Shifting Resources & Saving Lives: Funding Domestic and Sexual Violence Services in Chicago

The Network
ADVOCATING AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence is a coalition of over 39 diverse organizations and 4 individual members who provide domestic violence related services in the Chicago metropolitan area. The Network is dedicated to improving the lives of those impacted by domestic violence through education, public policy and advocacy, and the connection of community members to direct service providers.

This report calls for the reallocation of $35 million to a line item in the budget for critical gender-based violence services in the City of Chicago. This amount represents 7 days of the 365 day police budget and would bring Chicago in line with other large cities in funding for gender based violence prevention and response services.

This report will look critically at the failings of police reform strategies across the country, and will consider domestic and sexual violence service provision models that do not rely on law enforcement. This paper was written by Network staff after collaboration and discussion with member organizations.

"We’re asking cops to do too much in this country... Every societal failure, we put it off on the cops to solve. Not enough mental health funding, let the cops handle it. Not enough drug addiction funding, let’s give it to the cops...School’s fail, give it to the cops. 70% of the African American community is being raised by single women, let’s give it to the cops to solve as well. That’s too much to ask. Policing was never meant to solve all those problems. ".

- DAVID BROWN [1]

Issues

Unbalanced Investment in CPD Budget

Chicago has the second-largest police department in the United States, with more than 13,000 officers[2]. The budget for the Chicago Police Department (CPD) is 40% of Chicago's operating budget, which averages to approximately $4 million spent each day on policing[3]. Additional funds were added to policing in the City's 2020 budget, including:

- An additional $9 million to expand the Office of Public Safety, which is dedicated to the management and implementation of all administrative functions for CPD
- $25 million for police consent decree compliance and expanding CPD from three to five police areas [4]

The City is also planning a new $95 million police academy in the west side of Chicago, currently opposed by community organizations asking community funding and investment instead[5]. In all, the budget for policing continues to grow each year. Chicago's spending on policing per capita is higher than Los Angeles, which has a population of one million more residents, and more than double that of Miami-Dade County in Florida, which has a similar population[6].

The high budget allotted to law enforcement has not yielded positive results. Many studies show that an increase in policing does not lead to a decrease in crime, and often leads to an increase in racial and socioeconomic profiling and inequalities. Research shows that "broken windows policing," an idea that overwhelmingly marginalized communities, leads to increasingly aggressive and invasive policing, and ultimately results in more violence[8]. Additionally, as funding per capita has increased, the murder clearance rate in Chicago has dropped significantly over recent years, dropping below the national average as of 2017[9].

The Department of Family & Support Services (DFSS) oversees, among other programs, programs for victims and survivors of domestic violence, including the Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline, housing, counseling, and legal advocacy services. Domestic violence funding through DFSS is the smallest funding portion even after administrative funds, amounting to $7,442,566 [11]. This means that the CPD budget (which is $1,762,078,349) is 236x the funding the City devotes to domestic violence services through DFSS. In comparison, the City of San Francisco spends $8.5 million dollars per year directly on specific and targeted domestic and sexual violence services for a population one-third the size of Chicago.

Racial Disparities in Policing and Domestic Violence

From 1988 to today, there have been over 57,000 accusations of excessive use of force against CPD officers. Of these complaints, only 1,719 resulted in discipline. These complaints amount to an average of 10 a day [12].

As the graphic to the right highlights, use of force is more often against people of color at disproportionate rates to the population. This is despite the fact, that data show that Black citizens are less likely to resist arrest than their white counterparts [13].

These implicit and explicit biases built into law enforcement and legal systems have created a warranted distrust by Black and Brown communities. Black and Brown people, however, have a greater likelihood of experiencing domestic violence in their lifetimes [14]. They, however, are less likely to rely on systems connected to law enforcement. This means that service providers must be adequately funded to provide alternative methods of providing safety and shelter for these survivors [15].

Community Asks

The Network is in support of community asks for funds to be re-invested in communities through the reopening of closed schools, the reopening of closed mental health centers, additional housing resources for those facing homelessness, funding for crisis centers, job programs, and treatment and recovery centers. As a representative of the sexual and domestic violence advocacy community, the Network primarily seeks funding to be re-invested into the following services:

I. Sexual Violence Response Programs
Currently the City of Chicago only provides funding to rape crisis centers through Chicago's Children Advocacy Center. This leaves little support for survivors. The Network and its member organization ask that the city provide additional funding for sexual violence response programs to meet the need for both adult and child survivors. Network member organizations are working on this issue and can provide additional data on the limitations of the current systems and need for this funding.

II. Community Based Advocacy Work
While historically, domestic violence advocacy work has relied on partnerships with law enforcement and court officials, there is a growing movement for more community based resources. We ask for additional funding to support these models of work as we continue to find new innovative ways to reach survivors.

III. Prevention Programs for Sexual and Domestic Violence
The Network requests a specific line item in the city's budget for gender based violence prevention and intervention. This funding will be used to support the development of new prevention programs as well as fund existing programs. One form of prevention work is working with youth in schools. The National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence reports that 49 percent of children suffer from two or more incidences of physical abuse, sexual abuse, bullying, or exposure to intimate partner violence.
This study also showed that within their lifetimes 18 percent of children will be exposed to intimate partner violence [16]. Despite the trauma faced by children, during the 2017-2018 school year CPS schools had a 444 to 1 student to counselor ratio, far exceeding the recommended 250 to one. Similarly, there was only one psychologist per 1,760 students, which is close to five times the recommended ratio [17]. Prevention means providing more support in schools for students, funding training for professionals and community members, and additional funding for school-based prevention programming run by sexual and domestic violence advocacy organizations.

IV. Funding for Services for those Who Cause Harm

Preventing domestic violence also means working with those who have caused harm. This requires funding for Partner Abuse Intervention Programs (PAIP) as well as those that move beyond this model. These programs and their funding should not require the individual to have been involved in the court system but be available to all those who are seeking to stop causing harm. Additional funding should be available for evaluation of programs and development of new models which are informed by a public health lens.

V. 24-Hour Non-Shelter Domestic Violence Crisis Responders

While shelters are available 24/7 for survivors of domestic violence, we seek to develop a system of non-police responders to domestic violence to provide an alternative to survivors and address the 400 calls for service CPD receives per day. We seek to explore the violence interrupter model developed by community violence organizations as well as the models of response teams outlined in this report.

Law enforcement officers receive minimal training on domestic violence and are not the best responders. Research has demonstrated that many communities already look for alternatives to law enforcement in these situations. We seek to provide support to those communities by providing trauma-informed and culturally responsive responses and resources [18].

VI. Long-term Housing Solutions For Survivors

Research has long shown that there is a high correlation between domestic violence and homelessness. A study by the National Center for Homelessness and Health Care found that 57% of homeless women report domestic violence as the cause [19]. Additionally, among homeless women with children, 80% reported experiencing domestic violence [20]. While shelters have historically been used to address housing needs, they do not have the capacity to meet the growing need and are not long term solutions. The Network seeks funding for housing resources based on the Housing First and Rapid Rehousing models. These models provide flexible financial assistance for housing needs [21]

VII. Counseling, Financial Assistance, and Other Services

Survivors of sexual and domestic violence seek not only shelter, but a multitude of other services including counseling, financial assistance, employment assistance, medical assistance, and child care. These services are vital to survivors and must be adequately funded.

[20] Ibid.
Challenges with Reform Strategies

While The Network supports the idea of internal reform for CPD, we urge city officials to be cognizant of the limited success of this approach. In the following pages, we highlight problems with some of the most commonly referenced reform strategies. In general, these tactics are not standardized or large enough to overcome systemic problems and therefore these and other reform strategies must only be considered in conjunction with large scale changes to the system as a whole.

I. Implicit Bias Training

Many advocates of police reform call for implicit bias, diversity, or sensitivity trainings designed to reduce racial and cultural biases and prejudices. Calls for these kinds of trainings are often made after public stories of police brutality and are intended for officers to be able to interrogate their biases in hopes of reducing prejudiced behavior while on duty. In many cases, these trainings are not new but have already existed. After the death of Michael Brown, for instance, approximately 69% received implicit bias training[22].

Implicit bias trainings are often not standardized, and there are few evaluation processes despite the costs. NY initiated a $4.5 million dollar contract in 2018 for this training despite no standards for curriculum or methods of assessment[23]. Meanwhile, Hawaii police are only required to watch a 30 minute video once a year[24]. 59% of surveyed departments reported no measures of evaluating the trainings. There is also a lack of background research in the development of the training programs to determine structure and use.

Research shows that implicit bias trainings are not particularly effective in reducing systemic policing issues such as racial stereotyping and disparities in profiling or arrests[25]. A researcher who has worked with departments to develop these trainings noted that incidents of racial bias still occurred after training, concluding that one of the reasons was due to a lack of ongoing evaluation[26].

Officers also often feel resentful of trainings and are consistently unwilling to engage with material. Many officers feel defensive at confronting their racism, and describe the trainings as politically motivated and divorce from their work[27]. Officers across the country have reported that implicit bias trainings harmed moral, and have shared resentments on money being spent on training rather than on additional firearm trainings or other desires[28].

Lastly, implicit bias trainings do not take into account explicit bias, as well as systemic or institutional biases. Even when individual officers are able to assess their personal prejudices, institutional pressures to remain intact. These trainings alone, therefore, will be ineffective in changing outcomes without larger scale changes[29].

II. De-Escalation Training

De-escalation training faces similar issues as implicit bias training, including cost, lack of standardization and efficacy. Officers are reluctant to engage with the material and may not implement these strategies after completing the training. Officers in Arizona reported that their training consisted only of being shown a brief video. They reported that it was understood the expectation in the department was not that they had to follow the guidelines of the training, but simply had to sit through it. When questioned about a specific incident of excessive force used against a civilian by other officers in the department, the officers re-iterated that those officers had done what they are told to do [30]. There has been considerable feedback from police unions across the country advocating against this training and critiquing these tactics as increasing the risk towards the safety of officers [31].

This unwillingness by departments and officers to embrace these strategies, despite training influences outcomes. There is consistent evidence of their failure. One recent example, is that the officer who killed Rayshard Brooks had completed both de-escalation training and deadly force training within this calendar year and still proceeded to escalate to violence in a non-threatening encounter [32].


III. Body Cameras

Police body cameras are another frequently cited suggestion in the conversation about preventing police abuse, but this proposed solution has been found to have almost no effect on police officer behavior. A rigorous 18-month study of over 2,000 police officers in Washington D.C. found that officers using body cameras exhibited excessive force and prompted civilian complaints at around the same rate as officers not using body cameras [33].

Additionally, the use of body cameras has actually been shown to cause more harm to civilians, especially in areas with weak enforcement tactics. A 2016 study found that when officers were able to turn body cameras on or off at their discretion during shifts, police use-of-force actually rose 71% over shifts where officers did not wear a body cam at all [34].

Even when body cameras do capture police officer misconduct, this information is not always made available to the people these officers are supposed to be protecting and serving. In 2017, 987 civilians were killed by police officers, but only 105 of these deaths were caught on body cameras. Of these 105 deaths, the camera footage for 38 percent was never released to the public. While footage of the remaining 62 percent was eventually released, it was not done in a timely or consistent manner, with footage from 25 percent of the cases being released more than 30 days after the incident. Chicago stands alone as one of the only major cities to have a policy requiring the release of body camera footage within 60 days of the incident with a following 30-day extension in limited circumstances [35]. Despite this attempt to maintain transparency, it only took a little over 1 year for the city to defy this policy in the case of the non-fatal shooting of Dwane Rowlett [36].

For a device that at its best causes no change in officer behavior and at its worst causes police abuse to rise, body cameras are exorbitantly expensive. According to the Police Executive Research Forum’s 2018 report, each individual body-worn camera (BWC) costs about $189 with additional maintenance and video storage costing around $739, bringing the cost of one camera to about $928 [37]. In 2017 there were around 12,500 active police officers in the Chicago police department, if we are to assume that every patrol officer would be outfitted with a BWC for complete officer transparency, then it would cost the city 11.6 million dollars [38].

IV. Case Study: Minnesota

In 2015, Minnesota implemented many of the reform strategies people currently suggest, including implicit bias training, mindfulness training, de-escalation training, crisis intervention training, diversifying the department, changing the use of force standards, adopting body cameras, initiating police-community standards, and enhancing systems to track officers with complaints for use of force [39].

Since implementing these reform strategies, the Minneapolis police have been documented using force 11,500 times. In nearly 60 percent of these cases, 6,650, the person who was subject to force was Black. Black people, however, are less than 20 percent of the city's population[40]. The rates of overall force and the racial disparities have remained consistent since 2015 as shown in the graph below.

![Police-reported uses of force in Minneapolis by year](Image)


For 30 years Eugene has paid non-police crisis workers to respond to 911 calls. This includes crisis counseling, suicide intervention, substance abuse response, conflict resolution, resource referrals, transportation to services, and housing crisis. These workers all have several years of experience in their respective fields and are more prepared to handle these calls than an officer with minimal related training [42]. In 2019 the program handled over 17 percent of the area’s 911 calls while operating at only 1% of the PD’s budget [43].

II. Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett collaborated with city leaders to develop a coordinated plan to address public safety and reduce violence. This approach included ways to tackle underlying systems of violence, as well as invest into community assets and culture. This new plan, titled the Milwaukee Blueprint for Peace, focuses on prevention of violence before it occurs, as well as intervention efforts once violence has occurred in order to reduce its impact and risk of occurring again. The Blueprint works separately from criminal justice systems, but also compliments the justice system in order to reduce violence through law enforcement and institutional suppression [44].

In order to address domestic and sexual violence, among other issues, the Blueprint identifies many factors that contribute to ongoing interpersonal and systemic violence, including neighborhood disinvestment, lack of resources, lack of quality houses, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). The plan for sustainable change in these communities centers widespread community training on trauma-informed healing practices, which shifts the scope of knowledge and responsibility from just service providers, to communities at large. The Blueprint recognizes the kinds of prevention and intervention work happening in communities, and finds way to support these efforts [45].

Many of the strategies outlined in the Blueprint align with the Mayor's Office Violence Prevention Planning Committee's developed Implementation Plan, which highlights non-carceral strategies to addressing issues of domestic violence and other safety concerns. The Network, having been involved in these planning efforts, is supportive of the plan and asks to see it fully funded.

III. San Francisco, California

San Francisco Mayor London Breed has recently announced a police reform plan modeled after Eugene’s CAHOOTS program that would prevent police officers from responding to noncriminal incidents such as mental health crises, substance use crises, school discipline scenarios, neighbor disputes, and homelessness. Instead a mobile crisis intervention team including unarmed, medical and mental health professionals would respond to the scene ready to provide appropriate services and help. These intervention teams will also perform welfare checks and offer suicide prevention and intervention when necessary [46].

Breed does not plan to let police reform end with a crisis intervention team. The Mayor has banned the use military-grade weapons including tear gas, bayonets, and tanks against unarmed civilians, and these weapons must be disposed of by the end of 2021. Additionally, she has implemented steps to reduce officer bias including: implementing testing for implicit bias and the potential for abuse within the hiring and promotional procedures as well as decreasing the amount of booking photos released to the public in order to decrease officer and civilian biases [47].


IV. Camden, New Jersey

In 2013 Camden, New Jersey was considered to be one of the most dangerous cities in America [48]. Murder rates were 18 times the national average [49], the police force was not only ineffective but filled with officers accused of excessive force, evidence planting, fabrication, and perjury [50]. In the midst of this public health crisis, Camden dissolved and rebuilt their police force. This new police force was under county control without the city police union restrictions limiting the number of officers that could be on patrol. Within this restructuring plan all of the original officers were laid off, and anyone wishing to be rehired would need to complete a 50 page application, retake psychological testing, and go through an interview process [51]. This new plan prioritized “problem-solving over violence and punishment” which included an emphasis on de-escalation tactics and efforts to make the police force reflect the diverse population of Camden [52].

Overall these changes have been successful. Homicides in Camden went from 67 in 2012 to 25 in 2019 and excessive-force complaints went from 65 in 2012 to 3 in 2012 to 25 in 2019 and excessive-force complaints went from 65 in 2012 to 3 in 2019 [53]. Despite these improvements, Camden is not a perfect model. Many of

Camden’s residents still do not have a positive relationship with the police force, and that is partially due to the load that the police are forced to carry, especially in regards to situations in which they are not trained such as mental health crises [54]. The former chief of the Camden Police Force was quoted saying “I would have traded 10 cops for another Boys & Girls Club...Police are not equipped [to handle mental health crises] they’re not trained. So I think if we changed the expectation of police...I think cops would actually appreciate that” [55]. Camden is not doing everything right, but they have created a path that Chicago can follow and improve upon.


V. Austin, Texas

In the past year, Austin, Texas has vastly improved services to individuals experiencing mental health crises by increasing funding to the city’s existing Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (EMCOT) and the creation of a mental health option at the 911 call center. This option allows individuals who call to specify that they want a mental health professional, the same way they would normally indicate if the emergency needed a fire, EMT, or law enforcement response [56]. This funding will allow the EMCOT team to hire 7 more trained mental health paramedics that can respond to scenes of incidents and provide the care that individuals need. Additionally these EMCOT first-responders will be supported by 2 full-time and one part-time clinician that can communicate with the paramedics in the field through a tele-health video call line. Lastly, this funding will allow four EMCOT clinicians to be hired at the 911 call center who will be able to take calls from individuals currently in crisis [57].

In changing the approach to public safety, many individuals will still continue their normal pattern of calling 911. Building alternatives to law enforcement into these systems allows for law enforcement only to be engaged when necessary, while still providing an immediate response for citizens.

VI. Oakland, California

The Oakland Power Projects in Oakland, California was created in 2015 to find alternative methods to respond to situations without solely relying on the police. The Oakland Power Projects continually creates distinct programs to meet the different, stated needs of Oakland residents in a way that “rejects police and policing as the default response to harm” [58]. Two of these projects have included a healthcare program as well as an emergency preparedness program.

The healthcare project resulted out of a collective civilian agreement that interactions with the police during healthcare crises were not only unhelpful, but consistently caused harm. The Oakland Power Projects team created an “Anti-Policing Health Toolkit” and held workshops for Oakland residents to help them better understand how they could respond to healthcare emergencies such as mental health crises or substance overdoses, without getting law enforcement involved [59].

The second, and most recent, project is an analysis of police militarization in Oakland and an effort to equip citizens with the skills to handle general emergencies. Some of these skills include teaching de-escalation tactics, choosing citizens to will act as peacekeepers, creating mechanisms to review emergencies and then establish subsequent protocols, and the creation of local civilian rapid response networks. Future trainings will include community natural disaster preparedness as well as lessons on how to advocate and defend community members from ICE raids and other police groups with specific targets [60].

[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
The Chicago domestic violence and sexual violence community are far from the only ones making this request. Throughout the nation, many cities are re-evaluating and re-envisioning their approach to public safety. Minneapolis, New York, and Los Angeles have all chosen to make some budgetary cuts to their police departments in order to re-invest in their communities [61]. Throughout the community, people continue to take to the streets to call for action. They are joined by at least six Chicago Aldermen who have called for a decrease in the CPD budget [62].

Police officers have long been called to do work outside of their training, responding as social workers, mental health care professionals, and community specialists. Reallocating funds means allowing individuals with the proper training to respond to these needs in the community and allowing police officers to focus on the tasks they are trained for. By allocating $35 million in additional funds to gender-based violence prevention and response, the City will improve the health and safety of its residents, enable the police department to respond strategically and effectively to criminal activity, and equip providers to meet the ever increasing need for services in this area.

We ask you to do what's best for the citizens of our city by recognizing that public safety comes from a web of community supports.