

Children’s Trust of Alachua County

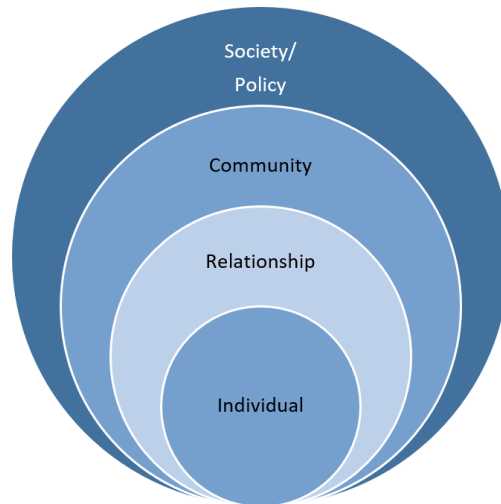
Gun Violence Funding Proposal

Fiscal Year 2025

Background:

In 2023, the Gainesville City Commission and Alachua County Board of Commissioners declared Gun Violence as a public health crisis. This declaration emphasizes the need to utilize public health concepts to identify and implement solutions to a complex issue. Public health promotes and protects the health of all people and their communities (American Public Health Association). Within public health, there are multiple disciplines including epidemiology, management and policy, environmental health, biostatistics, and social and behavioral science, among others.

Social and behavioral sciences applied to public health seeks to focus on health promotion, illness prevention, and barriers to health behavior change, on both individual and health system levels (Temple University). Through this discipline, there are health behavior theories and models were developed over decades to inform behavior change efforts across populations. One of these models is the Social Ecological Model. While there are multiple iterations of this model, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) version is most applicable to the issue of violence prevention. The framework encourages a multi-level analysis of the factors that influence a public health issue.



What is public health? (n.d.). American Public Health Association — For Science. For Action. For Health. Retrieved July 13, 2023, from <https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health>

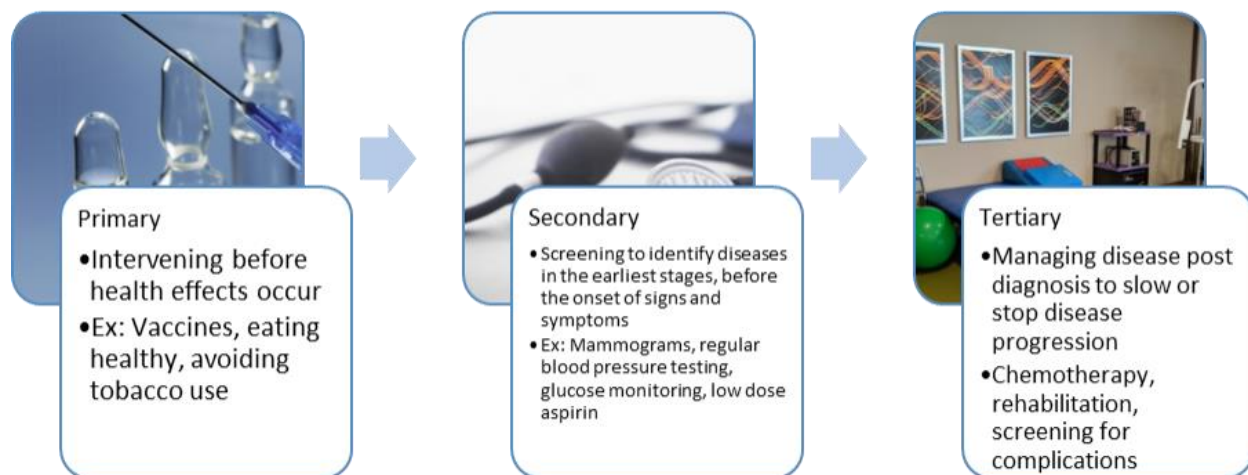
Social and Behavioral Sciences MPH | Temple University. (n.d.). Temple University. Retrieved July 13, 2023,

The Social Ecological Model (SEM) considers the interplay between different levels of influence in someone’s life – their own, their relationships, their community, and the larger societal and policy standards. The individual level includes biology and personal history, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and the skills that one has as it relates to a behavior. The relationship level considers family, peers, significant others, and one’s close circle that may encourage or discourage participation in a behavior. At the community level, initiatives can address the settings where social relationships occur like schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods. There are also characteristics within those settings that are associated with risk or protective factors to participating in a behavior. Lastly is the society/policy level. These factors are broad and help to create a climate in which the issue is encouraged or inhibited. This includes cultural norms as well as the health, economic, educational, and social policies that maintain economic or social inequities between various groups.

Reciprocal determinism is a core component of the SEM, stemming from the work of psychologist Albert Bandura. This concept states that a person’s behavior both influences and is influenced by personal factors and one’s social environment. Lastly, the model suggests that to prevent a public health issue, work must exist across multiple levels within the model to make sustainable change. The more levels addressed or influenced, the more likely the prevention efforts are to be successful.

Prevention efforts across each level of the model should seek to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors associated with the behavior. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines protective factors as “characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor’s impact. The National Institutes of Health provides examples like social support, career aspirations, spirituality or religious beliefs, and community resources. Protective factors may be seen as positive countering events.” Risk factors are “characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes.” Examples from the Department of Justice include exposure to violence, substance use, abuse/neglect, lack of community resources, and inequity.

In addition, when considering prevention initiatives, we must consider the various levels of prevention – primary, secondary, and tertiary. Please see below for definitions and examples.



The Social-Ecological Model: A Framework for Prevention | Violence Prevention | Injury Center | CDC. (n.d.). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved July 13, 2023.

Risk and Protective Factors. (2019). 20190718-Samhsa-Risk-Protective-Factors.Pdf; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

By keeping the levels of prevention in mind with programming, initiatives can support people who have not yet participated in the behavior, for those who are at risk of or are beginning to engage in the behavior, and for those who have engaged in the behavior and are working to move forward in a different direction.

In summary, viewing gun violence as a public health crisis allows for a multi-sector and multi-level approach as a community.

Proposal Development:

At the May 6th joint meeting of the Children's Trust of Alachua County (CTAC) Board of Directors and the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners, \$250,000 was allocated toward gun violence prevention efforts. Specifically, County staff were directed to work with the City of Gainesville to develop a proposal for the use of the funds in FY24. Soon after, staff were also informed that \$250,000 for FY25 would be allocated for the same purpose.

The Gun Violence Prevention Alliance, comprised of Alachua County, the City of Gainesville and Santa Fe College, and a number of other stakeholders discussed the usage of the funds. Since the May 6th motion, staff have undergone an initiated planning period.

That process included:

- Setting regular meetings to discuss CTAC funding priorities related to gun violence prevention and intervention efforts in both the City and County
- City staff discussions of programmatic and community needs through IMPACT GNV
- Researching violence interruption models, including but not limited to Cure Violence Global
 - County staff have met with representatives from Cure Violence Global on multiple occasions to discuss their model and any additional services they may offer and brought that information back to the team
- Conducting a SWOT analysis through the Gun Violence Prevention Alliance to develop priorities and areas of opportunity that can inform funding opportunities, including CTAC.
- Centering community engagement through the Gun Violence Prevention Alliance and allowing stakeholders and community members the opportunity to provide input on the use of CTAC funding and needs related to building the capacity of local groups
- Bringing in Jaye Athy from the County CAPP Office as a small grants specialist to help advise us with this effort

The planning period resulted in a proposal for both the FY24 and FY25 funding.

At the August 12, 2024 meeting of the Children's Trust of Alachua County, a recommendation was given to roll the \$250,000 of FY24 funding over to FY25 to result in a total funding amount of \$500,000. This recommendation was approved by the Trust.

FY25 Proposal

The goal of this planning period was for City and County staff to develop priorities based on local needs around gun violence. Staff was able to intentionally engage stakeholders, research best practices, and gather community feedback to ensure that this funding represented the needs of the community and help build long-term sustainable efforts for FY25.

Grant Funded Projects

On the July 10th meeting of the Gun Violence Prevention Alliance, community stakeholders were asked for input on how the available funding could be used. The group was in favor of hosting a call for grant-funded projects. These projects would be focused on ongoing programs for youth and their families most impacted by or at highest risk of being impacted by gun violence .

Stakeholders recommended that funded projects focus on:

- County-wide & country-wide partnerships
- Education
- Family engagement
- Free after school/summer programming
- Jobs & opportunities for teens
- Learn through play—eSports, social media, sports
- Learning alternatives
- Mental health
- Proactive vs. reactive initiatives
- Recovery
- Start with young children
- Trauma-informed care
- Incentives for youth that address the problems that occur during down/idle time
- Initiatives with vetted partners
- Gun Violence Youth Forum

The call for projects would be informed using the lessons learned through One Nation One Project GNV, a local arts and wellness initiative working to reduce youth gun violence by addressing associated risk factors. These lessons learned include that to inform not only the intentionality behind youth programming but also the application and proposal review processes.

Stakeholders also discussed the forms of technical assistance that would be helpful for organizations seeking the available funding.

- More grant-writing workshops
- Grant-makers/Funders need to offer ample training and TA/office hours to support those preparing proposals
- Language Barriers
- Simple, straightforward funding applications
- Professional grant writer(s)

- Resources to write grants
- Researcher to find grants
- Connecting the organization to the impacted area

To support the contractual, financial, and deliverable needs of the grant-funded projects, a full-time temporary staff person will be hired. The estimated salary is roughly \$41,000. County staff would oversee the grant-funded proposals with support from Alliance MOU partners.

Strategic Planning

In addition to the call for projects, stakeholders were interested in the Alliance facilitating a strategic planning process within the next 6 months. This would be done via a contract with a third-party entity. At the August 2024 meeting of the Alliance, stakeholders identified the following qualities among others:

- Innovative
- Local
- Community engagement
- Ethical
- Youth-focused
- Recognizing those who are impacted as valuable stakeholders
- Consider partner violence and gun suicide
- Representative of multiple ages and perspectives

Input for a strategic planning request for proposals will continue to be gathered through meetings of the Alliance.

Violence Interruption Program and Support

The proposed funding includes the continuation and expansion of violence interruption and community outreach work. This would be done through a community-based violence interrupter network to mediate conflict and de-escalate tensions in the community as well as facilitate on-the-ground relationship building with communities most impacted by gun violence. Currently, this work exists primarily within City of Gainesville limits. The available funding will allow the current work to continue past its contracted end date of 10/13/24 and extend into the greater Alachua County area.

The current contract includes the below objectives:

- Develop a community network to interrupt the cycle of violence.
- Build relationships with the following entities to reach young people:
 - Schools
 - After-school programs
 - Churches
 - Groups for justice-involved individuals
 - Athletic leagues

- Provide warm hand-offs to local social resources to assist with unmet needs of the individual and family unit.
- Educate youth about the dangers of gun violence, appeal to youth to resist gun violence, and offer methods of resolving conflict without resorting to violence.

The funding includes \$100,000 for contracted violence interruption, \$25,000 for faith leader stipends, and \$25,000 for training and mental health support of the individuals doing this work. IMPACT GNV would oversee the violence interruption services with regular updates to the Alliance.

Youth Steering Committee Facilitation

The Youth Steering Committee started convening in February 2023 as part of One Nation One Project GNV and guided many project components to elevate youth voices. The group has been and will continue to be managed by the Youth Services Division of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs at the City. In August 2024, the committee provided a discussion summary and recommendations to the City on how to solve youth gun violence, with an emphasis on the arts and well-being activities as key components. The Youth Steering Committee will continue to convene and will connect with the Alliance and Impact GNV to continue their work beyond One Nation One Project. The Youth Steering Committee will help to elevate youth voices on important topics. Youth ages 16 to 24 from across Alachua County will continue to guide how we can solve youth gun violence, while also helping us find ways we can help youth in our community be successful.

Funding for the Youth Steering Committee member stipends is provided through an agreement between the City of Gainesville and the National League of Cities. This funding will be for an additional facilitator and some materials and supplies.

Santa Fe College Administrative Assistant to the Alliance

Santa Fe College has hired a part-time administrative position to assist Dr. Brunings with the gun violence work from the college and in the administration of the Gun Violence Prevention Alliance. This position is currently staffed, and funding would cover 20 hours per week, for the duration of the fiscal year, at a total of \$21,500. The position is responsible for setting up meetings, sending out invitations, taking notes and compiling minutes, following up on requests, putting together presentations, gathering proposals for service, among other things.

Technology Hubs in Community Centers

Computer and internet accessibility is a must of modern-day life. Not only do many school-based programs require a computer, but many youth service programs also need devices to ensure access for their students to a variety of resources. This includes completing homework assignments, tutoring, signing up for sports programs, and more. According to the 2024 Alachua County Community Health Assessment, roughly 20% of respondents do not have internet service. The top reasons cited include poor reception/service where they live (8.8%), affordability (5.81%), and lack of access to a personal computer (5.54%).

For these reasons, it is proposed to purchase technology carts with laptops that can be used in community centers or community organization buildings that are in areas with high rates of gun

violence. These technology carts are secure and can to store and charge up to 36 15” laptops. These carts can be used by youth and family programs that have reserved the space and on an individual basis when not reserved for programming. There would be a process of capturing who is using the computers, sign-in and sign-out times. Carts will be intentionally placed in centers where relevant programming already exists, or programming could be developed to best utilize the resource.

The budgeted amount includes the cost of 7 carts (\$2,170 each) and 18 laptops per cart (\$279 each).

FY25 Budget:

Item	Cost	Number	Total
Grant-Funded Projects	\$33,000	6	\$198,000
Grant Manager	\$45,350	N/A	\$45,350
Strategic Planning Consultant	\$30,000	N/A	\$30,000
Violence Interrupter Program and Training	\$150,000	N/A	\$150,000
Additional Facilitator for the Youth Steering Committee	\$4,750	N/A	\$4,750
Santa Fe Administrative Assistant	\$21,500	N/A	\$21,500
Technology Hub Carts	\$7,200	7	\$50,400
Total			\$500,000

Implementation Timeline:

Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Four
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and release RFP for Grant Funded Projects • Hire grant manager • Work with Community Foundation to provide information sessions on grant application process • Contract with Facilitator for Youth Steering Committee • Choose and Contract with Strategic Planning Consultant • Select violence interruption organization and initiate contract • Technology cart sites identified and agreements drafted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and select RFP applications. • Initiate contracts with selected projects. • Begin Strategic Planning Process • Violence Interruption • Tech Carts purchased and established at sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Period for grant funded projects • Ongoing technical assistance and training for grant funded projects • Strategic Planning Process • Violence Interruption • Tech carts implemented at sites • Data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Period for grant funded projects • Ongoing technical assistance and training for grant funded projects • Strategic plan developed • Violence Interruption • Tech Cart sites underway • Data collection and analysis

