

Violence Free West Allis Collaborative Action Plan



INTRODUCTION

Violence is a significant public health problem in terms of the effects on its victims, the quality of life for offenders, and the economic burden on correctional services, the health sector, and the community. Residing in violent communities is associated with emotional, behavioral, substance use, mental health and academic difficulties –all of which affect individuals throughout their lives. Historically, communities rely solely on law enforcement data to understand the nature and scope of intentional injury and violence. However, this data may not provide a comprehensive understanding of community violence.

Leaders within the City of West Allis identified the need to address interpersonal violence leading to the formation of the Violence Free West Allis Collaborative (VFWAC). The mission of the VFWAC is to promote a safe and healthy community through data collection, education, leveraging of resources and policy advocacy. The Collaborative utilizes the Cardiff model to link, interpret and disseminate data in the development and implementation of violence prevention strategies in high-need areas and have a voice in our community's safety planning. Key stakeholders including police, fire, public health, hospital partners, local businesses, community services organizations and many more gather to identify data-informed and place-based strategies to target violence in the City of West Allis and specific neighborhoods with high violence rates. The VFWAC views the identified strategies through the Social Ecological Model (SEM) to categorize suggestions into actionable ideas in our community.

The aim of this action plan is to demonstrate the need for violence prevention efforts in the City of West Allis and encourage our community to embrace and implement potential strategies identified by VFWAC. Additionally, we hope this plan garners support from local leaders to implement violence prevention strategies and impact our specific needs in the City of West Allis.

THE CARDIFF MODEL

The Cardiff Model is a unique enhanced violence surveillance system that involves information sharing and violence prevention planning among sectors of civil society. This enhanced surveillance process allows for tracking of: violence incidents, trends in violence “hotspots,” trends in weapons used by assailants and precise times (e.g., hour, day, week) when violence is more frequent. Frequent data analysis and meetings allow the VFWAC to reevaluate violence seen and monitor the impact of implemented strategies.

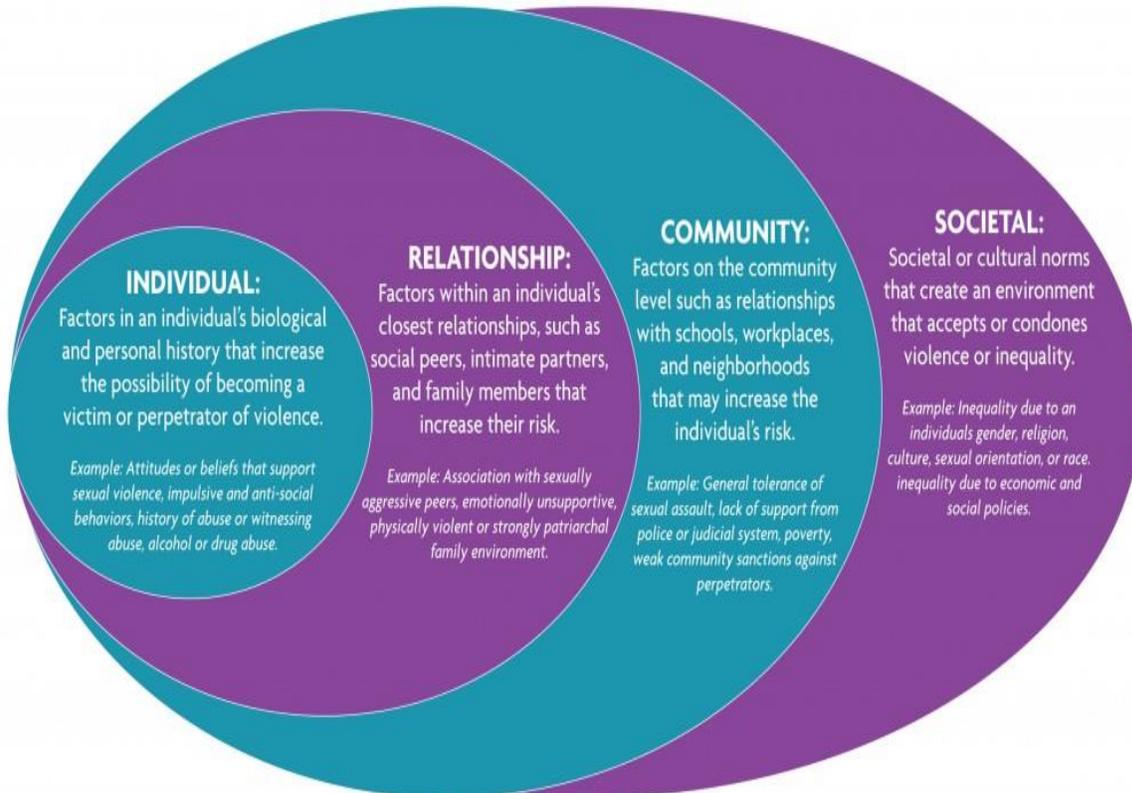
The model consists of 3 parts:

- Continuous collection and linking of violence data from hospital emergency departments (EDs), police departments and other public health areas (e.g., EMS, public health) about precise violence location, time, weapon and numbers of assailants.
- ED, Police, EMS, and other data information anonymized and linked to form plotted maps and heat maps of community violence.
- Recruitment and convening of stakeholders in a community collaborative to implement data-informed violence prevention activities in the community



THE SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL

The Social Ecological Model (SEM), utilized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other prominent public health organizations, is a prevention framework to better understand violence and the effect of potential prevention strategies. This model considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors. It allows us to understand the range of factors that put people at risk for violence or protect them from experiencing or perpetrating violence. The overlapping rings in the model illustrate how factors at one level influence factors at another level. The VFWAC utilizes the Social Ecological Model to identify and categorize violence prevention and reduction strategies.



<http://www.actabuse.com/services/community-education/prevention/>

Individual	The first level identifies biological and personal history factors that increase the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. Some of these factors are age, education, income, substance use, or history of abuse. Prevention strategies at this level promote attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that prevent violence. Specific approaches may include education and life skills training.
Relationship	The second level examines close relationships that may increase the risk of experiencing violence as a victim or perpetrator. A person's closest social circle-peers, partners and family members-influences their behavior and contributes to their experience. Prevention strategies at this level may include parenting or family-focused prevention programs, and mentoring and peer programs designed to reduce conflict, foster problem solving skills, and promote healthy relationships.

Community	The third level explores the settings, such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods, in which social relationships occur and seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that are associated with becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. Prevention strategies at this level impact the social and physical environment – for example, by reducing social isolation, improving economic and housing opportunities in neighborhoods, as well as the climate, processes, and policies within school and workplace settings.
Societal	The fourth level looks at the broad societal factors that help create a climate in which violence is encouraged or inhibited. These factors include social and cultural norms that support violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflicts. Other large societal factors include the health, economic, educational and social policies that help to maintain economic or social inequalities between groups in society.

THE BURDEN OF VIOLENCE IN WEST ALLIS

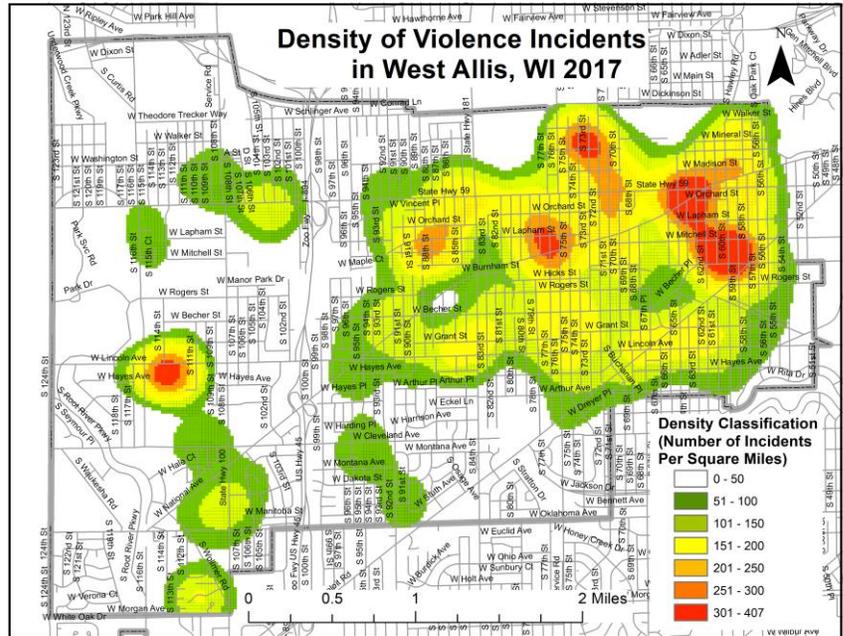
The City of West Allis is a suburban city with a population just under 60,000 and is located in Milwaukee County, WI. Each year there are over 600 occurrences of interpersonal violence. As illustrated below, the bulk of the violent occurrences are simple assaults and largely of a domestic nature. In these cases, domestic refers to spouse, partner, family or roommate. Additionally, violence is primarily occurring at home, which make it difficult to ‘see’ violence in our community. For instance, extra police patrol in areas heavily populated with bars will not have a large reduction of violence. These data highlight the need for action and are used to support the development of the VFWAC recommended strategies.

West Allis Interpersonal Violence	WAPD*		WAFD*	
	2017	2018	2017	2018
Total Cases	624	648	246	245
Crime Type				
Simple Assault	78.8%	78%	-	-
Aggregated Assault	9.5%	9.3%	-	-
Robbery	11.7%	11.7%	-	-
Violence Type				
Domestic	53%	63%	-	-
Random	47%	37%	-	-
Location Type				
Residence/Home	62.8%	70.5%	62.2%	57.2%
Hwy/Road/Alley/Street/Sidewalks	13.6%	13.4%	11.8%	11.8%
School	9%	4%	1.6%	3.2%
Gas Station	3.2%	2.6%	-	-
Bar/Nightclub	2.1%	1.2%	-	-
Prison	-	-	4.1%	9.1%
Other	9.3%	8.3%	20.3%	-
Race of Offenders				
White	71.2%	69.6%	-	-
Black	26.9%	27.5%	-	-
Other	1.9%	2.9%	-	-
Race of Victims				
White	75.4%	75.4%	72.4%	67.9%
Black	16.3%	17.4%	20.7%	21.4%
Hispanic	-	-	5.7%	7.5%
NULL/Other	8.3%	7.2%	1.2%	3.2%
Sex of Offenders				
Male	72.7%	74.4%	-	-
Female	27.3%	25%	-	-
NULL	-	0.6%	-	-

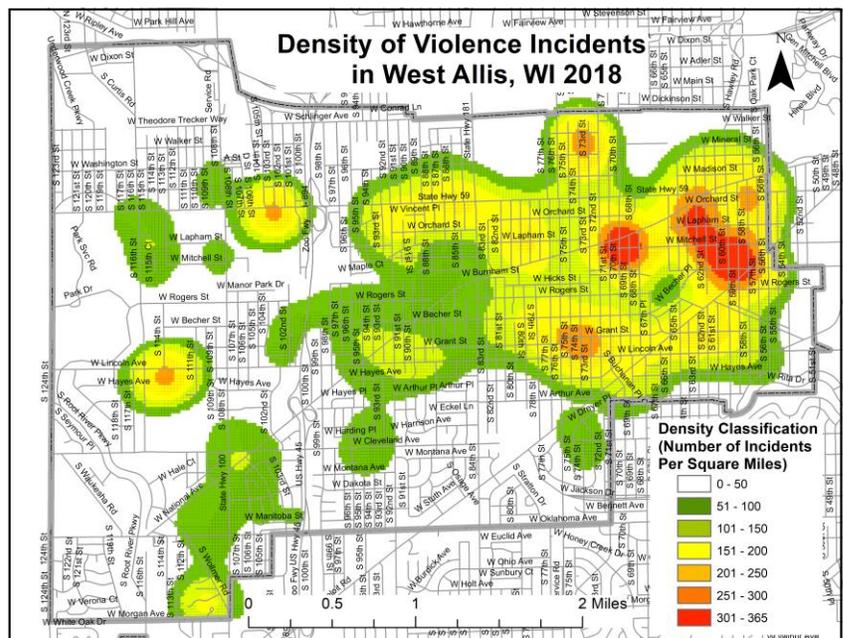
Sex of Victims				
Male	39.8%	37.8%	51.6%	58.8%
Female	54.3%	58.1%	48.4%	41.2%
NULL	6%	4.1%	-	-
Average Age of Offenders	30	32	-	-
Average Age of Victims	31	32	35	36

*WAPD & WAFD cases may overlap due to reporting process

The maps to the right illustrate the location of violent incidents for 2017 & 2018 in the City of West Allis. The areas indicated in red are the neighborhoods with the highest occurrence of violence. These areas are largely residential and there is a high concentration of apartment dwellers. Additionally, the homes are lower cost residences and many of the apartments are low income. As depicted, the east side of our county experiences more violence than our west. The location of the “hot spots” has remained consistent over the course of the past two years.



The VFWAC views density mapping on a bimonthly basis, along with data analytics for the time period. These data and maps aid in the discussion of causation and prevention. Additionally, the maps are used to assess neighborhood structure and identify community stakeholders to assist in strategy development and implementation.



Moreover, in 2019 the VFWAC did a walking assessment and photo survey of the neighborhood with the largest density of violence. The resulting observations are used to ensure the neighborhood is a key element of strategy development and further discussions of targeted planning.

VFWAC RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

The following table includes a brief overview of the strategies recommended by the Violence Free West Allis Collaborative to address violence in the City of West Allis. This list is not comprehensive. The VFWAC is continually assessing the needs of West Allis and adding strategies as identified and appropriate. From primary prevention to intervention, these strategies aim to address multiple factors that influence violence.

Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Intervention Strategies				
Level of SEM	Strategy	Brief Description	Type of Strategy	Connection to other areas
Individual	Botvin Life Skills	A substance abuse and violence prevention program based on more than 35 years of rigorous scientific research. Botvin Life Skills promote positive youth development to help kids resist drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, and supports the reduction of violence and other high-risk behaviors.	Evidence Based	Mental Health, Substance Abuse
Individual	GAIN-SS	The GAIN-SS is a 16-question survey developed that identifies needs for further assessment in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, and anger management for adolescents and adults. This electronic tool has been made available in Wisconsin through a cooperative effort of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Department of Health Services (DHS), and Wisconsin Family Ties and is appropriate for use by school-based, pupil services professionals and community providers.	Evidence Based	Mental Health, Substance Abuse
Individual	After School Tutoring	After-school programs provide opportunities for youth to strengthen their social and academic skills and become involved in school and community activities to expand their prosocial experiences and relationships. These approaches also address key risk and protective factors for youth violence by helping to provide supervision	Evidence Based	
Individual	Youth Mentoring	Mentoring programs pair youth with a volunteer from the community with the goal of fostering a relationship that will contribute to the young person's growth opportunities, skill development, and academic success.	Evidence Based	
Individual	Violent Offender Rehabilitation	Offender behavior programs that aim to reduce an offender's propensity to commit further crime.	Evidence Based	Mental Health, Substance Abuse
Individual	Domestic Violence Mobile Advocacy	Mobile advocates meet survivors in the location of their choice. This can be at the park, in a coffee shop, or survivor's home.	Promising Practice	

		It also includes accompanying survivors to housing, employment, and child welfare appointments.		
Individual	Support Groups	Support Groups for victims of violence can help them recover and offer an opportunity for people to share personal experiences, feelings, and coping strategies to heal.	Evidence Based	Mental Health
Individual	Short-term financial assistance	Short-term or one time financial assistance for housing concerns such as rent, electricity or heating	Theory Based	Homelessness
Individual/Relationship	Men of Strength (MOST)	A behavior change program, from Men Can Stop Rape, targeting high school age men, that builds young men's capacity to challenge harmful aspects of traditional masculinity and to embrace their vital role as allies with women and girls in fostering healthy relationships and gender equity by holding multi-session, curriculum-based meetings throughout the school year.	Theory Based	Mental Health
Relationship	Love is Respect-Health Relationship Toolkits	Educator toolkits for high schools and middle schools to lead discussions on health relationships to prevent and end domestic violence and dating abuse.	Promising Practice	
Relationship	Positive Parenting Classes	The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program is a parenting and family support system designed to prevent – as well as treat – behavioral and emotional problems in children and teenagers. It aims to prevent problems in the family, school and community before they arise and to create family environments that encourage children to realize their potential.	Evidence Based	Mental Health
Relationship	Legal Advocacy/Legal Assistance	Legal issues are a deterrent for domestic violence victims to leave an unsafe environment. Legal assistance to prevent future violence by obtaining, renewing and enforcing preventive orders and assist with custody orders.	Promising Practice	
Community	Public Awareness Campaign	Awareness campaign to educate community members about the prevalence of abuse, encourage people to take action to end abuse, and alert survivors to the options and resources that are available to them.	Promising Practice	
Community	Green Dot Program	Green Dot Bystander Intervention is a bystander education approach that aims to prevent violence with the help of bystanders. A comprehensive strategy to permanently reduce rates of violence and mobilize and empower all members of a community.	Evidence Based	
Community	Rapid Rehousing	Eliminate housing as a reason for survivors to stay in abusive relationships	Promising Practice	Homelessness

		by providing means to leave and the ability to establish a home and develop freedom from their abuser.		
Community	Handle with Care Policy	When a law enforcement officer encounters a child during a call, that child's name and three words, HANDLE WITH CARE, are forwarded to the school/child care agency before the school bell rings the next day. The school implements individual, class and whole school trauma-sensitive curricula so that traumatized children are "Handled With Care". If a child needs more intervention, on-site trauma-focused mental healthcare is available at the school.	Evidence Based	Mental Health
Community	Violence Resource Database	A comprehensive online database for resources related to the field of violence prevention and assistance.	Best Practice	
Community	Domestic Violence Workplace Policies	Policy to emphasize workplace's policy commitment to a safer and more supportive organizational climate and to the prevention and reduction of the incidence and effects of domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking at the workplace.	Best Practice	
Community	Bullying Policies	School staff can help prevent bullying by establishing and enforcing school rules and policies that clearly describe how students are expected to treat each other. Consequences for violations of the rules should be clearly defined to prevent emotional, mental and physical violence.	Evidence Based	Mental Health
Community	Violence prevention community development policies	Community development policies that address the need to consider violence prevention in the development of new neighborhoods.	Best Practice	Homelessness
Community	Resident driven physical improvements to neighborhoods	Physical environment can play a key role in violence prevention. Strategies such as the ones from the Better Block foundation can create a more visually appealing and inviting neighborhood. Additionally, strategies to remove trees and add more street lighting can also reduce violence.	Best Practice	
Community	Faith Community	Faith leaders may be asked to provide spiritual guidance and counseling to both the victim and the perpetrator.	Best Practice	
Community	Trauma-informed Therapists	A trauma-informed therapist is aware of the complex impact of trauma (any perceived trauma) on a person's suffering and how it shapes a person's efforts to cope. Increase the amount of trauma informed therapists in the area and have more affordable options.	Evidence Based	Mental Health
Community	Substance Abuse Treatment Options	Substance abuse and violence are often intertwined. Have local more local	Evidence Based	Substance Abuse

		substance abuse treatment options.		
Community	Cure Violence-Peer/Street Mediators	Community members are trained in violence prevention and reduction techniques to anticipate where violence may occur and intervene before it erupts. Also, mediators follow up after violent events to stop the cycle of violence.	Evidence Based	
Community	Safe At Home program	Promote WI Safe At Home program that provides victims of actual or threatened domestic abuse, child abuse, sexual abuse, stalking, and trafficking, or those who simply fear for their physical safety with a legal substitute address to be used for both public and private purposes.	Evidence Based	Sexual Abuse
Community	Housing Assistance Availability	Need for more housing that accept assistance and more structures for sheltering and rapid rehousing	Evidence Based	Homelessness
Societal	Change Social Norms	Change social norms and patterns regarding violence by focusing on the environment and interpersonal influences of change behavior.	Evidence Based	
Societal	Domestic Violence Prosecution	Increase sanctions and penalization of domestic violence offenders.	Best Practice	
Societal	Media Marketing	Change the standards for mass media marketing to limit the use of violence and encourage mainstream media to depict violence as harmful to individuals, families and communities.	Promising Practice	Mental Health
Societal	Assess alcohol density and availability	Assess current alcohol density and consider the implications of adding more vendors.	Best Practice	Substance Abuse

City of West Allis Violence and Opiate Prevention Small Grant Program

In support of implementing the above strategies, the Violence Free West Allis Collaborative offers a Violence and Opiate Prevention Small Grant Program. The purpose of the program is to provide resources to local community groups, organizations, and businesses to support community-generated violence and opiate prevention activities. More details about the program and the application are available on the City of West Allis website.