



Authentic Community Engagement: Made in Milwaukee

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Institute for Child and Family Well-being



Today's Agenda

- 1) What is Authentic Community Engagement?
- 2) Introduce our Panelists' Organizations, Their Mission and History
- 3) Explore our Panelists' Journey through Authentic Community Engagement
- 4) Q&A



Authentic Community Engagement

“The **intentional** process of **co-creating solutions in partnership** with people who know best, through their **own experiences.**”

Lisa Attygalle, Tamarack Institute

Our Panelists



Leah Jepson



Reggie Moore



Blake Tierney

Milwaukee Coalition for Children's Mental Health (CCMH)

Collaborating to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children aged 0 – 8 and their families in the City of Milwaukee with a focus on disparities in child and family outcomes.

More than 60 organizations, dozens of Community Health Workers and people with lived experience working together to identify innovative solutions to enact change at a grassroots level.



Visit us on the web at: www.mkekids.org

A Brief History of CCMH

Founded in 2015 with 12 original partner organizations

Funded in 2016 for one year of guided planning for a five-year project to design strategies and sustainability plans

Engaged a diverse group of community and organizational leaders for input

Funded in 2017 for seven years to improve children's mental health through prevention, early identification and intervention

Specifically focused on racial and socioeconomic disparities with an emphasis on social justice and social determinants of health

CCMH is funded by the **Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin**



Our Values

Awareness that parents and families in Milwaukee have unique experiences and their voices must be heard

Empathy and respect for the dignity of all persons

Fair access to resources and services

Inclusion of the diversity of our Milwaukee community

Commitment to our diverse experiences and collective skills in informing our decisions and creating innovative solutions

Active participation in building a community full of nurturing relationships and other protective factors



OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Mission

To prevent and reduce violence through *partnerships* that strengthen youth, families, and neighborhoods.

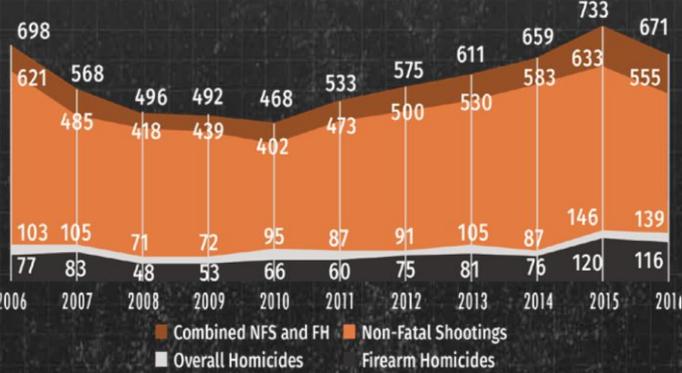
Activities

- ❖ Commission on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- ❖ Safe Visitation and Exchange Center
- ❖ Coaching Boys to Men
- ❖ Recast Milwaukee
- ❖ Trauma Response Partnership
- ❖ 414 LIFE
- ❖ Blueprint for Peace



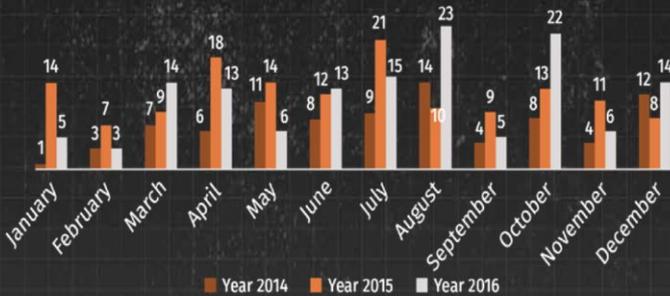
Figure 1. Firearm Homicide and Nonfatal Shooting Victims, 2006-2016

Combined Firearm Homicide and Non-Fatal Shooting Victims by Year



Data source: MHRC, 2006-2015; MPD, 2016

Milwaukee recorded 139 homicides and 55 nonfatal shooting victims in 2016. In Figure 1, comparing 2006 to 2016, there has been a 51% increase in firearm-related homicide victims, an 11% decrease in nonfatal shooting victims, and a 4% decrease in combined victims.



Data source: MHRC, 2014-2015; MPD, 2016

In 2016, the City of Milwaukee tallied 139 homicides, which is a 5% decrease from 2015 (n=146 homicides) but a 60% increase compared to 2014 (n=87). By month, there was an increase in homicides during March (56%), June (8%), August (130%), October (69%), and December (75%) compared to 2015.



A look at some of the Milwaukee homicide victims from 2015. Additional images below.

Homicides soar in Milwaukee, along with many theories on cause

A sudden rocket-like rise in killings in Milwaukee and elsewhere has experts pondering why — and grasping for solutions

VALUES

Community Centers youth and families most impacted by violence. Its success is dependent on the power, connection, and engagement of every resident in making Milwaukee one of the safest cities in the country

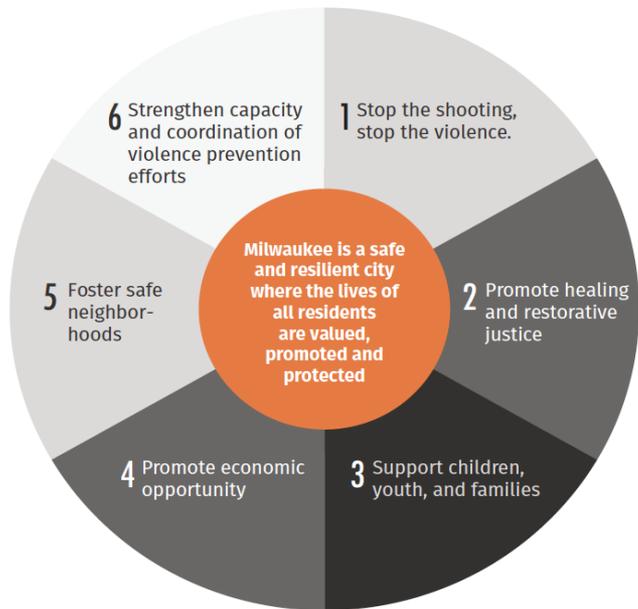
Equity Addresses the inequitable toll that violence has on specific neighborhoods and populations including youth, women, and people of color. Recognizes that multiple forms of oppression contribute to violence, and these must be acknowledged, addressed, and dismantled, including institutional racism.

Resilience Acknowledges the impact that violence and trauma have on children, families, and neighborhoods and **promotes asset-based solutions for immediate and lasting change.**

Action Rooted in a **public health approach** to preventing multiple forms of violence and **builds on Milwaukee's assets through coordinated strategies that are comprehensive, actionable, and measurable.**



BLUEPRINT GOALS



1. STOP THE SHOOTING. STOP THE VIOLENCE
2. PROMOTE HEALING AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
3. SUPPORT CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES
4. PROMOTE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
5. FOSTER SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS
6. STRENGTHEN CAPACITY AND COORDINATION OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION EFFORTS

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**Why is authentic engagement
of community members and
context experts critical to
social change?**

Importance of Community Engagement

- Our systems are designed by those who hold the power and privilege in our communities/states/nation
- Those making decisions are rarely those with intimate knowledge of the problem on the ground
- Trust in our systems has been eroded by unethical practices and inequitable treatment for generations
- Our communities have the answers to these problems, but are furthest away from the funds and the table where decisions are made
- Parachuting into communities to “fix their problems” is paternalistic (at best) and oppressive and destructive at worst
- Those who have created and held problems in place are not the best folks to solve the problem

NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US






CITY OF MILWAUKEE
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION

MARCH AND RALLY

MOTHER'S CALL TO ACTION!!

COA, 2320 W BURLEIGH ST
August 31, 2019 at 10:30am

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW!

VISION

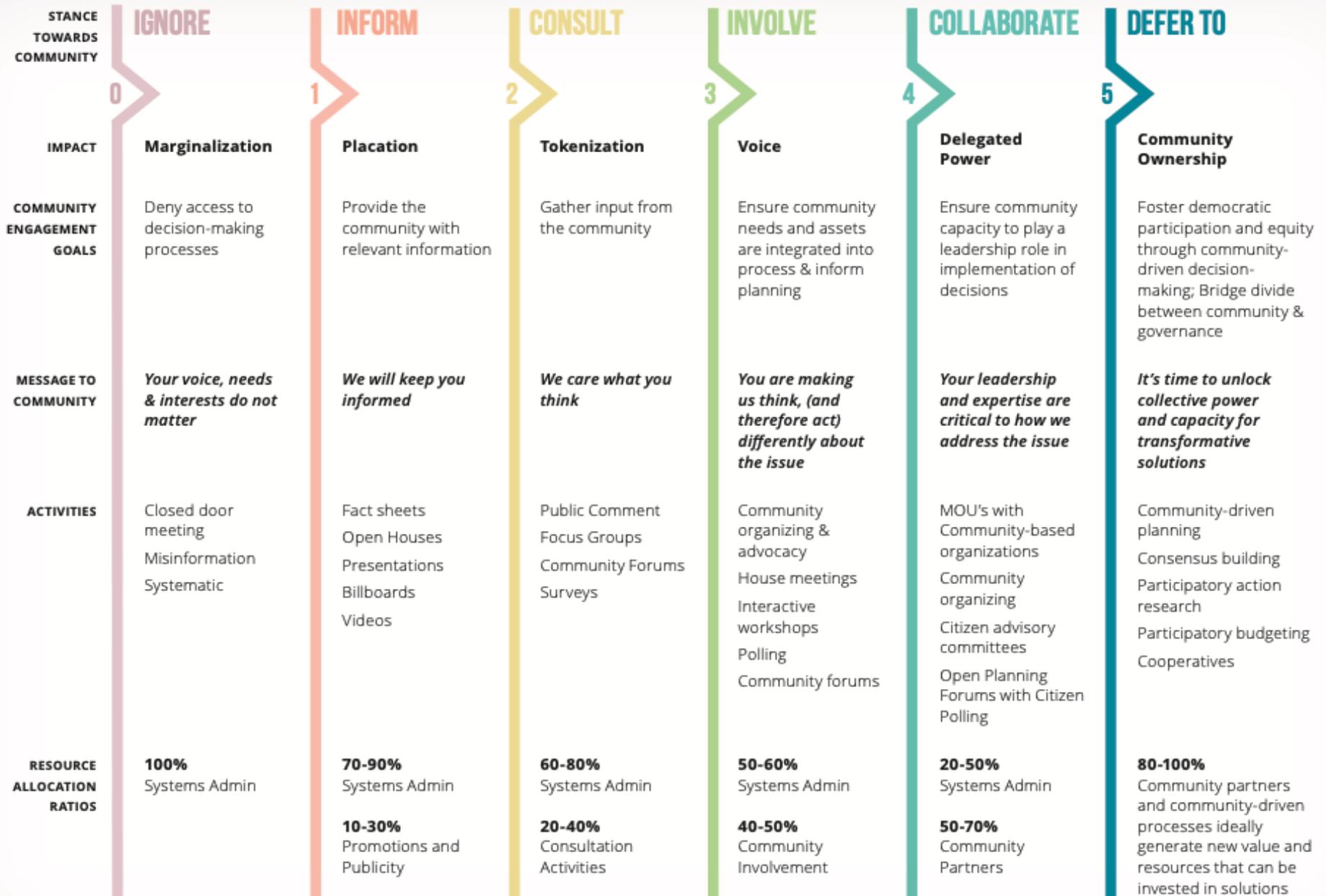
MILWAUKEE IS A **SAFE AND RESILIENT** CITY WHERE THE LIVES OF **ALL** RESIDENTS ARE **VALUED, PROMOTED, AND PROTECTED.**

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**How does authentic
community engagement
impact decision-making from
design to implementation to
evaluation?**

THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP



Coalition Roles and Structure

CCMH Core Council: Our Leadership Team formed 2+ years into our existence; represented by:

- Backbone staff
- Evaluation Team
- Strategy Leaders
- Parent Leaders
- Members with Lived Experience
- Add'l Coalition Members (nominated and voted in)

Strategy Leadership:

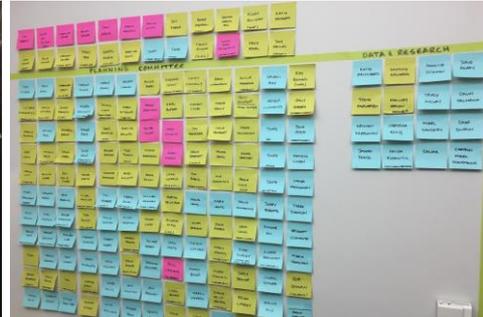
- Content Experts led Strategy Workgroups initially while authentic community relationships were built
- Shifted leadership to members with lived experience and those closest to the issues, with Content Expert support.

Project Evaluation: IMPACT Planning and Evaluation leads effort

Backbone Agency and Staff: Mental Health America of WI provides infrastructure, grant management, communications, relationship building, leadership support, and guides strategies.



What are the challenges of building meaningful collaboration between context and content experts?



Challenges and Adaptations

Hold listening sessions and/or focus groups to inform decisions



Including people with lived experience as team members and leaders

Creating the coalition and then adding community members after the fact



Intentionally creating an inclusive, safe space; making time for relationship building

Holding meetings the same way with rigid agendas and lots of presenting, little time for networking



Loosening up, practicing adaptive leadership, having fun, and being transparent and authentic

Providing gift cards for people who are not being paid to be at the table



Offering context experts to be paid consultants who get paid hourly

Creating professional growth opportunities for context experts



Having context experts identify their own needs and design for themselves



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How did you overcome those challenges?

FROM AWARENESS TO ACCOUNTABILITY

- Outreach and Education** raises community awareness and concern about violence
- Community Mobilization** creates opportunities for community members to take aligned action to address violence as a public health issue
- Community Organizing** builds community capacity among those most affected to address violence as a public health issue through coordinated action and policy change.
- Community Accountability** develops community power to hold elected and appointed leaders accountable for the policies and resources required to advance safe and thriving communities.



Engaging Community in Our Work

Intentionally creating a safe, welcoming space

Agendas are important, but flexibility is critical

Building in “Unapologetic Community Building” into every meeting

All members are held accountable to maintain space

Implementing the “Acroknock” and limiting jargon

Authentically cultivating relationships

Bidirectional trust is critical for success

Be patient and authentic – building strong relationships takes time

You, too, have to be vulnerable and share yourself



CCMH



Engaging Community in Our Work, con't

Actively supporting leadership development

- Context experts identify their strengths and weaknesses and interest areas for growth
- Making room for decision making and autonomy
- Being very clear on our limits as a grantee, organization, or initiative
- Celebrating and cultivating the unique qualities each person brings
- Creating partnerships/collaboration between content and context experts working together on strategies
- Also training us as professionals on how to be cognizant on how we show up and take up space; identifying biases and making room for others



Important Considerations

Is my organization able, willing, and ready to intentionally and meaningfully incorporate the voice of the community in our work? Meaning, will we:

- Share power, privilege, and control?
- Slow down the process to develop relationships and build trust, even if it takes considerable time?
- Be open to experiences, opinions, and ideas we didn't anticipate?
- Be transparent about expectations and what is and is not negotiable?
- Make accommodations for people who need to meet during non-business hours, and may need transportation and child care?
- Create safe meeting spaces where all voices can be heard and respected?
- Pay participants a living wage (i.e., at least \$15/hour) for their time?



Community Engagement Resources

Collective Impact Forum: [Community Engagement Toolkit](#)

FSG: [Water of Systems Change](#)

Tamarack Institute: [The Context Experts](#)

Stanford Social Innovation Review: [Community Engagement Matters \(Now, More than Ever\)](#)

CCMH Website: www.mkekids.org



RESOURCES

PREVENTION INSTITUTE: [HTTPS://WWW.PREVENTIONINSTITUTE.ORG](https://www.preventioninstitute.org)

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL POLICY: [WWW.CSSP.ORG](http://www.cssp.org)

COMMUNITY PLANNING TOOLKIT: [WWW.COMMUNITYPLANNINGTOOLKIT.ORG](http://www.communityplanningtoolkit.org)

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES: [WWW.NLC.ORG](http://www.nlc.org)

BLUEPRINT FOR PEACE: [WWW.414LIFE.COM](http://www.414life.com)



Thank you!

We value your participation and feedback. Please complete the **brief survey** that you will receive upon the conclusion of this webinar.

We will follow shortly with **supportive materials** for further learning.

Upcoming ICFW Webinars

Join us for “**Making a Case for Trauma Screening and Assessment**” with ICFW Clinician Meghan Christian, Clinical Director Dimitri Topitzes, and Cynthia Franzolin, LPC, from Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers, on May 4th at 1:00pm.

Register here: https://chwi.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oK4j1DiRSzasCuR0bx6bvw

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