

Youth Violence: Trends, Myths and Solutions
Talking Points for Beverly Coleman Miller, MD
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1. **Young people, families, and communities across the country are seriously impacted by violence**
2. **Violence is costly to individuals, families, communities, businesses, and government, and preventing violence can contribute to economic recovery and growth**
3. **Leaders are calling for action:** Mayors, police chiefs, school superintendents and public health directors have stated that violence is a serious issue and responses are inadequate and The US Conference of Mayors declared youth violence to be a public health crisis.
4. **Violence is preventable:** Prevention programs and strategies have a demonstrated track record in reducing violence.
5. **We need a national commitment to and action on preventing violence before it occurs** in order to Support and complement enforcement and suppression, Improve outcomes for young people, families and communities, and Strengthen our economic recovery and growth.
6. **UNITY is a national initiative funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support cities in preventing violence before it occurs through what has been called public health approach.**
7. **Cities working with UNITY have identified a set of key strategies that would support violence prevention efforts in cities.** The *upfront* strategies are: positive early care and education; positive social and emotional development; parenting skills; mentoring; quality after school programming; youth leadership; social connections in neighborhoods; quality education; and economic development. In the *thick* strategies are mental health services, family support services, street outreach, and mentoring. Aftermath strategies are successful reentry and mental health services.
8. **Having the resources and policies in support of these kinds of programmatic efforts is key.**
9. **They will have the greatest impact in the context of being part of a city-wide strategy and directed in a coordinated way to the neighborhoods and people with the greatest need.**
10. **The UNITY City Assessment found Cities with more coordination, communication, and attention to preventing violence have achieved lower violence rates**
11. **More and more cities are putting plans in place** (Minneapolis, Nashville, Philadelphia, LA, San Jose), and their efforts can be greatly supported through federal prevention policies and resources.
12. **Putting some prevention dollars through Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would help support prevention efforts at the local level** by bringing prevention leadership, in addition to law enforcement and criminal justice, to the table.