



# Project Safe Neighborhoods 2022 National Summit to Reduce Violence and Strengthen Communities

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## MEETING OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

On February 3, 2022, President Biden and Attorney General Garland announced that the Department of Justice (DOJ) would convene a National Summit to Reduce Violence and Strengthen Communities in the spring of 2022. As one of the core components of DOJ's violent crime strategy, Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) brought together United States Attorneys' Offices; state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies; and community stakeholders to reduce violence and support community safety. This convening of PSN teams and other community safety stakeholders from across the country brought together multidisciplinary teams of enforcement and prevention specialists, including community violence intervention practitioners, researchers, community groups, and others to exchange information and promising strategies to reduce violent crime.

Over two days, the summit engaged a variety of panel discussions and plenary presentations that embraced the four PSN design elements of community engagement, prevention and intervention, focused and strategic enforcement, and accountability.

### Day 1 Opening Remarks

#### Speakers

- Karhlton Moore, Director, Bureau of Justice Assistance
- Amy L. Solomon, Principal Deputy Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs
- Lisa Monaco, United States Deputy Attorney General
- Monty Wilkinson, Director, Executive Office for United States Attorneys

### Day 2 Opening Remarks

#### Speakers

- Karhlton Moore, Director, Bureau of Justice Assistance
- Anjali Chaturvedi, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division
- Vanita Gupta, United States Associate Attorney General
- Kenneth A. Polite, Jr., Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division





## Day 2 Closing Remarks

### Speakers

- Amy L. Solomon, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs
- Merrick B. Garland, United States Attorney General





## PLENARY SUMMARIES

### What Works and Why? Using Data, Technology, and Research Partnerships to Reduce Violent Crime

This session enlisted practitioners and researchers to present evidence-based strategies that can be used to reduce violent crime. This session also discussed the use of technology, data, and analysis to support and measure crime reduction, public trust, and stronger communities.

In this plenary session, a group of panelists led by Dr. Ed McGarrell discussed ways to increase community engagement, utilize technology and data, and reduce crime. Panelists agreed that effective partnerships between community and law enforcement are essential in achieving this goal and stressed the important role that technology plays in increasing public engagement. Panelists raised the point that transparency and proactivity invoke public engagement—specifically by informing the public of the plan for data and technology use and allowing the public to provide feedback. Ultimately, community buy-in helps the public see the benefits of PSN. That buy-in starts with letting the public voice its concerns so that law enforcement agencies can use their resources to find effective compromises and solutions.

Other topics discussed by panelists included the importance of the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN), the need to find a way to measure partnership and public sentiment, and the need to improve data analysis, visualization, and real-world implementation for officers on the street.

#### Moderator

- Dr. Ed McGarrell, Professor Emeritus, Michigan State University

#### Panelists

- Dr. Bryanna Fox, Associate Professor, University of South Florida
- Dr. Sean Malinowski, Director, Policing Innovation and Reform at University of Chicago
- Dr. Chris Fisher, Senior Advisor, Office of the Assistant Attorney General, DOJ
- Hon. John R. Lausch Jr., US Attorney, Northern District of Illinois





## Federal Resources Available for Violent Crime Reduction Efforts

This session highlighted the key violence reduction training and technical assistance resources available from DOJ. Attendees heard from leadership from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, the Office for Victims of Crime, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF).

The discussion began with recommended websites that provide violent crime reduction resources such as the Crime Gun Intelligence Center and the PSN Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) website. Panelists provided a list of resources that jurisdictions can use when looking for more information on violent crime strategies, as well as different programs that assist jurisdictions with implementing those strategies. Panelists presented resources aimed at addressing youth violence, including a model programs guide, street gang intelligence training, and the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program. Panelists offered insight into how the victim service field can approach reducing violence and expressed a need for connecting victims with services and advancing hospital-based services due to the small percentage of victims that report and end up seeking services.

### Moderator

- Phelan Wyrick, PhD, Senior Advisor, Office of the Assistant Attorney General, DOJ

### Panelists

- Matthew Scheider, Assistant Director, COPS
- Katherine Darke Schmitt, Deputy Director, OVC
- Scott Pestrige, Senior Policy Advisor, OJJDP
- George Lauder, Assistant Director, ATF
- Kristen Mahoney, Principal Deputy Director, BJA





## SESSION SUMMARIES

### Collaboration Among Federal, State, and Local Prosecutors of Violent Crime Cases

Collaboration among criminal justice entities can often be difficult, especially during times of rising caseloads and staffing challenges. This panel provided examples of strong collaborative partnerships among federal, state, and local prosecutors on violent crime cases.

During this session, panelists engaged in a moderated discussion on collaborations to strengthen prosecution of violent crime cases. Speakers described successful efforts to respond to illegal firearm use, including the Gun Violence Strategic Partnership, which started in New York City in the summer of 2021, and agreed that having the “right” people involved is key to achieving positive outcomes. Panelists acknowledged the limited capacity of federal partners to take on all cases and emphasized the importance of process and communication. The defining of partner roles at different levels of government requires collaboration beyond regularly scheduled meetings, although the structure of regularly scheduled meetings is important for momentum. Speakers also talked about building relationships within their communities.

#### Moderator

- Anjali Chaturvedi, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, US Department of Justice

#### Panelists

- Ronald DeWald, Counsel to the US Attorney and PSN Coordinator, US Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Illinois
- Ethan Holland, Chief, Criminal Prosecutions Bureau, Cook County, IL, State’s Attorney Office
- Patrick Morley, Acting Supervisor, Gun Crimes Strategies Unit, Cook County, IL, State’s Attorney Office
- Marques Young, Assistant United States Attorney and PSN Coordinator, US Attorney’s Office, Western District of Tennessee
- Doug Carriker, Assistant District Attorney, Shelby County, TN, District Attorney’s Office
- Drew Skinner, Assistant United States Attorney and PSN Coordinator, US Attorney’s Office, Southern District of New York
- Terry Gottlieb, Chief, Trial Division, Bronx County, New York, District Attorney’s Office
- Patricia McLane, Assistant US Attorney, US Attorney’s Office, District of Maryland
- James Keay, Special Agent, Baltimore Field Division, ATF





## Community Violence Intervention (CVI): A Community-Centered Approach to Addressing Violence

This session covered community violence intervention (CVI) strategies, which are multidisciplinary strategies to address violence at its core. These strategies involve engaging with high-risk individuals and groups to prevent and disrupt cycles of violence and retaliation, and establishing relationships with individuals to address trauma, provide opportunity, and improve the physical, social, and economic conditions that drive violence. Panelists discussed essential elements of CVI strategies and some of the challenges of partnering with law enforcement.

The panelists discussed some of the key components of successful CVI strategies, namely that these initiatives are “person-centered”—they empower individuals and provide tools and support to change their life trajectories. Panelists stressed that CVI efforts should recognize that participants, and often the communities in which they live, have experienced repeated trauma (including intergenerational and structural traumas) that should be recognized. Intervention efforts should address and help heal this trauma as part of the work. All the panelists stressed that for CVI to be properly supported, the federal government needs to continue to fund these efforts and make CVI approaches a standard part of the public safety infrastructure, rather than grant opportunities that can come and go.

### Moderator

- Kathy Browning, Senior Policy Advisor, BJA

### Panelists

- Dr. Chico Tillmon, Executive Director, Heartland Alliance, READI Chicago
- Dr. Shani Buggs, Assistant Professor, University of California, Davis
- Dr. Shila Hawk, Law Enforcement Coordination Specialist, US Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Georgia
- Eddie Bocanegra, Senior Advisor, Office of the Assistant Attorney General, OJP





## Creating Effective Public Service Announcement for Crime Reduction

During this session, panelists discussed how to create effective public service announcements (PSAs) to address specific crime reduction issues through various types of platforms. The presentation included the various elements of developing and deploying public service announcements, including how to measure effect and impact, examples of successful PSAs, and strategies for leveraging resources. Panelists stressed the importance of defining goals and managing expectations. Panelists also highlighted the importance of knowing the target audience and adjusting each project to execute at the optimal time by understanding audience behaviors and current events.

### Moderator

- Brandy Donini-Melanson, Program Manager, Executive Office for United States Attorneys

### Panelists

- Laura McElroy, Communication Strategist, McElroy Media Group
- Paul DelPonte, Executive Director, National Crime Prevention Council
- Kristina Mastropasqua, Spokesperson, Office of Public Affairs, DOJ







## Crime Gun Intelligence Centers and National Integrated Ballistic Information Network

This panel provided an overview of the NIBIN technology and the business process necessary to ensure all human and technological resources are aligned appropriately to enhance enforcement efforts for individuals and networks that are engaged in gun crime. During this session, presenters discussed their work with NIBIN, including the ways in which NIBIN matches shell casings within the system, the benefits to criminal investigations, and lessons learned through NIBIN data exploration. Presenters also discussed the NIBIN Enforcement Support System (NESS), which includes NIBIN data, Trace ID and purchase date data, and other gun crime–related data. Presenters also discussed how NIBIN (and NESS) data can be used by an agency in tandem with other relevant data, including social media, and how those data can act as a mechanism for increasing collaboration among community partners and local/federal law enforcement partners.

### Moderator

- Terry Gainer, PSN TTA Liaison, CNA

### Panelists

- Sharon Buchanan, Branch Chief, NIBIN Sites Operations, Firearms Operations Division, ATF
- Jeff Russell, Supervisory Special Agent, Regional Anti Violence Enforcement Network, Denver Group IV, ATF
- Kristin Brewer, Director, Midwest Criminal Justice Institute, Wichita State University
- Christie Weidner, Special Agent, Firearms Operations Division, ATF





## Emerging Firearms Threats

The session covered the emerging threats posed by privately made firearms (or “ghost guns”), bump stocks, auto-sear devices, and other technology that pose new challenges to tackling violent crime. It also addressed the legal issues they present and potential solutions.

In this session, panelists discussed emerging threats posed by privately made firearms, bump stocks, auto-sear devices, and other technology. The panelists also reviewed legal issues regarding these threats and potential solutions, as well as crime rates across the United States during the pandemic. Overall, property and drug crime rates have continued to fall, while homicide rates have continued to increase since 2020. Speakers provided six explanations for the increase in gun violence and decrease in property crime: change in routine activities, de-policing, de-legitimizing, more guns, more drugs, and more stress. These explanations are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive.

Panelists then discussed the different types of privately made firearms, bump stocks, auto-sear devices, and other technologies. There are many ways to create a privately made firearm, including purchasing unfinished frames or receivers, buying parts kits, and assembling the gun yourself and creating a firearm or firearm technology with a 3D printer. Speakers provided participants different methods of prosecution for privately made firearms. They made a point to mention that these are federal avenues, and each state’s law may be different. The presentation continued with a discussion on receivers, short-barreled rifles, “stabilizing braces,” silencers, and Glock switches.

### Moderator

- Bill Taylor, PSN TTA Liaison, CNA

### Panelists

- James Vann, Associate Chief Counsel, Firearms and Explosives Law Division, ATF
- Dr. Richard Rosenfeld, Founders Professor, University of Missouri, St. Louis
- Bill Ryan, Deputy Chief (Acting), Firearms and Ammunition Technology Division, ATF





## Engaging and Supporting Witnesses and Victims of Violence

Support for witnesses and victims of violence is crucial to investigative success and increasing criminal justice system legitimacy. Attention to these principles can build victim and community trust and may also reduce violent crime through improved clearance rates and convictions. This panel discussed best practices and innovative approaches to these issues in both urban and rural PSN districts.

This session focused on supporting and engaging witnesses and victims of violence. Four experts in the field spoke about using and studying best practices for victim and witness support.

Participants discussed the disparities in race for who is more likely to become a victim of violence. Black people's risk for serious violence has remained 1.5 to 2 times greater than for white people, and Hispanics people's risk is 1.2 to 1.5 times greater than for white people. The panel also touched upon the media's role in covering homicides. Mainstream media is more likely to cover white homicides than Black homicides, but is also more likely to cover homicides when the offender is Black. This is an issue that needs to continuously be addressed, because media coverage shapes the ability of individuals and communities to receive fair and equal justice. Panelists repeatedly emphasized community engagement. Even though policies differ between agencies, evidence shows that community engagement practices have produced positive results. The different approaches have resulted in the public demonstrating more trust toward police departments and have provided victims and witnesses with more resources to heal and receive justice.

### Moderator

- Kate Peterson, State Victim Resource Division Director, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)

### Panelists

- Kyle Walton, Community Outreach Specialist, US Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio
- Shardal Rose, Unit Lead Specialist, Victim Services, Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Police Department
- Heather Warnken, Executive Director, Center for Criminal Justice Reform, University of Baltimore School of Law
- Chief Scott Booth, Danville (VA) Police Department





## PSN and Justice Reform

Law enforcement currently faces challenges in effectively responding to high levels of violent crime while heeding the widespread calls for criminal justice reform. There is emerging concern that the nation now faces a binary choice between reducing violence and fully implementing reform initiatives that aim to improve police practice and legitimacy, build community trust, and reduce incarceration rates. It is critical that PSN teams consider these structural issues within the criminal justice system (e.g., bias, disparate effects of enforcement activities, incarceration issues, and recidivism) and consider how to address those issues when planning their violence reduction strategies. This panel provided an overview of how violent crime reduction and reform initiatives have been successfully and simultaneously addressed in specific jurisdictions, as well as a discussion regarding the national justice reform movement and best practices that are integral to making both possible.

During this session, panelists representing law enforcement and community social justice efforts addressed their concerns with the emerging gap between communities and law enforcement. Panelists argued that now, more than ever, it is essential for agencies to foster a culture of adaptability and transparency. Justice reform may take many forms. It is necessary to understand the variations across communities and police departments to achieve successful reform.

### Moderator

- Didi Nelson, Special Assistant for Intergovernmental Affairs (Ret.), US Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia

### Panelists

- Chief Michel Moore, Los Angeles (CA) Police Department
- Timothy Mygatt, Deputy Chief, Special Litigation Section of the DOJ Civil Rights Division
- Michael Sullivan, Deputy Commissioner, Baltimore (MD) Police Department
- Chief Kathleen O'Toole (retired), Seattle (WA) Police Department and Boston (MA) Police Department
- Reverend Markel Hutchins, President & CEO, MovementForward





## Serving Small, Rural, and Tribal Communities

Small, rural, and tribal communities face unique challenges in reducing crime and supporting victims and witnesses of violence. Panelists addressed a wide range of promising practices learned from the field and from the PSN engagements in smaller, rural, and tribal communities. The panelists echoed each other in their challenges with high crime trends in the smaller, rural, and tribal communities. Panelists mentioned that trends in rural areas can be difficult to identify due to a lack of data and resources.

### Moderator

- Geoff Smith, Senior Advisor, CNA

### Panelists

- Jeremy Sherer, Assistant US Attorney and PSN Coordinator, US Attorney's Office, Northern District of Alabama
- Chief Mike Pooley, Apache Junction Police Department
- Renee Stapp, Program Director, Victims Assistance to Support Tribes, National Center for Victims of Crime
- Jesucita Hernandez, Training and Technical Assistance Director, Unified Solutions Tribal Community Development Group





## Strategies for Improving Homicide and Nonfatal Shooting Clearance Rates

This panel discussed promising practices that law enforcement agencies have implemented to improve homicide and nonfatal shooting clearance rates. Agencies and researchers shared their experiences with improving their clearance rates. The panelists addressed a wide range of topics on clearance, such as the importance of collaboration both within one's department and with local and federal partners, using data-driven and innovative approaches to inform investigative decisions, accountability, and community engagement. Once they shared their experiences and lessons learned, the panelists effectively echoed each other in terms of sharing information within departmental units and other external partners who are critical in the investigative process.

### Moderator

- James "Chip" Coldren, Co-Director, CNA, Center for Justice Research and Innovation

### Panelists

- Dr. Scott Decker, Chief Scientist, CNA, Center for Justice Research and Innovation
- Lieutenant Jason Johansson, Las Vegas (NV) Metropolitan Police Department
- Fred Milanowski, Special Agent in Charge, Houston Field Division, ATF





## Successful and Authentic Community Engagement and Collaboration

This panel discussed important elements of community engagement and mobilization. The panel included examples of successful strategies that PSN teams use to collaborate with the community to prevent and reduce violence. The panelists also discussed the concept of building collective efficacy and social cohesion in communities experiencing violent crime and the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Community engagement cannot flourish if the community is not fully involved or allowed to make decisions. The right people (e.g., the chief of police and a community leader) need to be “in place” to make the partnership happen. Even so, it can take years. The Omaha Police Department and Omaha 360 have been working together for more than 15 years. Partners should commit to consistent weekly meetings. Representatives from Dallas aspired to “attend as many community meetings as arrests made.”

Developing resources to clearly state the purpose and goals of the partnership can create cohesion (e.g., door hangers with a magnet attached, business cards, and media announcements in multiple languages). The strategies must be comprehensive, with clear data collection methods and outcomes. PSN TTA support and guidance can be very helpful in all aspects of community engagement.

The panelists noted that when opportunities for youth increase, violence in the community decreases, homicide clearance rates increase, and officer-involved shootings decrease.

### Moderator

- Nola Joyce/Robert white, PSN TTA Liaison, CNA

### Panelists

- Joe Jeanette, Law Enforcement Coordinator, US Attorney’s Office for the District of Nebraska
- Willie Barney, Founder, Empowerment Network
- Jonathan Chapman, Director of Neighborhood Collaboratives, Empowerment Network
- Deputy Chief Tom Shaffer, Omaha (NE) Police Department
- Philip Meitl, Assistant US Attorney, US Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Texas
- Dr. Craig Uchida, President, Justice & Security Strategies, Inc.
- Theresa Segovia, Senior Advisor, Law Enforcement/HCPA Gender Affairs, DOJ, Community Relations Service





## Tackling Youth Violence

This panel discussed how to respond effectively to and prevent youth violence using different enforcement, prevention, and intervention strategies. The discussion provided a broad overview of evidence-based and trauma-informed interventions.

Preventive measures suggested included taking a public health approach while being purposeful and comprehensive with expenditures. Los Angeles' Gang Reduction & Youth Development (GYRD) funds (a \$20 million budget) go to programs in the community because those are the providers that have the trust and capability to address needs. One major element of Los Angeles' violence reduction strategies is the Summer Night Lights held in 42 parks throughout the city over the summer to provide safe activities for youth. Use of credible messengers and regional program coordinators has proven effective. These individuals are "neutral" parties and conduits between the community, the city, and law enforcement. Building these relationships has disrupted the violence and led to a 42 percent reduction in violence/repeat offenses.

Participants highlighted the importance of developing programs for youth of varying ages. For example, My Daddy Taught Me That, a youth development program, offers a comprehensive set of programs for boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 19. Weekly meetings of social services/nonprofits and law enforcement are essential. Given a rise in carjackings committed by juveniles, Chicago sought alternatives to keep juveniles out of the justice system, avoid charging them as adults, and reduce recidivism.

### Moderator

- Cindy K. Chung, US Attorney, Western District of Pennsylvania

### Panelists

- Dave Jaffe, Chief, Organized Crime and Gang Section, DOJ
- Darcie McElwee, US Attorney, District of Maine
- Dr. Denise Herz, Director, California State University, Los Angeles, School of Criminal Justice and Criminalistics
- Robert Kline, Cook County State's Attorney Office
- Keynon Lake, Founder, My Daddy Taught Me That







## RESOURCES

### Training and Technical Assistance

Training and technical assistance (TTA) aids PSN task forces, local, state, and Tribal law enforcement agencies, criminal justice agencies, and communities with planning, implementing, and assessing their violence reduction PSN strategies. TTA can be provided in a variety of formats. PSN sites also have access to national training and networking opportunities. Check out the [PSN TTA Overview Document](#) for more information.

- The [TTA Resource Catalog](#) contains a list of on-site and virtual TTA available to PSN teams.
- Discuss your TTA needs with the PSN TTA team and fill out the online [TTA Request Form](#).

### PSN Blueprint for Success

The PSN Blueprint for Success is a resource to help prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, and community partners develop effective and sustainable initiatives to address violent crime in their districts. View the [PSN Blueprint for Success](#) to identify critical stakeholders, determine performance metrics, and learn more about the TTA opportunities.

### Collaboration, Partnerships, and Community Engagement

Successful PSN initiatives rely on strong and authentic partnerships among the US Attorney's Office; community partners; federal, state, and local partners; research partners; victim support organizations; and fiscal agents.

- View the [PSN Partnership Guidebook](#) to learn about effective PSN partnerships and collaboration.
- Learn about collaboration and information sharing regarding firearms-related topics and investigations in this two-page resource, [Strategies for Effective Collaboration: Firearms](#).
- Applications are now open for National Public Safety Partnership. View the [application here](#).
- Check out the [Public Safety Partnership Virtual Academy](#).
- See an example of a successful PSN partnership in the [Dallas Better Block video](#) and hear from US attorneys, law enforcement coordinators, and victim-witness specialists in the [PSN Partnership video](#).
- View BJA's [Community-Based Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative Implementation Checklist](#).





## Session Recordings and Presentations

Some sessions from the National Summit were recorded and are available to watch. In addition, if a session included presentation slides, the PDF versions of those slides are also available.

- View and download the presentation slides from the [PSN TTA website](#).
- Watch the recorded sessions on the [PSN TTA YouTube Channel](#).

