

# HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT

## Can We Make Communities Safer Without Relying On Police?

**Yes!** In November 2020, the John Jay Research & Evaluation Center published [Reducing Violence Without Police: A Review of Research Evidence](#), describing policies, programs, and research that show violence in communities can be reduced without policing, rather by investing in communities and community-serving organizations. Violence in the community should be addressed with community-level interventions that focus on the health and safety of whole populations and not only high-risk individuals.

Below are seven strategies identified as key areas for non-policing interventions and policies:



(1)  
**improve  
the physical  
environment**



(2)  
strengthen anti-  
violence social  
norms and peer  
relationships



(3)  
engage  
and  
supporting  
youth



(4)  
reduce  
substance  
abuse



(5)  
mitigate  
financial  
stress



(6)  
reduce the  
harmful effects  
of the justice  
process



(7)  
confront  
the gun  
problem

These strategies to prevent crime and violence at the neighborhood/community levels improve residents' quality of life, and at a lower cost than law enforcement.

The most obvious improvement that can be made to a community to reduce crime and violence without policing is **improving the physical environment** of neighborhoods. For example, green spaces invite local residents to meet and become more invested in their relationships with each other and their surroundings. **This idea is in alignment with the goals of the [Healthy Neighborhoods Project](#), which aims to provide evidence that improving the physical environment of neighborhoods can reduce community violence in New Orleans.**

Below are interventions to reduce and prevent community violence by **improving the physical environment**:

- 1) adding tree coverage and other plants to neighborhoods, including the grounds of public housing
- 2) cleaning up debris and adding greenery to vacant lots; collaborating with residents to improve vacant lots
- 3) monitoring lead levels and reducing children's exposure, especially children younger than age 3
- 4) reducing the number of abandoned buildings, preventing foreclosure of homes
- 5) closing streets and creating cul-de-sac streets in neighborhoods affected by or at risk of violence
- 6) increasing street lighting in residential areas
- 7) reducing traffic congestion