

Public Health Madison and Dane County: Roadmap to reducing violence plan released

Posted on Wednesday, Mar 10, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Today, Public Health Madison & Dane County released a comprehensive violence prevention plan that provides a roadmap for collective community action. [Madison Dane County Violence Prevention: A Roadmap to Reducing Violence](#) is a five-year plan guided by a public health approach to violence prevention and provides five evidence-based goals and accompanying strategies and objectives.

“We know that the risk factors and root causes of violence are complex and require multiple strategies to prevent and address violence,” said Aurielle Smith, Director Policy, Planning and Evaluation for Public Health Madison & Dane County. “This plan doesn’t replace existing violence prevention work and initiatives happening across our community; it is meant to provide unity in approach and action.”

In 2018, Public Health was tasked with analyzing, defining, and addressing the issue of community violence utilizing a public health approach. Since then, Public Health’s violence prevention unit has developed relationships with key stakeholders, started developing data infrastructure plans, launched and facilitated the Community Safety Intervention Team (CSIT), conducted stakeholder meetings, supported and led many local violence prevention initiatives, and conducted focus groups and community listening sessions. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic deepened economic and social disparities and increased violence in communities across the country, including Madison and Dane County. In July, a call to action was made to finalize a comprehensive violence prevention plan.

“Madison & Dane County violence prevention partners have long spoken of being ‘silo-ed’ in our work; this comprehensive plan gives direction and shared strategies

to work together,” said Anthony Cooper, Executive Director of the Focused Interruption Coalition.

The plan recognizes violence as a public health crisis that is preventable through a coordinated and sustained effort that requires shared ownership and leadership.

“Violence and its harmful effects reaches every corner of Dane County,” said Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. “A widespread problem requires collaborative solutions, which is why it’s so important that the City of Madison and Dane County work together to eliminate violence.”

The five goals of the plan include:

- Understanding violence in our community through data
- Supporting community engagement with children, youth, and families
- Fostering strong neighborhoods
- Bolstering and increasing intervention and continuous healing for those affected by violence
- Strengthening community capacity, collaboration, and coordination of violence prevention efforts

“We know that violence is inherently linked to societal inequities and preventing violence includes investment in efforts to address health, racial, and gender inequities,” said Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway. “A public health approach is especially valuable because it understands this interconnectedness.”

Over the coming months, Public Health Madison & Dane County will present an in-depth intro to the *Roadmap*, hire two new positions to add capacity to the violence prevention unit, work with data partners to develop preliminary plan evaluation metrics, and reconvene the Madison Dane County Violence Prevention Coalition to get started on *Roadmap* implementation.