

Cure Violence Annapolis (CVA)



Annual Report July 2024 - June 2025



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I. Anne Arundel Department of Health Gun Violence Intervention Team (GVIT)

Launched in August 2020 following an Executive Order by County Executive Steuart Pittman, the Gun Violence Intervention Team (GVIT) serves as the permanent multi-agency body tasked with implementing the county's strategic recommendations to reduce firearm-related harm. The GVIT brings together a wide range of expertise, from public health and law enforcement to social services and education, to prevent and reduce gun-related injuries and deaths.

The GVIT is intentionally situated within the Anne Arundel County Department of Health. This positioning aligns with the county's declaration of gun violence as a public health crisis. By treating violence as a public health issue rather than strictly a criminal justice one, it can apply epidemiological methods to the problem. Much like an infectious disease, violence is viewed as a "contagion" that spreads through social networks. The Department of Health framework allows for a focus on:

- **Social Determinants of Health:** Address underlying factors that lead to violence
- **Preventative Intervention:** Move beyond reactive measures to stop the "spread" of violence before it occurs
- **Data-Driven Strategies:** Use hospital data and vital statistics to identify high-risk clusters

As a core pillar of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, Violence Interruption is the "frontline" strategy for reducing interpersonal shootings. In partnership with Cure Violence Global (CVG) and Kingdom Kare, the program utilizes Credible Messengers to engage the community. This strategy fits into the overall reduction plan:

- **Interrupt Transmission:** Mediate conflicts in real-time to prevent retaliatory cycles
- **Case Management for High-Risk Individuals:** Redirect those most likely to be involved in violence toward workshops and supportive services
- **Change Social Norms:** Actively work to make violence an unacceptable way to resolve disputes within the community

This report details the operational activities, community feedback and strategic milestones achieved by the GVIT and its partners from June 2024 through June 2025.

II. Cure Violence Global (CVG)

CVG operates on the principle that violence should be treated as a public health issue. Its success hinges on effective collaboration with local partners and strategic alliances. Using a rigorous, scientific, and data-driven methodology, CVG assists communities in developing and implementing violence prevention programs that lead to measurable reductions in violence.

Mission: To promote and implement an evidence-based health approach to eliminate violence worldwide.

The public health methodology for preventing violence applies strategies used to reverse epidemics, focusing on three key areas:

- **Detection and Interruption: Prevent potential violence from escalating**

The CVG model uses violence interrupters and outreach workers who are trained professionals who prevent violence by mediating and resolving lethal conflicts, also ensuring thorough follow-up. Operation remains independent of law enforcement to preserve the credibility required to work with high-risk individuals.

- **Behavioral Change: Identify and alter the thinking and actions of high-risk individuals (the most likely "transmitters" of violence)**

Outreach workers utilize a trauma-informed and culturally appropriate methodology to engage those at the highest risk of committing violence and connect clients with essential resources (e.g., job training, drug treatment). Key activities include recruiting high-risk individuals to build relationships and shift norms, changing violent behaviors by teaching alternatives, and providing intensive case management to address core needs like employment and treatment.

- **Norm Change: Shift group norms that currently perpetuate the use of violence**

Works to change community norms by engaging a broad coalition of stakeholders that includes community leaders, residents, and businesses, to deliver the clear message that violence is not supported. This is achieved through three core actions: responding publicly to every shooting with community disapproval; organizing local groups, such as block clubs, to aid prevention; and re-establishing positive norms via events and materials that emphasize non-violence.

The CVG method analyzes the transmission dynamics and clustering of violence. It relies on culturally sensitive, credible messengers, paraprofessional health workers hired from the community to interrupt transmission and change community norms. These staff members often share similar life experiences with the highest-risk individuals and receive comprehensive training in evidence-based methods such as mediation, persuasion, and behavior change to effectively limit the spread of violent outbreaks.

III. Executive Summary

The Violence Interruption Program (VIP) is a public health approach to violence prevention that works with high-risk youth aged 15–35. Cure Violence Annapolis (CVA) is a program based on the Cure Violence Global (CVG) model, which views violence as a learned behavior grounded in social determinants of health that can be prevented through VIPs. The focus is to detect and interrupt potentially violent situations, changing the behavior of those most at risk and changing group norms that support violence in the Eastport area of Annapolis. The program targets high-risk individuals by focusing on the seven key indicators:

High-Risk Indicators:

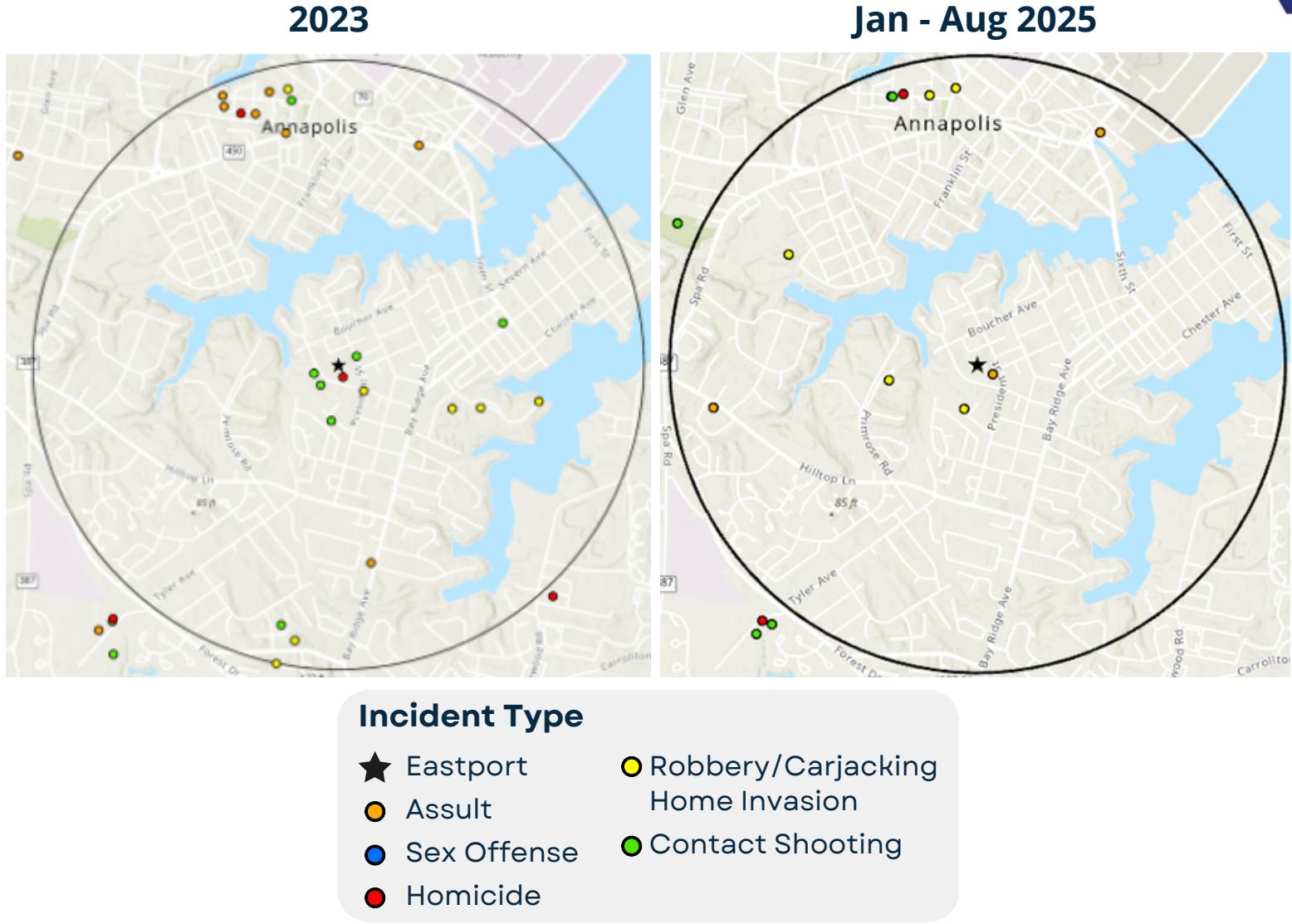
1. Between the ages of 15 and 35 years old
2. Involved in street activity associated with violence
3. Legal history of involvement in violent activity
4. Personally injured by violence recently
5. Friend, family member or group member was injured by violence recently
6. Be a member of a group that is involved in street activity
7. Have easy access to a weapon

Dedicated CVA teams consist of the following essential personnel:

- 1 Program Manager
- 1 Site Supervisor
- 2 Outreach Workers
- 3 Violence Interrupters

CVA has demonstrated significant strides in its mission to reduce gun violence through its public health approach. From July 2023 to June 2025, we observed a notable reduction in gun-related homicides and non-contact shootings in ZIP code 21403 compared to the previous year, a trend supported by Annapolis City officials. The team has successfully built trust and credibility within the community, which has been instrumental in these positive outcomes.

III. Executive Summary (cont.)



The two maps show the Eastport community in 2023 and 2025, along with the 2-mile radius surrounding the area.

From January - August 2025, there were no homicides within the immediate Eastport area. During this timeframe, there were 2 robberies/carjackings/home invasions and 1 gun-related assault. These statistics represent a decrease from 2023, when there was 1 homicide, 4 contact shootings and 1 robbery/carjacking/home invasion.

There were 11 total gun-related incidents (including 1 homicide and 1 contact shooting) within a mile of Eastport from January - August 2025, a decrease from 22 (including 2 homicides and 7 contact shootings) in 2023.

IV. Program Implementation

Kingdom Kare, Inc. (KKI), led by Bishop Antonio Palmer and Dr. Barbara Palmer, was officially selected in 2023 to lead the Violence Interruption Program (VIP) to address local community gun violence in the Eastport area of Annapolis.

The operational launch began in January 2024. Potential VIP staff underwent a thorough prescreening and panel interview process designed to identify individuals with the necessary credibility and commitment. The interview panel included a collaborative group of stakeholders, featuring representatives from CVG, KKI, Glimpse of Paradise, the Anne Arundel County Department of Health (DOH) and a key community member. Following successful interviews, all new hires completed the comprehensive KKI onboarding process.

After being onboarded, the VIP staff immediately entered rigorous CVG training to ensure they were fully equipped to implement the evidence-based model with fidelity.

The essential training schedule included:

- Program Manager Training: January 30 - February 2
- Violence Interrupter Training: February 6 - 10
- Database Training for VIP and Outreach Staff: March 4
- Database Training for Program Manager and DOH Staff: March 20

In February 2024, before the final database training, the team began proactive planning for implementation. This involved conducting an essential community survey in Eastport, actively interacting with residents, and identifying high-risk areas and hotspots. This early, visible presence was instrumental in familiarizing residents with the team and establishing an essential daily community accustomed to the team's presence.

CVG is contracted to provide continuous technical assistance critical for sustained implementation and quality assurance. This support structure ensures consistent program documentation and maintenance of specialized skills:

- Weekly check-ins with the Program Supervisor
- Monthly database online office hours and response to any immediate questions
- Bi-weekly calls with the DOH and CVA Program Manager
- CVG is available to support any emergent issues as they arise

This comprehensive, sustained support is crucial in ensuring that the team consistently and accurately documents the required information for the database, which is key to maintaining program model fidelity and enabling accurate impact evaluation.

V. Program Overview

The operational framework supports direct community engagement and data-driven strategies.

Strategic Office Location: The CVA office is conveniently located within the Eastport Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis (HACA), providing direct access and a strong presence in the community.

24/7 Hotline Availability: The team remains accessible to the community 24/7 via their hotline at 443-599-8222.

Data-Driven Approach: CVA leverages the CVG web-based database system for comprehensive data collection, monitoring and reporting, which is essential for measuring program efficacy and guiding intervention strategies. The team received Technical Assistance training on October 22, 2024, focusing on more effective methods for entering data into daily logs, inputting case notes and developing efficient methods for inputting Risk-Needs-Resilience.

Dedicated violence interrupters and outreach workers diligently track their work in the database's daily logs, noting hours for activities geared toward interruption, norm change or behavioral change. Supervisors contribute through staff facilitation, community monitoring, mediation, community education and activities.

Key Interventions and Crisis Response:

- Following a shooting incident, violence interrupters successfully mediated between parties to prevent further escalation.
- Violence interrupters responded to an incident where a firearm was discharged, successfully de-escalating the situation and preventing further violence.
- A serious incident involving a BB gun took place. The CVA team took this as an opportunity to do community outreach to address the dangers posed by BB guns and firearms in general. They also used the opportunity to explain their role in promoting peace and preventing gun violence within the neighborhood.

V. Program Overview (cont.)

Consistent High Hours in Core Activities: The team dedicated substantial hours to core programmatic activities throughout the year.

Interruption Efforts include time spent within the community, engaging residents and looking for opportunities to de-escalate situations that could lead to violence, such as intervening in crises, mediating disputes and interceding in group conflicts to prevent violence.

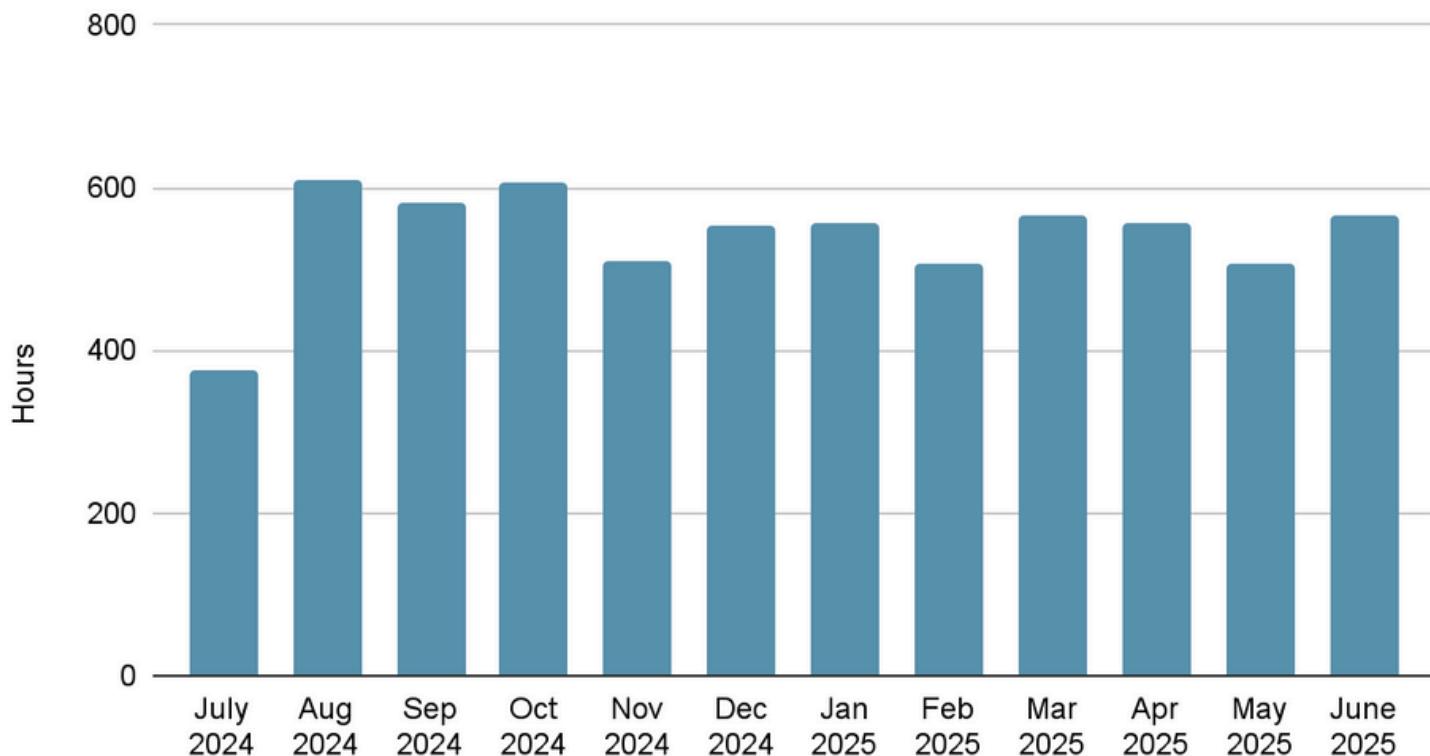
541 Hours
per month

On Average, CVA spent 541 hours per month conducting interruption efforts

6,464 Hours
July 2024 - June 2025

Overall, CVA spent nearly 6,500 hours conducting interruption efforts from July 2024 - June 2025

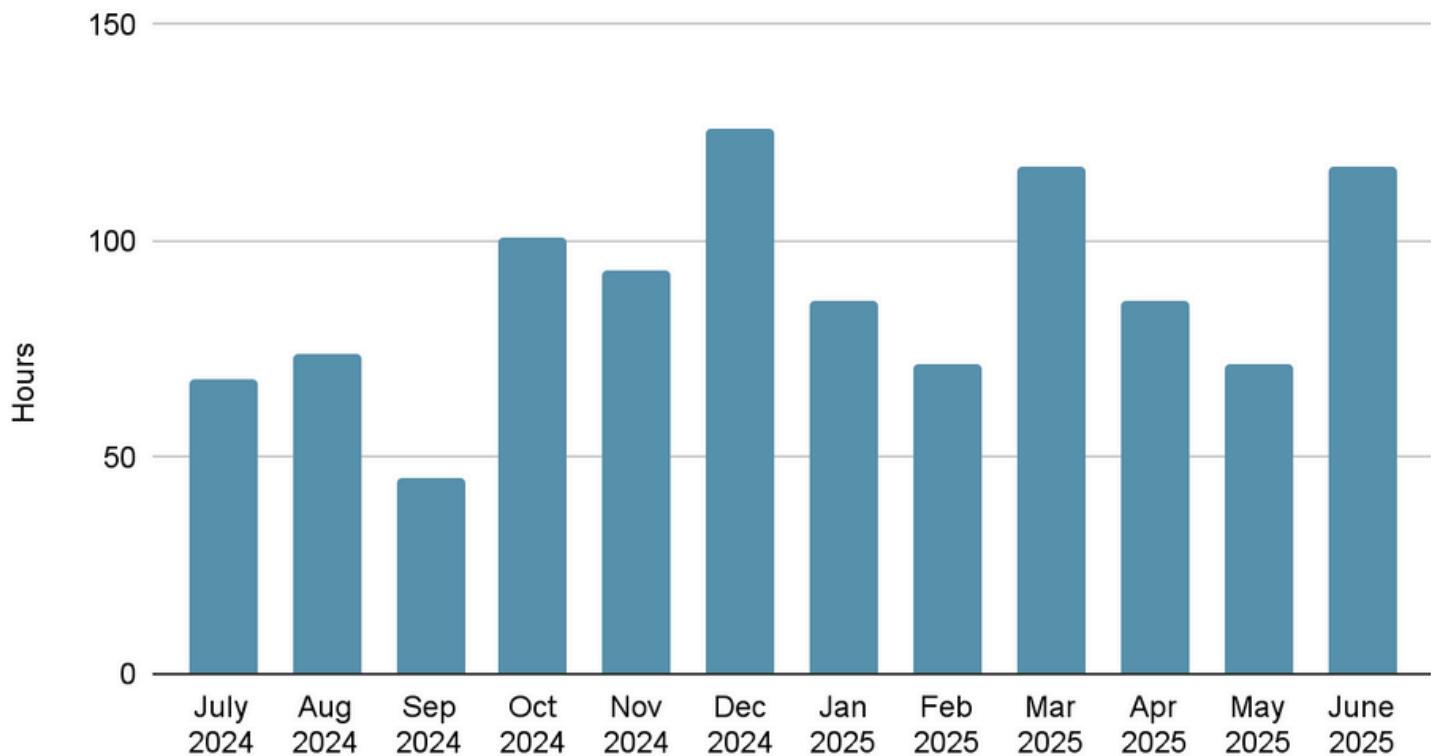
CVA Interruption Effort Hours by Month



V. Program Overview (cont.)

Norm Change includes coordinating with community groups, distributing materials and hosting events to convey that violence is unacceptable.

CVA Norm Change Hours by Month



88 Hours
per month

On Average, CVA spent 88 hours per month conducting norm change activities

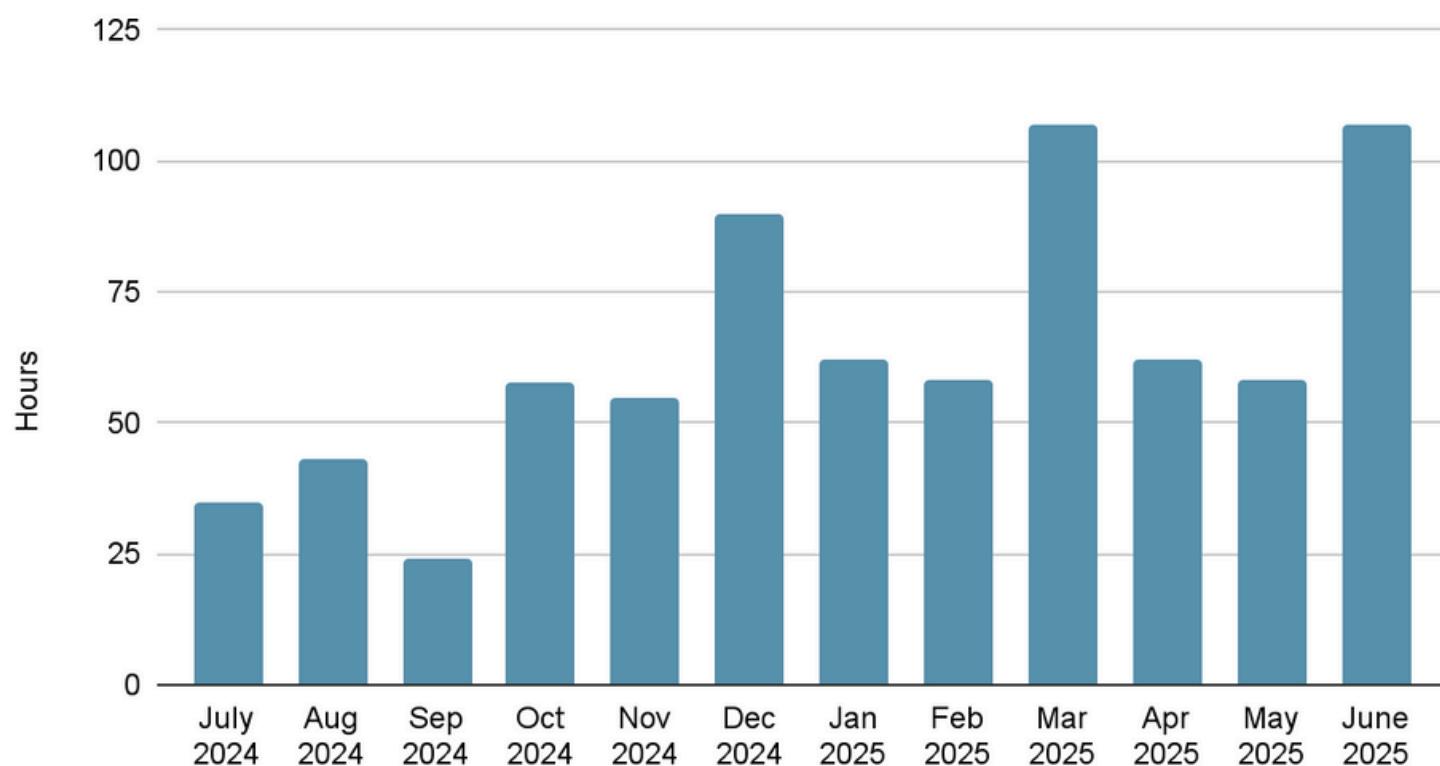
1,056 Hours
July 2024 - June 2025

Overall, CVA spent over 1,000 hours conducting norm change activities from July 2024 - June 2025

V. Program Overview (cont.)

Behavioral Change hours are centered around engaging individuals at the highest risk to discuss the costs of using violence, helping them obtain social services and providing the surrounding support needed to reduce their risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violence. These hours include case management services for those enrolled in CVA.

CVA Behavioral Change Hours by Month



63 Hours
per month

On Average, CVA spent 63 hours per month conducting behavioral change activities

759 Hours
July 2024 - June 20

Overall, CVA spent over 750 hours conducting behavioral change activities from July 2024 - June 2025

VI. Program Participation and Community Impact

CVA's approach prioritizes quality engagement to drive meaningful change within the community.

Strategic Participant Engagement

- Outreach Workers successfully recruited 5 new program participants during the July - September 2024 quarter, bringing the total to 12 participants.
- An additional 4 participants were recruited during the October - December 2024 quarter, increasing the total to 16 participants. This caseload of 16 individuals remained steady through June 2025.
- Retention rate is crucial. The stabilization of 16 high-risk participants is a testament to the team's effective, focused engagement.
 - In violence interruption, long-term, sustained participation is the only reliable indicator of behavioral change and community impact.
 - The benefit of retention is its correlation with public safety outcomes.
 - These individuals are the primary drivers of community violence. Keeping them actively engaged means their conflicts are being de-escalated and managed. This focused and consistent presence is a key factor in the program's success.

Comprehensive Participant Support

- Intensive support for participants included behavioral change guidance, job training and case management. Assistance was provided to help participants secure employment and enroll in career programming in November 2024. Participants also attend job-readiness workshops, dedicated wellness days for men and women, and educational field trips.
- Workers provide ongoing case management and facilitate referrals to essential services such as legal aid, financial assistance, psychological and social assistance, hospital care, housing support, education, and employment opportunities.

VI. Program Participation and Community Impact (cont.)

Extensive Referral Services

- Staff provided a significant number of referrals to both program participants and broader community members for various needs.
- Below shows a chart from July 2024 to June 2025.

Referral Name	# of Referrals Made
Employment	216
Housing	10
Finance	86
Hospital	1
Education	93
Legal	16
Psych	14
Social	56
Other	71

VII. Partnerships

Building and nurturing community relationships are fundamental to the program's success, enhancing its reach and resource availability.

Strategic Collaborations

- **Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis (HACA):** Ongoing partnership has been crucial, securing dedicated office space and access to the Eastport Community Center for program activities.
- **Public Library:** Collaborated with the Anne Arundel County Public Library to distribute 16 gun locks at a community meeting and continues to maintain this partnership.
- **Behavioral Health:** Established a new Baltimore-based partnership with Agape Way, a nonprofit offering comprehensive behavioral health programs. They are among the organizations with whom the team will continue to maintain partnerships.
- **Workforce Development:** Partnered with the Community Action Agency, Anne Arundel Workforce Development, and the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program to host a successful job fair in October 2024.
- **Business Sector Engagement:** The CVA Program Manager attended the Central MD Chamber of Commerce annual banquet to network with the business sector about the program and to seek business engagement and sponsorship, including help with job readiness, job fairs/opportunities, job placement and further mentorship.

Additional Key Partnerships: The team continues to foster relationships with organizations such as the Anne Arundel County Partnership for Children, Youth and Families; American Heart Association; and several other organizations.

VIII. Professional Development for Staff

Conferences Attended Two CVA members attended the 2025 Gifford's Community Violence Intervention Conference in Los Angeles (June 16-17, 2025). This was a major national event dedicated to advancing community-led, non-punitive responses to gun violence, bringing together a diverse group of experts, advocates and practitioners.

Attendees exchanged concrete practices, training materials and implementation strategies to strengthen community violence intervention efforts nationwide. It provided a space for frontline workers to discuss what is working, challenges they face, and what support they need.

Training Attended: The team also attended a Mental Health First Aid training (April 5, 2025) and database training for the new database (April 22, 2025). Staff has a keen interest in continuing professional development opportunities in case management and mental health.

IX. Community Engagement

Engaging Community Events and Initiatives: Successfully created and hosted numerous events to engage families and recruit high-risk individuals.

- **Women's Empowerment Event:** Hosted on July 20, 2024, attracting over 40 women of all ages.
- **Boy-to-Manhood Program:** Partnering with Glimpse of Paradise, CVA hosted a Boyhood to Manhood Program running every Wednesday through Friday for three hours at the Eastport Community Center. It offered opportunities for engaging conversations centered on preventing and reducing violence with youth and community members, along with providing healthy meals and teaching about healthy eating. On August 25, 2024, they held a graduation that included yoga and karate instructors to discuss physical and mental health.
- **Youth Engagement Program:** Successful 6-week program with 14 girls began in June 2024, serving as a relationship-building effort to connect with high-risk parents.
- **Community Meetings:** Well-attended meetings were held on September 24, 2024 (nearly 50 attendees), and March 25, 2025, to update the community.
- **Thanksgiving Drive:** Prepared and distributed turkey baskets to 25 families, including program participants, for Thanksgiving in 2024.

IX. Community Engagement (cont.)

Educational and Wellness Events Hosted by CVA

October 19, 2024	Partnered with Community Action Agency, Anne Arundel Workforce Development and Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program to host a job fair for the community
November 30, 2024	Mutter Museum Historical Medical Library Field Trip
December 11 - 30, 2024	3-week Strengthening Families Program
December 17, 2024	Community Health and Wellness Event
December 26, 2024 - January 1, 2025	Kwanzaa Event
February 28, 2025	Black History Month Program
March 20, 2025	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Class
May 8, 2025	Health and Wellness Session for Mothers
May 22, 2025	Financial Literacy Session
June 8, 2025	National Gun Violence Awareness Day event, over 100 community members attended
June 27, 2025	Wellness and Health Workshop for Men
June 28, 2025	Wrapped up the month with a community-wide event to celebrate the significant reduction in gun violence for the year

IX. Community Engagement (cont.)

Educational and Wellness Events Attended by CVA Staff

July 27, 2024	Annual Family Day hosted by the Local Organizing Committee (LOC)
August 4, 2024	Eastport Community Gardening Event
August 18, 2024	Back to School Drive in Eastport
January 31, 2025	Partnered with My Brother's Keeper and participated in an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) training

X. Program Challenges and Barriers

CVA has encountered and continues to address various challenges throughout the year, but through these experiences, the team has simultaneously gained valuable lessons learned regarding effective program fidelity and community engagement.

Database Rollout and Fidelity: CVG's new database rollout at the beginning of the year presented initial hurdles, notably contributing to delays in CVA's daily log inputs due to several technical issues. The team continues to consistently and accurately document their efforts in the database. Maintaining model fidelity through accurate data entry is an ongoing focus, despite the training received. CVA has been working diligently with CVG's tech team to resolve these issues and streamline processes.

- **Key Take-Away:** Data Fidelity is paramount for program efficacy. Accurate and consistent database utilization is essential for measuring impact, strengthening program efficacy and guiding strategic decisions.

Initial Program Presence and Relationships: Developing an initial presence and building relationships within the community started slowly. While CVA's presence is becoming more known and trusted, this initial hurdle underscores the importance of consistent engagement over time.

- **Key Take-Away:** Building trust and presence is a gradual process. Establishing initial program presence and fostering strong relationships within the community requires sustained, consistent engagement over time.

X. Program Challenges and Barriers (cont.)

Recruitment of High-Risk Participants: Continuously recruiting high-risk participants is a primary focus and ongoing challenge. While the steady number of participants indicates a focused approach to engaging with the most suitable participants, it still presents a challenge in terms of expanding reach and overall program growth. The program is working to be more intentional in targeting participants based on seven specific indicators of high-risk individuals.

1. Between the ages of 15 and 35 years old
2. Involved in street activity associated with violence
3. Legal history of involvement in violent activity
4. Personally injured by violence recently
5. Friend, family member or group member was injured by violence recently
6. Be a member of a group that is involved in street activity
7. Have easy access to a weapon

- **Key Take-Away:** Targeted recruitment enhances impact. Being intentional in recruiting high-risk individuals based on specific indicators ensures resources are directed effectively to those most in need of intervention and support.

Sustaining Program Programming and Events: The program aims to continuously develop and expand programming and events tailored to the needs of participants and the target population. This includes consistently engaging families and youth and providing access to services that may not be readily available.

- **Key Take-Away:** Sustained and relevant programming is key to engagement. Continuous and tailored development and expansion are crucial. This includes consistent engagement efforts and providing access to essential services.

Obtaining Community Feedback: Continual efforts are needed to obtain feedback to determine the impact of available services and identify whether different approaches are needed.

- **Key Take-Away:** Community feedback drives adaptation and improvement. Obtaining continuous feedback is vital to determining the true impact of services. While gathering this feedback was initially a challenge due to skepticism and a lack of established trust, ongoing efforts and the team's consistent presence established open lines of communication.

XI. Audit Feedback and Program Review

A comprehensive three-day program review was conducted in December 2025 to evaluate Kingdom Kare Inc's Cure Violence Annapolis (CVA) implementation of the Cure Violence Global (CVG) model. Covering the fiscal period of July 2024 to June 2025, this rigorous audit involved in-depth interviews with project staff and the Kingdom Kare leadership team. The primary objectives were to assess operational fidelity to the model and identify any systemic barriers that could hinder the program's ability to achieve maximum impact in community violence intervention.

Key Findings and Operational Barriers

- **Programming and Workshop Funding:** Current financial constraints, like limited budgeting for programming, limit the frequency, scale, and modernization of workshops for participants. This shortfall acts as a primary barrier to delivering the high-quality, consistent programming necessary for long-term behavioral change.
- **Referral Tracking Gaps:** There is no formalized system for follow-ups after external service referrals are made. This poses a challenge in determining whether the essential needs of program participants are being met by outside providers.
- **Secondary Support Strains:** Connecting participants to specialized recovery resources for individuals struggling with substance use disorder is an ongoing challenge for staff members. Staff members are often called upon to go above and beyond to provide much-needed support and stability.

Recommendations

The program audit conducted by DOH staff found the CVA program's overall performance acceptable. It demonstrated strong fidelity to the CVG model through effective teamwork, credible community engagement and consistent conflict response. Moving forward, CVA will work with its leadership team and collaborate with CVG to address the key findings and barriers.

XII. Employee Feedback

During the audit, CVA program staff reported a significant increase in residents' sense of security. This heightened comfort is reflected in residents' willingness to approach staff to report conflicts, confident that the team would intervene before escalation. This positive shift in both local safety perception and trust is directly attributed to the consistent presence and visibility of the Cure Violence Annapolis Team, suggesting a transformative change is actively underway.

Key Themes in Community Engagement

- **The Power of Credible Messengers:** A primary driver of engagement is the "Credible Messenger" status of the staff. Because the majority of the team grew up in the target areas, they possess a unique lived experience that fosters immediate trust. Community members are notably more open to engaging with the team because they view the staff as authentic peers rather than outside observers.
- **Proactive Information Sharing:** In a significant reversal of traditional dynamics, community members are now frequently initiating contact with staff. When incidents or tensions arise, residents are increasingly reaching out to the team first to seek mediation, rather than waiting for staff to identify the problem. This "community-first" reporting indicates a deep trust in the team's ability to de-escalate conflict.
- **Civic Engagement and Volunteering:** Residents who are not officially enrolled as program participants have demonstrated a commitment to the mission. Many community members actively assist the team during events and have "joined forces" to monitor neighborhood safety. This surge in volunteerism suggests that the program is fostering a collective sense of ownership over community well-being.
- **A Focus on Self-Improvement:** There is a high level of community interest in the workshops and programming offered. Feedback indicates that residents are not just looking for conflict resolution but are actively seeking opportunities for personal development and ways to contribute to the betterment of the community as a whole.

XIII. Next Steps

CVA's primary focus is to continue recruiting high-risk individuals for the program and to expand on the programming they have created.

- The violence interrupters and outreach workers will continue to work in known hot spots to detect and interrupt potentially violent conflicts.
- The program will continue to engage families and youth by addressing the community's needs and providing access to and advocating for services that may need to be more readily available. To do so, they will host and create numerous programs and events.
- Community feedback will be obtained to determine whether the available services are impactful or if anything different needs to be done.
- CVA will continue to use the training they received to recruit high-risk participants continuously and create events to support the community.
- After further conversations with CVG and the DOH, CVA has identified other ways to recruit high-risk participants and maintain the model's fidelity. Activities include being more intentional about targeting participants based on the seven indicators of high-risk status, using CVA programs to target and recruit participants, reminding staff that they are credible messengers and planning other programming specific to the target population.
- The DOH will continue to provide oversight and monitor the program's progress and outcomes by reviewing database entries, meeting with staff, performing site visits and reviewing monthly program reports.
- Our CVG partners will continue to provide ongoing technical assistance as needed to ensure that the program work matches the model's fidelity, including in-person visits, virtual meetings and ongoing training.
- In partnership with CVG and the DOH, CVA will also review and discuss whether there is a need to expand the CVA targeted area based on the need within the targeted and surrounding areas. This review will only be done if there continues to be an uptick in violence within the surrounding areas, and not specifically in the targeted Eastport area.
- Partnering with a third-party organization to conduct a comprehensive, independent program evaluation in 2026.