



# CITIZENS CRIME COMMISSION OF NEW YORK CITY

ASSESSING NEW YORK CITY'S YOUTH GUN VIOLENCE CRISIS: CREWS

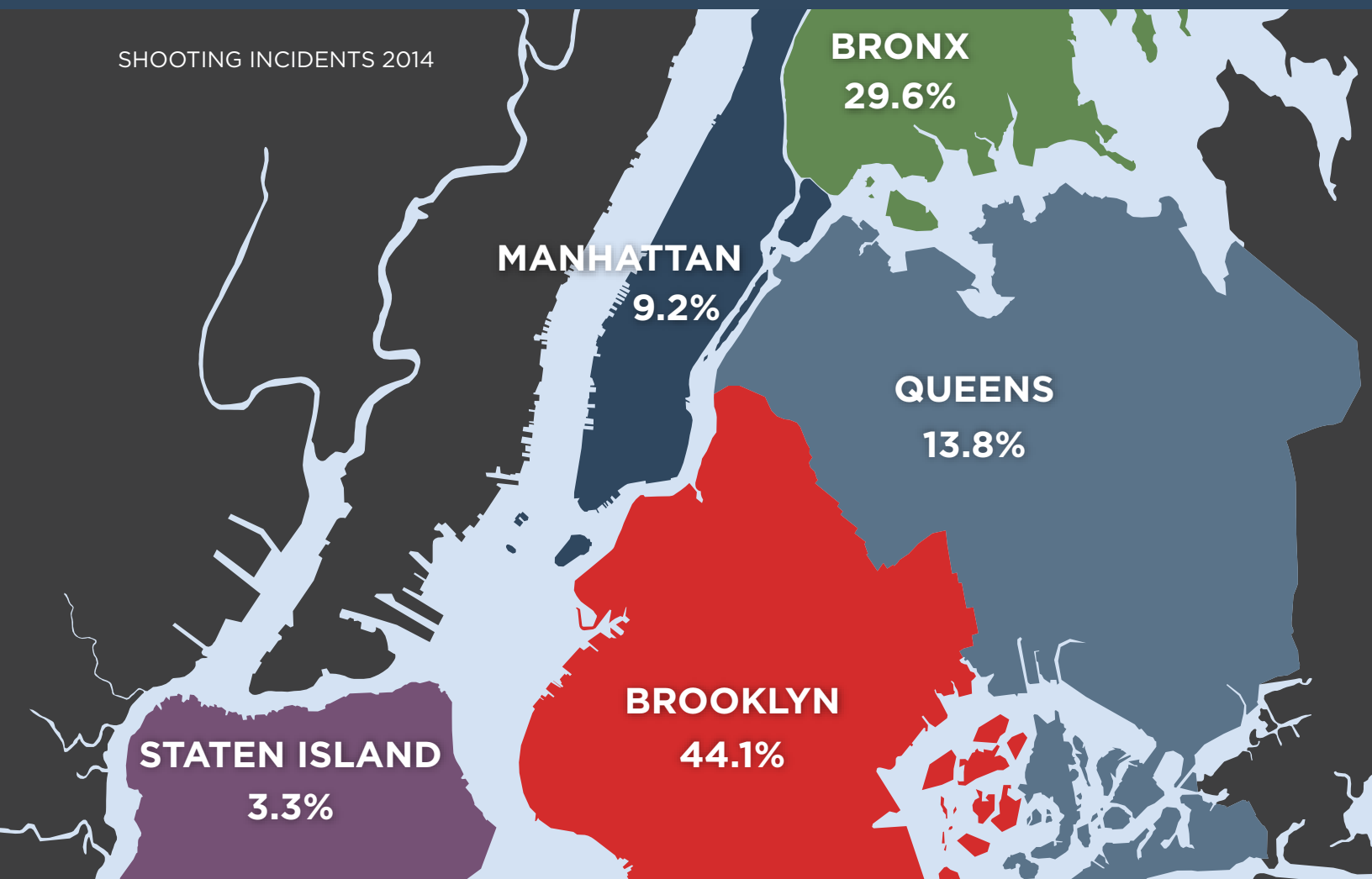
VOLUME II

## COMPSTAT FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

COLLECTING PROGRAM SPECIFIC DATA TO  
MANAGE PERFORMANCE AND INFORM POLICY

BY STEPHANIE UEBERALL & ASHLEY CANNON

SHOOTING INCIDENTS 2014



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The success or failure of community strategies to address the youth gun violence crisis is often attributed in part to how well the problem is understood and diagnosed.<sup>1</sup> With support from The New York Community Trust, the Crime Commission has undertaken an analysis of youth gun violence and crew activity – violent turf rivalries among less-organized, smaller and normally younger groups than traditional gangs – in select New York City communities. Our initial findings from available data, existing research, and interviews with stakeholders are presented in a series of papers titled, “Assessing New York City’s Youth Gun Violence Crisis: Crews”.

New York City has famously experienced unprecedented, sustained reductions in crime over the last 25 years.<sup>2</sup> Areas once so dangerous that they resembled foreign war zones now are home to some of the most desirable real estate in the country. We proudly and rightfully point to our success, calling ourselves the “safest big city in America”.<sup>3</sup> But there are places and people that have been left behind. There are areas which have not seen violent crime rates drop to nearly zero – as others have – or anywhere close. Certain races and age groups are also still far more likely to become victims and be responsible for violent crime than others.

The root causes of violent crime have not changed either—and the circumstances under which crime is committed sound eerily familiar to the high-crime New York of 25 years ago that we now refer to as the “bad old days”. Therefore, in order to make real strides in improving the quality of life amongst these persistently hardest-hit groups, we must address the root causes of why youth become involved in gun violence and crews.

The NYPD publically acknowledged that youth “gangs” are becoming more organized and more violent,<sup>4</sup> finding that more than a third of all shootings in New York City now involve what the NYPD calls “crews”.<sup>5</sup> In order to truly identify how youth are involved in organized activity (gangs, crews, etc.) and gun violence, the Crime Commission researched legal and intelligence definitions and conducted fieldwork with community residents, service providers, and policymakers which revealed three broad categories of organization:

### TRADITIONAL GANGS

Groups that have clear hierarchy, structure, organization, rules of conduct and are profit-motivated, usually affiliating with national gangs such as the Bloods.

### CREWS<sup>i</sup>

Fluid groups formed based on where members live, such as a building or block, creating violent turf rivalries. Crews generally do not have clear hierarchy, structure, or rules, and are usually not profit-motivated.

### GROUPS

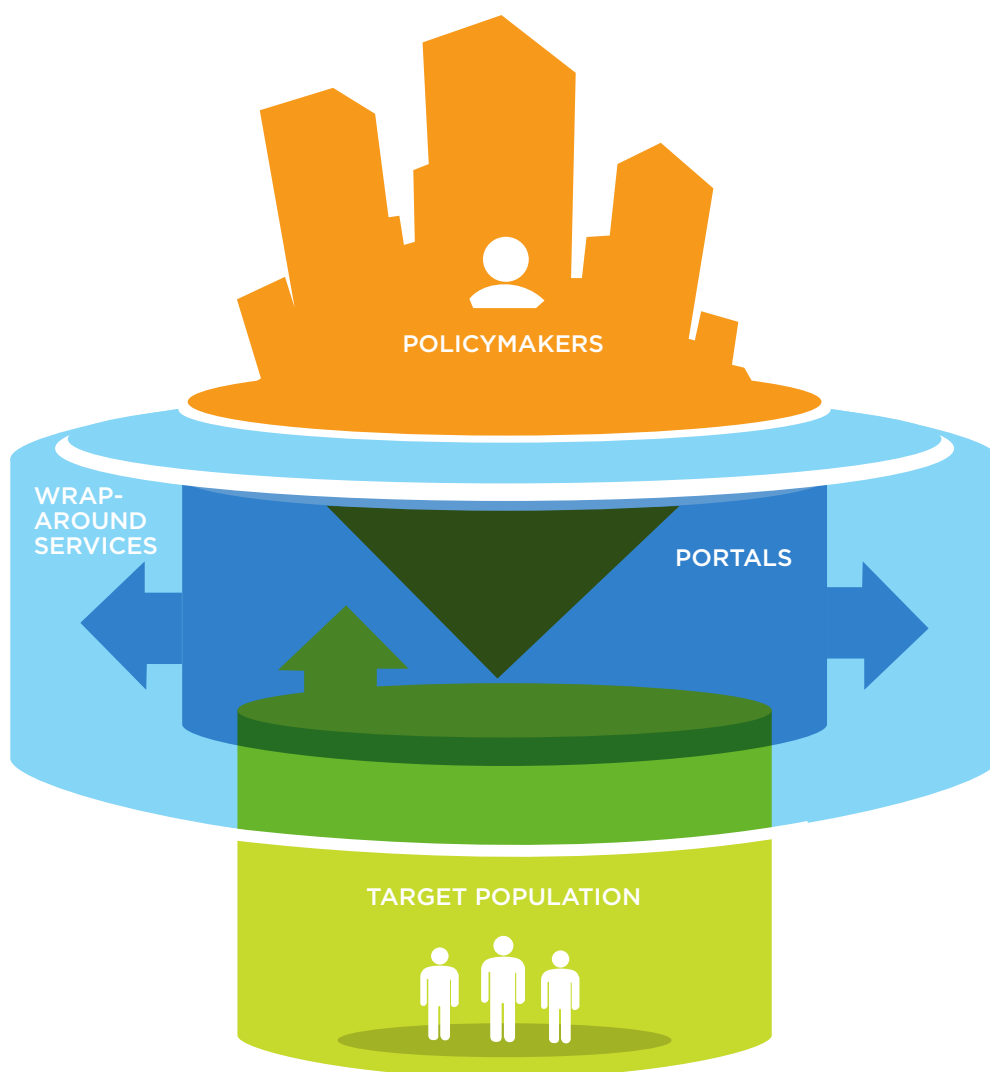
Unorganized groups, often temporal in nature, which form as a result of interpersonal conflicts.

This research and fieldwork demonstrated that crews – and not traditional, hierarchical gangs – are a major part of violent crime statistics and analysis. Crews actually account for a great deal of youth criminal activity, especially violent crime—and without proper interventions for this type of activity, we will not be able to adequately address what has been a persistent public safety and criminal justice issue for New York City.

**In order to develop more effective responses to crews it is essential for stakeholders to acknowledge the victimization of those involved, understand their underlying needs, and identify the neighborhood conditions that impact them.**

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i. Crews form working relationships with other crews, known as sets. Sometimes crew members also affiliate with a citywide set (Young Guns (YG) or Young Bosses (YB)) for recognition when traveling outside of their neighborhood.



### POLICYMAKERS

- Elected Officials
- Government Agencies
- Advocates
- Philanthropies

### WRAP-AROUND SERVICES

- Legal
- Education
- Job Readiness & Training
- Employment
- Mental Health
- Substance Use

### PORTALS

- Street Outreach
- Violence Interruption
- Conflict Mediation
- Hospital Responders
- Educational Workshops
- Community Mobilization
- Public Education
- Youth Development
- Peer Leadership

### TARGET POPULATION

- Youth Engaged in Crews and Violence
- Peers
- Family
- Community Members

**Although there have been significant recent investments by policymakers and funders – ranging from organizing task forces and work groups, to deploying new law enforcement strategies, to implementing programmatic interventions – New York City’s ability to fully understand and diagnose its crew problem is hindered by a lack of data and coordination.**

While the NYPD collects data on crew members and related criminal activity, law enforcement data are typically insufficient to inform comprehensive responses because it is collected for the purpose of informing suppression and investigation strategies.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, community-based organizations collect a range of data about the underlying needs of the individuals involved, but often lack the capacity to analyze and communicate these data to inform policy and programming decisions. Further, the City lacks a collaborative effort among stakeholders dedicated to addressing this problem.

Preventing crew violence cannot be accomplished by a single agency or organization. Effective solutions require the combination of insight, hard work, and dedication from a wide variety of organizations and stakeholders. New York City should immediately mobilize stakeholders to take steps toward developing a comprehensive strategy to address the city’s crew violence problem.

## THE CRIME COMMISSION'S ASSESSMENT OFFERS THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

### IMPLEMENT A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH:

- Deliver and sustain adequate services to prevent crew violence.
  - Develop funding strategies that promote stability and consistent service delivery, and thus situate providers in a position to succeed.
- Better track the risks, needs, victimizations, and activities of youth involved in crews, as well as the conditions impacting them by harnessing the wealth of knowledge possessed by stakeholders.
- Facilitate a collaborative effort among stakeholders to minimize the duplication of efforts and maximize the use of resources available to selected needs.

### BETTER COLLECT AND SHARE DATA:

- Share aggregated data on crews between government agencies and citizens.
  - Request the NYPD to report crew-related crimes as part the Mayor's Management Report and/or weekly CompStat reports.
  - Create information-sharing forums both within and across stakeholder groups (e.g., government, community-based organizations, youth) in order to share insights and identify effective prevention and intervention strategies.
- Build the capacity of community-based organizations.
  - Support must be provided to community-based organizations for internal capacity building by instituting a civilian CompStat-like data management system for violence prevention programs.
  - Strengthen inter-organization collaboration to facilitate the integration of resources and responses.

### COORDINATE A CONTINUUM OF INTERVENTIONS:

- Incorporate programs that have different points of contact with youth at each developmental milestone.
  - Government must invest in locally accessible interventions that focus on education and vocational skills, address victimization, trauma and grief, and emphasize the role of the family and community.

**As youth develop their identity, set goals, and plan for their future they stop committing crime.<sup>7</sup> By implementing these suggestions, the city can build comprehensive strategies that reduce crew violence and make our communities safer.<sup>8</sup>**

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**VOLUME II**

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# **COMPSTAT FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS**

## **COLLECTING PROGRAM SPECIFIC DATA TO MANAGE PERFORMANCE AND INFORM POLICY**

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BY STEPHANIE UEBERALL & ASHLEY CANNON

In New York City, there are dozens of community-based organizations working on the ground every day that have no useful way of relaying the invaluable information they collect from the frontlines in the fight against violence. These foot-soldiers possess troves of data and game-changing insights, but often have not been trained to evaluate, nor told what to record—and they have no easy way of reporting back to the generals at the NYPD and City Hall what they know.

Right now, these organizations are brimming with crucial intelligence on crime trends, risk factors amongst youth, and the efficacy of current approaches to prevention. If we continue this way, all that knowledge will be effectively wasted, and our single greatest allies to neutralize and prevent violence among youth will remain underutilized.

To make informed decisions and forward progress in preventing crew violence, policymakers and the public need real-time data on the high-risk population and the nearest assessments of what interventions are actually working—data that community-based organizations can provide.

Therefore, providing support for and developing systems that facilitate data collection and enable government agencies and community-based organizations to track and share information relative to crews and violence must be a priority for policymakers, funders, and community-based organizations to enable us to prevent violence.

## **THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY LINKS**

It is rare for a legislator, analyst, funder, or law enforcement official to have access to high-risk youth in the same capacity as service providers. By the nature of their work, community-based organizations are uniquely positioned to collect data about youth: direct service workers often perform home visits, conduct assessments of youths' risks and needs, work with family members and/or peers, and gather relevant information about individual youth (e.g., education records, criminal records, disabilities).

To facilitate the information gathering process, service providers spend a considerable amount of time gaining the youth's trust and developing rapport in a non-adversarial manner, which then allows them to dig deeper into the youth's presenting issues. This in turn allows service providers to identify underlying needs and create a more comprehensive picture of what youth are experiencing.

The information collected is extremely valuable to decision-makers, as it provides reliable evidence about the issues facing youth and the kinds of needs that programs should seek to address. Unfortunately, this in-depth information is typically only available to internal staff.

Service providers who want to contribute to policy discussions and showcase program results of public value to decision-makers and community members should implement high-quality data collection methods that enable them to collect the appropriate information required to tell the participant's and community's stories. Putting data to use, service providers can share information with relevant agencies and communities, inform policy, and enhance program performance.

Although community-based organizations possess a great opportunity to collect and utilize data, many do not have the capacity and/or systems in place to do so. To harness this opportunity, community-based organizations should consider implementing data collection tools and management systems. While this consideration may seem complex and overwhelming, there are many resources available and lessons to import.

## A PERFECT MODEL: Civilian CompStat For Violence Prevention

Since violence prevention programs focus on preventing specific criminal behavior (gun violence, assaults, etc.), it would be advantageous to use lessons from law enforcement's experience with the CompStat model.

CompStat is a management strategy which relies on data collection and analysis to help managers make informed decisions and monitor performance. Derived from sound business practices, CompStat is an adaptable model that can be used to manage a variety of organizational functions in a wide range of settings (see *exhibit 1*).<sup>1</sup>

### To implement a CompStat-based management strategy, an organization must identify:

- I. relevant data indicators;
- II. mechanisms to collect program specific data;
- III. processes to facilitate analysis, feedback, and guidance.<sup>3</sup>

### EXHIBIT 1: COMPSTAT PRINCIPLES

#### The CompStat model is rooted in four principles:

1. accurate, timely intelligence clearly communicated to all;
2. a rapid deployment that is concentrated, synchronized, and focused;
3. effective tactics and strategies; and
4. relentless follow-up and assessment.<sup>2</sup>

Those guides would fit well when recording, assessing and reporting on street violence. The following is a detailed analysis and breakdown of how the CompStat model could be implemented and used as an invaluable link between service providers, law enforcement, funders, and policymakers in order to create successful strategies in the fight to prevent violence.

## I. IDENTIFYING RELEVANT DATA INDICATORS

Identifying key performance indicators requires an understanding of what information and knowledge needs to be communicated, both internally and externally. As there are scores of valuable indicators, service providers and appropriate stakeholders must decide which indicators best measure program specific performance (see *appendix A*). In making these decisions, it is important to consider the *nature of the program and which outcomes most correlate to program activities*.

## Consideration 1: Prioritize Indicators that Measure Program Specific Performance

*With the vast amount of information for programs to collect—from logging phone calls, to tracking program participants, to managing budgets—collecting data takes a great deal of staff time. If an organization invests its time in collecting data, it should benefit the most from this investment. Therefore, information that measures program specific performance should be the highest priority.*

## Nature of the Program

When thinking about which data indicators to collect and which management system to use, the nature of the work that is being performed must drive the development of an appropriate model. If the organization employs too much of an emphasis on data collection (requiring the collection of countless indicators via inappropriate methods) without the consideration of how the services are delivered, the organization could create circumstances which move the organization away from its original mission. For example, many violence prevention programs rely on credible messengers who meet with youth on the street. If an organization requires staff to collect data through a structured interview or another formal method, the organization could jeopardize the key component of the program which allows them to access and provide services to the intended high-risk population.

## Outcomes Correlated to Program Activities

Crime prevention programs often use recidivism as a measure of performance. While this is an important indicator, programs and policymakers would benefit more from understanding the risk factors and program activities which impact the recidivism outcome. If an organization plans to measure the number of participants who recidivate, it is also important to measure changes in the factors correlated with recidivism risk, as well as strategies and activities which help reduce risk factors.<sup>4</sup>

Research shows the factors associated with risk of recidivism include: antisocial personality patterns; procriminal attitudes; social supports for crime; substance use; family and marital relationships; school and work; and prosocial recreational activities (see *exhibit 2*).<sup>5</sup>

By collecting information about risk factors, program activities, and the recidivism outcome, organizations can learn about which program components impact specific risk factors, and make changes to programming based on outcomes.

For example, if a program collects data on youth participating in job readiness workshops, and demonstrates through analysis that youth are less likely to recidivate due to participation in the workshop, the organization could alter programming to provide more emphasis on the correlated factors. The combination of these data can provide a more complete picture of the program outcomes and facilitate performance management.

## EXHIBIT 2: RECIDIVISM RISK FACTORS

### FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH RISK OF RECIDIVISM<sup>6</sup>

- **antisocial personality patterns** (impulsive, adventurous, pleasure seeking, restlessly aggressive and irritable)
- **procriminal attitudes** (rationalizations for crime, negative attitude towards the law)
- **social supports for crime** (friends involved in crime, isolation from prosocial activities and peers)
- **substance use** (abuse of alcohol and/or drugs)
- **family and marital relationships** (inappropriate parental monitoring and disciplining, poor family relationships)
- **school and work** (poor performance, low levels of satisfaction)
- **prosocial recreational activities** (lack of involvement in prosocial and leisure activities)



Similarly, it is important for the organization to understand which outcomes the program can control. Many violence prevention programs monitor the community for potential violence and respond to real-time violent events. As a result, much of the data collected by these programs are limited to indicators related to community violence such as shooting incidents. While collecting this information is valuable, the organizations cannot necessarily control all community violence. For example, one organization reported that four of five recent shootings in the program's catchment area involved perpetrators and victims from other neighborhoods. While the program may be able to reach potential victims and shooters within its catchment area, the effectiveness of the program should not be measured by factors the organization cannot control. Further, by limiting data collection to indicators related to community violence, the program is not capturing all of the work done to serve its participants.

Service providers can maximize the use of data by collecting relevant information that reflects youth developmental milestones, needs, and program impact. More accurate measures of program performance may include indicators related to the youth participants (i.e., risks and needs), program specific services (e.g., referrals and services that seek to address risks and needs), and outcomes that are program specific (e.g., high school equivalency diploma obtained, referral to service, job readiness, knowledge gained).

Tracking indicators such as these would allow the organization to generate data that could demonstrate clear, tangible results on how the program impacts participants, and help the organization understand which program components are having the greatest effect. Ultimately, creating a data collection system that reflects meaningful outcomes will help communicate principal indicators and facilitate the transfer of knowledge to inform decision-makers on key issues affecting the target population.

## II. MECHANISMS TO COLLECT PROGRAM SPECIFIC DATA

Program managers must identify mechanisms to collect program specific data, such as data collection tools and data management systems. In order for selected mechanisms to be effective, program managers must consider the needs of the organization and staff.

Traditional methods of tracking quantitative data include pen and paper, spreadsheets, and computerized data management systems. In today's society, using a pen and paper system is not only outdated, but also creates chaos when attempting to compile and analyze data.<sup>7</sup> Spreadsheets are effective for tracking simple variables, but can fall short if an organization needs to track progress and produce reports on interrelated indicators.<sup>8</sup> Computerized data management systems are more sophisticated and complex than spreadsheets, and offer a range of options to help organizations track outcome data and program performance (see *exhibit 3 and appendix B*).<sup>9</sup>

There are several components organizations typically require from a data management system: *a user-friendly interface; accessibility; case management and tracking capabilities; the ability to collect multiple variables; compatibility to import/upload external data; and reporting and data visualization options.*

### EXHIBIT 3: DATA COLLECTION SOFTWARE<sup>10</sup>

- **Spreadsheets** – Microsoft Excel, GoogleDocs Spreadsheets
- **Software** – Microsoft Access, FileMakerPro, SQL, Oracle
- **Report Builders** – Jasper Reports, Crystal Reports
- **Data Visualization** – Tableau, ManyEyes
- **Dashboard** – ClickView, GoodData
- **Advanced Quantitative Analysis** – SAS, SPSS, R
- **Qualitative Analysis** – NVivo, STATA, Cognitive Edge SenseMaker

## User-Friendly Interface

The interface of the data management tool should be straightforward and easy to navigate. Staff with varying levels of computer skills should be able to easily navigate the system and efficiently complete data entry tasks.

## Accessibility

For organizations that frequently conduct services in the field, a data system that is accessible online from any location is critical. Systems that provide online access to the database enable staff to enter data from a mobile phone or a laptop computer while working in the community. Accessibility should be balanced with appropriate information security policies and procedures (see *appendix C*).

## Case Management and Tracking

As much of the data collected by service providers are at the client level, it is imperative that organizations are able to conduct case management and track client progress over time. For example, the organization may need to track progress concerning referrals to other services and changes in risk factors, youth goals, criminal and violent activity, education, employment, housing and family situations, substance use, and/or mental health needs.<sup>11</sup>

### Consideration 2: Connecting Disconnected Youth to Services

*Conducting case management and tracking progress is essential for community-based organizations working with high-risk youth. Many organizations operating these types of programs have access to youth who traditional providers have difficulty reaching. These programs employ credible messengers from the community as Outreach Workers in order to reach disconnected youth by meeting them on the streets, building relationships, and earning the youth's trust through consistency and follow through. Once an Outreach Worker has gained a youth's trust, they can assess the youth's needs and make referrals to appropriate services. Given this unique access to disconnected youths, the violence prevention programs often act as an entryway to additional wrap-around services. Having the ability to track progress and associated outcomes would enable an organization to show if the youth's needs were met, the organizations' ability to coordinate services, and which community partners are essential to this process.*

## Multiple Variables

Given the wide range of services violence prevention programs provide, it is essential to capture multiple variables related to individual participants, program components, and community level data. For example, in addition to participant-specific demographics and risk factors, an organization may want to collect community violence indicators (such as homicides, shootings and stabbings), and the number of conflict mediations and violence interruptions.

## Importing External Data

If the organization relies on external data sources from agencies such as law enforcement or schools in order to inform programming decisions, the data management system should have the capability to easily upload/import data from these external sources. This capability will facilitate the creation of a more comprehensive database that contains and generates data from multiple sources in a variety of forms, providing a richer description of youth needs and circumstances.

## Reporting and Data Visualization

In addition to capturing multiple data indicators, organizations must have the ability to present the data. The data management system should have capabilities that enable the organization to produce a wide variety of reports for internal performance monitoring and for partners, funders, and the media.

Some data management systems may not have the capabilities to meet all of the organization's reporting needs. If an organization decides to implement a data management system without the capability to produce the needed reports, add-on report building software may be considered.<sup>12</sup> General-purpose reporting tools allow users to link various data sources and produce simple reports.

In addition to report builders, applications that make data visually appealing and easy to absorb are also available. These applications enable an organization to create interactive charts and data visualizations that can be embedded on a website or offer dashboard tools which enable users to create visual summaries of consolidated key indicators at certain points in time.<sup>13</sup>

For organizations that need to display data on a map, geographical information systems (GIS) allow users to plot variables in this format. For example, many violence prevention programs track shootings in the community. By utilizing GIS software, an organization could create maps that showcase variables affecting shootings, such as time of day and day of the week, geographical features (e.g., visibility, dead-end), and conduct analyses to identify trends.

Utilizing an assortment of report builders and visualization tools provides the ability to showcase an organization's work in a variety of forms, affording them the opportunity to appeal to a range of stakeholders and internally review data with staff in an exciting and relatable manner.

The need for add-on software will vary depending on the type of data management system an organization selects, the types of data that need to be collected and the levels of analysis desired. At a minimum, the selected data management system should enable staff to effortlessly query data and perform data exports. These two features will allow organizations to easily share data and analyze specific indicators as needed.

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### III. PROCESSES TO FACILITATE ANALYSIS, FEEDBACK, AND GUIDANCE

Once data indicators and data collection mechanisms are selected, the organization must develop processes to facilitate data analysis, feedback, and guidance. These processes should seek to operationalize the CompStat principles: 1) accurate, timely intelligence clearly communicated to all; 2) a rapid deployment that is concentrated, synchronized, and focused; 3) effective tactics and strategies; and 4) relentless follow-up and assessment.<sup>14</sup>

Depending on the organization's needs, these processes may include *assigning analysis tasks*, *setting the frequency of reporting*, and *scheduling staff meetings to review data and provide feedback and guidance*.<sup>15</sup>

#### Assigning Tasks

Program managers should ensure that data are regularly analyzed and reviewed. This should include requiring all staff who are responsible for data collection and entry to review and clean data, research staff preparing pre-reporting analysis to identify any inaccuracies, and determining which managers are responsible for reviewing data and analysis.

#### Frequency of Reporting and Review

Depending on the organization's needs, reporting and review schedules could be daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc. As mentioned above, some staff may be required to produce reports and review data more or less frequently based on their assigned responsibilities. The frequency of reporting should be adequate to allow program managers to respond to any issues that arise before they become serious problems.

## Staff Meetings

Staff meetings should focus on using data to improve performance and increase accountability among staff. During these meetings, data on strategies and outcomes should be reviewed and analyzed to identify trends and discuss the various interpretations of data.<sup>16</sup> Staff should be praised for positive outcomes and view meetings as an opportunity to share success stories and learn from co-workers.<sup>17</sup> From these meetings, organizations will be able to monitor performance and determine if strategies are effective in reducing violence, meeting youth needs, and achieving organizational goals. Further, these meetings can equip program managers with the tools needed to identify effective strategies and trends related to program participants and the organization as a whole. This information will in turn provide managers with greater capacity to deploy resources, resolve problems, and respond to community-specific needs.

### Consideration 3: Building Staff Capacity

*A large factor that influences an organization's ability to use data is the internal skill sets held by staff. Organizations often find it difficult to divert resources away from providing services and deploy resources to development of long-term organizational goals, such as data collection and program planning, if there is not a pressing need to direct attention and energy to these objectives.<sup>18</sup>*

*Moreover, organizations often have limited funding for training. To implement data collection and management systems, organizations typically need to provide staff trainings on spreadsheets, research methods, database software systems, program evaluation, and computer programs in general.<sup>19</sup> Without these proficiencies it can be overwhelming and difficult to decide what information to collect, how to manage the data collected, and how to analyze and utilize the data.*

*Community-based organizations do not necessarily require research and data practices informed by theory, but rather practical methods that allow the identification of trends and the ability to develop best practices.<sup>20</sup>*

**The combination of implementing a data management system and adopting processes that facilitate analysis, feedback and guidance will ultimately allow program managers to take informed action and keep the organization focused on results.<sup>21</sup>**

## HOW COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Once an organization has implemented a CompStat-based data management system, program managers can apply the data collected to inform policies at various stages of development including: inception, review, and post-implementation impact assessments.<sup>22</sup>

### Consideration 4: Long-Term Goals & Benefits

*By attending to long-term goals, a culture can be created that facilitates greater responsiveness to changing conditions within the community and beyond. This process will contribute to the long-term benefits of being able to serve more participants, offer more programs, and employ more staff.<sup>23</sup>*

**Service providers can contribute to feasible and evidence-informed policy development by:**

- **Facilitating a mutual understanding of goals and cultures among stakeholders;**
- **Working collaboratively with stakeholders to identify problems and gaps in service;**
- **Developing internal capacity for data collection and analysis;**
- **Constructing systems that make data easily transferable and facilitates the use of shared data;**
- **Assisting stakeholders with data synthesis and analysis; and**
- **Monitoring of the impact of evidence-informed policymaking.<sup>24</sup>**

Implementing a strategic approach to evidence-informed policymaking will facilitate a more coordinated effort among stakeholders, which can minimize the duplication of efforts and maximize the use of resources available to a selected need.<sup>25</sup> Further, the availability of data and research can help to identify gaps in service and aid in the prioritization of responses and development of mechanisms to address unveiled issues.<sup>26</sup>

**In the process of implementing such an approach, the capacities of direct service organizations will naturally build and in turn have effects on access to funding, create a data savvy workforce and improve program performance and best practices through a commitment to utilizing data. The combination of these factors will ultimately lead to better services and meeting the needs of youth more completely.<sup>27</sup> Including service providers in decision-making processes will also maximize the expertise gained from working directly with youth, to create more informed policies that seek to improve the lives of youth.**

### **Consideration 5: Importance of Internal Capacity for Data Management**

*When organizations do not develop internal data capacities, they can be left at the mercy of outsiders who can impose performance measures in exchange for resources without the consideration and understanding of what is truly a valuable measure of success in the context of the specific service delivery method.<sup>28</sup> By increasing the internal capacity of service providers to manage data, organizations can become less dependent on external sources, have the opportunity to empower program staff, and be able to provide support to other organizations in the community.<sup>29</sup>*

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## **CONCLUSION**

Implementation of a CompStat-based data management system would provide decision-makers with the necessary intelligence to implement and sponsor effective strategies to stem crew violence. Such a system would also allow community-based organizations to offer the best services possible, while empowering them to do more than ever as the frontline in this fight.

Organizations can increase internal capacity to understand the effectiveness of their interventions and help maximize their ability to reach the intended high-risk population. Ongoing data collection and analysis can also enable organizations to make adjustments in programming, and allow them to respond to their communities as needed. Further, the tracking and sharing of data throughout the organization – combined with regular review and analysis – will facilitate the identification of strengths and weaknesses.

Finally, adopting a civilian CompStat management system for violence prevention programs will also improve organizations' abilities to proactively develop, implement, and test problem-solving strategies and interventions.

But, without a serious investment in data-gathering and a system to manage and facilitate information sharing, New York will be unable to take a sophisticated – and far more effective – approach to preventing crew violence. Luckily, the method is already well-established and organizations already have access to the information needed. Now we just need to commit to a straightforward effort to put them together.

## APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF KEY DATA INDICATORS

TOPIC	QUESTION	INDICATORS
Living Situation	Where does the participant normally sleep?	(check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Participant's Own Apartment/House <input type="checkbox"/> Family's Home <input type="checkbox"/> Girlfriend/Boyfriend's Home <input type="checkbox"/> Friend's Home <input type="checkbox"/> Motel/Hotel <input type="checkbox"/> No Stable Residence (Street, Car, Park, Abandoned Building, Couch Surfing, Other (List)) <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhere Else (List)
Family	Does the participant have children? If yes, is the participant currently parenting his/her children?	Yes/No Yes/No
Support Network	Describe key supportive relationships, both those in the home and outside of the home:	Supportive Individual (Name, Age, Job/Grade, Relationship to Participant, In-Home/Outside-Home); Frequency of Contact (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, A Few Times Per Year, Once A Year); Other Pertinent Information (History of Violence, Affiliations, Other (List))
Goals	What types of goals does the participant have?	(check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Job Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational/Training <input type="checkbox"/> Substance Use <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Health <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Activities <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Anger Management <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence <input type="checkbox"/> Street Violence <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation/Public Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Housing/Independent Living <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships (Peers, Spouse, Family, Other (List)) <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting <input type="checkbox"/> Other (List)
Activities	Is the participant involved in any recreational activities? What talents, passions, and hobbies does the participant have?	Yes/No Talents/Passions/Hobbies (List)
Documents	Does the participant need any documentation or paperwork?	(check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> State Photo ID <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Card <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Green Card <input type="checkbox"/> Working Papers <input type="checkbox"/> Other (List)

TOPIC	QUESTION	INDICATORS
Services	Is this participant receiving services from another agency? If yes, what types of services are they receiving and which agencies are providing services? Is the participant satisfied with these services?	Yes/No Type of Services (List) Service Agency (List) Satisfaction Level (Yes/No)
Education	What is the last grade completed by the participant? Is the participant currently enrolled in school or training?	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/> 6th <input type="checkbox"/> 7th <input type="checkbox"/> 8th <input type="checkbox"/> 9th <input type="checkbox"/> 10th <input type="checkbox"/> 11th <input type="checkbox"/> 12th <input type="checkbox"/> High School Graduate <input type="checkbox"/> High School Equivalency Diploma (GED) <input type="checkbox"/> Some College <input type="checkbox"/> College Graduate Yes/No
Employment	Is the participant currently employed? If not, does the participant need job readiness programming?	Yes/No Yes/No
Mental Health	Has the participant ever been evaluated for a mental illness? If yes, was there a diagnosis? If yes, what was the diagnosis?	Yes/No Yes/No Diagnosis (List)
Health	Does the participant have any physical or medical problems/disabilities? If yes, is the physical/medical problem the result of a violent incident?	Yes/No Type of Violent Incident (Shooting, Stabbing, Assault, Car Accident, Other (List))
Substance Use	Does the participant have a history of substance use? If yes, what types of substances has the participant used? Is the participant currently using substances?	Yes/No Types of Substances - Prior (List) Types of Substances - Current (List)
Criminal History	Does the participant have prior criminal justice involvement? Is the participant currently involved with the legal system?	Yes/No Yes/No
Crew Involvement	Is the participant thought to be a member of a crew known to be actively involved in violence? What indicates this participant is involved in a crew?	(check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Self Identification <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal History <input type="checkbox"/> Community Knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Other (List)
Victimization	Has the participant been a victim of a shooting within the past 90 days?	Yes/No
Domestic Violence	Is there any evidence or reason to believe that the participant is currently the victim or perpetrator of domestic violence?	Yes/No



## APPENDIX B: DATA MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

### Off-the-Shelf Packages

There are multiple data management software systems designed for service providers that are ready-made in off-the-shelf packages. These packages are often desirable to organizations because they have been tested and proven reliable—and training and technical assistance is usually included by the software company.<sup>30</sup>

These software packages are available in two forms:

- installed software - which is housed on the organization's computer or network server; and
- web-based software - which is hosted off-site and accessible via the internet.<sup>31</sup>

While these packages work well for some, organizations need to consider whether the package meets program specific data collection needs.<sup>32</sup> Organizations should inquire if the software package:

- includes all the relevant indicators;
- produces the needed reports;
- produces data visualizations; and/or
- tracks necessary program performance.

### Custom Databases

Since tracking community violence is not a mainstream focus of the larger human services industry, the off-the-shelf software packages might not be able to satisfy the data collection needs of violence prevention programs. If an organization's service delivery is not captured in the ready-made packages, or requires some other tailored reporting, a customized database should be considered. Customizable databases can be built using software such as Microsoft Access and FileMakerPro, which provide a basic set of tools in order to build custom systems, select data indicators, and include reporting options. Alternatively, platforms such as SQL Server and Oracle allow an organization to build an entire database from scratch.<sup>33</sup>

When organizations implement a custom-built database, it is essential to build internal capacity to manage the data system, as the organization will be responsible for maintaining and updating the database, or acquiring technical support.<sup>34</sup>

### Statistical Analysis Software

If an organization requires more advanced quantitative statistical evidence than general report builders permit, the use of statistical analysis tools such as SAS, SPSS, or R should be considered.<sup>35</sup>

### Qualitative Analysis Software

If organizations have an abundance of qualitative data from interviews, case notes, social media posts, and/or pictures, that require analysis, software such as NVivo, STATA, or Cognitive Edge SenseMaker can be employed to organize concepts and provide quantitative data and other analyses.<sup>36</sup>



## APPENDIX C: INFORMATION SECURITY

Given the sensitivity of information collected by community-based programs, it is important to ensure that appropriate information security policies and procedures are in place. Appropriate policies are any practices that employees and other third parties with access to the information should follow to protect the data; meanwhile procedures include any appropriate technical and managerial controls put in place to prevent acts such as data theft. Such policies and procedures should ensure adherence to the three primary security principles: *confidentiality*, *integrity*, and *availability of data*:

### Confidentiality

Data confidentiality controls should be in place to maintain the privacy of sensitive information by ensuring that only authorized users have access to data. It is important to have very specific policies in place about how to protect client confidentiality. This is particularly important for programs that collect data on participants' criminal behavior because it could be subpoenaed for use in a criminal case.

Examples of data confidentiality policies include:

- Requiring employees to sign a confidentiality agreement stating that they will never share sensitive information with any unauthorized users;
- Restricting employees from downloading and storing confidential information unless encrypted on their personal computers, external hard drives, portable drives, CD/DVDs, or any removable device;
- Requiring that all printed confidential data must be shredded or disposed of into locked bins; and
- Restricting employees from taking printed or unencrypted confidential data off-site.

Examples of data confidentiality procedures include:

- Encrypting fields that are particularly sensitive, such as incarceration data fields or personal identifier fields (e.g., birth dates);
- Password protecting databases; and
- Keeping paper records in locked file cabinets.

### Integrity

Data integrity controls are necessary to ensure that data are not intentionally or erroneously changed to inaccurate data. This is important because an error in fields – such as participation in a shooting or service needs – could misinform case planning and could result in inaccurate outcome analyses. An example of a data integrity policy is “double data entry”, which requires one person to enter new data and a second person to verify that the data are correct. Many data management systems have built-in checks for problems such as transposition errors or mismatches between data (such as birth date and age) to provide procedural support to an organization's data integrity management efforts.

### Availability

Data availability controls ensure that the data are available only to authorized users when needed. An example of a data availability policy is to monitor network traffic and to have an agreement to invest in more bandwidth once the network is at, for example, 80% capacity.

In addition to consideration of policies and procedures to ensure adherence to security principles, organizations should also ensure that there are security controls at three levels: *prevention*, *detection*, and *correction*:

## Prevention

It is critically important to prevent both errors and malicious acts against the data before they happen—the more investment in preventative controls the better. Preventative controls include:

- Password protected applications where appropriate;
- Encryption of sensitive data;
- Use of firewalls;
- Downloading software patches when available; and
- Using anti-malware applications.

## Detection and Correction

It is also important that organizations have contingency plans in the event that there is a problem. Organizations should have the ability to detect errors in the data when they occur, and have a plan for correcting the errors that does not compromise the integrity of all data in the system. Accordingly, organizations should schedule regular backups of data, consider using intrusion detection and prevention systems, and utilize applications such as audit logs, which enable organizations to recreate a chain of events if there is ever a problem.

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CITIZENS CRIME COMMISSION  
OF NEW YORK CITY

## ASSESSING NEW YORK CITY'S YOUTH GUN VIOLENCE CRISIS: CREWS

VOLUME II

# COMPSTAT FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

COLLECTING PROGRAM SPECIFIC DATA TO  
MANAGE PERFORMANCE AND INFORM POLICY

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**THE CITIZENS CRIME COMMISSION OF NEW YORK CITY IS A NON-PARTISAN NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION WORKING TO MAKE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY POLICIES AND PRACTICES MORE EFFECTIVE THROUGH INNOVATION, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION.**

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