

NEW ORLEANS: COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROOT CAUSES OF VIOLENCE

A PROGRAM FUNDED BY THE BUSH CLINTON KATRINA FUND



CommonHealth *ACTION*



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Acknowledgements

CommonHealth ACTION deeply appreciates the numerous stakeholders and partners of all ages from the city of New Orleans who graciously shared their time, experiences, and ideas in this endeavor. Additionally, we express our sincere gratitude to the Bush Clinton Katrina Fund and the Greater New Orleans Foundation for their generous grant support. CommonHealth ACTION leveraged these resources to convene stakeholders from human services agencies, local government, non-profits, local colleges/universities, community based organizations, youth, and other grassroots entities to identify root causes of violence.

As a product of that convening, this report highlights recommendations from key youth and adult stakeholders on ways to prevent future violence in the city, particularly as it relates to children and youth. We hope the ensuing report will serve as a tool for community leaders and organizations actively in pursuit of ending the senseless violence that hinders the city's full recovery and limits health and quality of life for its children, youth, and families. Additionally, we hope this report adds value to the ongoing violence prevention efforts currently underway by the health department, the PLACE MATTERS initiative and other relevant interventions led by community leaders. Finally, given the nature of the topic, recognizing that much of its contents are of a negative nature, we offer this report in the true spirit of healing for a more positive future.

CommonHealth ACTION

Building on over two decades of learning from health systems improvement initiatives, CommonHealth ACTION's philosophy guides its practice to invest in people and dedicate available resources to those most affected by inequities in health and well-being. A registered non-profit in the District of Columbia, CommonHealth ACTION serves as a catalyst and intermediary for the development of community generated solutions nationwide.

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Violence as a Significant Public Health Issue

As of May 31, 2009, 80 murders had been documented in New Orleans¹. In 2007, the city reported 71 murders per 100,000 people² compared to six per 100,000 for the rest of the country³. Apart from these unsettling murders featured on the nightly news, New Orleans continues to struggle with a growing epidemic of domestic and interpersonal violence often resulting from stress related to incomplete recovery efforts from Hurricane Katrina, economic and housing challenges, the loss of community and neighborhoods, fragmented and broken familial structures, struggling schools, and untreated mental health issues. Violence in New Orleans is an insidious public health crisis that jeopardizes the city, its residents, and their future.

Children and youth are particularly impacted by this emerging culture of violence, as minors are too often victims of domestic and street violence. Unfortunately, increasing numbers of children and youth are presenting to school and social service employees, with stories of victimization and fear related to violent personal experiences and witnessing violence in their environment. The lack of trained mental health professionals available to treat victims and perpetrators presents significant challenges for neighborhoods, teachers, social service workers, city administrators, and parents. Absent treatment, many victims continue to be victimized and perpetrators continue to prey on others until they enter the penal system with little hope for rehabilitation.

During the stakeholder meeting, CommonHealth ACTION engaged participants in dialogue to identify root causes of violence in New Orleans and to seek upstream interventions, that target prevention. Although there was clear acknowledgement that an increased police presence could serve as a deterrent, most participants believe that prevention will be most successful when planned and implemented collaboratively, at the neighborhood and city levels, and as part of a comprehensive strategy to mitigate social factors that currently fuel violent behavior, in and outside of domestic relationships. Critical to the success of such an approach are: the re-building and strengthening of mental health services so they are widely available; the continued re-establishment of the communal culture that served as an anchor and stabilizing force for most New Orleans neighborhoods and families, and strong, trusted, and respected formal and informal leadership at the city-wide and neighborhood levels.

Definition of Violence for this Report

There are several valid definitions of violence. For the purpose of this report, we will highlight the following definitions:

The Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA) of the World Health Organization defines violence as, “The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group

1 McCarthy, Brendan. (June 1, 2009). Despite drop in crime, New Orleans' murder rate continues to lead nation. Nola.com. Retrieved July, 2009 from http://www.nola.com/news/index.ssf/2009/06/despite_drop_in_crime_new_orle.html.

2 Associated Press. (January 1, 2008). New Orleans murder rate gets even worse. CBSNews.com. Retrieved June, 2009 from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/01/01/national/main3665137.shtml>.

3 2007 Crime in the United States. Number of Crimes per 100,000 inhabitants, by Population Group 2007, Table 16. Retrieved August 2009 from http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2007/data/table_16.html.



or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.”⁴

The VPA has three violence sub-types based on the victim-perpetrator relationship that were used to guide the stakeholders’ discussion and resulting recommendations in this report:

- **Self-directed violence** refers to violence in which the perpetrator and the victim are the same individual and is subdivided into *self-abuse* and *suicide*.
- **Interpersonal violence** refers to violence between individuals, and is subdivided into *family and intimate partner violence* and *community violence*. The former category includes child maltreatment; intimate partner violence; and elder abuse. While the latter is broken down into *acquaintance* and *stranger* violence and includes youth violence; assault by strangers; violence related to property crimes, and violence in workplaces and other institutions.
- **Collective violence** refers to violence committed by larger groups of individuals and can be subdivided into social, political, and economic violence.

Interpersonal youth violence, as defined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is defined as “The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person or against a group or community that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation” (Dahlberg and Krug 2002).⁵

Approach

CommonHealth ACTION conducted two (2) focus groups of adult and youth stakeholders to share their perspectives about violence taking place in New Orleans. CommonHealth ACTION researchers informed participants that their perspectives and recommendations would help inform an emerging citywide strategy to address the root causes of violent crimes in a post-Katrina environment. The meetings were convened on May 7, 2009 at the Westin Canal Place in New Orleans, Louisiana.

During the early afternoon, adult participants were lead in a two-part facilitated discussion. The first segment focused on information gathering followed by exploration of recommendations that would inspire public and private collaboration. During Part I of the four hour meeting, the structured dialogue focused on gathering information about the current state of violence; who the groups most affected were and the social, political and economic determinants that have affected violence in New Orleans (see questions in Appendix 3). Facilitated questions during the second segment focused on current efforts to reduce violence in New Orleans, structures and leadership that support and challenge effective violence prevention initiatives and specific ways to address violence prevention in the city (see questions in Appendix 3). The adult meeting concluded with a brief meeting evaluation.

4 Violence Prevention Approach. 2009. Definition and Typology of Violence. Retrieved May 17, 2009 from <http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/index.html>.

5 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (May 13, 2009). Definitions of Youth Violence. Retrieved August 3, 2009 from <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/youthviolence/definitions.html>.



Later that evening, youth participants engaged in a two-hour focus group that explored their thoughts on the current state of violence in New Orleans, their recommendations for reducing violence, and their general thoughts about life in post-Katrina New Orleans. Researchers led a facilitated dialogue about the nature of violence the youth experienced, or witnessed, its effects on their lives, and their ideas about addressing the causes of violence in schools and neighborhoods. The group concluded by exploring issues of hope associated with a more peaceful future.

Participants

CommonHealth ACTION invited 24 adults to the Violence Prevention meeting, of which eight attended; all 15 of the 15 youth invited attended. Adult key stakeholders invited to the meeting consisted of individuals who live or work in New Orleans, including: leaders of community organizations, staff from the New Orleans Health Department, clergy, non-profits, local judges, and staff from the Louisiana Public Health Institute. Adults who were invited to this meeting and directly worked in their communities were asked to identify 2-3 youth participants who could participate in a conversation about the state of violence post-Katrina. Each adult who invited youth participants distributed consent forms to the parents or guardian of youth under the age of 18 before the meeting and the youth submitted their signed consent forms before their meeting began. Youth participants attended New Orleans high schools and/or participated in community based programs. It was important to convene a conversation with youth about this issue because it was perceived that youth are both affected and one perpetrators of violent acts in the city, which are at high rates.

Impact of Violence on Recovery and Progress

Adult focus group participants offered the following observations regarding the impact of violence on progress and recovery for the city and its children:

- Violence is the most unrecognized recovery issue and the basic issues behind the problem which are not being dealt with effectively. The focus has been on government corruption and the levies, but the violence problem is pushed to the background.
- People are desensitized to violence on the news. Reporting is done about the criminal acts but no one actually seems to do anything about the issue.
- The issue impacts health in a couple of ways:
 - *Mental Health*: For children to cope with the aftermath of Katrina, they need to feel secure and safe. (An estimated) eighty percent of the children surveyed report hearing gunshots in their neighborhood. It is very difficult for children to deal with the situation if they feel unsafe. Additionally, youth do not just decide to be violent. This type of behavior is often steeped in mental illness. Schools have tried to address violence by increasing security guards, as opposed to counselors.
 - *Physical Health*: Children have very limited places to play (e.g., “walkable” or “bikable” spaces) because they do not feel safe. This limits their activity and damages their health.
- An alarming number of juveniles are committing crimes and agencies that provide resources for them have limited funding to address the issue.



- Violence is a primary reason many residents have either not returned, or have moved away and will not return, especially if they have children. This affects the ability of the city to recruit or retain a skilled workforce to move the city's recovery forward.

The adults in the focus group concurred with the opinion of the 2006 Tulane University study that the level of violence in the city increased drastically after the storm. Also they described the violence as being more intense, random, and more often occur within families and towards children. Prior to Katrina, there had always been a significant level of violence in New Orleans, however, the underlying factors contributing to violence have changed and intensified. According to one of the participants who work with at-risk youth in the city, when children vent about their problems, it is usually because of recovery-related issues. For example, youth are observing the frustration their parents or guardians express with not having jobs and not being able to provide for their families. These children then “act out” in school and in the community. Many of these violent behaviors also are linked to the traumas that both children and adults experienced because of the storm. However, in addition to other contributing factors, under-diagnosis of many of these behaviors and the consequent lack of early intervention further exacerbates the underlying issues.

An important observation emerged concerning the devastation to the city's infrastructure; as a result, facilities that historically engaged youth were no longer available (e.g., bowling alleys, movie theatres, parks, etc.). The youth in New Orleans have inadequate outlets to support positive youth development, and are surrounded by blight, which can be a rather depressing environment, have little hope for advancement, and consequently, experience significant frustration. Generally, participants believe that children in New Orleans lack a sense of security and stability necessary for positive development.

Participants noted that young African American males and increasing numbers of young females are most affected by violence. Often, these youth live in impoverished neighborhoods, such as Central City, where recovery efforts have made less progress. Often, violence occurs in households comprised of multiple families or extended families living in close quarters. Such situations can promote domestic violence and child abuse. Participants also recounted situations where there is more intergenerational violence (i.e. youth against adults), attacks from African Americans on the new migrant Hispanic population, and an increase in gang membership and activity.

Poverty continues to be a significant driver of violence. As one participant share, the general thought process behind many violent acts is “if you have it, and I need it, I'm taking it.” The shortage of living wage jobs continues to threaten the well-being of families. Many youth remain separated from their parents, often living with friends or on the street. Consequently, many youth drop out of school and must support themselves financially; unable to find jobs often they, resort to gangs, crime, and violence for survival.

Additionally, before the storm, many residents in poorer neighborhoods were struggling but had the support of family, friends, church, and others. These support systems have been drastically reduced, and in some instances, eliminated, since Katrina. For the youth who are in these precarious situations, the lack of stability presents a constant threat of homelessness. Both the economic and social factors propel them toward seeking refuge in gangs and criminal activity.

Several participants raised issues related to a lack of political stability and effective political leadership in New Orleans. A prime example of these challenges has resulted in an enormously complex array of public and private schools, with which many parents and students remain unclear as to how best to navigate.



The adult group shared the following observations about the current state of violence in New Orleans:

- Violence in the city is increasing to critical proportions, it is ongoing (i.e. not in cyclical), and random.
- It is manifesting itself in younger generations, specifically between young dating couples.
- Most youth accept the levels of violence as a way of life; it becomes part of their world.
- An overabundance of media coverage focused on crimes in the city which has de-sensitized many residents, and there is a general sense of powerlessness and hopelessness. People absorb the news then continue with their lives.
- Collectively, people do not know what to do or how to address the situation. People care but so many of them deal with chaos daily in their lives that they cannot stop to look at the larger picture. In general, many are just exhausted from the lack of stability and being over stimulated by constant exposure to the increased violence.
- Several participants expressed pessimism in immediate change as a result of the long-standing priorities associated with protecting tourism in the French Quarter. They urge city leaders to invest in efforts that benefit the entire city.

The youth discussed usual descriptors such as gangs, peer pressure, fighting/arguing, all types of abuse, drugs, drive-bys, kidnapping, jail, and other activities. Additionally, participants highlighted the following descriptors:

- Family Problems
- Neighborhoods
- Relationships
- Schools
- Law/Policemen/Crooked Cops
- Media
- Instability
- Isolation
- Racism
- Hate Crimes
- Politics

These descriptors offered by the youth clearly validate the observations from adult participants.

While adults did not make reference to the influx of the newer immigrant population to the city — i.e. Mexican workers — the youth raised this as one of the more significant issues facing the city. One participant was extremely steadfast in her stance that the ‘Mexicans should go home so that the African Americans would work. Other participants did not agree with her point of view, but did acknowledge an increase in violence against a growing Mexican population promulgated by African Americans as a result of competition for jobs.

Both youth and adults were cognizant of the increased, random violence in the city, and could identify many of the critical factors underlying violence. Several participants noted that residents are worn-out as a result of living in a constant state of unrest, inadequate family and city resources, and are constantly being barraged by accounts of random crimes in their beloved city, many are overwhelmed with their own personal issues and cannot envision how to address the larger violence problem. Further, they strongly believe the city government can provide greater focus and support in the violence prevention arena beyond the economic capacity-building efforts afoot.



Recommended Strategies from the Focus Groups

Typically, governing bodies react to violence by taking action within the purview of law enforcement. New Orleans' city officials have responded to this situation by increasing the resources for the police force and similar agencies. While these resources may also be helpful, meeting participants expressed concern that additional law enforcement presence simply cannot address the root causes of violence.

Both youth and adult focus groups had specific ideas about how the city could resolve the violence issue, or at the very least abate and/or reduce it significantly. The following strategies emerged from the youth discussion:

- Eliminate racial profiling.
- Reduce the amount of idle street time by creating more opportunities for youth engagement in activities.
- Work with the media to show more positive images of teens. The media should show positive images of ALL types of people.
- Reduce access to weapons and drugs; stop the supply pipelines.
- Work with youth to reduce the impact of negative peer pressure. Reduce gang membership and related incentives.
- Put political power in the city into the right hands; politicians should have more of an investment in the solving the violence problem.
- Provide better home lives for children, including having more father figures for young men and women.
- Parents need to show/teach children more tolerance.
- Remove those things that divide the community.
- Increase the level of respect in the city.
- African Americans need to have better knowledge about their race/history (this was specifically related to self-love and love within/for the community)

Approximately three-quarters of the youth plan to remain in New Orleans, whereas, one quarter indicated interest in relocating elsewhere. While those interested in relocating desired positive changes in the city, they did not have confidence in such improvements coming to fruition. A majority remained optimistic and planned to do their part to reclaim the city, while understanding that preventing violence in the city would be an arduous process.

The adults believe community residents know how best to address violence, and attribute a lack of progress to the uni-dimensional focus on the criminal justice system. Some in the media appear to share these frustrations and recently began an increased focus on positive aspects of the city and the recovery efforts by reaching out to local communities and organizations for more encouraging stories to report.

The participants identified systems and collaboratives already in place within the city that could help to prevent/reduce violence. For example:



- *The United Way of Greater New Orleans* provides funding and support for programs that serve youth. One of their programs, the *New Orleans Kids Partnership (NOKP)* is a collaborative of about eight (8) organizations that provide the children in the program with “caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, effective education and the opportunity to help others” [<http://www.unitedwaynola.org/stc/nokp.html>].
- *Greater New Orleans Afterschool Partnership* serves as an intermediary organization leveraging resources to programs that serve children and youth during *out of school* hours in New Orleans [<http://www.gnoafterschool.org/>].
- *New Orleans Outreach* seeks to improve the quality of public education at partner schools. They do this by linking volunteers and community resources through programs that respond to the needs of each school [<http://www.nooutreach.org/>].
- *Jefferson Cops and Clergy* serves as an educational clearinghouse for faith-based and community organizations interested in networking, learning about potential financing sources, and community event planning [<http://www.jpso.com/CopsClergy.aspx>].
- *Cops for Kids* is a free 8-week summer camp established by the New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation that targets children between the ages of 7 and 14 who live in housing developments [<http://www.nopjf.org/programs/copsforkids.asp>].

Other agencies and programs were mentioned in the discussion, clearly suggesting that there are available resources in the city to support violence prevention activities.

Adults offered the following recommendations:

- Identify ways to fill the idle time experienced by youth in the city on a large scale. One way could be to set up an Advisory Group to the city government that is run/staffed by youth. Engage them in the process of developing and implementing solutions to end violence perhaps beginning by convening a Youth Congress on Violence.
- Youth programs should be developed by youth for youth, and young people should be paid to do the work. This type of work should be specifically funded.
- Provide meaningful job opportunities for the youth so that they can see a future in the city.
- Document initiatives and efforts taking place in the city that address violence prevention (conduct asset mapping).
- Identify a “convener” or catalyst (i.e. an organization) with the power to bring people and organizations to the table to explore problems associated with the root causes of violence and to develop comprehensive strategies to alter these patterns. This local entity should be well-respected and poised to engage all sectors across the city. In addition, a governing structure for the collaborative should be established in and guided by rules of engagement. Most importantly, this effort must be funded in order to organize the movement and coordinate activities.
- A Leader: As with the civil rights movements in the past, there has to be one person leading the charge. Someone who is neutral, not a slave to the political, but is politically connected or can make those connections. In addition, this person will need to be paid since the job will require full time attention. The group suggested some other qualities for this individual:
 - Passionate about social change.
 - Must be an insider, who is, “One of us.”



- Motivator
- The person must have his/her ear to the ground and be “real.”
- Live in the community.
- Be a big picture visionary.
- Exhibits transparency and engenders trust.
- Charismatic
- Demonstrates Integrity.
- Can secure the community’s support.
- Should transcend race and be able to relate to all of the ethnic elements within the city.

Creating comprehensive violence prevention strategies throughout the city will naturally require significant collaboration. Groups must therefore work to transcend a history of mistrust and agree on approaches to manage competition for scarce resources. In light of these issues, focus group participants suggest the new collaborative:

- Begin the conversation with the collaborators differently and acknowledge each party’s individual traits, agendas, issues, and history.
- Establish a collaborative funding mechanism that reduces the spirit of competition and incorporates accountability to the collaborative’s governing body.
- Build networks to support relationship building that fosters trust, through hosting meetings in different locations.
- Institute leadership development as part of the collaborative’s work, which will prepare leaders to work with, and for the community in a “real” way.
- Must pursue progress on the ground where progress is seen and direct action is taken. The evidence of results must be shown.
- Should allow for time to build trust among its partners. Perhaps the group should start small then grow larger as these bridges are built and preserved.
- Must ensure that work is happening on the ground, in the community.
- Needs to keep people engaged in the conversation and the work.
- Must work with older established organizations.
- Should secure and retain collaborative funding and resources to work towards common goals.
- Must develop and maintain the Youth Congress to continually inform and guide the work of the collaborative, ensuring that there are permanent youth representatives within the collaborative.



Researcher Perspectives

While many of the economic, social and political constructs have a longstanding history in the city, the storm exacerbated these challenges for many residents. A shortage of living wage jobs continues to threaten the well-being of families, and the historic breakdown of trust associated with the federal, state, and local governments continues to impede progress.

Continued violence remains a significant and serious public health issue for the New Orleans post-Katrina redevelopment efforts. In post-Katrina New Orleans, deteriorating economic conditions also significantly impact the levels of violence. Rising stressors promote substance abuse, and other self-medicating behaviors increase violent behavior. Left unchecked, a culture of violence becomes normative, reducing the likelihood of successful intervention.

Notwithstanding these issues, a majority of the focus group participants expressed hopeful attitudes toward the future, specifically for the youth in the city, and are eager to contribute to collaborative action. Rebuilding efforts at the neighborhood levels show strong leadership. A number of efforts are underway that exist to address violence and to work with youth to mitigate the factors that often lead to violence in this population. The great educational experiment underway throughout the city also presents opportunities for increased collaboration among school personnel and students throughout the system. However, these partnerships tend to operate in silos, and usually do not reach out to other similar groups to pool resources on a larger scale.

Participants recognized the need for, and strongly supported the development of a collaborative entity with effective, neutral leadership on a city-wide level. This type of effort would require the creation of a safe space for stakeholders to work together, to test strategies that engage youth and build protective factors that can be supported for an entire generation. We believe the efforts of these groups would be most successful given more opportunities for collaboration focused on the development of city-wide action strategies. Additionally, while New Orleanians are reticent about external agents participating in local concerns, this particular circumstance may require an objective perspective to ensure the success of the collaborative and the process.

Clearly, resources in New Orleans remain inadequate and are not on the scale needed to be effective. Nevertheless, everyone invested in the future of the city must work together to ensure increased development of protective factors for youth, such as strong family units, friends, and church networks/supports. It is even more critical to establish effective leadership and collaboration across the city in order to successfully reduce the levels of violence, and secure the future for New Orleans' next generation of citizens.

Dissemination: This report will be distributed to invited meeting participants and to their colleagues who have an interest in addressing violence issues in New Orleans. Additionally, CommonHealth ACTION will share recommendations contained herein with City Council members, Health Department staff, the Greater New Orleans Foundation, and the PLACE MATTERS representatives. Finally, this report will be available on CommonHealth ACTION's Web site at www.commonhealthaction.org. For more information, please email us at info@commonhealthaction.org.



APPENDIX 1: ADULT AGENDA

Violence Prevention Meeting

May 7, 2009
11:30am – 4:00pm

Westin Canal Place

100 Rue Iberville
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. To identify root causes of violence in New Orleans, and
2. Gather recommendations for action that can be shared with city leaders and stakeholders interested in violence prevention

AGENDAS/QUESTIONS:

Agenda (Adults):

11:30pm – 12:00pm	Lunch/Introductions
12:00pm – 12:30pm	Welcome
12:30pm – 2:00pm	Facilitated Discussion
2:00pm – 2:10pm	Break
2:10pm – 3:40pm	Continue Discussion
3:40pm – 3:50pm	Compile and Review Recommendations
3:50pm – 4:00pm	Appreciations/Wrap- Up/Thank You

APPENDIX 2: YOUTH AGENDA

Violence Prevention Meeting

May 7, 2009
5:30pm – 7:30pm

Westin Canal Place

100 Rue Iberville
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

Agenda (Youth):

5:30pm – 6:00pm	Dinner/Sign-In/Collect Consent Forms
6:00pm – 6:15pm	Welcome/Introductions to meeting
6:15pm – 6:25pm	Introductions
6:25pm – 6:30pm	Read Recommendations
6:30pm – 7:15pm	Review Each Recommendation and Provide Feedback
7:15pm – 7:25pm	Overview of Thoughts/Will ask about being hopeful and staying in NOLA
7:25pm – 7:30pm	Appreciations and Wrap-Up

APPENDIX 3: ADULT FACILITATED QUESTIONS

Facilitated Questions for Adults

Part I- Information Gathering:

- What is the current state of violence and how has it changed post-Katrina?
- What groups have been most affected?
- Who do you believe are the greatest perpetrators of violence? Is that different than before Katrina? If it is, how?
- What social, economic and/or political determinants have affected violence post-Katrina for youth?
- How would you characterize the current state of domestic violence in the city?
- Without knowing the statistics, are random acts of violence increasing or decreasing? Why does it seem that way to you?
- What structures/systems play a part in preventing violence in New Orleans for youth? How?
- What role has media played in your perception of violence in New Orleans?

Part II- Questions to Facilitate Recommendations:

- What efforts are currently working to reduce violence in New Orleans?
- What should be done to prevent domestic violence?
- How do systems-level structures work together to reduce violence?
- What is the most effective way to address violence in New Orleans?
- What needs to happen so that youth do not engage in violent behaviors?
- What role does race/racism play in the public's perception of violence?
- What role does structural racism play in violence in the city?
- What steps would you recommend that city leaders and policy makers take to prevent future violence?
- What role should the school system play to reduce violence in and out of school?
- What role does the criminal justice system play in preventing or perpetuating violence? How can they be more supportive of prevention?
- Are you hopeful that violence can be reduced in New Orleans?

APPENDIX 4: YOUTH FACILITATED QUESTIONS

Facilitated Questions for Youth

- How has violence negatively affected you or the city?
- What are some types of violence you can identify?
- What are some things that can help reduce violence prevention? How would you do that in your neighborhood/school?
- Are you hopeful that violence can be reduced in New Orleans? Do you plan on staying in New Orleans (raise hands)?

APPENDIX 5: SURVEY

CommonHealth ACTION is conducting an online survey to understand the current roots of violence in New Orleans and solutions to reduce it. This survey should take about 10 – 15 minutes to complete. All information in this survey will remain confidential; however, an analysis of all the surveys will be incorporated into a final report.

You have been invited to complete this survey because you: 1) participated in our May 7, 2009 Violence Prevention Meeting, 2) You were invited to participate in our May 7, 2009 Violence Prevention Meeting, or 3) You have been referred by a colleague as someone who is interested in violence prevention in New Orleans. Should you think one of your colleagues would be interested in addressing this important topic, we would appreciate you forwarding the survey link to him/her. Please complete this survey only once by **May 25, 2009 at 5:00 pm EST**.

Should you be interested in receiving the final report, email Carolyn Lowery at Clowery@commonhealthaction.org. Thank you for your time.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the most prevalent type of violence in New Orleans?
2. What are the social determinants that contribute to the prevalence of violence in New Orleans currently?
3. What are the economic determinants that contribute to the prevalence of violence in New Orleans currently?
4. What are the political determinants that contribute to the prevalence of violence in New Orleans currently?
5. Briefly describe three ways you would reduce violence in New Orleans.
6. What organizations and/or government agencies in New Orleans are best positioned to address violence?
7. What organizations and/or government agencies should collaborate to reduce violence?