

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION
**REDUCING
GUN VIOLENCE
IN PRICE HILL**



Ideas and insights from residents of
East Price Hill, as told to the
Cincinnati Works Phoenix Program



ABOUT THE CINCINNATI WORKS PHOENIX PROGRAM

Cincinnati Works is a non-profit dedicated to helping our neighbors in poverty find stability through employment and financial coaching, including resources to help with work-related challenges.

The Phoenix Program is an initiative to end gun violence by offering an alternative to the street life, including mentoring and leadership opportunities, in addition to the standard Cincinnati Works coaching and support services.

During his many outreach events, Phoenix Program coordinator Mitch Morris would often ask the community, "What do you think are solutions to the gun violence in your neighborhood?" In early 2022, Cincinnati Works decided to expand on this and find community-led, place-based solutions to the gun violence in East Price Hill.

ABOUT DESIGN IMPACT

Design Impact works with grant-makers, non-profits, government agencies, and community groups to tackle complex challenges. Their approach is rooted in social justice and human-centered design, so that the people most affected by inequity are involved in all steps of the problem-solving process.



THE PROCESS

Cincinnati Works and Design Impact both believe that a community led, participatory action research methodology is the best way to find sustainable and long-lasting solutions to social issues. For this reason, the CW core team recruited, interviewed, and hired six community facilitators who all had deep connections to East Price Hill and its surrounding areas. Design Impact Principal Executive Teresa Gonzalez and Director Desire Bennett assisted with the creation and facilitation of a training session for the community facilitators and development of a 20-question interview guide. From May to July of 2022, these facilitators interviewed their neighbors and other East Price Hill residents. During this time facilitators were paid \$50 per hour and each person interviewed received \$50 for their time.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

East Price Hill was selected due to the volume of gun violence in the neighborhood, Mitch Morris's ongoing work within the community, and lack of organizations and programming imbedded in the neighborhood. According to the City of Cincinnati, there were 15 shootings in 2022. Over the past four years, there have been 68 shootings – the 6th highest total among 52 neighborhoods in Cincinnati.



1-ON-1 INTERVIEWS

Facilitators conducted 110 1-on-1 interviews between May and June 2022

RACE/ETHNICITY

54% African-American / Black
27% White
16% Latino
3% two or more



GENDER

66% Female
34% Male

AGE

18 - 29: 20
30 - 44: 41
45 - 64: 26
65+: 5

ZIP CODE

45202	1
45204	7
45205	26
45211	11
45223	2
45224	1
45225	7
45238	5

COMMUNITY EVENT

On September 17, 2022, Cincinnati Works hosted an ideation session at the Price Hill Recreation Center to present the themes and opportunities discovered in the community interviews and engage stakeholders in discussion. Feedback and solutions shared at that event informed the insight on the ensuing pages.





THEME 1: COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Community members are not aware of existing resources to prevent gun violence.

- 82% of interviewees could not name a single organization doing gun violence prevention. The remaining 18% of interviewees named a variety of individuals and organizations, including:
 - Cincinnati Police Department District 3, Moms Demand Action, Shot Spotter, Price Hill Safety CAT, Price Hill Will, Santa Maria, Price Hill Library, Price Hill Rec Center, Cincinnati Works, Boys to Men United, Bully Proof, Pastor Mingo, Pastor Jackson
- Only 6% of interviewees could think of information available to the community about gun violence, and only 1 interviewee felt confident that they could easily access necessary information about gun violence.

“There is none in the community. You would have to Google or ask around, because at this moment I have no clue.”

Opportunities:

- How might we provide better access to resources that exist and increase resources?
- How might we provide resources in culturally and linguistically responsive ways (i.e. Spanish)?

Solutions:

- **Peer support:** Find and engage individuals who are bridge-builders in the neighborhood and enable them to reach out to diverse populations to connect to needed resources.
- Improve **communication and info-sharing** to the public through a variety of means:
 - App or central website, with information translated in Spanish
 - Through schools and other neighborhood organizations.
- Increased resources for **parents and families**, including parenting classes, childcare, and gun safety.



THEME 2: YOUTH ACTIVITIES

"Violence among youth is a concern. They need diverse, constructive, accessible activities, from sports to trades to music and art."

Youth in our community do not have sufficient opportunities to be safe, healthy and productive

When asked about obstacles to gun violence prevention and potential solutions, youth violence and the need for youth activities were common answers.

Opportunities:

- How might we increase access and affordability for youth activities to keep them off the streets
- How might we create more opportunities for youth to be valued as leaders in our community?

Solutions

- Increase access to **free or reduced-cost sports**:
 - Local organizations sponsor community teams
 - Create a youth council or advocacy team to work with community council and local organizations to get ideas generated directly from the youth.
- Create programs for and **encourage entrepreneurship**, mentorship, and pursuit of trades.
- Offer gun-violence-prevention **programming** in schools.

"Educate youth on self-love/care, educate youth on ways to manage conflict resolution properly, educate youth on ways to stay safe and alive."





THEME 3: POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

“Being afraid to speak up is a big problem. I don’t blame them! Who gonna protect the speaker if the victim wasn’t protected?”

Community members are not reporting gun violence incidents to the police due to a lack of trust or fear of retribution

When asked, *What is the biggest obstacle to ending gun violence in East Price Hill?*, the most common answer was the reluctance to “snitch” or work with the police. Yet, when asked to whom would an individual turn first for help, 52% of interviewees named the police.

The Hispanic community is reluctant to report an incident to the police because of a fear of being deported. Some believe this has made them a target for theft or abuse.

“As Hispanic, we want to support but we are afraid. As immigrants, we think that it can affect us. We prefer not to call the police or report a crime because we think we might be arrested and be deported back to our country.”

Opportunities:

- How might we improve trust and relationships between law enforcement and community?
- How might we reduce our reliance on police?

Solutions:

- Create magnets with **phone numbers** for resources other than police that community members can call during a crisis or emergency. Distribute these to the community through schools and community events.
- Create more opportunities for police and residents to **connect socially**.
- Increase **police visibility**, including more frequent walking and/or biking patrols.

THEME 4: TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

“I know we cry out for help because we need it, but we don’t know who to actually talk to.”

Individuals and families impacted by gun violence need trauma-informed support and intervention

When asked if they were aware of resources available for community members (including children) who have experienced trauma or mental health issues related to gun violence, 62% of interviewees were not aware of any.

Many Spanish-speaking interviewees answered that they were not aware of any services available in Spanish.

Opportunities:

- How might we increase knowledge and access to trauma informed resources, services and support?
- How might we create a trauma informed response for those who are engaging with violence survivors?

Solutions:

- Increase mental-health interventions in schools.
- Create and utilize a messaging app that can be used after a crisis that includes a database of available resources and translates information to different languages.
- Train neighborhood leaders to be mental-health advocates.





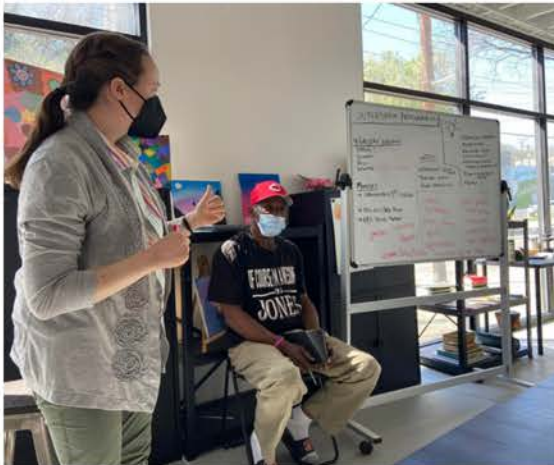
OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe the City should fund ...

- Organizations that work with Spanish-speaking populations, to increase their reach and services.
- Opportunities for the East Price Hill community and District 3 Police to connect and build trust, in collaboration with existing organizations and the East Price Hill Improvement Association.
- A central database that shares important resources and current information, translated into Spanish.

Invest in Leaders

In many interviews, community members expressed a desire to be more informed and involved, but they did not have information on how to do so.



We recommend supporting leaders in the East Price Hill neighborhood to build and sustain a community group similar to the Neighborhood Action Team in Lower Price Hill, which was launched and initially led by Community Matters.

A similar team in East Price Hill could:

- Disseminate important information
- Train mental-health advocates
- Lift the voices of young people, people of color, and immigrants

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Engage Neighborhood Kids

The youth of East Price Hill lack communal spaces and age-appropriate activities. Many community members expressed concern about increasing youth violence. So we recommend creating and expanding youth-led programming in the neighborhood.

We believe funding should go to organizations already working with youth, to expand into East Price Hill or increase existing service in the neighborhood.

Examples of these organizations include:

- Cincinnati Youth Collaborative
- Boys & Girls Club
- Santa Maria Family Center
- MyCincinnati



Funding should also be increased for organizations like the East Price Hill Recreation Center to host youth-centered activities on subjects like learning a trade, entrepreneurship, money management, and mental health.

Inform and Intervene Via Neighborhood Schools

We found an overall lack of knowledge of accessible information on gun violence and mental-health services. During our community ideation session, multiple people suggested increasing information and intervention within neighborhood schools. This should include:

- Adding an age-appropriate gun violence curriculum
 - Straight Talk About Risks (STAR), Center to Prevent Handgun Violence - Washington, D.C.
 - Addressing Gun Violence - Lighthouse Community Charter School
- Provide mental-health services and trauma-informed care targeted to victims of violence.
- Distribute relevant information to parents in both English and Spanish.

CORE TEAM



Sam Dewald
Senior Project Manager



Terana Boyd
Customer Experience Coordinator



Jordan Johnson
Staffing Specialist



Scott Priestle
Marketing & Communications
Manager



Mitch Morris
Phoenix Program, Outreach &
Mentoring Coordinator



Teresa Gonzalez
Principal, Design Impact



COMMUNITY FACILITATORS



Danny Burrige



Donnie Gresham



English McMullen



Cindy Shields



Mayra Velazquez



Brenda Zechmeister



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We heard from many interviewees that there are organizations and individuals that are doing work to reduce gun violence, get resources out to the community, and provide support during crisis. We would like to highlight these community leaders and suggest that their work continue to be supported in meaningful ways.

- Santa Maria Community Center
- Price Hill Will
- Community Matters
- BLOC Ministries
- Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health
- Fernside Center for Grieving Children
- Su Casa Hispanic Center Services
- Reverend Peterson Mingo
- Moms Demand Action
- Boys to Men United
- BullyProof Youth Supporters
- Beech Acres
- Price Hill Library
- Women Helping Women
- Price Hill Safety CAT
- Pastor Jackie Jackson
- Stefan Pryor
- Price Hill Recreation Center



COMMUNITY
MATTERS



"We all need to be active participants in getting gun violence under control. I'd love to hear leaders speak up frequently (not just election time) telling us what is being done."



**THANK
YOU**



708 Walnut St, Cincinnati OH 45202



513-744-5627



www.cincinnatiworks.org