

Overview of the Aim4Peace: Community Mediation Program

What is the AIM4PEACE Movement?

The AIM4PEACE: Community Mediation Program is a movement with a potential solution to reduce volatile situations and ultimately build a safer community through the City of Kansas City Missouri's newest violence prevention effort.

AIM4PEACE is a comprehensive public health strategy designed to reduce violence by supporting people active in their community and by connecting residents to basic services.

Background

June 2005, The Commission on Violent Crime submitted its final report to the Kansas City, Missouri City Council. The Commission strongly urged the city to develop a strategic community-based, public health strategy to stop the shootings and killings.

The report highlights that the primary cause of homicides in the city is arguments or conflicts. There is an acknowledged gap in crucial conflict and/or dispute resolution skills to settle arguments by means other than a gun.

To immediately address this vital need, the City Manager, Wayne Cauthen, created the Mediation Task Force to design a strategy to enhance community mediation interventions to decrease the number of killings and aggravated assaults in the city.

Scope

Although the city ranked number 16 on the national list of the 25 most dangerous cities in 2006, this concept proposal supports the strategic restructuring of the Office of Community Relations/Dispute Resolution as the first endeavor of a multi-year approach to attack violence, which is the number one cause of death to citizens ages of one to forty.

The Community Mediation Program is designed to utilize specialized professional staff, as well as trained, contracted volunteers and crisis intervention teams who have street credibility to intervene in East Patrol hot spots (initial target zone), an area ravaged by violence stemming primarily from unresolved disputes.

Mission and Objectives

The mission of Community Mediation Program is to increase the capacity of the community to handle their own disputes and empower community members to peacefully resolve conflicts, supported by three key objectives.

- Enhance community mediation preventions and interventions.
- Decrease the potential for homicides and aggravated assaults.
- Mobilize the community to build a safer Kansas City.

How will AIM4PEACE work to reduce violence?

AIM4PEACE will work to reduce violence by engaging high risk individuals between the ages of 16-40; supporting people active in their community and connecting residents to basic services.

The workers will connect with persons who may have a history of criminal activity and/or gang involvement to assist in defusing any potential harmful actions against others.

Aim4Peace also seeks to connect with high-risk individuals through outreach workers, clergy and community organizations.

What are the AIM4PEACE goals?

- Improve anti-violence culture in the target area
- Decrease social problems that lead to violence
- Change in community risk and protective factors
- Create a healthier means for the community to resolve it's own conflicts

AIM4PEACE builds on the City's efforts to revitalize the 3rd and 5th districts through neighborhood improvements, capital projects and economic stimulus. With AIM4PEACE, the city is taking a brave step forward to begin efforts to reduce 78 percent of the violence that occurs in only 9 percent (30 sq. mi.) of the city's land mass (320 sq. mi.).

What is the AIM4PEACE target area?

The initial AIM4PEACE target zone is the 24.8 square miles of the East Patrol area: bounded to the West by Wabash; to the East by I-435; to the North by the River; and to the South by Blue Parkway. This area was selected as ground zero as the East Patrol Division recorded the highest homicide and aggravated assault rates for more than 4 years.

How can I get involved?

- Participate in marches and responses.
- Call neighbors to invite them to AIM4PEACE events.
- Attend community meetings.
- Distribute AIM4PEACE materials.

For more information, please call (816) 513-3886 or visit www.kcmo.org/aim4peace.