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## FORUM FEATURE: DETROIT



## PRIMARY PREVENTION

Howard Spivak, M.D., and Marci Hertz graciously made time for us in their busy schedules to answer some questions about prevention. Both work in the Division of Violence Prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—Dr. Spivak as Director and Ms. Hertz as a Health Specialist. In the interview, their commitment to violence reduction came through loud and clear, as did their vast knowledge about how to approach this issue effectively. Below is part one of our interview. Part two will appear in the May issue.

### ***Is there a difference between "prevention" and "primary prevention"?***

Dr. Spivak explained that in a public health model, prevention includes a spectrum of activities.

Primary prevention activities complement secondary and tertiary prevention activities; all three types are needed to address a problem like violence. Dr. Spivak noted that many well-meaning folks tend to focus on secondary and

### **Detroit, Detroit: How Does Your Garden Grow?**

In Metro Detroit, Riet Schumack's sprawling gardens crown the town of Brightmoor in all their glory. Over a verdant slope of flora, a field brimming with beets, broccoli, and beans stretches to the Rogue River. The landscape is so lush and quiet, it's hard to believe bustling Telegraph Road is just a stone's throw from Riet's home. But that's exactly where the gardens began, bringing inspiration, hope, and restorative therapy to hundreds of neighborhood kids each spring.

The 40 gardens span 34,000 square feet of city space and serve as a second home for kids from the Youth Development Program, which has made many a young thumb a bit greener. The program is building valuable life skills with kids and teens, who gather the fruits and veggies for each season's harvest with a genuine sense of accomplishment.

And it's all thanks to residents like Riet. In 2005, when she bought her Brightmoor home, it was one of many on the block in utter disrepair. She began renovating the house and signed up for the [Urban Roots Community Garden Leader Training Program](#), a collaboration with [Michigan State University Extension](#). Then she decided to try soil for herself and

tertiary activities since they address current problems. But he emphasized that without primary prevention activities, the roots of the problems cannot be addressed.

*Primary prevention* focuses on whole populations and aims to reduce or prevent the development of issues, problems, or risk behaviors. These activities make the general population less violent. Primary prevention includes strategies implemented with individuals or small groups such as universal school-based violence prevention programs, as well as broader strategies that can be implemented at the community level. Community-level strategies can be program or policy focused—for example, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, or alcohol outlet density.

*Secondary prevention* activities target higher-risk individuals or groups, including those that engage in high-risk behaviors (e.g., carrying a weapon, using drugs) and those with risk factors that put them at elevated risk for becoming engaged in violence (e.g., siblings of gang members, youth with developmental disabilities). These activities are structured to prevent further involvement in violence. Many different kinds of strategies and interventions fall under the umbrella of secondary prevention. For instance, a conflict-resolution program could be integrated into school activities targeting at-risk kids. Wraparound services might be provided to identified at-risk youth, not only for skill building but for monitoring purposes.

*Tertiary prevention* focuses on individuals "way downstream"—that is, people who have already deeply penetrated the juvenile or criminal justice system. These individuals might be in detention or jail. The goal of tertiary prevention programs is to lessen the degree to which these people may be involved in violence down the road. An example is reentry programs, which tend to provide more services than prevention.

To illustrate the various levels of prevention, Dr. Spivak used smoking as an analogy. For instance, primary prevention includes activities to reduce the risk of people starting. Such activities could include statutory changes, communication strategies, and even legal approaches (media campaigns, increasing the cost of cigarettes, making it more difficult to smoke in different places, and implementing age limits). Secondary prevention includes smoking cessation programs. Tertiary prevention includes addressing lung cancer to save a life.

## Continue Reading

she dug in, raking soil for a garden everyone could help cultivate. It was no accident that the plot was flanked by a drug house and popular corner for prostitution, but before long, Riet's good garden vibes began to drive away neighborhood crime. Four years later, she had enough volunteers to start Neighbors Building Brightmoor, a nonprofit organization dedicated to "mobilizing, equipping, and helping each other to create a beautiful, healthy, and sustainable community." Riet is one of many activists in Northwest Detroit whose revitalization efforts have helped longtime residents remember what they first loved about the area. Once-abandoned homes are now being bought and restored.

Riet's young gardeners learn the value of hard work in more than theory, with fresh produce generating \$7,000 for the Northwest Detroit Farmer's Market and a community investment that renews itself every year in a bounty of carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, watermelon, broccoli, pumpkins, and squash. With every seed sown comes an appreciation for life, growth, and prosperity—principles that Mother Nature often teaches best.

The gardens have also educated kids about income, credit, and debt. Youth Growing Brightmoor Market Gardens introduces young farmers to the business aspects of urban agriculture. They can earn up to \$100 each month, plus a \$15 stipend for attending a weekly financial literacy program.

There are visions of fruit trees in Brightmoor's plans for the gardens, and expansion onto adjacent street lots is in the works. Riet wants to boost the city's economy by creating small farms throughout the city to stock local markets, restaurants, stores, hospitals, and nursing homes, all while filling abandoned lots.

The garden program is an example of Detroit's "built environment"—structured improvements to manmade surroundings like parks, buildings, and transportation systems that can reduce crime and improve quality of life for residents. At their basic level, built environment features make neighborhoods and cities look and feel safer, adding light to dark corners, securing exits and entries to local businesses, and posting signs that designate public and private areas. Annie Ellington, Director of the Detroit Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, talked about ongoing efforts to renovate areas where conditions have deteriorated.

"In Detroit, public safety, community pride, and youth engagement all cross in one way or another. [Challenges] are the growing number of abandoned homes, our aging lighting infrastructure, the continued population loss, etc. It's difficult to maintain environments where vacancy rates are increasing. Mayor Dave Bing, Governor Rick Snyder, and other elected officials have identified public safety as a top priority." To that end, the

**[Residential Demolition Program, Neighborhood Stabilization and School Anchor Program, Detroit Blight Authority, and 100 Houses Campaign](#)** are gaining ground.

Blight is the city's major environmental concern. A blighted structure, as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is one showing objectively determinable signs of deterioration sufficient to constitute a threat to human health, safety, and public welfare. According to a **[2012 Detroit Free Press article](#)**, more than 33,000 abandoned and potentially dangerous structures threaten Detroit students as they travel to and from school. "In mapping Detroit's Safe Routes to School program, the Detroit Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (DYVPI)



There is something truly special about a new book. The scent of paper, ink, and glue ... the crinkling of its spine opening for the first time ... these are memories from our earliest experiences of reading and learning. Although used books also have their charm, a brand new book says "this one was meant for me."

Included in this issue is an interview with Howard Spivak, M.D., Director of the Division of Violence Prevention at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in which Dr. Spivak outlines and defines all aspects of prevention. Providing new books to children is one of the most basic and effective prevention tools we have to shield youth from involvement in violent behavior. Simple, resourceful ideas like First Book often provide the best primary prevention. Evidence shows that a child's interest in reading triples with the gift of a new book. The potential of books to shape the minds and creativity of our children is powerful—especially when they are our books.

First Book is a nonprofit organization that has provided new books to local schools and community programs since 1992. Rather than duplicate efforts or reinvent the wheel, First Book works to supply existing community heroes with the new books and educational resources they need to help children. Almost 100 percent of revenue donated to First Book supports their current program, and only \$2.50 is needed to purchase a new book for a child.

As a leader in your community, you can rely on First Book to bring needed resources to local groups. Any Title I (or Title I eligible) school or classroom can sign up—as well as any community program serving at least 70 percent children from low-income families—to get brand new, quality books for free or at a very low cost.

learned some youths walk as far as three miles to school and are sure to encounter hazardous conditions," said Annie. "Communities like the DYVPI target areas of Cody, Osborn, and Denby all face high rates of crime, poverty, and blight. The three target areas are also home to a significant portion of Detroit's youth population. Students and patrol groups have identified many abandoned homes as hubs for truancy, drug sales, dog fighting, gang activity, and prostitution. As a result of Safe Routes, efforts include the identification of dangerous structures that pose a threat to students."

Detroit's many environmental and anti-crime initiatives are uniting local, state, and federal agencies and building camaraderie among residents and youth. "Every spring there's the Motor City Makeover, Adopt-a-Park, and board-up campaigns," said Annie. "In essence, you have to adjust from environmental issues to minimize crime—to constantly engaging people to change that environment. Crime strategies such as 'Broken Windows' are appropriate solutions for more stable and some transitional communities. For example, one of Detroit's most desirable communities embraced the concept and improved community/police relationships to address and reduce property crimes."

Overall, there is a greater understanding of the relationship between blight and public safety, noted Annie.

Tending to Detroit is a labor of love, and advocates like Riet and Annie are determined to watch their city grow and flourish. The effort will take all hands, said Annie. "Detroit will continue to engage stakeholders in conversations about public safety and revitalization. Those conversations inform strategies that build partnerships and leverage resources to foster safe, healthy, and vibrant environments."

## Additional Resources

**Detroit Works Project:** [detroitworksproject.com](http://detroitworksproject.com)

**The Built Environment and Health—11 Profiles of Neighborhood Transformation:**

[http://www.preventioninstitute.org/index.php?option=com\\_jlibrary&view=article&id=114&Itemid=127](http://www.preventioninstitute.org/index.php?option=com_jlibrary&view=article&id=114&Itemid=127)

**Neighbors Building Brightmoor:**

<http://neighborsbuildingbrightmoor.org>

**Cultivating Community Gardens: The Role of Local Government in Creating Healthy, Livable Neighborhoods:**

[http://www.lgc.org/freepub/docs/community\\_design/fact\\_sheets/community\\_gardens\\_cs.pdf](http://www.lgc.org/freepub/docs/community_design/fact_sheets/community_gardens_cs.pdf)

## NEWS & VIEWS

First Book is eager to partner with civic groups too. Local volunteer groups are active in more than 160 communities throughout the country, including Memphis, Minneapolis, New Orleans, and Philadelphia, and First Book works directly with other civic groups, like the African American Chamber of Commerce in Camden, New Jersey.

For more information, visit [firstbook.org](http://firstbook.org) or watch a [video](#) on how First Book can help get new books for students.

## UPDATES

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention convened in Washington, D.C., on April 12, 2013, to discuss implementation of recommendations in the **"Report of the Attorney General's National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence."** Attorney General Eric Holder commissioned the report as part of the **Defending Childhood** initiative, and it has become a blueprint for reducing trauma among children who witness or experience violence.

The Council coordinates federal programs for juvenile delinquency prevention and missing and exploited children. Robert L. Listenbee, Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, serves as vice chair.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

### Training Opportunities

Just Detention International and the Office on Violence Against Women will present the Webinar **"Safe and Secure: Providing Services for Incarcerated Youth"** on May 1, 2013. Topics for discussion include services addressed in the Prison Rape Elimination Act standards, challenges of providing care in detention, ways to adapt crisis interventions to these settings, and strategies for providing the community standard of care to youth detainees.

**"Implementation Science and the Importance of Fidelity: Replicating Evidence-Based Practices"** is the latest Webinar in a series

## Reports

### Survey of Youth in Residential Placement 2003

*National Archive of Criminal Justice Data, 2013*

The **Survey of Youth in Residential Placement** is part of a series of assessments conducted by OJJDP to provide information about the characteristics and backgrounds of youths, including offense histories, service needs, and expectations for the future.

### Youth Violence Prevention: Public Health Intervention and High Risk Populations

*Crime, HIV and Health: Intersections of Criminal Justice and Public Health Concerns, 2013*

The 12th chapter of this report, **"Youth Violence Prevention: Public Health Intervention and High Risk Populations,"** focuses on adoption and implementation of a public health model for violence intervention among high-risk youth in California cities.

### Juvenile Justice Reform in Connecticut

*Justice Policy Institute, 2013*

This **report** describes Connecticut's success in juvenile justice reform and provides lessons for other states and communities striving to improve their juvenile justice systems.

### Culturally Responsive Strategies to Address Youth Gangs in Schools

*Handbook of Culturally Responsive School Mental Health, 2013*

Youth gangs may negatively affect school climate and contribute to overall student victimization. Kids in gangs are responsible for up to seven times more violent crime offenses than those not involved in gangs. [http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4614-4948-5\\_13](http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4614-4948-5_13)

### Reducing Youth Incarceration in the United States

*The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013*

In 2010, the U.S. youth confinement rate reached a new 35-year low—a decline that has not led to higher juvenile crime rates. This **report** highlights positive de-institutionalization trends and recommendations that encourage the humane and just treatment of youth.

### Raising the Age of Juvenile Court Jurisdiction

*Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission, 2013*

When Illinois increased the age of adulthood for criminal misdemeanor offenses to 18, it became the only U.S. state to simultaneously route youth of the same age (17) to juvenile court and adult criminal court. Now, the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission recommends **adopting legislation** to include 17-year-olds charged with felonies in the juvenile court jurisdiction age.

### Teen Dating Abuse and Harassment in the Digital World Implications for Prevention and Intervention

*Urban Institute, 2013*

Victims of digital abuse and harassment are two times likelier to be physically abused, 2.5 times likelier to be psychologically abused, and five times likelier to be sexually coerced, according to this **report**.

## News

**Michelle Obama Speaks on Youth Violence in Chicago**

hosted by the National Criminal Justice Association. The May 1, 2013, Webinar will highlight scientific findings on effective implementation of evidence-based programs and practices and how implementation can affect desired outcomes.

On May 2, 2013, the Office of Safe and Healthy Students and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education will host "**Preventing Suicide, Resources for Schools,**" a Webinar discussing suicide prevention, available school resources, and the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention.

### Funding Opportunities

The Department of Labor announced a 2013 **Face Forward** funding opportunity for programs that offer services and training to improve long-term job prospects of system-involved youth. Applications are due May 10, 2013.

OJJDP will fund rigorous, field-initiated research and evaluations for the **Community-Based Violence Prevention Field-Initiated Research Evaluation Program** to prevent and reduce youth violence and exposure to violence. Applications are due May 28, 2013.

OJJDP will fund **field-initiated studies** that advance understanding of a child and adolescent development framework's application to juvenile justice system approaches, policies, and programs. Applications are due May 29, 2013.

On April 10, Michelle Obama attended a Chicago conference on reducing violence. Mrs. Obama **emphasized the city's business, civil, and moral obligations** to improve and expand children's resources and community support and talked to kids about neighborhood crime.

### Allstate CEO Wilson on Youth Violence, Boston Bomb

In this **video**, Chief Executive Officer of Allstate Corporation Thomas Wilson discusses the April 15 bombing in Boston and a program to raise \$50 million to combat neighborhood violence in Chicago.

## Other Resources

### Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). It's a time to educate the public about sexual violence and how to prevent it. The **SAAM site** provides information and materials for upcoming and past campaigns as well as Healthy Childhood Sexual Development Resources.

### National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day

May 9 is **National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day**, an initiative of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to raise awareness about children's mental health and spread the message that good mental health is essential for proper development. Educational resources, event-planning guides, and a list of related conferences and meetings are available online.

### Take 25 Events

A **Take 25 event** represents any opportunity to begin a conversation about child safety. Events can be hosted throughout the month of May and organizers receive free materials for each event registered online.

## Contact Us

Send questions or feedback about the newsletter to **NFYVP@dsgonline.com** or **subscribe**.

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