

# Cease fire

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CeaseFire Program Affiliation: Street violence is one of the many vices that critically affect different societies across the globe from time to time. The design and development of ways to deal with street violence and crime in the social setting has always been a necessary practice in a bid to enhance social interaction among people in the society. The CeaseFire program is one of the primary ways used by a number of communities in the state of Illinois to contain and address street violence issues. The CeaseFire program is an anti-violence initiative run under the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention, and it primarily targets street violence and conflicts (Chaskin, 2010).

Public health issues are diverse and dynamic, and they also impact differently communities and societies. Dr. Gary Slutkin, the person behind the project that saw the establishment of the CeaseFire program, holds that violence is a critical public health issue yet the most relatively ignored (Wilson & Petersilia, 2011). He also maintains that violence is deeply rooted in behavior and can, therefore, be prevented through changes in behavioral norms. In this respect, the program heavily depends on the intervention of outreach workers in the event of violence or conflicts in the streets. The duty and responsibility of these workers is to interrupt conflicting parties and mitigate conflicts that are likely to result in violence.

The planned behavior theory can essentially explain the causes and trends in street violence. The variables that inform the theory of planned behavior include attitude towards a behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Weisburd & Braga, 2006). The intentions of a behavior are critically linked to an individual's beliefs. Therefore, street violence is driven by individual behavior in regard to the intentions and beliefs of the gangs or any other person who engages in street conflicts and violence.

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The anti-violence advocacy by the CeaseFire program in the benefiting communities targets behavior change in order to achieve its objectives. The process of changing behavioral norms must identify the subject matter and all its variables before addressing the underlying issue (House of Commons, 2008). Stakeholders must first identify the behavior that needs to be changed in order to act accordingly. Anti-violence advocacy and conflict mitigation at the street level have to change the mindset, beliefs, and behaviors of gangs and all other persons who engage in street violence, and that is essentially the role of interrupters in the CeaseFire program. Street violence reduction, conflict mediation, and retaliatory shootings and killings prevention are the key goals of the CeaseFire program, and they constitute the key tasks of outreach workers or interrupters under the program (Chaskin, 2010). The program targets the streets and other areas that are prone to violence as a way of addressing the problem right from its source. In so doing, behavior change that starts with the street gangs is likely to take effect in a descending manner, thereby spreading its effects far and wide. Most importantly, reducing violence is a critical step in the bid to address public health issues.

## References

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