- This has led to an **overall reduction of 17.7% on average in the number of homicides and shootings per month** in the 30 months since CP4P launched.

Figure 1: CP4P Treatment Areas



1. Austin
2. Humboldt Park
3. West Garfield Park
4. East Garfield Park
5. North Lawndale
6. South Lawndale
7. New City (Back of the Yards)
8. West Englewood
9. Englewood

In 2017, CP4P was implemented in nine neighborhoods across Chicago, all of which suffer from some of the highest rates for crime and gun violence in the city.

2017–19 PRELIMINARY FINDINGS, CONT.

Second, before the CP4P intervention, shootings and homicides increased by 2% each month whereas after the intervention, shootings and homicides declined approximately 1% per month

As an example, prior to CP4P an average of 90.5 shootings and homicides took place per month in the treatment areas, and this decreased to an average of 74.4 per month after CP4P—a decline of approximately 17.7% over 30 months. This change is meaningful and statistically significant. Figure 3 (p. 4) captures this early but promising trend.

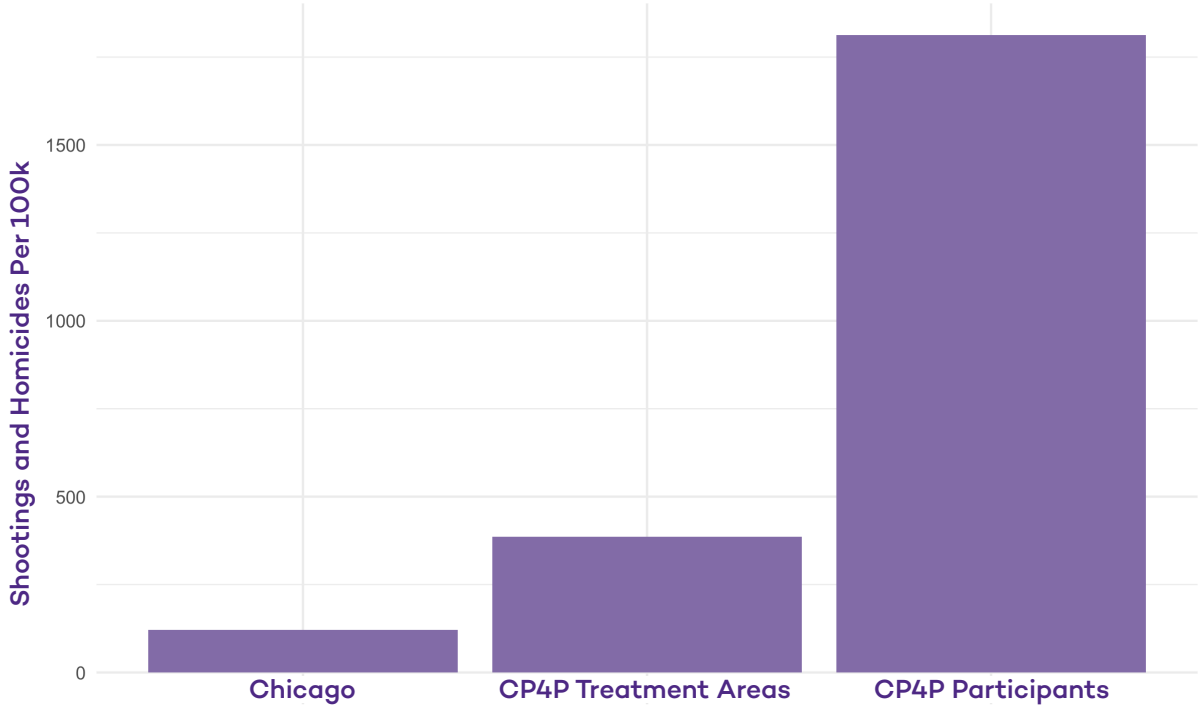
Since the 2016 spike in homicides and violence in the city, homicide and shooting rates have started to decline to pre-2016 levels in most CP4P communities. Early indications in many districts suggest that these downward trends are likely to continue.

The coming year will be important, as the research team should be able to determine if these programs can help push victimization rates even lower.

In summary, while formal evaluation efforts continue, preliminary results suggest that CP4P's start in 2017 was associated with a decline in gun violence beyond what might be predicted from historical patterns.

The final evaluation of CP4P will include a quasi-experimental analysis of participant-level data to identify the impact that the program is having on the people directly receiving services. N3 is also collecting extensive interview data with participants to identify the personal impact of street outreach in their day-to-day lives.

Figure 2: Shooting Victimization Rates per 1,000



CP4P participants run a far higher risk of experiencing gun violence than other Chicagoans. They are 370% more likely to be shot when compared with their neighbors in the CP4P neighborhoods.

METHODOLOGY

The analyses examine the predicted number of shootings in a month, given historical trends in the CP4P communities, compared to the number of shootings that actually took place. In short, this approach allows the researchers to compare what might have occurred in the CP4P communities based on historical patterns with what actually occurred after the intervention's start. Evaluation of any place-based intervention requires comparison conditions.

The researchers needed some measure of what shooting rates would have been if the intervention had not been in place to determine the net effect of CP4P on gun violence. CP4P chose not to randomize treatment communities, so they deploy quasi-experimental methods to estimate what the number of shootings would have been without CP4P.

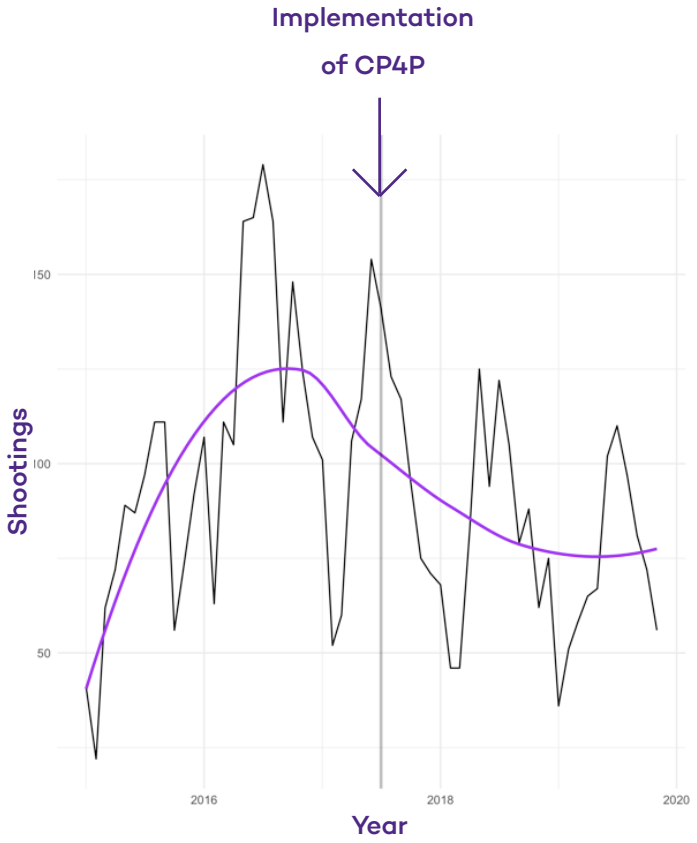
Interrupted Time Series (ITS) models offer a quasi-experimental research design to evaluate an intervention over a clearly defined time period.

The time series data establish an underlying trend, which is "interrupted" by the CP4P intervention. They included a month-level control into the model to account for regular seasonal variation in shootings.

REFERENCE

Gopalan, S., D. Hureau, D. Leggett, A. V. Papachristos, and R. Werth. 2020. Communities Partnering 4 Peace (CP4P) Preliminary Neighborhood Level Impact Analysis: Preliminary Findings.

Figure 3: Aggregate CP4P Interrupted Time Series Results



Following a 2016 spike, homicides and shootings have seen a decline in the numbers for both following CP4P's launch in 2017.

"Prior to CP4P an average of 90.5 shootings and homicides took place per month in the treatment areas, and this decreased to an average of 74.4 per month after CP4P— a decline of approximately 17.7% over 30 months.

CONTRIBUTORS

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