

Community Safety & Violence Prevention



The second cohort of CHW-VPPs to complete the CPRV training in Buncombe County.

As June wraps up, Justice Services is proud to release the Community Safety & Violence Prevention Plan & Report for 2020-2023. From the report: Safety. Community cohesion. Health. Collective efficacy. Accountability. Healing. Equity. These are the guiding principles behind Buncombe County's collaborative efforts to address violence and its disproportionate impact on historically oppressed communities. The mission of the Justice Services Department is to collaborate with community and justice system partners to re-imagine justice, enhance public safety, and holistically support all people impacted by the justice system.

This report brings together the past few years of collective work by community leaders, government partners, and stakeholders from diverse sectors, including education, public health, law enforcement, legal systems, social work, housing, and healthcare. It aligns with Buncombe County's Strategic Focus areas of promoting Resident Well-Being and building an Educated & Capable Community, where all residents are safe, healthy, engaged, and able to thrive and demonstrate resilience throughout their lives.

You can find the report attached below.

Board of Commissioner Proclamation

On June 4, the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners officially recognized June as Gun Violence Prevention and Awareness Month in Buncombe County. In 2023, the Buncombe County Register of Deeds recorded 51 death certificates indicating gun-related deaths. Of those incidents, 46 occurred within Buncombe County, with the youngest decedent being 14 years old and the oldest 94 years old. [Read the full proclamation here.](#)



Summer Safety Event

On Friday, June 7, partners in Buncombe County hosted the Summer Safety Event in Pack Square Park in honor of Gun Violence Prevention and Awareness Month. The event was organized by the P.E.A.C.E. Team (Providing Education and Advocacy through Community Engagement), a collaboration of KL Training Solutions (Founder of My Daddy Taught Me That), The SPARC Foundation and YTL Training Programs with support from Buncombe County. The P.E.A.C.E Team is dedicated to violence prevention through education, advocacy, and community engagement. The team is composed of Community Health Workers who strive to create safer, healthier communities. This event brought together community members and organizations, law enforcement, and juvenile justice system partners together to promote safe firearm storage, share the importance of gun violence prevention, and enjoy a celebratory and safe kick-off to summer.

This event was part of the [NC SAFE \(Secure All Firearms Effectively\)](#) initiative to promote safe firearm storage across North Carolina. The initiative emphasizes the need to reduce firearm-related accidents and deaths, especially among children and youth. By securing firearms effectively, we can prevent them from falling into the wrong hands and reduce the risk of tragic incidents. The NC SAFE Initiative provides resources and guidance on best practices for firearm storage, which is an essential aspect of responsible gun ownership.

Celebrating Community Health Worker-Violence Prevention Professionals

Communities across the nation, including Buncombe County, are working to end deaths by guns, including suicides, accidents, and gun violence with evidence-based solutions. Buncombe County is implementing a Community-Based Public Health Response to Violence (CPrV) with training and technical assistance from CHASM. This model strategically identifies, trains, and activates community champions to take the lead in the implementation of a co-designed, customized strategy to prevent violence. CPrV prioritizes public health upstream thinking and methodology to restore community connectivity and collective efficacy.

On June 14, members from the following organizations received their certification as Community Health Worker-Violence Prevention Professionals:

- My Daddy Taught Me That
- The SPARC Foundation
- Youth Transformed for Life
- Umoja Health Wellness and Justice Collective
- Operation Gateway
- The Racial Justice Coalition
- Deep Time
- UNETE
- Center for Participatory Change
- The North Carolina Office of Violence Prevention
- Buncombe County Justice Services

This class represents the second cohort of CHW-VPPs to complete the CPRV training in Buncombe County. Community Health Workers trained in Violence Prevention (CHW-VPPs) are trusted community members who are trained as public health professionals to support communities they serve to get access to what they need to live healthy, safe, and thriving lifestyles.

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