



**COOK COUNTY**  
OFFICE OF THE  
Justice Advisory  
Council

# Effective Approaches to Violence Prevention: Strategies that are Evidence Informed & Community Affirmed

Cook County Justice  
Advisory Council

**June 18, 2024**

Dr. Whitney Key Towey, Justice Advisory Council

Aaron Brown, Lawrence Hall

Jakobe Jones, Program Alumni & Young Adult Leader



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# Cook County Justice Advisory Council

Promoting equitable, human-centered, community-driven justice system innovation and practice that increases community safety and reduces reliance on incarceration.

Community  
Engagement



Policy Work

Re-entry  
Services

Grants &  
Investment

**Our mission**



# Grants and Investments

**Investment  
approach**

Investing in programs, services and strategies that are



**EVIDENCE  
INFORMED**



**COMMUNITY  
AFFIRMED**





# Grant and Investments

## Community Violence Intervention (CVI)

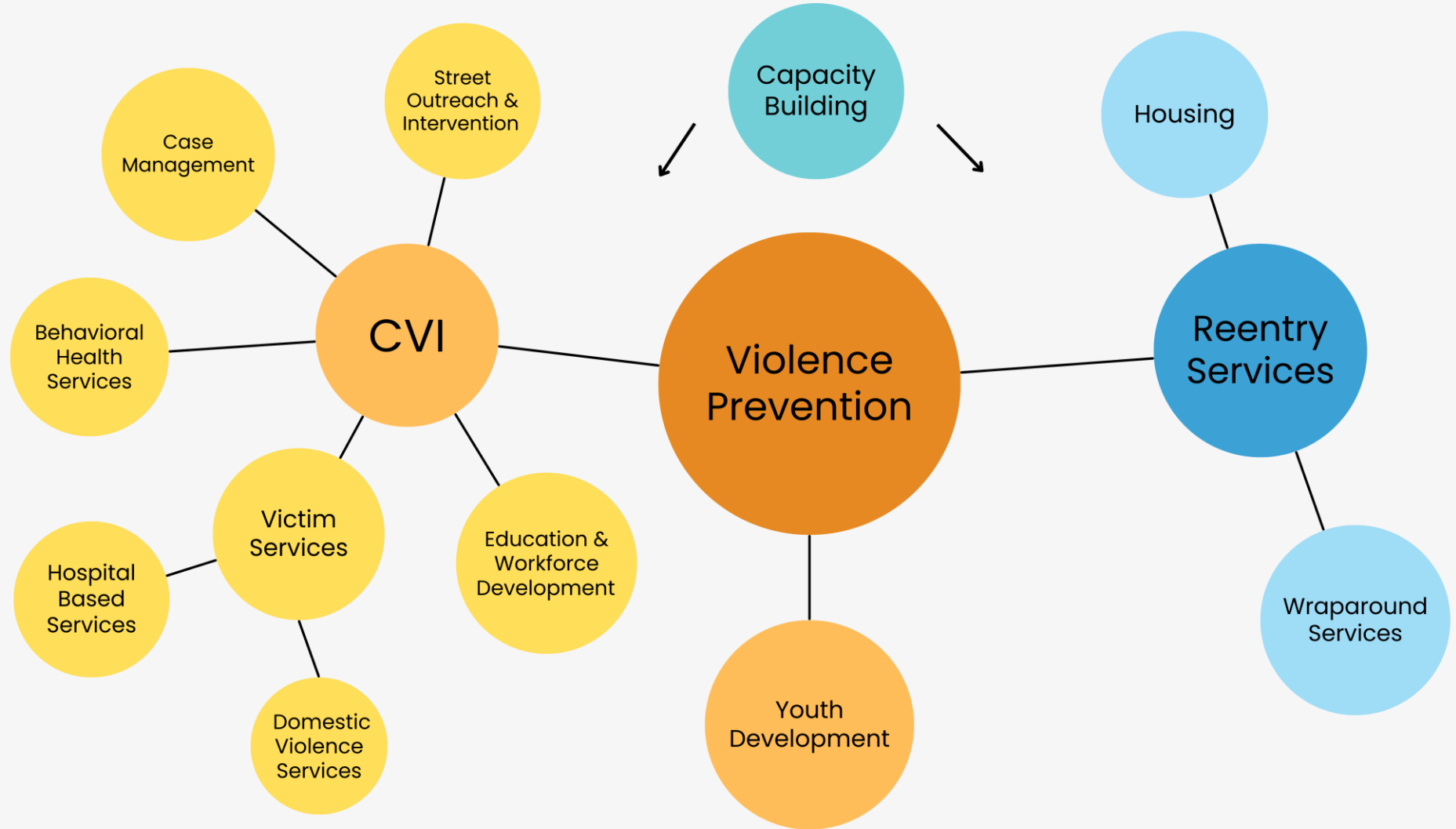
CVI programs save lives, provide opportunities, and improve the underlying conditions and root causes that drive violence in our communities by following two main principles:

1. **Engaging those at the highest risk** of perpetrating or falling victim to violence, to interrupt incidents of violence, and
2. **Providing social services to those at highest risk** to heal unresolved trauma and interrupt cycles of violence in those individuals' lives and, in turn, their communities.

CVI approaches are evidence-informed, community-centered, multidisciplinary, and intended to both prevent and disrupt community violence



# Grant and Investments



Investing in  
approaches that  
are evidence  
informed





# Centering Community-Based Approaches

Gun violence is a public health problem, need to use public health approaches as solutions<sup>1</sup>

Gun violence exposure has lasting impacts on the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals and their communities.

Gun violence disproportionately affects Black communities- a gun homicide rate 14 times higher than their white peers.

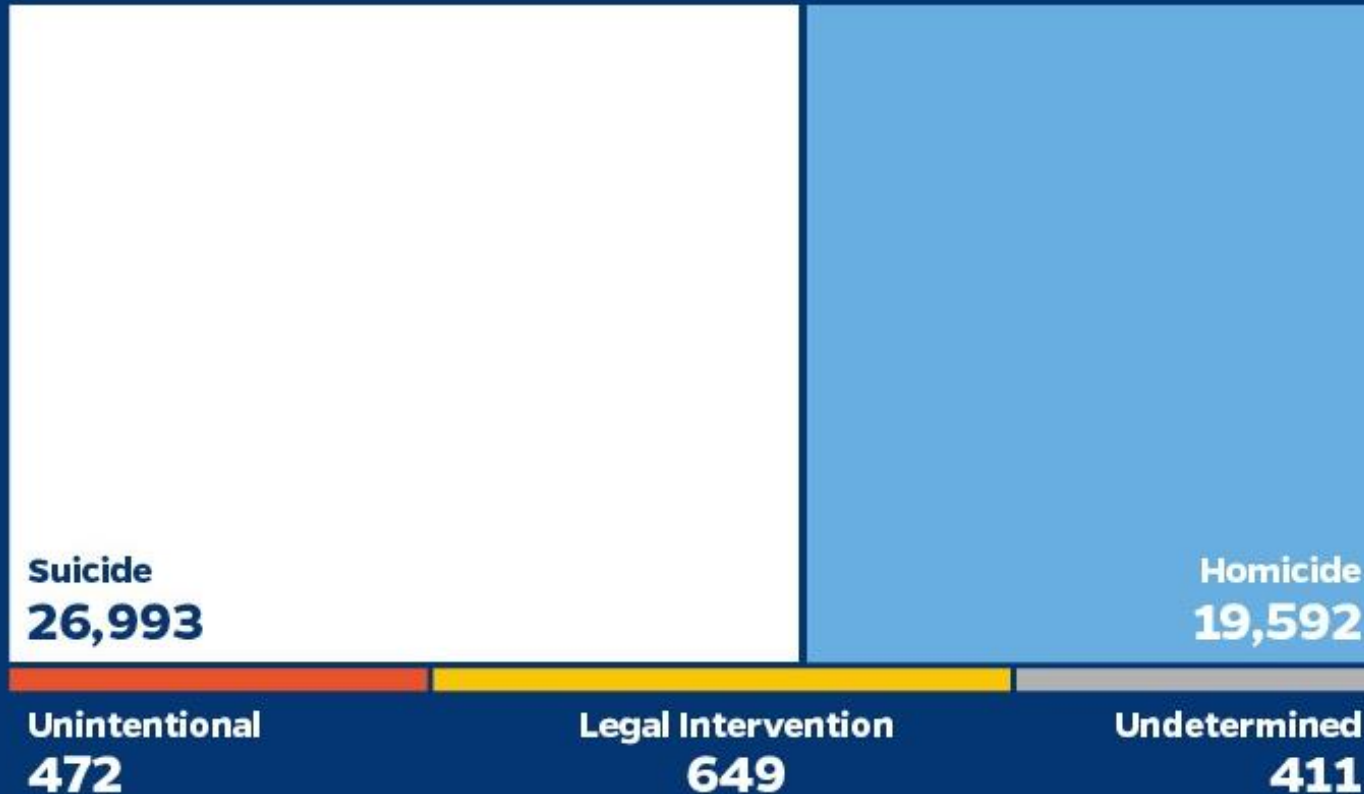
Policing and incarceration have been ineffective in addressing gun violence, often exacerbating racial inequities and trauma.

Community violence intervention (CVI) programs are designed to reduce gun violence in the most impacted neighborhoods through outreach by credible messengers who work with individuals involved in gun violence.<sup>1, 3</sup>



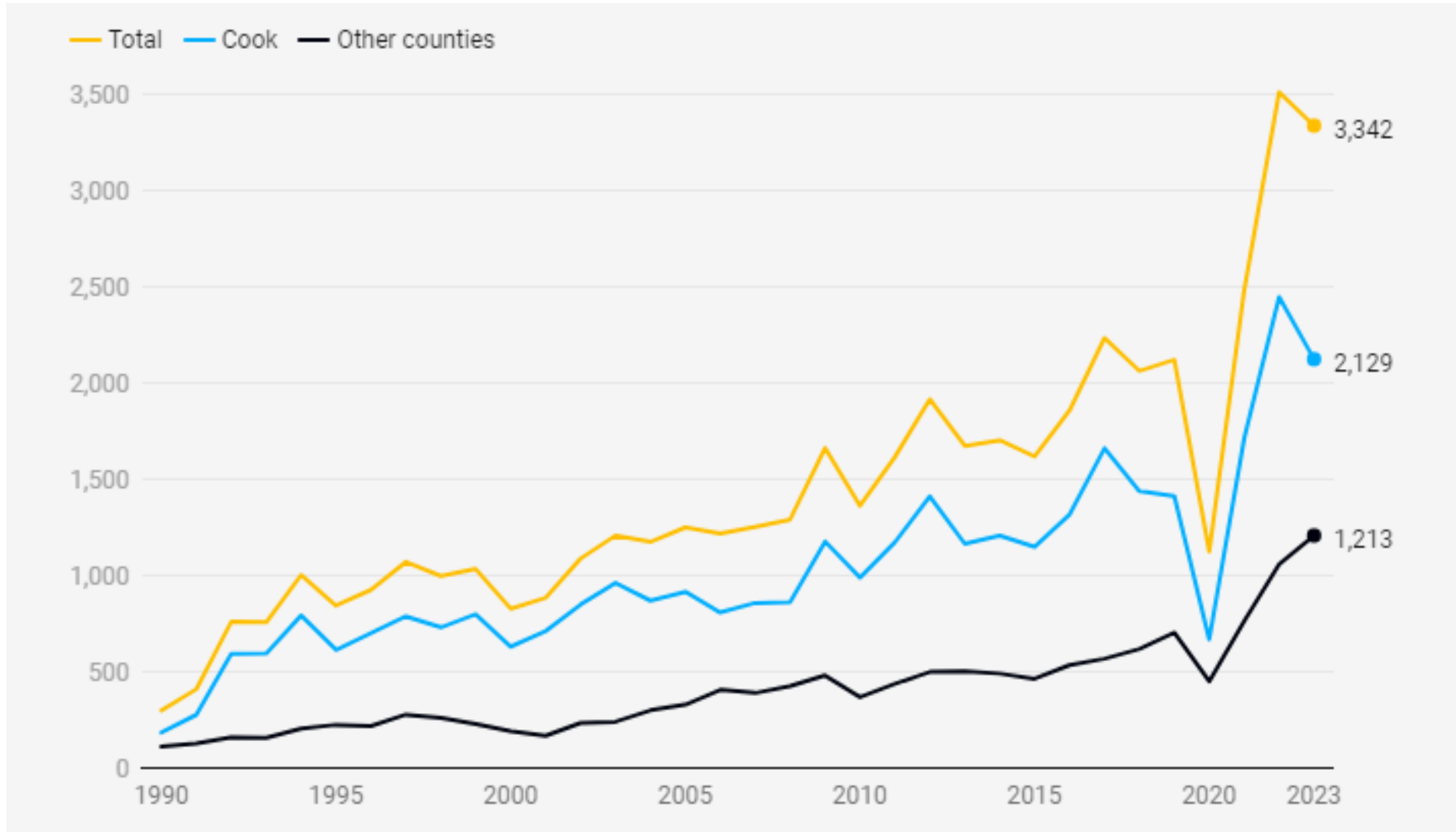
# National Data & Trends

## 48,117 lives were lost to gun violence in 2022



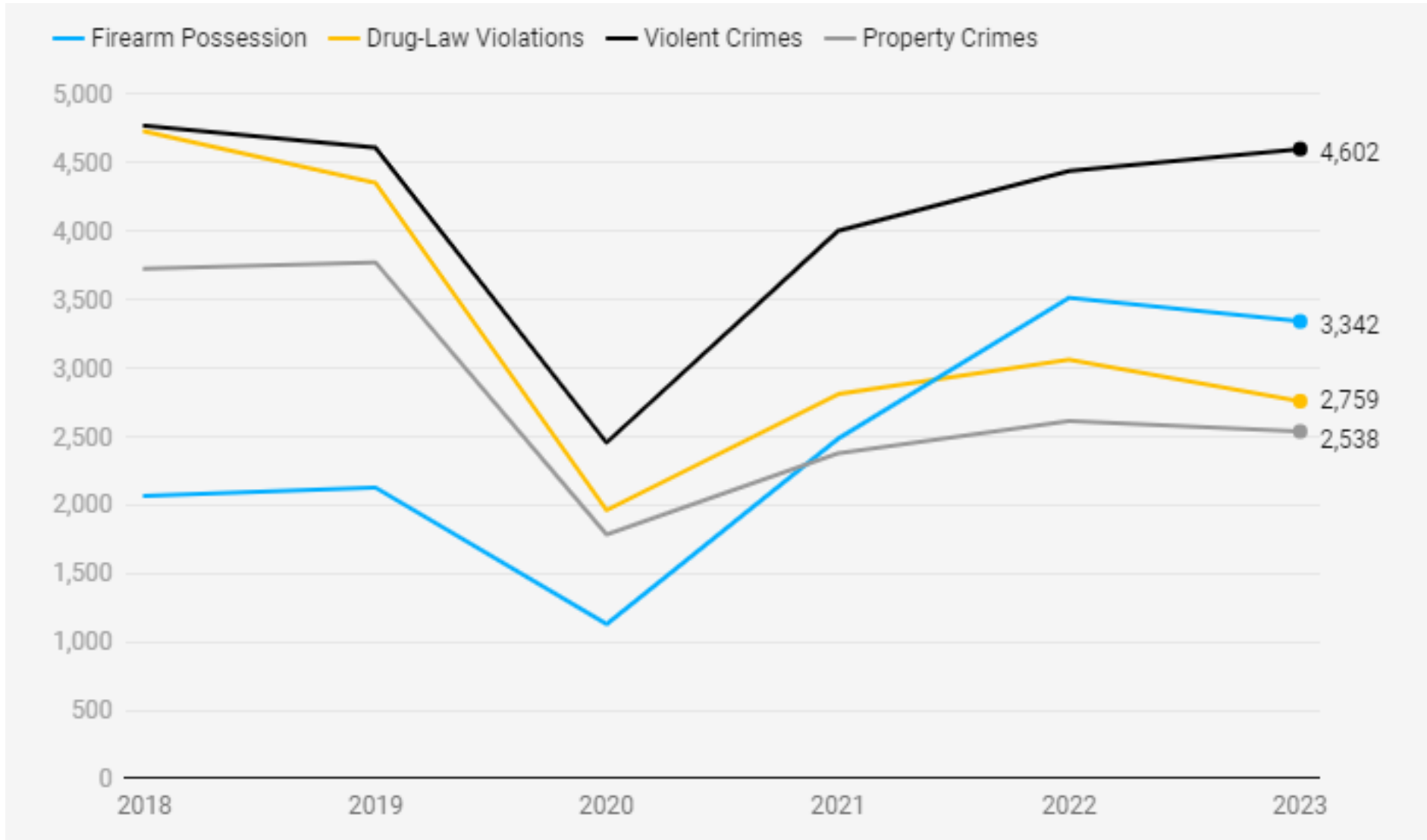


# Prison Sentences in IL for Firearm Possession<sup>2</sup>





# Prison Sentences for all Crime in IL<sup>2</sup>

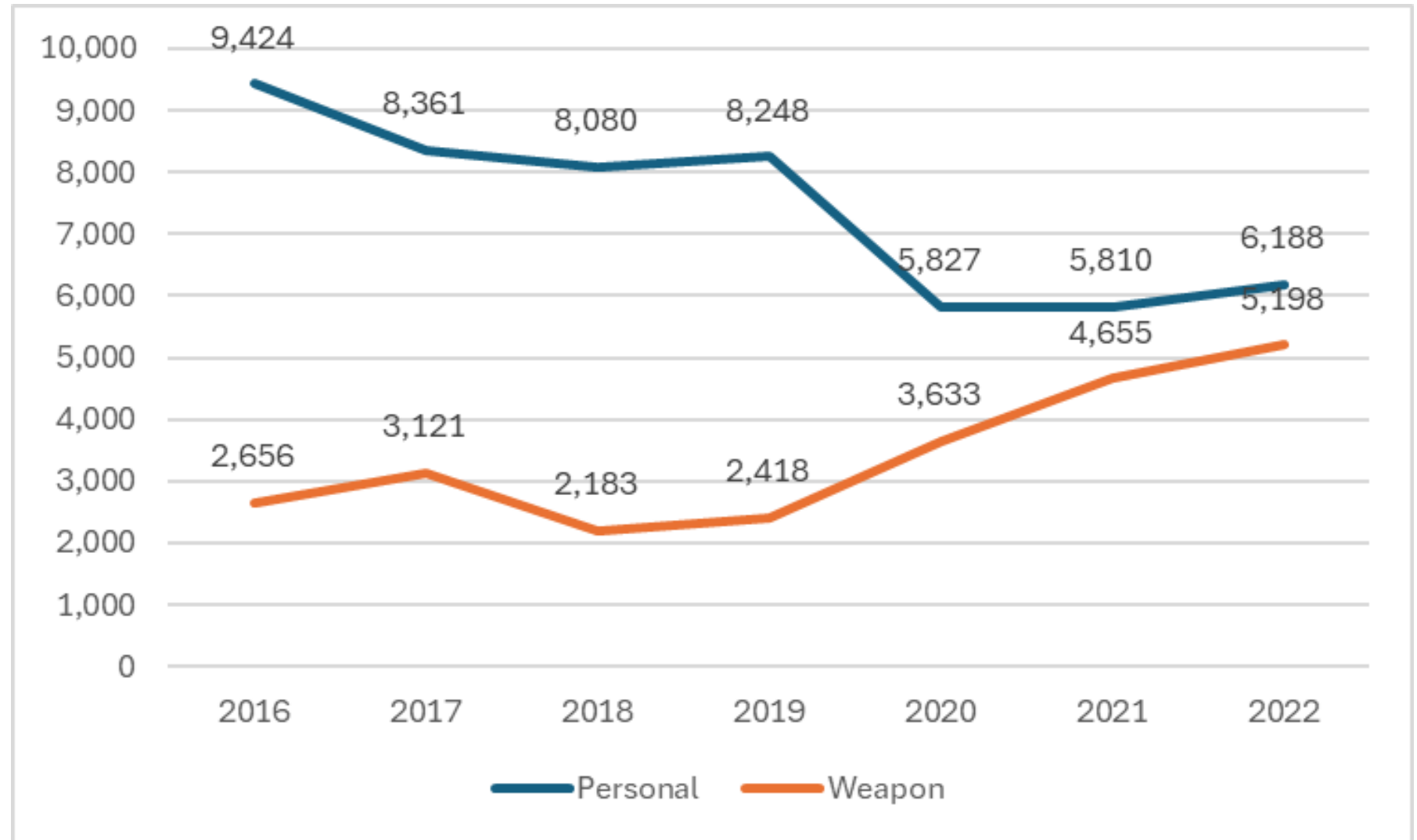




# Incarceration Rates – Offense Type

Cook County Jail  
Admission rates  
from 2016-2022  
based by offense

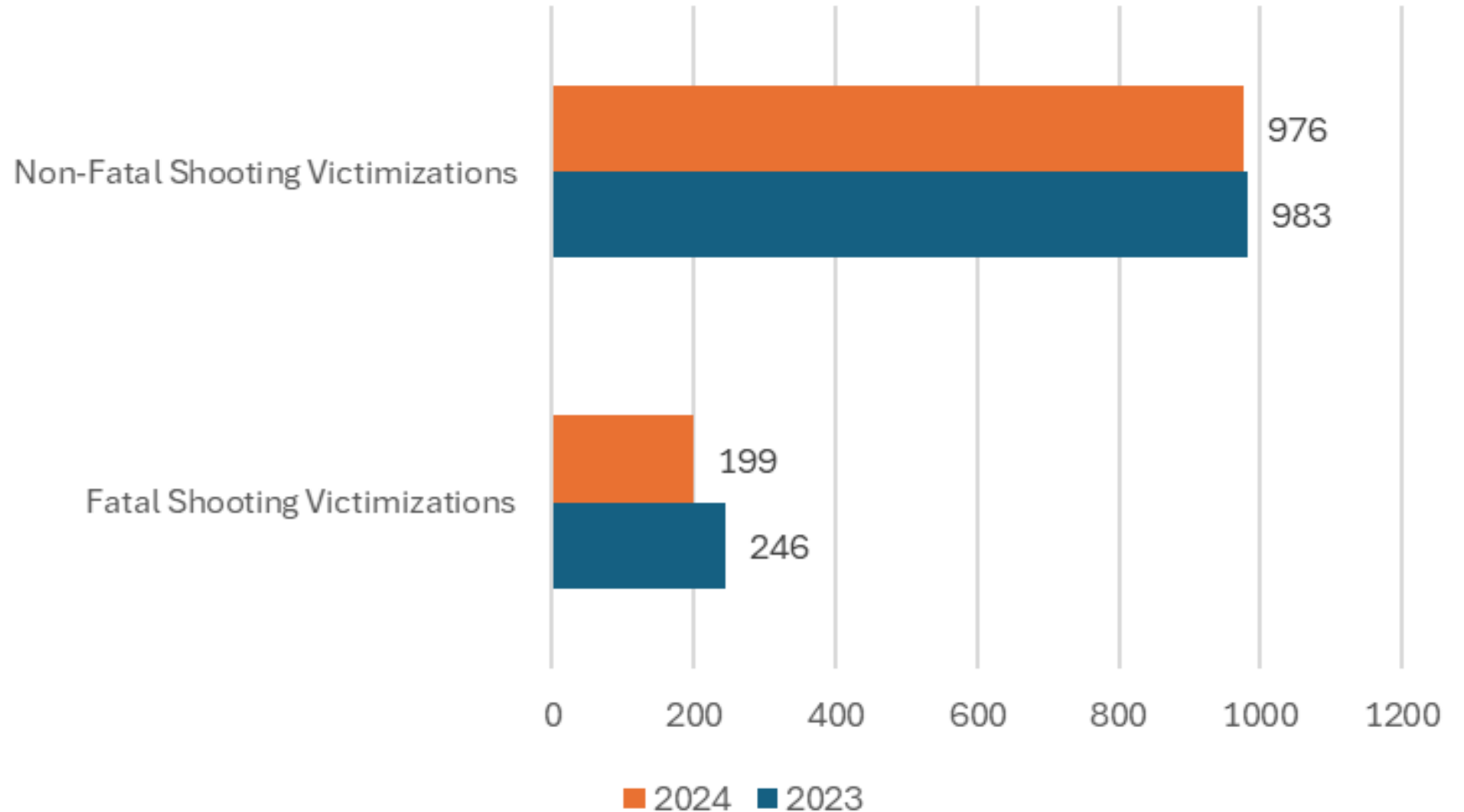
Source: Loyola University  
Chicago<sup>3</sup>





# All Shooting Victimization Chicago

Victim counts and comparison in all community areas, Jan 1- Jun 16



Source: City of Chicago<sup>4</sup>



# What's Working? Local Data & Trends

## Community Violence Intervention (CVI) strategies demonstrate promising results

- A Chicago CRED study by CORNERS showed a 73.4% reduction in violent crime arrests<sup>5</sup>
- UChicago Crime Lab's study indicated Becoming a Man can reduce violent crime arrests by 50%<sup>6</sup>
- UChicago Crime Lab's study denoted READI Chicago's program reduced arrests by 79% and victimizations for shootings and homicides by 43%<sup>7</sup>



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# Government Investment - GASC

Active coordination, collaboration, and communication are essential to effectively and sustainably increase community safety. The *Government Alliance for Safe Communities (GASC)* is working towards a more equitable and comprehensive approach to community safety in which violence prevention programs are a permanent and central feature of the community safety ecosystem in Chicago and Cook County.<sup>8</sup>

## PARTICIPATING AGENCIES



Learn more: [ILGovAlliance.org](http://ILGovAlliance.org)



# Cook County Investments



## Gun Violence Prevention and Prevention Grants

- \$110 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) initiative that funds 150 organizations providing an array of services in Cook County communities that have experienced the highest rates of gun violence.



## Cook County Reconnect

- \$23 million ARPA initiative that provides Rental Assistance and Wraparound Services to eligible individuals who recently returned to Cook County from periods of incarceration at the Illinois Dept of Corrections.



## Domestic Violence Intervention & Support Services

- \$5 million ARPA initiative responding to increase in gender-based violence and funding counseling, legal & advocacy support, crisis hotlines and housing for survivors and those impacted by domestic violence in Cook County.



## Starting Block Grants

- \$5 million Cook County funded initiative that provides designated funding for capacity building projects for small to medium sized community-based organizations in Cook County to strengthen how they run and increase organizational sustainability.

Learn more: [CookCountyIL/JACGrants](https://www.cookcountyil.gov/jac/grants)



# Cook County Investments: Preliminary Data 2022-2024

**Current, Overall Cook County Violence Prevention Funding - \$115,000,000**  
44,793 individuals served; 159 organizations

**Gun Violence Prevention and Reduction Initiative - \$110,000,000**  
44,061 individuals served; 150 organizations

**CVI Street Outreach- \$38,188,028**  
2,700 individuals served; 26 organizations

## Impact in communities

- Sum of total number of services provided: 114,102
  - Crisis services: 1,326 Education: 45,716 Employment: 9,754 Food assistance: 14,320 Funeral: 105 Housing: 5,815 Identification support (ID, SSN, etc.): 4,891 Legal assistance: 8,244 Medical: 7,053 Mental health: 14,006 Referral to Victim Advocacy Services: 1,9057 Substance use: 915
- Total number of mediations: 2,067

Ensuring  
Strategies are  
Community  
Affirmed





# What's working in Communities: Community Affirmed Programming

**Mission:** Empowering those who have experienced trauma by providing healing, stability, and community connection.

**JAC Program: Journeys Across Communities** (funded by the JAC Gun Violence Prevention & Reduction Grant initiative)

Overview:

- Started in 2021, building on existing programming but centering youth and community needs
- During Covid-19 pandemic, saw devastating impacts for young people and community
- Over 300 youth (age 14-26) served in South Shore and surrounding communities
- Trauma informed therapeutic services, individualized case management and supportive services, ex. assistance with housing, transportation etc
- Workforce development programming, career counseling and exposure to jobs based on interests
- Cultural immersion and public service outings to increase exposure to new communities and opportunities





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**Lawrence Hall**<sup>SM</sup>

Serving Children, Families and Communities Since 1865

# What's working in Communities: Community Affirmed Programming

## What does community affirmed program look like?

- Leveraging data and research for programs but centering to community – using care in how in how data is collected and used
- Adapting. Paying attention to what works, and what does not
- Representation and cultural competence

## JaKobe Jones

JaKobe is from the Southeast side of Chicago. He attended Kenwood Academy and is currently a junior in college at Northern Illinois University with a 3.3 gpa. He is the President of his Student Government Association a member of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity inc. He helped found an organization called RISE UP to motivate Black males to further their education beyond high school. He is an Alumni of the Lawrence Hall JAC Program and serves as a peer mentor for the youth at Lawrence Hall.





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## Questions





# References

- <sup>1</sup> Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. (2024, May 30). *Community Violence Intervention*. <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/center-for-gun-violence-solutions/solutions/community-violence-intervention>
- <sup>2</sup> Olson, D., Griffin, P., Stemen, D., & Malecka, M. (2024, June 6). Sentences to prison in Illinois for illegal possession of a firearm. [Sentences to Prison in Illinois for Illegal Possession of a Firearm \(loyolaccj.org\)](https://loyolaccj.org)
- <sup>3</sup> Loyola University Chicago. (2024, June 10). Multi Agency Dashboard.
- <sup>4</sup> City of Chicago. (2024, June 18). Violence Reduction Dashboard. <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/vrd/home.html>
- <sup>5</sup> Ross, M. C., Ochoa, E. M., & Papachristos, A. V. (2023). Evaluating the impact of a street outreach intervention on participant involvement in gun violence. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 120(46), e2300327120.
- <sup>6</sup> University of Chicago Crime Lab. (2024, May 30). Community Violence Intervention. <https://crimelab.uchicago.edu/topics/community-violence-intervention/>
- <sup>7</sup> Bhatt, M. P., Heller, S. B., Kapustin, M., Bertrand, M., & Blattman, C. (2024). Predicting and preventing gun violence: An experimental evaluation of READI Chicago. *The quarterly journal of economics*, 139(1), 1-56.
- <sup>8</sup> Government Alliance for Safe Communities. (2024, May 30). About GASC. <https://www.ilgovalliance.org/>