

PLACE MATTERS

Design Lab 7 • New Orleans, Louisiana
March 3–5, 2008

In New Orleans, Dysfunction Fuels Cycle of Killing

The New York Times, Published: February 5, 2007



Linda Holmes, second from right, is comforted at the scene of her son's killing in the Iberville housing project.

One killed in Uptown Shooting

by The Times-Picayune
Wednesday February 27, 2008, 6:30 PM



New Orleans Police look at the body of a murder victim who was shot to death in a Mazda in the 3600 block of Danneel Street Wednesday evening.

Double Shooting on St. Roch Leaves One Dead, One Critical

by The Times-Picayune
Tuesday February 26, 2008, 3:52 PM



Two women embrace as a third is comforted by an NOPD chaplain after finding out that one of the victims of a double shooting at the gray house (background) had died.

Storm Left New Orleans Ripe for Violence

The New York Times, Published: January 11, 2007

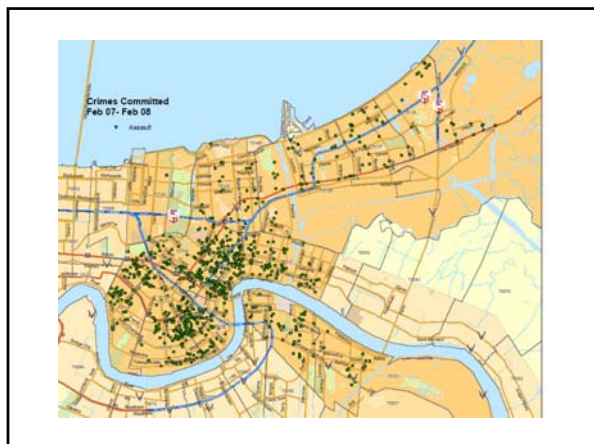


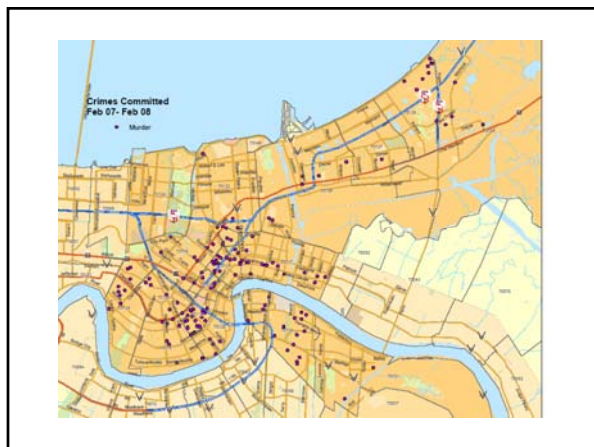
The Dec. 28 killing of Dinerral Shavers, 25, a music teacher in New Orleans, is among several that have recently frightened residents

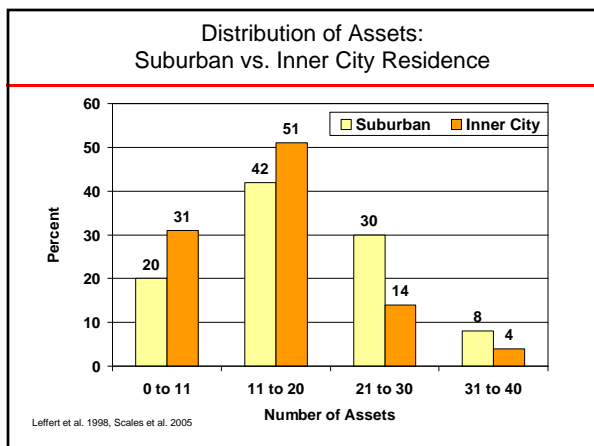
The New York Times, Published: February 5, 2007

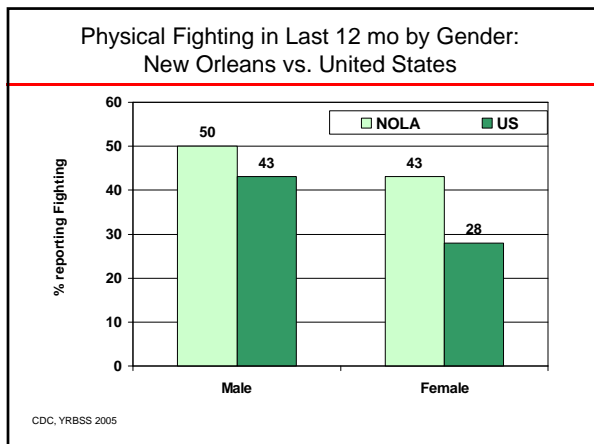


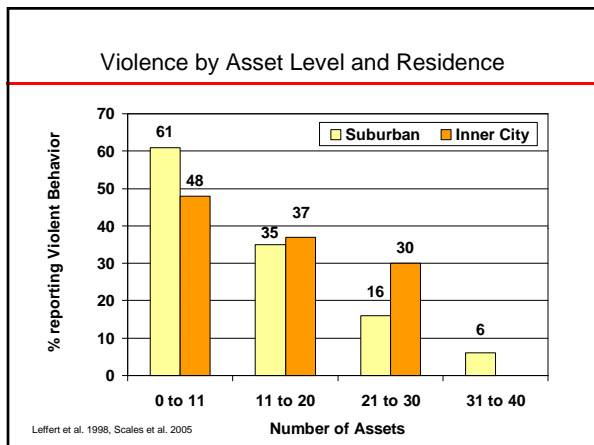
LaKendra Brown cries at the scene where a neighbor of hers, Ronald Holmes, was killed in the Iberville housing project of New Orleans.











New Orleans Violence Project Aims of the Pilot School Survey

I.) AIM

The main aim of the planning phase of this program is to develop a sustainable, multi-faceted, community-based intervention to reduce youth violence in New Orleans.

II.) OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the planning phase of this program are to:

1. Establish a youth violence intervention working group
2. Assess community needs and resources for violence interventions
3. Review literature on approaches to youth violence intervention
4. Assess the feasibility of various approaches to violence intervention
5. Develop an intervention program to reduce youth violence
6. Create a plan to analyze the program's effectiveness
7. Collect preliminary data to assess the feasibility of the intervention
8. Submit a proposal for NIH funding of the program

III.) Risk Factors

- Many of the major social challenges identified by policy experts and health and human services providers represent risk factors for youth violence, for example:
- High number of single parents
- Poor parenting skills
- High number of incarcerated family members
- Sustained, extreme stress and trauma due to the disaster
- Insufficient funding for family support programs
- Children increasingly exposed to drug use and violence
- Unsafe environments
- Lack of safe, healthy places for children to learn and play
- Ineffective schools
- Lack of vocational opportunities for out-of-school youth
- Increasing lack of self-respect in youth and adult population
- Inadequacy of affordable and accessible mental health services
- Inadequate communication among various agencies serving children
- We plan to identify key advisors in the area of health policy, health and human services, and community development to serve as advisors to the project during the planning phase.

Potential Data Collection Instruments

We have begun to explore data collection instruments which may be useful for this program. The following instruments were identified through a review of published studies of youth violence interventions.

1. **Child Behavior Checklists.** The Child Behavior Checklists (CBCLs) are a set of surveys that assess internalizing and externalizing behaviors of children based on reports from parents and teachers. Normative data is available for large, diverse samples of children. The CBCLs has been widely used to measure the impact of cognitive and behavioral interventions designed to reduce problem behavior and violence. In the context of this program, the CBCL would be most useful for baseline characterization of the study cohort.
2. **SEARCH Institute Surveys.** The SEARCH Institute has developed a variety of surveys to assess youth developmental assets. These surveys would be very useful in the context of a program focused on reducing violence by building developmental assets of youth in New Orleans.
3. **Youth Risk Behavior Survey.** The CDC's YRBS contains modules on risk behaviors that relate to violence and violent behaviors, as well as other outcomes which could be affected by a program designed to build developmental assets among youth. Normative data is available at the national and state level.

POPULATION

- Children of the Inmates identified by Sheriff Marlin N. Gusman
- Youth who are identified by Judge Calvin Johnson from the Mental Health and Drug Court
- The Youth Center of the City of New Orleans Department of Human Services, which provides pre-trial detention for youth who have been arrested
- Students from alternative schools who exhibit behaviors that lead to violence and crimes

Main Accomplishments

1. Introduced the notion of unnatural cause to a group of 80 health department staff in November of 2007
2. Introduced social determinants to a group of 30 health department staff and this has been reinforced through a series of a bi-weekly Morbidity and Morbidity & Interdisciplinary meetings;
3. During those M&M & Interdisciplinary meetings focus has been made on thinking notion up-stream in term of
 - a. Reducing low-birth weight and preterm deliver
 - b. Reducing obesity, morbidity-related to asthma and diabetes
 - c. Reducing the prevalence and the incidence of HIV and Aids-related morbidity
 - d. Reducing morbidity and complications related to lead poisoning
4. Obtained planned grand to address the issues of crime prevention
5. Obtained NIH grant to address the issues of environmental issues related to asthma

Challenges

1. Scheduling meetings
2. Shortage of personnel
3. Difficulty hiring in civil service system
4. Difficulty identifying good staff
5. Overwhelm with children in need

Lessons Learned

1. Mental health is a big issue in the city
2. Every single person has experienced lost (family member, infrastructure, etc)
3. Every single person in the city has documented a change of life

Visions for the Future

1. Involve lawmakers embrace the idea
2. Establish a partnership with business, community, and academic leaders
3. Identify more resources
4. Build capacity
5. Design upstream projects

Aims of Pilot Data Collection

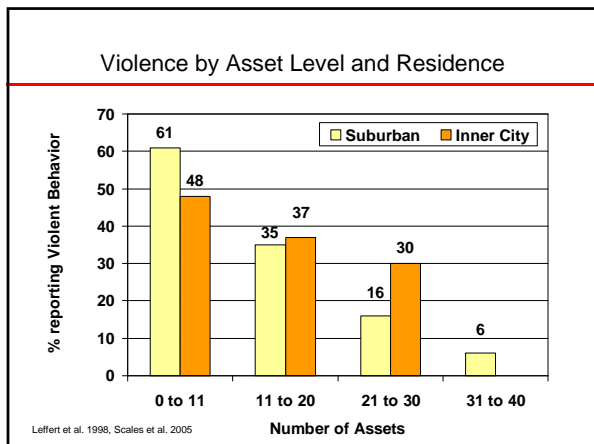
Feasibility assessments

- engaging school administrators and staff
- obtaining parental / guardian consent
- student participation

Aims of Pilot Data Collection

Baseline assessment of youth

- impact of Katrina
- youth developmental assets
- violence related-behaviors
- relationships between Katrina and assets
- relationships between assets and violence



- ### Task List for Pilot Survey Implementation
- 1) Formalize survey and data collection plans
 - 2) Submit proposal to IRB
 - 3) Select schools for participation
 - 4) Contact school administrators
 - 5) Select classes
 - 6) Engage teachers
 - 7) Select a date for the surveys
 - 8) Mail consents to parents
 - 9) Distribute surveys to teachers
 - 10) Identify and survey students with consent

- ### Suggestions for Pilot Data Collection
- Focus data collection on inner-city schools
 - Sample from 1 middle school and 1 high school
 - Sample from grades 6, 8, and 10
 - Sample several class rooms from each grade
 - Survey classes once, unless absence is high
 - Engage teachers in survey administration

Sample Size Considerations

- Pilot data is typically descriptive and exploratory
- Formally testing associations may increase sample size
- Assets have a larger effect in suburban data (Leffert 1998)
 - may need 400 to 500 participants
