Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy
2023-2026

A Building Safer Communities initiative



Niagara Region

A Message from the Action Table

On behalf of the Building Safer Communities Action Table, we are pleased to present Niagara's Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy.

This plan reflects the voices of youth in Niagara and the caring adults who work with them, and highlights what they need to thrive. It focuses on working directly with youth to build their protective factors, with the goal of reducing their vulnerability to involvement in crime.

The Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy attempts to tell the story of youth crime in Niagara, and is comprised of information from several different data sources, such as local youth crime statistics and local youth expertise – including the perspectives of those disproportionately at-risk for experiencing harm, victimization or crime in our community. It highlights areas for targeted investment and points us firmly in the direction of implementing evidence-based best and promising practices in prevention programs.

Ultimately, it represents the commitment of the Niagara Region, along with local youth-serving organizations to work together in support of the needs of youth in Niagara to prevent not only youth involvement in crime, but their victimization. By investing in our young people, we not only support their well-being and resiliency, but can witness greater societal benefits to our community at large.

We wish to thank all the youth and staff that engaged in our community consultations. Their voices have played a central role in informing this strategy and its areas of focus, and we look forward to continuing our collaborative work to support youth well-being and safety.



Adrienne Jugley,
Commissioner
Community Services,
Niagara Region



Dr. Tapo Chimbganda,
Executive Director
Future Black Female

Table of Contents

A Building Safer Communities initiative..... 1

A Message from the Action Table..... 2

Acknowledgements..... 4

Introduction..... 5

Building Safer Communities and
Community Safety and Well-Being..... 6

Victimization, Vulnerability and Violence 7

Measuring Youth Involvement in Crime..... 8

Building Safer Communities Grant Program:
Implementing the Strategy 16

Areas of Focus: Preventing Crime
by Supporting Youth At-Risk..... 17

Monitoring and Evaluating the Strategy..... 28

Conclusion 30

References..... 31

Acknowledgements

Land Acknowledgement

Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The Regional Municipality of Niagara stands with all Indigenous peoples, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

Action Table

We would like to thank Action Table members that have guided the development of Niagara's Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy.

- Banyan Community Services
- Boys and Girls Club Niagara
- Brock University
- Contact Niagara for Children's and Developmental Services
- Community Addiction Services of Niagara
- District School Board of Niagara
- Family and Children's Services Niagara
- Folk Arts Multicultural Centre
- Future Black Female
- John Howard Society of Niagara
- Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- Niagara Catholic District School Board
- Niagara Regional Native Centre
- Niagara Regional Police Service
- Niagara Region Community Services
- Niagara Region Public Health
- Pathstone Mental Health
- RAFT
- TOES Niagara
- Youth Resources Niagara
- YMCA Employment and Immigrant Services
- YWCA Niagara Region

Introduction

Overwhelming evidence attests to the importance of children's well-being in shaping who they are, how they behave and what they do when they grow up. The conditions under which children grow up, and the ways children develop physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively leave deep impressions; child well-being manifests itself in adults' health, job opportunities, family life and relationships.[1]

Gang-involved youth are considered to be some of the main perpetrators and victims of crime and violence, and impose a high burden on society in terms of criminal justice system and other societal costs. For example, the negative outcomes of gang involvement for individuals can include dropping out of school, a lack of employment opportunities or success, and exposure to and involvement in drugs and alcohol use.[2] Importantly, participation in gangs and violence can reduce youths' connections to other prosocial activities, and they may cut ties with family, friends and schools.[3] In order to avert these negative consequences, it is critical to try and prevent at-risk youth from joining gangs, and to intervene in the lives of current youth gang members.

For many gang-involved youth, the common experience of childhood trauma(s) and adverse experiences helps us to understand the degree to which victimization is linked to future criminal involvement. While termed a Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy, this document could equally be understood as setting a path forward to ensuring children and youth at-risk are provided with opportunities to develop critical skills, enhance their well-being, and improve their resiliency – thereby preventing the conditions for which they may fall into crime.

It is widely understood that the most effective method of reducing crime in a community is preventing it from happening in the first place. Crime prevention methods are a cost-saving measure that contributes to the overall wellbeing of all community members, however cannot be accomplished solely through law enforcement.

Niagara's Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy, developed under the guidance of service providers from across the human services system, seeks to identify youth crime trends, understand local needs as identified by at-risk youth themselves and the staff who serve them, and map out opportunities for targeted investment in prevention-based programming using the Building Safer Communities Grant Program.

Building Safer Communities and Community Safety and Well-Being

With a strong focus on upstream approaches, prevention initiatives under the Building Safer Communities program are aligned with Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, 2021-2025.

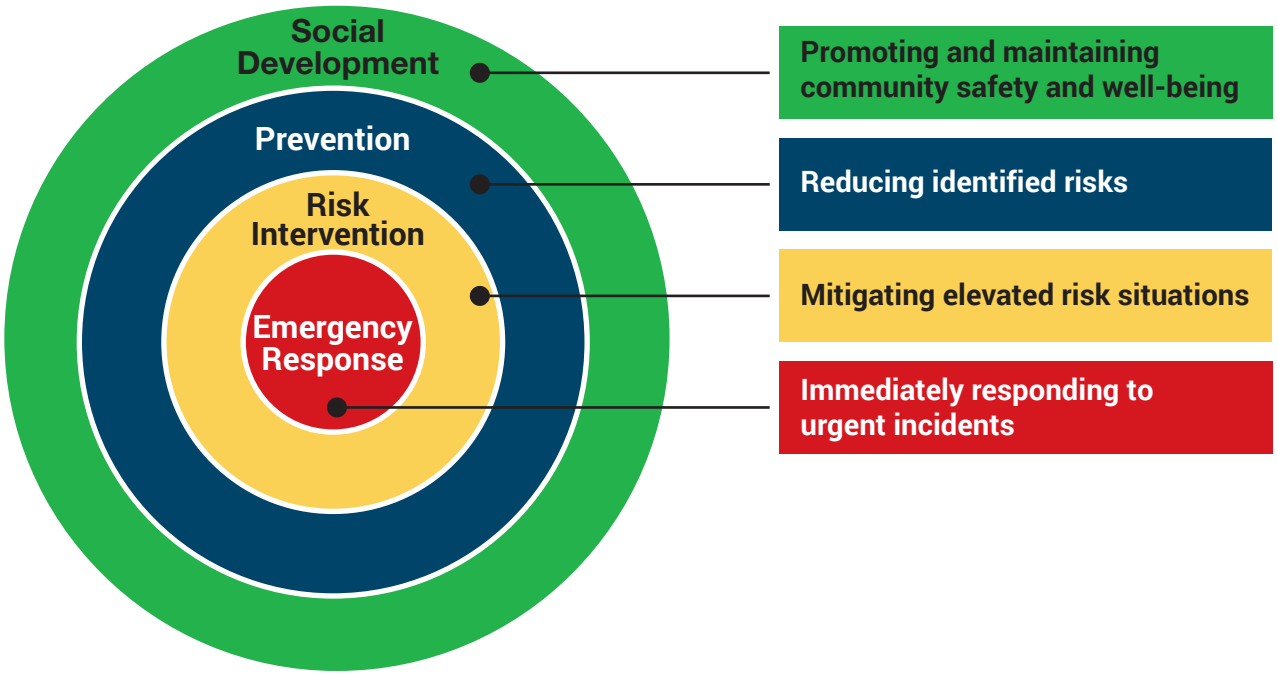
Using a collaborative, multi-sector approach

Community Safety and Well-Being planning involves a recognition that safety and well-being requires cross-sector participation and engagement. Frequently, police or other crisis-driven services are required to respond to situations which could be addressed earlier and more effectively through greater collaboration among sectors (including police, education, health and social services) using prevention-based approaches. The Community Safety and Well-Being planning framework, identified within Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, and local approach brings together community partners in recognizing that everyone has a role to play in making Niagara a safe, inclusive and connected community.

Proactively reducing identified risks

Planning in the area of prevention involves proactively implementing evidence-based situational measures, policies or programs to reduce locally-identified priority risks to community safety and well-being before they result in crime, victimization and/or harm. Through the creation of an Action Table, service providers, community agencies and organizations shared data and information about things like community assets, crime trends, vulnerable youth and places, to identify priority risks within Niagara in order to plan and respond most effectively.

Community Safety And Well-Being Zones Of Intervention[4]



Victimization, Vulnerability and Violence

Many studies have found that exposure to violence is related to an increased likelihood of engaging in criminal activities. While not all victimized youth become involved in serious crime, the relationship between early victimization and juvenile offending is one of the most consistent and robust associations in research.[5] Studies estimate that over 90 per cent of justice-involved youth have experienced at least one trauma, with many experiencing multiple forms of victimization, reporting an average of five different types of trauma or violence exposure in their lifetime. [6789]

The association between trauma and offending is clear: as victimization increases so does the risk for juvenile offending.

The role of Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse childhood experiences are traumatic events, particularly those in early childhood that significantly affect the health and well-being of people. These experiences range from suffering verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse, to being raised in a household where domestic violence, parental separation and alcohol or drug abuse is present.

Research on adverse childhood experiences has demonstrated a correlation between early adversity (e.g., abuse, neglect, household dysfunction, violence in the community, racism, chronic poverty, etc.) and poor outcomes later in life, including outcomes identified to be risk factors for criminal justice involvement (e.g., substance and alcohol abuse, deprivation, poor educational attainment and mental health concerns).[10]

A 2015 Welsh study[11] reported that compared with people with no adverse childhood experiences, those with four or more adverse childhood experiences were:

- 14 times more likely to be a victim of violence in the last 12 months
- 15 times more likely to be a perpetrator of violence in the last 12 months
- 20 times more likely to have been incarcerated in their lives

A trauma-informed approach asks, ‘What happened to you?’ not ‘What is wrong with you?’

Understanding the link between youth involvement in crime, and their own previous exposure to violence or other forms of stress, is critical to the development of effective prevention-based programs. As such, Niagara’s local Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy highlights opportunities to identify and support children and their families at risk of adversity at the earliest stage possible, to promote their resilience and well-being.

Measuring Youth Involvement in Crime

In 2003, Canada adopted the Youth Criminal Justice Act which reoriented the youth justice system to favour extrajudicial measures and extrajudicial sanctions, to support the rehabilitation for young offenders (ages 12-17).[12]

Under the Youth Criminal Justice Act, a variety of consequential measures are applied to young offenders, subject to the seriousness of the offence. This change resulted in a decline in youth incarceration rates as many young people who traditionally would have been charged under the previous Young Offenders Act, were redirected away from the criminal justice system via other rehabilitation measures.[13]

Extrajudicial measures – An informal diversion program which can be offered by police before charging a young person with a crime or offered by the Crown after charges have been laid. This can include warnings, cautions or referrals to community programs.

Extrajudicial sanctions – A formal court diversion program, only to be used if extrajudicial measures are viewed to be insufficient in holding a young person accountable. This can include volunteer work, compensating the victim and attending specialized programs.

260 young persons in 2022 were charged in Niagara under the Youth Criminal Justice Act

13.8% were diverted from the criminal court system by way of extrajudicial measures

Similarly, in 2021, 13.4 per cent of youth charged were referred by Niagara Region Police Services to participate in extrajudicial measures.[14]

Available data related to youth crime relies primarily on criminal charges and convictions. Given the shift away from charges and convictions, data on youth crime does not holistically represent all youth criminal activity. Warnings, such as verbal warnings, that may be issued by police are not easily tracked and reported. Additionally, the Youth Criminal Justice Act restricts the release of certain youth justice information that is protected under the Act.[15]

When examining limitations in the local context, it is important to note that not all the statistics reflect crimes being committed by Niagara residents, but rather demonstrate crimes being committed in Niagara – an important caveat for a tourist destination such as ours. As a community with less than 500,000 residents and a higher proportion of seniors than the provincial average, the number of young people in Niagara and the subsequent number of those being charged is quite small.[16] In communities with small data sets, it can be challenging to report on aggregate level data as the risk of identification can remain high. The following trends are informed by available data on youth crimes which excludes youth criminal activity that has not been formally recorded, or crimes committed by young people over the age of 18 (i.e., adult charges).

Violent Crime

There has been a steady increase in youth criminal cases involving "crimes against persons" in both Niagara and across the province over the past few years (see Figure 1). This group of offences are known as violence crime, and include homicide, attempted murder, assault, robbery, sexual assault, and uttering threats. In 2021, Niagara saw a 7.7 per cent increase in youth criminal cases for violent crime compared to 2020. On average and across Ontario, youth criminal cases for the same offence group only increased by 2.6 per cent. It is important to note that while provincial averages continue to tick upwards, Niagara experienced a minimal (-0.8 per cent) decrease in cases in 2022.[17]

Figure 1: Youth Criminal Cases Involving "Crimes Against Persons", 2019-2022

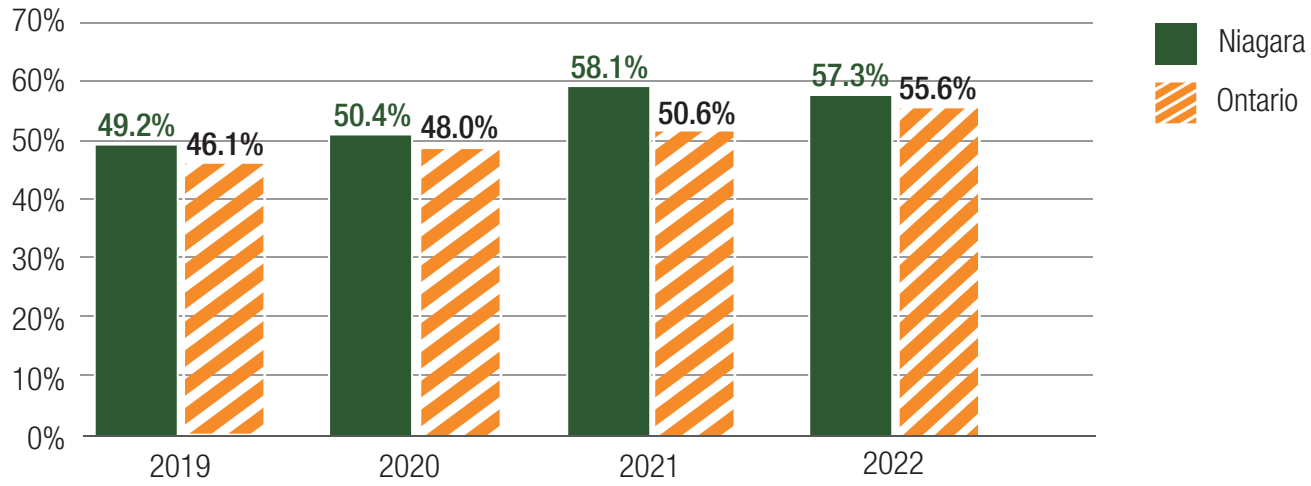


Figure 1: The above chart depicts the percentages of criminal cases brought to the Ontario Provincial Youth Court for both Niagara and Ontario that are crimes against persons. These crimes include homicide, attempted murder, robbery, sexual assault, other sexual offences, major assault, common assault, uttering threats, criminal harassment, and other crimes against persons[18]

In Niagara in 2022, common assault was the most prevalent offence (32.4 per cent), followed by robbery (27.6 per cent) and major assault (18.6 per cent). Across Ontario, common assault (25.7 per cent) and major assault (27 per cent) accounted for approximately half of all violent crime, followed by robbery (17.2 per cent). Overall, youth crimes against persons in both Niagara and Ontario more broadly are slowly increasing and represent over half of all youth criminal cases.[19]

Weapons

The percentage of youth engaging in crimes involving weapons remains very low, representing on average 0.8 per cent of youth cases in Niagara and 2.8 per cent in Ontario (see Figure 2). In 2020, there was a notable increase in local cases involving weapons, whereas the provincial trend showed a slight decrease.[20]

Gang Activity and Organized Crime

In Ontario, most of the youth who identify as being part of a gang tend to be in lower-level street gangs. These gangs, often characterized by their identification with a certain community or territory, seek to gain control over their respective communities to engage in illegal activities and violent crime. In recent years, there has been a shift from strictly urban street gangs to other geographical areas and online platforms. This shift allows for youth to connect with individuals engaging in criminal activity outside of their immediate communities using social media as a platform to recruit, carry out illegal activity and verbally attack their rivals.[22]

Intelligence from Niagara Regional Police Service reveals that the presence of street gang activity in Niagara region is typically transient in nature and originating from outside the region, including the Greater Toronto Area.

Figure 2: Youth Charges Involving Weapons, 2019-2022

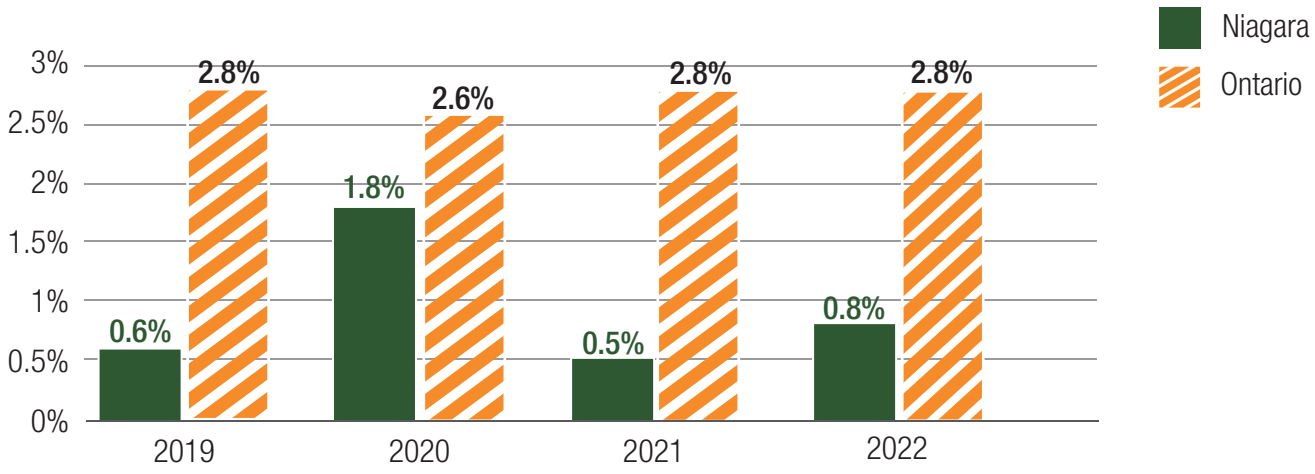


Figure 2: The above chart represents both the Niagara youth cases percentages and the provincial percentages of weapons charges from 2019-2022. Niagara has lower rates across all years with respect to the provincial averages.[21]

In other jurisdictions, gang members may have to respect territorial boundaries or risk violence and/or theft by competing gangs, however these territories do not carry over into our community. Furthermore, gang members may be afforded anonymity outside of their home base due to their transient presence, better avoid local police attention, and have a dependable local client base and infrastructure (e.g., highway networks) which facilitates the sale of drugs and sex.[23]

Street gangs and organized crime groups often have a propensity to violence (either in protection of illicit goods or profits – or through retaliatory violence) and pose public safety concerns. In Niagara and across Ontario, violence committed by illegal firearms has risen over the past five years and includes shootings, drive-by shootings, robberies and serious assaults. From 2018-2022 in Niagara region, there have been approximately 10 shootings that were believed to be gang-related or were committed by offenders who are associated with gangs. There are many more suspected gang-related incidents; however, in those instances the persons of interest, suspects or accused were not identified. From 2020 to 2022, there have been two homicide investigations that were suspected to be associated to individuals with street gangs from outside of Niagara.[24]

In Niagara, there is a well-documented, long history of organized crime, with residents being charged in association with traditional organized crime groups (i.e., Italian Mafia) and outlaw motorcycle gangs (i.e., Hells Angels, Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs). Traditional organized crime groups are formal groups whose members connect back to established criminal networks with national and/or international ties, and have a shared country of origin. They rely on participating in the illegal drug trade, illegal gaming, and money laundering as well as intimidation tactics to gain legitimacy and advance their influence within the private and public sectors. Outlaw motorcycle gangs are known for their involvement in the illegal drug trade, intimidation, prostitution, human trafficking, money laundering, and their propensity for violence.[25]

Local Risk Factors Associated with Organized Crime and/or Gun Violence

1. Close proximity to the Canada-US border
2. A large tourism industry, and prevalence of hotels/motels and strip clubs
3. A high demand for illicit drugs

In Niagara, priority areas of concern involving organized crime include specifically drug trafficking and human trafficking. For example, the severity of crime in the St. Catharines–Niagara Census Metropolitan Area increased by 15 per cent between 2017 and 2018, mostly due to an increase in the trafficking, production and distribution of cannabis and cocaine, and breaking and entering. However, over the past decade (2008 to 2018), the overall severity of crime in St. Catharines–Niagara has declined by 14 per cent, compared with a 15 per cent decline in Ontario and a 17 per cent decline in Canada.[26] Niagara also has one of the higher rates of opioid-related deaths across the province. In 2021, Niagara witnessed increases in 911 calls involving suspected opioid overdoses (1,005), opioid-related emergency department visits (973) and hospitalizations (102) and confirmed opioid deaths (163) – compared to the year before.[27] This was approximately 14 deaths per month in a community of less than 500,000 people. Compared with the average annual rates for 2010 to 2020, several Census Metropolitan Areas, including St. Catharines-Niagara had a rate of human trafficking that was notably higher in 2020 specifically: Thunder Bay (15.9 incidents per 100,000 population), Peterborough (14.7), Halifax (8.5), St. Catharines–Niagara (6.4), among others.[28]

Other Crime

In 2022, "crimes against property" accounted for 18.6 per cent of total youth criminal cases in Niagara (see Figure 3). The most prevalent of these crimes was mischief (40.4 per cent) and theft (29.8 per cent). Other offences in this category include possession of stolen property, break and enter, fraud and other property crimes, such as vandalism. As shown below, in 2022 Niagara has slightly higher rates of youth criminal cases falling into this category when compared to the provincial average. Alternatively, Niagara has a lower percentage of cases related to the administration of justice (e.g., failure to appear, breach of probation, etc.), other criminal code offences (e.g., weapons charges, prostitution, etc.) federal statute offences (e.g., drug possession, trafficking, etc.) and criminal code traffic offences (e.g., impaired driving, etc.) when compared to the provincial average.[29]

Figure 3: Youth Criminal Cases by Offence Group, 2022

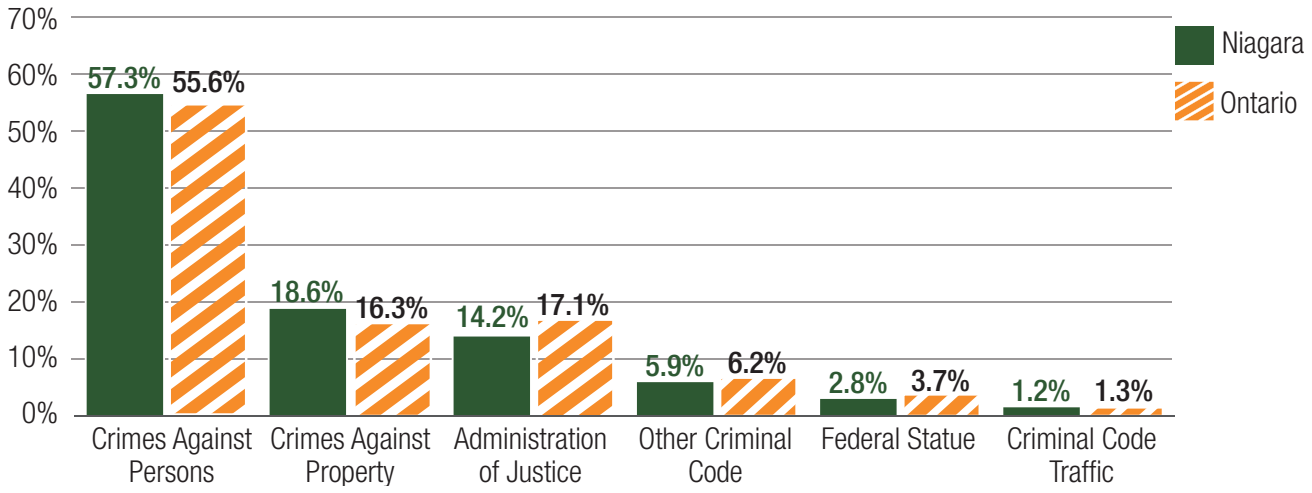


Figure 3: The above chart represents both the Niagara youth cases percentages and the provincial average by offence group in 2022. Niagara has higher rates in both Crimes Against Persons and Crimes Against Property, but lower rates in Administration of Justice and Other Criminal Code offences.[30]

What We Heard: Community Engagement

From June 1, 2023, to July 7, 2023, staff administered surveys (online and paper-based), facilitated focus groups, and conducted semi-structured interviews with staff at youth-serving organizations and youth who may be disproportionately affected by violence or crime, to understand local trends. This resulted in engagement and feedback from:

- 143 at-risk youth attached to local youth-serving organizations
- 96 frontline staff who work directly with at-risk youth, from across 14 organizations

These surveys, focus groups and semi-structured interviews were designed with flexibility to ensure discussions were culturally safe and appropriate, as a guiding principle of engagement was to ensure that youth who are typically underrepresented in research and data collection efforts were prioritized.

Findings from community engagement activities demonstrate that at-risk youth in Niagara have an awareness of what they need to be happy, healthy, and safe. Most commonly, youth identified a need for close interpersonal connections with family and friends. Youth also indicated their desire to live in good health (mental and physical health), participate in meaningful activities, access safe spaces, and be able to adequately meet their basic needs, such as housing, income and food (see Figure 4). Local youth-serving organizations indicated that they are attempting to meet many of these needs by building rapport with youth, and creating safe and welcoming spaces where youth can feel a positive sense of belonging.

Top risk factors for youth in Niagara

1. Substance use
2. Unhealthy relationships, attitudes and behaviours
3. Poor health and well-being

Figure 4: Youth Needs

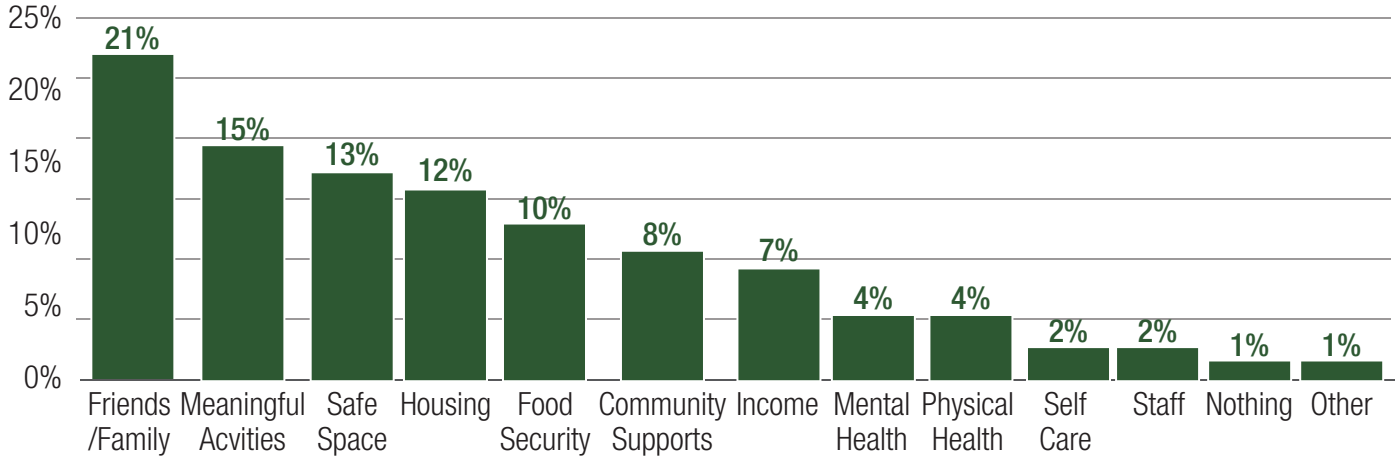


Figure 4: In 2023, 143 youth at-risk living in Niagara were asked in an open-ended survey / focus group question to better understand their self-identified needs related to being happy, healthy and safe. The above results are based on coding their qualitative responses into key themes.

Both youth and staff indicated that substance use was prevalent not only for youth themselves, but also among family members and peer groups. Unhealthy familial and peer influences was also identified as a major risk factor, with staff indicating that youth should be connected to positive relationships to mitigate this risk and build up social protective factors. Lastly, poor health and well-being was a top risk factor, with poverty and poor mental health identified as among the most prevalent issues among youth.

In relation to violence, findings indicate that youth are being exposed; however, this is viewed to be largely physical violence, without the use of weapons and is observed within the family or amongst youth themselves. Where weapons are involved, knives are reported to be the most common. Black and racialized youth indicate that their experiences of hate and discrimination undermined their sense of safety and belonging within Niagara. As such, Black and racialized youth emphasize in particular, the need to cultivate spaces that allows for them to feel comfortable, be represented and feel safe.

Most staff and youth indicate that they are not seeing youth involved in local gang activity but recognize that the youth in Niagara have several risk factors which may make them vulnerable to gang involvement and crime. Therefore, crime prevention programs as opposed to gang intervention programs, should remain our local focus.

Indigenous Perspectives:

Family violence, economic deprivation and poor school performance were some of the risk factors shared by staff serving Indigenous youth, with substance use as the most prevalent at the individual level as well as among their peers and families. It was noted that these risk factors were compounded by the experiences of intergenerational trauma. Intergenerational trauma refers to the adverse life experiences passed down through generations.[31] The effects of colonization, residential schools, the Sixties Scoop (i.e., the removal of Indigenous children from their parents by the child welfare system) and present-day racist ideologies, continue to have a profound impact on Indigenous youth.[32] The ongoing effects of systemic racism highlight the need for culturally safe services for Indigenous youth and their families, which are grounded in traditional ways of knowing, doing and being.

Building Safer Communities Grant Program: Implementing the Strategy

This strategy will be mobilized through the Building Safer Communities Grant Program and subsequent monitoring and evaluation of funded programs. The Building Safer Communities Grant Program will be used to fund community-based prevention initiatives for youth at-risk of gun and gang involvement for a two-year period (Jan. 2024 to Dec. 2025).

Granting enables administrative efficiencies in applying for and evaluating applications, allows for funding to flow quickly to community organizations, involves a simplified application process that eliminates fees incurred by interested organizations, and can support improved relationships between applicants and the Region. The Building Safer Communities Grant Program will be a pilot for the use of granting by Niagara Region.

Community organizations may apply for funds to develop and deliver initiatives which address risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, as outlined under the next section as areas for targeted investment.

Application details and information regarding funded initiatives will be made available on the Community Safety and Well-Being webpage.

Areas of Focus: Preventing Crime by Supporting Youth At-Risk

The following 10 areas of focus were identified through an analysis of community engagement findings, local trends related to risk factors, and research/literature reviews. In total, these areas of focus highlight opportunities for targeted investment to support youth at-risk by improving their skills, well-being, and/or resiliency. Each area highlights how investments in these programs can mitigate risk factors for youth involvement in crime and spotlight a best or promising practice which can be used for consideration for service providers in Niagara. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list, however the programs listed below are examples that can be found in school, family and community-based settings, which have demonstrated value and impact.



1. Programs which increase emotional regulation skills or the social-emotional competency for children and their parents

Children and youth who struggle with acts of aggression are more likely to engage in acts of violence as adults. Similarly, youth without the presence of caring adults modelling positive emotional regulation and secure attachment, are more likely to display aggressive or violent behaviours. Early identification and access to treatment or support is viewed as a best practice for improving the social-emotional competency of young people.[33]

Best Practice Spotlight: SNAP® (Stop Now and Plan)[34]

- **Description:** The SNAP® program is a gender-sensitive cognitive behavioural multi-component family-focused model. SNAP employs a multi-systemic approach, combining interventions that target the child, the family, the school, and the community. These interventions include skills training, training in cognitive problem solving, self-control strategies, family management skills training, and parent training.
- **Target Population:** Children and youth ages 6-19 years old (and their families) who have had police contact or who are experiencing serious behavioural challenges at home, in school or in the community. To be eligible to receive services, youth must also score within clinical levels on the conduct, oppositional and/or externalizing scales as assessed by either standardized measures, adapted checklists or through a clinical assessment.
- **Key Activities:**
  - Children's gender-specific group sessions (12-week duration, offered weekly, 90 minutes each)
  - Parent's group sessions (12-week duration, offered weekly, 90 minutes)
  - Individual mentoring and individualized family counselling
  - School advocacy/teacher support
- **Outcomes:**
  - Decreased aggressive and impulsive behaviours
  - Decreased self-reported anxiety and depression
  - Increased self-regulation
  - Improved parent-child relationships

2. Programs which increase positive attachment to school and improve access to post-secondary education

During adolescence, peers and social attachments become increasingly influential and schools provide opportunities for youth to engage in positive social connections. School attachment (i.e., the relationships with peers and school staff) as well as school commitment (i.e., engagement with tasks associated with school and learning) serve as significant protective factors against violence and other criminal behaviours. In schools, students develop a sense of belonging, well-being and positive development. Alternatively, youth who are disengaged from school or drop out, are significantly more likely to be involved with the criminal justice system.[35]

Best Practice Spotlight: Pathways to Education[36]

- **Description:** A multi-facted program designed to support young people living in low-income neighbourhoods. The program is centered on academic support; community mobilization; counselling and social work; job employment; leadership and youth development; mentoring – tutoring; skills training; and prevention of school absenteeism.
- **Target Population:** Youth ages 12-17 years old living in low-income neighbourhoods with low high school completion rates
- **Key Activities:**
  - Academic support (i.e., tutoring, etc.)
  - Short and long-term financial support
  - Mentoring and social support
  - Collaborative goal setting
- **Outcomes:**
  - Improved high school completion rates
  - Increased engagement of youth in their own career development
  - Improved access to post-secondary education for disadvantaged youth

3. Programs which prevent youth homelessness

The experience of homelessness can make youth highly vulnerable to engaging in criminal activities, fostering negative social connections, and are more likely to experience ongoing homelessness as an adult. Youth who lack stable housing and are often marginalized from access to education and employment, and may resort to relying on activities of criminality as a means of survival.[37] Effective community-school partnerships can help identify young people at risk of homelessness, dropping out, or criminal engagement and ensure that youth and their families receive necessary supports.[38] Strategies which prevent the experience of youth homelessness include strengthening positive relationships with natural supports (i.e., parents and caregivers), which in turn reduces the chances that youth will enter the criminal justice system.[39]

Best Practice Spotlight: Youth Reconnect[40]

- **Description:** Youth Reconnect is a youth-based early intervention program which uses community-school partnerships to assist youth in strengthening their natural supports to family, caring adults, and services to prevent or reduce their risk of homelessness
- **Target Population:** Youth and young adults ages 13-24 years old who are at-risk of homelessness or are experiencing the early stages of homelessness
- **Key Activities:**
  - Flexible and youth-centered case management, including assessment and goal setting
  - Individual and family counselling and mediation
  - Referrals and advocacy with other service providers
- **Outcomes:**[41]
  - Reduced entries into homelessness by supporting youth to return home, when practical and safe
  - Increased school attendance and/or improved employment opportunities
  - Improved positive, viable support system that includes family
  - Improved sense of self and positive self-worth

4. Programs which support the early identification and treatment of mental health concerns for children and youth

Certain diagnoses, including conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, substance use disorder, among others, have demonstrated a correlation with a youth's future likelihood of being involved in the criminal justice system[42]. Similarly, one in four individuals with mental illness are likely to be victims of violence each year. Early identification of mental health concerns and increasing access to appropriate treatment and support is important in preventing criminality – and more importantly – victimization among youth with mental illness.[43]

Promising Practice Spotlight: Intensive Family Support Program[44]

- **Description:** Based on the principle that engaging the entire family is imperative to early identification and intervention of mental illness, Intensive Family Support Program provides intensive therapeutic mental health services for children and their caregivers. Using a team of child and youth practitioners, child and family therapists, and psychologists, a treatment plan is developed in partnership with the family based on the needs of the child and the goals identified by the family.
- **Target Population:** Children ages 0-11 years old and their families
- **Key Activities:**
  - Intensive case management
  - Parenting support
  - Coaching and skill-building
  - Coordinating and advocating for appropriate supports
- **Outcomes:**
  - No information available

5. Programs which provide opportunities for mentoring and connection to positive peers or caring adults

High quality mentoring can promote positive outcomes by addressing a variety of risk factors. Mentoring can provide young people a sense of belonging and can provide guidance, support, and improved self-esteem. Mentors can positively engage youth to prevent criminal involvement or disrupt ongoing participation in criminal activities.[45] Promoting prosocial connections through mentoring is important for youth and has been shown to improve relationships with adults, increase high school graduation rates, enhance self-esteem, and reduce and/or prevent criminality into early adulthood.[46]

Best Practice Spotlight: Mentoring for Change. Mentoring for Good[47]

- **Description:** A community-based mentoring program that helps youth build protective factors to reduce their risk of engaging in violence though relationships with positive caring adults and enhancing coping skills.
- **Target Population:** Children and youth ages 10-18 years old who are at-risk of involvement in the criminal justice system
- **Key Activities:**
  - One on one mentoring
  - Social-recreational activities
  - Emotional support
  - Advocacy and referrals
  - Positive behaviour modelling
- **Outcomes:**
  - Decreased aggressive behaviour and violence
  - Decreased social alienation, hopelessness, and depressive symptoms among youth
  - Increased youth confidence and participation in pro-social activities

6. Programs which develop youth conflict resolution skills and/or enable alternative dispute resolution

Strong conflict resolution skills are protective factors for both violence and criminality. Conflict resolution is a life skill that starts to form at an early age and is tested throughout adolescence and adulthood. A young person's approach to conflict often mirrors their environment, therefore, conflict resolution and violence prevention go hand and hand, as violence can sometimes be a by-product of social conflict. Programs that support the development of positive conflict resolution skills including increasing communication skills to prevent the likelihood that disagreements are handled using aggression.[48]

Best Practice Spotlight: School-Based Restorative Justice Programs[49]

- **Description:** School-based restorative justice programs aim to address violence, bullying and conflict in schools by providing an opportunity for those harmed, and those who take responsibility for the harm, to communicate about and address their needs in the aftermath of an incident. Such programs assist students in addressing conflict in healthy ways, establish leadership skills and foster positive relationships.
- **Target Population:** Children and youth ages 7-18 years old who have harmed another person in school
- **Key Activities:**
  - Case conferences, circles or dialogues guided by trained facilitators provide an opportunity for those that have caused harm and those impacted by harm to communicate and address their related needs
  - Programming and workshops
  - Referrals to community resources
- **Outcome Evaluation[50]:**
  - Reduced use of out-of-school suspension
  - Strengthened social and emotional competencies
  - Reduced gender and racial disparities in discipline
  - Increased access to equitable and supportive environments for students from marginalized groups

7. Programs which connect Indigenous youth and their families with traditional healing and cultural activities

Indigenous people are overrepresented among victims of violence and violent crime in Canada. Approximately 41 per cent of Indigenous people experienced violence by an adult before the age of 15, compared to 25 per cent of non-Indigenous individuals.[51] Similarly Indigenous youth continue to be overrepresented in the criminal justice system. In 2017-2018, Indigenous youth made up 43 per cent of admissions to custody facilities across Canada, while only representing 8 per cent of the overall youth population.[52] A positive connection to culture, traditions and customs can create a sense of belonging, purpose and self worth, and can act as a protective factor for crime and gang involvement.[53] In order for healing to occur, connections to family and community can support youth so that they feel safe, stable and secure.[54]

Best Practice Spotlight: Project Venture[55]

- **Description:** An outdoor youth development program that is aimed to prevent substance abuse among Indigenous youth. The program combines the classroom and outdoor settings to provide youth with a positive environment to embrace their cultural values and build on competencies and life skills.
- **Target Population:** Indigenous children and youth ages 10-17 years old who have come into contact with the criminal justice system
- **Key Activities:**
  - Classroom-based, team-building activities (20 to 25 sessions, 60 minutes each, offered throughout school year)
  - Outdoor activities (weekly after-school and weekends)
  - Adventure camps and treks with Elders and knowledge keepers (3 to 10 day trips, summer)
  - Community-oriented projects – such as working with Elders or creating art projects for the community to enjoy (4 projects per year, 150 hours total)
- **Outcome Evaluation:**
  - Increased positive self-concept, effective social and communication skills, a community service ethic, and decision-making and problem-solving skills
  - Increased youth resiliency to refrain from substance use
  - Decreased other challenging behaviours (such as violence and other criminal activity)

8. Programs which provide substance use / addiction treatment for youth

Early substance use puts young people at risk for harm to their physical and mental health, disengagement from school, isolation, and more problematic long-term substance use issues.[56] Early substance use is among the top risk factors for one's involvement in the criminal justice system across their life course, as criminal activity can become the means to support use.[57] Youth who develop substance use concerns often report inadequate access to mental health and substance use treatment and services. When services are available, they often are coupled with long waitlists and other access barriers, such as lack of transportation.[58]

Promising Practice Spotlight: Youth Addiction and Concurrent Disorder Service[59]

- **Description:** Working from a harm reduction model, staff work with young people to create individualized treatment plans based on comprehensive assessments, focused on identifying treatment needs for both substance use and mental health
- **Target Population:** Youth ages 14-24 years old who have substance use challenges/concerns, with or without concurrent mental health concerns, and their families
- **Key Activities:**
  - Assessment
  - Individual treatment
  - Group sessions
  - Psychiatric consultation and follow-up
  - Family support and education
- **Outcome Evaluation:**
  - No information available

9. Programs which intervene in or prevent youth involvement in human trafficking

As of 2020, 96 per cent of human trafficking cases in Canada involve young women and girls.[60] The average age of recruitment into sex trafficking is 13 years old and two thirds of police-reported human trafficking cases in Canada occurring in Ontario.[61] Extensive evidence suggests that children in the foster care system are overwhelmingly at greater risk of being trafficked due to their lack of a stable living situation, physical separation from family and friends, as well as emotional vulnerability. A recent study resulting from a partnership between the York Regional Police and York Region Children's Aid Society noted that 23 per cent (52 youth) of the 225 survivors of sex trafficking were child welfare involved youth.[62] Providing known at-risk populations, such as girls and/or youth in care, with the knowledge and skills to combat risks associated with trafficking and supporting their development of protective factors (including stable housing, enhancing family supports, etc.) will decrease their likelihood of victimization.[63]

Promising Practice Spotlight: Specialized Youth in Transition Worker[64]

- **Description:** Specialized case workers help prevent vulnerable youth who are transitioning out of the care of family and children's services from being trafficked
- **Target Population:** Youth and young adults ages 16-24 years old that are transitioning out of care
- **Key Activities:**
  - One on one case management
  - Education
  - Community referrals
  - Safety planning
  - Harm reduction strategies
- **Outcome Evaluation:**
  - No information available

10. Programs which support Black and racialized youth with a positive sense of community belonging

The experience of Black youth with the criminal justice system is heavily informed by anti-Black racism, poverty and the absence of adequate services. Among racialized newcomer youth, additional disadvantages include language barriers, cultural exclusion, anti-settlement sentiment and xenophobia, which further limits youth well-being and ability to form a positive sense of community belonging.[65] In the absence of positive, healthy connections to community, youth may look to form negative associations with others to meet this need. Creating welcoming spaces, free from discrimination or hate, is critical to ensuring Black and racialized youth are safe and have opportunities to thrive.[66]

Promising Practice Spotlight: Participating in Arts, Sports, and Society (P.A.S.S.) Program[67]

- **Description:** P.A.S.S. seeks to introduce racialized communities, including newcomers, to new sports, promote the benefits of participating in sports and physical activities, connect them to available resources, and develop collective strategies to create a more inclusive environment. The overarching goal is to address the barriers that prevent racialized and newcomer youth from accessing social recreational activities.
- T**arget Population:** Racialized and newcomer children, youth and families
- **Key Activities:**
  - Information sessions on sport and recreation opportunities
  - Support to access financial assistance programs for low-income families
  - Empower youth to participate in sports as a means of integrating into society and feeling a sense of belonging
  - Advocacy and awareness of racial discrimination and other barriers faced by newcomers in sports
- **Outcome Evaluation:**
  - Improved communication and team-building skills
  - Increased youth self confidence
  - Improved youth's sense of belonging
  - Improved education related to the physical and mental benefits of exercise

Monitoring and Evaluating the Strategy

The Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy is a community-based, collaborative effort to prevent gun and gang violence in Niagara. As such, collaboration with youth-serving organizations and recipients of Building Safer Communities Grant funding, will be central to data monitoring and evaluation efforts, and are key to understanding the relationship between funded activities and their effects on reducing youth involvement in criminal activity in Niagara.

Visualizing relationships through a logic model

Working alongside community partners, a logic model will be developed to provide a graphic depiction or road map that presents the shared relationships among the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for funded initiatives under the Building Safer Communities Grant Program.[68] The logic model will include:

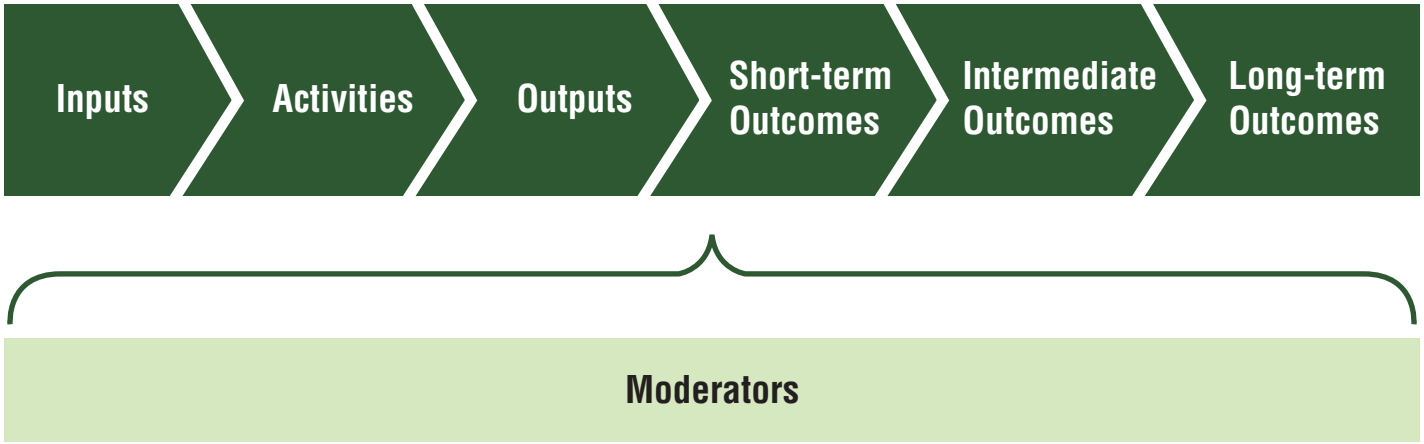
- **Inputs:** The resources needed to implement the activities, such as Building Safer Communities funding
- **Activities:** What the program and its staff do with those resources, such as launch a program for at-risk youth
- **Outputs:** Tangible products, capacities, or deliverables that result from the activities, such as the number of at-risk youth recruited to participate in a prevention program
- **Outcomes:** Changes that occur in people or conditions because of the activities and outputs, such as positive changes in awareness, skills, attitudes and motivations among at-risk youth
- **Impacts:** [Sometimes] The most distal/long-term outcomes, such as fewer young people being charged with criminal offences involving violent crime in Niagara
- **Moderators:** Contextual factors that are out of control of the program but may help or hinder achievement of the outcomes

Monitoring and evaluation of the strategy will likely highlight the need for more meaningful data about youth and identify areas where current data is lacking. The limits in accessing race-based and sociodemographic data uncovered through the development of this strategy, points to the need to dig deeper into the experiences of marginalized youth - including Indigenous youth, Black and racialized youth, newcomer youth, and girls / young women through qualitative data collection.

Other tools

The relationship between implementation and outcomes has consistently been documented in the literature. Staff will work with funded agencies to monitor the implementation and fidelity to evidence-based program models to support continuous quality improvement efforts.[69]

Logic Model


Inputs
Activities
Outputs
Short-term Outcomes
Intermediate Outcomes
Long-term Outcomes
Moderators

Conclusion

Niagara's Gun and Gang Prevention Strategy, rooted in the Community Safety and Well-Being planning framework, provides a clear path to working alongside system partners to enhance safety and well-being for vulnerable youth living in Niagara.

As we move from planning to implementation and evaluation, and over the course of the three-year plan, we are committed to continuing to seek input and participation from community partners, including populations who are disproportionately at risk of experiencing harm, crime or victimization.

The Action Table recognizes the community members who contributed feedback, and shared their insights, stories, and experiences to inform this strategy. It takes multi-sector partnerships and collective efforts to ensure the children and youth of Niagara are safe and well, and through this collaborative strategy, much can be done to provide opportunities for youth most in need.

References

1 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). Measuring What Matters for Child Well-being and Policies, OECD Publishing, Paris, **dx.doi.org/10.1787/e82fded1-en.**

2 Public Safety Canada. (2017). Youth Gangs in Canada: A Review of Current Topics and Issues. **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/2017-r001/index-en.aspx**

3 Pyrooz, D. C., Sweeten, G., and Piquero, A. R. (2013). Continuity and change in gang membership and gang embeddedness. Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 50(2), 239–271. **doi.org/10.1177/0022427811434830**

4 Ministry of the Solicitor General. (2021). Community Safety and Well-being Planning Framework. **ontario.ca/document/community-safety-and-well-being-planning-framework-booklet-3-shared-commitment-ontario/section-2-community-safety-and-well-being-planning**

5 Jackson, C. L., Hanson, R. F., Amstadter, A. B., Saunders, B. E., and Kilpatrick, D. G. (2012). The longitudinal relation between peer violent victimization and delinquency: Results from a national representative sample of US adolescents. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28(8), 1596-1616.

6 Dierkhising, C. B., Ko, S. J., Woods-Jaeger, B., Briggs, E. C., Lee, R., and Pynoos, R. S. (2013). Trauma histories among justice

7 Rosenberg, H. J., Vance, J. E., Rosenberg, S. D., Wolford, G. L., Ashley, S. W., and Howard, M. L. (2014). Trauma exposure, psychiatric disorders, and resiliency in juvenile-justice-involved youth. Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 6(4), 430-437.

8 Ford, J. D., Grasso, D. J., Hawke, J., and Chapman, J. F. (2013). Poly-victimization among juvenile justice-involved youths. Child Abuse and Neglect, 37(10), 788-800.

9 Abram, K. M., Teplin, L. A., Charles, D. R., Longworth, S. L., McClelland, G. M., and Dulcan, M. K. (2004). Posttraumatic stress disorder and trauma in youth in juvenile detention. Archives of General Psychiatry, 61(4), 403-410.

10 Harvard University – Center on the Developing Child. Adverse Childhood Experiences and Toxic Stress: Frequently Asked Questions. **developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/Adverse Childhood Experiences s-and-toxic-stress-frequently-asked-questions/**

11 Public Health Wales. (2015). Adverse Childhood Experiences and their impact on health-harming behaviours in the Welsh adult population. **phw.nhs.wales/files/aces/aces-and-their-impact-on-health-harming-behaviours-in-the-welsh-adult-population-pdf/**

12 Government of Canada. (2021). The Youth Criminal Justice Act Summary and Background. **justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/yj-jj/tools-outils/back-hist.html**

13 Statistics Canada. (2020). Adult and youth correctional statistics in Canada, 2018/2019. **www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00016-eng.htm**

14 Niagara Regional Police Service. (2023). Annual Report – Youth Crime – January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. **niagarapolice.ca**

15 Harvard University – Center on the Developing Child. Adverse Childhood Experiences and Toxic Stress: Frequently Asked Questions. **developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/aces-and-toxic-stress-frequently-asked-questions/**

16 Statistics Canada. (2022). Focus On Geography Series, 2021 Census Population: Niagara, Regional municipality. **www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/fogs-spg/page.cfm?lang=E&topic=1&dguid=2021S0503535**

17 Ontario Court of Justice. (2022), Offence Based Statistics: Youth Criminal Cases. **ontariocourts.ca/ocj/statistics/**

18 Ontario Court of Justice. (2022), Offence Based Statistics: Youth Criminal Cases. **ontariocourts.ca/ocj/statistics/**

19 Ontario Court of Justice. (2022), Offence Based Statistics: Youth Criminal Cases. **ontariocourts.ca/ocj/statistics/**

20 Ontario Court of Justice. (2022), Offence Based Statistics: Youth Criminal Cases. **ontariocourts.ca/ocj/statistics/**

21 Ontario Court of Justice. (2022), Offence Based Statistics: Youth Criminal Cases. **ontariocourts.ca/ocj/statistics/**

22 Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. (2019). Bringing Organized Crime Out of the Shadows. **www.oacp.ca/en/current-issues/resource-documents.aspx**

23 Niagara Regional Police Service, 2023.

24 Niagara Regional Police Service, 2023.

25 Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. (2019). Bringing Organized Crime Out of the Shadows. **oacp.ca/en/current-issues/resource-documents.aspx**

26 Statistics Canada. (2023). Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey, Aggregate Database. Safe Cities profile series: Key indicators by census metropolitan area. **www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00001/st_catharines-niagara-eng.htm**

27 Niagara Region Public Health (2023). Opioid Usage – Statistics in Niagara. Retrieved from: **niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/alc-sub-abuse/drugs/opioids.aspx#topic4**

28 Statistics Canada. (2023). Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey. Police-reported incidents of human trafficking, by statute and census metropolitan area, 2010 to 2020. **www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00010/tbl/tbl02-eng.htm**

29 Ontario Court of Justice. (2022), Offence Based Statistics: Youth Criminal Cases. **ontariocourts.ca/ocj/statistics/**

30 Ontario Court of Justice. (2022), Offence Based Statistics: Youth Criminal Cases. **ontariocourts.ca/ocj/statistics/**

31 Gaywsh, R., and Mordoch, E. (2018). Situating intergenerational trauma in the educational journey. in education, 24(2), 3-23.

32 Allan, B., and Smylie, J. (2015). First peoples, second class treatment. **wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/**

uploads/2015/02/Summary-First-Peoples-Second-Class-Treatment-Final.pdf

33 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. (2007). Aggressive behaviour in children and youth: When is it something to be concerned about? **camh.ca/en/health-info/guides-and-publications/aggressive-behaviour-in-children-and-youth#:~:text=Research%20shows%20us%20that%20children%20with%20serious%20aggression,more%20likely%20to%20engage%20in%20acts%20of%20violence.**

34 Public Safety Canada. (2021). National Crime Prevention Strategy, Crime Prevention Inventory **ublicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/nvntr/index-en.aspx?txt=SNAPandSORT=TitleandBY=ASC**.

35 Mihić, J., Skinner, M., Novak, M., Ferić, M., & Kranželić, V. (2022). The importance of family and school protective factors in preventing the risk behaviors of youth. International journal of environmental research and public health, 19(3), 1630.

36 Public Safety Canada. (2021). National Crime Prevention Strategy, Crime Prevention Inventory. **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/nvntr/dtls-en.aspx?i=10059**

37 Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. (2021).Homeless Hub: Street youth are among the most victimized population in Canada. **homelesshub.ca/resource/street-youth-are-among-most-victimized-population-canada#:~:text=While%2025%25%20of%20Canadians%20are%20victims%20of%20crime,women%20seem%20to%20be%20particularly%20vulnerable%20to%20crime.**

38 Gaetz, S. and Dej, E. (2017). A New Direction: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. **homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/COHPreventionFramework_1.pdf**Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. (2021). Homeless Hub: Street youth are among the most victimized population in Canada. **homelesshub.ca/resource/street-youth-are-among-most-victimized-population-canada**

39 Public Safety Canada (2022). Youth gang involvement: What are the risk factors? **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/yth-gng-nvlvmnt/index-en.aspx**

40 Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. (2020). Homeless Hub: Youth Reconnect Program Guide. **homelesshub.ca/youthreconnect**

41 Australian Government – Department of Social Services. (2023). Reconnect Program Operational Guidelines. **dss.gov.au/families-and-children/programmes-services/reconnect/reconnect-operational-guidelines/reconnect-operational-guidelines**

42 Public Safety Canada (2022). Crime Prevention – Research Highlights 2017-H01-CP – Youth Mental Health, Mental Illness and Crime. **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/2017-h01-cp/index-en.aspx**

43 Canadian Mental Health Association. (2011). Violence and Mental Health: Unpacking a Complex Issue. **ontario.cmha.ca/documents/violence-and-mental-health-unpacking-a-complex-issue**

/44 Child Development Institute. (2023). Intensive Family Support Program. **childdevelop.ca/programs/early-intervention-services/child-and-family-programs**

45 Crime Prevention Ottawa. (2014). Effective Youth Mentoring: Best Practices. **crimepreventionottawa.ca/library/**

46 U.S. Government - youth.gov. Benefits of Mentoring for Young People. **youth.gov/youth-topics/mentoring/benefits-mentoring-young-people#:~:text=Enhanced%20self%2Desteem%20and%20self,Improved%20interpersonal%20skills**

47 Public Safety Canada, (2021). Mentoring for Change. Mentoring for Good. **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/nvntr/dtls-en.aspx?i=10177**

48 Foster, D. A., Krenz, V., Pogoloff, D. D., Callahan, D. M., and Krenz, E. (2003). Three-year longitudinal study on reduction of bullying in a rural, multicultural elementary school using the conflict resolution training program. Persistently Safe Schools: The National Conference of the Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence.

49 Public Safety Canada. (2021). School-Based Restorative Justice Programs. **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/nvntr/dtls-en.aspx?i=10204**

50 Gregory, A., and Evans, K. R. (2020). The Starts and Stumbles of Restorative Justice in Education: Where Do We Go from Here?. National Education Policy Center. **nepc.colorado.edu/publication/restorative-justice**

51 Statistics Canada. (2022). Criminal victimization of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in Canada, 2018-2020. **www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220719/dq220719c-eng.htm**

52 Government of Canada. (2019). Indigenous overrepresentation in the criminal justice system. **justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/oip-cjs/p3.html**.

53 Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. (2019). Bringing Organized Crime Out of the Shadows. **oacp.ca/en/current-issues/resource-documents.aspx**

54 Chase, Y. E., and Ullrich, J. S. (2022). A connectedness framework: Breaking the cycle of child removal for Black and Indigenous children. International Journal on Child Maltreatment: Research, Policy and Practice, 5(1), 181-195.

55 Public Safety Canada (2021, Nov 29). Project Venture. Retrieved from **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/nvntr/dtls-en.aspx?i=10179**.

56 Canadian Mental Health Association. (2023). Understanding and finding help for substance use and addictions. **ontario.cmha.ca/documents/understanding-and-finding-help-for-substance-use-and-addictions/**

57 Canadian Centre for Addictions. (2019). Addiction Among Youth: What Is Happening in Canadian Classrooms. **canadiancentreforaddictions.org/addiction-youth-canadian-classrooms/**

58 Ali, F., Russell, C., Nafeh, F., Chaufan, C., Imtiaz, S., Rehm, J. and Elton-Marshall, T. (2022). Youth substance use service provider's perspectives on use and service access in ontario: time to reframe the discourse. Substance abuse treatment, prevention, and policy, 17(1), 9.

59 Centre for Addictions and Mental Health. (2023). Youth Addictions and Concurrent Disorders Service. **hrsoft.camhx.ca/uat/**

60 Public Safety Canada. (2023). About Human Trafficking. **publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/hmn-trffckng/abt-hmn-trffckng-en.aspx**

61 Government of Ontario. (2020). Ontario's anti-human trafficking strategy 2020-2025. **ontario.ca/page/ontarios-anti-human-trafficking-strategy-2020-2025#protecting**

62 Baird, K., McDonald, K. P., and Connolly, J. (2020). Sex trafficking of women and girls in a southern Ontario region: Police file review exploring victim characteristics, trafficking experiences, and the intersection with child welfare. Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science / Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement, 52(1), 8–17. **doi.org/10.1037/cbs0000151**

63 Government of Ontario. (2020). Ontario's anti-human trafficking strategy 2020-2025. **ontario.ca/page/ontarios-anti-human-trafficking-strategy-2020-2025#protecting**

64 Government of Ontario (2020). Anti-human trafficking services and supports. **ontario.ca/page/anti-human-trafficking-services-and-supports**

65 Government of Canada. (2022). Black Youth and the Criminal Justice System: Summary Report of an Engagement Process in Canada. **justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/jr/bycjs-yncjs/engagement-resultat.html**

66 The City of Toronto. (2021). The Impact of Community Violence Exposure on Newcomer Youth. **toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/9737-Newcomers-ToolkitV3.pdf**

67 Action for Healthy Communities. (2022). P.A.S.S. (Participating in Arts, Sports and Society) Program. **a4hc.ca/p-a-s-s-program/#1669765712266-6b717a8c-8003**

68 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Office of Policy, Performance, and Evaluation. (2018). Logic Models. **cdc.gov/evaluation/logicmodels/index.htm#print**

69 Massetti, G., Holland, K., and Gorman-Smith, D. Implementation Measurement for Evidence-Based Violence Prevention Programs in Communities. Journal of Community Health, 41(4): 881-94. **DOI: 10.1007/s10900-016-0156-z**

Niagara Region

niagararegion.ca/projects/community-safety-well-being



August 2023