

# Amani

*Swahili*

*(noun)*; tranquility, quiet, absence of chaos

State of harmony characterized by lack of violent conflict and freedom from fear of violence.





# Project Amani

*“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men...”*

*Frederick Douglas*



# 3 W's and...Details

What's the Problem?

- High Crime Rates and Youth Violence

Who has this problem?

- Communities Across America...
- Zip codes 61605 and 61603 in Peoria

Why should this problem be solved?

- Create a safer community for future generations.

How will I know this problem has been solved?

- Decrease incidences of violence
- More productive communities

# Violence...A Public Health Crisis

- Violence is an urgent public health problem. From infants to the elderly, it affects people in all stages of life and can lead to a lifetime of physical, emotional, and economic problems.
- The focus of public health is on the well being, safety, and overall health of entire populations. A unique aspect of the approach is that it strives to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people.
- Public health draws on a science base that is multi-disciplinary. It relies on knowledge from a broad range of disciplines including medicine, epidemiology, sociology, psychology, criminology, education, and economics. This broad knowledge base has allowed the field of public health to respond successfully to a range of health conditions globally.
- The public health approach also emphasizes input from diverse sectors including health, education, social services, justice, policy, and the private sector. Collective action on the part of these stakeholders can help in addressing problems like violence.

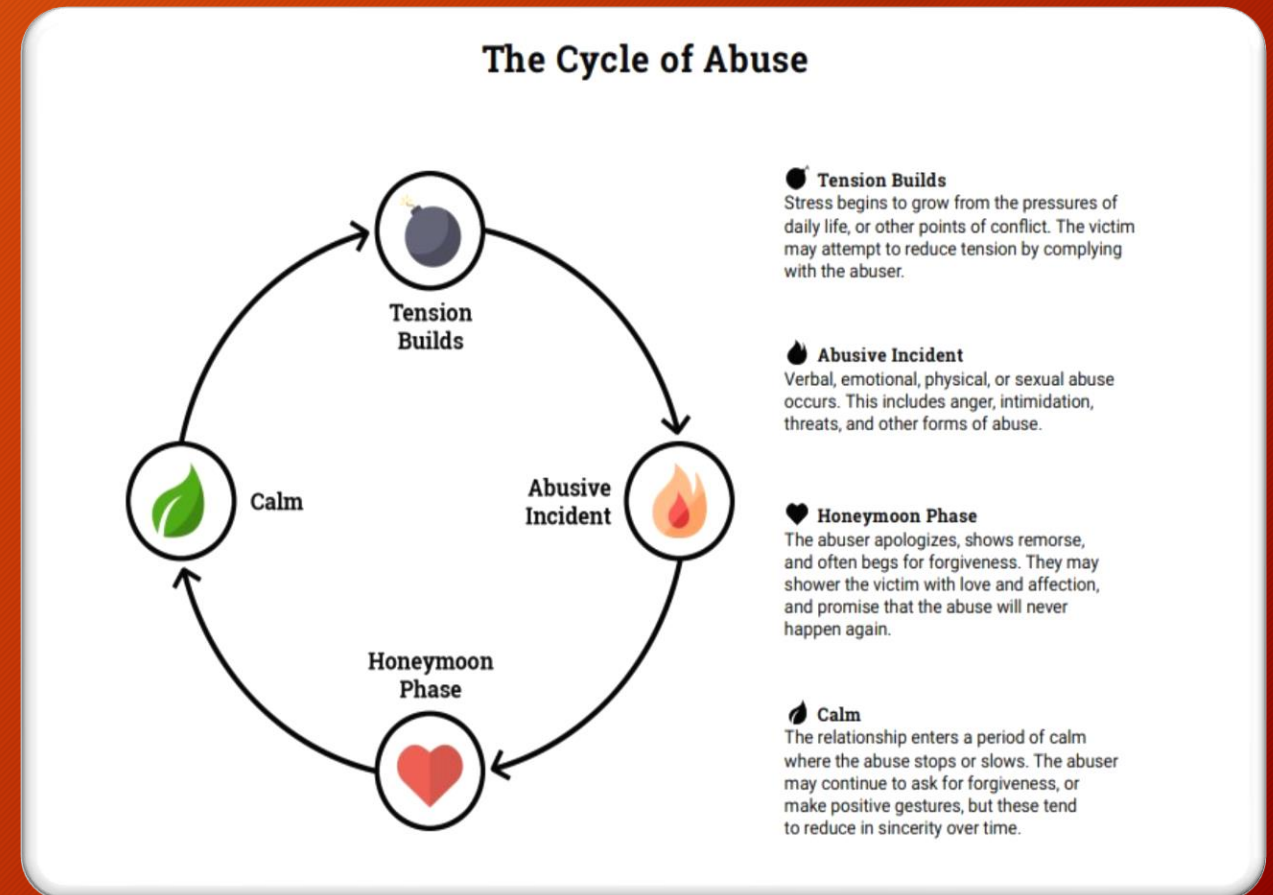


# The Center for Disease Control and Violence...

Public Health Agencies can play an important and unique role in preventing youth violence. Public health agencies typically place prevention at the forefront of efforts and work to create broad population-level impact, can bring *critical leadership and resources to bear on this problem*.

Public Health Agencies:

- ✓ Can bring together partners and stakeholders to **plan, prioritize, and coordinate** youth violence prevention activities.
- ✓ Well positioned to collect and disseminate data, implement preventive measures, evaluate programs and policies, and track progress.



# Effects of Violence on Youth

Children who experience violence have several health conditions and risk behaviors, including:

- Truancy due to safety concerns
- Risky sexual behavior
- Low academic grades
- Overweight or obesity
- Carried a weapon (gun/knife)
- Felt sad or hopeless
- Suicidal thoughts or behavior
- Substance use/abuse



*If this sounds familiar to you then you or someone you know has more than likely experienced some form of trauma from violence.*





# Project Amani~Leading the Way

*“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing...”*


*Walt Disney*

# The CDC Model on Preventing Youth Violence

Project Amani utilizes the guidelines that the CDC has developed with decades of research and they have summarized the best available evidence in

## A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors.

This technical package represents a select group of strategies to help communities and states sharpen their focus on prevention activities with the greatest potential to prevent youth and community violence and its consequences.

 Preventing Youth Violence	
Strategy	Approach
<b>Promote family environments that support healthy development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early childhood home visitation</li><li>• Parenting skill and family relationship programs</li></ul>
<b>Provide quality education early in life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preschool enrichment with family engagement</li></ul>
<b>Strengthen youth's skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Universal school-based programs</li></ul>
<b>Connect youth to caring adults and activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mentoring programs</li><li>• After-school programs</li></ul>
<b>Create protective community environments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modify the physical and social environment</li><li>• Reduce exposure to community-level risks</li><li>• Street outreach and community norm change</li></ul>
<b>Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Treatment to lessen the harms of violence exposures</li><li>• Treatment to prevent problem behavior and further involvement in violence</li><li>• Hospital-community partnerships</li></ul>



# Project Amani's Workable Solutions

## School Based Collaboration

- Maintaining a presence in the schools is important.
- Resources are available within the school and for many youth a safe place.
- Collaborate with existing interdisciplinary team that can help address social challenges youth face.

## Mentoring Programs

- Engage mentoring programs that have been successful in that community.
- Provide variety in activity options with the ability for children to be “children”.
- Develop custom approaches to working with identified at-risk youth.

## Community Empowerment

- Creating Protective Community Environments by strategically partnering with other agencies.
- Inclusion of support services (i.e. Law Enforcement, public health, neighborhood groups) when implementing a comprehensive safety plan and access to more resources for residents.

# The 61605 “Assessment” Information

## Cultural Demographics

Black	60%
White	30%
Hispanic	8%
American Indian	0.3%
Other	0.5%
Average age is 33 years	

## Education

High School Graduates	73%
Bachelors Degree	5%
Post graduate Degree	2%

## Employment

Unemployed	21%
Adhusted Gross Income	\$21,855

## Crime

Violent Crime Rate	70%
<i>US average</i>	<i>23%</i>
Property Crime Rate	79%
<i>US average</i>	<i>35%</i>

The 61605 zip code is 4.1 square miles in Peoria. It is among 100 of the poorest areas in the US and an identified “hot zone” in the Peoria area.



# Potential Outcomes

**A NEW  
BEGINNING  
A BETTER  
EDUCATION  
A BRIGHTER  
FUTURE**

[www.promiseacademypeoria.org](http://www.promiseacademypeoria.org)

- Reductions in victimization and perpetration of violence
- Reductions in nonviolent and violent criminal behavior
- Reductions in arrests and recidivism
- Reductions in gang involvement
- Reductions in out-of-home placements
- Reductions in child abuse
- Reductions in substance use
- Reductions in symptoms of PTSD, depression, and behavioral problems
- Increases in school attendance and homework completion
- Increases in positive parenting and family management practices (e.g., monitoring and supervision)
- Improvements in family relationships and communication

# Intervene to Lessen Harm

- ✓ Utilizing programs such as **Safe Passage** provides students safe routes to and from school by placing *highly visible* community members along these routes to monitor and assist with students' safe travel.
- ✓ **Community members are hired** and their role is to be physically present on routes students usually take to and from school.
- ✓ Safe passage workers are trained on conflict de-escalation strategies and have reporting protocols for violent behavior.





# Our Peoria Collaborative

- Community is at the **center** of this peaceful Partnership.
- Project Amani will work with the Peoria leadership to change the narrative of these communities.
- Accessing **existing resources** provided thru the Police Department, Public Health Department and other local organizations will help replace the negatives with positives.

Grow Peoria

**Camera Registry Program**

National Night Out Against Crime

**Coffee with Code**

Peoria Recovery Project

**Peoria Community Showcase**

Citizen Police Academy









# What's Unique About Project Amani



- This collaborative leans on the strength of the existing Peoria community and resources to provide multi-disciplinary support.
- Multi faceted in the approach, Project Amani will serve the community with a comprehensive understanding of what is needed and the resources to provide service.
- Supporting **local business** and providing opportunity for business development and economic growth for/in the community will be a catalyst for positive change.

# The Collaboration is Real...

- Promise Academy
- Southside Mission
- Neighborhood House
- Peoria Housing Authority
- Greater City of Refuge Worship Cathedral
- Catholic Charities
- Department of Children and Family Resources
- PCCEO
- Peoria Urban League
- Lutheran Social Services



# Potential Outcomes

## REDUCTIONS IN...

- Behavior problems and disruptive behavior at home and school
- Physical fighting, aggression, and delinquency
- Arrests, convictions, and probation violations
- Alcohol and drug use by youth and parents
- Family conflict •
- Child abuse and neglect
- Parental depression and stress

## INCREASES IN...

- Compliance to caregiver's directions
- Prosocial behavior (e.g., social skills, such as concern for others, empathy, and cooperation)
- Parent-child connection, communication, and relationship quality
- Positive parenting practices, such as monitoring and supervision of youth's activities, use of consistent and nonviolent discipline, and involvement and support of youth

# Need More Information?

THANK YOU!

Folders available with presentation information

**We GO GREEN!**

E-mail with links to the CDC Manual and additional information we discussed has been sent.

Contact Think ReHemption  
Carolyn Vazquez, Project Amani  
[cvazquez1008@yahoo.com](mailto:cvazquez1008@yahoo.com)  
773.251.7300

