Place-based approaches to tackling local youth violence: A review of evidence on models, implementation and impacts

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UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Centre for Evidence and Implementation

YOUTH ENDOWMENT FUND

About the Youth Endowment Fund

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) is a charity with a mission that matters. We exist to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. We do this by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice.

Children and young people at risk of becoming involved in violence deserve services that give them the best chance of a positive future. To make sure that happens, we'll fund promising projects and then use the very best evaluation to find out what works. Just as we benefit from robust trials in medicine, young people deserve support grounded in the evidence. We'll build that knowledge through our various grant rounds and funding activity.

And just as important is understanding children and young people's lives. Through our Youth Advisory Board and national network of peer researchers, we'll ensure they influence our work and we understand and are addressing their needs. But none of this will make a difference if all we do is produce reports that stay on a shelf.

Together, we need to look at the evidence, agree what works and then build a movement to make sure that young people get the very best support possible. Our strategy sets out how we'll do this. At its heart, it says that we will fund good work, find what works and work for change. You can read it here.

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About the Evaluators

Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI)

CEI (www.ceiglobal.org) is a global, not-for-profit evidence intermediary dedicated to using the best evidence in practice and policy to improve the lives of children, families and communities facing adversity. Established in 2015, CEI is a multi-disciplinary team across four offices in London, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney. We work with our clients, including policymakers, governments, practitioners, programme providers, organisation leaders, foundations and funders, in three key areas of work:

- Understanding the evidence base

- Developing methods and processes to put the evidence into practice

- Trialling, testing and evaluating policies and programmes for more effective decisions and better outcomes.

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VRC (www.vrc.crim.cam.ac.uk) is a hub for interdisciplinary and international research on violence based at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge. It was launched in September 2014 on the occasion of the First Global Violence Reduction Conference, held jointly with the World Health Organisation (WHO). VRC's aim is to conduct rigorous interdisciplinary research on the causes, prevention and consequences of interpersonal violence in a variety of settings.

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Introduction

- This report sets out the findings of a series of linked studies drawing together evidence about place-based approaches (PBAs) to reduce youth violence. The project was commissioned by the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) to support its key strategic work using PBAs and undertaken by a research consortium consisting of the Centre for Evidence and Implementation, Monash University and the Violence Research Centre (University of Cambridge).

- PBAs draw from socio-ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The place-based approach is rooted in recognition that youth violence is highly concentrated in specific localities (Weisburd, Groff, & Yang, 2012) and reflects features of the local environment. The PBA stems from a rationale that if youth violence reflects features of localities, its causes also need to be understood and addressed in the context of those localities (Kondo et al., 2018). Common features of PBAs include that they focus on a specific locality, involve several agencies working together, emphasise community engagement and aim to tackle the cause as well as prevalence of the targeted issue.

- YEF is making a significant investment in developing and testing different place-based responses to youth violence. Its Neighbourhood Fund aims to test PBA models and approaches with an emphasis on community engagement. These operate in hyper-local areas, with a phased programme of work including co-design of action plans with local communities. The Agency Collaboration Fund aims to identify the most effective ways for agencies to work together in local areas to prevent youth violence. YEF also support Violence Reduction Units, which take a whole-system preventative approach to violence reduction.

- This study was commissioned to synthesise learning about the design, implementation and effectiveness of PBAs to support YEF's work.

- This report brings together the findings from three components:

  - A systematic, narrative synthesis of literature describing the theories and logic behind models of PBAs targeting youth violence and their implementation (the 'Review of Models and Implementation')

  - A systematic review of evidence about the impacts of PBAs on youth violence (the 'Review of Evidence of Impact').

  - Mapping and analysis of examples of UK-based PBAs addressing youth violence or linked issues (the 'Analysis of England PBAs').

- A further linked component, reported separately, describes approaches to evaluating PBAs (Smith et al., 2023).

Overall methodology

- The Review of Models and Implementation and the Review of Evidence of Impact involved a combined search of four academic and grey literature databases. The systematic review methods

are published in a protocol. In setting criteria for the inclusion of texts, we defined PBAs targeting youth violence as initiatives that:

- Are geographically bound, that is, operate in a defined geographic area

- Focus on local needs and solutions and the attributions of a place

- Involve more than one statutory agency

- Involve meaningful engagement with local communities in design and delivery (the approach is described further below)

- Have at least one aim that relates to preventing or reducing street-level violence perpetrated by young people, or measure youth violence as an outcome

- Involve young people under 18

- Are undertaken in places the size of a city or smaller, in high income countries.

- We included exploratory, descriptive, quasi-experimental and experimental studies, published in English language between 2000 and 2022.

- Our eligibility criterion for meaningful community engagement used a modified version of Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969) to assess levels of community engagement on a 5-point scale:

  - 1 = Informing: providing communities and individuals with information

  - 2 = Consulting: obtaining feedback on, for example, analysis or decisions

  - 3 = Involving: working directly with communities to ensure their concerns are considered, e.g. through reference groups

  - 4 = Collaborating: working in partnership in each aspect of decisions, including identifying preferred solutions

  - 5 = Devolving: placing decision-making in the hands of the community and individuals.

- We included only PBAs where engagement reached Level 3 or higher, reflecting activity classified as 'involving', 'collaborating' or 'devolving'.

- Covidence was used for data management. Titles and abstracts were screened by two authors with duplicate screening of 20%. Full text review was undertaken by two authors; 3,458 publications were screened, identifying 276 studies for full-text screening, of which 103 met the inclusion criteria. Twenty of these papers were included in the Review of Evidence of Impact. Risk of bias assessment was undertaken on the studies included in the evidence review.

- The third component, the Analysis of England PBAs, involved desk-based research to identify potential PBAs for inclusion. We aimed to include PBAs that matched the definition used in the Review of Models and Implementation and the Review of Evidence of Impacts (set out above). Because we were not able to find many PBAs that focused on youth violence, we also included some with a wider or different remit. We selected seven PBAs, all in England. For each, we reviewed the

project website and key documents such as strategy papers and evaluation reports. We also undertook one interview with senior representative/s from each of the seven English PBAs

- The three reviews are summarised in Table E.S.1. It is important to be clear about the nature of the evidence we draw on in this synthesis. The Review of Models and Implementation and the Analysis England PBAs describe features of PBAs and their implementation, and perceptions of the important elements and ways of working, but do not allow definitive conclusions that these are associated with effectiveness. The Review of Evidence of Impact provides clear evidence about the effectiveness of the evaluated PBAs, but not about the individual elements associated with the impacts observed. Together, though, they inform hypotheses of important elements and how they operate to achieve change.

Table E.S.I. Summary of reviews and findings

Review	Aims	Methods	Key findings
Review of Models and Implementation	To describe models of PBAs, identify theories and approaches, and describe key components and implementation of models	Systematic narrative synthesis. Based on search of four academic and grey literature databases, with 103 publications included in the synthesis.	• Most papers described PBAs aligned with a public health approach targeting multiple levels of influence and need. • Multi-agency engagement and community engagement are described as core enablers of change. • Strategies most commonly targeted individual and microsystems (e.g. family) and, less often, community-level change. • Common activities include family/parenting programmes, youth development programmes, community mobilisation and programmes targeting school-based violence or substance use.
Review of Evidence of Impact	To synthesise findings from studies measuring impacts on youth violence, using experimental or quasi-experimental methods (QED)	Systematic review. Based on same search as Review of Models and Implementation. Included a sub-set of 20 studies.	• 17 studies used QED, and three were RCTs. • 13 studies reported statistically significant positive impacts on aspects of violence. • The most effective targeted youth considered at risk or high risk and delivered secondary or tertiary prevention strategies
Analysis of England PBAs	To contextualise the review findings to examples of UK PBAs, explore how far review findings align with these examples and describe their features	Selected through desk research. Data collection involved review of websites and key documentation and interview with representative/s.	• The selected PBAs were wider in their focus than the reviews, focusing variously on youth violence, other youth outcomes, early years and community cohesion. • Most focused on a specific sub-group with additional goals to improve community outcomes and create lasting systems change. • Activities included youth development, family and parenting support, employability support, and strengthening systems around young people and families, as well as signposting to

| | | | services. Most PBAs did not use evidence-based programmes, and instead placed emphasis on locally developed initiatives. |
| | | | • Community engagement and multi-agency collaboration were described as fundamental to the approach. |

Review of Models and Implementation

- The aim of this systematic narrative literature synthesis was to identify theories and approaches underpinning PBAs that target youth violence and to describe the range of approaches that have been developed and their underpinning theories. We also aimed to identify the key characteristics and components of models reported in the literature and how they are implemented.

- Most of the included publications (75.7%) were published since 2010, and most (89.8%) were published in the US; 40.7% related to the Communities That Care (CTC) PBA, which involves the formation of community coalitions of members of the public, local authorities and stakeholders that work together to plan and implement activities. Given its prevalence, we distinguish between CTC and non-CTC approaches in our analysis.

- Where an explanation for site selection was given, it mainly related to rates of violence. Other relevant considerations included the requirements of funding, the availability of local agencies willing to partner and socio-economic disadvantage. Where the information was available, most targeted local residents rather than a broader population.

- Half (53.4%) of the studies specified an age range, and here the average minimum age range was 10.8 years and average maximum was 17.6 years; 34% of the studies referred to 'youth' with specifying ages, and 12.6% did not stipulate a target population. The target population was further specified in 60.2% of the studies, e.g. by school settings or risk of or engagement in youth violence.

- The PBAs varied in their focus, focusing solely on high-risk young people and/or taking a preventive approach by targeting low-risk young people, young people more generally and/or the community more broadly.

- Goals of PBAs typically involved reducing youth violence, addressing attitudes and behaviours concerning violence, addressing social determinants of violence, and reducing alcohol and drug use.

- Many publications did not clearly articulate all activities implemented. The most commonly described were: family/parenting programmes; youth development programmes; community mobilisation; school violence, alcohol or drug programmes; education/training/employment programmes; community building; public education and youth outreach; and case management.

- The selection of activities to meet goals involved needs identification and prioritisation (using local data and consultation). Several PBAs selected evidence-based programmes to match locally-identified needs. This approach is a component of manualised PBAs such as CTC. Other PBAs developed local programmes and associated activities.

- We mapped the timelines described in publications to the phases of activity YEF describes in its Neighbourhood Fund work[1]: preparation (involving intelligence gathering and 'discovery' work to understand the local areas and co-design of action plans with local communities), delivery and evaluation. Across the publications that described timelines, the preparation phase had lasted for an average of 9.6 months. The delivery phase had lasted an average 53.1 months (i.e. just under four and a half years) and the evaluation phase had lasted on average 47.7 months (i.e. just under four years). Preparation time was on average shorter for the CTC approach, and delivery and evaluation phases were longer.

- There was variation in the theories underpinning the PBAs, and it was rare for a PBA to draw on a single theory. The theories described included both criminological and other theories. Theories included socio-ecological theory, community empowerment theory, disorganisation theory, deterrence theory, social learning/differential association theories, social bonding and feminist theory. The most common theoretical underpinnings were socio-ecological and community empowerment theories. This aligns with recommendations for public health approaches to preventing violence that simultaneously address multiple levels of influence.

- Few interventions and activities identified across PBAs targeted the physical or built environment or addressed macro-level factors impact violence outcomes (e.g. poverty).

- Multi-agency engagement was a key component of the models described. Most frequently involved were police; schools; community-based organisations; and health, religious, and child and family services. Around half of the publications described a local collaborative governance structure, most commonly including community-based organisations, statutory agencies, government and researchers/evaluators. Few mentioned community youth representatives.

- Strategies for building and sustaining multi-agency engagement were described, including devolving power, relationship building, communication, formal structures and agreements, assessing pre-existing dynamics, developing PBA visibility and identity, harnessing existing key relationships and structures, and considering sustainability.

- Community engagement was also a key component. As noted earlier, we used a modified version of Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969) to assess levels of community engagement on a 5-point scale and included only PBAs where engagement reached Level 3 or higher, reflecting activity classified as 'involving', 'collaborating' or 'devolving'. The highest levels of community engagement were described in the co-production phases of activity (average 4.4 out of 5, aligned with 'collaborating') and delivery phases (average 4.6, aligned with 'collaborating'). Lower levels of community engagement were described in discovery (average 3.8, aligned with 'involving'), evaluation (average 3.3, 'involving') and early feasibility (average 2.9, aligned with 'consulting') phases.

- Strategies for building and sustaining community engagement were similar to those involved in multi-agency engagement. They included asking, listening and learning about place; relationship building; communication; addressing pre-existing dynamics (e.g. tensions or conflicts between

groups, or between local people and agencies); devolving power; developing the PBA's visibility; harnessing relationships and structures; resourcing and considering sustainability.

- In attempting to achieve their goals, PBAs for addressing youth offending could have varying targets. Overall, most PBAs aimed to have some impact on individual childreb (80.6%), and over one half targeted children's microsystems (57.3%) (e.g., family, teachers, peers). Around a third aimed to impact on the child's mesosystem (that is, to influence the interactions between children's microsystems, such as the child's parents and school). Around one third (36.9%) targeted children's exosystem (e.g. neighbourhood, mass media), and fewer aimed to impact on the macrosystem (e.g. poverty) (12.6%). CTC PBAs were more likely than non-CTC PBAs to target the mesosystem and microsystem.

Review of Evidence of Impact

- The aim of the Review of Evidence of Impact was to synthesise findings from studies that had measured the impact of PBAs on youth violence, using either experimental or quasi-experimental methods.

- The twenty studies presenting impact evaluations were mainly from the US and included one UK study. Five reported on the impact of CTC (described above). Seven reported on the impact of Operation Ceasefire (OCF). OCF is a form of focused deterrence and a multi-agency programme that targets those at high risk of violence alongside universal preventive work through approaches including policing, community mobilisation and mentoring by ex-offenders. Most (17 studies) used a quasi-experimental design (matched control group, non-matched control group, statistically matched control group [e.g. propensity score matching], one group or interrupted time series, or difference in difference). Three used a randomised controlled trial (RCT) design. The unit of analysis involved clusters of data (school districts, neighbourhoods, communities or geographical area) for 14 studies and individuals in five studies (generally smaller scale interventions and samples).

- The most frequent aims were reducing youth violence, reducing gang involvement and development of positive behaviours and attitudes.

- Eleven studies reported on one or more violent behaviours as outcomes, the remainder measuring behaviours not representative of serious violence but indicating a pattern of aggressive, antisocial or delinquent behaviour. Studies used self-reported surveys (n = 10), police data (n = 8), census data (n = 7) and hospital records (n = 2) – the latter including crimes not always captured in police records. Three studies used geo-coding to test whether crimes occurred in the intervention or comparison area and to test displacement (bleed over of effect into an adjoining area).

- In terms of impacts, all five of the CTC evaluations reported statistically significant positive impacts in the form of reduction of arrest and re-arrest, self-reported delinquency, gang involvement and crimes of property. However, reductions were small and not uniform across studies.

- Four of the seven OCF evaluations reported medium to large positive impacts on reducing youth homicide, gun assault, assault, violent crimes, violent attitudes, gun violence and non-fatal shooting. The three other OCF evaluations found both positive and negative impacts.

- Of the remaining eight studies, four found statistically significant positive impacts on aspects of violence, and four found no difference, or differences that were not statistically significant.

- Four studies tested displacement effects, i.e. whether either violence or beneficial impacts were displaced to a neighbouring area. Two found no evidence of displacement of either violence or beneficial impacts, one found displacement of beneficial impacts and not violence, and one found displacement of violence (i.e. increases in an adjoining area).

- Overall, positive impacts were more evident when PBAs targeted serious youth violence, when they used multi-component approaches combining universal preventative activities and targeted interventions for young people already involved in violence, and when they incorporated coordinated efforts with local stakeholders.

Analysis of England PBAs

- This element of the study complemented the two reviews by providing information about PBAs currently operating in the UK. The aims were to explore how far the features and approaches identified in the Review of Models and Implementation and the Review of Evidence of Impacts aligned with current PBA practice in the UK, and to explore issues that may not yet be fully reflected in the literature.

- Seven PBAs were identified and analysed, all operating in England. Of these, two focused on youth violence, one on wider outcomes for young people, one on early years and two on wider community cohesion.

- The key characteristics of the geographic locations were the prevalence of local violence or other poor outcomes for children, young people or another target population; high levels of disadvantage and inequality; a sense of being overlooked or forgotten communities; and having existing networks or connectivity to provide a foundation for place-based work. All had funding from multiple sources, both within the local area and external, with the National Lottery Community Fund a common funder.

- Most of the seven PBAs analysed focused on a particular sub-group – either young people involved in or at risk of violence or at risk of other poor outcomes, e.g. learning and social development – or on children in their early years or people living in poverty. They generally also had additional goals at two wider levels: (1) supporting the community as a whole, improving community outcomes and community cohesion, and (2) creating lasting systems change.

- Community-level objectives included aims such as building community identity, positivity and confidence; and increasing community cohesion and mutual support. Systems-level objectives were generally fairly loosely described but involved aims such as improving connectivity between local organisations, creating new partnerships, improving the capacity of organisations and services to support local people, increasing funding targeted at young people or other focus population, and changing the culture of local services (e.g. more holistic, tailored or people-centred ways or working, more community involvement in service development, and more use of evidence and data).

- The activities undertaken included youth development activities, activity targeting other groups, e.g. family and parenting support and employability support, and activity to strengthen support systems

around young people or families. They also provided signposting or other assistance to link individuals in the target population with local services and sources of support. In addition, there was a strong focus on community building and community mobilisation. Although there were exceptions, using existing evidence-based programmes was not commonly part of the work, with more emphasis on locally developed initiatives. This appeared to reflect a cultural preference for locally developed services rather than systematic consideration of the available evidence-based programmes and their fit.

- The PBA representatives also described ambitions for local systems change. The strategies planned tended to be evolving. Systems change was anticipated to arise through strengthening the capacity of local organisations to meet local needs; developing a shared vision for area-wide change and strengthening joint work; developing new partnerships and services; and strengthening local policy-making to meet needs.

- Multi-agency working was a core approach across all seven PBAs. Most had formalised arrangements with some form of partnership board representing core partners involved in decision-making. These inter-agency relationships were viewed as key, both for the immediate work of the PBA and to ensure longer-term impacts and legacy.

- Community engagement was also a key component of the approach in all seven PBAs. Mapping against the distinct phases described in YEF's Neighbourhood Fund work (described above), communities were more commonly involved in the discovery, co-production and delivery phases of programmes than they were in the early feasibility phases or later evaluation phases. The highest levels of engagement were described in the co-production phase. Community engagement was described as requiring or aided by taking time to build relationships, offering multiple ways of engaging with local people for small-scale and informal to larger structured events, entering communities and extending networks through influential 'insiders', being visible and approachable, having a workforce that reflects the local demography, using positive and non-stigmatising language, and providing active support to community-led actions so that local people were supported to carry these out.

- Evaluation approaches among the seven England PBAs varied. They generally focused more on impacts for individuals directly receiving PBA services or activities rather than on whole-population impacts. One PBA evaluation used a quasi-experimental design with matched comparison groups, but it was more typical that less robust approaches were used to measure impact, e.g. simple pre- and post-comparisons, retrospective reports, and without the use of validated measures. They also used a range of methods to assess implementation and delivery including interviews, observation, surveys, workshops and case studies.

- Several of the PBA representatives described aspirations for sustained change in local areas. Ideas were evolving, but this was seen to lie in strengthening the community's capacity to collaboratively solve local problems, developing organisational capacity and networks, changing cultures and ways of working, and changing local policy and funding allocation. Cultural change included, for example, more emphasis on evidence-informed and data-driven ways of working, more holistic and person-centred working cultures, or developing a local 'learning system' mindset that emphasised learning together, using evidence and adaptive approaches.

- Some of the PBAs also had aims for their model to be replicated in other geographic areas. The intention was to identify the core features of their approach as a 'blueprint' that could be used elsewhere, beginning with locally-focused work in new sites to identify local needs and develop local partnerships and activities.

Integrated findings and recommendations

- The Review of Evidence of Impact highlights that PBAs can have a positive impact on youth violence, particularly serious violence. Across the three elements of the study, a clear set of key components of PBAs were identified. Although some reflect the inclusion criteria used, they emerged as key aspects of place-based working. These are:

  o Multi-agency working: This was described in texts included in the Review of Models and Implementation and in the Analysis of England PBAs as a key aspect of the PBA to bring together organisations whose support and involvement was critical to delivering the PBA activities. In addition, the Review of Evidence of Impact concluded that positive impacts were more evident when PBAs incorporated coordinated efforts with local stakeholders.

  o Community engagement: Again this was described in the Review of Models and Implementation and in the Analysis of England PBAs as being of central importance to PBAs working. It was seen as key for developing, implementing and evaluating PBAs and important to overcome any community mistrust of the PBA and stigma associated with being involved in the PBA, avoid the appearance of 'outside-in' approaches, and ensure the community does not feel exploited by the PBA or associated research and that the initiative becomes rooted in the community.

  o Reflecting local context: From the Review of Models and Implementation and Analysis of England PBAs, we know that PBA localities were primary selected for high rates of violence and, as noted, the involvement of local partners and communities was seen as critical. For many PBAs, activity selection began by identifying and prioritising local needs through analysis of local data and local consultation. Strategies for identifying possible activities included matching evidence-based programmes with identified community needs and developing or using local activities, programmes and services.

  o Targeting impacts and activities at multiple levels: The Review of Models and Implementation found that most PBAs aligned with a public health approach, simultaneously addressing multiple ecological levels of influence (e.g. individual, family, school and neighbourhood levels), and involved primary prevention activity combined with targeted approaches to high-risk individuals (secondary and/or tertiary prevention activity). The Review of Evidence of Impact found that the most effective PBAs targeted youth considered at risk or high risk (secondary and/or tertiary), and some combined this with primary activity aimed at the broader youth population. The Analysis of England PBAs similarly described PBAs targeting specific sub-groups and the community as a whole.

  o A phased approach with appropriate timelines: The Review of Models and Implementation found that where publications reported timelines, the preparation phase lasted on average nearly 10 months (16 months for non-CTC PBAs), the delivery phase lasted on average around

four and a half years and the evaluation phase lasted just under four years. The importance of the preparation phase was emphasised in the Analysis of England PBAs.

- Using data and evidence to identify community needs: This, as noted above, was a prevalent approach described in the Review of Models and Implementation as well as in the Analysis of England PBAs and is a core approach in models such as CTC.

- There is considerable variation in PBA models and approaches, reflecting different theoretical underpinnings and their responsiveness to local context. This means that it is not possible to propose a single Theory of Change, but we can make recommendations for the elements that a Theory of Change should include. These are:

  - Intended outcomes: at different levels, e.g. for individual young people, for communities and for systems

  - Planned activities: relating to interventions for young people or other local people and for multi-agency working, building and sustaining community engagement, and evaluation and learning

  - How readiness or foundations for place-based working will be built: e.g. funding and infrastructure for the PBA; understanding the local area; building relationships and trust; planning for shared data; and embedding learning and evaluation in ways of working

  - Hypothesised mechanism of change.

- The findings generally align with YEF's approaches to place-based working. Our recommendations are that PBA work should:

  - Consider combining universal preventative work focused on young people at low risk of involvement in youth violence coupled with targeted work for those at high risk or already involved in violence. The rationale is that this would reduce current high levels of violence, address underlying causes and help prevent or reduce violence for the future. This is consistent with the public health approach described throughout the Review of Models and Implementation and with the approach seen in effective PBAs described in the Review of Evidence of Impact, which either targeted high-risk young people or combined this with activity targeting low- or lower-risk young people. We recommend it as an approach to reduce current high levels of violence and help to prevent and reduce.

  - Build from and work with the local context, including developing a rich understanding of cultures, histories, dynamics, strengths, assets, vulnerabilities, sub-populations, formal and informal organisations and leaders, and existing service systems. These approaches are described in the Review of Models of Implementation and the Analysis of England PBAs. We recommend this focus so that PBAs are tailored to local conditions from which violence emerges that hold it in place and that need to be part of future change.

  - Invest in building and sustaining partnerships and community engagement: These are emphasised in publications included in the Review of Models and Implementation and perceived by those involved in England PBAs as foundational approaches and key ways in which they make a difference.

- o Make the use of data and evidence central, combining different forms of data, including local data about violence and needs, insights and experiences of local people, evidence about what has worked in previous PBAs and local initiatives, and evidence about effective approaches for a targeted set of outcomes. This was a feature of many of the models described in the Review of Models and Implementation and in the Review of Evidence of Impact and underscored as important in the Analysis of England PBAs.

- o Make intentions for systems-level change explicit early on, with specific activities planned to address them. This activity was less evident in the Review of Models and Implementation, and participants in the Analysis of England PBAs described aspirations for lasting systems change, but intentions and activities were generally not very well developed.

- o Prioritise rigorous evaluation, learning systems and data infrastructure, using robust approaches to measure impact and monitor implementation. PBAs involve intensive long-term investment, but we found relatively few rigorous evaluations of effectiveness that would allow assessment of the merits of this investment. The complexity and emergent nature of work involved in PBAs would be supported by a culture of learning and evidence use, and assessment and measurement of the effectiveness of implementation and associated strategies would be valuable to those involved in their design and delivery and to the field more generally.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

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Context and purpose of the YEF commission

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) exists to prevent children and young people becoming involved in violence. It approaches this mission by finding out what works and building a movement to put this knowledge into practice. Place-based approaches (PBAs) are a key part of YEF's strategy, used in the Neighbourhood Fund, Agency Collaboration Fund and YEF's support for Violence Reduction Units (VRUs).

To this end, a series of linked studies was commissioned by YEF to assess the evidence about how to best deliver and evaluate PBAs addressing youth violence to support decision-making by YEF and its partners. This work was undertaken by the research consortium comprised of the Centre for Evidence and Implementation, the Violence Research Centre (University of Cambridge) and Monash University.

This following section provides an overview into the issue of youth violence, with a particular focus on the UK context. It then outlines the approach taken for the study and the overall structure of this report.

Youth violence

Violence in all its forms is a concern for individuals, families, communities and governments alike. While collective violence such as war and terrorism captures the public attention, the most costly forms of violence originate locally, reflecting the proportionately greater prevalence of violence in interpersonal and community contexts (Hoeffler, 2017).

Globally, interpersonal violence disproportionally affects children and young people, with homicide being the fourth leading cause of death for young people aged 15–19 (World Health Organisation, 2021). In the UK, the Office for National Statistics reported that the most common age group for victims of homicides registered in 2020 was 16–24-year-olds, with males being the most prevalent sex group (Office for National Statistics, 2021). One of the most common methods of killing continues to be by a sharp instrument. In the UK, knife crimes displayed an 80% increase between 2015 and 2019; about 30% of these offences are reported in metropolitan cities, and around 65% of incidents involve young people aged 10–25 (Skarlatidou, Ludwig, Solymosi, & Bradford, 2021).

Previous research has shown that young people who become involved in violent crimes as victims or perpetrators experience several detrimental mental health and wellbeing outcomes. For example, exposure to violence increases the risks of injury or re-injury, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, mental health problems, school dropout, early pregnancy, reproductive health problems, and communicable and non-communicable diseases (Cunningham, 2015; Farrell, 2018; Ranney, 2019).

Costs stemming from violence extend beyond the loss of life and physical and psychological trauma generated through injury; they encompass the intergenerational impacts of these experiences (Widom & Maxfield, 2001), alongside the substantial healthcare, criminal justice and social services costs associated with preventing and responding to violent acts. In 2018, a single incident of violence with injury in the UK was estimated to have an economic and social cost of £13,900 (Heeks, Reed, Tafsiri, & Prince, 2018), reinforcing the critical importance of government attention and associated funding to addressing this concern.

In response to the ongoing challenge of violence, in April 2018, the UK Government launched its Serious Violence Strategy, which detailed a plan to focus on early intervention and prevention, centring local partnerships at the heart of these strategies (Home Office, 2018). This approach stems from the understanding outlined in the UK Serious Violence Strategy that tackling serious violence requires the implementation of strategies beyond law enforcement. Such strategies should draw on a range of partners across multiple sectors and must be relevant and responsive to the needs of local communities. These intentions are reflected in PBAs for the prevention of violence.

Place-based approaches to crime

PBAs draw from social-ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). They are rooted in a recognition that youth violence is highly concentrated in specific localities (Weisburd, Groff, & Yang, 2012) and reflects features of the local environment (e.g. deprivation, residential mobility and ethnic diversity). The implication is that the causes of youth violence similarly need to be understood and addressed in the context of those localities: *"Neighbourhood violence is a place-based problem that requires place-based solutions"* (Kondo, Andreyeva, South, MacDonald, & Branas, 2018, p. 267).

The approaches utilised by PBAs for addressing violence are varied. Some approaches build on conventional crime prevention and policing methods. These include environmental interventions such as housing and blight remediation (Kondo et al., 2018), CCTV (Welsh & Farrington, 2009) and street lighting (Welsh et al., 2021), and police-led approaches such as hot-spot policing and situational crime prevention, where police resources are concentrated in a specific locality (Averdijk, Eisner, Luciano, Valdebenito, & Obsuth, 2020; Gaffney, Jolliffe, & White, 2022). In place-based investigations, police focus on a particular locality and aim to disrupt the offender networks through gathering intelligence on key individuals (McManus, Engel, Cherkauskas, Light, & Shoulberg, 2020).

Other approaches used in PBAs aim to address the social challenges that might lead to crime by targeting developmental risk and protective factors understood to impact on the risk of engagement in crime or violence. They may, for example, involve provision of youth and family programmes, institutional reform or focused deterrence that provides targeted enforcement strategies and multi-agency support to individuals and communities involved in violent crime (Gaffney, Farrington, & White, 2021). These approaches also engage in community capacity building and enhancement (e.g. through community clean-up and improving educational, recreational, and training facilities and community life more broadly). This includes community-led public health interventions that engage multiple stakeholders in a multi-strategy approach (McManus et al., 2020), including activities centred around inter-agency collaboration, evidence-based programmes, capacity building and using more fluid strategies. Social crime prevention approaches focus efforts on individuals and communities with a view to preventing both initial engagement in crime or violence across a whole population (primary social crime prevention), 'at-risk' groups (secondary social crime prevention) and deterring re-engagement in crime or violence among those already involved or convicted of crime or violence (tertiary social crime prevention; Lab, 2020; White et al., 2019).

Evaluating PBAs, and particularly social crime prevention approaches and community-led PBAs, raises a number of challenges (Bellefontaine & Wisener, 2011; Foell & Pitzer, 2020). The core features of such PBAs that represent their potential (Bellefontaine & Wisener 2011; Crimeen, Bernstein, Zapart, & Haigh, 2017) are also issues that raise challenges to conventional evaluation methods. For example:

- These PBAs are designed to meet unique conditions, which means they evolve over time and vary in form, making them hard to define for evaluation.

- Their objectives are multiple, diverse and evolving.

- They address underlying causes of the social issue being addressed (e.g. youth violence or its antecedents), structures and power dynamics.

- They engage multiple stakeholders in varied roles and ways.

- They are opportunity driven, reflecting local resources and constraints.

- The strategies used evolve over time reflecting changes in contexts and learning about how to bring about change.

- They work through relationships, engagement and qualities such as trust, and through building capacity and synergies.

YEF's place-based work to reduce youth violence

YEF was set up in March 2019, with a 10-year mandate to establish what works in preventing children and young people from becoming involved in violence and build a movement to put this knowledge into practice. YEF is making a significant investment in developing and testing PBAs, with a number of different strands of work:

- The Neighbourhood Fund aims to test models and approaches that particularly use community engagement in addressing youth violence. The aim is to understand whether and how empowering people to make decisions about their local neighbourhoods can prevent youth violence. YEF has invested in five hyper-local areas in England and Wales, with a phased programme of work to understand the problems the community faces through 'discovery' work and co-design and deliver solutions (over a period of up to five years) that are evidence-informed and responsive to local needs[2]. The draft Theory of Change for the Neighbourhood Fund initiative is shown in Appendix 1.

- The Agency Collaboration Fund addresses the fact that intelligence about and support for children at risk of youth violence is often fragmented across local agencies. The Agency Collaboration Fund aims to identify the most effective ways for agencies to work together to identify and support children most at risk, including through sharing data, power and information. In the first grant round, YEF is testing focused deterrence, an approach that aims to identify groups and group dynamics implicated in violence and offer targeted support to young people, engaging the wider community. A second round is testing a multi-agency partnership approach for children at risk of extra familial harm.

- The third strand of work is support for VRUs to make sustainable, evidence-based change in their areas. VRUs are situated in police force areas and take a preventative, whole-system approach to violence reduction, involving multi-agency working, data sharing and analysis, engaging young people and communities, and commissioning (and developing) evidence-based interventions.

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[2] https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/grants/neighbourhood-fund/

The approach taken in this study

Given the limited evidence on community-led PBAs (see above), this study aimed to look in depth into the existing literature and analyse the models and theoretical underpinnings of PBA approaches and the effectiveness of these approaches to reducing local youth violence, as well as further understanding their implementation and delivery.

This study addresses the gap in evidence using four interrelated work packages that, together, aimed to enhance the current evidence base for designing, implementing and evaluating PBAs to address youth violence.

- **Review of Models and Implementation –** This was a systematic narrative synthesis of literature to identify PBA initiatives focusing on youth violence and systematically analyse the theories, models and underpinning philosophies, and to highlight learning about implementation. It focused on PBAs that involved at least two statutory agencies and demonstrated meaningful engagement of local communities, with a focus on young people and reducing violence. Studies were identified for inclusion through a systematic search of international literature. The narrative synthesis is set out in Chapter 3, which describes the theoretical underpinnings, local contexts and strategies for their selection, target population, goals, and the approach to identifying needs and prioritising activities. It highlights learning about multi-agency engagement and community engagement as two key enablers of change.

- **Review of Evidence of Impact –** This was a systematic review and analysis of the sub-set of 20 studies from the Review of Models and Implementation, which measured the impacts of PBAs on reducing youth violence. This is reported in Chapter 4, which synthesises evidence on the effectiveness of PBAs and describes the characteristics of effective initiatives relevant to youth violence.

- **Analysis of England PBAs**[3] **–** The third component was a description and analysis of examples of PBAs in the UK (all were being implemented in England) to understand how PBAs are currently being designed, delivered and evaluated in the England context in areas of work involving or relevant to youth violence. This stage involved one interview per PBA with representatives of the PBA and website and documentary analysis. Seven PBAs are described, and the linkages to the Review of Models and Implementation are highlighted. This forms the content of Chapter 5.

- **PBA evaluation approaches –** The final component is a report describing methods for evaluating PBAs**.** This is published separately (Smith et al., 2023).

The methods used in the first three components described above are set out in the next chapter. (As noted, the fourth component is reported separately.) The final chapter of this report provides a discussion of the findings and their implications and sets out recommendations for work in this area, drawing across the Review of Models and Implementation, Review of Evidence of Impact and Analysis of England PBAs.

As far as we are aware, this project is the first attempt to combine information from published and unpublished literature of PBAs specifically targeting youth violence. This series of work will provide essential evidence for future interventions to effectively reduce the prevalence of youth violence.

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[3] Initially planned as an analysis of UK examples. However, as all seven included were based in England, we describe them as England models.

Chapter 2 – Methodology

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The following chapter sets out the methodologies used for the Review of Models and Implementation, the Review of Evidence of Impact and the Analysis of England PBAs.

Review of Models and Implementation and Review of Evidence of Impact

A combined search strategy was undertaken for the two reviews, for efficiency and to ensure inclusion of all eligible literature (see Appendix 2). The review team identified eligibility criteria, searched four academic and grey literature databases, screened titles and abstracts to identify texts fitting inclusion criteria, screened full texts for those meeting inclusion criteria at title and abstract screening (or if eligibility could not be determined from title and abstract alone) to further assess fit with inclusion criteria, and then extracted data from those meeting inclusion criteria at full text screening. This formed the pool of literature included in the Review of Models and Implementation. A sub-set of this literature was identified as eligible for the Review of Evidence of Impact. The following sections describe this in more detail.

Selection criteria

The following selection criteria were agreed:

Place-based approaches

In line with the place-based work supported by YEF, PBAs were defined as collaborative, long-term approaches that:

(i) are based in a geographically bound location;

(ii) focus on local needs, local solutions and the unique attributes of a place;

(iii) involve more than one statutory agency (e.g. schools, police, hospitals, health services, child welfare and youth justice); and

(iv) demonstrate meaningful engagement and involvement of local communities in the design and/or delivery of the approach (see further below).

Country, language and locality

Texts concerning PBAs in high-income countries only were included, on the basis of relevance to YEF's place-based work. Texts were included if title, abstract and key words were in English. PBAs targeting localities of the size of a city or smaller were included, again for relevance to YEF's place-based activity.

PBA target population and aims

Texts were included if the PBA targeted or included young people aged under 18 years and aimed to prevent or reduce, or measured impacts for, violence perpetrated by young people. Violence included both street violence (e.g. assaults, sexual assaults and homicide) and private violence (e.g. dating violence and adolescent family violence).

Community involvement

Community involvement is an important aspect of YEF's work, particularly in the Neighbourhood Fund, and so was included as an eligibility criterion. Meaningful engagement and involvement of local residents and/or grassroots organisations was defined using and adapted version of Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969). The original version sets out eight levels of participation. The adapted version we used (Public Participation Team NHS, 2015) involves five levels, the highest being where the community takes the role of decision maker and the lowest being where the community is involved as a receptor of information that allows its members to understand the problems, alternatives and opportunities. The five levels are set out in Table 1.

Table 1. *Definitions of levels of community involvement*

5. Devolving	Placing decision-making in the hands of the community and individuals.
4. Collaborating	Working in partnership with communities and patients in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
3. Involving	Working directly with communities and patients to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered, e.g. partnership boards, reference groups and service users participating in policy groups.
2. Consulting	Obtaining community and individual feedback on analysis, alternatives and / or decisions, e.g. surveys, door knocking, citizens' panels and focus groups.
1. Informing	Providing communities and individuals with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding problems, alternatives, opportunities, solutions, e.g. websites, newsletters and press releases.

We set, as an eligibility criteria, that studies should describe community engagement aligned with levels 3, 4 or 5 – involving, collaborating and devolving. This decision was made to align our focus with YEF's assumption in their PBA work that this level of involvement is important for PBAs to be effective in achieving change for young people and communities.

'Community', in the context of community engagement, was defined as any of (i) private citizens, (ii) community-based or grassroots organisations or (iii) other community services or groups, e.g. spiritual/religious groups or Scouts.

Multi-agency engagement

PBAs were eligible if they included at least two statutory agencies in the design and/or delivery of the PBA. Statutory agencies were defined as a state or local government unit whose existence is supported by legislation and whose actions are subject to review (e.g. police, hospitals, community health services, schools, child protection, youth justice, etc.).

Study designs

Exploratory, descriptive, quasi-experimental and experimental studies and publications were all eligible. Systematic and other types of reviews were not included per se, on the basis that they would not provide sufficient detail about individual PBAs. Instead, any individual PBAs they covered or referenced were included if they met the selection criteria. The combined search approach included evidence from both published and non-published sources, including book chapters, journal articles, government reports and also academic master's and PhD theses.

Publication year

Texts were included if they were published in 2000 or more recently, with a view to capturing more contemporary interventions or prevention programmes.

Further selection criteria for the Review of Evidence of Impact

As noted above, the texts included in the Review of Evidence of Impact were a sub-set of those included in the Review of Models and Implementation. We also explored reference lists of 16 previous reviews related to the intervention/outcomes (see Appendix 2). A total of 186 papers were screened from lists. Many of them had already been detected in the previous searches.

The selection criteria for this sub-set were as follows.

Study type

Including experimental and quasi-experimental study designs (QED). Experimental studies involved random allocation of participants in at least one experimental group and one control group (i.e. a control group with no intervention, a control group with intervention as usual and a control group with an alternative intervention or a wait-list control group). QEDs were included if they compared the impact of the independent variable using at least one treatment and one control group, reporting a clear method to ensure statistical equivalence (e.g. time series analysis, propensity score matching, matching through cohort controls and regression discontinuity).

Violence as an outcome measure

Studies were included if they addressed youth violence as a specific outcome measure, based on official records, self-reports or the perception of victims (e.g. victimisation surveys), and included statistical results that could be transformed into effect sizes.

Search strategy

The search used keywords relating to dimensions of 'study design' (e.g. qualitative, RCT), 'intervention' (e.g. place-based, location-based), 'population' (e.g. adolescent, teen) and 'outcomes' (e.g. crime, delinquency). These are set out in full in Appendix 2.

The search terms were used to search the following academic and grey literature electronic databases:

(1) *Criminal Justice Abstracts via Ebsco (1980 to present)*

(2) *ProQuest: Dissertations & Theses Global*

(3) *APA PsychInfo*

(4) *MEDLINE*

Screening and extraction

For efficient review management, all citations were transferred to web-based electronic systematic review software (*Covidence*) for the removal of duplicates, for title/abstract and full text screening, and to identify, track and resolve discrepancies across reviewers (Babineau, 2014).

Prior to study selection, all review authors underwent training to ensure a comparable understanding of the purpose of the reviews and the selection criteria.

After removal of duplicates, 3,458 texts were reviewed for inclusion. Titles and abstracts were screened by two authors (EW and JM), with duplicate screening of 20%. Consensus was reached by a discussion between authors, with amendments made to the screening criteria as required. For the full text review, two authors (EW and JM) double screened the first five papers with 100% consensus, and the remaining studies were assessed by one review author. The reference lists of reviews identified in the electronic database search were also screened by one author (AH).

A data extraction form was developed iteratively and agreed with YEF. Four reviewers extracted the data (EW, JM, AH and BT), covering the following data items:

- Publication characteristics: e.g. authors, year published, country and publication type

- PBA details: e.g. name, year(s) of fieldwork, delivery organisation(s), target population and goals/intended outcomes

- Key activities and targeted impacts at micro/meso/macrosystem level

- Implementation of the PBA: e.g. PBA activities and adaptations, support for implementation, barriers and enablers

- Geographic context: e.g. location, number of sites involved, strategy for choice of location and size of geography

- PBA theory: any overtly identified theories/philosophies

- Multi-agency engagement (agencies involved at each phase, primary program implementers and deliverers, local collaborative structures supporting the PBA)

- Community engagement: level of engagement at each phase, relationship between community and statutory agencies, description around development of trust and key pitfalls identified

- Impact of PBAs on wider systems

- Any evidence of evaluation.

Results of search and screening

Initial title and abstract screening of the 3,458 publications excluded papers that did not meet the inclusion criteria and identified 276 studies eligible for full-text screening for both the Review of Models and Implementation and the Review of Evidence of Impact (Figure 1). Of these, 103 met the inclusion criteria, most of which (90.3%) were not already in the YEF Evidence and Gap Map[4]. Of the 103 studies included in the review of theory, 20 studies were found to be eligible for the Review of Evidence of Impact.
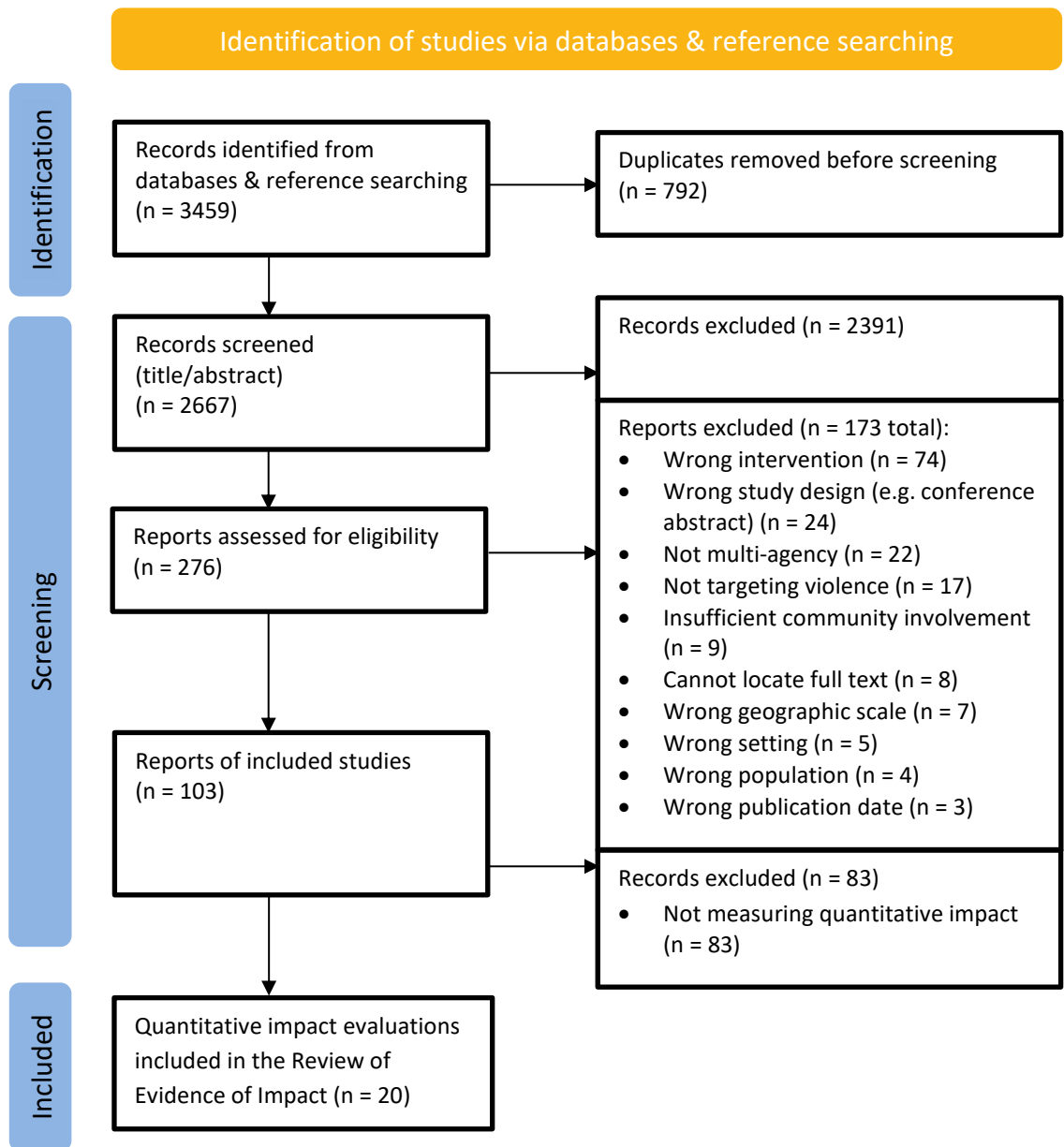

The PRISMA flow diagram is shown below (Figure 1). Most publications (n = 85, 82.5%) were identified from primary database searches, 11.7% were identified from reference list searches, 4.9% were identified from a grey literature search and one publication was identified through manual searching.

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram, with additional screening stage for the Review of Evidence of Impact

Identification of studies via databases & reference searching

Identification

Records identified from databases & reference searching (n = 3459) → Duplicates removed before screening (n = 792)

Screening

Records screened (title/abstract) (n = 2667) → Records excluded (n = 2391)

Reports assessed for eligibility (n = 276) → Reports excluded (n = 173 total):
- Wrong intervention (n = 74)
- Wrong study design (e.g. conference abstract) (n = 24)
- Not multi-agency (n = 22)
- Not targeting violence (n = 17)
- Insufficient community involvement (n = 9)
- Cannot locate full text (n = 8)
- Wrong geographic scale (n = 7)
- Wrong setting (n = 5)
- Wrong population (n = 4)
- Wrong publication date (n = 3)

Reports of included studies (n = 103) → Records excluded (n = 83)
- Not measuring quantitative impact (n = 83)

Included

Quantitative impact evaluations included in the Review of Evidence of Impact (n = 20)

For the studies included in the Review of Evidence of Impact, we also assessed data concerning the role of the evaluator and its potential conflict of interest through the evaluation process and evaluated studies on their potential Conflict of Financial Interest (CoFI) using a scale developed by Eisner and Humphreys (2012). Nine studies (45%) published in peer-reviewed journals disclosed a personal or organisational conflict of interest. Using the CoFI scale, none of the included studies were classified as 'likely' to present a potential financial conflict of interest. CoFI was identified as 'possible' for five studies (25%) and 'unlikely' for seven (35%). In the case of eight studies (40%), there was not enough data for classification. Further details are shown in Appendix 3. We also undertook a risk of bias assessment (see Appendix 4).

The full list of included papers for the two reviews is shown in Appendix 5.

Analysis of examples of UK PBAs

As well as the two reviews, a further component of the study was analysis of a selection of current UK PBAs. The aim of this component of the study was to assess how far the features and approaches identified in the reviews were also demonstrated in current UK-based PBA, to identify practice or approaches not yet reflected in the published evidence and to gather more in-depth insights from practitioners including in areas where published evidence is limited.

The methodology involved first identifying potential PBAs for inclusion based on YEF's and the review team's networks and knowledge, supplemented by website searches. We aimed to identify current UK-based initiatives that met the review definitions for PBAs (including multi-agency and community involvement). Initiatives were *prioritised* if their outcomes of interest focused on reducing youth violence or antecedents. However, we included a wider set of PBAs, both because relatively few focus on young people and youth violence and to maximise the chances to include more radical approaches to community involvement.

Having selected eight UK PBAs for inclusion, analysis began with a review of the content of the selected PBAs' websites and other relevant published documents. We then undertook a semi-structured interview with a senior representative of each PBA. Interviews lasted at least one hour, and some included two representatives. They followed an interview guide but were adapted to the context of each PBA. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and thematically analysed using the Framework method (Spencer et al., 2014). Further documents provided by representatives following interviews were also reviewed.

Limitations

The syntheses described in this report focus on PBAs that align with YEF's PBA work, for example meeting our criteria for multi-agency partnerships and community engagement, as well as targeting or measuring reduction in aspects of youth violence. This is just one part of the evidence on PBAs, and there is a wider literature covering PBAs and local systems change initiative not aligned with our criteria that might nevertheless be relevant to YEF's work.

The Review of Models and Implementation does not constitute evidence of 'what works'. It presents an exploration and description of PBAs and learning from those involved in designing, delivering and evaluating them. In the Review of Models and Implementation, we retain publication rather than individual PBA model as the unit of analysis, which over-represents CTC-related publications. We have addressed this by distinguishing between CTC and non-CTC publications throughout the relevant chapter.

The Review of Evidence of Impact summarises findings relating to effectiveness for the 20 studies identified, but again findings from other PBAs not included in our search might also be of relevance.

Very little literature from either review concerns PBAs in the UK.

We also found it harder than expected to identify UK-based initiatives for the analysis of UK examples of PBAs. We also were unable to secure the involvement of all the UK PBAs that we approached about being involved in the review. The examples included are all based in England. The analysis is based on documentary review and one interview with one or more representatives of each PBA, at a single point in time. Interviews with more representatives would have enriched this element.

While it was proposed that a typology of PBAs for addressing youth violence would be developed as an outcome of this review, it became evident over the analysis process that this was not feasible due to the evolving and dynamic nature inherent to PBAs. A single PBA could transform over time, in response to changes in community needs, changes in relationships or funding and other learning, and could be adapted quite considerably for delivery in different contexts. The lack of an apparent typology or taxonomy across the PBAs reviewed may also reflect the inclusion criteria. All those included involved multi-agency partnerships and meaningful levels of community engagement, which may have excluded PBAs that were more distinct and that did not involve these elements.

The challenges in identifying a typology stem from the inherently adaptable nature of these models. It is precisely the variable, evolving, diverse and place-centric nature of PBAs for addressing youth violence that renders them difficult to reduce to a system of classification; at the same time, these features reflect the potential and opportunity presented by these approaches and models. Many of these same challenges were experienced in the review process, which necessitated taking steps into the unknown to identify literature and models. The research team held presuppositions of where the process would lead, which required revision and subsequent adjustment. In effect, the review process mirrored that of PBA development in needing to remain flexible and adaptable, in order to achieve its aims.

Ultimately, the review findings suggest that it may be more appropriate to consider PBAs for addressing youth violence based on where their components or elements sit along various continua at any given point in time. This might include consideration of the nature of multi-agency engagement, community engagement and the ecological levels targeted by their activities and strategies for addressing youth violence.

Chapter 3 – Review of Models and Implementation

Lead Author: Dr Susan Baidawi

Summary of chapter findings

- This chapter presents an analysis of 103 publications (published 2000–2021) relating to PBAs for addressing youth violence that included, among other characteristics, multi-agency engagement and a meaningful level of community engagement.

- The review found that the mechanism of change underpinning PBAs for addressing youth violence is theorised to be founded on the choice of place and target population(s) and enabled via multi-agency engagement and community engagement, both of which rely on effective and sustainable relationship-building, communication strategies, collaborative governance structures, and resourcing. While choice of place for PBAs targeting youth violence mainly centred on the level or nature of violence, in particular locations, other influences included funding-related considerations, agency and community consultation, and the availability of local expertise to deliver the PBA, among others. The geography of place is meaningful to the populations targeted by PBAs aiming to address youth violence, most commonly by being residents of these communities.

- Most PBAs for addressing youth violence align with a public health approach to preventing violence as recommended by the World Health Organisation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Public health approaches simultaneously address multiple ecological levels of influence (e.g. individual, family, school and neighbourhood levels) and match evidence-based activities with locally identified needs across several crime prevention levels (e.g. targeting all young people or the broader community, as well as individuals 'at risk' or already using violence). Among the PBAs reviewed, the strategy for achieving impact was most commonly at the individual and microsystems levels, though community-level changes were targeted in some cases. Common activities across PBAs include family/parenting programs, youth development programmes, community mobilisation programmes and strategies, and school-based violence or alcohol and other drug programmes.

- The variable, evolving, diverse and place-centric nature of PBAs for addressing youth violence render them difficult to reduce to a system of classification. They may be better understood based on the nature of their common elements – e.g. the nature of multi-agency engagement, community engagement and ecological levels targeted by activities – at a given time point. While these dynamic features underpin the potential of PBAs for addressing youth violence, they also reflect challenges that must be carefully considered in the design of their evaluation.

Aims and methodology

The Review of Models and Implementation aimed to identify theories and approaches underpinning PBAs targeting youth violence with a view to mapping the evidence-base around the range of approaches that have been developed to date and presenting an analysis of their key characteristics. This chapter provides an overview of publications that describe PBAs targeting youth violence, including the nature of multi-agency and community engagement within these, and an analysis of underpinning assumptions and Theories of Change. The review includes studies and publications that report on a range of dimensions of PBAs targeting youth violence. A summary list of the included studies is shown in Appendix 5.

The key results of this review were synthesised via mixed methods and are both exploratory and descriptive in nature. Where possible, various dimensions or variables were quantified, distinguishing between types of PBAs. In other instances, qualitative (thematic) analyses were undertaken to ascertain common themes across the approaches taken across the PBAs. The review does not include an analysis of the quality of evidence across the included studies. The findings presented are drawn from a body of literature that is largely descriptive, exploratory and qualitative in nature, and the characteristics of the PBAs identified within the review are unrelated to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of approaches for addressing youth violence. The topic of the efficacy of PBAs for reducing youth violence is addressed in Chapter 4.

Characteristics of the included publications

Table 2 provides an overview of the 103 included publications in the Review of Theory, most of which were journal articles (81.6%). Three quarters of these were published since the year 2010 (75.7%), reflecting increasing policy, practice and academic attention to PBAs for addressing youth violence over time. Most of the publications described PBAs that were implemented in the United States (89.8%), with only one publication identified in the UK (Scottish) context. Most of the identified publications (90.3%) were not already in the YEF Evidence and Gap Map. This suggests that the work of YEF in developing and rigorously evaluating PBAs for addressing youth violence will be highly useful to addressing this evidence gap in the UK context.

Of note, a significant proportion of the included studies (40.7%) related to one specific PBA: Communities That Care (CTC), including both impact and theoretical publications. Given the large proportion of publications relating to CTC, findings relating to this PBA are separated, where relevant, to highlight differences between this model and other (non-CTC) PBAs. We also distinguish between CTC Theory publications (which describe the model more broadly, contributing to theory development) and CTC Impact publications (which describe actual instances of implementation and delivery of the model). Separating the papers in this way aims to distinguish between versions of this model as described in theory and those actually delivered in practice.

However, we also retained the publication as the unit of analysis throughout the findings discussed below, meaning that where findings (e.g. characteristics of PBAs) are expressed as a percentage, this relates to the percentage of publications rather than the percentage of PBAs. This decision was based on the observation that publications relating to the one PBA often described different components, points and places of evaluation and/or stages of 'evolution' of the PBA, and therefore sometimes described different characteristics (e.g. time period for evaluation). The decision to retain the publication as the unit of analysis resulted in the over-representation of CTC-related publications across the review (just over 40% of included publications). As such, readers should exercise caution in interpreting the quantitative findings that are presented, as these tend to over-represent the characteristics of CTC-related publications.

Table 2. Sample characteristics (n = 103)

Variable	n (%)
Year of publication	
2000–04	10 (9.7)
2005–09	15 (14.6)
2010–14	40 (38.8)
2015–19	30 (29.1)
2020–	8 (7.8)

Variable	n (%)	
Publication type		
Journal article	84 (81.6)	
Thesis	8 (7.8)	
Technical report	5 (4.9)	
Book chapter	4 (3.9)	
Other[a]	2 (2.0)	
Country of PBA[b]		
US	88 (89.9)	
Australia	3 (3.1)	
Puerto Rico	2 (1.9)	
Other[c]	5 (5.1)	
PBA		
Non-CTC[d]	61 (59.2)	
CTC Impact	23 (22.3)	
CTC Theory	19 (18.4)	

Note. n = number. [A] 'Other' includes annual reports (n = 1) and conference proceedings (n = 1). [b] Reported for n = 98 publications as five publications were theoretical and/or described PBA models without reference to a specific sample or geographically implemented PBA. [c] 'Other' includes Canada, Croatia, Germany. Holland and Scotland (each n = 1). [d] Non-CTC includes both theory and impact papers.

The findings below summarise the key themes and findings of the included studies across two key domains: foundations and key components.

Foundations

This section presents findings related to the foundational elements of the PBAs described in the included publications, including theoretical underpinnings, the context of place, funding, target population, goals, key interventions, selection of key activities and timelines for various PBA phases.

Theoretical underpinnings

The theoretical underpinnings of the included PBAs for addressing youth violence encompass both criminological theories that hint at the PBA's understanding of the key drivers of youth violence and any (explicit or implicit) theoretical bases underpinning preventative or responsive interventions applied.

The strategies described in the PBAs analysed for this review were primarily social problem approaches aimed at addressing social challenges understood to underpin youth violence. Table 3 outlines the key theories drawn on across the PBAs included in the review, arranged (top to bottom) in the order of greatest frequency. However, it should be emphasised that rarely did PBAs only draw on a single theory to shape their understanding and approach to addressing youth violence. More commonly, multiple theoretical foundations were evident in the description of each PBA and its activities.

Table 3. *Common theoretical underpinnings of PBAs addressing youth violence*

Theory	Basic description	Related PBA activities for addressing youth violence	Example PBAs drawing on the theory
Social-Ecological Theory	A developmental and multifactorial theory of crime suggesting that individual, situational, social and structural	• Young people-focused programmes addressing risk or protective factors (e.g. referral to	• *Communities That Care* • *Youth Violence Prevention Centres*

Theory	Basic description	Related PBA activities for addressing youth violence	Example PBAs drawing on the theory
	'risk' and 'protective' factors impact the likelihood of youth violence. Interventions should target multiple social-ecological levels (individual, relational, community and societal) to weaken risk and strengthen protective factors.	employment/training, after-school education, sport or leadership programmes) • Family-focused programmes addressing risk factors (e.g. family support programmes). • Systems-focused strategies strengthening infrastructure and partnerships to deliver violence prevention activities	• *Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council Youth Project* • *Operation Ceasefire (mentoring and referrals)* • *Juntos Opuestos a la Violence Entre Novios (Together against Dating Violence)* • *Training and Technical Assistance (Dymnicki et al., 2021)*
Community Empower-ment Theory	From a structural perspective, crime is an inevitable outcome of negative social conditions created by wider economic, political and cultural forces; key to crime prevention is long-term social empowerment, particularly of marginalised groups via collective approaches to problem-solving and decision-making.	• Community mobilisation/ community empowerment • Collaborative or citizen-led decision-making and/or intervention delivery	• *Communities That Care* • *El Joven Noble* • *A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth* • *Arlanza Neighborhood Initiative* • *Seattle Minority Youth (MY)Health Project*
Disorganisa-tion Theory (Sampson & Groves, 1989)	Based on the idea that stability, community support and social integration are required for the maintenance of social order. Interventions focus on enhancing community systems of support, cohesiveness and pride in local community identity.	Similar to community empowerment activities: • Community activities and neighbourhood projects • Collaborative or citizen-led decision-making and/or intervention delivery	• *Arlanza Neighborhood Initiative* • *Seattle Minority Youth (MY)Health Project* • *One Vision One Life (Community coalition building aspect)*
Deterrence Theory (Cornish & Clarke, 2014)	Based on classical theories that view crime as a rational choice of the individual who weighs up the pros and cons of engaging in e.g. violence. Emphasis is on personal responsibility for chosen actions and on punishment, retribution and deterrence as prevention strategies.	• Incapacitation and deterrence through education and warning of gang-involved young people • Certainty of punishment • Surveillance of high-risk areas • Risk-oriented policing strategies	• *Operation Ceasefire* • *Project Safe Neighbourhoods* • *Safe Passage (surveillance elements)*
Social Learning/ Differential Association Theories (Sutherland,	Presupposes youth violence is learned through interactions with a violent social environment and associated acquired attitudes, norms and behaviours. Interventions focus	• Interventions that focus on changing young people's attitudes to violence (e.g. public and individual level anti-violence education	• *Safe Streets* • *Ceasefire (i.e. gang involvement sustains violent attitudes and behaviours)* • *Manhood 2.0*

Theory	Basic description	Related PBA activities for addressing youth violence	Example PBAs drawing on the theory
Cressey, & Luckenbill, 1947)	on changing attitudes and beliefs.	programmes, peer and other mentoring programmes).	
Social Bonding (Hirschi, 1969)	Based on the idea that crime and violence are caused by weakened bonds with prosocial (law-abiding) structures and individuals such as school and healthy relationships, and by strengthened bonds and access to opportunities and learning about violence through antisocial structures such as gangs. Interventions focus on strengthening prosocial bonds and weakening antisocial bonds.	• Outreach workers aim to be prosocial role models and connect young people with prosocial opportunities (e.g. education, training and employment). • Programs and activities aiming to reduce educational disengagement.	• *Gang Reduction and Youth Development* • *El Joven Noble* • *Safe Streets* • *Ceasefire (outreach element)*
Feminist Theory	Highlight the gendered nature of crime and notion that violence is underpinned by patriarchal, hypermasculine norms and male privilege absorbed at micro, meso and macrosystem levels and reinforced by institutions. Interventions aim to disrupt patriarchal beliefs and gendered power imbalances.	• Interventions that focus on development of social bonds to gender-equitable and non-violent cultural identity. • Values- and rights-based educational programmes for young people, families and school personnel.	Only PBAs targeting teen dating violence: • *Manhood 2.0* • *El Joven Noble (Gendered Social Bond Theory)* • *Juntos Opuestos a la Violence entre Novios* • *Start Strong Boston*

The most common theoretical underpinnings of PBAs targeting youth violence were social-ecological and community empowerment theories. This again aligns with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations for a public health approach to preventing violence that simultaneously addresses multiple ecological levels of influence (e.g. individual, family, school and neighbourhood interventions) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022; World Health Organisation, 2022). At the same time, this review identified that few interventions and activities identified across PBAs addressing youth violence target the physical or built environment or are structural interventions aimed at addressing macro-level factors impacting violence outcomes.

Context of place

Location of PBA delivery

PBAs were typically described as being delivered in one or more communities or neighbourhoods, sometimes described as a school district, an individual school or set of groups, city areas, police beat area, or a series of hot spots in a neighbourhood. Occasionally, they were described as city-wide or by reference to university locations. CTCs were particularly described as taking place in a group of towns, in communities and villages or in a small district. There was very little information about the specific size in terms of either population or area.

Data on the type of setting of PBA delivery was available from 99% of publications (Table 4). Where specified, most PBAs were described as being delivered in metropolitan locations (57.6%), i.e. cities or larger towns. Approximately one third (30.3%) of publications described PBAs as being delivered in towns or smaller locations (including rural locations). However, these figures are strongly influenced by the number of CTC-related publications, as these PBAs were more often delivered in towns of 50,000 or fewer residents and rarely included urban or suburban populations. Smaller numbers were delivered in a mix of location types (i.e. a combination of metropolitan and smaller areas; 10.1%), and two locations were unknown (i.e. the geographic context for the specific community that the PBA was delivered in was not described). However it was not always clear in these cases whether a single PBA spanned different locations or whether multiple PBAs were described.

Table 4. *Setting of PBA delivery by PBA type (n = 99)*

	Metropolitan n (%)	Town or smaller n (%)	Mixed n (%)	Unknown n (%)	Total n (%)
Non-CTC	54 (88.5)	2 (3.3)	4 (6.6)	1 (1.6)	61 (100)
CTC Theory	3 (15.8)	9 (47.4)	2 (10.5)	1 (5.3)	15 (100)
CTC Impact	-	19 (82.6)	1 (4.3)	3 (13.0)	23 (100)
Total	57 (57.6)	30 (30.3)	7 (7.1)	5 (5.1)	99 (100)

Note. n = number.

Similarly, it was not possible to categorically assess the number of different locations (e.g. number of sites, neighbourhoods or school districts) that PBAs spanned. There was wide variation in what was reported in individual publications, from single-site PBAs to papers describing multiple initiatives.

Strategy for choice of place

The strategy for choice of place was only described in non-CTC publications (n = 48, 46.6% of all included publications) and in none of the CTC publications. The most prominent strategy underpinning the choice of place was the **rate of violence** in the specified state, city, region, neighbourhood or specific site. Noted in 42 publications (40.8%), concerns about the rate of violence were typically cited in relation to those in the broader population (e.g. nationally or state-wide), in one or more neighbouring areas or in relation to historical levels of violence noted in the area (i.e. a recent escalation was noted). Some publications commissioned specific research (e.g. that which drew on police or hospital data) to identify specific high crime neighbourhoods or hyper-local areas. Other influences underpinning the choice of place(s) or specific sites included:

- the requirements or availability of specific funding or partnerships (7.8%);

- consultation with local agencies (e.g. police/justice agencies) or community (4.9%);

- the availability, expertise or willingness of local agencies to deliver the PBA (3.9%);

- noted socioeconomic disparity of the area compared with other areas (2.9%);

- the PBA target population being prominent in the particular area or site (1.9%); and

- previous experience delivering PBAs at a particular site (1.0%).

Funding

Eighty-one publications (78.6%) mentioned one or more specific funding sources for the delivery of the PBAs[5]. These were most commonly national health, education or human services bodies (55.3%, e.g. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [US], government departments, institutes or research funding bodies) as well as national (15.5%) or state (4.9%) justice departments or agencies. Seven publications (7.0%) mentioned receiving philanthropic or private funding for the PBA, three (2.9%) described funding from a national minority support agency or department, and one mentioned receipt of funding from each of state child and family welfare (1.0%) and university funding bodies (1.0%).

Target population

Most publications indicated they were targeting young people of specified ages (53.4%) or 'youth' of unspecified ages (34.0%), while the remainder (12.6%) did not stipulate a target population for the PBA or indicated it was targeted at the community more broadly (including young people).

Age range of young people targeted

Those PBAs that targeted young people of a specific age most often used 10 years as the minimum age (65.5% of PBAs that specified a minimum target age) and 16 years as the maximum age (58.2% of PBAs that specified a maximum target age). The bottom of the age range targeted varied from 0–17 years, with an average minimum of 10.8 years. The top of the age range targeted varied from 11–29 years, with an average maximum of 17.6 years. The PBAs targeted an age band of, on average, 6.9 years, with the narrowest age band targeted covering two years and the widest covering 24 years (Table 5.)

There was some variation between CTC (n = 33) and non-CTC (n = 22) PBAs, with CTC PBAs tending to target a slightly lower age range of young people (around six years, on average 10–16 year-olds), and non-CTC PBAs targeting a slightly wider age range (around 8.2 years, on average 11.7–19.9 year-olds).

Table 1. *Target age range of PBAs (where specified; n = 54)*

	Minimum (years)	Maximum (years)	Average (years)
Minimum age targeted by PBA	0	17	10.8
Maximum age targeted by PBA	11	29	17.6
Age range targeted by PBA	2	24	6.9

Note. N = number; m = average (mean); min = minimum number; max = maximum number.

Other characteristics of target population

Overall, 60.2% of publications further qualified the nature of the population (typically young people) who formed the group to which the PBA was targeted. Most common among these were targeting young people in school settings (38.8%) and those at risk of or already engaged in crime or violence (16.5%). Smaller numbers of publications described targeting young people of colour (8.3%), males (4.9%) or families of low socioeconomic status (1.0%) via the PBA. It should be noted that 80% of the publications mentioning

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[5] Figures do not add to 100% as many publications mentioned receipt of funding from multiple sources.

targeting young people at school were CTC-based PBAs. All the papers that mentioned targeting young people by other characteristics were non-CTC PBAs.

Further to the above, some PBAs took a multi-pronged approach to selecting target populations, with various activities or programmes aimed at different groups. For instance, Le et al. (2011) outlined a PBA that broadly targeted Asian Pacific Islander and Hispanic young people, which comprised an afterschool intervention (Roosevelt Village Center) targeting low-risk young people, and a case management intervention (Street Team) targeting high-risk young people that were generally referred due to behavioural challenges via the justice system (e.g. young people currently on probation) or through schools (e.g. due to truancy or fighting). PBAs targeting youth violence can therefore opt to solely focus on high-risk young people and/or to take a preventative approach by targeting low-risk young people, young people more generally and/or the community more broadly.

Relationship between target population and place

Further analyses were conducted to ascertain whether the PBAs described were solely targeted towards local residents or a broader range of individuals who frequented the PBA delivery context (e.g. people working in or visiting the areas). Overall, two thirds of publications (67%) noted whether the specified PBA targeted residents only or a broader population, including 57.4% of non-CTC publications, 63.2% of CTC Theory publications and 100% of CTC Impact papers. Of the publications that provided this information, most (97.1%) targeted residents of the area(s) in which the PBA was implemented, while two publications (2.9%) did not. These two were non-CTC publications, one of which targeted young people frequenting a particular area, regardless of whether they lived there or not (Milam et al., 2016), and the other which, aside from residents, also targeted people who worked in or were involved with community organisations in the target neighbourhoods (Hausman, Siddons, & Becker, 2000). It should also be noted that most CTC PBAs, while initially targeting students who remained in the intervention or control communities for at least one semester, continued to track and survey all participants annually, including those who had left the PBA communities (see, for example, M. R. Kuklinski, Briney, Hawkins, & Catalano, 2012; M. R. Kuklinski, Fagan, Hawkins, Briney, & Catalano, 2015; Rhew, Oesterle, Coffman, & Hawkins, 2018). In general, it was observed that most initial participants in CTC studies (94%) continued to reside in the communities in which the PBA was implemented for the duration of the evaluations (see, for example, M. R. Kuklinski et al., 2012; M. R. Kuklinski et al., 2015; Rhew et al., 2018). Overall, the review findings indicate that the geography of place is meaningful to the target populations targeted by PBAs aiming to address youth violence, most commonly by being residents of these communities.

Goals

This section describes the key goals described in the PBAs of the included publications. Overall, the goals of the PBAs were strongly influenced by the high number of CTC-related publications, which typically described general goals of reducing youth violence, drug and alcohol use, addressing social determinants of violence, and supporting prosocial attitudes and behaviours, generally among young people. Across the included publications, targeted social determinants of health included those at the individual level (e.g. improving engagement in education [including early childhood], prosocial extracurricular activities and prosocial social connections) and those at the family level (improving family relationships, enhancing parenting skills and supporting parents) and community level (improving availability of spaces for extra-curricular activities and encouraging social cohesion through activities that promote neighbour-to-neighbour interactions). On the

other hand, non-CTC publications had a broader range of key goals, including reduction of more specific forms of violence (e.g. gang or firearm) and other health and social outcomes (e.g. pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases).

Reducing and preventing violence

An analysis was undertaken concerning the key goals of the PBAs, based on information in the included publications. As shown in Figure 2, the most frequently stated goal of the PBAs was to reduce violence (74.8% of publications). In most cases, this was specifically youth violence, although some publications articulated a desire for the PBA to reduce violence in the community more broadly. Several non-CTC studies described PBAs targeting more specific forms of violence that were of concern in particular communities, including firearm violence (11 publications), gang-related violence and/or gang involvement (seven publications), homicide (three publications), and dating violence (three publications).

Figure 2. Key PBA goals by PBA type
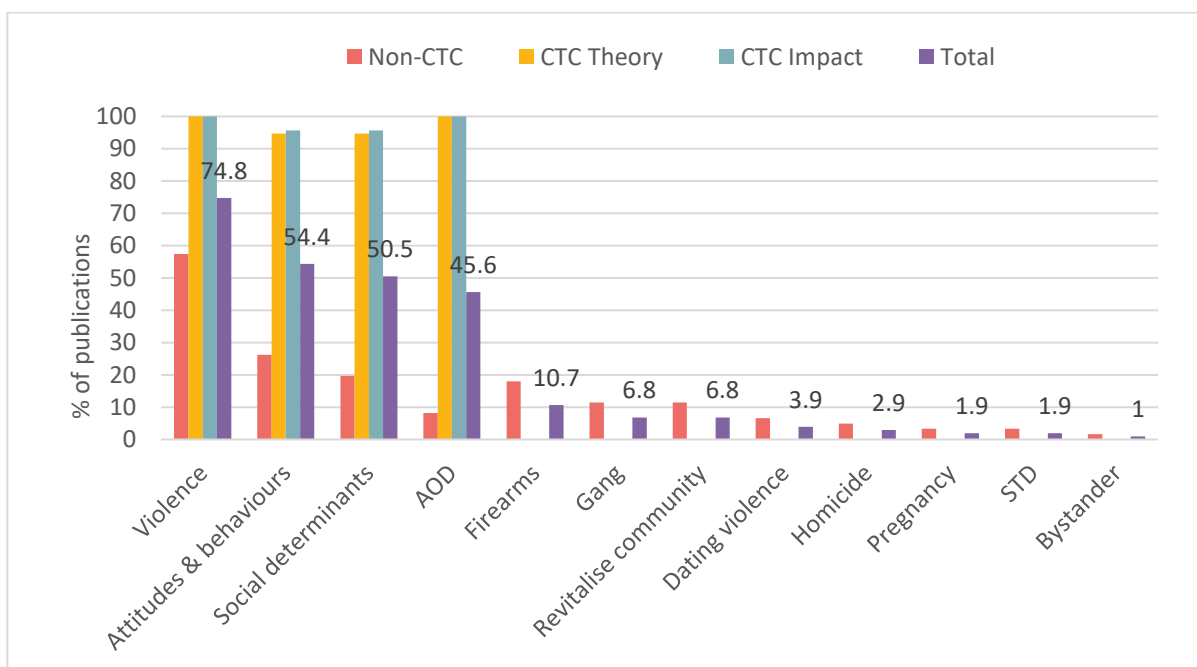
Note. AOD = Alcohol and other drugs; STD = Sexually transmitted diseases; Bystander = improve bystander responses to violence.

Other goals

The most common other goals of the PBAs were to improve or address attitudes and behaviours concerning violence, most commonly among young people (54.4% of publications), to address social determinants of violence (i.e. preventative public health approaches; 50.5% of publications) and to reduce young people's alcohol and other drug use (45.6% of publications). A smaller numbers of publications articulated other goals around reducing teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, bystander responses to violence, and revitalising or empowering the community.

Key interventions

Overall, 88.3% of publications described one or more key activities implemented as part of the PBA; these were more commonly outlined in the non-CTC and CTC Impact publications (95.1% and 95.7%, respectively), compared with the CTC theory papers (57.9%), which tended to describe the broader tenets of the CTC

model. Attempting to quantify the nature of activities implemented as part of each PBA for addressing youth violence was not straightforward, as many publications did not clearly articulate the nature of all activities implemented, described several disparate PBAs with different activities, or did not distinguish between planned and implemented activities. Nonetheless, the available data present an interesting overview of the types of activities implemented or intended to be implemented as part of PBAs aiming to address youth violence. After excluding publications that did not describe any key activities, the most commonly included activities (see Figure 3) were:

- **Family/parenting programmes (60.4%):** including father and son programmes, family support programmes, wrap-around support programmes, and programmes aimed at improving parent-child relationships

- **Youth development programmes (51.6%):** including a range of mentoring, generalist counselling, peer violence education, positive youth development and leadership programmes

- **Community mobilisation (48.4%)**: often involved working alongside the community to define, discuss and raise awareness around youth violence and the available services, key activities or programmes which the community would like to implement

- **School violence or alcohol and other drug (AOD) programmes (40.7%):** e.g. bullying prevention programmes and AOD education programmes.

Examples of some of the other key activities identified across the publications include:

- **Community-building –** activities targeting or open to the whole of community and which promote social interaction between community members such as establishment of community newsletter, community resource centre and hosting of a community fair (Mirabal, Lopez-Sanchez, Franco-Ortiz, & Mendez, 2008), community barbeques and development of community gardens (Trent, 2021).

- **Cultural activities** – activities targeting one or more specific racial or ethnic groups within the community and intended to support the education, enrichment or expression of cultural identity, for example Native American talking circles (Oscós-Sánchez, Lesser, & Oscós-Flores, 2013) and yearly retreats where programme young people, parents and staff work together on culturally appropriate area-replenishment activities such as restoring opae ula ponds (Hawaiian red shrimp ponds; Akeo et al., 2008).

- **Church** – activities involving or being delivered by churches or church leaders, such as the Youth Empowerment Solutions Program that was implemented and delivered by a church to support young people to design and carry out community improvement projects (Morrel-Samuels, Bacallao, Brown, Bower, & Zimmerman, 2016).

- It should be noted that a single activity could be included under several of the activity types depicted in Figure 3, e.g. the Youth Empowerment Solutions programme, mentioned above, which is both a church-based activity and a community-building activity.

Figure 3. *Key PBA activities*
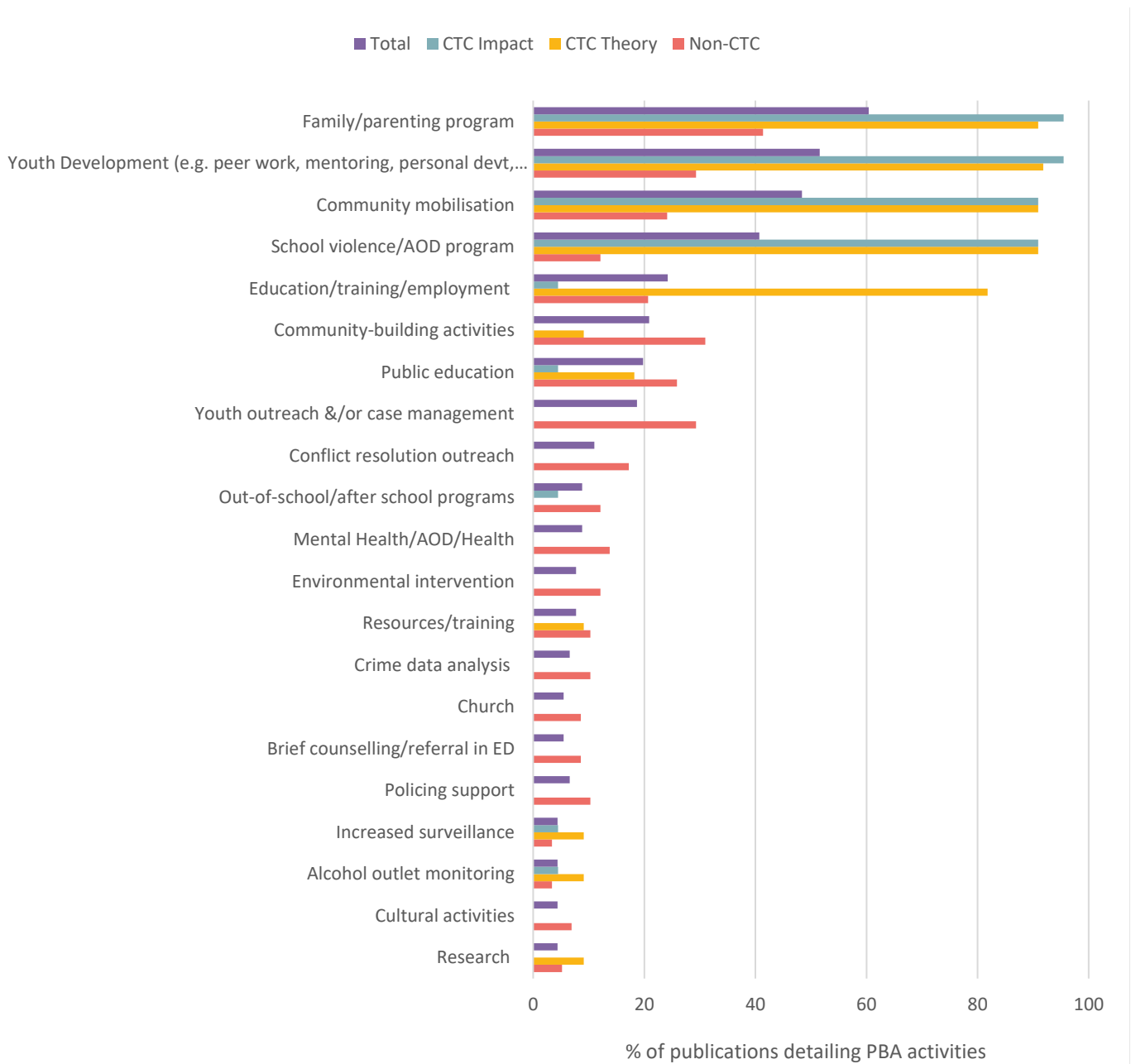
Note. AOD = alcohol and other drugs; NGO = non-government organisation; ED = emergency department. Activities that were described in less than 3% of publications were excluded from this figure for simplicity, including outreach to businesses & NGOs to enhance crime prevention strategies (n = 3), material aid (n = 2), warning offenders (n = 2), teen court (n = 2), review of school disciplinary policies (n = 2) and area-specific non-law safety teams (n = 1).

As shown in Table 6, most of the activities among the PBAs aiming to address youth violence constituted primary crime prevention strategies (89.5%), whole-of-population strategies that attempt to prevent the onset of youth violence in the first instance (White, Perrone, & Howes, 2019). A smaller proportion (10.5%) were secondary or tertiary crime prevention strategies that targeted 'at-risk' young people or those already involved with the justice system, aiming to both prevent any or more entrenched justice system involvement and to reduce the consequences and impacts of crime (White et al., 2019).

Table 2. Key PBA activities by crime prevention level and domain

Crime Prevention Level	Activity	Count	Domain
Primary (n = 306 activities, 89.5%)	Parenting/Family support	59	Family
	Youth development programmes (e.g. healthy masculinity and relationships, peer-led violence prevention, mentoring, generalist counselling and youth leadership)	47	Individual young people
	Community mobilisation	46	Community
	School violence/AOD prevention programme	40	School
	School/post-school academic/training and employment activities	25	School/Education
	Community building activities	19	Community
	Public education	19	Community
	Crime/alcohol outlet data analysis	12	Community
	Crime prevention through environmental design (e.g. neighbourhood clean-up/surveillance)	8	Community
	Out-of-school/after-school activities	8	School
	Policing support	7	Law enforcement /justice
	Training programmes/resources for violence prevention	6	Community
	Partnership with faith-based organisations	5	Community
	Outreach to NGOs and businesses to support crime prevention	3	Community
	Material aid support (direct support, first-home buyer programme)	2	Community
	Focused deterrence (individual police warnings)	2	Law enforcement /justice
Secondary/ Tertiary (n = 34 activities, 9.9%)	High-risk young people outreach +/- case management	17	Individual young people
	Conflict resolution/street violence interrupters	11	Community
	Hospital-based brief counselling and referral for violence-involved young people	6	Hospital
Tertiary (n = 2 activity, 0.6%)	Teen court programme	2	Law enforcement /justice

Figure 4 below presents an alternative way of visualising these data, demonstrating that the primary crime prevention strategies more often targeted community and school domains, while secondary and tertiary crime prevention strategies commonly targeted individual young people and community domains. Across

the publications examined, very few described PBA activities related to law enforcement or the justice system (<6%).

Figure 4. PBA crime prevention levels and domains
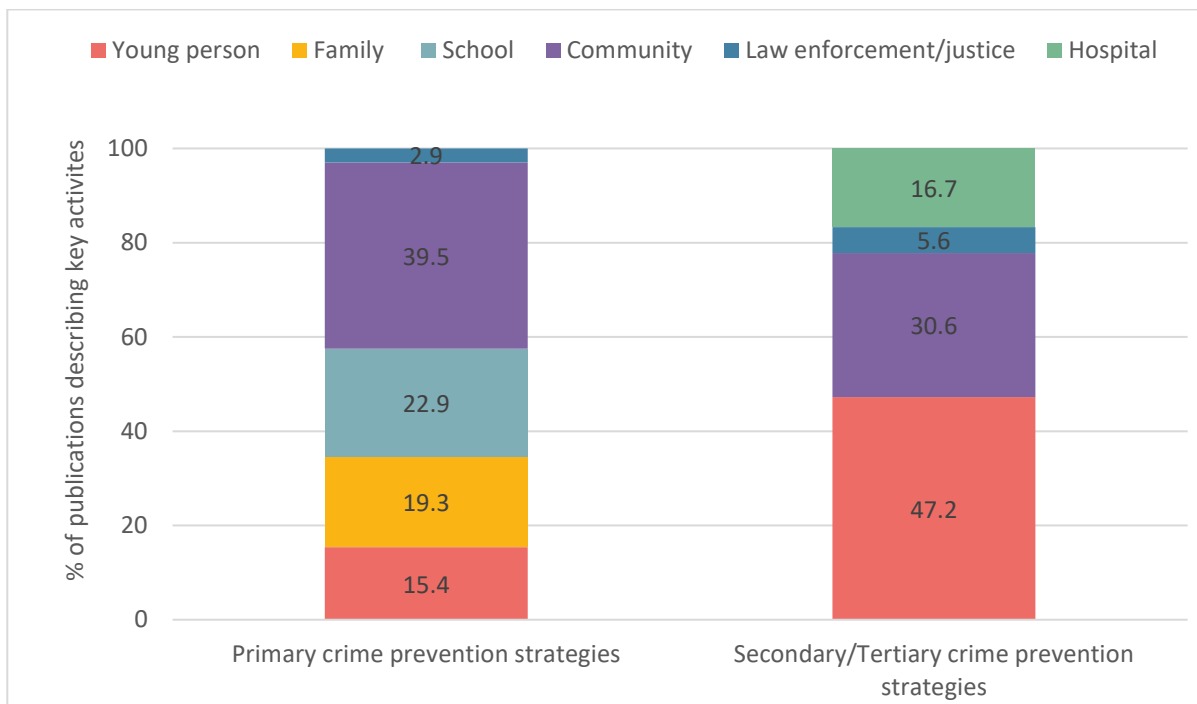
Selection of key activities

Qualitative analyses identified a process that commonly supported the selection of activities for PBAs addressing youth violence, depicted in Figure 5. These stages essentially align with the Public Health Approach to Violence Prevention proposed by the World Health Organisation (2022). Each stage of this process is described in greater detail in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5. Process of PBA activity selection
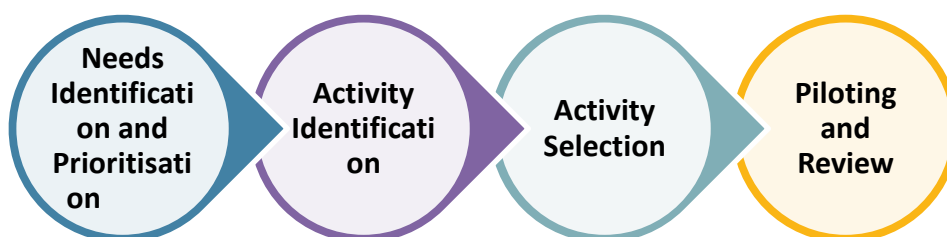
Needs identification and prioritisation

In many cases, activity selection began by identifying and prioritising local needs to be addressed by the PBA. Two strategies **– epidemiological analysis of local data** and **local consultation** – were most often used during this stage to support data-driven decision-making. Examples of epidemiological analysis of local data included:

- Examining levels of risk and protective factors for youth violence in the community (e.g. CTC model; see, for example, A. A. Fagan & Hawkins, 2015; M. R. Kuklinski et al., 2012; M. R. Kuklinski et al., 2015)), including at various 'levels' (e.g. individual, family, peer, school and neighbourhood risk and protective factors)

- Examining crime and intelligence data from police, key stakeholders and young people, e.g. to define local crime hot spots and understand community challenges

- Drawing on other research that outlines local needs related to youth violence.

Local consultation included with the community and/or community partners was used both to identify and prioritise local needs, for example by:

- Hosting discussions, meetings or participatory planning exercises with local stakeholders, community and/or community leaders

- Conducting interviews with local social service programme staff

- Conducting a formal needs assessment with the community (e.g. school community, broader community)

- Conducting focus groups with community members to understand local strengths, risk and protective factors, needs or challenges, as well as experiences with prior programmes and indicators of success

- Hiring an external agent to support the above discussions/consultations.

Some PBAs utilised several of these strategies or repeated the same strategy several times to comprehensively identify and prioritise local needs. For example, Umemoto et al. (2009) conducted both a survey of local residents and focus groups with community members to understand local needs. Likewise, Knox et al. (2011) held several community meetings to discuss local needs in developing the *Families and Schools Together* PBA. Additionally, the above strategies could also be used to prioritise or understand how the community wished to prioritise local needs (e.g. through informal or focus group discussions or survey instruments that distinguished the level of each need). For example, both Hernández-Cordero et al. (2011) and Umemoto et al. (2009) describe various strategies where epidemiological analysis and/or local consultation were used to identify local needs, with the PBA governance body (which included local community partners) then prioritising these.

Activity identification

Prior to selecting activities, programmes or strategies to be implemented by the PBA, there was generally a process by which possible activities were identified; this tended to adopt one or more of three approaches, namely: **drawing on existing PBAs for addressing youth violence, matching evidenced-based programmes with identified community needs** and **developing or utilising local activities/programmes.** Each approach is described below.

Drawing on existing PBAs for addressing youth violence

Several strategies for drawing on existing evidence-based PBAs were identified, the most common of which was duplication of an existing PBA. For example, publications described replicating the Comprehensive Gang

Model (e.g. Brantingham, Tita, & Herz, 2021), the Ceasefire Model (e.g. Brisson, Pekelny, & Ungar, 2020; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013; Webster, Whitehill, Vernick, & Parker, 2012), and the Communities that Care Model (e.g. Morrel-Samuels et al., 2016). Some approaches aimed to duplicate existing PBAs precisely, such as Save Our Streets, which sought to implement the Ceasefire Model with high fidelity (R. D. Trent, 2020). Others adapted existing PBAs to the local context; for instance, the Manhood 2.0 programme was an adaptation of Program H, a dating-violence programme that was previously developed in Brazil (Abebe et al., 2018). In some instances, the choice of activities and strategies was pre-defined in the duplicated model, while in other cases, PBA duplication included a choice from a menu of evidence-based activities (e.g. Communities That Care), which included more community involvement in the identification of needs and choice of strategies to address these. Other strategies for drawing on existing PBAs for addressing youth violence included consultation with existing PBA developers (e.g. Thomas, Holzer, & Wall, 2002; R. D. Trent, 2020) and conducting reviews of existing models and practices (e.g. Browne, Clubb, & Aubrecht, 2001; Wilson, Chermak, & McGarrell, 2010).

Selecting evidence-based programmes matched to identified community needs

Several PBAs selected evidence-based programmes to match locally-identified community needs. While this is a component of some manualised PBAs (e.g. Communities That Care), it was also described across other developed PBAs, for example The Connecticut Project Safe Neighbourhoods Youth Opportunity Initiative (Jeffries, Myers, Kringen, & Schack, 2019) and the Centers of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention (Kingston, Bacallao, Smokowski, Sullivan, & Sutherland, 2016). Additionally, some publications described conducting systematic reviews to identify evidence-based or promising programmes that were suited to their target population(s) (e.g. Allison, Edmonds, Wilson, Pope, & Farrell, 2011; Leff et al., 2010; Mirabal-Colón, 2003; R. D. Trent, 2020).

Developing or utilising local activities/programmes

A less common approach that was nonetheless seen across some publications was the development of local programmes or activities. This entailed PBA staff working in collaboration with local organisations to develop new programmes (e.g. Youth ALIVE! Program; Calhoun, 2014) or utilising programmes that were already operating in the community as part of the PBA (e.g. the Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center; Morrel-Samuels et al., 2016).

Activity selection strategy

Three key strategies for activity selection were identified across the publications, which could be distinguished based on the level of community involvement or control: **community selection, collaborative selection including community members** and **selection without community involvement**, as described below**.**

Community selection

Some PBAs implemented activities that were entirely selected by local community members. For example, the Seattle Minority Youth Health Project adopted a range of activities that were selected by a Community Action Board, with communities allocated individual funding to finance projects of their own selecting (Cheadle et al., 2001). Similarly, Oscós-Sánchez et al. (2013) described community members selecting a particular PBA (El Joven Noble) in a community based participatory action violence prevention research

study and being subsequently trained in its implementation. These PBAs represent examples of community-led decision-making, based on local identified needs.

Collaborative selection including community members

Most PBAs described a process in which a local governance structure (see Section 5.4.1) undertook a collaborative process to select activities that were implemented as part of the PBA (e.g. Cheadle et al., 2001; Gonzalez-Guarda, Guerra, Cummings, Pino, & Becerra, 2015; Vivolo, Matjasko, & Massetti, 2011). As described in Section 5.4.1, the composition of these governance structures varied; however, they tended to be comprised of representatives of the PBA backbone organisation, community partners, researchers/evaluators and (to a varying extent) community members and/or leaders. Some of the strategies used by these coalitions included coalition/committee selection of activities with advice from researchers, discussion to determine the PBAs strategy, and discussions in working groups or focus groups, including by presenting the collaborative group with several options, which were subsequently extensively discussed.

Selection without community involvement

The final approach to selection of PBA activities were top-down approaches that excluded community involvement. Such approaches were adopted by PBAs that were designed and led by criminal justice agencies, generally alongside community organisations and researchers (e.g. Boston Gun Project; J. Fagan, 2002) and PBAs that were university-led (e.g. the Comprehensive Gang Model; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2010) and the Ceasefire Model (e.g. Gorman-Smith & Cosey-Gay, 2014; R.D. Trent, 2020). These PBAs were still included in the review as community engagement was sufficient in other aspects, for example in the delivery of the PBA.

Activity selection considerations

Generally, the key considerations driving the activity selection process were matching **locally-identified needs** with existing **evidence-based activities or programmes (EBPs).** On the other hand, some PBAs did not implement EBPs due to a lack of EBPs that supported locally identified needs (see, for example, Le et al., 2011). Other key considerations in the selection of activities that constituted the PBAs addressing youth violence included:

- **Cultural and contextual relevance of programmes:** selecting programmes that are compatible with local culture and values or that are adapted for the type of violence in the community (e.g. Knox et al., 2011; Milam et al., 2016). For example, Steketee et al. (2013) described the development of a CTC-model in the Netherlands where, due to the lack of Dutch EBPs in the CTC's existing menu, the Dutch Youth Institute developed a menu of promising and effective programmes relevant to the local context. Similarly, Miao et al. (2011) created a cultural adaptation of an evidence-based programme (Strengthening Families Program) for Hawaiian families.

- **Programme novelty**: e.g. Kelly et al. (2010) , however no further information is provided in the text to explain how novelty was conceptualised.

- **Capacity to deliver interventions at multiple levels:** for instance, the Safe Streets Program was chosen in part due to its tenets and multi-layered approach to intervention (Milam et al., 2016).

- **Cost:** this was more broadly described as a consideration in environments of limited violence prevention resources (e.g. Massetti & Vivolo, 2010).

- **Funding mandates:** e.g. Hernández-Cordero, Ortiz, Trinidad, & Link (2011).

- **Avoiding duplication of available programmes and services:** e.g. A. A. Fagan, Hanson, Hawkins, & Arthur (2008).

Timelines for PBA preparation, delivery and evaluation

This section describes the reported timelines for preparation, delivery and evaluation of PBAs targeting youth violence, where these were noted in the included publicatisons (see Table 7)[6].

Table 3. *Reported timelines for preparation, delivery and evaluations of PBAs*

	Minimum (months)	Maximum (months)	Average (months)
Preparation phase			
Non-CTC (n = 15)	4	30	16.1
CTC Theory (n = 9)	6	9	6.3
CTC Impact (n = 19)	6	6	6.0
All (n = 43)	4	30	9.6
Delivery Phase			
Non-CTC (n = 34)	3	120	41.7
CTC Theory (n = 11)	12	60	55.6
CTC Impact (n = 23)	24	180	68.9
All (n = 68)	3	180	53.1
Evaluation Phase			
Non-CTC (n = 19)	9	156	43.2
CTC Theory (n = 1)	60	60	60
CTC Impact (n = 3)	24	108	72.0
All (n = 23)	9	156	47.7

Note. n = number; m = average (mean); min = minimum number; max = maximum number.

Preparation phase

Forty-three of the 103 publications (41.7%) reported a timeline for the preparation phase of their respective PBAs. Where publications reported a range of timelines (e.g. for PBAs at different sites), the minimum time frame for the preparation phase was used. Reported preparation phases of the PBAs (summarised in Table 7 above) ranged from a minimum of four months to a maximum of 2.5 years, with an average across the studies of 9.6 months. This average was strongly influenced by the CTC PBAs, which (where specified) mostly reported a six-month minimum preparation phase. Non-CTC PBAs tended to have a longer minimum preparation time (average of 16.1 months), which likely reflects the time required for their development in the absence of a pre-existing framework or model.

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[6] These are the phases described in YEF's PBA work. The preparation phase involves three sub-phases: feasibility (e.g. initial data and analysis and intelligence gathering and selection of place); discovery (e.g. activity to understand the local context and needs and develop local partnerships; and co-design (collaborative development of an action plan). Delivery means the delivery or implementation of the action plan. Evaluation is self-explanatory. We used YEF's articulation of the phases in our extraction. https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/grants/neighbourhood-fund/

Delivery phase

Sixty-eight of the 103 studies (66.0%) reported a defined timeline for the delivery phase of their respective PBAs at the time of publication[7]. Reported delivery phase duration of the 68 PBAs (see Table 7 above) varied from a minimum of three months to a maximum of 15 years, with an average across the studies of 4.4 years. Again, this average was strongly influenced by the CTC studies, which (where specified) generally reported longer delivery phases than the non-CTC studies.

Evaluation phase

Of the 103 studies, 61 (59.2%) included evaluation components, one (1.0%) had a planned evaluation, while the remaining 39.8% did not include any evaluation. Publications without evaluations tended to be descriptive of the approach proposed by one or more PBAs, rather than describing or evaluating the outcomes of the PBA. Twenty-three studies (22.3%) reported a specific timeline for their evaluation phase, which ranged from nine months to 13 years, with an average of 3.9 years (see Table 7). These time frames are more strongly reflective of the non-CTC studies, which more often reported their evaluation timelines compared with the CTC studies.

Key components of PBAs

This section of the review presents analyses of key components and approaches in the PBAs aimed at reducing youth violence, focusing on multi-agency engagement and community engagement and noting common strategies, pitfalls and recommendations in both areas.

Multi-agency engagement

This section describes the agencies commonly involved in the identified PBAs, including key combinations of agencies and local collaborative governance strategies. It additionally presents findings of thematic analyses of key strategies for building and sustaining multi-agency engagement, pitfalls in this area and any identified strategies for their avoidance. Where discernible in the included publications, agency/sector involvement among the PBAs is shown in Figure 6, which demonstrates that the most frequently involved of these are police, schools, community-based organisations, and health, religious and child and family services. Rarely, though sometimes, particular PBAs mandated the involvement of certain agencies. For example, the Ceasefire Model requires the involvement of law enforcement agencies and faith-based leaders (Whitehill, 2012).

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[7] Two publications that reported ongoing delivery of the PBA are excluded from these figures.

Figure 6. *Common agencies/sectors involved in identified PBAs*
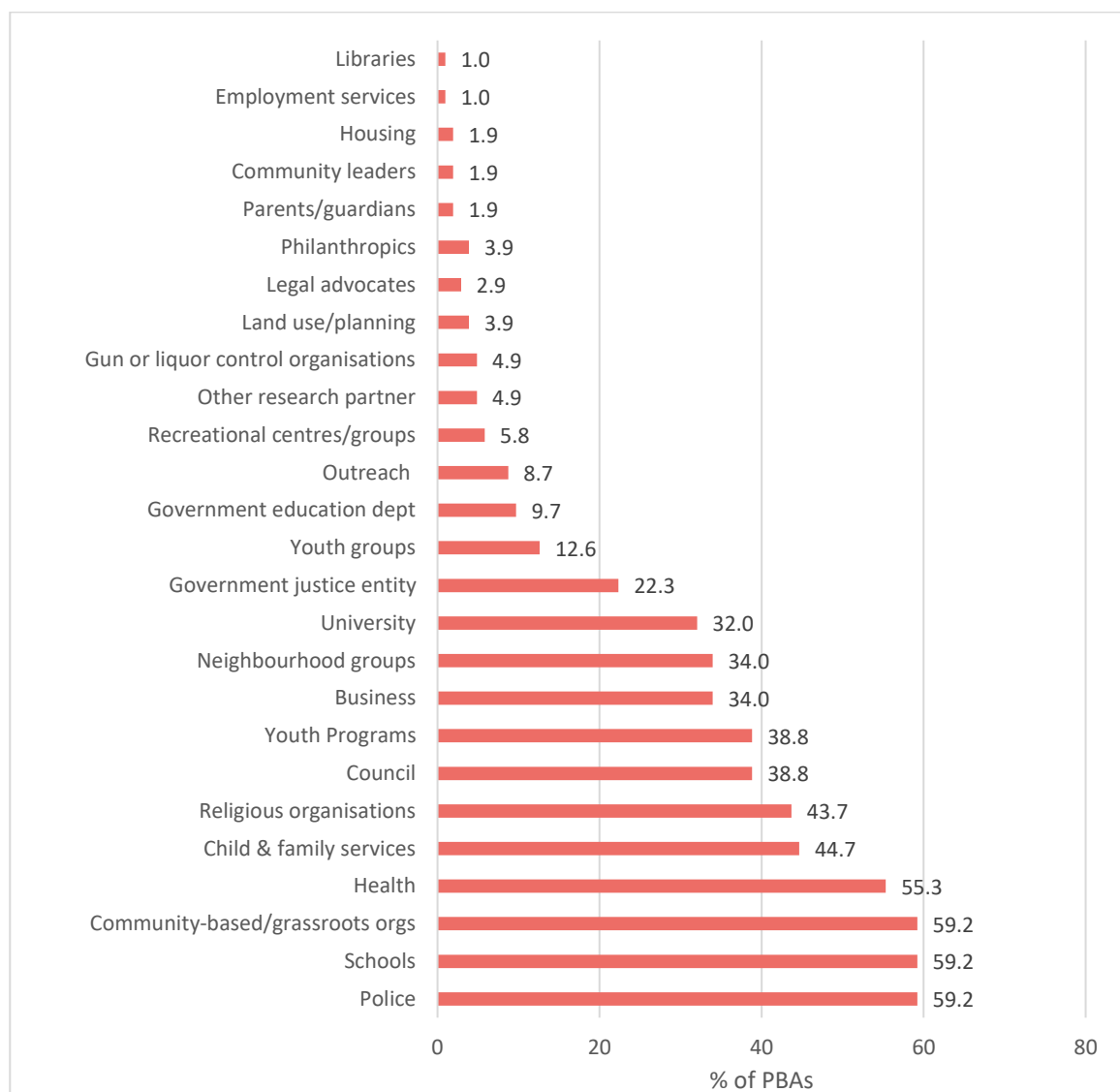
Further analyses were undertaken to identify the most common combinations of agencies or sectors among the most prevalent four agencies/sectors (Table 8). Around one quarter of publications (25.8%) described PBAs for addressing youth violence that involved police, schools, NGOs and health services. At present, the research has not assessed whether certain combinations of agencies are associated with impact, and it remains unclear if this is a factor that can influence outcomes.

Table 4. *Common agency/sector combinations of included PBAs*

Police	Schools	NGOs	Health	n (%) of publications
ü	ü	ü	ü	29 (28.2)
				13 (12.6)
ü	ü	ü		10 (10.3)
ü				6 (5.8)
			ü	6 (5.8)
ü	ü		ü	5 (4.9)
ü			ü	5 (4.9)

Note. NGOs = non-government organisations.

Governance and delivery

Over one half of publications (57.3%) described a local collaborative governance structure that oversaw the PBA. This figure was strongly influenced by the CTC Theory papers, which understandably did not describe any governance structures, as they solely aimed to outline the CTC approach in principle. After excluding these CTC Theory papers, 95.7% of CTC Impact publications and 60.7% of non-CTC publications described some form of local collaborative governance structure overseeing the PBA. These governance structures were given a range of titles depicting their role, including *'multi-agency working group', 'community action board', 'interagency task force', 'collaborative council', 'advisory council', 'steering committee', 'community-academic partnership',* and *'PBA coalition'.*

These collaborative governance structures differed in composition, particularly in the extent to which community voices were represented. Other representatives in these governance structures were most commonly community-based organisations, statutory agencies (e.g. police and schools), government (e.g. local council) and researchers/evaluators. It was notable that few PBAs specifically mentioned including community young person representatives within these governance structures; however, there were some exceptions. For example, Abdul-Adil and Suárez (2022) had young person advocates on their Advisory Board, Calhoun (2014) had young people from the community as part of the team that implemented the PBA and Watson-Thompson et al. (2020, p. 248) described a PBA that had multiple intersecting collaborative governance structures, inclusive of youth voices. These encompassed:

- An Executive Advisory Board comprised of high-level stakeholders and decision makers

- A Systems Advisory Board (SAB) that supported four 'action teams' that facilitated efforts in the areas of a) parent, family and community engagement; b) trauma, social services and support; c) youth justice and crime prevention; and d) youth opportunities

- A Youth Advisory Board comprised of more than 20 of the PBA's young people participants who met with the SAB to include and harness young people voice and participation.

PBA activities described in the included publications were, for the most part, delivered by community agencies in each relevant place, each of which delivered individual intervention components that were selected and overseen by the above collaborative governance structures. Delivering agencies or individuals (e.g. peers) held expertise in the type of intervention being delivered or in the target population to which these were delivered (e.g. young people or families). While this was the most common strategy for PBA delivery, two other approaches were identified. In the first, a smaller number of PBAs formed their own organisations comprised of local experts, leaders and/or agencies, sometimes coupled with a university or research partnership (see, for example, Abdul-Adil & Suárez, 2022; Calhoun, 2014; Wilson et al., 2010). Such PBA organisations then hired and trained staff to deliver the selected interventions or activities. For example, the PBA described by Calhoun (2014) was implemented by a group that later became a non-profit organisation that was run both by young people and staff from the community. Finally, in some cases, a lead agency (e.g. local council or community organisation) was identified and agreements were generated with this organisation/council to auspice the PBA locally, including to champion the formation of a local coalition (e.g. Rowland et al., 2021).

Building and sustaining multi-agency engagement

A total of 34 publications (33%) described strategies for building and sustaining multi-agency engagement, including 26.2% of non-CTC papers, 15.8% of CTC Theory papers, and 65.2% of CTC Impact papers. Like other information presented in this review, it should be emphasised that these key themes emerge in descriptions, recommendations and learnings set out in reviewed papers rather than from measurement of their impacts, and there is insufficient evidence to link them to the efficacy of the PBAs. Findings of thematic analysis of these strategies are presented in Table 9.

Table 5. *Key themes around building and sustaining multi-agency engagement*

Key theme	Details/examples
Devolving power	Papers state that PBA backbone organisation may need to engage with agencies in ways that may be uncomfortable or unfamiliar; be prepared have their assumptions and knowledge questioned; and support local organisations to take the lead on programme implementation.
Successful relationship-building qualities and approaches	Papers identify that the approaches and qualities that can be applied by PBA backbone agencies to support relationship-building with agencies and other partners include: • **Starting early and allowing sufficient time:** Papers recommend to engage partners early (even pre-funding, well before implementation and data collection); community partners can be engaged in data collection, identifying risk and protective factors/needs, and decision-making processes (e.g. choosing programmes to be funded); PBA backbone organisations need to spend considerable time in the community, including after-hours/weekends building relationships. • **Authenticity and humility:** Papers recommend showing respect and attention to community partners, being authentic and approaching these relationships with humility; planning to support the community and for agencies to support one another beyond the funding period, ensuring these are genuine relationships supported by open discussions. • **Supporting cross-sector learning:** Papers suggest that trust can be generated by providing mutual learning opportunities (e.g. strategic planning retreats and workshops) and appreciating the complementary expertise (e.g. mental health, education) and skills (e.g. grant writing and finance) of different groups/individuals /sectors; organisations should scaffold on one another's expertise and view the PBA experience as a collective growth process. • **Being a resource to community organisations:** Papers suggest that PBA backbone organisation should serve as a resource for community organisations' own programmes and activities, and provide training or technical assistance to organisations/government on developing and enhancing coalitions and designing/implementing/evaluating interventions. Efforts may feel non-strategic at times.
Communicating well	Papers suggest that communication should be regular and open; for example, PBA backbone organisations should host regular (e.g. monthly) meetings with community partners, put out a newsletter/other clear form of regular communication and provide opportunities to discuss issues and ideas; there should be a core group of agencies/individuals with an open meeting policy to encourage new organisations/agencies to join. PBA backbone organisations should also identify and clearly communicate benefits of the PBA to community partners.
Developing formal structures and agreements	• **Collaborative structures:** As previously noted, many publications described some form of collaborative governance structure, such as a strong coalition of local organisations and community members; PBA backbone organisations may

Key theme	Details/examples
	consider having smaller sub-groups where applicable; collaborative structures ensure selected programmes or activities are integrated into existing service agencies, reduce duplication and competition between agencies and establish systems to monitor their implementation and outcomes. Engaging partners/supporters at multiple levels (e.g. community, city and state) was identified as helpful for supporting PBA sustainment. Having periodic elections for chair/co-chair positions disrupts any power structures. Providing refresher training on PBA model and goals to agencies joining the PBA is also helpful. Collaborative structures (e.g. coalitions and steering committees) should work together to develop mutual or common goals, objectives and outcomes for the PBA and make contact with agencies not regularly participating in these structures. • **Written agreements:** Several publications described PBAs that had established *'written agreements'* or *'memoranda of understanding'* with participating organisations that delineated roles, responsibilities (including regular attendance in governance meetings) and compensation. A long-term approach needed to be taken to develop these in a way that was acceptable to all partners. Such written agreements were seen to assist PBAs to remain a priority despite changes in staffing/administration of the partner organisations or government agencies. • **Colocation:** Some PBAs described colocation of agencies in a 'hub' due to the availability of, for example, land and facilities to allow such an arrangement. Colocation was seen to strengthen collaboration and social learning between partners (e.g. Miao et al., 2011).
Assessing pre-existing dynamics	Some publications described the PBA backbone organisation considering and addressing pre-existing problematic dynamics between partner agencies, between these agencies and the community, or between agencies/community and the tenets of the planned PBA (e.g. belief in the importance of improving preventative programmes). Some PBAs used structured tools (e.g. Community Key Leader Survey[8]) or qualitative approaches to assess community and agency readiness and climate to implement/deliver PBA.
Developing PBA identity and visibility	Recommended strategies to enhance visibility and identity included: engaging members of city government and local media; hosting meetings early in the PBA development process; a common language for stakeholders to discuss violence prevention strategies; and adopting best practices and tenets of community-based participatory action approaches to nurture a group of disparate organisations to generate a cohesive identity and a unified voice.
Developing or harnessing relationships, special roles or structures	Some PBAs recommended that backbone organisations harness existing and key relationships with community leaders and other local/district staff within collaborative governance structures, as well as ensuring buy-in at multiple/higher levels of community and government (e.g. mayors, commissioners and other officials) to increase PBA visibility and sustainability. Some PBAs also recommended reaching out to establish new relationships, which can be supported by a having a specialist community mobiliser/coordinator role who is active in the community organising and recruiting key stakeholders. This is a key component of most CTC-PBAs. Hiring staff from the local community and encouraging the use of PBA meetings as networking opportunities were also noted as key strategies for building and sustaining multi-agency engagement.
Considering sustainability	Some papers emphasised the need for PBA backbone organisations to take a long-term view of relationships with community agencies and understand the importance

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[8] See Basic (2015) for further details.

Key theme	Details/examples
	of sustained buy-in. Strategies suggested to support sustainability include: holding a regular time/date of meetings, providing orientation for new members, annual retreats to reinvigorate the PBA, having specialist committees that address sustainability, planning/goal-setting for sustainability throughout the life of the collaboration (e.g. ongoing data collection and evaluation), regular reporting to PBA committee and elected officials, awards ceremonies or other strategies to highlight achievements and contributions of key individuals, clients and agencies, and having buy-in at multiple levels of developing government and media.

A total of 10 publications (9.7%) described pitfalls associated with multi-agency engagement, some of which included strategies to avoid these (see Table 10). Pitfalls to multi-agency engagement included factors described in publications as *causing* poor multi-agency engagement (e.g. poor relationships with community agencies or a lack of leadership structure), as well as those which could *emanate* from poor multi-agency engagement (e.g. limited use of EBPs and poor evaluation). Most of these papers (90%) were non-CTC related publications, and it should again be emphasised that these are anecdotal observations and not able to be linked to PBA efficacy.

Table 6. *Pitfalls around poor multi-agency engagement – key themes*

Key theme	Details/examples
Poor relationships with community agencies	PBAs had weak relationships with coalitions and networks; there was a lack of communication and feelings of exclusion on the part of key community agencies. In other instances, researchers or PBA backbone organisations were 'out of sync' with family, school or community practice and needing flexibility to respond to these adaptively as circumstances changed. Some PBAs described successfully framing conflict as a positive and necessary learning experience (e.g. Miao et al., 2011).
Lack of leadership structure	Failure to generate or sustain collaborative governance structures inclusive of community agencies; project coordinators being too involved in the day-to-day activities to undertake leadership role; insufficient support to community agencies.
Limited use of evidence-based programs	Some publications noted limited use of evidence-based programs or a lack of EBPs to choose from that met the specific needs of the target population.
Poor evaluation	Challenges related to information-sharing between agencies were sometimes noted to generate barriers to quality evaluation. It is recommended to develop a supportive learning community (comprised of researchers/evaluators, community and agencies) to address this challenge.
Low agency capacity or resources	Publications noted that PBAs struggled to be implemented and delivered in 'lower capacity communities' due to lack of agency resources or time, competing demands, and the high turnover of service providers and policymakers. At times, there was also seen to be conflict between the direction of PBAs and local, state or federal directives or resource allocations, which saw agencies investing time and resources outside the PBA.
Insufficient support to agencies	Some universities and research partners may be less nimble in responding to day-to-day turbulence in PBAs (e.g. research partners that have long time frames for getting new budget items approved may not be able to support agencies as easily).
Failing to respond to diversity of place	Differences in places/cultures may lead to differing balance between community/government/agency involvement. For example, some contexts may have a higher expectation for government intervention in social challenges than others (e.g. Netherlands vs US, respectively).
Failing to support sustainability	Failing to plan for sustainability was seen to result in disruptions to funding, which in turn disrupted PBA activities. For this reason, planning for sustainability should form a key priority for PBAs.

	Part of sustainability of multi-agency engagement is sustaining the level of motivation around the PBA among agencies involved in its design, delivery and evaluation. PBA backbone organisations should anticipate a lag in long-term outcomes being realised and identify intermediate outcomes that are hypothesised to be linked with desired outcome(s), with a view to sustaining agency engagement.

Community engagement

This section of the review describes the level and nature of community involvement in the included PBAs at each phase of their development, delivery and evaluation. Papers also outlined the importance of community engagement for any PBA for addressing youth violence. Qualitative analysis of the studies identified that community engagement was seen as essential to not only successfully develop, implement and evaluate PBAs but also to:

- overcome community resistance/mistrust/reluctance to engage in the PBA;

- overcome any stigma associated with being involved in PBA or its initiatives;

- avoid appearance of 'outside-in' approaches;

- ensure community doesn't feel exploited by the PBA or associated research; and

- ensure initiative becomes rooted in the community with perceived positive impacts.

Level of community engagement

As outlined in Chapter 2, the level of community involvement in each PBA is described according to a modified five-level version of Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969).

Levels of community involvement were assessed at each of five phases of the PBA: design, delivery and evaluation, namely the early feasibility, discovery, co-production, delivery and evaluation phases, as shown in Table 11[9]. Where multiple PBAs were described in a single study, the highest level of community engagement of any of the PBAs was utilised for the analyses. An overall level of community engagement is also provided in relation to each type of PBA/publication based on the average levels of involvement across all phases. Note that not all PBAs specified the level of community engagement at each phase. The data presented in Table 11 illustrate that the overall level of community engagement across the PBAs was relatively high (4.3/5); however, this engagement varied from a low point in the early feasibility and evaluation phases (2.9 and 3.3/5 respectively) through to a higher point in the discovery and co-production phases (3.8 and 5.5/5 respectively). PBAs aiming to sustain a higher level of community engagement across the whole PBA life cycle could therefore focus on ensuring community engagement in the early feasibility and evaluation phases.

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[9] These are the phases described in YEF's PBA work. Feasibility involves initial data and analysis and intelligence gathering and selection of place. Discovery involves activity to understand the local context and needs and develop local partnerships. Co-design involves collaborative development of an action plan. Delivery and evaluation are self-explanatory.

Table 7. *Level of community involvement at each PBA phase*

	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Early feasibility phase			
Non-CTC (n = 29)	0	5	2.8
CTC Theory (n = 13)	3	3	3.0
CTC Impact (n = 23)	3	3	3.0
All (n = 65)	0	5	2.9
Discovery phase			
Non-CTC (n = 42)	0	5	3.6
CTC Theory (n = 16)	3	4	3.9
CTC Impact (n = 23)	4	4	4
All (n = 81)	0	5	3.8
Co-Production phase			
Non-CTC (n = 47)	1	5	3.9
CTC Theory (n = 16)	5	5	5.0
CTC Impact (n = 23)	5	5	5.0
All (n = 86)	1	5	4.4
Delivery Phase			
Non-CTC (n = 49)	3	5	4.0
CTC Theory (n = 5)	3	5	4.6
CTC Impact (n = 0)	0	0	0
All (n = 54)	3	5	4.0
Evaluation Phase			
Non-CTC (n = 25)	0	5	3.2
CTC Theory (n = 4)	1	5	4.0
CTC Impact (n = 0)	0	0	0
All (n = 29)	0	5	3.3
Overall			
Non-CTC (n = 61)	3	5	3.9
CTC Theory (n = 18)	3	5	4.8
CTC Impact (n = 23)	5	5	5.0
All (n = 102)	3	5	4.3

Building and sustaining community engagement

A total of 51 publications (49.5%) outlined strategies for building and sustaining community engagement, the majority of which (37/51, 72.5%) related to non-CTC PBAs. Like other information presented in this Review of Theory, it should be emphasised that these key themes are anecdotal and exploratory only and there is insufficient evidence to link these to the efficacy of the PBAs.

Ten key themes for building community engagement were identified via thematic analyses, as shown in Table 12. Several papers mentioned the significant time (e.g. 3–12 months) required to build relationships with community prior to commencing design and implementation of the PBA (see Rowland et al., 2021). For example, Brisson et al. (2020, p. 6) described "working with youth unofficially for some time before they would agree to be part of the programme and participate in the intake evaluation". Similarly, Morrel-Samuels et al. (2016, p. 200) outlined that community engagement work commenced "well before the proposal was funded", while Trent (2020) described a PBA in which the field observer spent more than 500 hours in the communities building trust by attending community programmes and being open and forthcoming about the programme. Overall, the identified themes primarily related to developing an understanding of place; building relationships through well-considered strategies, activities and

communication; and considering power dynamics, including those pre-existing within the community and those existing between the community and other stakeholders involved in the design, implementation, delivery and evaluation of the PBA.

Table 8. *Building and sustaining community engagement – key themes*

Key theme	Details/examples
Asking, listening and learning about place	PBA backbone organisation to learn about culture, dynamics, key historical events, community's assessment of previous related initiatives, how best to include community voice in the PBA design and delivery, key motivations, assets, and strengths within community.
Successful relationship-building qualities and approaches	PBA backbone and delivery/evaluation organisations should value the community and demonstrate humility, authenticity, transparency, respect, gratitude for community engagement and involvement, patience, and a long-term, flexible approach.
Communicating well	PBA backbone and delivery/evaluation organisations should communicate with transparency, accountability, responsibility, clarity, accessibility, and respect; deliver findings regularly to the community; and train staff on community/young people engagement.
Successful relationship-building activities	PBA backbone and delivery/evaluation organisations can participate in everyday community activities, meet with the community face-to-face, ensure consistent PBA staffing, share meals, and hold informal gatherings with the community, consider timing, location and support (e.g. childcare) of these gatherings, acknowledge that conflicts may arise in the design and delivery of the PBA, and agree on resolution strategies.
Addressing pre-existing dynamics	PBA backbone and delivery organisations need to work with community and others to address pre-existing conflicts/tensions, including fallout of previous initiatives in the community.
Devolving power	Two aspects of devolving power were outlined: • Empowering the community: e.g. via involving community in conception of PBA, giving decision-making power, tools and resources, acknowledging the capability and expertise of community • Surrendering power/authority: e.g. via the PBA backbone organisation having input but no/reduced decision-making power concerning activities to be implemented, be willing to have their assumptions questioned, holding meetings at community not academic/statutory sites.
Developing PBA identity and visibility	PBA backbone and delivery/evaluation organisations need to ensure consistent branding/identity of the PBA, its visibility in the community, and consistently provide information about the PBA to the community.
Developing or harnessing relationships, special roles or structures	PBA backbone and delivery organisations can develop or harness a community conduit or mobilisation role, pre-existing public outreach/community liaisons or leaders, volunteers or businesses, or recruit community members to support the design, delivery, implementation and evaluation of the PBA.
Resourcing	PBA backbone and delivery/evaluation organisations can provide the community with training/support needed to implement/deliver/evaluate the PBA, as well as support outside the PBA, linking community to ongoing funding, providing technical assistance and capacity building, incentivising young people participation.

Key theme	Details/examples
Considering sustainability	PBA backbone and delivery organisations should consider how sustainability of the PBA will be maintained; strategies include: • Setting up non-profit organisations to continue delivery sourcing ongoing funding for the PBA • Holding regular (e.g. yearly) meetings to discuss PBA impacts/activities with the community (e.g. community leaders and residents) and ensure these continue to alignment with community priorities • Building leadership capacity into the PBA to maintain growth and momentum • Building a learning community as part of the PBA to continually draw lessons from evaluation and self-reflection.

A total of 15 publications (15.5%) described pitfalls associated with community engagement, some of which included strategies to avoid these (see Table 13). Again, most of these papers (14/15, 93.3%) related to non-CTC PBAs. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these pitfalls primarily related to a failure to adhere to the above strategies and approaches for building and sustaining community engagement. Again, readers should be aware that these findings are anecdotal and exploratory in nature and should not be interpreted as being related to the effectiveness of PBAs in addressing youth violence.

Table 9. Pitfalls around poor community engagement – key themes

Key theme	Details/examples
Insufficient attention to community engagement	Failure to develop trust with community due to insufficient time allocated to this dimension, wrong choice of strategies, failing to work at the community's pace, a lack of respect and inclusion, or not addressing the fallout of previous community-based initiatives.
Damaging trust and generating barriers to relationship-building	Having onerous intake process to the PBA and/or evaluation, not devolving power to the community, lacking transparency (e.g. concerning funding) and agencies failing to understand the importance of community engagement.
Challenges stemming from choice of place	PBAs implemented in 'lower capacity communities' identified that a lack of existing relationships and infrastructure generated barriers to community engagement, places where there were substantial pre-existing trust issues (e.g. government corruption), and PBAs that failed to respond to diversity in the community (e.g. only including certain subsections of the community in the PBA design or delivery).
Poor communication	E.g. failing to communicate the value of the PBA and/or its evaluation to community.
Insufficient funding	E.g. to support PBA administration activities.
Insufficient support to community	E.g. insufficiently supporting the community to select, implement or evaluate PBA-related activities.
Failing to respond to diversity of place	E.g. applying the same model at different sites without considering differences in population, pre-existing dynamics (e.g. intra-racial tensions) or service availability.
Failing to support sustainability	Lack of strategies and attention to sustainability resulting in degradation over time of the relationships required to sustain the PBA.

PBA intended targets

Finally, data were extracted and coded to analyse the levels of anticipated impact targeted by each PBA for addressing youth violence. These were coded utilising the framework of Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), which identifies five major levels that exist between a developing person

and their environment, as outlined and defined in Table 14 below. While some publications and models theorised that broader systemic changes would emerge due to the activities implemented, these were not coded as existing for a PBA unless the particular exosystemic level was either targeted or evidence of impact was apparent. These analyses demonstrate that the most common targeted levels of anticipated impact are on the individual child and their microsystem (e.g. schools, families and peers). There was again variation between the CTC and non-CTC publications in this area, with most PBAs targeting exosystems (94.7%) or macrosystems (100%) being non-CTC PBAs. Conversely, CTC PBAs were more inclined to target mesosystems (71.4% vs 14.8%) and microsystems (78.6% vs 42.6%) compared with non-CTC PBAs. Both CTC and non-CTC PBAs were inclined to target individual young people achieving or attempting to achieve their impact (78.6% and 82%, respectively).

Table 10. *Ecological levels of targets of PBAs for addressing youth violence*

Ecosystem Level	Definition	% Youth Violence PBA Publications Targeting	Examples of Targeting
Individual	Anticipated impact within the individual child (e.g. reduced individual level violence, improved school attendance and reduced individual level drug use).	80.6	Direct outreach, counselling, substance abuse or violence reduction programmes for young people.
Microsystem	Anticipated impact on things that have direct contact with the child in their immediate environment (e.g. parents, siblings, teachers and school peers).	57.3	Family programmes or case management, father–son programmes and opportunities for young people prosocial connectedness (e.g. afterschool or cultural programmes).
Mesosystem	Anticipated impact at the level of interactions between the child's microsystems (e.g. interactions between the child's parents and teachers, or between school peers and siblings).	37.9	Increasing communication between schools and parents, bringing together parents and community partners.
Exosystem	Anticipated impact on other formal and informal social structures that do not themselves contain the child but indirectly influence them as they affect one of the microsystems (e.g. neighbourhood, parent's workplaces, parent's friends and the mass media).	36.9	Public health messaging of non-violence, shifting community norms about the acceptability of violence, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (e.g. improved street lighting and neighbourhood clean-up), enhancing community infrastructure and assets, strengthening neighbourhood connectedness, and increased uptake of evidence-based programmes.
Macrosystem	Impact on cultural elements that affect a child's development, such as socioeconomic status, wealth, poverty and how culture responds to diversity (e.g. ethnicity). Differs from previous ecosystems as it does not refer to the	12.6	Enhancing economic status of neighbourhood and shifting broader attitudes towards violence. Few examples of macrosystem level change were identifiable.

Ecosystem Level	Definition	% Youth Violence PBA Publications Targeting	Examples of Targeting
	specific environments of one developing child, but the already established society and culture in which the child is developing.		

Chapter 4 – Review of Evidence of Impact

Lead Author: Dr Sara Valdebenito

Summary of chapter findings

- This chapter presents findings from 20 studies that have quantitatively assessed the impact of PBAs on reducing youth violence. This is a sub-set of the studies described in the previous chapter. Most (17 studies) used a quasi-experimental design (matched control group, non-matched control group, propensity score matching, one group or interrupted time series, or difference in difference). Three used an RCT design. The unit of analysis involved clusters of data (school districts, neighbourhoods, communities or geographical area) for 14 studies and individuals in five studies (generally smaller scale interventions and samples).

- Included impact evaluations were mainly from the US, and there was one UK study. The most frequent aims were reducing youth violence (10 studies), reducing gang involvement (10 studies) and development of positive behaviours and attitudes (eight studies).

- The most robust evidence favoured PBAs addressing serious youth violence (e.g. gun violence, knife crimes, homicide, injuries and aggravated assault) that incorporated multi-component, multi-agency strategies. Specifically, the most effective PBAs targeted young people considered at risk or high risk (i.e. those who were already involved in violence) through the delivery of secondary or tertiary crime prevention strategies (e.g. youth outreach, case management, conflict resolution and police intelligence). In some of the PBAs that demonstrated effectiveness, these targeted strategies were utilised alongside primary crime prevention measures that targeted the broader young people population (e.g. via schools).

- The description of impact has been organised in three subcategories of PBAs, namely i) Communities That Care (CTC, five studies); ii) Operation Ceasefire (OCF, seven studies); and iii) other interventions (eight studies). In terms of quantifiable impact:

  - All five of the CTC evaluations reported statistically significant positive impacts in the form of reduction of arrest and re-arrest, self-reported delinquency, gang involvement and crimes of property, although reductions on these outcomes were small and not uniform across studies.

  - Four of the seven OCF evaluations reported medium to large positive impacts on reducing youth homicide, gun assault, assault, violent crimes, violent attitudes, gun violence and non-fatal shooting. The three other OCF evaluations found both positive and negative impacts on shootings, non-fatal shootings and aggravated assault.

  - Of the remaining eight studies, four found statistically significant positive impacts on aspects of violence, and four found no difference or differences that were not statistically significant due to small sample size.

Four studies (covering different types of PBAs, see Table 20) tested displacement effects (Brantingham, Tita, & Herz, 2021; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013; Webster et al., 2012; Wilson, Chermak, &

McGarrell, 2010). Two found no evidence of displacement of either violence or beneficial impacts, one found displacement of beneficial impacts and not violence, and one found displacement of violence.

Aims of this study element

The main aim of the review of impact was to scrutinise the available studies found using the combined search strategy and assess the effectiveness of different types of place-based interventions for reducing youth violence, antisocial behaviour, aggression or delinquency. Secondary aims related to comparing different approaches and identifying those that could potentially demonstrate larger and more significant effects.

As described in Chapter 2, the studies selected for this review were a sub-set of those included in the Review of Models and Implementation. They were selected for the Review of Evidence of Impact if they involved either an experimental or QED and measured impacts on youth violence.

The chapter begins with a detailed description of the included studies and interventions, covers findings relating to impacts of the PBAs evaluated and then concludes with findings relating to evaluation methodologies for assessing PBA impacts.

Description of the included studies

Study type, country and publication year

Twenty studies presenting impact evaluations were included in the present systematic review (Table 15). The studies involved 16 peer reviewed publications (i.e. journal articles) and four technical reports (i.e. grey literature). As shown in Table 15, all studies were written in English and represented impact evaluations mostly implemented in the United States, with two in Australia and one in the UK. All were published between 2001 and 2021 (M_{pub_date} = 2013; SD = 5.5), representing contemporary attempts to reduce youth violence and youth crime.

Study designs and sampling

Table 16 indicates that 17 studies (85%) used a quasi-experimental design. We found a wide diversity of QED including *time series analysis* (Braga, Kennedy, Waring, & Piehl, 2001; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013), *difference in differences* (Brantingham, Tita, & Herz, 2021), *propensity score matching* (Chilenski, Frank, Summers, & Lew, 2019; Wilson, Chermak, & McGarrell, 2010), *matched control groups* (Heinze et al., 2016; Le et al., 2011; Oscós-Sánchez, Lesser, & Oscós-Flores, 2013; Webster, Whitehill, Vernick, & Parker, 2012a; Williams, Currie, Linden, & Donnelly, 2014) and *not matched control groups* (Fox, Katz, Choate, & Hedberg, 2014; Knox, Guerra, Williams, & Toro, 2011; Milam et al., 2016; Rowland et al., 2021; Spergel et al., 2003; Toumbourou, Rowland, Williams, Smith, & Patton, 2019). This last subgroup of studies was originally excluded in our registered protocol (Valdebenito et al., 2022); however, it has been kept here to display the diversity of methods used to evaluate the impact of PBAs.

Table 11. *Characteristics of included papers*

Study characteristics	Category	N	%
Type of publications	Journal article (peer reviewed)	16	80
	Technical report (grey literature)	4	20
Publication language	English	20	100
Country of the sample	United States	17	85
	United Kingdom	1	5
	Australia	2	1
Conflict of interest	Disclosed	9	45
	Not disclosed	11	55
Potential financial conflict of interest	Unlikely	7	35
	Possible	5	25
	Likely	0	0
	Unknown	8	40
		Mean	**SD**
Publication year		2013	5.5

Table 12. *Methodological characteristics of the included studies*

Study characteristics	Category	N	%
Study design	One group time series/Interrupted time series	2	10
	Difference in differences	1	5
	Propensity score matching	2	10
	Matched control group	6	30
	Not matched control group	6	30
	Randomised controlled trial	3	15
Sampling methods	Non-probabilistic sample	16	80
	Randomly selected	3	15
	Unclear	1	5
Unit of analysis	Individuals	5	25
	Clusters	14	70
	Unclear	1	5
Outcome measured	Aggression	1	5
	Antisocial behaviour	1	5
	Violent crime	11	55
	Youth crime	5	25
	Violent attitudes	2	10
Data[10]	Police records	8	40
	Hospital records	2	10

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[10] The subsection does not sum up 20 and the percentage is over 100 because some studies reported multiple sources of data.

Study characteristics	Category	N	%
	Census data	7	35
	Surveys (self-report)	10	50
	Other (Geo coded data, qualitative data)	3	15

All included QEDs used a non-probabilistic sampling method where participants did not have the same chance of participating in the study. Moreover, in non-probabilistic sampling, units are selected using subjective criteria (e.g. availability and geographical proximity) rather than randomisation (Bryman, 2012). For instance, Brantingham et al. (2021) selected territories on "a needs-basis" from areas most impacted by gang related violence and that closely followed the structure of the Los Angeles Police Department. In the case of Heinze et al. (2016, p. 170), "*the intervention community was a single geographic area of 1.16 square miles encompassing eight Census block groups across three Census tracts.… The comparison community was another predominantly African American neighbourhood encompassing two Census tracts (1.03 square miles) about one-and-a-half miles directly north of the intervention community*".

The three RCTs included in this review corresponded to two small size trials and a large-scale impact evaluation. The first small-scale study (n = 82) was aimed at facilitating the development of a strong social bond to a gender-equitable and nonviolent cultural identity (Kelly et al., 2010). The second (n = 312) was the only study targeting dating violence (Gonzalez-Guarda, Guerra, Cummings, Pino, & Becerra, 2015). Finally, the third RCT (Hawkins et al 2018) was a large-scale impact evaluation (n = 4,407, 12 pairs of matched communities) testing the impact of Communities That Care. All samples were randomly assigned.

Unit of analysis

In a study, the unit of analysis is defined as the level on which the research question is focused (Bachman & Schutt, 2011). In social sciences, the level could range from individuals to groups, organisations or neighbourhoods. In this review, only five studies used individuals as the unit of analysis (i.e. Gonzalez-Guarda et al., 2015; Kelly et al., 2010; Le et al., 2011; Oscós-Sánchez et al., 2013; Williams et al., 2014). In general, these five studies used small samples of young people (ranging between 82 and 388 participants) and tested interventions targeting changes at micro level (i.e. individual or family) rather than changes at the community-level (e.g. increased collaboration among service providers and adoption of public health approaches and early prevention).

In contrast, 14 studies used clusters data as the unit of analysis. These clusters of data corresponded to school districts (e.g. Chilenski et al., 2019), communities[11] (e.g. Heinze et al., 2016), neighbourhoods[12] (e.g. Milam et al., 2016) or specific geographical areas within a city like Boston (e.g. Braga et al., 2001). The analysis of data in clusters implies specific challenges for researchers. While studies using individuals as units of analysis can be implemented with smaller samples and analysed using regular regression models, cluster

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[11] Henize et al. (2016, p. 170) defines community as "a single geographic area of 1.16 square miles encompassing eight Census block groups across three Census tracts".

[12] Defined as a single police post, in this specific case, Lower Park Heights and Southwest Baltimore, Baltimore City (Milam et al., 2016).

data normally requires inflated samples and hierarchal regression models with robust errors (for more details, see Giraudeau & Ravaud, 2009). All these issues should be taken into consideration when planning interventions and impact evaluations for the reduction of serious violence among young people. Participants nested in the same cluster tend to share similarities (intraclass correlation – ICC). When this correlation is not accounted for, standard errors, confidence intervals and p-values will tend to be too small (Holodinsky, Austin, & Williamson, 2020).

In this review, only six of the 14 studies using cluster data explicitly mentioned the use of multilevel modelling/hierarchical regressions, the most advisable analysis for this type of data (i.e. Feinberg et al., 2007; Hawkins et al., 2008; Kelly et al., 2010; Knox et al., 2011; Rowland et al., 2021; Toumbourou et al., 2019). This is another relevant element to keep in mind when planning future evaluations of PBAs.

Outcomes measured

The outcomes measured in the eligible studies focused primarily on serious violence – defined as any behaviour involving homicide, gun assault, fatal and non-fatal shootings, physical violence, robbery, and assault with injuries. As a secondary outcome, we also included antisocial behaviour, aggression or delinquency (self-reported or based on police data). Studies measured perpetration of violence and/or victimisation. As shown in Table 16, 11 studies reported one or more of the violent behaviours described above, while the remainder measured behaviours indicating a pattern of aggression, antisocial or delinquent behaviour.

Data sources

Collected evidence suggests that researchers used different sources of data to plan, observe historical trends and test the impact of PBAs. Evidence suggests that planning the implementation of a PBA requires official data to establish the baseline measure of violence and to match areas with similar levels of violence or delinquency that will act as treatment and control conditions.

Table 16 shows that most of the included studies used police data (eight studies), census data (seven studies) and self-reported surveys (10 studies). Interestingly, two studies also included the analysis of hospital records describing data on injuries linked to violent crimes that were not always captured by police records (i.e. Fox et al., 2014; Heinze et al., 2016). Different criminological studies have claimed the relevance of including this information to arrive at a more complete perspective of the prevalence of violence in communities. As suggested by Sutherland et al. (2021, p. 20), "approximately 90% of cases in the ambulance dataset did not have a corresponding case in the police dataset. The proportion was even lower in the Emergency Department dataset, where less than 5% of cases were successfully matched to a police record. These data suggest that adding the medical data to the police data could add 15 to 20% more violent offences to the totals recorded by the police". Based on these findings, it seems advisable to attempt the inclusion of different sources of data (police records, hospital data, self-reports) since they can produce a more accurate measure of violence perpetration or victimisation.

Three studies included geocoding of violent incident location to test whether crimes occurred in the intervention or comparison area (Brantingham et al., 2021; Heinze et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2010).

Conflict of interest and risk of bias assessments

Nine studies published in peer-reviewed journals disclosed a personal or organisational conflict of interest (CoI). We also evaluated studies on their potential Conflict of Financial Interest (CoFI) by using a scale developed by Eisner and Humphreys (2012). We assessed CoFI as 'unlikely' in seven studies (35%), 'possible' in five studies (25%), 'likely' in no studies and 'unknown' in eight studies (40%; logged in the category 'unknown' because there was not enough data for classification) (see Appendix 3).

We also assessed risk of bias, which is an indicator of the quality of the studies and the corresponding level of confidence we can have in their results. Two different tools were used to assess RCTs (Joanna Briggs Institute, 2017b) and QEDs (Joanna Briggs Institute, 2017a), both developed by The JBI Collaboration. The assessments are shown in Figures 7 and 8, and full details of the procedure and assessment are shown in Appendix 4.

Figure 7. Risk of quality bias for randomised controlled trials
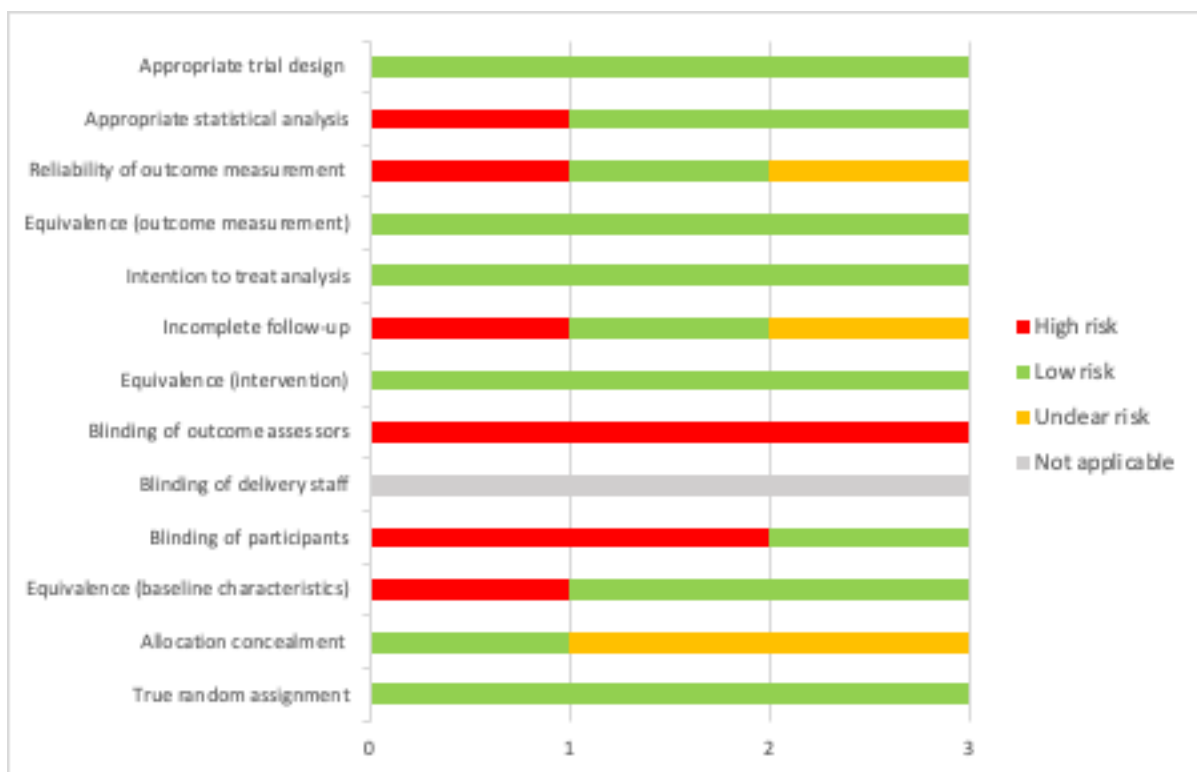
Figure 8. *Risk of quality bias for quasi experimental designs*
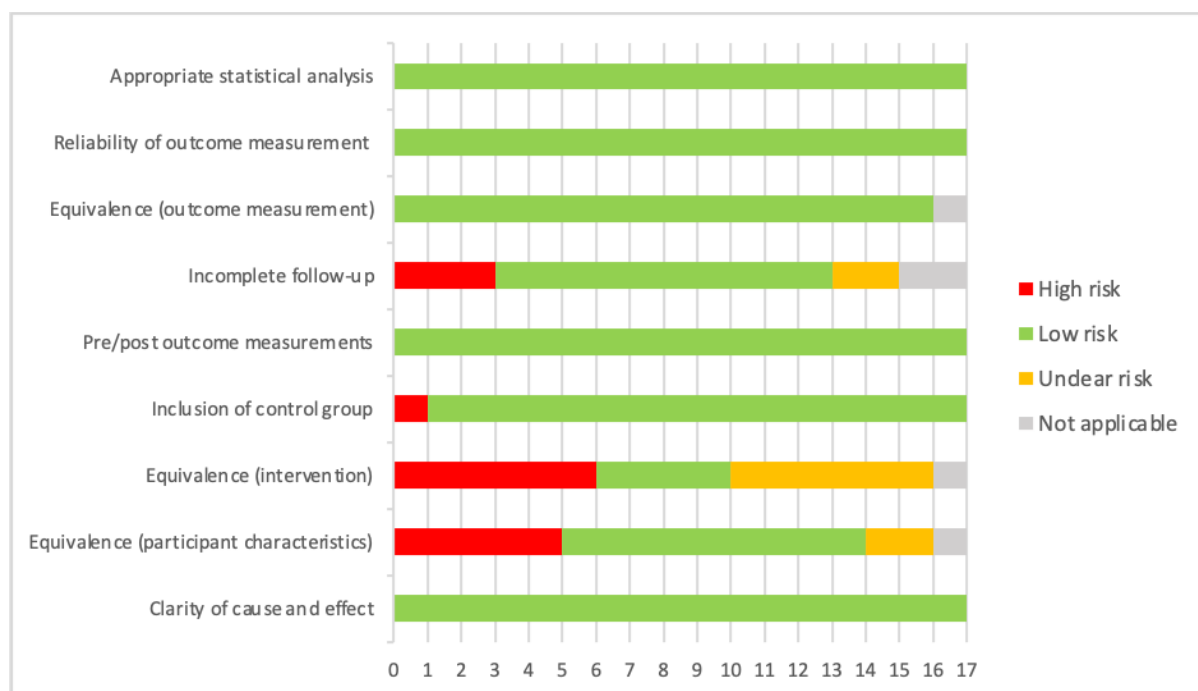
Criteria for determination of independent findings

When performing evidence synthesis, it is essential to detect the potential of dependent findings. One common case of dependency is the publication of multiple reports based on the same sample. The main risk in this case would be overestimating the impact of a specific treatment by including the outcome for the same people in the same study multiple times. Since violations of the assumptions of independence would lead to incorrect conclusions (Higgins & Green, 2011; Romano & Kromrey, 2009), we have made sure that each sample is reported only once (Lipsey & Landenberger, 2006).

The interventions evaluated in the included studies

Table 17 provides a description of the included PBAs. Systematic searches found nine different types of interventions. The included interventions covered a wide range of aims. Fifty per cent aimed at the reduction of youth violence (i.e. Chilenski, Frank, Summers, & Lew, 2019; Feinberg, Greenberg, Osgood, Sartorius, & Bontempo, 2007; Hawkins et al., 2008; Heinze et al., 2016; Knox, Guerra, Williams, & Toro, 2011; Le et al., 2011; Rowland et al., 2021; Toumbourou, Rowland, Williams, Smith, & Patton, 2019; Webster, Whitehill, Vernick, & Parker, 2012; Williams, Currie, Linden, & Donnelly, 2014). Another 40% targeted the development of positive behaviours and attitudes, such as peaceful conflict resolution, prevention of drug use or community involvement in prevention of risk factors for child development (i.e. Chilenski et al., 2019; Hawkins et al., 2008; Knox et al., 2011; Milam et al., 2016; Oscós-Sánchez, Lesser, & Oscós-Flores, 2013; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013; Rowland et al., 2021; Spergel et al., 2003).

The included interventions primarily targeted changes at the micro (i.e. young people) and macro levels (e.g. neighbourhoods and cities), the analysis of data nested in clusters being a common feature (i.e. few at the meso level such as schools).

Table 13. *Characteristics of the interventions*

Study characteristics	Category	N	%
Type of programme	Communities That Care	5	25
	Operation Ceasefire	7	35
	El Joven Noble	2	10
	Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Centre	1	5
	Together Against Dating Violence	1	5
	Families and Schools Together	1	5
	Roosevelt Village Center	1	5
	Gang Violence Reduction Project	1	5
	GRYD Prevention Program	1	5
Aims[13]	General youth violence	10	50
	Homicide	3	15
	Firearms violence	5	25
	Gang involvement	3	15
	Youth AOD	5	25
	Positive youth behaviours/attitudes	8	40
	Dating violence	1	5
	Wellbeing	5	25
	Empower community	1	5
Funding[14]	Health agency	8	40
	Justice agency	6	30
	Scottish government	1	5
	Public agency	2	10
	Public and private	2	10
	Unclear	3	15
Setting of PBA delivery	Metropolitan	14	70
	Towns or smaller	1	5
	Mixed	1	5
	Unknown	4	20

Communities That Care (CTC)

We found five papers reporting the impact of CTC on delinquency reduction (i.e. Chilenski et al., 2019; Feinberg, Greenberg, Osgood, Sartorius, & Bontempo, 2007; Hawkins et al., 2008; Rowland et al., 2021; Toumbourou et al., 2019). Developed in the US in the mid-1990s, CTC is a community-based model aimed at reducing risk, enhancing protective factors and reducing problem behaviours across the general population of children and adolescents. It is a science-based, manualised programme that uses a public health approach. CTC seeks to:

1. increase community ownership of prevention initiatives;

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[13] This subsection does not sum up 20 and sums to more than 100% because some studies reported multiple aims.
[14] This subsection does not sum up 20 and sums to more than 100% because some studies reported multiple sources of funding.

2. increase efficiency of the use of community resources (avoid duplication and fragmentation);

3. reduce competition among the multiple agencies designed to promote healthy human development;

4. improve the sustainability of prevention measures; and

5. facilitate coordination to solve complex problems (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2017). The reduction of serious violence was not a primary aim in any of the five included studies, but all interventions targeted early risks (e.g. unhealthy behaviours and delinquency) and protective factors that could potentially have an impact on subsequent violent behaviour. One of the most distinctive characteristics of CTC is the formation of community coalitions involving members of the public, local authorities and many relevant stakeholders that work together throughout the whole process of planning, implementation and follow-up. The development of community coalitions favours the sustainability of the changes (Hawkins et al., 2008). CTC targets school children from the community, displaying low to high risk. All documentation and tools and can be accessed in https://www.communitiesthatcare.net.

CTC has expanded from the US to Australia and Europe. Even though we found some publications regarding the impact of the interventions in a European context and, more precisely, in the UK, our searches did not detect any studies testing the effects of CTC on serious violence or delinquent behaviour (e.g. Crow, France, & Hacking, 2006). Detailed information describing the implementation of CTC in Europe can be accessed in the following link: http://www.ctc-network.eu.

Operation Ceasefire (OCF)

Seven papers reported the impact of OCF on serious violence reduction. OCF, implemented for the first time in Boston in 1996 (Braga et al., 2001), works by targeting areas of high concentrations of serious violence and deploying resources on those areas in order to deter future violence (i.e. focused deterrence; Braga & Weisburd, 2012; Nagin, 2013; Piquero, Gomez-Smith, & Langton, 2004). Under this category, we also included any similar intervention explicitly defined as a replication or adaptation of the original intervention (i.e. Fox et al., 2014; Milam et al., 2016; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013; Webster, Whitehill, Vernick, & Parker, 2012b; Williams et al., 2014; Wilson et al., 2010). Replication and adaptations of OCF retained the main principles of the original version with some variations regarding the role of the police. In particular, targeted policing and crackdowns seemed to be less central. However, the coordination with the police and the criminal justice system and young people outreach continued to be highly relevant.

The original Operation Ceasefire, also known as The Boston Gun Project, was a problem-oriented policing initiative aimed at reducing youth homicide and youth firearms violence among people under 24 years of age. The original intervention was framed within a problem-oriented policing approach that attempts to allocate police resources in specific areas of the city where crime and harm are concentrated (Braga, Kennedy, Piehl, & Waring, 2000). Broadly speaking, the intervention was based on deterrence principles, targeting high-risk offenders. (For more details, see Table 20). As stated by Nagin (1998), general deterrence hypothesises that the general population is dissuaded from committing offences when the likelihood of punishment necessarily follows the commission of a crime. As such, OCF involved crackdowns, information campaigns, community mobilisation and young people outreach by trained members of the community as well as coordinated multi-agency services to promote social reintegration (Braga et al., 2001). Unlike other police strategies to deter crime, OCF displays a multi-agency approach and the involvement of the

community and ex-offenders who work as mentors for a small number of chronically offending, gang-involved young people. Following a public health approach, OCF includes universal, indicated and selective prevention strategies, attempting to provide an adequate number of specialised resources reach young people with the greatest needs.

OCF focuses on adolescents and adults who display a high risk of involvement in violent crime and gang association. Among all the interventions included in the Review of Evidence of Impact, OCF is the most clearly designed to reduce serious violence in the form of homicide, injuries, aggravated assaults, gun violence and gang-related violence. OCF is the only intervention of those included in the Review of Evidence of Impact to have been tested in the UK (Williams et al., 2014). As in the case of CTC, interventions included in the category OCF were first implemented in the US and more recently adapted to the UK context. A pilot study has been run in London (Davies, Grossmith, & Dawson, 2016), but the Glasgow initiative (Williams et al., 2014) is the only full impact evaluation carried out in the UK to date. The positive impact of the Glasgow initiative and details on implementation can be accessed via the following link:

https://www.svru.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/CIRV_2nd_year_report.pdf

Other PBA models

The remaining studies were very varied and are described below in the Impacts section.

Funding

Not surprisingly, the main sources of funding for the included PBAs corresponded to health (40%) and justice (30%) agencies. Interventions based on public health approaches such as CTC tended to attract funding opportunities from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a national public health agency of the United States. PBAs specialised on the reduction of serious violence were mostly funded from public agencies linked to the criminal justice field.

Setting of PBAs

As observed in Table 17, most of the interventions described in this review were implemented in metropolitan areas (70%). Locations that were the size of towns or smaller (including rural areas) were represented in one study, and locations were a mix of study types in one further study.

Characteristics of participants in included studies

Participants in the included PBAs were mainly from minority backgrounds, with 12 studies including predominantly Black, Latino, Hispanic or Asian participants. In terms of age, participants ranged between 10 and 29 years of age. The nine studies reporting data on younger adolescents were implemented in a school setting (i.e., CTC) or closely linked to violence reduction in schools (e.g., El Joven Noble or families and schools). Generally, studies related to schools tended to cover low-risk or low to high-risk participants. Low-risk populations were defined as individuals who are exposed to risk factors for violence but are not involved in that type of behaviours. High-risk populations were generally defined as those who had members actually involved in acts of serious violence as perpetrators or gang members (e.g. Braga et al., 2001; Williams et al., 2014). Included PBAs also involved high-risk adults not attending school at the time of the intervention. This

was mostly the case in PBAs implementing a version of OCF and those interventions aimed at reducing gang involvement.

Table 14. Participant characteristics within included studies

Study characteristics	Category	N	%
Ethnicity	Predominantly Black	6	30
	Predominantly White	3	15
	Predominantly Latino	5	25
	Other	1	5
	Not reported	5	25
Age	School age	9	45
	Non-school age	11	55
Gender	Predominantly male	7	35
	Mixed	8	40
	Not stated	5	25
Level of risk	High risk	11	55
	Low to high risk	7	35
	Low risk	1	5
	Unclear	1	5

With regard to gender, most of the interventions targeted predominantly male or mixed populations. This is not unexpected since males tend to display significantly higher involvement in delinquency and violent offending compared with their female peers (Liu & Miller, 2020).

Levels of community participation

Using the five-level adapted version of Arnstein's (1969) Ladder of Citizen Participation described in Chapter 2, as shown in Table 19, seven out of the 20 interventions displayed Level 5 (i.e. devolving). These interventions were all of the CTC programmes included in the review, One Vision One Life (Wilson et al., 2010, a programme inspired by OCF) and one version of El Joven Noble (Kelly et al., 2010). CTC was the only intervention displaying a positive impact on the reduction of delinquency, and it was also a good example of an evidence-based strategy to involve the community. In CTC, the formation of community coalitions and the promotion of community involvement starts by evaluating the risks, needs and level of readiness[15] presented by each local community. This baseline assessment was the starting point for defining and implementing a sequence of training, technical assistance and engagement activities that allow the community to engage with the aims of CTC over the long term. These activities are completed between nine and 12 months before delivering the intervention (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2017; J. D. Hawkins, Catalano, & Kuklinski, n.d.).

Another seven interventions were classified as Level 4 (i.e. collaboration) (see Table 19 for details). In these cases, the community plays a role as a partner of the intervention team, having a voice in the definition of the problem and also in selecting the strategies to achieve their aims. Kelly et al. (2010) provide an example

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[15] The point where communities had the ability to start the implementation of the PBAs.

of the characteristics of this level of engagement. In order to tackle violence, they use a community-based participatory research model that provides a method to include the community in the design, implementation and evaluation of their prevention programme. Consequently, community members, representatives from local community-based organisations, local school district teachers, administrators and social workers were invited to work together with an academic research team. In a collaborative meeting, the community was presented with three different curricula designed to address violence. In the selection of the intervention, the academic team had a voice but no vote. The selected intervention, El Joven Noble, was defined as the best option since this aligned with the cultural needs of the targeted individuals. Kelly et al. (2010) estimate that collaborating with the community involved at least 20% of the time resources.

Finally, five of the included interventions were classified as Level 3 (involving). At this level, intervention teams are expected to work directly with communities to make sure that their demands and needs are taken into consideration. This can be achieved by creating partnership boards and making contact with reference groups and service users. The intervention included in this level did not provide extensive detail on actions employed to engage the community. However, it appears that OCF can be used as a reference example. In order to identify young people at high risk of violence, the intervention team contacts relevant members of the community and institutions that can provide relevant perspective on the implementation. Religious leaders, ex-offenders or ex-gang members were then invited to collaborate with OCF and received training and support to work with the targeted participants.

Based on the current data, it is difficult to establish patterns of association between the level of community involvement and the impact of the interventions. A simple observation of Table 19 suggests that studies classified in Level 5 tend to report a larger proportion of positive impact than Levels 4 and 5. However, this association would be explained by other factors, such as the quality of the intervention, dose or type of population, among many others. A meta-regression analysis would have helped to identify the variables linked to impact, but the number of studies included in this review and its considerable heterogeneity have limited the chances of such kind of statistical explorations.

Table 15. Community involvement and patterns of impact

Level of community involvement	Total number of studies[16]	Number of studies reporting positive impact	Number of studies reporting negative or null impact
Level 5	7	6	1
Level 4	7	4	3
Level 3	5	3	2

Impact

Overall, evidence extracted from 20 experimental and quasi-experimental studies suggests a positive impact of some PBAs on reducing violence. The most effective interventions were those targeting individuals involved in serious violence, using multi-component approaches (e.g. universal reduction of risk factors and targeted intervention for young people already involved in crime and violence) and multi-agency collaboration.

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[16] The table does not sum up to 20 studies because one of them (Spergel et al., 2003) did not report enough data for classification.

The description of impact has been organised in three subcategories, namely i) Communities That Care, ii) Operation Ceasefire and iii) other interventions.

Communities That Care

The five experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of CTC included involved 665,015 male and female participants, aged 10–19, displaying low to high risk of health or behavioural problems. All samples were nested in school districts or other geographical units and analysed using hierarchical models with robust standard errors. Data used to test the impact of the intervention encompasses official records (e.g. police and census data) and self-report questionnaires completed by young people.

All CTC interventions included in the Review of Evidence of Impact reported positive impacts on the reduction of arrest and re-arrest, self-reported delinquency, gang involvement and crimes of property. The reductions were small and not uniform across the studies. Feinberg et al. (2007), for example, found an extremely small but significant reduction in self-reported delinquency, and Chilenski et al. (2019) stated that students in intervention districts were less likely to have been arrested but found no significant effect on gun involvement. Moreover, Oesterle, Hawkins, Fagan, Abbott, & Catalano, (2014) suggested that the effect on delinquency was marginally greater for boys than for girls.

An exception among CTC Impact evaluations was Rowland et al. (2021), which measured the impact of the intervention on crimes against persons, a proxy for violence. Data from this study found a small effect – a two per cent reduction of crimes against persons after one year.

Operation Ceasefire (OCF)

As observed in Table 6, the seven impact evaluations of OCF were based on quasi-experimental designs, showing a wide scope of methods for minimising selection bias and enhancing internal validity (Cook & Campbell, 1979). One study (Milam et al., 2016) used a non-matched control group design, displaying high susceptibility for selection bias. Three of the studies (Braga et al., 2001; Fox et al., 2014; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013) used time series analysis, a method that involves multiple observations at several consecutive time points, before and after intervention within the same individuals (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). Two studies (Webster et al., 2012a; Williams et al., 2014) measured impact using matched control units, a mechanism that attempts to control for selection bias, and one single report (Wilson et al., 2010) calculated the impact of OCF using propensity score matching, a method to control for confounding factors (Apel & Sweeten, 2010).

Studies included in the category OCF cover large territories, such as Boston or Phoenix, or a set of selected neighbourhoods. For samples nested in clusters, studies did not provide enough details on the use of hierarchical analysis that account for clustered units. Since these evaluations targeted the reduction of crime at a macro-level, it was impossible to determine the sample of individuals involved or affected by this intervention in the present review. Data used to test the impact of the intervention encompassed official records (e.g. police data or census data) and young peoples' self-reported questionnaires.

Four of the seven interventions defined as OCF or adapted versions of OCF reported a medium to large positive impact on reducing youth homicide, gun assault, assault, violent crimes, violent attitudes, gun violence and non-fatal shooting. As a case in point, Braga et al. (2001) found a 63% reduction on youth homicide, and Picard-Fritsche and Cerniglia, (2013) reported a 20% decrease in gun violence. Williams et al.

(2014), the only PBA implemented in the UK, found a 30–42% reduction in weapon possession among those engaged with the initiative and 21–31% reduction on the perpetration of physical violence. The latter results were not statistically significant, but this was quite likely related to a small sample size (n = 167) and the subsequent lack of sufficient statistical power to detect differences between treatment and control.

Another three interventions testing OCF found both positive and negative impacts (Fox et al., 2014; Webster et al., 2012a; Wilson et al., 2010). For example, while Wilson et al. (2010) found a small positive variation on homicide, aggravated assault and gun assault rates increased in the intervention areas. In a similar vein, Fox et al. (2014) reported a 26% decrease in homicide but a 22% increase in non-fatal shootings.

Other interventions

This heterogeneous subcategory includes eight interventions. Each of them targets one or more of the following aims: to reduce youth violence, to prevent dating violence or to increase community wellbeing and community empowerment.

We found two studies testing 'El Joven Noble' (EJN), a programme oriented towards developing healthy relationships, enhancing community strengths and building community capacity (Kelly et al., 2010; Oscós-Sánchez et al., 2013). Only one of these studies measured physical violence reduction as a primary outcome. The other measured variation on attitudes towards violence. A positive effect was observed in the increase of non-violent attitudes. However, evidence showed that participants of EJN reported higher levels of physical violence when compared against the control group. These results represent a total of 610 participants.

'Together against Violence', an intervention targeting dating violence during adolescence tested by Gonzalez-Guarda et al. (2015) found a non-significant small effect on the reduction of violence. The sample size corresponded only to 82 individuals, which indicates an underpowered study.

Two additional studies targeted high-risk young people, specifically gang members (Brantingham et al., 2021; Spergel et al., 2003). Both Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) and Gang Violence Reduction Project showed a significant and small reduction on violent crimes, but only the former was effective at controlling gang crime.

In addition, the Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Centre (MI-YVPC) reported by Heinze et al. (2016) aimed to reduce violent crime and injury among 10–24-year-olds. It implemented both targeted and universal approaches including environmental changes[17]. This was the only study providing data on violent victimisation of young people. The outcome of the impact evaluation revealed that assaults and assault injuries per month for victims under 25 years old were significantly lower in the intervention area.

'Families and Schools Together' aimed to reduce child aggression by engaging parents alongside their children, reinforcing parents' role as leaders of their family and increasing social support available from family and community. In contrast to other interventions described in this review, users were defined as low-risk school children (9–12 years of age). Although the impact evaluation conducted by Knox et al. (2011) demonstrated a small positive change in child aggression, it was not statistically significant.

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[17] Targeted interventions are defined as interventions for young people who display an involvement in delinquency and serious violence. Universal interventions tend to address the whole population (involved and non-involved adolescents) with the aim of providing the prevention of risk factors that can accelerate the involvement in delinquency and serious violence.

Finally, Le et al. (2011) tested the intervention known as 'Community-Based Research Partnership', which was defined as an after-school programme designed to reduce youth violence by using youth outreach strategies and empowering the community. The results of the impact evaluation displayed no reduction in the levels of delinquency among young people.

Impact of PBAs in the adjacent areas: Displacement of crime or diffusion of benefits?

In police studies, displacement consists of the relocation of crime or offenders in a nearby area as a consequence of the implementation of preventive place-based interventions. In simple terms, the hypothesis of displacement suggests that people engaged in offending would move from one place to another when measures of control limited their criminal activity (Telep, Weisburd, Gill, Vitter, & Teichman, 2014; Weisburd, Wyckoff, Eck, & Hinkle, 2005).

Alternatively, the hypothesis of diffusion of benefits suggests that preventive strategies to control crime can positively affect adjacent areas. The diffusion of benefit may be explained by the fact that the perception of social control increases in the adjacent areas, or that the offenders, unaware of the geographic limits of the intervention, feel disincentivised to commit crimes in buffer zones (Clarke & Weisburd, 1994). Recent systematic reviews and meta-analyses (e.g. Bowers, Johnson, Guerette, Summers, & Poynton, 2011; Telep, Weisburd, Gill, Vitter, & Teichman, 2014) have suggested that while spatial displacement is unlikely in place-based interventions, the spillover of benefits seems to be more frequent.

Displacement has been mostly tested in micro places, under the logic of hot-spot policing, but evidence suggests a large variation in the measurements. While some studies define adjacent areas as the 400 metres around the intervention areas, others have tested this hypothesis in adjacent neighbourhoods or close-by police beats surrounding the hot spot (Telep et al., 2014).

In the present review, four studies coded data to test the potential displacement of crime or diffusion of benefits from the targeted areas once the intervention had been completed. Brantingham et al. (2021), testing the impact of Gang Reduction and Youth Development, observed an 18% reduction on violent crime in the targeted areas. The study found no evidence for the displacement of crime to adjacent areas, nor the diffusion of potential benefits. Picard-Fritsche and Cerniglia (2013) tested the impact of OCF using three control areas near the selected intervention zone. Overall, the intervention reduced gun crimes by 20% without evidence of spillover of positive or negative effects on the control zones. Webster et al. (2012b) also tested a version of OCF, with the results showing 26% decrease of homicide and 22% reduction on non-fatal shootings. In terms of displacement, rather than moving violence to adjacent areas, the intervention appeared to have substantial protective effects for neighbourhoods near the intervention areas. In the opposite direction, Wilson et al. (2010), testing One Vision, an adapted version of OCF, found a negative impact of the PBA expressed as an increase in aggravated and gun assaults on the adjacent areas. Although a good number of studies suggest that displacement in adjacent areas is unlikely (Telep et al., 2014), this would be an interesting hypothesis to test in future impact evaluations of PBAs.

Overall, evidence extracted from 20 studies suggests some positive impact on reducing violence. The impact was more evident in the following scenarios:

i. When the PBAs targeted serious violence (e.g. gun violence, knife crimes, homicide, injuries and aggravated assault)

ii. When PBAs used multi-component approaches (e.g. universal reduction of risk factors and targeted intervention for young people already involved in crime and violence)

iii. When PBAs incorporated coordinate efforts with local stakeholders.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first review attempting to summarise the impact of PBAs on reducing serious youth violence, antisocial behaviour, aggression and delinquency. However, it is essential to highlight some limitations of the data. First, most of the included studies did not use an experimental design (i.e. randomised controlled trial) to test the impact of PBAs. While some of the QED incorporated matched controls and propensity score matching, others were only based on time series analysis. As such, evidence cannot rule out the presence of confounding factors affecting the impact of the interventions on the outcome measures. Second, limitations of the statistical data reported in primary studies limited the chances of calculating pooled effect sizes and moderator analysis. Third, as mentioned in the previous paragraphs, because of the lack of available evidence, we could not disentangle the intervention characteristics that better explained the reduction of serious violence.

Table 16. Summary data extracted from included studies

Study	Name of the programme	Aim	Main activities	Community involve-ment	Research design	Sample	Participant level of risk	Age	Impact	Comment
Braga, Kennedy, Waring, & Piehl (2001)	Operation (**Operation Ceasefire**)	To reduce gang violent crimes, homicide, carrying a weapon and shooting.	Youth outreach, case management, policing	4	QED Time series	Boston. n = not specified	High risk	0-24	**Youth homicide**: -63% **Gun assault**: -25% **Shot fired**: -32% **Youth gun assaults**: -42%	+ Significant reductions all outcomes measured
Brantingham, Tita, & Herz (2021)	Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD)	The GRYD Prevention programme is aimed at building skills and fostering positive alternatives to gangs for at-risk young people aged 10–15.	Conflict resolution, parent/family training, life skills and problem-solving strategies.	3	QED Difference in differences	n = 820 Reporting Districts (RDs) that represent neighbourhood-sized regions	High risk	10-15	**Violent crime** B= -1.07; p<0.01 **All Crimes** B= - 0.41; p>.05	+ Significant reductions in violent crime (18%), but no statistically significant reduction for crime overall. No evidence for the displacement of crime to adjacent areas, nor the **diffusion of potential benefits** (p. 213)
Chilenski, Frank, Summers, & Lew (2019)	Communities That Care (CTC)	To produce community-wide changes in prevention service system characteristics. To promote the science-based approach. To promote collaboration among service providers. To produce changes in adolescent drug use and delinquent behaviours.	Risk/protective factors assessment, community empowerment, evidence-based interventions	5	QED Propensity score matching	n = 470,798 388 school districts	Low to high risk	10-16	**Ever in a gang**. OR=1.09 (1.01, 1.17) **Ever arrested**. OR=0.92 (0.85, 0.99) **Arrested 12-m**. OR=0.90 (0.83, 0.98) **Attacked to hurt**. OR= 0.97 (0.92, 1.03)	+ Students in intervention districts were less likely to have been arrested (past 12 months or lifetime)
Feinberg, Greenberg, Osgood, Sartorius, & Bontempo (2007)	Communities That Care (CTC)	To produce community-wide changes in prevention service system characteristics. To promote the science-based approach. To promote collaboration among service providers.	Risk/protective factors assessment, community empowerment, evidence-based interventions	5	QED Matched control group	n = 134,982 225 school districts	Low to high risk	11-19	**Delinquent behaviour (6th grade)** B= -.021; p<.05	+ CTC school districts have lower levels of delinquent behaviours than non-CTC school districts.

Study	Name of the programme	Aim	Main activities	Community involve-ment	Research design	Sample	Participant level of risk	Age	Impact	Comment
		To produce changes in adolescent drug use and delinquent behaviours.								
Fox, Katz, Choate, & Hedberg (2014)	TRUCE Project (**Operation Ceasefire**)	To reduce gun violence (perpetration and victimisation).	Youth outreach, case management, community mobilisation	3	QED Time series	Phoenix. n = Not specified - conducted 12 semi structured interviews	High risk	16-25	**Shooting (increase)** d=1.43 **Assault (reduction)** d= −2.05 **Violent crime (reduction)** d= -1.79	Increase of 3.2 shootings, on average, per month (p. 26) + Large and significant impact on assaults and other violent crime (p. 27)
Gonzalez-Guarda, Guerra, Cummings, Pino, & Becerra (2015)	JOVEN/YOUTH: Together against Dating Violence		Skills-building, psychoeducation, parent/family training, healthy communication/negotiation, healthy dating	4	RCT	n = 82	Low risk	13-16	**Psychological victimisation** (B= -.004, SE= .01, p= .71) **Psychological perpetration** (B= .002, SE= .01, p= .82) **Physical and sexual victimisation** (B= - .007, SE= .01,p= .46) **Physical and sexual perpetration** (B= -.003, SE= .01, p= .75)	No statistically significant intervention effects over time.
Hawkins et al. (2008)	Communities That Care (CTC)	To produce community-wide changes in prevention service system characteristics, use science-based approach to prevention, collaboration among service providers. To produce changes in adolescent drug use and delinquent behaviours.	Risk/protective factors assessment, community empowerment, evidence-based interventions	5	RCT	n = 4407 12 matched Communities	Low to high risk	10-16	**Delinquent behaviour (self-reported)** OR = 1.27, p<.05	+ Students from control communities were 27% more likely to initiate delinquent behaviour during grades 6 and 7 than were students from CTC communities (p. 7).
Heinze et al. (2016)	Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Centre (MI-YVPC)	Ecological approach to reduce the violent crime and injury among 10–24 years old, implement both high-risk and universal approaches.	Youth outreach, case management counselling, connecting sons and fathers, parent/family training, policing	4	QED Matched control group	n = 306	Low to high risk	10-24	**Assault of victims under 25 years old** B = −2.03, SE = 0.80 **Assault Injury of victims under 25 years old** B = −0.29, SE = 0.12	+ Number of assaults per month for victims under 25 years old was lower in the intervention area. Number of assault injuries per month for victims under 25 years old was lower in the intervention area (p. 173)
Kelly et al. (2010)	El Joven Noble	Violence prevention programme addressing community-identified needs and health problems through a process of sharing power,	Parent/family training, change gender norms, culturally sensitive activities	5	RCT	n = 312	High-risk males	8-11	**Nonviolence self-efficacy High-risk students** - Time 2 b=0.690 (SE=0.27) p < 0.05 **High-risk students** - Time 3 b=0.582 (SE=0.26) p < 0.05	+ High-risk students in the intervention group showed statistically significant changes in their scores on nonviolence self-efficacy (p. 7).

Study	Name of the programme	Aim	Main activities	Community involve-ment	Research design	Sample	Participant level of risk	Age	Impact	Comment
		establishing trust, fostering co-learning, enhancing strengths and ultimately building community capacity.								
Knox, Guerra, Williams, & Toro (2011)	Families and Schools Together (FAST)	To engage parents with their children by reinforcing their role as leaders of their family, increasing social support available from family and community.	Parent/family training	4	QED No matched control	n = 282	Unclear	9-12	**Aggression reported by the children** b = -.073, SE=.125, p>.05 **Aggression reported by parents** b = -.334, SE=.454, p>.05	Aggression for intervention children significantly declined over the course of the study, but the decline was not significantly different from children in the control group (p. 71).
Le et al. (2011)	Community-Based Research Partnership (RVC)	After-school intervention to convene community partners to address the issue of youth violence.	Youth outreach, case management,	3	QED Matched control group	n = 388	Low- to at-risk young people	-	**Arrest** T1 (treatment) M= .01, SD=.25 T1 (control) M= .01, SD=.08 T2 (treatment) M= .02, SD=.13 T2 (control) M= .01, SD=.08 T1 (treatment) M= .04, SD=.21 T1 (control) M= .01, SD=.08	These preliminary findings suggest that RVC did not result in any improvements on delinquency outcomes for the young people participants.
Milam et al. (2016)	Safe Streets Intervention (**Operation Ceasefire**)	Public health violence preventive intervention designed to prevent shootings among young men by changing attitudes, behaviours and social norms most directly related to gun violence.	Youth outreach, case management, conflict resolution (mediation), public events, positive activities, referral, education, training or work	3	QED No matched control	n = 478 in two neighbourhoods	High risk	18-24	**Reduction of violent attitudes** b = −0.522, p < 0.001	+ After implementation of the intervention, there were more attitudes that improved within the intervention community as compared to the control community (p. 622).
Oscós-Sánchez, Lesser, & Oscós-Flores (2013)	El Joven Noble (EJM)	Violence prevention programme addressing community-identified needs and health problems through a process of sharing power, establishing trust, fostering co-learning, enhancing strengths and ultimately building community capacity.	Parent/family training, change gender norms, culturally sensitive activities	4	QED Repeated measures	298	High-risk secondary school students	11-18	**INTERVENTION** **Physical violence EJN (middle school)** M=14.9, SE=.3 **Physical violence EJN (high school)** M=10.6, SE=.2 **CONTROL** **Physical violence TMA (middle school)** M=10.5, SE=.2	In this study, neither middle nor high school students who participated in the intervention programme, El Joven Noble, reported fewer acts of aggression or violence than students who participated in the control programme, the Teen Medical Academy (p. 99).

Study	Name of the programme	Aim	Main activities	Community involve-ment	Research design	Sample	Participant level of risk	Age	Impact	Comment
									Physical violence TMA (high school) M=9.4, SE=.2	
Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia (2013)	Save Our Streets (**Operation Ceasefire**)	Gun violence prevention programme	Youth outreach, conflict resolution	4	QED Time series	96 participants recruited, although used neighbourhood violence rates to measure impact, based on four neighbourhoods	High-risk	15-26	**Gun violence. – 20%**	+ 20% reduction of gun violence
Rowland et al. (2021)	Communities That Care (CTC)	To produce community-wide changes in prevention service system characteristics, use science-based approach to prevention, collaboration among service providers. To produce changes in adolescent drug use and delinquent behaviours	Risk/protective factors assessment, community empowerment, evidence-based interventions	5	QED Pre-post and control group	14 communities, n = 3,500	Low to at-risk young people	10-16	**Crimes against persons for all age groups** IRR = 0.98, 95% CI [0.96, 0.998]. **Crimes of property and deception for adolescents aged between 10 and 17 years** IRR = 0.95, 95% CI [0.90, 0.99].	+ These findings support CTC as an intervention for preventing youth crime at a population level. A two per cent annual reduction in risk for crimes against persons for all age groups. A five per cent annual reduction for crimes of property and deception for adolescents aged between 10 and 17 years (p. 7)
Spergel et al. (2003)	Gang Violence Reduction Project				QED	n = 195	High-risk male	17-24	Incomplete statistical data	+ Reduction on serious violence, violence arrest and property arrests. The programme was less effective at reducing gang crime (p. 97)

Study	Name of the programme	Aim	Main activities	Community involve-ment	Research design	Sample	Participant level of risk	Age	Impact	Comment
Toumbourou, Rowland, Williams, Smith, & Patton (2019)	Communities That Care (CTC)	To produce community-wide changes in prevention service system characteristics, use science-based approach to prevention, collaboration among service providers. To produce changes in adolescent drug use and delinquent behaviours.	Risk/protective factors assessment, community empowerment, evidence-based interventions	5	QED No matched control group	n = 41,328	Low- to at-risk young people	30	**Antisocial behaviour self-reported (annual reduction)** (Unstandardised regression coefficient B= 0.001, (95%CI 0.002, 0.000)	+ The hypothesis that exposure to the CTC intervention would be associated with steeper declines in adolescent alcohol, tobacco and cannabis use and antisocial behaviour was supported. The CTC intervention was also associated with steeper reductions in adolescent risk factors and larger increases in protective factors (p. 541).
Webster, Whitehill, Vernick, & Parker (2012)	Safe Streets (**Operation Ceasefire**)			3	QED Matched controls	n = 65 for qualitative component ; not specified for quantitative component	High-risk (90% male)	-	**Homicide** 26% decrease in homicide **Non-fatal shootings** 22% increase	
Williams, Currie, Linden, & Donnelly (2014)	The Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) (**Operation Ceasefire**)	To address physical violence and weapon carriage among gang-related young people in a deprived area of Glasgow.	Youth outreach, conflict resolution, police intelligence, diversionary activities, personal development, and job-readiness training	4	QED Matched controls	n = 167 male young people	High-risk male	16-29	**Physical violence offenses** (year 1) = - 21% (p>.05) (year 2) = - 31% (p>.05) **Weapons carrying** (year 1) = - 30% (p<.05) (year 2) = - 42% (p<.05)	+ The preliminary evaluation of CIRV found a positive statistically significant effect on rates of weapon possession among those engaged with the initiative. Non-significant effect on the reduction of physical violence offences (p. 690).
Wilson, Chermak, & McGarrell, (2010)	One Vision One Life (**Operation Ceasefire**)			5	QED Propensity score matching	n = 155 individuals 3 neighbourhoods	High-risk male	-	**Northside Homicide** (0.0219, p>.06) **Aggravated assault** (25.2095, p>.05) **Gun assault** (13.1244, p<.05) **Hill District Homicide** (−0.6710, p>.05) **Aggravated assault** (7.7365, p<.05)	Homicide showed small variation and non-significant. Aggravated assault and gun assault rates increasing in the target areas relative to the comparison areas after programme implementation (p. 67)

Study	Name of the programme	Aim	Main activities	Community involve - ment	Research design	Sample	Participant level of risk	Age	Impact	Comment
									Gun assault (6.6038, P<.05) **Southside Homicide** (−0.2540, p>.05) **Aggravated assault** (25.3953, p<.001) **Gun assault** (14.6630, p<.001)	

Learning relating to evaluation methods

In this section, we highlight learning from our assessment of the study methodologies in the included studies as an aid to designing future PBAs and evaluations to reducing violence.

- **Target interventions.** In order to effectively control and prevent violence, it is crucial to target the correct population. According to Sherman (2013), resources for such efforts are often limited, which underscores the need for police and practitioners to develop strategies that enable them to focus on concentrations of harm. The most effective interventions, as observed in the review of impact evaluations, have been those that targeted high-risk young people using specialised strategies such as mentoring, law enforcement, reducing gang activity and limiting access to firearms and knives.

- **Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for evaluating impact of PBAs**. In this review, 85% of the studies used quasi-experimental designs. In general, the studied PBAs displayed characteristics that would make RCTs very challenging because RCTs generally require a high level of investigator control and standardisation of the intervention's delivery (Farrington, Gottfredson, Sherman, & Welsh, 2006). In our case, PBAs targeting serious violence reduction focused on risk and protective factors at multiple levels (e.g. individual, community and society) with different degrees of intensity (e.g. primary, secondary and tertiary prevention models) and for different targets (i.e. universal, selected or indicated) (Chanon Consulting and Cordis Bright, 2018). PBAs involved multiple agencies, stakeholders and users, various recruitment and delivery settings and a wide variation in terms of implementers. All these issues impose serious hindrances for the standardisation of treatment across the study population and, coupled with known issues in detecting local features and adaptations, make it extremely challenging to detect the length and complexity of the causal chains that connect outcomes to intervention (Raine et al., 2016; West et al., 2008).

- **Negotiate access to data with stakeholders**. Impact evaluations aimed at testing the reduction of violence and/or antisocial behaviour require a careful methodological design. Independently of the selection of a randomised control trial or a quasi-experiment design, the teams in charge of planning the evaluation will need to access data early in the preparation phase. Data on the prevalence of serious violence can be accessed through police files or injuries recorded by hospital and medical personnel. These data can have multiple functions. If the aim is planning an RCT, official records will assist in the establishment of the baseline of the intervention and for testing the equivalence of the randomised units (individuals, districts, neighbourhoods, etc.). If the aim is planning a quasi-experimental study, data on serious violence will help to balance the non-randomised treatment and control units. The early access to data can be used to create and implement sophisticated designs such as propensity score matching, where the controls are artificially created from large databases of individuals with the same statistical propensity to be victims or perpetrators of violence. In the case of quasi-experimental designs, such as time series analysis or difference in differences, access to robust historical data will also be essential.

Accessing criminal records tends to be a challenging endeavour. Data protection laws and the need to guarantee the hosting of data in protected servers can delay the process of data access. We suggest beginning negotiations with stakeholders in each local community at early stages of the planning phase.

- **Sampling procedures.** None of the included studies described the procedures used to define the sample size needed for testing the hypothesis of reduction on serious violence/antisocial behaviour. This means that, during the early stages of the evaluation design, there must be consideration given to the sample size required to detect the effect of a specific outcome(s) in a PBA (also known as power analysis). Power analysis is important because it helps researchers determine the minimum sample size needed for a study to detect meaningful effects accurately. In simple terms, it tells us how many participants or observations are required to have a good chance of finding real differences or relationships between variables. Power analysis helps researchers avoid two common problems. First, conducting a study with insufficient power can lead to false-negative results, meaning you might conclude that there is no effect when, in fact, there is. Second, it prevents wasting resources and time by determining the appropriate sample size from the beginning. By estimating the required sample size, researchers can plan their studies more efficiently, ensuring they have enough participants to achieve meaningful results (Ellis, 2010). In summary, power analysis is crucial because it helps researchers determine how many participants they need for a study to have a good chance of detecting real effects accurately. It ensures that studies are appropriately designed, saving time, resources, and avoiding potential false conclusions

- **Data nested in clusters.** As described in the previous sections, the analysed PBAs targeted individual units (young people) nested in clusters (cities, neighbourhoods, precincts, etc.). Clustered impact evaluations (RCTs or QEDs) involve complex designs and impose substantial effort for data analysis. "The main issue is that observations from the same cluster are more similar than observations from two different clusters. This situation requires the use of both an inflated sample size and adapted statistical analysis to take into account this concern" (Giraudeau & Ravaud, 2009, p. 1). In this review, not all studies presenting data nested in clusters were analysed using adapted statistical models such as multilevel modelling or hierarchical regression. Future impact evaluations of PBAs would benefit from carefully designing the analytical methods before any intervention is implemented.

- **Impact evaluations conducted by independent teams.** We believe that the production of independent, high-quality evaluations could contribute to more transparent and precise evidence regarding the impact of PBAs. Evidence suggests that interventions evaluated by independent teams have found significantly smaller effect sizes compared to those studies carried out by researchers involved in the design and/or delivery of the programme (e.g. Eisner, 2009; Eisner & Humphreys, 2012; Lösel & Beelmann, 2006; Petrosino & Soydan, 2005; Valdebenito, Eisner, Farrington, Ttofi, & Sutherland, 2019).

- **Cross national and cross-cultural variations.** The evidence on which we based our findings has so far come largely from the United States. We know that evidence suggesting effective approaches in some countries/cultures will not necessarily have the same effectiveness when translated and delivered to different populations. For example, those making decisions about how to reduce youth violence in their own country will need to have access to detailed information in order to adapt PBAs to address unique needs without compromising effectiveness.

Chapter 5 – Analysis of Examples of England PBAs

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Summary of chapter findings

- This chapter presents findings related to the analysis of England-based PBAs. The purpose of this component of the study was to understand how PBAs are currently being designed, delivered and evaluated in the UK context in areas of work involving or relevant to youth violence, to build on evidence from the reviews.

- Most of the PBAs included had a focus on a particular vulnerable sub-group – including young people involved in or at risk of violence or at risk of other poor outcomes, children in their early years and people living in poverty. They generally also had additional goals at two wider levels: (1) supporting the community as a whole, improving community outcomes and community cohesion and (2) creating lasting systems change.

- Community-level objectives included aims such as building community identity, positivity and confidence; and increasing community cohesion and mutual support. Systems-level objectives were generally fairly loosely described but involved aims such as improving connectivity between local organisations, creating new partnerships, improving the capacity of organisations and services to support local people, increasing funding targeted at young people or other focus population, and changing the culture of local services.

- The activities undertaken included youth development activities, family and parenting support, employability support, and activity to strengthen support systems around young people or families.

- Multi-agency working was a core approach. Most formalised arrangements with some form of partnership board representing core partners involved in decision-making. These inter-agency relationships were viewed as key, both for the immediate work of the PBA and as part of its longer-term impacts and legacy.

- Community engagement was also central to their work. Communities were more commonly involved in the discovery, co-production and delivery phases of programmes than in the early feasibility phases or later evaluation phases, with the highest levels of engagement in the co-production phase.

- Replication in further sites was a goal of some, based on a blueprint, model or approach that could be applied at a high level in other areas, with specific locally-focused activities and partnerships.

Aims of this analysis of examples of England PBAs

The aim of this element of the study was to complement the reviews reported in the previous two chapters by providing information about England-based PBAs and exploring how far the features and approaches identified in the reviews align with current PBAs in England. We also aimed to include issues and practices that may not yet be reflected in the literature and to gather more in-depth insights from practitioners, particularly exploring some areas where evidence was limited in the reviews. We focused here on reasons for PBA initiation, intentions for systems change and PBA sustainment.

Seven PBAs were identified, based on website searches and drawing on YEF and the Centre for Evidence and Implementation's networks and knowledge. We aimed to identify initiatives that were clearly place-based (i.e. that had developed from and with the local context) and that, in line with the inclusion criteria for the two reviews, included multi-agency working and community engagement. Initiatives were also prioritised if their outcomes of interest were focused on reducing youth violence and/or antecedents of youth violence. Having identified a group of England PBAs, we reviewed and summarised background documents and content from their websites and carried out an hour-long semi-structured interviews with a senior representative of each of the PBAs.

We were able to identify few place-based initiatives (both historical and currently being delivered) that focus on reducing violence, are targeted at young people and have a strong element of community involvement. This meant that our approach needed to be broader than the inclusion criteria for the reviews of theory and evidence. We viewed a local focus and community involvement as crucial inclusion factors but were more flexible about the focus on young people and violence to maximise transferable learning.

Focus of the included PBAs

The seven PBAs were broad ranging in their focus, and their main priorities included:

- Explicitly reducing youth violence (n = 2)

- Supporting vulnerable young people but not specifically targeting violence (n = 2)

- Children in the early years (n = 1)

- Reducing poverty (n = 1)

- Strengthening local communities generally (n = 1)

The seven included PBAs are described in Table 21. In the analysis below, we do not name individual PBAs and instead use codes (with PBA initiatives randomly allocated to codes and not numbered in the order in which they are presented in the table).

Table 17. *Summary table of the included UK-based PBA initiatives*

PBA Name	Lead Organisation	Funder(s)	Location	Summary of Aims
Fight for Peace London	Fight for Peace	A mix of corporate and institutional funders	Have worked with partners in 17 countries around the world, have two academies in Rio (Brazil) and London (UK) and manage a collective in Jamaica. Our analysis focused on the London site.	Fight for Peace aim to promote peaceful societies and to support young people to reach their full potential and thrive. To do this, they offer programmes based on five pillars: Boxing & Martial Arts, Education, Employability, Youth Leadership and Support Services.

PBA Name	Lead Organisation	Funder(s)	Location	Summary of Aims
LEAP Confronting Conflict	LEAP Confronting Conflict	LEAP Confronting Conflict is a registered charity and receives income through charitable donations and legacies and charitable activities.	Originated in Lambeth and expanded to Islington	LEAP Confronting Conflict aims to give young people and the adults in their lives the skills to effectively navigate conflict. Through training, they provide the tools to foster healthy relationships, make positive decisions and inspire self-growth.
West London Zone	West London Zone	West London Zone are funded by the local council, National Lottery Community Fund, local schools and philanthropy.	West London, covering parts of Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Brent and Westminster	They aim to help children and young people build the relationships and skills they need to get on track socially, emotionally and academically so that they can thrive in adulthood.
Pembury Children's Community	Peabody Housing Association	Peabody, with a contribution from Young Hackney	Pembury Estate, Hackney, London	Pembury Children's Community aims to significantly improve the lives of the children and young people living on and around the Pembury estate and be a model for neighbourhood transformation.
Lambeth Early Action Partnership[18]	Lambeth Early Action Partnership is part of the National Children's Bureau (NCB)	The National Lottery Community Fund as part of the national A Better Start programme	Lambeth, London	Lambeth Early Action Partnership aims to give thousands of children in the Lambeth Early Action Partnership area aged 0–3 years a better start, as well as to use their learnings and evidence to positively influence early years services across Lambeth and beyond.
Hartlepool Action Lab	The Joseph Rowntree Foundation	A mixture of funds from Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund	Hartlepool	Hartlepool Action Lab aims to bring people together to understand the challenges experienced by the people of our town and to identify and develop working solutions that provide the people of Hartlepool routes out of the poverty trap.

PBA Name	Lead Organisation	Funder(s)	Location	Summary of Aims

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[18] The Lambeth Early Action Partnership more commonly uses the name 'LEAP' but this is part of the name of another PBA in this analysis and so we use its full name for clarity.

PBA Name	Lead Organisation	Funder(s)	Location	Summary of Aims
Big Local	Local Trust	National Lottery Community Fund	Big local works in 150 areas across England	Big Local aims to support local areas to identify local needs and take effective action in response to them, and to develop skills and confidence to continue doing this in the future. The main goal is that residents feel that their area is an even better place to live.

Background and genesis

PBA origins

The genesis of the PBAs included varied. Some had emerged specifically within an existing place (e.g. Pembury Children's Community, which works to improve the lives of the children and young people living on and around one estate in London), and one (LEAP Confronting Conflict) had developed from a narrower local initiative into a wider PBA. Others had begun with a funded opportunity for which appropriate site or sites needed to be selected and put forward. They also varied in whether an existing PBA model was adopted and adapted to a new area (e.g. Fight for Peace) or whether the PBA approach was developed entirely from within the local area, albeit reflecting the requirements of a funder.

Area characteristics

Places in which PBAs were based tended to be deprived, metropolitan areas with small populations (e.g. Big Local worked in neighbourhoods with an average population size average of 7,805). While some of the site characteristics were objective features of the local area, places were also selected based on more subjective assessments relating to community experiences and dynamics.

Places selected across the PBAs displayed similar characteristics, often having:

- **High rates of local violence or poor outcomes for young people:** This was the primary reason for the choice of place for PBAs that directly focused on reducing youth violence, such as Fight for Peace. Other poor outcomes were relevant elsewhere. For example, West London Zone's work aimed to support the poor educational outcomes of the young people in the local area.

- **Socioeconomic disparity:** All the initiatives were set up in areas that had high levels of disadvantage and inequality, with high indices of deprivation (e.g. a selection criterion used by Fight for Peace), high levels of unemployment, poor education and health outcomes, or poor access to services or facilities. Some places were situated within (e.g. West London Zone) or very close to (e.g. LEAP Confronting Conflict) higher socioeconomic areas, a particular feature of inequality.

  o *"The community we work in… it's a through part of the borough; it's not a destination-type part of the borough… I'm not exaggerating; it's like 200/300 metres away from the centre of X. It's not that far but a lot of the young people, if you're talking about young people on the*

edge of being affiliated to gangs or being involved in economic criminality, can't travel very far." (England PBA representative)

- **Communities being 'forgotten' or 'overlooked' by statutory and local support:** PBAs were often situated in areas seen as 'overlooked' by statutory bodies or area funding and investment. Big Local's site selection was described as 'forgotten communities', where residents lack community spirit, and whose potential is "hampered by people feeling disenfranchised, lacking confidence or skills, mistrustful of statutory bodies and/or having low morale" (England PBA representative).

  - *"Communities that have been struggling for generations – and that's struggling maybe around race and equality, struggling around deprivation, struggling around just getting the local authority to do things on the estate that need to be done. So just everything feels like a struggle for that community; they become very protective of themselves, of their space, of their geography."* (England PBA representative)

- **Presence of existing local services, connectivity and infrastructure:** Having pre-existing networks between local agencies and the availability of partnerships, services and infrastructure needed for PBA activities was also a feature of local areas and had driven site selection. This allowed PBAs to reach and engage with the community more easily and begin delivering services more quickly.

  - *"It's very hard for outside organisations to come in and deliver [when] there is no infrastructure for that to comfortably sit in… people come in and say, 'Hey, we're here!' Everyone says, 'Yes, we don't care, go away. We don't know you!'* (England PBA representative)

  - *"[In communities that have infrastructure,] it's easier to engage because you can speak to, if it's a commissioner or if it's a head of youth service that knows everybody; then you can go in through that doorway and you're working through a trusted person whereas if you go in and there's no infrastructure, it means nobody is trusted. You're one of those that are not trusted, so it makes it harder."* (England PBA representative)

Funding

The selected England PBAs tended to draw on funding from multiple sources, including local councils and other statutory bodies, schools and philanthropic sources, and this was seen as important for future sustainment. For example, West London Zone employed a "diverse and sustainable funding model," with multiple sources of funding, ensuring that the PBA was not reliant on one source. Some had had significant funding from the start, but others had secured funding for initial pilot studies, which formed the basis of further significant funding applications, or developed new local funding sources as they evolved, part of an intentional shift towards more local funders "so that they have a stake in the transformation of their own community" (West London Zone).

Aims and objectives

Across the varied goals of the PBAs, objectives fell into three main categories: targeting specific groups within the community and connecting the services around them, working to improve wider community outcomes such as social cohesion and aiming to create lasting systems change within the local area. The emphasis that PBAs placed across these three categories varied, with some focusing much more heavily on

targeting specific groups of residents and the services that they access, and others on social cohesion and connectivity. The PBAs that target youth violence do so through addressing the antecedents of youth violence and generally choose not to highlight violence reduction or prevention aims in their public-facing messaging.

Across the PBAs, objectives varied.

Supporting targeted sub-groups of the population

PBAs aimed to provide support and opportunities to a targeted sub-group, e.g. young people, those living in poverty or children and families, to help them to maximise their potential.

"*Everyone knew someone who might have taken a different path with the right opportunities.*" (England PBA representative)

Typically, PBAs aimed to equip those target residents with skills and to facilitate their personal development, to help them to overcome challenges and achieve their goals and have the skills and confidence to respond to challenges in the future. Four sets of specific aims were described around capacity and skills development:

- Increase young people's safety and resilience and protect them against violence (e.g. Fight for Peace). Pembury Children's Community tackled this through conflict resolution education, as well as improving young people's ability to manage negative relationships and stressful situations.

- Improve educational outcomes, school engagement and attendance, and employability of local young people.

- Increase social inclusion and build or strengthen meaningful relationships. For example, Fight for Peace and West London Zone aimed to increase the strength of the friendships between young people in the area, to provide them with support and to help them to gain skills and confidence from their peers.

- Improve emotional, wellbeing and mental health outcomes through developing social-emotional skills. Often, this involved improving confidence, self-efficacy and self-value, developing capacity to embrace new opportunities, break old behaviour patterns and, in some cases, leave the local area (LEAP Confronting Conflict).

Support the community as a whole to improve community outcomes and cohesion

A further common objective was to improve outcomes for the community as a whole. For example, Big Local's outcomes included developing strong foundations to foster community pride and engagement and for residents to feel that their area was a better place to live. Other community-level goals included increasing community involvement, pro-social activity, and feelings of peace (e.g. Fight for Peace), safety and support (Pembury Children's Community). PBAs aimed to build capacity for identifying local needs and responding to them, serving to buffer the community from issues arising in the future, as well as the present. A further key aim was strengthening the connectivity within and between local people, and between local people and organisations, in order to increase the sense of cohesion within local areas, to connect people with existing services and to improve support networks around individuals.

Create long-lasting systems change

A final goal was system-level change. These objectives were not always set out by PBAs at their initiation. In many cases, PBAs were set up to tackle immediate local issues, and the focus on long-term change came later. For example, Hartlepool Action Lab differentiates between 'urgent' and 'deep' work: much of their initial work in the community involved aiming to ameliorate the impacts and experience of poverty, but after several years they recognised they needed also to focus on 'deep' work to tackle the complex, systemic issues that underly poverty to create long-term change. However, the analysis showed that plans for systems-level change tended to be less well developed, and the focus had generally been on more specific local change. PBAs aimed to create systems level change by:

- Supporting local organisations to grow and develop, changing the way that local organisations and agencies worked together, and improving the capacity of organisations and services to support the community. For example, both Hartlepool Action Lab and Lambeth Early Action Partnership aimed to change the culture of work across local organisations to a more holistic, person-centred way of working.

- Developing a shared vision for area-wide change and strengthening joint working among statutory bodies, local organisations and agencies, and the community.

- Developing new partnerships and services within local areas and an improved local system of support. For example, Fight for Peace works with three partner organisations on their Act-As-1 Collective in Newham, funded by the Violence Reduction Unit (Mayor of London).

- Strengthening local policy-making by generating evidence of local needs and successes and supporting greater use of evidence in policy and decision-making by local partners.

- Taking programmes to a national level, and creating impact through raising awareness, visibility and campaigning for PBAs to be used more widely.

Multi-agency engagement

PBAs generally involved multiple agencies and stakeholders in the initiation and throughout their life cycle, with people and agencies from:

- Local government and statutory services

- The voluntary sector, community groups and local civil society organisations

- Social care and health services

- Early years and education

- Researchers

- Funding bodies.

Generally, these agencies were brought together in order to collaboratively make decisions about PBA direction, to be consulted about the needs and challenges they face in the local areas, and for joint work.

PBAs often worked through a lead, or 'backbone', organisation that was either already in existence in the local area, or was brought into or specifically set up within the local area. These organisations usually provided a combination of direct service delivery, working as 'glue' to bring local organisations and services together within the areas, and commissioning services or acting as a 'broker' or signposting service. For example, West London Zone describe their role as 'micro-commissioning' services to meet each child's needs and to join up children's systems around them. Lambeth Early Action Partnership also emphasised the sign-posting role as being essential to their work.

> "*I think, previously, we saw ourselves as referring out, whereas, now we see ourselves as micro-commissioning in and… taking responsibility… for that relationship with our delivery partners.*" (England PBA representative)

Although some PBAs were essentially one individual organisation linking with other organisations when necessary, most involved a wider group of organisations as direct partners. Some PBAs had a partnership board, which would come together to make decisions around direction and activities. Partnering also sometimes took the form of providing joint services with other organisations. Some PBAs had a formal partnership model from the start, whereas formalised structures of some PBAs' partnership models emerged later. For example, Hartlepool Action Lab's structure developed into a more formal partnership governance model when they received funding.

> "*For the collective specifically, Fight for Peace is the lead applicant for the programme and we are, let's say, defining ourselves as the backbone organisation. So we bring together the other three partners regularly – as often as weekly sometimes – for different elements. We design programmes that we want to deliver locally*." (Fight for Peace)

Engaging multiple partners was core to PBAs' work but was also challenging. Some described being met with scepticism from some stakeholders (e.g. West London Zone and Pembury Children's Community both found it initially challenging to engage schools). It was also challenging for stakeholders to work together to find joint solutions to the complex local issues presented, given what were sometimes conflicting or competing organisational priorities, objectives and preferences. This required detailed and extensive work over time and facilitated discussions to build a shared vision and work through conflict to find solutions.

Theories of Change

Most of the PBAs developed Theories of Change describing their goals, activities and measures of success and used these to:

- Detail a clear, shared vision of the initiative's aims and approaches and how activities and outcomes are linked, to be shared with residents and organisations

- Make sure that, as their approach evolved and adapted to changes in the context around them, they were remaining true to the principles, aims and approaches that were initially intended by the PBA

- Clarify and create consistency between organisations and members of staff (e.g. West London Zone detail their Theory of Change in their Link Worker handbook, with specific examples of how to carry out each activity)

- Identify measures of progress to evidence impacts and successes.

It was described as challenging to develop Theories of Change that reflected the complex and changing work of PBAs, and some had reworked them over time or moved away from what were seen as "predetermined models of how things are expected to work". For example, Big Local decided that their Theory of Change was not suited to an experimental approach where communities were given as much power and agency as possible.

While some PBAs developed a single Theory of Change across all their work, others created Theories of Change detailing each activity or strand of their work. Theories of Change generally described activities targeted at individuals, the community as a whole or partner organisations. PBAs also varied in whether they set out outcomes for different populations, at different levels (e.g. individual and community), for different services or activities, and distinguishing between short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. For example, Lambeth Early Action Partnership has Theories of Change that cover their work as a whole, for each domain of activity and for each service that they provide. Fight for Peace separates their organisational Theory of Change into different populations (partner organisations, young people and communities) and shows how these strands of work are intended to come together. They also varied in how narrowly outcomes were specified.

Finally, they also differed in whether they detailed mechanisms or assumptions about how activities would produce the intended outcomes, whether they referred to contextual conditions or external influences on outcomes and whether they referenced underlying theories (for example, Lambeth Early Action Partnership's Theory of Change references ecological theory as being foundational).

There did not seem to be any clear explanations for why different PBAs created their Theories of Change in different ways. This sometimes reflected requirements of a funder, or the work of an organisation involved in early stages. It is difficult to draw conclusions about the implications or about which approaches to Theories of Change were most useful for PBAs in their activities or evaluations. However, several PBAs' Theories of Change may have been more conducive to impact measurement and evaluation due to their inclusion of specific measurable outcomes. Only one Theory of Change set out how the final desired impact would be quantified (Pembury Children's Community specified that they would draw on Youth Offending Team Data to measure reduction in youth violence).

Key activities and ways of working

Activities

Activities were generally developed using two main strategies: analysis of local data and local consultation with residents and local agencies. Some PBAs (such as Lambeth Early Action Partnership) also emphasised using evidence-based programmes (although they had re-assessed the suitability of some programmes to the local area and de-implemented some), but it was more common for the PBAs to develop their own programmes or to draw on and amplify existing local services that matched community needs. This did not appear to be based on a systematic consideration of available evidence-based programmes but reflected a preference for locally developed services. Most PBAs implemented more than one type of activity. The number of activities varied depending on factors such as the level of funding that the PBA had, the breadth of intended impacts and the length of time that it had been established for. Different PBA activities were also employed to target different populations, some targeting specific groups and others the community more broadly. PBA activities commonly included:

- **Youth development activities**, such as mentoring, leadership and personal development opportunities

- **Community-building activities and community mobilisation**, such as setting up community hubs, raising awareness of local needs in the community, extensive outreach work and bringing people together

- **Family and parenting programmes** and support

- **Employability support**

- **Education activity** to support skill and knowledge development

- **Strengthening support systems around local people,** e.g. Pembury and West London Zone supported parent-school relationships, with the aim of providing more wrap-around support for children

- **Improving local people's relationships to reduce violence,** for example though conflict resolution activities.

Community engagement and involvement

Community engagement was an absolutely central approach in the implementation of all the included PBAs. Communities were involved in multiple stages of the different PBAs, brought together in different ways and involved at different levels at each stage. The work was extensive and the strategies varied. Lambeth Early Action Partnership described an 'octopus' approach, with multiple strategies being used.

> "*We're trying to give as much responsibility as possible and as much power and control as possible to local communities.*" (England PBA representative)

> "*[Community engagement is] very much about bringing together and listening to local people, and working with those individuals to try and understand what they would want to say, and work with them in trying to find a way of saying it and a way of demonstrating it.*" (England PBA representative)

We mapped what was described back to the five levels of community engagement (described in Chapter 1) and using the three phases of PBA activity used by YEF (described in Chapter 3), although it should be noted that our assessment is provisional only and based on limited information.

Communities were more commonly involved in the discovery, co-production and delivery phases of PBAs. There was more limited information about community involvement in the very early feasibility or the later evaluation phases.

- **Discovery phase:** Involvement at this stage was seen as critical for understanding the local context. However, it generally did not go higher than consultation (Level 2). PBAs engaged with residents to understand the community's concerns and gaps in existing community services. Some PBAs had undertaken local ethnography (e.g. Pembury Children's Community and Hartlepool Action Lab). PBAs undertook outreach work in venues and areas where target populations or those were well connected in the community would congregate (e.g. restaurants, school gates, religious venues). A more structured approach was also used, such as West London Zone's hosting of a consultation group for citizens to voice their concerns, or Lambeth Early Action Partnership's hosting of events

and spaces where residents could discuss and share needs and ideas with PBA staff. It was challenging to engage with communities in the absence of existing infrastructure; for example, Big Local noted that this stage took significantly longer in areas with limited partnership opportunities or fewer organisations able to support the engagement process (Big Local's Evaluation).

- **Co-production phase:** Overall, this phase saw the greatest levels of community involvement across the PBAs, with involvement varying from consultation (Level 2), up to devolving (Level 5). Most PBAs continued to seek advice and information from the local residents in a consultative manner, while also involving community members more intensively. For example, young people advisory groups and councils were set up by PBAs to contribute to direction, set-up and funding decisions (e.g. Big Local). Community-involved co-production was utilised by PBAs to ensure that local plans had ownership, management and endorsement from the local residents. Big Local's approach involved utilising 'democratic participation': their guidance requires that at least 51% of the members involved in decision-making processes are local residents, although they reported much higher levels being achieved in practice in many areas (average of almost 75% of residents).

- **Delivery phase:** Community involvement during delivery looked different across the PBAs, and it was most common for community involvement to vary from consultation (Level 2) to collaboration (Level 4). Big Local involved residents in activities such as raising awareness within the community, in administration tasks, delivering activities and services themselves, and in research tasks such as monitoring progress. Pembury Children's Community paid local 'mums and aunties' to facilitate early events, and Lambeth Early Action Partnership engaged local people as parent champions. These actions were seen as increasing community-wide engagement, demonstrating that residents were valued and that the PBA aimed to support the whole community and building confidence in the PBA. Some PBAs incorporated citizens at devolving (Level 5). In Hartlepool Action Lab's work, residents could propose new small-scale activities and projects and were then supported by Hartlepool Action Lab to take those forward. The community members typically involved in delivery were those with more influence in the local area, and with connections to harder-to-reach groups.

Facilitators to community involvement

Facilitating strategies primarily related to building strong relationships, reflecting the specific features and assets of local places and local contexts, and providing time and space for residents to participate in the PBA development. Key strategies included:

Increasing engagement and buy-in:

- Taking sufficient time to build strong relationships with local residents prior to, and during, the discovery and delivery phases

- Providing the opportunity for local residents to contribute to the set-up and delivery of the PBA, sometimes paying residents to do so, demonstrating the organisation's commitment to supporting the whole community (e.g. Pembury Children's Community)

- Larger-scale events (such as Lambeth Early Action Partnership's festivals, or Big Local's creative events and workshops) facilitate increases in engagement across the community

- Hiring engagement managers and outreach workers.

Building trust:

- Entering a community through introductions from already-trusted individuals who also advised on other influential residents to connect with.

- Ensuring that PBA staff were visible, approachable and known within the communities. Pembury Children's Community did this by introducing new staff members to local residents and making sure they know the local area really well

- Having a workforce that reflects the local demography, including lived experience

- Using local, positive and non-discriminatory language (e.g. avoiding terms like 'disadvantage' or 'need', and referring to 'friendship groups' rather than 'gangs')

- Utilising 'parent champions' (Lambeth Early Action Partnership) and 'young ambassadors' (Pembury Children's Community)

- Building relationships through word-of-mouth and using, but not relying on, more formal communication and marketing

- Demonstrating the leadership of activities by local residents.

Providing support and flexibility:

- Providing support to the activities that local people led or were engaged in. For example, Hartlepool Action Lab note that although they gave power to residents to come up with and lead their own ideas for actions or projects, it was also necessary to provide support this work in order to ensure success

- Not trying to 'force' local communities into a predefined structure or way of working together

- Engaging residents on their own terms, meaning that residents could involve themselves when, where and how they wanted, reflecting their own interests and capabilities.

An evaluation of Big Local's residents' perceptions about community involvement (Big Local's Evaluation) found that a majority of partnership members, representatives and residents felt that their areas were genuinely resident-led in practice.

Challenges of community involvement

Challenges in community involvement were also described, relating to:

- **Widening reach:** PBAs sometimes faced difficulties in reaching and engaging all groups in the communities. Big Local noted several challenges seen in a small proportion of areas that they worked with, such as issues with existing members gatekeeping the involvement of others; members feeling that their work may not always be appreciated by other residents; and low local engagement leading residents to feel as though the PBA was not truly resident-led. However, these challenges were only experienced in a small minority of areas, with wide community involvement seen as successful in most areas.

- **Sustaining community engagement:** Big Local's evaluation of community involvement (Big Local's Evaluation) found that often only a small proportion of those initially consulted or engaged go on to become more actively involved in the later stages of work. PBAs had a busy range of activities and staff were often stretched. Big Local noted that in many areas, enthusiasm and engagement dropped when plans were approved, and the bulk of work tended to fall on the key individuals in the community.

- **Decision-making conflicts:** There were also reports of conflicts in views and decision-making among community members, which was sometimes stressful for residents, partnership members or local representatives (e.g. from Big Local). The continued involvement of PBA staff to facilitate discussion and decision-making was seen as helpful to provide support as well as space.

Other ways of working

Other key foundational approaches were building a foundation of strong relationships between services and residents, holistic and personalised support, taking multi-pronged approaches to action, and maintaining flexibility.

Building strong trusted relationships: The PBAs emphasised that an important feature of their work was facilitating the development of strong, trusting relationships between those receiving and those providing services. Building trusted relationships between Link Workers and young people was central to West London Zone's work. They explained that trusted relationships facilitate effective delivery of their intervention, as well as improving outcomes and serving as templates for positive relationships for young people. By placing Link Workers in schools, West London Zone also facilitated relationship development with parents, gaining their trust and creating a link between the schools and the parents. Hartlepool Action Lab explained that the relationships they make with the community members also facilitate providing support and enabling 'warm handovers', where they support local people to engage with other services and model person-centred working to those partners.

> *"The success of an intervention is not only dependent on the content of the programme but also by how it is delivered.… The relationship between delivery staff and young people is central to driving outcomes and is a key predictor of the success of an intervention."* (England PBA representative handbook)

Person-centred work: PBAs aimed to develop and demonstrate highly person-centred ways of working, providing holistic and tailored support, from multiple angles. The approach recognised that people face interrelated challenges that can inhibit engagement with or effectiveness of services. Linking and sign-posting work was also part of this holistic approach, both as a way of meeting needs and to model this way of working to change the culture in other local services.

Multi-stranded and multi-level approach: All the PBAs used multi-stranded activities and targeted outcomes at different levels, particularly individual and community levels. Activities typically had different aims but, when combined, were intended to create larger-scale community change. For example, Fight for Peace hosts three streams of action: 'Academies' for working directly with young people; 'Alliances' for exchanging knowledge and skills between community-based partners; and 'Collectives', which bring together partners, services and organisations to improve services available and promote systemic change at a local level.

Structure with scope for flexibility: PBAs emphasised the need to be flexible and adaptive to community needs and the evolving nature of PBAs and their activities. PBAs aimed to monitor needs and take-up, adapt provision to meet changing contexts and needs, ensure they remained relevant and adapt to societal circumstances (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic or changing support needs).

> "*While the nature of conflict is always changing, our tried-and-tested methodology, though informed by over 30 years' experience is rooted in the same principles… developing self-awareness of your own relationship conflict and new strategies to de-escalate conflict and challenging behaviour.*" (Pembury Children's Community's website)

Timescales

The PBAs are working to varying timescales and have taken different lengths of time to reach their current positions, but they were generally over five years old. A significant period of time in setting up PBAs was generally spent on developing strong partner relationships within the local area; for example, Pembury Children's Community took between one and two years to develop relationships with local organisations to a level where they could begin working efficiently together. The very adaptive flexible approach meant there were not clear start and end points to different phases.

Evaluations and impacts

Evaluation approaches

The England PBAs typically carried out or commissioned formal and informal evaluations of their impact and processes. Through both formative and summative evaluations, PBAs aimed to:

- Assess whether individual services and aspects of their PBAs were impacting as intended

- Evaluate how effectively the PBA was being implemented and how successful partnerships were (e.g. West London Zone)

- Identify where services needed to be developed or modified.

They used evaluations to assess their work and make changes, to report to funding bodies or to demonstrate to the wider community what their work was achieving.

> "*We hope [that by] using an evaluation, we're going to see a bit more clarity, [whether] we need to make it longer and if we are having an impact.*" (England PBA representative)

Evaluations generally employed a mix of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods, administered at varying time points. The most robust methods used were West London Zone's evaluation, which is a quasi-experimental design, using matched comparison groups of students within schools and primary schools and an 'intention to treat' analysis controlling for differences in baseline characteristics. It assesses impacts on pupils' attendance, attainment, confidence, emotional wellbeing (using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire) and whether they were considered 'at risk'.

Lambeth Early Action Partnership has developed an integrated data platform of routinely collected data covering demographics, engagement, feedback and outcomes from different local services. In addition a national evaluation across all five 'A Better Start' areas is being undertaken.

Some PBAs gathered both baseline and follow-up data to assess impacts for participants, but several used only retrospective self-reported data not using validated measures. There were also references to using evaluation to assess how well aspects of the PBA had been delivered and what had facilitated continued engagement with the PBA. This work utilised methods such as interviews, observation, desk research and surveys.

Other PBAs also focused on implementation and delivery. For example, the aim of Big Local's Early Years evaluation was to evaluate the systems and support put in place to enable areas to work in their local area. This involved a multi-method evaluation combining analysis of programme data as well as conducting surveys, interviews, observation visits and workshops and case studies across 90 different areas.

Evaluations were longitudinal (Big Local and West London Zone), repeated periodically (e.g. yearly or biannually) or ad-hoc. Evaluations were also often conducted at points of transition, such as at the beginning and end of services or, in the case of Big Local, when areas move from one phase or plan of work to another, to summarise learnings.

PBAs described challenges when carrying out evaluations:

- **Availability of local-level data:** Data were often only accessible at a wider level (e.g. local authority, ward or Lower Layer Super Output Area level). West London Zone addressed this by using school-based measures such as rates of permanent exclusion and involvement in antisocial behaviour.

- **Inability to directly attribute outcomes with PBA work:** PBA representatives recognised that they could rarely attribute changes in young people outcomes with the work of the PBA or concretely evidence the link between improvements in antecedents and reduced youth violence because many different factors feed into changes in outcomes and the evaluation approaches used generally did not include counterfactuals.

- **Difficulties in engaging all residents:** This made it challenging for PBAs to assess impacts.

Evaluation findings

Evaluations commonly described or highlighted improvements to young people's (or other target populations') mental health and wellbeing, strength and quality of relationships, and educational attainment. They were mainly based on perceptions of impacts since, as noted above, this was rarely based on designs that involved a counterfactual, such as a control group or a matched comparison group. The most common impacts were on the individual child and their microsystem, with impacts also on the mesosystem, including:

- **Improved mental and socio-emotional wellbeing:** reported in Fight for Peace and West London Zone

- **Impacts on educational attainment**

- **Improved relationship strength and quality:** For example, young people building strong relationships with a mentor or coach, being more self-aware and confident, being more confident about differentiating between negative and positive relationships, being able to make more responsible decisions more independently, and being able to act as a positive model for their peers.

Systems change was emerging as a desired outcome of many of the PBAs, although most had not yet seen significant change. Changes were reported in:

- **Increased community infrastructure and connectivity:** Local organisations were reported to be better joined up and could more easily work together around the local community's needs. Pembury Children's Community noted that since their inception, many local organisations working around youth violence had begun to work together, and the Early Years Report of Big Local highlighted that areas felt Big Local had acted as a catalyst for the increase in local connectivity and strength of partnerships that had formed between organisations in the area, and their subsequent joint work and impacts. Similar changes were also seen by Hartlepool Action Lab.

- **Influencing local service provision:** Several PBAs described ways in which they had influenced the extent and nature of local service provision. For example, Lambeth Early Action Partnership have commissioned new services. Fight for Peace have helped to shape local provision through close partnerships with local bodies such as the Violence Reduction Unit and have chosen to work with partners able to influence local policy. West London Zone noted they supported some of their smaller partners to develop their own Theories of Change and to develop their services and ways of working.

- **Increased funding:** PBAs also described new sources of funding becoming available for work in the local area. Pembury Children's Community noted that the increased local connectivity had led to more money and focus being drawn to the area.

   "If there is nothing that's visible there, then people don't know what to invest in. If there is something that is happening, there's some kind of step change or something is happening then everybody gravitates towards it and then all of a sudden, there's something to invest in." (Pembury Children's Community)

- **Increased community-led action and change:** For example, Big Local reported that work with local residents and the set-up of community spaces have enabled local people to develop and provide services (such as setting up food parcel distribution during the COVID-19 pandemic).

   "Very often in our areas where they had their community spaces set up, those spaces were in their control, and so they were able to open those up to do food parcel distribution and stuff like that. Some of our areas were able to do that before the local authority were able to do it because they were in charge of those spaces." (Big Local)

- **Culture change:** For example, Hartlepool Action Lab has seen a shift of culture within the community and local organisations towards a more collaborative and can-do approach, and with a greater belief that local issues are solvable and that local residents are able to come together to actively find solutions to those issues, as opposed to a top-down way of thinking. They have also seen an impact on the emphasis placed on lived experience and how residents are placed at the centre of local organisations' work.

Sustainment, Scale-Up and Legacies

PBAs were working towards strengthening and expanding their presence and reach within the local area and embedding themselves more strongly within the local systems, including, for example, by integrating

with the work of Police and Crime Commissioners and Violence Reduction Units (Pembury Children's Community) or by engaging policy players in the local area (Fight for Peace).

Several PBAs (Pembury Children's Community, Lambeth Early Action Partnership and West London Zone) had aims for their model to be used as a 'blueprint' for work in new communities and on a wider scale. They planned to take learnings from their current work and identify the most effective aspects of their approaches so that the approach could be replicated in new areas. For example, West London Zone planned to develop a 'white label' version of the model. Pembury Children's Community and West London Zone both saw their role as a 'broker' between residents, local organisations and services as being a key part of the replicable model. West London Zone also aimed to develop a policy team to advocate for the integration of their model in more education systems in England.

Because of the highly localised nature of each of the PBAs, expanding to other sites was generally seen as involving applying processes and frameworks to new areas rather than replicating specific activities. The intention was to begin with new needs assessments in each area and with development of strong local partner relationships. The work was at a fairly early stage, without detailed plans, and it was seen as an area for future development.

Several of the PBAs were not time-limited and did not have specific plans about when they might cease working in an area, although some did have time-limited funding. They generally aimed to sustain changes made within the local areas and to build 'lasting social capital' (Big Local). Building legacies was a particularly a focus for Big Local, Lambeth Early Action Partnership and Hartlepool Action Lab.

A key challenge here was how to build and sustain a community-led ethos that would maintain its impact and success when the 'backbone' of the PBA initiative ceased. However, several of the PBAs were making significant efforts to ensure their legacies could remain.

Views about how to leave a legacy related closely to thinking about systems change, and this was generally seen to lie in:

- Increasing the community's resilience and capacity to collaboratively solve local issues

- Developing organisational capability to support the community, including strengthening networks in the community and creating culture change, e.g. a person-centred and holistic focus

- Achieving systems change.

Increasing community resilience and capacity to facilitate local change: At the local level, PBAs typically hoped to create the capacity and infrastructure within the communities that would enable them to identify and address issues self-sufficiently. This involved both individual capacity (confidence, skills and potential) and collective capacity (increased community spirit and identity). Being resident led was also one of Big Local's key components of having a 'powerful community' (Big Local), and they noted that one of their legacies would be the emergence of community leaders.

"What we're trying, I suppose, to do, is find a way where people find their own place, in terms of the way that they would want to – govern is not quite the right word, but basically run the activities that they're doing, and say what they want to say." (England PBA representative)

I think it's a legacy of more developed community leaders in the areas... I think that's the sort of thing that we will have as a legacy from the programme is the people development, to be honest – people who feel able to get together and work on issues with the community." (England PBA representative)

Developing organisational capability to support the community: PBAs aimed to strengthen the support that local organisations and service providers could provide to the community so that they could continue to provide holistic support around community members into the future. PBAs aimed to do this by:

- Increasing the connectivity and networks between local organisations, developing partnerships and improved collaboration with a shared vision of change and creating support networks around residents.

- Increasing organisations' knowledge of the community and how to support and empower it. For example, Fight for Peace aimed to improve local organisation's ability to support the community by improving their knowledge of effective methodologies for young people with their work. Lambeth Early Action Partnership aim to improve recognition within the early years' workforce of families' needs and understanding of their journeys.

- Some PBAs, such as Hartlepool Action Lab, aimed to create culture change and ways of working within local organisations and ensure that they were more person-centred and would work in ways that empower residents through their support.

Encouraging systems change that would help to sustain PBA efforts: PBAs aimed to create a legacy in the local area by facilitating lasting change through policy change, increased funding coming into the local area, allocation of funding and more support from statutory bodies. Many aimed to work to achieve this by raising awareness, visibility and campaigning. For example, Pembury Children's Community worked to advocate for more financial investment and inform public spending decisions that would impact the local area in the long term. Hartlepool Action Lab saw the emergence of a human learning system as an important part of their legacy. Systems change was also seen to lie in encouraging an evidence-informed and data-driven approach across the local system. For example, Lambeth Early Action Partnership aimed to ensure their lasting impact by building a culture of shared learning, evidence-based practice, the use of local data, and data-driven decision-making.

Alignment with the Review of Models and Implementation and Review of Evidence of Impact

Overall, the learning from the England PBA examples strongly echoes findings from the Review of Models and Implementation. Compared with the initiatives in the two reviews, there was more emphasis in area selection on relative disadvantage and being forgotten or overlooked as a community.

The goals and objectives of the England-based PBAs were generally wider than many of those included in the two reviews. The majority had a focus on a particular sub-group, either young people involved in or at risk of violence or at risk of other poor outcomes, children in their early years, or people living in poverty. However, compared with the PBAs identified in the two reviews, they generally had more explicit additional goals at two wider levels: (1) supporting the community as a whole, improving community outcomes and community cohesion and (2) creating lasting systems change. The focus on systems change had been an

objective from the start for some but had emerged later for others as their sights widened from ameliorating local conditions to addressing the underlying causes.

The activities undertaken map well to those described in the two reviews and included young people development projects, activities targeting other groups, e.g. family and parenting support, employability support, and work to strengthen support systems around young people or families. There appeared to be a stronger emphasis in the England PBAs on providing signposting or other help to link individuals in the target population with local services and sources of support, and many operated using a 'brokerage' model.

In line with the PBAs in the reviews, there was a strong focus on community building and community mobilisation, both as a feature of support for the target population and as an aim in itself.

As in the PBAs identified by the reviews, activities were selected through a combination of using local data and consultation with local organisations and communities.

Although there were exceptions, using existing evidence-based programmes was not commonly systematically considered or included as part of the work, and on the whole there appeared to be more emphasis on locally developed initiatives than across the review PBAs, reflecting preferences rather than the absence of available evidence-based programmes.

As with the review PBAs, the England-based initiatives placed multi-agency partnership working and community engagement at the heart of their models. Multi-agency working took different forms, with the emphasis varying between the PBA being centred around *direct delivery* of services, *commissioning* of local services and more generally *influencing* other local partners. These inter-agency relationships were viewed as key, both for the immediate work of the PBA and as part of its longer term impacts and legacy.

Community engagement was absolutely central to all the England PBAs. As in the Review of Models and Implementation, communities were more commonly involved in the discovery, co-production and delivery phases of programmes, with limited information about community involvement in the early feasibility phases or later evaluation phases.

Chapter 6 – Discussion and Recommendations

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Introduction

This chapter integrates the key findings across the three study elements in a thematic discussion and draws out recommendations to YEF for taking forward PBA work. As a reminder, the three study elements were:

- **Review of PBA models and implementation:** This element described the models, underpinning theories and learning from implementation across 103 publications describing PBAs addressing youth violence. This review did not constitute evidence of 'what works' in PBAs for addressing youth violence.

- **Review of evidence of impact:** This study element focused on the effectiveness of PBAs for reducing youth violence. It involved 20 studies, representing nine distinct PBAs, which had used experimental or quasi-experimental methods and measured impacts on aspects of youth violence.

- **Analysis of examples of English PBAs:** This element looked across seven PBAs in England, with analysis based on documentary review and an interview with a representative of each PBAs.

Criteria for inclusion of PBAs across all elements included at least minimal multi-agency partnership and community engagement at the level of 'Involvement' or above: see Chapter 2 for a full explanation.

The nature of the PBAs and models included in the synthesis

The Review of Models and Implementation and Review of Evidence of Impact focused on PBAs to reduce youth violence, that is, those where at least one aim related to preventing or reducing youth violence or that targeted at least one outcome related to youth violence. It is, to our knowledge, the first such review. We identified and included a very large number of publications, over 100, including 20 effectiveness studies. The analysis of examples of English PBAs took a somewhat wider focus, including initiatives that do not focus on youth violence.

However the review reflects only part of the wider literature on PBAs that might be of relevance to PBAs addressing youth violence. Other reviews (e.g. Taylor et al., 2017) have taken a broader focus and include PBAs where the intended outcomes concern community empowerment or systems change. Nevertheless, there is much common ground, for example in the emphasis on multi-agency working, community engagement, building trust and relationships, and the need for long-term phased work.

The theoretical underpinnings of the included PBAs reflect public health approaches to preventing violence that address multiple ecological levels of influence. The theories most commonly highlighted as framing approaches were socio-ecological theory and community empowerment theories.

The dominant approach observed in the PBAs examined, looking across all three elements of our work, was primary prevention, that is, using universal approaches or targeting young people at low risk of involvement in youth violence. Some targeted specific groups of young people, such as those in particular school settings or young people of colour. Overall, only 16.5% of the publications in the Review of Models and

Implementation targeted young people at high risk of or already engaged in crime or violence, although these populations were more dominant as the focus in the Review of Evidence of Impact. Some PBAs utilised multi-pronged approaches, targeting both low- and high-risk young people.

Across all three elements, most PBAs also had other goals, particularly relating to the antecedents or social determinants of violence, reducing risk and enhancing protective factors, and including goals relating to revitalising or empowering communities.

This focus beyond violence reduction was reflected in the activities included in the PBAs. By far the most dominant were primary prevention activities including parenting/family support, youth development programmes and school violence and substance use prevention programmes. Community empowerment and mobilisation was also a strong feature, a component of half the studies in the Review of Models and Implementation, strongly featured in the analysis of examples of England PBAs and also represented among the studies in the Review of Evidence of Impact. These activities mainly targeted community and school domains. A much smaller set of activities were secondary or tertiary prevention, targeting individual young people.

At the same time, this review identified that few interventions and activities across PBAs addressing youth violence target the physical or built environment or are structural interventions aimed at addressing macro-level factors impacting violence outcomes. It is not immediately apparent from the findings why this might be so. We can speculate that, in the case of CTC, such interventions might not be aligned with the PBA approach (i.e. macro and environmental interventions may not have been included among the potential choices of 'evidence-based programmes'). In the case of other PBAs, such choices may reflect the nature of the organisations involved (e.g. their expertise in social welfare, health, education, etc.) or the nature of the funding source (e.g. health, social and justice related).

Key components of a place-based approach

The data do not allow us to draw conclusions about the essential or most effective components of PBAs. Texts reviewed for their discussion of models and theories included views and perceptions about important components but did not include evidence of their effectiveness. Texts reporting findings from impact evaluations describe the impact of the PBA as a whole but not of individual components. However, across the three study elements, some features of PBAs are emphasised as important. Although they are, to some extent, a reflection of the criteria for inclusion in the synthesis, they emerge strongly as aspects of place-based working that are recurrent and emphasised in all three study elements. These are: multi-agency engagement, community engagement, embedded in the local context, targeting impacts at multiple levels, and using data and evidence in decisions about activities and services to deliver within the PBA, including evidence-based programmes.

Multi-agency engagement

All studies and PBAs were selected as including multi-agency engagement, and there was a clear emphasis throughout the study elements on this as a core aspect of PBAs. Multi-agency working commonly comprised police, schools, community-based organisations, healthcare organisations, religious groups, and child and family services. There was more variation in whether young people were directly involved in the design or delivery of the PBA. The evidence does not allow us to draw conclusions about which agencies, or combinations, are associated with impact as this was not tested in any of the studies included. Multi-agency

engagement was often managed through a local collaborative governance structure overseeing the PBA, styled, for example, as a steering committee, a PBA coalition, a multi-agency working group or a community action board. The England example PBA representatives emphasised the value of a backbone organisation that worked as the 'glue' to bring local organisations and people together.

Key strategies for building and sustaining multi-agency engagement that emerged across the synthesis are set out in Box 1.

Box 1. *Key strategies for building and sustaining multi-agency engagement*

Devolving power: Being willing to allow local organisations and people to lead

Relationship building: Starting this work early, allowing time for relationships to build, showing respect and attention to the community, recognising and building complementary expertise, being a resource to community organisations

Communicating well: Hosting regular and open meetings, using other communication

Developing formal structures and agreements: Collaborative governance structures that work in alignment, using written agreements

Co-location: Seen to strengthen collaboration and social learning between partners

Understanding and working with existing dynamics: Between agencies and between the community and agencies; recognising competing organisational pressures and objectives, working through conflict

Creative collaborative work to find solutions: Requiring patience, persistence and effective facilitation strategies

Developing a PBA identity: Making the PBA visible, nurturing a cohesive identity and unified voice

Harnessing and leveraging existing relationships: Drawing on relationships of community leaders and the wider relationships and credibility that key individuals (both in formal and non-formal roles) hold

Understanding the need for sustained buy-in: Also for multi-agency engagement to be reviewed, renewed and re-invigorated

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Noted pitfalls described were generally the antithesis of these, e.g. poor relationships with community agencies, lack of leadership structure, limited use of evidence-based programmes, poor evaluation, low agency capacity or resources, insufficient support to agencies, failing to respond to diversity of place, and not recognising the need for continued work to sustain and refresh multi-agency engagement.

Our study points to the need to work actively to identify the key local partners to involve, recognising this may change as the local area and the focus of PBA activity evolves, attend to these strategies in multi-agency engagement, keep the quality and sufficiency of multi-agency engagement under review both informally and through formal monitoring and measurement, and to expect to need to invest significantly in this throughout the life course of a PBA.

Community engagement

Engagement of the local community was also a key component for PBAs addressing youth violence. Again, this reflects, in part, a study inclusion criterion, but community engagement was emphasised across our study elements. It was considered vital for developing an understanding of place, building relationships,

understanding and addressing power dynamics, and ensuring the PBA becomes rooted in the community and reflects its assets and needs. For example, in one study in the Review of Evidence of Impact, it was estimated that community collaboration had involved at least 20% of the PBA time resources (Kelly et al., 2010).

Key strategies for community engagement, drawing across the synthesis, are set out in Box 2.

Box 2. *Key strategies for building and sustaining community engagement*

Asking, listening and learning about place: Understanding local cultures, dynamics, historical events, assets and strengths

Adopting successful relationship-building qualities and approaches: Trustworthiness, transparency, respect, humility, authenticity, flexibility, engaging with people on their own terms and showing a commitment to the long term

Communicating well: Communicating aims and purpose in clear and engaging ways, using multiple forms of formal and informal communication, attending to language and the potential for stigma, training staff in community engagement and employing local people

Extensive outreach work: Both structured and unstructured, meeting with the community in multiple ways, holding informal meetings and events, using meals and entertainment to 'hook' people in, providing support, addressing existing dynamics and recognising that conflicts may arise

Allowing time: Recognising that it takes enduring and committed activity over time

Devolving power: Ceding power and decision-making, empowering the community and recognising their capability and expertise

Developing PBA identity and visibility: Providing information, developing a shared language, and ensuring consistent branding and naming

Developing or harnessing relationships, special roles or structures: Identifying and working with individuals and organisations that will support the involvement and engagement of other community members, either informally or in formal roles such parent champions or young people ambassadors

Resourcing the community: Providing training and support, linking people and organisations to existing funding and services, providing technical support and capacity building

Considering sustainability: Building community leadership and capacity and building a learning community

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Like multi-agency engagement, key pitfalls to community engagement were often the opposite of the enablers listed above. There were challenges in reaching widely across communities, ensuring engagement was meaningful, sustaining community engagement and sharing power. Pitfalls included insufficient attention to community engagement, experiencing blocks from 'gatekeepers', damaging trust and generating barriers to relationship-building, challenges stemming from the choice of place, needing to expect and manage conflict among community members, poor communication, insufficient funding, insufficient support to the community, failing to respond to diversity of place, and failing to sustain and refresh support for community engagement.

In the studies in the Review of Models and Implementation and among the England PBA examples, community engagement tended to be somewhat lower in the early feasibility phase; higher during discovery, co-production and delivery phases; and lower again during evaluation phases.

This suggests that PBAs aiming to sustain community engagement across their life cycle should start this activity early and also consider how it can be embedded in evaluation activity. Our series of reviews also point to the need for a high level of, and sustained investment in, community engagement, to build these skills within PBA backbone organisations and lead partners, and to assess the extent and quality of community engagement both informally and through formal evaluation.

Reflecting local context

Working with and building from the local context is a further key component of PBAs across our study elements. Richly understanding local place, people, history and dynamics is emphasised in strategies for multi-agency working and community engagement. It is essential for understanding and targeting the particular nature of local violence and related risk and protective factors, causes and antecedents and for developing solutions. The PBAs included in our synthesis also mainly involved activities delivered by existing agencies in the local area. Some PBAs formed a new agency specifically to deliver interventions and hired staff to do so, although the England PBA examples taking this approach emphasised the importance of linking closely with existing agencies.

Targeting impacts and activities at multiple levels

As noted earlier, socio-ecological theory was the most prevalent theory informing models in the Review of Models and Implementation, and targeting PBA aims and activity at multiple levels was a dominant feature across all three study elements. However, despite the focus on place-based and community-level change, it was striking that, in the Review of Models and Implementation (where our data are most ample), the most commonly targeted level of anticipated impact was the individual, targeted in 80% of the publications. The next most frequently targeted level was the microsystem around the child (families, teachers, peers), targeted in just over half the studies, followed by the mesosystem (interactions between the child's microsystems such as between the family and school) and exosystem (social structures influencing the young person indirectly, such as the neighbourhood), each targeted in by a little over a third of studies. Least frequently targeted was the macrosystem (e.g. the economic status of the neighbourhood), targeted by only 13% of studies in the Review of Models and Implementation. In the England PBA examples, individual and microsystems were again the focus, although some PBAs included activities that could be seen as focused on meso- and exosystems. Macrosystem activity was beginning to be recognised as potentially in focus by one PBA.

Although the nature of the evidence does not allow us to conclude that more focus on macrosystem issues would be more effective, nor what strategies this might involve, this gap is striking given that PBAs were often selected in part because of macrosystem factors, and it seems likely that these – particularly poverty – are a strong influence on local youth violence and community conditions. Our study does raise a question as to whether and how more targeted activity should be considered in the design and implementation of PBAs, particularly for lasting and sustained impacts.

Phased approach and appropriate timelines

The importance of a phased approach and appropriate timelines emerges as a further key component of PBAs. In the Review of Models and Implementation, for studies where duration was noted, average timelines were 10 months for preparation (rising to 16 months for non-CTC studies), just over four years on

average for delivery, and just under four years on average for evaluation. The importance of allowing time was also particularly emphasised in relation to multi-agency engagement and community engagement.

Data and evidence

A final key component of PBAs is the role of multiple forms of data and evidence. Across the study elements, this arose in multiple contexts:

- Using data and evidence to select localities as the focus of PBA work

- Using formal and informal data gathering approaches to understand place

- Using local data to identify and prioritise needs, primarily through analysis of local data and consultation with local communities and partners

- Identifying and selecting possible activities: drawing on the approaches used in other PBAs, identifying evidence-based programmes that match identified needs, understanding how to adapt them for local contexts, drawing on locally-available activities or programmes and developing new interventions

- Mapping progress in activity and delivery, including understanding how individual people have moved between services (a focus of Lambeth Early Action Partnership, for example)

- Evaluation and learning.

Evidence of impact

Looking specifically at the 20 studies in the evidence of impact, the evidence overall suggests a positive impact of some PBAs on reducing violence. The data were not available to undertake analyses that would be needed to identify with certainty the features of PBAs correlated most strongly with success. However, the impact on reducing violence among PBAs was more evident in the following scenarios:

- When PBAs targeted serious youth violence (e.g. gun violence, knife crimes, homicide, injuries and aggravated assault).

- When PBAs used multi-component approaches combining both universal reduction of risk factors and targeted interventions for young people involved in crime and violence. Specifically, the most effective PBAs targeted young people considered at risk or high risk (i.e. those who were already involved in violence) through the delivery of secondary or tertiary crime prevention strategies (e.g. youth outreach, case management, conflict resolution and police intelligence). In some of the PBAs that demonstrated effectiveness, these targeted strategies were utilised alongside primary crime prevention measures that targeted the broader young people population (e.g. via schools).

- When PBAs incorporated coordinated efforts with local partners and communities.

A Theory of Change for PBAs

Our synthesis highlights considerable variation between PBA models and initiatives, despite our focus on PBAs targeting youth violence that involved multi-agency and community engagement. Present in our

analyses are very diverse models, including PBAs highly focused on high-risk young people and serious violence, PBAs targeting antecedents with work primarily directed to low-risk young people, and PBAs with a broader focus on community empowerment and improvement. These different models vary considerably in the underpinning theory, the ways of working and the implicit or explicit mechanisms of change. In addition, a fundamental aspect of PBAs is that they are responsive to individual local context. This means it would be impossible to design a single unifying Theory of Change that would be sufficiently refined to usefully describe and explain PBAs for addressing youth violence.

However, our study suggests that Theories of Change for PBAs should include a set of key elements:
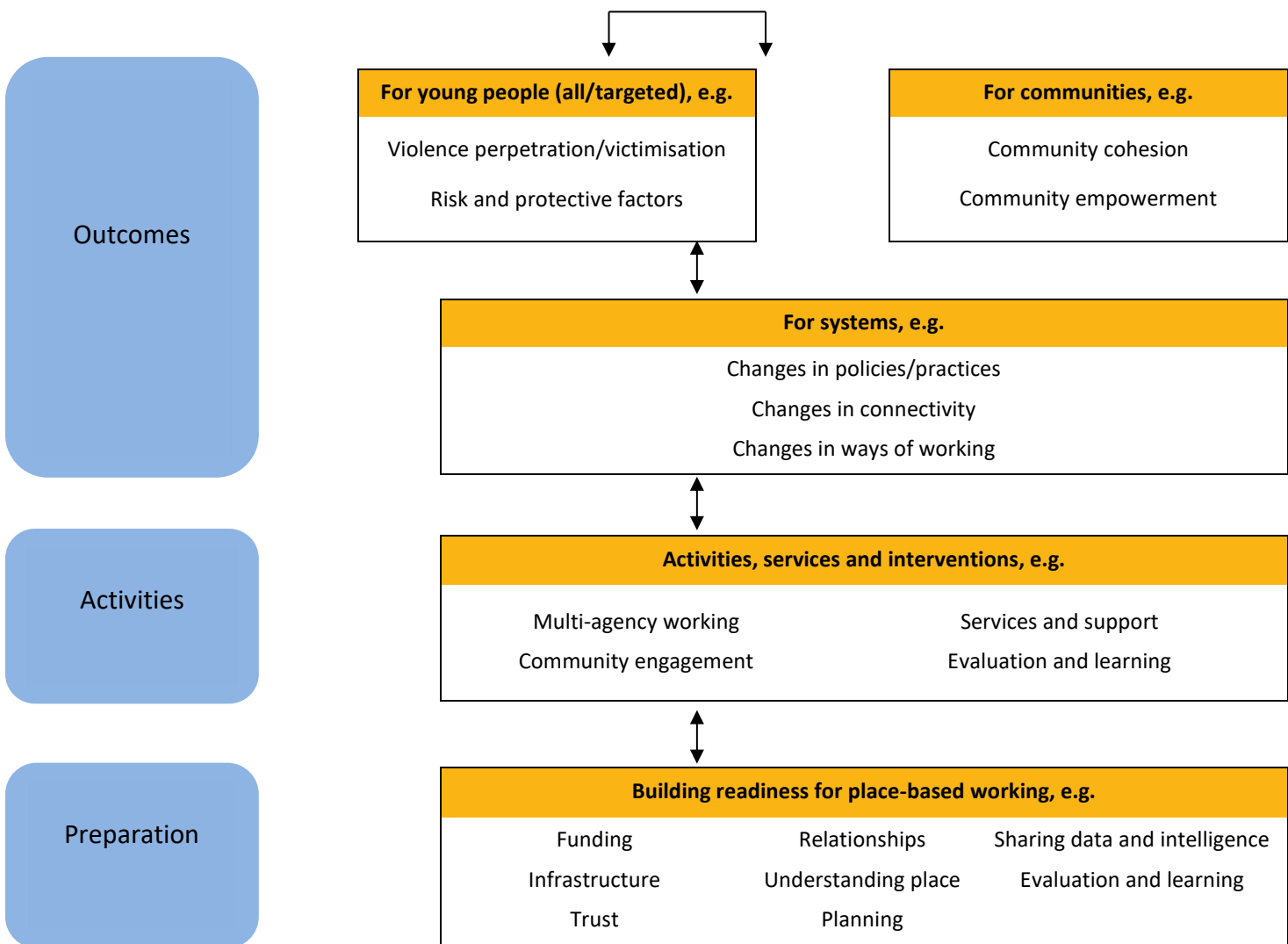
- **Outcomes:** Reflecting intended outcomes at different levels, particularly:

  - **Outcomes for individual young people:** Whether all local young people, targeted sub-groups, or both. These are likely to reflect outcomes directly related to violence perpetration and victimisation and outcomes relating to antecedents, risks and protective factors.

  - **Outcomes for communities:** These are likely to reflect the prevalence of youth violence overall, or the forms most relevant to the locality, but may also include issues such as community cohesion, community empowerment or pride in area.

  - **Systems-level outcomes**: Our study suggests that these can be an important intention in PBAs and are a mechanism through which outcomes for communities and for young people are intended to be achieved, hypothesised as key to sustaining change and to the PBA leaving a legacy. However, they are not always sharply articulated. Our analysis points to three types of system-level outcomes: changes in policies and practices[19], changes in connectivity and partnerships, and changes in cultures and ways of working.

- **Activities, services and interventions:** The specific work to be undertaken, particularly building and sustaining multi-agency working; building and sustaining community engagement; selecting, planning and delivering services and support; and activity related to evaluation and learning.

- **Preparatory work to build readiness for place-based working:** Establishing funding and infrastructure for the PBA; collaborative work to understand the local area from multiple perspectives; building trust and relationships; and planning, including setting up systems for learning and evaluation and shared data from early on. This work is especially relevant in early stages and could be described as the foundations of PBAs, but it is activity that needs to be a continuous part of PBA work.

- **Mechanisms of change:** A Theory of Change for a PBA would also set out the hypothesised mechanisms of change reflecting the specific theories underpinning the approach, which may, for example, concern the relationships between systems around a child, the role of communities and conditions that oppress and empower, how crime arises in social groups, specific approaches to policing and deterrence, or the gendered nature of violence.

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[19] This was discussed by some of the England-based PBAs (we probed on systems change in these interviews) but did not emerge in the PBA models and implementation texts.

These dimensions of PBAs may be mutually reinforcing and the connections between them multi-directional and important to work through in developing a Theory of Change.

Figure 9. Key elements in PBA Theories of Change

Outcomes	**For young people (all/targeted), e.g.** Violence perpetration/victimisation Risk and protective factors	**For communities, e.g.** Community cohesion Community empowerment
	For systems, e.g. Changes in policies/practices Changes in connectivity Changes in ways of working	
Activities	**Activities, services and interventions, e.g.** Multi-agency working Services and support Community engagement Evaluation and learning	
Preparation	**Building readiness for place-based working, e.g.** Funding Relationships Sharing data and intelligence Infrastructure Understanding place Evaluation and learning Trust Planning	

How do our findings map on to YEF's PBA work?

The overall findings outlined above broadly support the YEF's approaches to place-based working as demonstrated in the Neighbourhood Fund's and Agency Collaboration (described in Chapter 1).

First, although robust evidence about effectiveness is limited, our impact evidence highlights that PBAs can be an effective approach to reducing youth violence.

We found supporting evidence that aligns with YEF's considerations in terms of the importance of understanding context of place in selecting localities for PBAs and developing approaches and ways of working. In our findings, the selection of PBAs sites was strongly influenced by the prevalence of local violence and other poor outcomes for children, young people or another target population, as well as interrelated causal factors such as high levels of disadvantage and inequality. Furthermore, the presence of existing networks and structures were important aspects for providing an effective foundation for place-based work.

Our findings also support YEF's thinking around potential enablers of change, which includes references to diverse emergent leaders, opportunities for young people's engagement, building trust and negotiating entry, developing community capacity, and co-designing action plans. Our analysis points also to community engagement beyond young people, richly understanding local communities, being explicit about the levels or domains targeted, and using data and evidence throughout.

Our findings emphasise multi-agency collaborative working as a key component of PBAs and the need for collaborative governance structures to support this. The appointment of a lead coordinating organisation is consistent with the use of backbone agencies in many PBA initiatives included in our analyses.

Our synthesis also finds a pivotal role for community engagement and emphasises the importance of community engagement being sustained. It points to taking time to build relationships, offering multiple ways of engaging with local people, entering communities and extending networks through influential 'insiders', being visible and approachable, having a workforce that reflects the local demography, using positive and non-stigmatising language, and providing active support to encourage community-led decision-making. YEF may want to explore the nature of community engagement within their different phases of work, given our findings about levels of engagement changing over time.

The included PBAs broadly align with the phased approaches and time frames adopted by YEF in the Neighbourhood Fund and Agency Collaboration initiatives and the expectation that it will take significant time for impacts to emerge. The timelines indicated for the Neighbourhood Fund (12–18 months preparation, delivery for up to five years, evaluation for up to six years) are in line with our analyses.

Our analyses are supportive of an approach that involves focused impact targets relating to reducing youth violence, increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors, but that provides space for local activity to determine a programme of work that reflects local context and preferences. However, it suggests that there may be a need for both universal, non-targeted activity or activity focused on young people at low risk of involvement in youth violence <u>combined with</u> activities targeting young people at high risk or already involved in youth violence. In addition, the synthesis places emphasis on using data and evidence in the selection of activities, including using evidence-based programmes. A key assumption, to be tested in the Neighbourhood Fund model, is that 'empowering people to make decisions about their local neighbourhoods can prevent children and young people from becoming involved in local violence'. Our reviews suggest that involving neighbourhoods in decision-making may be an important component of PBAs but may not be sufficient, alone, to reduce youth violence.

As it currently stands, we found few studies that provide robust evaluation evidence for PBAs in reducing youth violence, certainly relative to the number of studies describing models and implementation. While this gap adds to the importance and novelty of YEF's work, it also increases the responsibility and importance of evaluating it well. Building the evidence base requires the strongest possible designs/methods.

This could include quasi-experimental approaches and sophisticated designs, such as propensity score matching. It is also important to pay close attention to ways in which the reliability and validity of outcome measures could be increased, e.g. supplementing police data with hospital records of youth violence/violence-related injuries, as well as carefully planning the associated negotiations needed to access official records data.

None of the included studies in the Review of Evidence of Impact described their process for identifying an adequate sample size to detect an effect on reducing youth violence. Future evaluations would benefit from

a prospective power analysis. Clustering is also a key challenge for evaluations of PBAs, as individuals living within the same area are more similar; as a result, it requires both an inflated sample size and adapted statistical analysis.

Integrated recommendations

In this final section, we highlight key findings and recommendations to help guide decisions about how best to deliver and evaluate PBAs to tackle local youth violence.

1. PBAs <u>can</u> reduce youth violence: The evidence suggests that multi-pronged and targeted approaches are needed

The Review of Evidence of Impact highlights that PBAs can reduce youth violence. This is clearest for established PBA approaches. All five of the CTC evaluations reported statistically significant positive impacts on aspects of youth violence. Four of the seven OCF evaluations reported medium to large positive impacts, the others finding mixed impacts. Of the remaining studies, four found significant positive impacts.

Both the Review of Evidence of Impact and the Review of Models and Implementation point to the importance of multi-level activity, involving multi-pronged strategies and combining activities targeting at-risk or high-risk young people (including those who were already engaging in violence), with primary crime prevention measures targeting the broader young people population.

We cannot say categorically that this is correlated with effectiveness. It may reflect the types of PBAs that have a robust evaluation and the higher base level of violence in the target cohort, which prevents 'floor effects' and results in a greater capacity to generate and detect reductions.

However, only one of the 14 PBAs that demonstrated evidence of reducing violence or its correlates had solely targeted low-risk young people, while the remaining 13 had in some way targeted high-risk young people. A PBA approach that does not involve some activity targeted towards higher-risk young people would therefore not be well aligned with the (limited) evidence. It will be important to have a clear evidence-based rationale for the community-level changes sought and why they are anticipated to reduce youth violence.

2. Build from and work with the local place

The learning from the Review of Models and Implementation and the Analysis of England PBAs clearly points to the importance of richly understanding local context – cultures, histories, dynamics, strengths, assets, vulnerabilities, sub-populations, formal and informal organisations and leaders, as well as existing services. This is highlighted as an important starting point. The evidence indicates that it requires prolonged structured and unstructured activity and intensive investment to understand these features of local context.

3. Strong partnership working and community involvement are key components

The Review of Models and Implementation and the Analysis of England PBAs highlight both multi-agency collaborative working and community engagement and involvement as key components of PBAs. These components require significant investment of time and effort, not only in development phases but throughout the lifetime of the PBA. Our analyses also point to the need to review, renew, refresh and

actively sustain these elements. They also suggest scope to consider how to strengthen community engagement in early development phases and in evaluation, where levels of community engagement were lower.

4. Data and evidence need to be central to PBA activity

The use of data and evidence is highlighted in the studies included in the Review of Models and Implementation, particularly to understand the local context, assess and prioritise needs, and select evidence-based interventions. Evidence and data were also emphasised in the Analysis of England PBAs, although the use of evidence-based interventions was not universal among them.

The picture that emerges from these two review is that PBAs require agile approaches to combine and help communities to work with different forms of data and evidence, including local data, the insights and experiences of local people, evidence about what has worked in previous PBAs and local initiatives, evidence about effective approaches to the targeted outcomes, and how to adapt them to local needs (we consider evaluation specifically below). The evidence from the Review of Models and Implementation and the Analysis of England PBAs highlights that conflicting views and competing priorities can be difficult to manage. There may not always be an immediate alignment between local preferences and the activities most likely to impact on violence.

Keeping the target populations, activities and outcomes sharply in mind throughout will be important and ensuring that building consensus does not involve compromising them. Approaches used in some of the PBAs reviewed that may be helpful are to include content and methods experts in the engagement process, reviewing existing evidence and considering specific training on how to work creatively with evidence as part of capacity-building activities. Models such as CTC demonstrate that it is possible to combine evidence-informed approaches with the highest levels of community engagement, and that these models can be effective in reducing youth violence.

5. Systems level change needs to be planned and explicit

Systems change objectives were explicit or implicit in many of the PBAs included in the Review of Models and Implementation and the Analysis of England PBAs, and the England examples appeared to be target outcomes in their own right as well as processes through which other outcomes were expected to be achieved. They were also seen as important ways in which a lasting legacy would be secured. However, they tended to be quite loosely described by representatives of the England PBAs, sometimes coming into focus only further on in the lifetime of the PBA. The types of outcomes described were developing a shared vision and strengthening joint working across partnerships involved in the PBA; developing new partnerships and services within local areas and an improved local support offer; and strengthening local policy-making and advocating for greater use of evidence within policy and decision-making. More focus earlier on the systems level changes sought and the specific activities needed to secure them may be needed to have the best chance of achieving them. This is also likely to be important work on planning for PBAs to end or transition.

6. Prioritise rigorous evaluation, learning systems and data infrastructure

We found relatively few rigorous evaluations of the effectiveness of PBAs in reducing youth violence. Many of the PBAs, including those analysed in the Review of Models and Implementation, did not measure violence as an outcome. Several evaluations targeted correlates of violence (e.g. gang involvement or violent attitudes) or crime and delinquency more broadly (e.g. evaluating arrest, aggression or delinquent

behaviour as outcomes). Ideally, evaluations will use sophisticated QED designs where RCTs are not feasible, draw on multiple data sources, use prospective power analysis to define sample size, include analysis to account for data nested in clusters and be undertaken by teams independent of the PBA design and implementation.

It will also be important to assess and measure the results and effectiveness of implementation well, moving beyond descriptions of process and challenges to identify effective strategies.

Several of the England PBAs had recognised the need to develop a strong infrastructure, including shared data systems across partners, ongoing monitoring of engagement and reach, mapping journeys across local services and interventions, and gathering data on the impacts of specific activities as well as consolidated outcomes for young people or families. There was also mention within the Analysis of England PBAs of the need to bring highly reflective learning system approach to PBA activity.

Programmes are ultimately sustained by a track record of successful outcomes. Data gathering, evaluation and reflection are key aspects of implementation, and data need to be used to inform ongoing decisions, fine-tune activity, identify gaps and learn about what is not working as well as what is. There is a clear view from the Analysis of England PBAs and the Review of Models and Implementation that PBAs need to evolve and flex over time, in response to changing local conditions, and this needs to be informed by multiple forms of data.

Overall, despite the prevalence of PBA activity, there remains little robust evaluation of PBAs targeting youth violence. This highlights both the importance and novelty of the programme development and evaluation work being conducted by YEF and its partners in this field.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Neighbourhood Fund theory of change - programme level
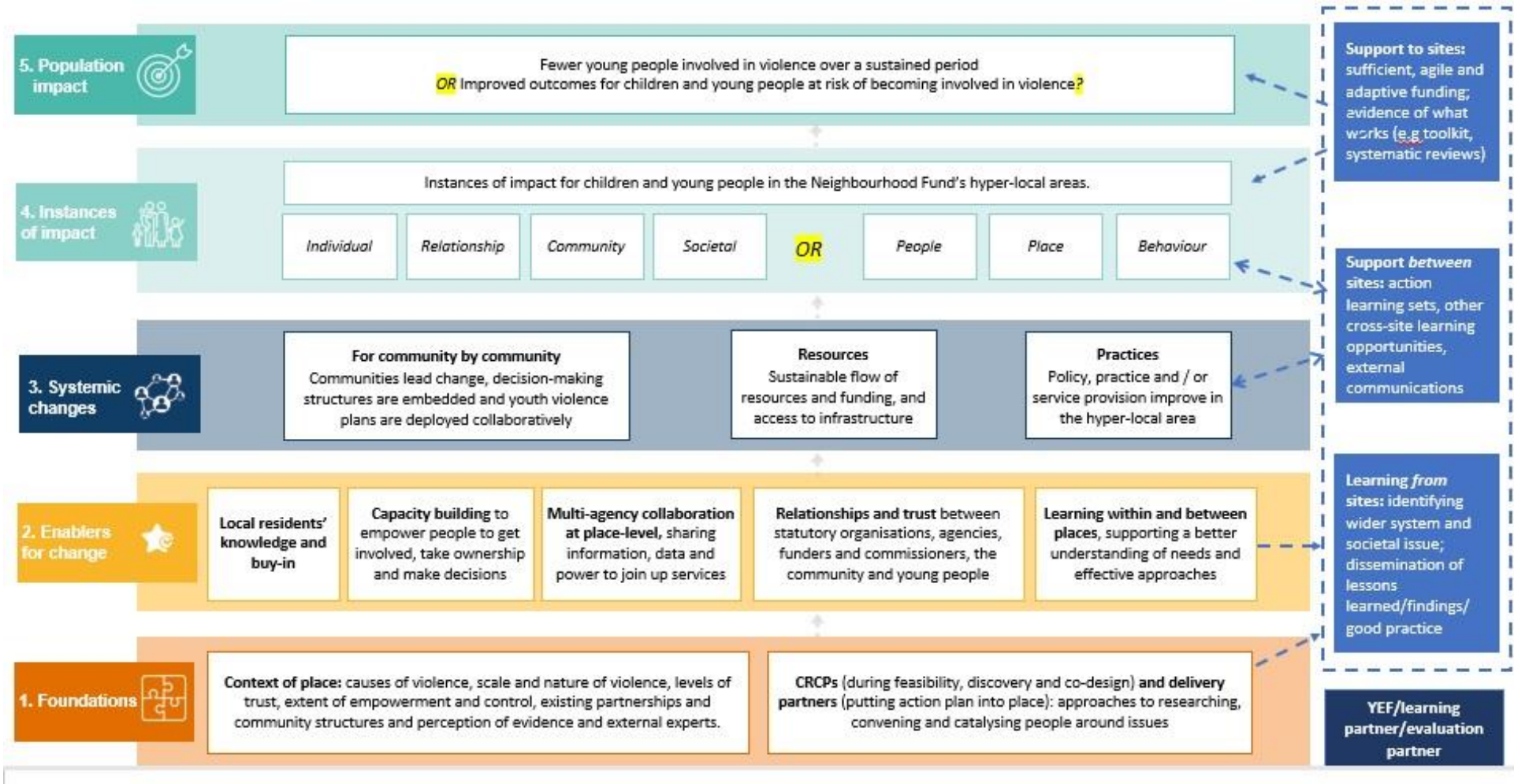
Appendix 2: Search strategies

Text word searches were mapped verbatim into each database, excepting adjustments made for database specific syntax. In addition, as specific, named programmes and/or services that met inclusion criteria were identified, they were added to the search to ensure we obtained all studies and reports of studies.

Table A1. Search strategy dimensions

Study Design	Intervention	Population	Outcomes
Qualitative	Place based	Adolescen*	Reduc*
Ethnolog*	Area based	Child*	Preven*
Ethnog*	Location based	Youth*	Early interven*
Ethnomethodolog*	Offender focused	Pre adolesc*	Violen*
Interview*	Community based	Teen*	Crim*
Emic	Community led	Juvenile*	Policing
Etic	Community	Minor*	Offend*
Phenomenolog*	intervention		Offence*
Hermeneutic*	Community		Delinquen*
Participant observ*	mobil#ation		Devian*
Constant compar*	Community practice		Recidivism
Focus group*	Community		Arrest*
Grounded theory	engagement		Youth justice
Narrative analysis	Community		Juvenile justice
Lived experience*	involvement		Antisoc*
Life experience*	Geographically		Reoffend*
Maximum variation	targeted		Lawbreaking
Snowball sampl*	Geographically based		Unlawful
Theoretical sampl*	Community		Misdemeanor
Purposive sampl*	development		Law* adj2
Action research	Co design		Break*
RCT	Co produc*		Breach*
Randomi*	Community adj2		Violat*
Control* trial*	participat*		Contraven*
Control* clinical	Neighbo?rhood adj2		Infring*
Clinical trial*	based		Transgress*
Random* assign*	Communities that		Parent abus*
Random* allocat*	care		Sibling abus*
Wait* list*	Smart policing		Emotional abus*
Wait*-list*	initiative		Partner abus*
Control* group*	Safe streets program		Gang
Control* condition*	Safestreets		Aggress*
Quasi-ex*	Ceasefire		Fight*
Quasi ex*	Cure violence		Rape
	Sure start		Rapist

Study Design	Intervention	Population	Outcomes
Ccontrol* adj2 intervention	Project safe neighbo?rhoods		Sexual abus*
Control* adj2 treat*	Promoting school community university partnerships to enhance resilience		Knife
Longitudinal			Gun
Control* stud*			Robb*
Control* variable			Homicid*
Comparison group	Comprehensive gang model		Assault
Comparative stud*			County line*
Before and after stud*	Youth violence prevention cent*		Weapon*
Pretest post	MI-YVPC		Harass*
Pre test post	The big local		
Time series	Tamarack		
Case control	Collective impact		
Case cohort	Neighbourhood renewal		
Cohort stud*			
Prospective stud*	Primary care partnerships		
Case stud*			
Evaluation	Communities for children		
Mixed method*			
Process stud*	Harlem children's zone		
Process research			
Process evaluation	Choice neighbo?rhoods		
Implementation			
Pragmatic stud*	Aim 4 peace		
Pragmatic trial*	Prevention project		
Formative stud*	Project wise-up		
Formative research	Child friendly cities		
	Magnolia place community initiative		
	Promise neighbo?rhoods		
	Stronger families and communities		
	Children's ground		

Search terms were combined using Boolean operators (e.g. AND, OR, NOT), and included wildcards and truncation symbols to maximise efficiency. Since different electronic databases accept different symbols, we created database-specific combinations of terms, using keywords and symbols as appropriate. PRISMA reporting guidelines were followed when describing the search and precise records were kept of each search, including search terms used, their combination, the date the search is performed, the sources consulted to identify eligible studies (e.g. electronic databases, list of references, hand searches), the total number of studies located, and the total number of studies retrieved.

For each database, pilot searches were run including the key terms depicted in Table A1. These helped to adjust the terms, synonyms, truncation, and wildcard terms as appropriate. Pilot searches were also helpful in creating combinations of terms that will capture relevant sets of studies. In order to produce a transparent report of the methodological decisions, we retained a record of electronic searches (e.g. date of searches, number of reports found, retrieved, key terms included, synonyms and wildcards used when appropriate).

The following reviews were harvested for further impact studies:

Table A2. *List of studies where reference list was explored*

Author (Year)	Title	Screened papers
Barton, McLaney, & Stephens (2020)	Targeted interventions for violence among Latino youth: A systematic review.	9
Farrington, Gaffney, Lösel, & Ttofi (2017)	Systematic reviews of the effectiveness of developmental prevention programs in reducing delinquency, aggression and bullying.	0
Holly, Porter, Kamienski, & Lim (2019)	School-based and community-based gun safety educational strategies for injury prevention.	10
Lin, Flanagan, Varga, Zaff, & Margolius (2020)	The impact of comprehensive community initiatives on population-level child, youth, and family outcomes: A systematic review.	25
Lourenço, Fornari, Santos, & Fonseca (2019)	Community interventions related to intimate partner violence among adolescents: scope review.	31
Lundgren & Amin, (2015)	Addressing intimate partner violence and sexual violence among adolescents: Emerging evidence of effectiveness.	0
Braga & Weisburd (2012)	The Effects of "Pulling Levers" Focused Deterrence Strategies on Crime.	11
Braga & Welsh (2015)	Can Policing Disorder Reduce Crime?	28
Distler (2011)	Less Debate, More Analysis: A Meta-Analysis of Literature on Broken Windows Policing (Master dissertation).	11
Gill, Weisburd, Telep, Vitter, & Bennett (2014)	Community-oriented policing to reduce crime, disorder and fear and increase satisfaction and legitimacy among citizens: a systematic review.	26
Cassidy, Inglis, Wiysonge, & Matzopoulos (2014)	A systematic review of the effects of poverty deconcentration and urban upgrading on youth violence.	9
Farrington, Gill, Waples, & Argomaniz (2007)	The effects of closed-circuit television on crime: Meta-analysis of an English national quasi-experimental multi-site evaluation.	0
Farrington & Welsh (2002)	Effects of improved street lighting on crime: a systematic review.	0
Welsh & Farrington (2009)	Public Area CCTV and Crime Prevention: An Updated Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.	11
Bennett, Holloway, & Farrington (2006)	Does neighbourhood watch reduce crime? A systematic review and meta-analysis.	0
Fagan & Catalano (2013)	What works in youth violence prevention: A review of the literature.	15

Appendix 3: Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Financial Interest

In order to add transparency to the description of included studies, we coded data identifying the role of the evaluator and its potential conflict of interest through the evaluation process. Interestingly, nine studies (45%) published in peer-reviewed journals disclosed a personal or organisational Conflict of Interest (CoI). This percentage is similar to the findings of Eisner, Humphreys, Wilson, and Gardner (2015) who found limited attention to full CoI disclosure in the evaluation of psychosocial interventions. They argue that even if "transparency about CoI in itself does not necessarily improve the quality of research, and researchers with a CoI should not be presumed to conduct less valid scholarship, transparency is needed for readers to assess the study findings and their particular context" (Eisner et al., 2015, p. 10).

In addition to the presence/absence of CoI statements, we evaluated studies on their potential Conflict of Financial Interest (CoFI) by using a scale developed by Eisner and Humphreys (2012). The trichotomous scale identify three levels of conflict as follows: i) Unlikely conflict of interest: none of the study authors are programme developers or licence holders; ii) Possible: a study author is a programme developer or collaborator with a programme developer AND the programme is not (yet) commercially available OR the business model is 'not-for-profit'; or iii) Likely: study author is a programme developer or collaborator with a programme developer AND programme is commercially available AND business model is 'for-profit'.

We found seven studies (35%) where the CoFI was defined as 'unlikely' (i.e. Brantingham, Tita, & Herz, 2021; Chilenski, Frank, Summers, & Lew, 2019; Fox, Katz, Choate, & Hedberg, 2014; Gonzalez-Guarda, Guerra, Cummings, Pino, & Becerra, 2015; Kelly et al., 2010; Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2013; Webster, Whitehill, Vernick, & Parker, 2012). Essentially, in this set of studies, none of the programme evaluators were involved (i.e. directly or as a collaborator) in the development of the intervention or were licence holders. However, we found five studies (25%) where we assessed a 'possible' CoFI (Heinze et al., 2016; Rowland et al., 2021; Spergel et al., 2003; Toumbourou, Rowland, Williams, Smith, & Patton, 2019; Williams, Currie, Linden, & Donnelly, 2014). In those cases, the evaluator was a programme developer/deliverer or a previous collaborator with a programme developer; the programme was not commercially available, or the business model was defined as 'not-for-profit'. Eight studies (40%) were logged in the category 'unknown', because there was not enough data for classification. As observed in Table A3, none of the included studies declared information that allowed us to classify them as 'likely' to present a potential financial conflict of interest.

Table A3. *Characteristics of included papers*

| Study characteristics	Category	N	%
Type of publications	Journal article (peer reviewed)	16	80
	Technical report (grey literature)	4	20
Publication language	English	20	100
Country of the sample	United States	17	85
	United Kingdom	1	5
	Australia	2	1
Conflict of interest	Disclosed	9	45
	Not disclosed	11	55
Potential financial conflict of interest	Unlikely	7	35
	Possible	5	25
	Likely	0	0
	Unknown	8	40
		Mean	**SD**
Publication year		2013	5.5

Appendix 4: Risk of bias in the included studies (ROB)

The ROB assessment was conducted by three researchers (JM, EW and SS). SS calculated the final figures. Risk of Bias is best understood as an indicator of quality of the studies and the corresponding level of confidence we can have in their results. Two different tools were used to assess RCTs (Joanna Briggs Institute, 2017b) and QEDs (Joanna Briggs Institute, 2017a), both developed by The JBI Collaboration (for details on the risk of bias assessment tools, see below).

The pooled risk of bias assessment of the three RCTs included in this review is displayed in Figure A1 (and the individual study assessment is provided below). While the horizontal axis represents the studies, the vertical axis describes the methodological characteristics of the studies assessed by our team. The colours correspond to answers to each question with 'low risk of bias' corresponding to green; 'high risk of bias' corresponding to red; 'Unclear' corresponding to amber; and 'not applicable' corresponding to grey. As can be appreciated, the main areas of concern related to the blinding of participants and assessors, something that seems due to the nature of PBA interventions.

Figure A1. *Risk of quality bias for randomised controlled trials*
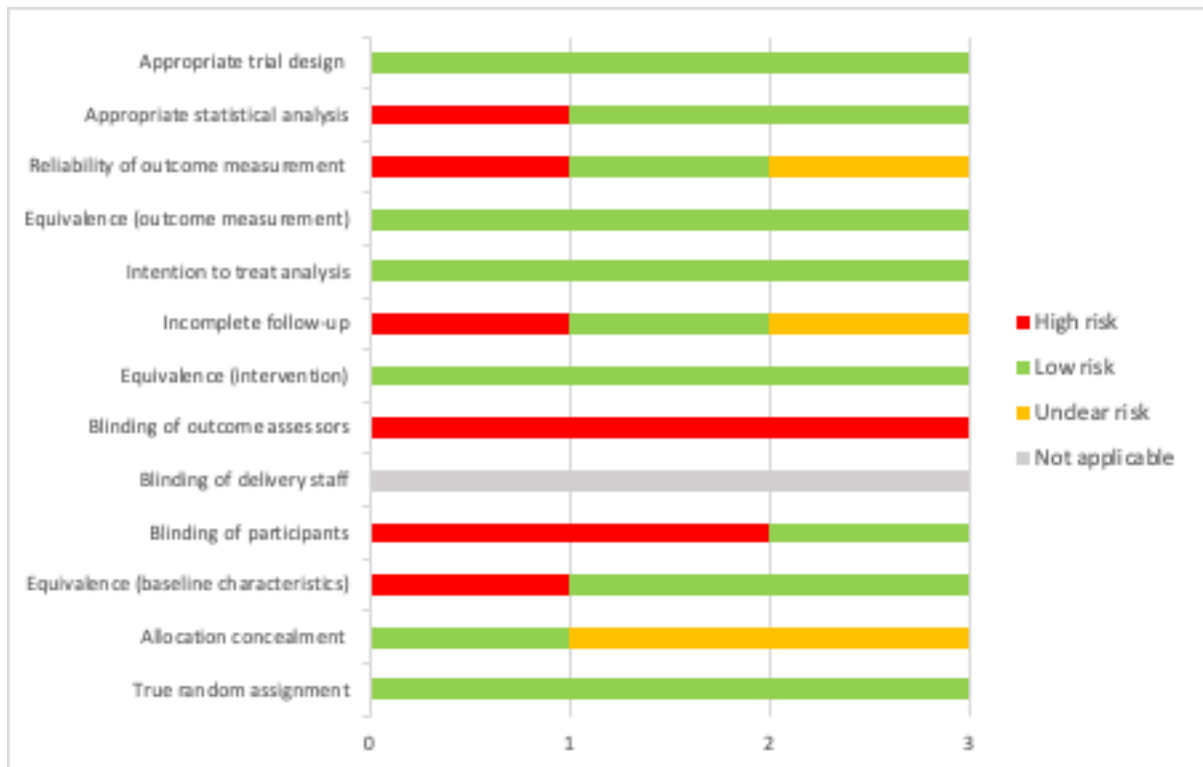
With regard to QED studies, Figure A2 suggests that most of the studies included in this review were considered as having low ROB in terms of their methodological quality (see Table A5 for the assessment of individual QED studies). High levels of risks were observed in the item denominated equivalence of the interventions that summarise the responses to the question: 'Were the participants included in any comparisons receiving similar treatment/care, other than the exposure or intervention of interest?'. Seven studies reported data that allowed to assume that it was actually not the case. Another relevant risk for quality bias was the lack of equivalence between the treatment and control group. In this respect it is important to bear in mind that we included studies with no matched control groups (e.g. Knox, Guerra, Williams, & Toro, 2011; Milam et al., 2016; Rowland et al., 2021).

Figure A2. *Risk of quality bias for quasi experimental designs*
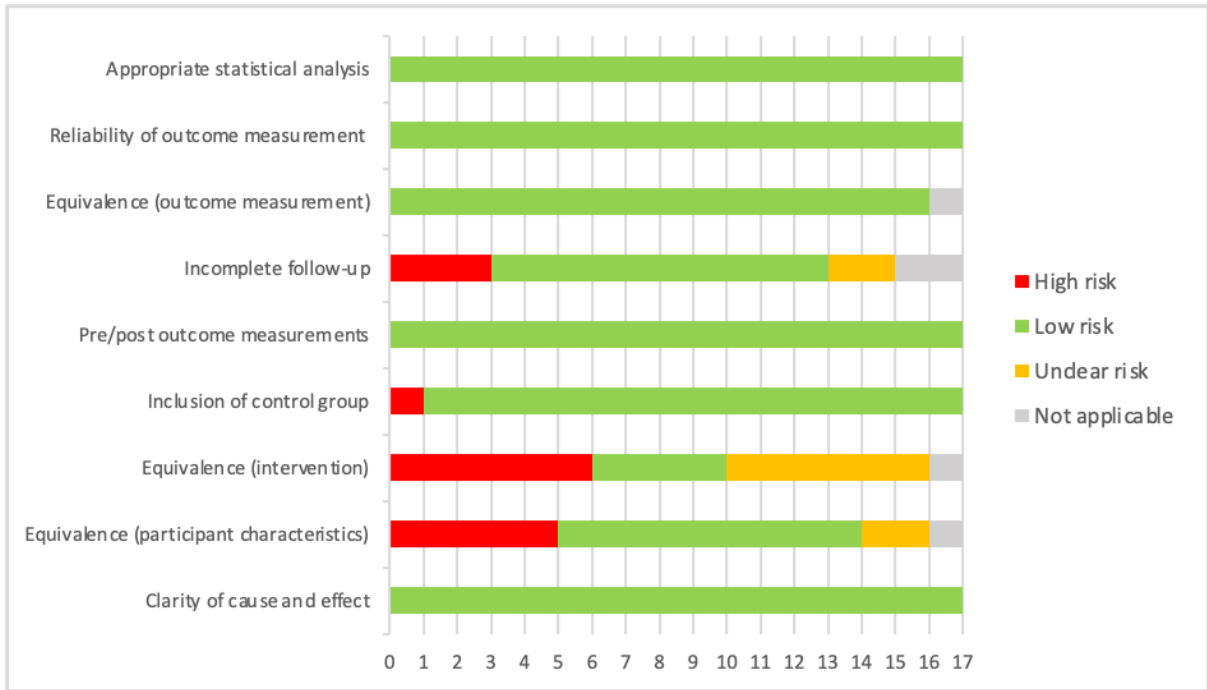
JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist For Randomized Controlled Trials

Reviewer_____

Date_____

Author_____Year_____ Record Number_____

	Yes	No	Unclear	NA
1. Was true randomization used for assignment of participants to treatment groups?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Was allocation to treatment groups concealed?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Were treatment groups similar at the baseline?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Were participants blind to treatment assignment?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Were those delivering treatment blind to treatment assignment?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Were outcomes assessors blind to treatment assignment?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Were treatment groups treated identically other than the intervention of interest?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Was follow up complete and if not, were differences between groups in terms of their follow up adequately described and analyzed?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Were participants analyzed in the groups to which they were randomized?	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Were outcomes measured in the same way for treatment groups?	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Were outcomes measured in a reliable way?	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Was the trial design appropriate, and any deviations from the standard RCT design (individual randomization, parallel groups) accounted for in the conduct and analysis of the trial?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Overall appraisal: Include ☐   Exclude ☐   Seek further info ☐

Comments (Including reason for exclusion)

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JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist For Quasi-Experimental Studies

Reviewer_____

Date_____

		Yes	No	Unclear	Not applicable
1.	Is it clear in the study what is the 'cause' and what is the 'effect' (i.e. there is no confusion about which variable comes first)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Were the participants included in any comparisons similar?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Were the participants included in any comparisons receiving similar treatment/care, other than the exposure or intervention of interest?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Was there a control group?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Were there multiple measurements of the outcome both pre and post the intervention/exposure?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Was follow up complete and if not, were differences between groups in terms of their follow up adequately described and analyzed?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Were the outcomes of participants included in any comparisons measured in the same way?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Were outcomes measured in a reliable way?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Overall appraisal:　　Include ☐　　Exclude ☐　　Seek further info ☐

Comments (Including reason for exclusion)

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Table A4. *Risk of bias (RCT)*

RCT	1. Was true randomization used for assignment of participants to treatment groups?	2. Was allocation to treatment groups concealed?	3. Were treatment groups similar at the baseline?	4. Were participants blind to treatment assignment?	5. Were those delivering treatment blind to treatment assignment?	6. Were outcomes assessors blind to treatment assignment?	7. Were treatment groups treated identically other than the intervention of interest?	8. Was follow up complete and if not, were differences between groups in terms of their follow up adequately described and analyzed?	9. Were participants analyzed in the groups to which they were randomized?	10. Were outcomes measured in the same way for treatment groups?	11. Were outcomes measured in a reliable way?	12. Was appropriate statistical analysis used?	13. Was the trial design appropriate, and any deviations from the standard RCT design (individual randomization, parallel groups) accounted for in the conduct and analysis of the trial?
Kelly 2010	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	NA	No	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gonzalez-Guarda 2015	Yes	Yes	No	No	NA	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Hawkins 2008	Yes	Unclear	Yes	No	NA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes

Table A5. *Risk of bias* (QEDs)

	1. Is it clear in the study what is the 'cause' and what is the 'effect' (i.e. there is no confusion about which variable comes first)?	2. Were the participants included in any comparisons similar?	3. Were the participants included in any comparisons receiving similar treatment/care, other than the exposure or intervention of interest?	4. Was there a control group?	5. Were there multiple measurements of the outcome both pre and post the intervention/exposure?	6. Was follow up complete and if not, were differences between groups in terms of their follow up adequately described and analysed?	7. Were the outcomes of participants included in any comparisons measured in the same way?	8. Were outcomes measured in a reliable way?	9. Was appropriate statistical analysis used?
Braga 2001	Yes	NA	NA	No	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes
Brantingham 2021	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chilenski 2019	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes
Feinberg 2007	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fox 2015	Yes	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Heinze 2016	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Knox 2011	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Le 2011	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Milam 2016	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oscos-Sanchez 2013	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Picard-Fritsche 2013	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rowland 2021	Yes	Unclear	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spergel 2002	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes
Toumbourou 2019	Yes	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Webster 2012	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Williams 2014	Yes	No	Unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

| Wilson 2010 | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | NA | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Appendix 5: Summary table of included papers in the Review of Theory

Table A6. *Summary of included papers in the Review of Theory*

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Abdul-Adil 2021	2021	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	The Urban Youth Trauma Center	Involving (Level 3)
Abebe 2018	2018	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	13 to 19	Manhood 2.0	Involving (Level 3)
Akeo 2008	2008	USA	Non-CTC	Rural	10 to 12	Hui Malama o ke Kai	Collaborating (Level 4)
Allison 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Clark-Hill Institute for Positive Youth Development, set up as an Academic Center of Excellence In Youth Violence Prevention (ACE)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Arthur 2010	2010	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Azrael 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center	Collaborating (Level 4)
Backer 2011	2011	USA	CTC Theory	Metropolitan	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Basic 2015	2015	Croatia	CTC Theory	Not specified	Not described	CTC	Involving (Level 3)
Beatriz 2018	2018	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	11 to 14	The Start Strong Boston: Building Healthy Teen Relationships	Collaborating (Level 4)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Bolton 2017	2017	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC)	Devolving (Level 5)
Braga 2001	2001	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	0 to 24	Operation Ceasefire	Collaborating (Level 4)
Brantingham 2021	2021	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD)	Involving (Level 3)
Bridgewater 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Youth Violence Systems Project	Collaborating (Level 4)
Brisson 2020	2020	Canada	Non-CTC	Multiple	9 to 24	Youth Advocate Program, Souls strong, CeaseFire	Involving (Level 3)
Brown 2009	2009	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Brown 2014	2014	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Browne 2001	2001	USA	Non-CTC	Multiple	Not described	Research on Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Violence, and Pregnancy Prevention Project (RSVPP)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Calhoun 2014	2014	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Youth ALIVE!	Devolving (Level 5)
Cheadle 2001	2001	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Seattle Minority Youth Health Project	Devolving (Level 5)
Chilenski 2019	2019	USA	CTC Impact	Rural	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Dymnicki 2021	2021	USA	Non-CTC	Multiple	Not described	Youth Violence Prevention Training and Technical Assistance (YVP TTA)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Fagan 2002	2002	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Boston Gun Project	Collaborating (Level 4)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Fagan 2008a: Bridging science to practice: Achievi	2008	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Fagan 2008b: Implementing effective community-base	2008	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Fagan 2011	2011	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Fagan 2012	2012	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Fagan 2013	2013	NA	CTC Theory	Multiple	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Fagan 2015	2015	NA	CTC Theory	Multiple	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Farrington 2010	2015	NA	CTC Theory	Multiple	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Feinberg 2007	2007	USA	CTC Impact	Multiple	11 to 19	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Fleming 2018	2018	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Fox 2015	2015	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	16 to 25	TRUCE Project	Involving (Level 3)
Goddard 2012	2012	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Livingston Beach Gang Reduction, Intervention, and Prevention Project	Collaborating (Level 4)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
						(LBGRIP) and the Livingston Beach Weed and Seed Project.	
Gonzala-guarda 2015	2015	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	13 to 16	JOVEN/YOUTH: Juntos Opuestos a la Violence Entre Novios/Together Against Dating Violence	Collaborating (Level 4)
Gorman-Smith 2014	2014	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Ceasefire Chicago	Involving (Level 3)
Griffith 2008	2008	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Youth Violence Prevention Center	Devolving (Level 5)
Hausman 2000	2000	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	The Firearms Connections - The North Philadelphia Firearms Reduction Initiative	Collaborating (Level 4)
Hausman 2013	2013	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	10 to 14	Philadelphia Collaborative Violence Prevention Center (PCVPC)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Hawkins 2002	2002	NA	CTC Theory	Not specified	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Hawkins 2008a: Testing communities that care: The	2008	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Hawkins 2008b: Early effects of Communities That	2008	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Hawkins 2009	2009	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Hawkins 2012a	2012	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Hawkins 2012b	2012	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Hawkins 2014	2014	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Heinze 2016	2016	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	10 to 24	Michigan Youth - Violence Prevention Centre (MI-YVPC)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Hernandez-Cordero 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Fresh Start	Collaborating (Level 4)
Holland 2015	2015	USA	Non-CTC	Multiple	Not described	National Academic Centers of Excellence (ACEs) in Youth Violence Prevention and Urban Partnership Academic Centers of Excellence (UPACEs) in Youth Violence Prevention	Collaborating (Level 4)
Jeffries 2019	2019	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	11 to 17	Connecticut Project Safe Neighbourhoods Youth Opportunity Initiative (PSN Youth)	Involving (Level 3)
Kelly 2010	2010	USA	Non-CTC	Regional	8 to 11	El Joven Noble	Devolving (Level 5)
Kim 2014	2014	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Kim 2015	2015	USA	CTC Theory	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Kim 2015	2015	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Kingston 2016	2016	USA	Non-CTC	Multiple	Not described	National Centers of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention (YVPCs).	Collaborating (Level 4)
Knox 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Southern California Academic Center of Excellence on Youth Violence Prevention (ACE-UCR) (this article focuses mostly on the intervention being evaluated by ACE-	Collaborating (Level 4)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
						UCR, called Families and Schools Together (FAST) rather than the Center itself)	
Kuklinski 2012	2012	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Kuklinski 2013	2013	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Kuklinski 2015	2015	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Le 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	The Center on Culture, Immigration, and Youth Violence Prevention (UC Berkeley ACE)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Leff 2010	2010	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	10 to 14	Youth violence/leadership promotion program (PARTNERS Program)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Manuel 2018	2018	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Youth Peace Olympics	Devolving (Level 5)
Massetti 2010	2010	NA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	The paper does not describe one PBA, it is the CDC writing about the benefits of their Community-Research Partnerships	Collaborating (Level 4)
Massetti 2016	2016	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention, University of Michigan YVPC, Virginia Commonwealth University Clark-Hill Institute for Positive Youth Development, North Carolina Rural Academic Center for Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention, John Hopkins Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence, University of Colorado Boulder - The Denver Collaborative to Reduce Youth Violence	Collaborating (Level 4)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Mercy 2016	2016	USA	Non-CTC	Multiple	Not described	Youth Violence Prevention Centers (YVPCs).	Collaborating (Level 4)
Miao 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Rural	14 to 19	Asian/ Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center (API Center)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Milam 2016	2016	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	15 to 24	Safe Streets intervention	Involving (Level 3)
Mirabal 2008	2008	Puerto Rico	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Centre for Hispanic Youth Violence Prevention	Collaborating (Level 4)
Mirabal-Colon 2003	2003	Puerto Rico	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Centre for Hispanic Youth Violence Prevention	Collaborating (Level 4)
Morrel-Samuels 2013	2013	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	10 to 24	Michigan Youth Violence Precention Centre (MI-YBPCs)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Morrel-Samuels 2016	2016	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Colorado Academic Center for Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention (CO-YVPC) and Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center (MI-YVPC)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Myers 2005	2005	USA	CTC Theory	Metropolitan	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Nation 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Nashville Urban Partnership Academic Center of Excellence (NUPACE)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Nazaire 2018	2018	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	ABSPY: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth	Collaborating (Level 4)
Ocos-Sanchez2013	2013	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	11 to 18	El Joven Noble	Collaborating (Level 4)
Oesterle 2010	2010	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Oesterle 2014	2014	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Oesterle 2018	2018	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Osterle 2015	2015	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Payne 2004	2004	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	The Arlanza Neighborhood Initiative	Involving (Level 3)
Picard-Fritsche 2013	2013	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	15 to 26	Save Our Streets (replication of CeaseFire for New York) - TBC	Collaborating (Level 4)
Rhew 2013	2013	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Rhew 2016	2016	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Rhew 2018	2018	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Roding 2021	2021	Germany	CTC Theory	Multiple	10 to 17	CTC	Not described
Rowland 2018	2018	Australia	CTC Theory	Metropolitan	13 to 16	CTC	Involving (Level 3)
Rowland 2021	2021	Australia	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Spergel 2002	2002	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	17 to 24	Gang Violence Reduction Project	Involving (Level 3)
Steketee 2013	2013	Holland	CTC Theory	Metropolitan	Not described	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Taylor 2018	2018	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Harlem Children's Zone Promising neighborhoods	Collaborating (Level 4)
Telleen 2009	2009	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative	Collaborating (Level 4)
Thomas 2002	2002	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	The Island Youth Programs	Collaborating (Level 4)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Toumbourou 2019	2019	Australia	CTC Impact	Multiple	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Trent 2021	2021	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	16 to 25	One Vision One Life, Pittsburgh; Safe Streets, Baltimore; CeaseFire, Chicago; Save our Streets, New York; TRUCE project, Pheonix	Collaborating (Level 4)
Umemoto 2009	2009	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center (APIYVPC),	Collaborating (Level 4)
US Department of Justice 2008	2008	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	7 to 14	Comprehensive Gang Model	Collaborating (Level 4)
VanHorn 2014	2014	USA	CTC Impact	Regional	10 to 16	CTC	Devolving (Level 5)
Vivolo 2011	2011	USA	Non-CTC	Multiple	Not described	ACE: National Academic Centres of Excellence for Youth Violence Prevention	Involving (Level 3)
Watson-Thompson 2008	2008	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council Youth Project (INCYP)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Watson-Thompson 2020	2020	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Together Helping Reduce Youth Violence for Equity (ThrYve)	Collaborating (Level 4)
Webster 2012	2012	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	Safe Streets	Involving (Level 3)
Whitehill 2012	2012	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	16 to 25	Ceasefire Chicago and Safe Streets (an adaptation of Ceasefire Chicago)	Involving (Level 3)
Williams 2014	2014	Scotland	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	16 to 29	Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)	Collaborating (Level 4)

Author	Year Of Publication	Country	Communities that Care (CTC) vs. Non-CTC PBAs	Type of Setting	Target Age Range in Years	Name of PBA	Overall Level on Arnstein's Ladder of Community Involvement
Wilson 2010	2010	USA	Non-CTC	Metropolitan	Not described	One Vision One Life	Devolving (Level 5)