



Fundamentals of Community Violence Intervention Training

Community Violence Intervention is a resident-driven, victim centered, impacted people-led strategy to address violence through a public health approach. CVI involves mediating conflict, getting people involved in violence on a path away from violence and toward stability, preventing revictimization, and more. When executed properly, community violence intervention work is transformative for individuals and communities.

*It is critically important to note that violence intervention work is dangerous. An improperly trained violence interventionist can **become severely injured** or lose their life. Proper training saves lives. An improperly trained interventionist can also cause harm to the community and damage the reputation of the profession.*

Violence Intervention workers must undergo thorough training to ensure that they are operating appropriately and effectively to protect their own life and safety while simultaneously creating community safety. Proper training ensures that a violence interventionist does not cause further trauma in the community. The standards laid out in this document are to provide a basic framework of minimum standards for any violence intervention training. This is not an all-inclusive manual for community violence intervention work. When executed properly, community violence intervention work is transformative for individuals and communities.

The CBPS Collective recommends the following **Standards for a Qualified Trainer of Community Violence Intervention:**

- Has “lived experience” related to violence and violence reduction
- Possesses credibility in the work through having done critical violence intervention work in the community
- Invited in by respected members of the community being served and thereby has a “license to operate” in the community
- Possesses relevant skills and experience in the field, including direct experience with trauma informed practices; conflict resolution; mediation; de-escalation, and more. (Discussed below)
- Presents a formal curriculum and syllabus including a complete set of Standard Operational and Behavioral Protocols and Procedures as described below
- Has measured and documented the processes and outcomes of their own impact on violence and crime reduction in the community
- Conducts a pre and post training evaluation, including input from leadership and the practitioners; must include trainee interviews.

Standard Operational and Behavioral Protocols and Procedures for Community Violence Intervention *Trainings*:

At a minimum, training must cover comprehensive community engagement and a multidisciplinary approach including:

- Practitioner's Personal Safety
- High-Risk Intervention
- Outreach Strategies
- Community Violence Prevention Strategies
- Restorative Justice and Re-entry
- Victim Services Advocacy
- Wellness/Healing Services
- Holistic Equitable Service Delivery
- Community Collaboration
- Engagement of Law Enforcement & All Public Safety Professionals
- Smart Suppression*
- Evaluating and Measuring Impact while maintaining local ownership of the work

*Smart suppression is respectful intervention delivered with restraint and calm.

A Standard Training Must Cover 3 Main Areas:

1. Crisis Intervention/Life-saving Skills: The 1st prong of the training is led by a practitioner-based, hard core community violence interventionist. The skills taught train the people whose work will be to stop the violence [in the moment] from happening. Trainees will receive instruction on and develop the following toolbox of life-saving skills:

- Immediate Violence Intervention
- Street Mediation
- Retaliation Protocols
- Personal Safety and Survival Planning
- Local and Regional Truce Development
- Peace Agreement and Maintenance
- Crisis Intervention
- Respectful Intervention; does not exceed necessary engagement
- Rumor Control
- Training Support
- Community Engagement
- District Conflict Resolution
- Securing Geographical Safe Zones and Safety Hubs

2. Holistic Healing/Non-emergency Trauma Support Skills: The 2nd prong of the training focuses on meeting the holistic needs of the person connected to life-threatening violence. Trainees learn how to help individuals, who've been connected to violence, anchor themselves to stability, wellness and functionality (rather than violence) by teaching them to utilize the following resources.

Trainees also learn to ensure that equitable service delivery within the following areas is locally available:

- Mental Health Services
- Private/Public Career Development
- Gender Specific Services
- Health Education on substances and sexuality
- Recreation Services
- Juvenile and criminal justice support services
- Independent living and housing
- Educational support
- Arts and culture
- Varying faiths and indigenous cultures

3. Sustainable community empowerment and partnerships: The 3rd and final prong of the training is designed to teach the critical skills needed to engage institutional partners and large stakeholders while maintaining local ownership of the work. Trainees will be taught the professional operational protocols they'll need to connect with external resources while remaining autonomous and independent community leaders. Skills taught must include on-the-ground data collection, analysis and reporting specific to this type of work. Trainees will be trained on how to go into the community and look for certain dynamics in the street, how to properly create incident reports, and how to articulate the stories that lead up to an incident, or lead to the prevention of an incident. Trainees will be taught to engage with the following partners:

- Universities
- Advocates
- Municipalities
- Private Stakeholders
- Foundations
- Charities
- Community-Based Participatory Research Specialists
- Hospitals
- Support Groups
- Think Tanks
- Strategic Planning Teams
- Neighborhood Groups
- TTA & Capacity-Building Teams