WILMINGTON COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

JANUARY 2017 - JANUARY 2018

FORMERLY THE CDC COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

#### A Message on Behalf of the Wilmington Community Advisory Council:

It is with great pleasure that we introduce the "POWER of Partnership," the annual report of the Wilmington Community Advisory Council for 2017.

It has been slightly over a year since the Advisory Council, formerly the CDC Community Advisory Council, shared its recommendations for preventing youth violence and promoting positive youth development in Wilmington, Delaware. Accordingly, the report outlines the role of the Advisory Council, progress that has been made in acting on the recommendations in 2017, and priorities for 2018.



This report is intended to recognize the tremendous efforts of our State and community partners. Our partners have demonstrated their commitment to working together over the last year to help our youth and families and the Wilmington community as a whole to improve their opportunities to be **connected**, **respected**, and **protected**, resulting in greater resiliency and a better quality of life. They are working to strengthen the network of supports for youth and their families to reduce the opportunities for them to fall between the cracks. Unfortunately, building the network takes precious time and does not happen as fast as we need or would like it to. There is a saying that the "longest journey starts with the first step." During 2017 we took many important steps and laid the groundwork for moving faster in 2018 with the implementation of projects for which existing resources are being leveraged and funding is being pursued for those which require additional investments.

During 2018 we will be strengthening our community engagement efforts through the formal launch of the **POWER** Campaign, "*People and Organizations Engaging in Reform,*" to network the many community members and community organizations that are working on the cause of preventing youth violence and promoting positive youth development. Through the **POWER** Campaign, we hope that we can better align our efforts and resources and advocate for needed policy changes to maximize our collective impact as a resilient community.

As you read this report, think about what you can do to help. Consider joining **POWER**. Attend a monthly Advisory Council meeting. Volunteer at a school or community organization. Mentor a young person. **Most importantly, if you are a parent, grandparent, or caregiver, reach out to those special young people in your life and let them know that you care and are there for them.** 

Check out our website and social media sites for more information about how to get involved.

In closing, we would like to acknowledge the hard work and tremendous commitment of our Council Co-chairs, Tyrone Jones and Ray Fitzgerald, and our members who have been actively engaged over the last two years.

In that spirit, we dedicate this report to our youth and their families and pledge as an Advisory Council to working as hard and as long as it takes to ensure that we don't lose our youth to senseless violence and we empower them to have lives where they have the opportunities to be the best they can be.

Hanifa Shabazz, D.H.L. Wilmington City Council President Wilmington Community Advisory Council Champion

## WILMINGTON COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

#### **Council Purpose**

The purpose of the Wilmington Community Advisory Council is to provide guidance, support, and advocacy to the planning and implementation of the Advisory Council's recommendations on youth violence prevention and positive youth development through early identification of risk and delivery of evidence-based, integrated services to youth and their families living in high need communities in the City of Wilmington.

#### **Council Functions**

The Wilmington Community Advisory Council has several functions, including:



**Public Messaging-** Serve as a repository for initiatives addressing gun violence and positive youth development. Share information through media messaging.



**Oversight-** Ensure the implementation of key recommendations from key reports. Monitor the outcomes and impact achieved.



**Stewardship-** Align efforts to maximize existing resources, eliminate duplication of efforts and hold partners accountable.



**Technical Assistance-** Review, analyze, and use data and evidence-based practices to develop recommendations on program and practice changes.



**Policy-** Identify and review structural barriers. Create recommendations for policy changes. Develop and advocate for a legislative agenda.

#### A Note on the Name Change

In alignment with the 2015 CDC recommendations, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services created the CDC Community Advisory Council. To emphasize the importance of the community being at the center of all efforts, the name evolved, in 2017, to Wilmington Community Advisory Council. The operative word is **community**. It is and will continue to be the responsibility of the Advisory Council to ensure that the community's voice forms the foundation of any and all efforts.

### **2017 BY THE NUMBERS**

The Wilmington Community Advisory Council envisions a city where youth are connected, respected and protected. Through the **POWER** of partnership we can enhance the trajectory of Wilmington, Delaware's most valuable resource: **our youth**. While we have accomplishments to be proud of, with regard to the state of Wilmington youth, we also have significant opportunity for growth.

#### **Connection to a Caring Adult**

Connection to a caring adult acts as a protective factor against youth violence and other risky behavior. According to the 2017 Fact Book developed by Kids Count Delaware, **95%** of surveyed 8th graders in Delaware reported having someone that "gives them a lot of support and encouragement."

#### Safe Haven for Youth

**2,944** youth participated in the Extended Hours/Summer Safe Haven Program, sponsored by the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, for a total of **66,193.5** hours off the street and in a safe, supportive environment. Read more on page 5.



#### **Employment Opportunities for Youth**

450 youth were employed by the Summer Youth Employment Program in 2017. Read more on page 5.

#### **Support Services & Employment Opportunities for Adults**

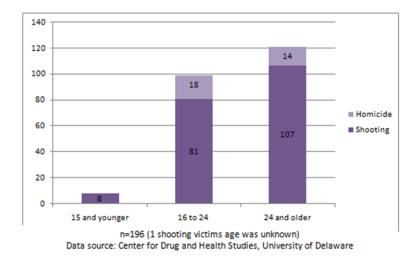
Since launching in mid-December (2017) the Community Partner Support Unit has assisted **75** library patrons. **200** people were refereed to UPS for seasonal positions, of which **22** accepted a seasonal position. Read more on page 7.

#### **Training Educators**

**4,300** Delaware educators have been trained by the Compassionate Connections Partnership. Read more on page 7.

#### Wilmington, Delaware 2017 Shooting Data

- 197 shooting victims
- 32 homicides
- 89 people age 5 to 24 were victims of a shooting
- 45% of shooting victims were age 5 to 24
- 18 people age 16 to 24 died due to gun violence
- 56% of homicide victims were age 16 to 24



"I don't want another child to die. We have a strong commitment to move this work forward."

- Dr. Kara Odom Walker -

DHSS Cabinet Secretary

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## **RECOMMENDATION PROGRESS**

In 2017, the Advisory Council proposed the following recommendations to prevent youth violence and promote positive youth development in Wilmington, Delaware:

- Foster violence-free environments and promote positive opportunities and connections to trusted adults
- Intervene with youth and families at the first sign of risk
- Restore youth who have gone down the wrong path
- Protect children and youth from violence in the community
- Address policy issues that have unintended adverse consequences for youth
- Integrate services

Since releasing the "Call to Action Report" in 2017, the Advisory Council has served as a catalyst for action on the recommendations. State and community organizations have partnered with the City to begin implementation of the pilot projects, leveraging existing resources and seeking new funding where possible.

Highlights of the **POWER**ful accomplishments made by our partners include:

#### **DATA SHARING**

Perhaps one of the most critical recommendations of the CDC, following its review of gun violence in Wilmington, was: 1) establishing MOUs among key agencies, State and others, to share relevant data associated with those involved in gun violence to aid in identifying individuals most likely to engage in gun violence. Working on this important issue, given the significant challenges, the development of MOUs for data sharing among relevant State agencies and other organizations and, ultimately, developing the technical network will deliver on this CDC recommendation. It is important to note that the **State of Delaware** recently received an 18-month training and technical assistance grant from the University of Pennsylvania to help develop an integrated data system across state agencies to help coordinate services and support those at high risk of violence. The training will begin in March 2018.

#### FAMILY SERVICES CABINET COUNCIL

Resulting from the work of the Advisory Council was a review of the best practices in children's cabinets created by Governors to work on behalf of children in need, from a state-wide perspective. Thus in February of 2017, based upon research and recommendations from the Advisory Council, **Governor John Carney** reestablished the Family Services Cabinet Council (FSCC) to help coordinate public and private services for Delaware families and propose changes to make the delivery of state services more effective, accordingly. The FSCC will address a variety of issues, including how to reduce violence in Delaware neighborhoods. The continued work and advocacy of the Governor for the work of the Advisory Council has been "bar none," and extremely appreciated.

#### CAPACITY BUILDING

In accord with one of the priority recommendations of the Advisory Council, schools and community organizations are receiving professional development, training, and technical assistance on evidence-based/promising practices, performance measurement, trauma informed practice, social and emotional learning, and cultural competence. For example, the **Hicks Anderson Community Center** continued to provide extended hours through December, 2017. The center is moving towards providing evidence-based programming and services, including having a social worker on site to provide support to youth and their families. Yet another example is **Delaware Guidance Services for Children & Youth, Inc.** now partnering with the **Boys and Girl Club of Delaware** to provide mental health services for children and families on site at the Boys and Girls Clubs based on referrals of children and their families from the clubs.

**RECOMMENDATION PROGRESS CONT.** 

#### **EXTENDED HOURS/SAFE HAVEN SUMMER PROGRAM**

This initiative is directly related to the Advisory Council's initiative focused on universal care (providing services to youth living in high-needs neighborhoods). The **Delaware Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services** funded community centers and youth serving organizations to extended their summer hours to provide a safe haven for Wilmington, Delaware youth. During the program, youth engaged in activities, evidence-based prevention programs, community service and receivde nutritious meals. Technical assistance and training were provided to "Extended Hours/Safe Haven" sites to increase their capacity to provide evidence-based interventions and trauma-informed approaches, supporting yet another priority pilot recommendation of the Advisory Council. In 2017, 2,944 youth participated in the program for a total of 66,193.5 hours. In comparison to 2016, participation rates increased by 10.28%. Demographically, 70% of the participants were boys and 30% girls. Majority of the participants (90%) were under the age of 17. Only 10% of participants were 18 and older.

#### SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Advisory Council is pleased with the partnership it has established with the **City of Wilmington** regarding a "Summer Youth Employment Program." Working with **United Way**, **Department of Education**, and **Department of Labor**, the **Department of Parks and Recreation**, has been able to enhance workforce development training provided to youth in the Summer Youth Employment Program. A total of 450 youth were employed during this past summer and a select number of youth will connect their summer work experience with the **Delaware Pathways** program in their schools. Plans are in place to expand the success of this initiative from 2017 to 2018.

#### FUNDING COLLABORATIONS

Partners throughout the State of Delaware and City of Wilmington are working in collaboration to apply for funding opportunities to support pilot projects in alignment with the Advisory Council recommendations. We are proud to share, for example, the **United Way of Delaware** and **West End Neighborhood House** receiving a Citi Foundation Grant to provide workforce development services for young adults with high needs. Opportunities to partner with other community organizations relative to our shared interests in violence prevention and positive youth development, we believe, will continue to grow.

#### **COMMUNITY INTERVENTION TEAM**

The University of Delaware's Center for Drug and Health Studies and Department of Health and Social Services are working towards securing funds to implement a community-based intervention study that will examine violence in the City of Wilmington utilizing the nationally recognized Street PAR (participator action research) methodology. This project would support the development and implementation of a community intervention team, serving as violence interrupters, using the nationally recognized Cure Violence model.

#### **HOSPITAL BASED INTERVENTION**

**Christiana Care Health System** is establishing a Youth Non-fatal Incident Review Board to identify practice and policy improvements to reduce youth violence and exploring opportunities to provide hospital and community based intervention to victims of gun violence. The work that is being launched here will be an integral element of the overall "One-Stop" Support Services to support youth wellness that is being developed.

Christiana Care Health System is also partnering with the **Wilmington Street PAR Family** to bring the Stop the Bleed Campaign to Wilmington, Delaware. Together, they will implement the national awareness campaign intended to encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to literally stop the bleeding. Bystanders will be trained how to remain calm and assist in a bleeding emergency before professional first responder help arrives.

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**RECOMMENDATION PROGRESS CONT.** 

#### MULTI-TIERED IDENTIFICATION AND SERVICE REFERRAL SYSTEM

A working group of the Advisory Council has been engaged in applying the multi-tiered identification and service referral model used in schools to community-based, youth-serving organizations. The results of that effort are being synthesized into a "Capacity Building Cookbook" which will serve as a reference tool for start-up and facilitation of their ongoing work. This manual will support youth-serving professionals in identifying youth who are experiencing challenges, engaging youth in age-appropriate interventions, and referring youth to relevant community services.

One goal is to support the development of working relationships between schools and community centers/youth-serving organizations to strengthen continuity of care for youth in a wraparound fashion, touching all of the environments that touch them. The "Cookbook" will be completed in early 2018 and will be tested through focus groups with staff at local community centers. The tool will be refined based on feedback from staff and services providers prior to its debut to youth-serving organizations.

The tool may also have utility in healthcare settings so adaptations for medical providers are also being explored. The working group will continue to identify opportunities to strengthen relationships between schools, youth-serving organizations, and the pediatric medical community.

#### DELAWARE CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND CHRISTINA SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNER

It is very important to note the **Delaware Center for Justice** (DCJ) was awarded funding which will be used to support a youth violence prevention program in partnership with **Christina School District**. The program will provide an after-school evidence-based violence prevention curriculum and comprehensive care management for both students and their families delivered by DCJ social workers.

The goal is to increase pro-social skills and provide individualized assessment, referral, and needed services to both students and their families via legal services, educational supplemental services, behavioral health, financial management, basic need resources, and exposure to activities and individuals that provide positive outlets with the goal of increasing quality of life. This partnership is supporting yet another priority pilot recommendation of the Advisory Council.

#### "ONE STOP" SUPPORT SERVICES

A working group has been meeting to identify opportunities to support youth and young adults 16 to 24 who are transitioning out of youth or adult services. The initial idea of developing and piloting a "One Stop Youth Wellness Center," modeled after the Hope Commission Achievement Center, has evolved into strategies for the development of an integrated system of "One Stop" Support Services, based on recommendations of community and service providers. This model will build on existing services, combined with new services, that have demonstrated or have shown promise of effectiveness in the likelihood of reducing recidivism and/or being introduced to the adult criminal justice system.

#### YEAR ROUND EMPLOYMENT

The **Division of Social Services** is partnering with private employers to provide subsidized employment to TANF and TANF-like adults. The **Department of Labor** has launched a mobile unit to help community residents connect to job training and employment opportunities. The mobile unit will regularly visit community centers and schools throughout the City.

#### **DELAWARE COMPASSIONATE SCHOOLS**

The Compassionate Schools initiative was spearheaded by the **Office of the Child Advocate** to transform school climate and culture by creating emotionally safe and responsive learning environments where students can build supportive relationships and engage in meaningful problem solving. The goal is to apply the brain science related to trauma and toxic stress and its impact on learning to the development of intervention strategies for building resilience across a multi-tiered system of school learning supports.

School staff are actively engaged in intense study on how adverse childhood experiences impact students' abilities to form relationships, develop self-regulation skills, and effectively achieve learning competencies. Through a variety of training opportunities and resource materials, educators learn strategies to mediate impact to brain development, the importance of relationships and connections for mediating toxic stress, and strategies to foster resilience. In addition, educators are exposed to the significant toll that work-related stress, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma have on them and are encouraged to explore the benefits of consistent self-care strategies.

Funding support from **Casey Family Programs** has created a movement around the state, which has resulted in a number of positive outcomes. Forty three hundred (4,300) Delaware educators have been trained. Partnerships have been established with the **Delaware Department of Education** (DDOE) and a variety of community stakeholders, including the **Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Families**, **Children and Families First of Delaware**, **University of Delaware's Positive** Behavior Support Program, and the **Delaware State Education Association** to name a few.

A Compassionate Schools Start-Up Guide was created to chronicle the journey of early adopters and provide a manual for school implementation. In addition, the **Compassionate Schools Learning Collaborative** was created for quarterly learning community gatherings, information and resource sharing, and advocacy.

**Governor John Carney** sponsored a grant competition to award 1 million dollars in funds to 10 schools eager to expand their knowledge and further their practice. The Governor's Office deemed this work critical to school transformation efforts at the state's highest needs schools. Thus, the **Office of Innovation and Improvement** was created at the DDOE and the **Compassionate Connections Partnership** (CCP) was formed. The long-term goal is to maximize and allocate resources to assure that students, families, and educators alike have the tools at their disposal for success. In the short-term, CCP is increasing wraparound and out-of-school services, in addition to elevating instructional practices and supports to build capacity through professional development that will strengthen climate and culture so students are able to learn and problem solve.

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNER SUPPORT UNIT**

The **Delaware Department of Health and Social Services** launched the **Community Partner Support Unit (CPSU)**, a team within the **Division of Social Services** that helps increase access to benefits and services by supporting community organizations and those they serve, including hard-toreach individuals and families. Social workers from the CPSU are stationed at public libraries to meet with community members on designated days and are present daily at the **Porter State Service Center** to serve clients referred by the **West Center City Community Policing Unit**. The CPSU established a relationship with **United Parcel Service** to provide seasonal employment opportunities for individuals receiving state benefits. This unit can be further deployed in ways that can be beneficial to the broad array of initiatives of the Advisory Council.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**



#### PEOPLE & ORGANIZATIONS IN WILMINGTON ENGAGING IN REFORM

In January of 2017, the Advisory Council launched **POWER**, which stands for **P**eople and **O**rganizations in **W**ilmington Engaging in **R**eform. This community engagement strategy is designed to harness the individual and collective **POWER** of people and organizations in Wilmington who are committed to preventing youth violence and promoting positive youth development.

#### **POWER Partners are committed to reforming:**

- Relationships between individuals, communities, organizations and government
- A culture of violence that normalizes gun and youth violence
- Systems/structures that perpetuate disadvantage in communities impacted by violence





#### **Become a POWER Partner!**

For more information on the strategy, benefits of being a partner and to become a P.O.W.E.R. Partner, visit the Advisory Council website.



## **VOICES OF THE COMMUNITY**

The Advisory Council asked Wilmington, Delaware residents what would make them feel **connected**, **respected** and **protected**. This is what our community members had to say:

Friends, Family, Commity LOVEIII 4 Francis Care Forin He same way you would want to be cared for ) etc Spaces where you have e yourself and speak

## **ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

#### **Partnership Between City and Universities**

In September of 2017, the City of Wilmington, Delaware State University and the University of Delaware (UD) signed an agreement to work on projects to benefit the City and residents.

Alisia Drew, Urban Fellow and graduate student at UD, will work with the Advisory Council as part of her research assistantship with UD's Center for Community Research and Service. Drew is pursuing a masters degree in Urban Affairs and Public Policy.



"We're going to make a change for our children. Our future depends on it."

- Dr. Hanifa Shabazz -

Wilmington City Council President

#### Website Launch

In January of 2017, the Advisory Council launched a website to enhance communication, highlight progress, and share violence prevention and positive youth development resources.



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## **2018 PRIORITIES FOR INVESTMENT**

In 2018, the Wilmington Community Advisory Council will continue to advocate for and support the action of partners working in alignment with the initial recommendations.

#### The following strategies have been prioritized:

- Support the development, implementation and sustainment of a learning community for community partners to offer professional development, training, and technical assistance on evidence-based/promising practices, performance measurement, trauma informed practice, social and emotional learning, and cultural competency.
- Build capacity of schools and community centers to embed trauma informed practice in their programs and to have more on-site social work and behavioral health supports.
- Support the development of an integrated system of "One Stop Service" support for youth and young adults 16 to 24 transitioning out of youth/adult service systems.
- Support the development of an integrated service model to facilitate data sharing.
- Expand the capacity of community centers to offer year-round programs with evidence-based or promising practices aimed at violence prevention and positive youth development.
- Support the investment in a year-round employment "earn and learn" program for youth 16 to 24, including summer employment, work-based learning and service opportunities, and "soft" and "hard" skill development.
- Support the development, implementation and sustainment of a multi-tiered identification and service referral system to identify youth at varying levels of risk, based on specific criteria, and connect them to needed services with case management or care coordination.
- Examine school policies to identify and remove barriers that adversely impact youth.
- Increase support for outreach programs that engage the community in creating and sustaining a culture and environment that prevents violence and promotes positive development, including de-escalation of conflicts and retaliation.
- Support existing/newly developed social networks in "prioritized communities" that promote positive social interactions and stop interactions that transmit violence.
- Leverage existing community capacity building opportunities to provide technical assistance to build capacity of grassroots leaders and organizations.
- Raise community awareness about chronic trauma and stress that promotes community violence in an effort to build individual and community resilience.
- Promote community ownership of public spaces in neighborhoods and community pride to foster safe environments.

#### A Note on Investment

The Advisory Council advocates for a financing plan to improve the use of existing and new resources to support violence prevention and intervention efforts. There is also a strong argument to be made that savings on the local and state level can, could, and should be strategically reinvested to support solutions to reduce youth violence and promote positive youth development.

## **ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

#### Champions

The Honorable Dr. Hanifa Shabazz President, Wilmington City Council

The Honorable John Carney Governor, State of Delaware

The Honorable Michael Purzycki Mayor, City of Wilmington

The Honorable Matthew Meyer County Executive, New Castle County

#### **Co-Chairs**

Ray Fitzgerald Director, Division of Social Services (DSS)

Tyrone Jones Chief Impact Officer, United Way of DE

#### **Members**

Raye Jones Avery CEO, Christina Cultural Arts Center

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Dr. Vilicia Cade Senior Director of Secondary Schools, Christina School District

Darryl Chambers Community Leader Research Assistant, University of Delaware (UD) Center for Drug and Alcohol Studies

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Earl Cooper Community Referral Specialist, City of Wilmington

Nancy Dietz Former Youth Rehabilitative Services Director Retired February 2018

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Coley Harris Community Leader

#### Members Cont.

Cheryl Heiks Director of Policy and Advocacy, Connections CSP, Inc.

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#### **Members Cont.**

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Alisia Drew University of Delaware Urban Fellow

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"It's my job to take care of youth."

- Kevin Kelley -

Director of Parks and Recreation

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