



VIOLENCE PREVENTION COALITION OF GREATER LOS ANGELES
A Project of Community Partners

End of Year Report - 2007

The VPC completed our first year of re-establishment with agreement on our purpose, governance structure, and membership. VPC members drafted and adopted a charter, describing the coalition's purpose and priorities, governance structure, action groups, committees, and the commitment of our members. As part of the newly developed structure, levels of membership were created for individuals, non-profit and governmental organizations, and private for-profit organizations. Requirements for voting membership include dues and a level of participation. Membership in the coalition has been growing at an increasing rate, and each new VPC meeting or event attracts additional members. VPC members elected a Steering Committee to carry out the day-to-day operations of the coalition. Action Groups were formed to address areas of specific concern including re-entry of incarcerated individuals, dialogues on the nature of violence, and advocacy for a comprehensive, regional prevention/intervention strategy as outlined in the Advancement Project Report. A Youth Action Group has also been initiated to bring a critical voice to the violence prevention movement.

The VPC was accepted as a project of Community Partners, a 501(c)(3) umbrella organization, which provides the VPC with fiscal sponsorship and administrative support.

An Ambassadors Council was established to promote the efforts of the coalition and champion the violence prevention movement in Los Angeles. To date, 15 community leaders have accepted the invitation to join the Ambassadors Council, including policy makers, advocates, leaders in violence prevention, and individuals who have done exemplary work in community building and violence reduction using a public health approach.

The VPC received a grant from the California Endowment to build the capacity of the Steering Committee and the coalition membership to address our priorities and build the critical mass necessary to create a movement for prevention and intervention in Southern California. We have also been asked to submit full grant proposals for core operating expenses and to update the VPC website. Successful conclusions of these grants will permit us to hire staff, acquire office space and establish other opportunities for the coalition to expand its outreach into the community. We also are seeking funding in order to host the Angel of Peace Awards and offer Challenge Grants to community-based organizations as we did in the past.

VPC members met bimonthly to address pressing and developing issues in the greater Los Angeles area. More than 75 individuals attended the August VPC meeting to meet Jeff Carr and hear about his new role as LA City's Director of Gang Reduction and Youth Development. The October meeting hosted a panel of experts that discussed implications of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (SB-81), which shifts non-violent youthful offenders from state to county facilities and community programs. In addition, we had a facilitated dialogue with the LA City Attorney's Office Days of

Dialogue to discuss the diverse approaches to violence prevention, intervention, and suppression practiced by our members.

VPC members have had impact on local and state policy. VPC members provided invited testimony to the Los Angeles City Council regarding a proposed ordinance mandating that gun dealers in Los Angeles post warnings about the dangers of possessing guns at home. The ordinance passed in July. The VPC also provided information to state legislators regarding the Crime Gun Identification Act of 2007, which requires that all semi-automatic handguns manufactured in California be outfitted with micro-stamping technology by 2010 to assist police in tracing crime guns. This legislation was passed in October, and signed by the Governor. California once again was the first state to pass such legislation which is now also being considered by several other states across the country.

Training on program evaluation for VPC member organizations has commenced. Workshops are offered by the Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center at the UCLA School of Public Health and funded by The California Wellness Foundation. To date, 15 member organizations have received training in evaluation. These workshops consist of four four-hour sessions and include training in writing measurable objectives, identifying sources of data, and developing an evaluation plan to monitor and measure outcomes of a project or a program. Participants are encouraged to work on current proposals and to avail themselves of free technical assistance as they implement what they have learned in the workshops. These workshops will continue for the next two years.

The VPC is establishing a clearinghouse to provide information on violence prevention. Fact sheets with up-to-date statistics and information on violence in the Greater Los Angeles Area have been developed and provided to members and decision makers. Topics include intimate partner violence, firearm violence, child abuse, gang violence, and drugs and alcohol related violence.

Building in 2008

The VPC Re-Entry and Employment Action Group hosted a symposium on February 5th to explore and address gaps in services for youthful offenders re-entering their communities. Connie Rice and David Steinhart were featured participants.

Beginning February 11th, Berkeley Media Studies Group and the Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center are providing media advocacy trainings to help VPC members engage in advocacy on violence prevention issues. Our first session was fully subscribed.

The VPC is once again taking its place as the only coalition in Southern California that addresses violence as a public health issue. Its membership is as diverse as Los Angeles County and is dedicated to building the critical mass to shift from suppression, enforcement, and incarceration to the much more cost effective and lasting solutions of prevention and intervention.