

Creating a Healthy and Safe City: The Impact of Violence in New Haven

Community Safety Briefing
Summary Presentation

May 2011



What Has The Health Department Got To Do With Violence?

➤ Health =

- absence of disease
- absence of injury
- overall well being



What Has The Health Department Got To Do With Violence?

Community violence causes

- Injury & death
- Psychological harm & other problems for health and well being



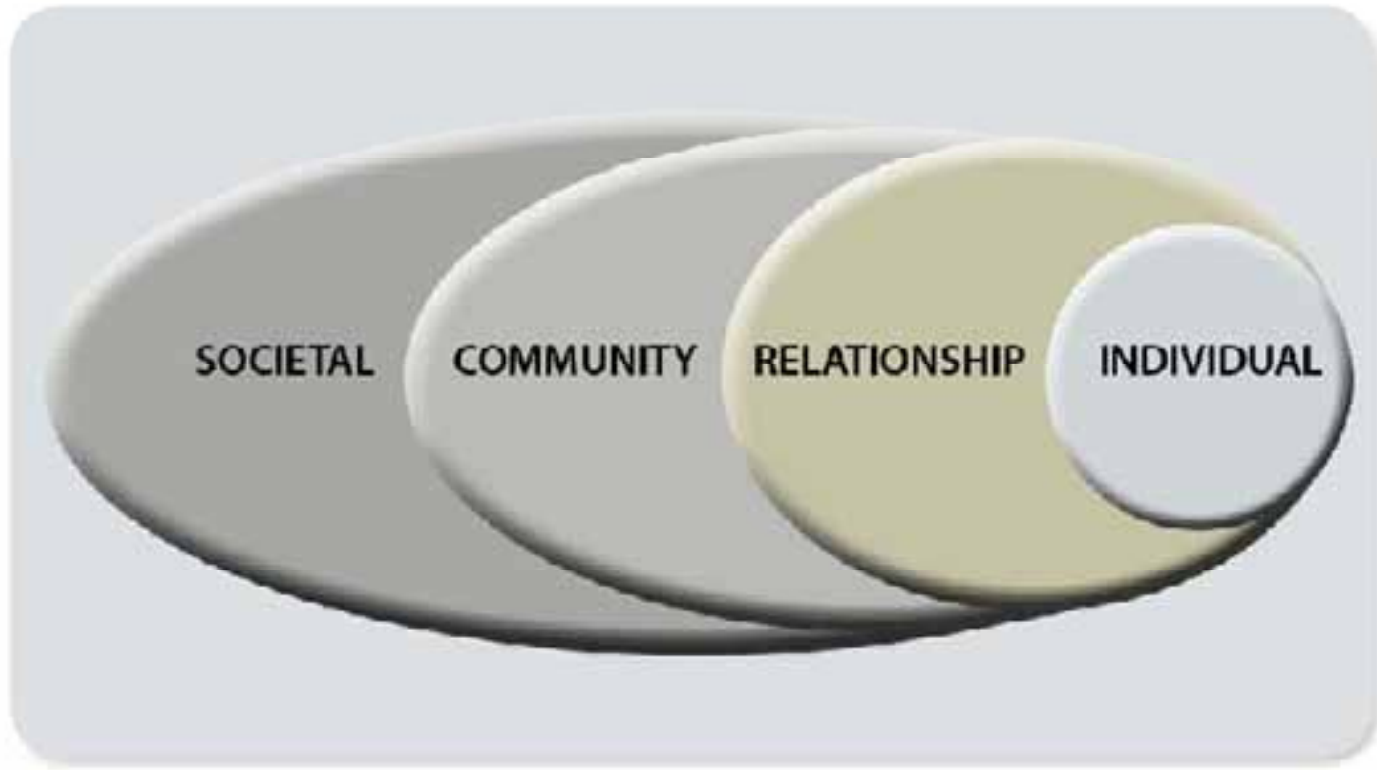
Public Health Approach to Community Violence

Figure 1. Public health approach to prevention



Public Health Approach to Community Violence

Figure 2. Social-ecological model



What Is Being Presented Today

- Findings of Health Equity Alliance Data Workgroup
 - Summary picture of violence in New Haven using local information where possible
 - Suggested areas for prevention strategies
- Full document can be found at <http://healthmattersnh.net/community/creating-a-healthy-and-safe-city>

Table 3 - Leading causes of death - New Haven - 2007 & 2008 combined

Group	Cause	N	%	PYLL 65*	
All	Malignant Neoplasms	385	22.8%	1398	
	Diseases of heart	377	22.4%	1440	
	Accidents (unintentional injury)	86	5.1%	1688	
	Dementia*	65	3.9%	0	
	Chronic lower respiratory diseases	60	3.6%	122	
	Cerebrovascular disease	57	3.4%	139	
	Diabetes	57	3.4%	243	
	Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome & nephrosis	50	3.0%	127	
	Septicemia	44	2.6%	331	
	Conditions originating the the perinatal period	35	2.1%	2275	
	HIV	35	2.1%	461	
	Pneumonia and influenza	35	2.1%	49	
	Alzheimers	30	1.8%	13	
	Assault	29	1.7%	1063	
	Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	23	1.4%	263	
	Other	305	18.1%		
	All other causes	1685	100.0%		
	Males 15 to 39	Assault	23	30.7%	909
		Accident	19	25.3%	733
Diseases of heart		9	12.0%	330	
Intentional self-harm		6	8.0%	212	
Cancer		5	6.7%	165	
Other		13	17.3%		
All other causes		75	100.0%		

* Potential years of life lost to age 65.

Overall the risk of fatal injury is low

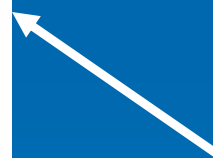


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It is an important cause premature death



It is the leading cause of death

Impact on young Black and Hispanic Males

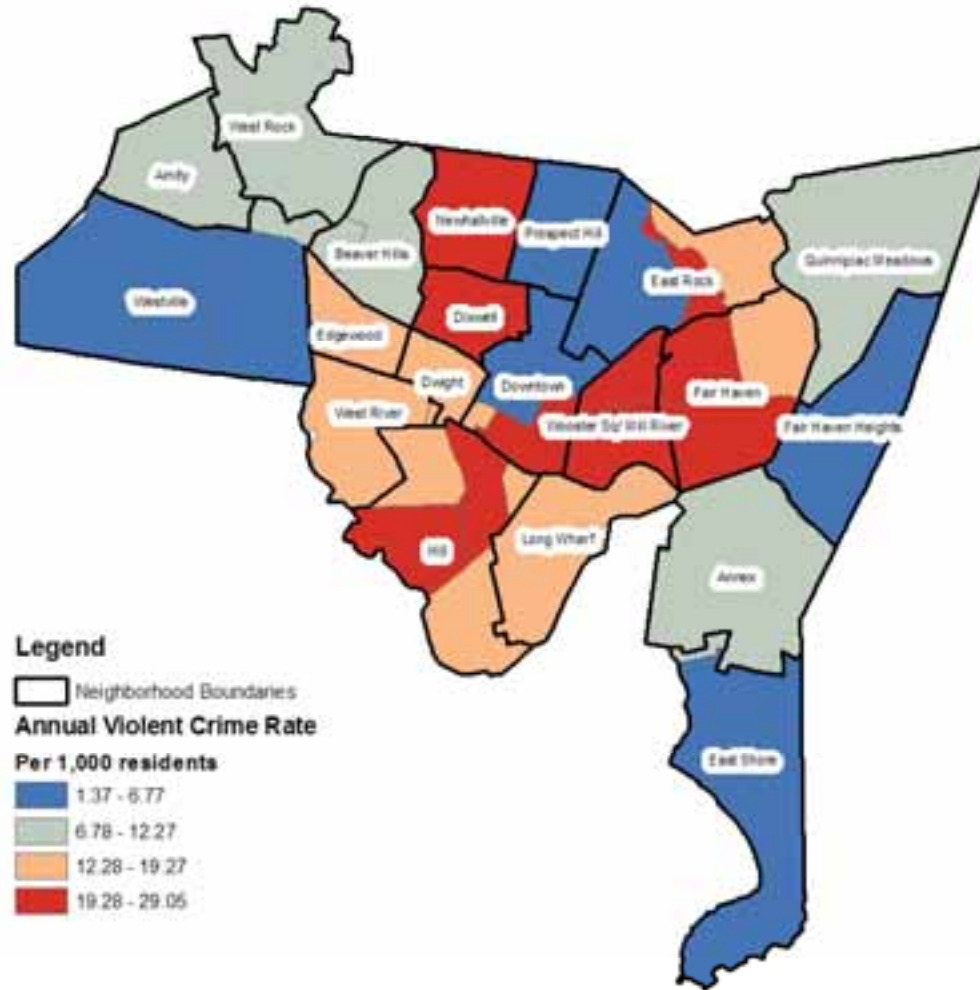
➤ 2007 & 2008 – Almost 40% of deaths in those 15-39



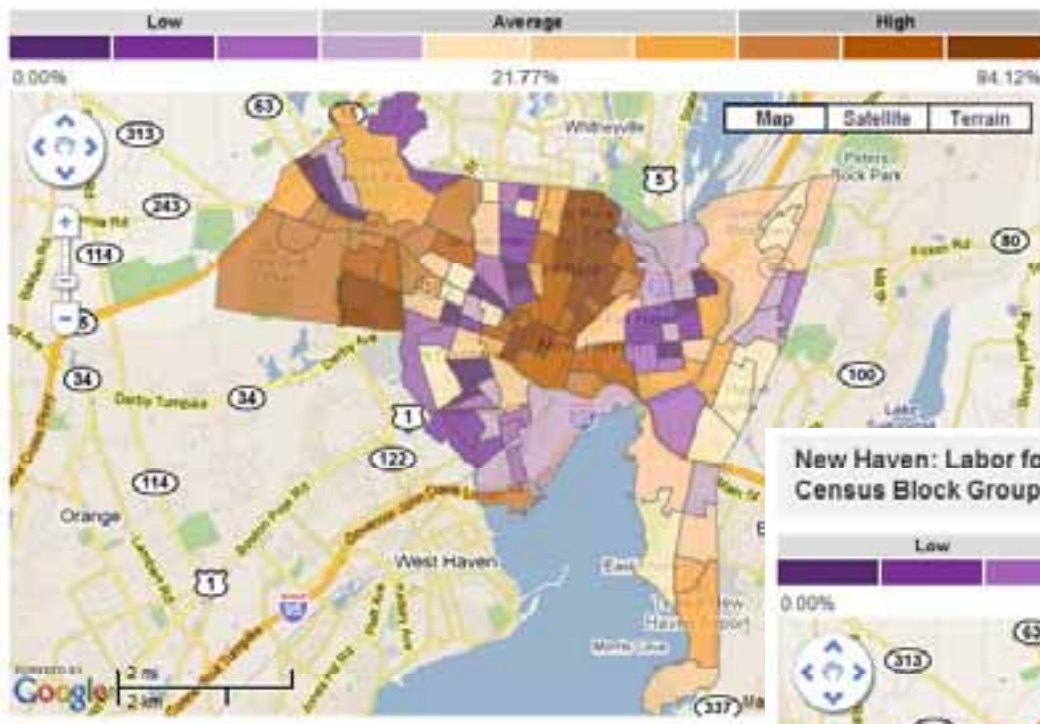
Table 2 - Description of deaths by firearms (N=26)

Characteristic		N	%
Race / ethnicity	Black	16	62%
	Hispanic	10	38%
	White	0	0%
Age	Less than 20	3	12%
	20-29	15	58%
	30-39	5	19%
	40+	3	12%
Sex	Male	24	92%
	Female	2	8%

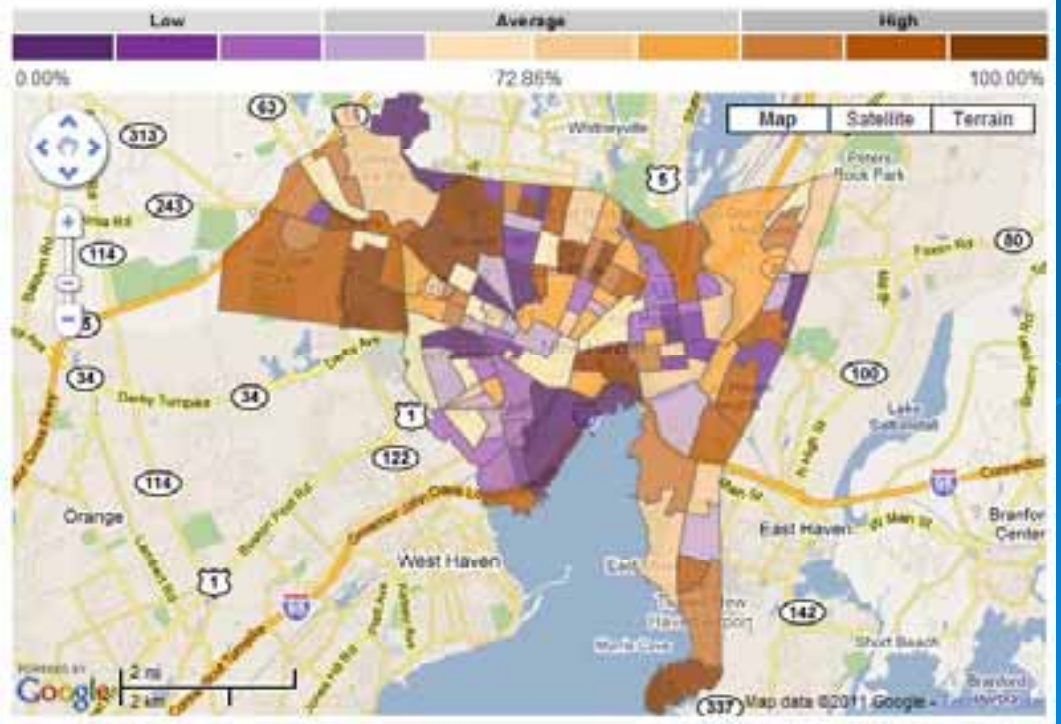
Figure 5 - Annual Violent Crime Rate By Census Tract
 Uniform Crime Report Part 1 Data
 New Haven CT, 2000 to 2009



New Haven: Percent of adults with at least a bachelor's degree by Census Block Group



New Haven: Labor force participation as a percentage of males 16 and older by Census Block Group



Kids turn to the streets for two reasons: one, it's easy to get the money. You don't need a job application, you just need a little cash and you can start hustling. Two, they're scared to fail. They don't see role models who are succeeding off the street, and they are scared that if they move past their comfort zone, they won't get anywhere.

New Haven Family Alliance & Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars, Yale School of Medicine. Understanding Youth Violence in New Haven: A Photovoice Project with Youth in New Haven. May 28, 2009. Available at http://www.cfgnh.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Public/Reports/Report_YouthViolence_2009.pdf.

Violent Crime

- Associated with places with a combination of:
 - Infrastructure services (convenience stores, restaurants/cafes, bars, liquor establishments, gas stations, banks, etc)
 - Residences of parolees and released prisoners
 - Drug markets and locations of drug violations
- Based on this analysis, about 20% of the area of New Haven is considered high risk.
- In 2003 to 2010 at least 75% of the violent crimes happened in these areas.

Violent Crime and Prior Felony Convictions

➤ In 2007

- Over 1,200 people were returned from the CT Dept of Corrections to New Haven on parole or other form of early release
- Over 2,800 probationers lived in New Haven

➤ In 2008, about 75% of homicide victims and suspects in New Haven had at least one prior felony conviction

Firearms

- 85% of assault deaths caused by handguns
- Vast majority of firearm deaths occurred outdoors

Table 1 - New Haven Independent Crime Log Data*

Year	Assault With A Firearm	Street Robberies With A Firearm	Unlawful Discharge of a Firearm
2006	117	259	480
2007	140	217	562
2008	137	254	654
2009	121	220	610
2010 (Jan-Oct)	78	119	473

* Unaudited New Haven Police Department Data

Psychological Effects of Violent Crime

- Child victims – increased risk of PTSD, depression, and anxiety
- Child witnesses – prone to anxiety and depression
- Youth living in violent communities
 - Urban adolescent girls experienced PTSD from hearing about violent crime
 - Experience psychological adaptation including hopelessness and desensitization.

Quotes from Visioning a Healthy City

- *more civil, with fewer gangbanger types. The stress of living in such a coarse environment, with so much "frontin'" is going to give me a heart attack (not kidding-- blood pressure has risen significantly since moving here). Too many muggings, too much disrespect between and within communities.*
- *It's a great city but everytime I think about moving into downtown, there's another incident of robbery or worse. Fear of crime is a tremendous source of stress. And, stress is not good for health.*

Not feeling safe to go outside

- Limits neighborhood cohesion and personal sense of well being.
- Appears to inhibit level of physical activity contributing to growing problem of obesity



Visioning a Healthy City

There are some great resources in the city for outdoor recreation - East Rock Park, Edgewood Park, streets with great sidewalks like Whitney and Prospect. But when I go out for a run in Dixwell/Newhallville, the sidewalks are in poor shape; I've ran a few times in the Dwight neighborhood, but it's poorly lit at dawn/dusk and I don't feel safe. I think that a healthier New Haven needs (1) a better infrastructure for people who want to be physically active, and (2) better safety measures, like lighting and those blue boxes you can call in an emergency, to make those people who are outside feel safe.

A Healthy New Haven has clean and safe parks where kids can play and attend nature and sports activities without fear.



Summary

- Violence is an important cause of premature mortality
- Impact on young black and Hispanic men is particularly pronounced
- Violent crime is not evenly distributed geographically - associated with indicators of economic distress

Summary

- Violence spatially associated with business, location of parolees and released prisoners and illegal drug activity.
- The vast majority of victims and perpetrators of homicide in 2008 had a prior felony conviction.
- Handguns are particular problem
- Most not injured by crime but indirect burden on health and well being may be substantial

Potential areas for policy initiatives

- Expanded job and education opportunities for youth & adults
- Physical enhancement to areas experiencing high violence
- Enhanced community stewardship in high risk areas
- Positive social activities for youth and adults
- Increased deterrents to use of guns in crime
- Enhancement to prison re-entry programs



Final recommendations

- Systematic review of community and society level violence prevention strategies implemented in US cities
- Adopt HIA process to systematically assess the health effect of violence preventions strategies.