



City of Seattle
Mike McGinn, Mayor

BRIEFING MEMO

Date: April 16, 2010
To: Mayor Mike McGinn
From: Seattle Youth Commission
Subject: Youth Violence Prevention

Briefing Objective: Prevention of youth violence through a Young Father's Coalition

Issue Statement

We have worked closely with the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative and found that adding a Young Father's Coalition would be most effective way to prevent youth violence. Males are twice as more likely to be violent than females and generally lack involvement in a child's life. Youth violence usually starts in the household, so creating a program that teaches fathers to be a good role model will set a good example for their children. Encouraging fathers to take part in their child's life will also help to strengthen the family.

Background

Youth violence has been an ongoing problem for years. Youth violence affects everyone, not just a specific race or religion. Various findings show:

- In 2005, the Student Peace Alliance recorded 5,686 youth in the United States between the ages of 10 – 24 were murdered.
- Based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS), boys experience over twice as many violent incidents than girls.

To lower the number of deaths among youth, we found that the root cause of youth violence started in the household.

- According to the Family First Aid Organization, leading causes of youth violence begin with lack of parental involvement, low emotional connection between parent and child, poor functioning of the family, and lack of financial stability.

Teens most prone to violence not only receive lack of support from their parents, but also their teachers, coaches, mentors, and peers. **Therefore we feel that in order to prevent this problem it is imperative to strengthen families.**

Outreach

Our outreach has come from two sources:

- Five Youth Community Meetings held in Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Central Seattle and Ballard
 - In each of these meetings, the issue of youth/gang violence was brought up
 - Youth reached the consensus that **early childhood life has a profound impact on child development, and consequently, their future actions**
- Interviews were sent out to four major players in the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (SYVPI): Mariko Lockhart, Jeron Gates, Nicole Franklin and Sue Goodwin.
 - These interviews revealed that the next step that needs to be taken for the upcoming year is to **add the component of strengthening the family and connecting parents and children**

Proposal

After working closely with the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, we have found that it would be most beneficial to add a component to the initiative rather than trying to re-create a program already in place. This new program, called the Young Father's Coalition would serve young fathers between the ages of 15 - 25 or any father figure in areas of Seattle most prone to violence. Fathers would come together as a group and meet every other week or drop in as they please, with a mentor to help strengthen their relationship with their child and learn about their part in preventing youth violence.

I. Goals

- a. End the cycle of violence and poor leadership by providing an environment where young father's can learn the importance of being active in a child's life.
- b. Serve families of youth placed at risk and help strengthen the connection between parents and teens
- c. Create a comfortable atmosphere where fathers and father figures can bond, talk openly, celebrate the role they play and learn from each other
- d. Increase male involvement. Mothers are generally more involved in a child's life; but by teaching fathers to be a role model, we are increasing their level of involvement and creating a support system for their children as they mature.

II. Recommended Steps for Implementation:

a. Outreach

- i. Formalize the Young Father's Coalition as a part of the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. By doing so, the program will be further promoted
- ii. Partnering with Parks and Recreation, various church groups, programs, and councils that believe in supporting fathers and strengthening families
- iii. Flyers in multiple languages can be posted in community centers or distributed

b. Pilot Project

- i. For the program's first year, we propose that the coalition be held at the Garfield Community Center
- ii. In the years following, this program would expand to community centers around Seattle in areas most prone to violence. Meetings at different



community centers can be held on different days of the week to maximize the opportunities for fathers to attend

- c. The coalition would be held every other week, throughout the year
 - i. Meetings would accommodate as many fathers that show up
 - ii. Fathers would be able to attend sessions at their availability
 - iii. Food would be provided for the young fathers
 - iv. A volunteer from an organization (such as Concerned Black Men National Organization, 100 Black Men of America, Divine Alternative for Dads Service, Christian Found First Church) will lead the discussions

III. Resources Required:

Budget

- a. Since we are proposing to add a component to the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, we are asking that some of the money that was allotted for the Initiative, be redirected to fund the Young Father's Coalition.

The SYVPI was given \$3,936,719. The expend summary for the YVPI showed that there were \$730,031 unspent dollars after they had funded the initial programs. After conducting interviews with top executives of the YVPI such as Mariko Lockhart, they would have created a program similar to the Young Father's Coalition.

- b. Therefore, we are asking that \$25,000 from the unspent money be redirected to fund this program.
 - i. This would cover the cost of a venue
 - 1. Venue would most ideally be in the Garfield Community Center for the first year without charge
 - 2. For years after that, we would expand to other neighborhoods most prone to violence. The Young Father's Coalition could be held at different community centers during different times of the week to allow multiple opportunities for fathers to attend meetings (Still no charge).
 - ii. A Young Father's Coalition mentor/ discussion leader (Volunteer)
 - iii. Young Father's Coalition coordinator (\$20,000)
 - iv. Outreach/ promotion materials (Community partners can run off copies, coordinator will create flyers, etc.)
 - v. Food and refreshments for the Young Father's (\$5,000)