



CITY OF MANCHESTER HEALTH DEPARTMENT MONTHLY BULLETIN – SEPTEMBER 2011

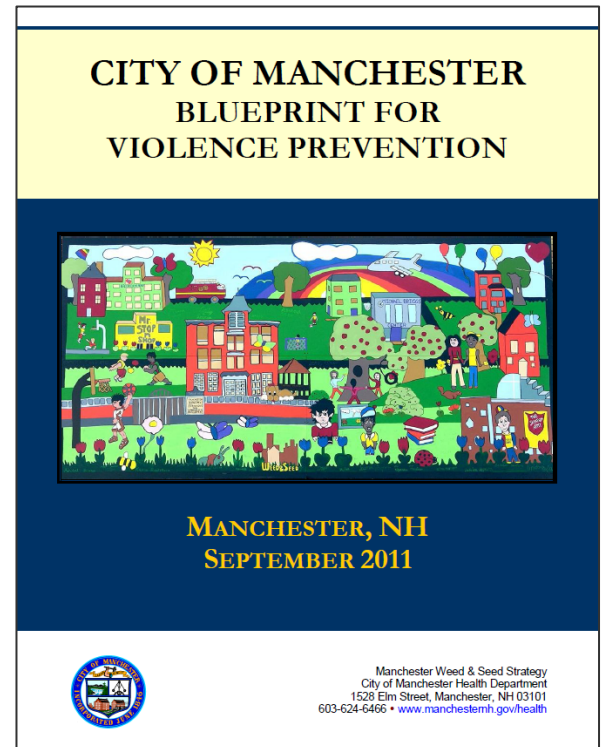


City of Manchester Blueprint for Violence Prevention

Violence is a community-wide responsibility. Despite a common misconception that violence is strictly a malady of a community's most disadvantaged neighborhoods, violence permeates the entire community affecting residents of all ages in personal, physical, emotional, psychological, and/or financial ways. In addition, violence has many forms, such as domestic and sexual violence, child maltreatment, elder abuse and neglect, bullying and cyberbullying, suicide, gang violence, and robbery. Furthermore, the perception of safety, as determined by the physical and social environment of a neighborhood, plays a key role in defining how safe or unsafe residents feel within their community. In other words, it is possible to have a neighborhood with relatively low crime rates, but still have the residents not feel safe or connected to their neighborhood.

Addressing violence within a community requires a better understanding of the key risk and resilience factors for violence prevention. Violence prevention is a comprehensive and multi-faceted effort to address the complex and multiple risk factors associated with violence including, but not limited to, poverty, unemployment, discrimination, substance abuse, educational failure, fragmented families, domestic violence, internalized shame, felt powerlessness, and a lack of social connectivity. To truly prevent violence, there must be a united and comprehensive effort aimed at reducing these primary risk factors while enhancing resilience factors, such as improving the physical environment, increasing social capital, and creating meaningful opportunities for community engagement.

As a result, the City of Manchester Health Department and the Manchester Weed & Seed Strategy have just released *"The City of Manchester's Blueprint for Violence Prevention"*. This report is the culmination of a ten-year local initiative to "weed out" crime, drug abuse and gang activity in designated high-crime neighborhoods while "seeding in" community involvement and needed services. In April of 2010, the Manchester Weed & Seed Strategy convened a Community Meeting for Violence Prevention to provide a forum for facilitated brainstorming and "outside of the box" thinking around community responsibility for preventing violence and increasing quality of life for all Manchester residents. More than 100 community members and organizations have contributed to the *Blueprint's* content, all of which are listed inside the front cover on the Acknowledgements page. The *Manchester Blueprint for Violence Prevention* is written for area residents and leaders who believe in the vision of Manchester as "a community which has clean, safe and crime-free neighborhoods for all by encouraging mutual respect and consideration for others, promoting education attainment, and fostering opportunities for community engagement".



MISSION STATEMENT

To improve the health of individuals, families, and the community through disease prevention, health promotion, and protection from environmental threats.

The *Manchester Blueprint for Violence Prevention* is a set of comprehensive recommendations to create a safer, more resident-driven and involved community. The *Blueprint* is a framework to identify the range of roles and partnerships in which key stakeholders can contribute, and the model programs and local promising practices that can prevent violence with the greatest impact. Given the complexity of issues, policies, and systems that promote or prevent violence, success requires an action plan that coordinates, supports, and strengthens a range of efforts. Since the cost of delay is too high in terms of risk, pain, suffering, and premature death, its focus is to address problems before violence occurs. This is known as primary prevention. Moreover, the *Blueprint* emphasizes community-wide or “environmental” outcomes and addresses all forms of violence, spanning across all ages, sectors of community and neighborhoods.

Included in the report are:

- Definitions for violence, violence prevention, risk and resilience factors
- Chapters for indicators of violence in the community including primary, secondary, tertiary victimization and perception of neighborhood safety
- A description of how the *Manchester Blueprint for Violence Prevention* was developed
- Recommendations for educators, youth-serving organizations, businesses, worksites, health care and social service providers, residents, neighborhood improvement efforts, government officials and policy makers.
- Next steps to realizing the vision of a violence-free community

As with “Believe in a Healthy Community: Greater Manchester Area Community Needs Assessment”, the *Manchester Blueprint for Violence Prevention* is not an endpoint, but a beginning. We welcome your suggestions and participation.

HOW YOU CAN HELP TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN THE CITY OF MANCHESTER:

- To learn more about Manchester's Weed & Seed Strategy, please visit:

<http://www.manchesternh.gov/website/Departments/Health/Services/NeighborhoodHealth/tabid/748/Default.aspx>

- To access the *Blueprint*, please visit:

<http://www.manchesternh.gov/website/Departments/Health/Services/NeighborhoodHealth/WhatsNew/tabid/3154/Default.aspx>

- For questions regarding the *Blueprint's* content, please contact:

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website at <http://www.manchesternh.gov/health>, or call 624-6466