

BYRNE CRIMINAL JUSTICE INNOVATION PROGRAM



Pictured Above: Target Neighborhood: Ashland/Cherryland - Alameda County, California

Since the inception of the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program (BCJI) in late 2012, the program has grown to encompass a diverse network of 60 sites in urban, rural, and tribal areas all over the country. As leaders on the local and national level examine how to address crime – particularly in places that have seen an uptick in violence in the last year – many also seek ways to build positive, collaborative relationships between communities and law enforcement. The BCJI sites adhere to a model that responds to both needs with promising results.

The BCJI Network

BCJI continues to grow with 15 new BCJI grants announced by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) in October 2015. Of the 60 sites funded to date:

- 41 sites have completed Implementation Plans that articulate a range of data-driven and evidence-informed strategies to address drivers of crime, such as limited recreational opportunities for youth, abandoned properties, and employment barriers for people who have been incarcerated.
- 24 sites are midstream in implementing strategies with BCJI funding, working with a range of partners including police, prosecutors, corrections officials, staff of other municipal agencies, community groups, service agencies and residents.
- 19 sites are engaged in BCJI planning, working with researchers and other partners to analyze data about crime patterns and neighborhood conditions, including critical input from residents. With this full picture about why and how crime happens around persistent hot spots, they are exploring responses grounded in research.



The BCJI Approach

Across the country, in neighborhoods with persistent crime problems, BCJI sites convene diverse partners including local law enforcement, researchers, and residents to analyze crime drivers and pursue strategies that improve safety and build community-police collaboration.

DATA-DRIVEN AND EVIDENCE-INFORMED:

BCJI targets crime hot spots – typically micro-places in communities that have struggled with crime for years. Researchers are engaged in the day-to-day work, helping partners examine problems, assess possible solutions and monitor progress.

COMMUNITY-ORIENTED:

BCJI champions active roles for residents in identifying problems, selecting strategies and creating safe environments.

SPURS REVITALIZATION:

BCJI tackles problem properties, unemployment, transit barriers and service gaps related to crime.

BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS:

BCJI taps the resources of public, non-profit and community leaders to bring more resources and different approaches to bear on longstanding crime challenges, and to enhance sustainability.



Pictured Target Neighborhoods clockwise from top left: Olneyville - Providence, Rhode Island; Little Italy - Erie, Pennsylvania; Fieldstone View and Country Walk - Rockdale County, Georgia; Fairmount - Newark, New Jersey

BCJI site leaders have come together in a variety of regional and national meetings to exchange ideas and share lessons and challenges. “Amazing camaraderie,” said one site coordinator after spending a few days with peers at a March 2016 grantee meeting. Others commented on the value of learning how others managed complex partnerships, or balanced community and agency priorities as they implemented programs.

Twenty sites have accessed peer learning funds to travel to other cities to view a particular approach firsthand, or to learn and network at events with other BCJI leaders. For example, police officers involved with BCJI in Los Angeles and San Bernardino, California joined officers from Tampa, Florida at a conference on homelessness last fall, followed by a visit with Tampa’s BCJI team. All three sites had pinpointed homeless encampments and related issues as a major source of calls for police service, as well as the cause of significant resident and business concerns. They discussed evidence-informed strategies for crisis intervention, street outreach and reentry, which are part of their BCJI implementation activities. “It has been valuable to learn how law enforcement agencies and organizations on the other side of the country are providing resources and assistance to homeless individuals,” said Sergeant Shauna Gates of San Bernardino. “We have integrated what we learned into our homeless plan.”

Some BCJI sites have shared the peer learning opportunity with resident leaders. Resident volunteers from the Syracuse BCJI site’s Near Westside Peacemaking Project joined staff to visit the Brownsville Anti-Violence Project in Brooklyn, another BCJI site led by the Center for Court Innovation. They wit-

nessed how Brownsville developed and implemented community engagement projects, and have since adopted similar approaches for involving youth in arts-centered programming to address violence in their community. More than 30 residents from the McElderry Park neighborhood of Baltimore visited West Philadelphia to learn from local leaders about block club organizing, youth engagement, and blight reduction. The Baltimore BCJI team went on to pursue similar resident outreach and leadership development strategies to complement ongoing workforce development and service programs.

Results: Safer and Stronger Communities

All BCJI sites share a common goal: reduce crime and increase community safety in specific places within their neighborhoods. The comprehensive nature of the BCJI model, and its emphasis on active resident involvement in problem identification and solutions means that many BCJI sites also achieve results that speak to broader neighborhood well-being.

Reductions in Crime and Offending

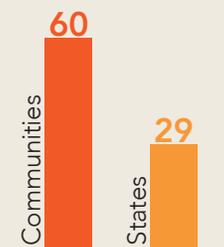
Many BCJI sites have documented crime reduction in their targeted hot spots and the surrounding neighborhoods. In Evansville, Indiana, reported crimes decreased by 42% in the BCJI target area from 2013-2015, while Lowell, Massachusetts' target area experienced a 10% decline in serious and violent crime since implementation of BCJI strategies. In one Lowell hot spot, burglaries declined 52%, larceny/theft declined 11%, and motor vehicle theft declined 38% from July 2013 to December 2015, as compared to the prior 2.5 years. Milwaukee, Wisconsin prioritized five hot spots which realized a 23% reduction in Part I crimes from 2013-2015, compared to a 1% increase in the city as a whole during the same time period.

Other sites have seen results with high risk groups identified as influential in local crime patterns. In Brownsville, gun-related re-arrest rates for parolees involved in BCJI-sponsored call-ins were less than 4% (15 of 421 people) at the end of the third year of program implementation in August 2015. In Kansas City, Missouri, the focused deterrence strategy pursued by the No Violence Alliance ("NoVA") contributed to a 42-year low in homicides in 2014, one year into implementation. As violence increased in Kansas City in 2015, the BCJI team retooled its efforts to prevent violence among members of identified criminal networks, by increasing meetings with victims to reduce retaliatory incidents and conducting new "mini call-ins" with people before they returned home from incarceration – both supplements to ongoing work to show members of key groups that violence would not be tolerated, and support services are available in the community.

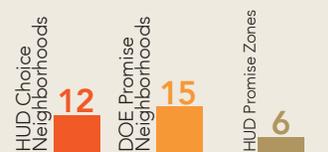
BCJI is part of the White House Promise Zones Initiative, which builds on the White House Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative to support comprehensive investment in high poverty communities around the country.

BCJI Fast Facts FY 2012-2015

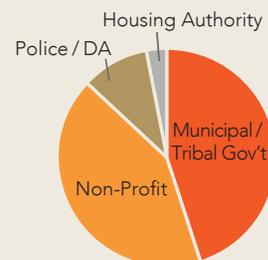
Geographic Breadth



Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI) Overlap



Coordinating Agencies



Site Grant Resources

\$35.4 MILLION AWARDED	
26	Planning/Implementation
12	Planning/Enhancement
22	Planning

Target Area Population



Economic Investment and Revitalization

To combat blight, many BCJI sites have rallied residents, property owners and development organizations to clean up streets and dilapidated properties. Some sites have gone a step further to rehabilitate homes and craft commercial corridor revitalization strategies to attract new investment to their communities. In Evansville, six new Habitat for Humanity homes have replaced blighted vacant lots, while the cross sector partners are pursuing streetscape and business façade improvements along a major commercial corridor where a significant portion of neighborhood crimes occur. In Providence, Rhode Island, eight of the highest crime-producing properties in the target area are being demolished, while others are being rehabilitated for affordable housing.

The Milwaukee BCJI team has successfully integrated redevelopment work with law enforcement activities led by the Milwaukee Police Department and the Milwaukee County District Attorney's office. Non-profit partners including Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity have deliberately clustered new home construction and existing home repairs in places targeted by law enforcement. In turn, Milwaukee Police have deployed beat officers and bike patrol officers in a proactive manner in and around Milwaukee Habitat build sites, in an effort to increase community-police trust through informal interactions with community members.

BCJI leaders from Baton Rouge, Louisiana and Kansas City, Missouri gathered with peers in San Antonio, Texas this spring for a course in "SafeGrowth" facilitated by crime prevention expert Gregory Saville. Teams learned and applied principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to discrete neighborhood problems – such as a vacant lot that attracts criminal activity and a struggling business corridor – with an eye toward building local leadership for problem-solving.

Social Cohesion and Community-Police Collaboration

In neighborhoods where fear and distrust too often shape daily life, BCJI sites have documented improvements – more people coming out to participate in neighborhood events, new cadres of local leaders devoting time and energy to making their communities safe, and residents reporting greater confidence in police.

BCJI fosters new community capacity to drive neighborhood projects. In Syracuse, New York, residents lead 20 community benefits projects including a movie night in the park, a fire safety workshop, and a series of community-police dialogues – all aimed at enhancing neighborhood safety and cohesion. In Springfield, Massachusetts, "promotores" – residents hired and trained through BCJI – are liaising among their neighbors, the police and other local organizations, pointing the way to services from health care to after-school programs. As paid positions, this model responds to an urgent need for jobs and employment training in BCJI neighborhoods, and reflects a commitment to valuing residents' time and leadership abilities that is shared across many sites.

BCJI in Context: Smart Suite

BCJI is a component of the Bureau of Justice Assistance "Smart Suite" of programs. The heart of the Smart Suite is practitioner-researcher partnerships that use data, evidence, and innovation to create strategies and interventions that are effective and economical. This data-driven approach assists jurisdictions to understand the full nature and extent of the crime challenges they are facing and to target resources to the highest priorities.

The Seattle, Washington BCJI team recognizes this same leadership potential in young people who serve as “Corner Greeters” stationed at hot spots in the Rainier Beach community. Adults supervise high school students as they engage with passersby and distribute public safety information. Seattle officials attribute a drop in juvenile crime to this effort as well as a Safe Passages program and a move to stagger school release times in the target area – all projects spurred by BCJI analysis about patterns of conflict and violence in the community.

Many BCJI sites explicitly foster positive interactions between community members and police, as well as create opportunities for real collaboration. In 2015, 74% of residents in the target area for Austin’s “Restore Rundberg” effort reported that they felt their neighborhood is safe, as compared to just 40% one year earlier. In Cleveland, Ohio, community leaders show a united front with police and corrections officials in visits to parolees, sending a joint message about support and compliance to people as they make their way back in the community.

Smart Resource Deployment Across Sectors

Propelled by the steady involvement of local researchers in BCJI teams, many sites have uncovered more effective or efficient ways to craft social service or policing activities to prevent or suppress crime.

In Dayton, Ohio, the researcher’s investigation into why women were dropping out of drug treatment programs at disproportionate rates – often a precursor to criminal activity – led to the adoption of more effective, trauma-sensitive treatment approaches for those women.

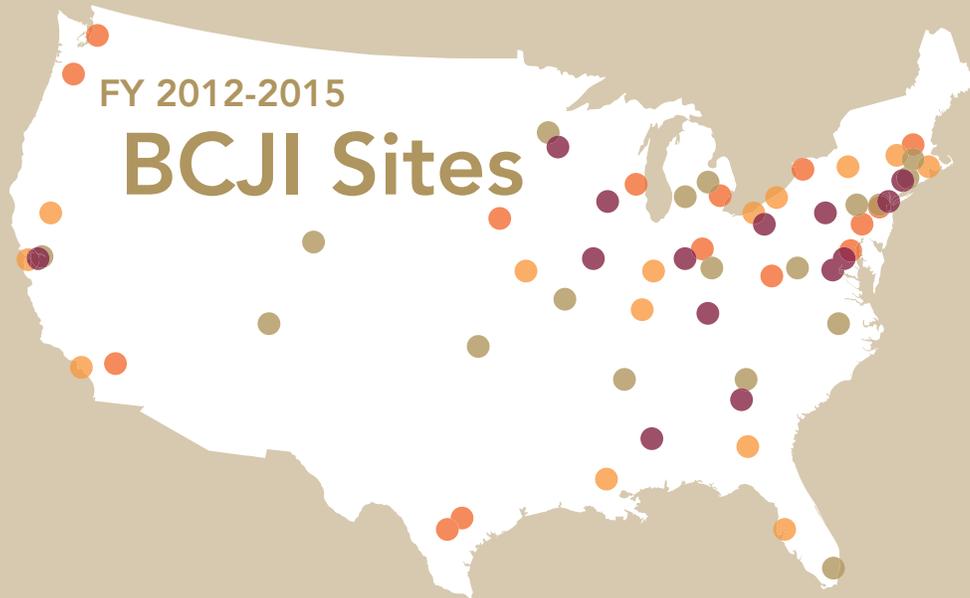
In Flint, Michigan, a collaborative research effort involving major universities, hospitals and other anchor institutions advises the police department as it navigates significant fiscal challenges, while ensuring that crime prevention research informs the progress of a broader revitalization effort underway in the University Avenue Corridor.

BCJI has spurred data-sharing across agencies and better coordination of resource deployment in a variety of realms that impact crime. In Phillipsburg, New Jersey, non-profit leaders have joined forces with public agencies to create a Recreation and Arts Commission that will use findings from BCJI analyses to guide youth recreation activities and other crime prevention programming.

In San Bernardino, California, cross-sector coordination through BCJI helped the Institute for Public Strategies and its partners forge the Central San Bernardino Neighborhood Transformation Collaborative to align resources for safety, health, and equitable development. Projects have included a successful campaign to trim trees, improve lighting, and bring neighbors out to enhance safety on residential streets targeted by city agencies and neighborhood groups.

For more information about BCJI program priorities and the site network, please visit:

www.lisc.org/BCJI



● FY 2012 Sites

Austin, TX
 Baltimore, MD
 Brooklyn, NY
 Buffalo, NY
 Charleston, WV
 Dayton, OH
 Detroit, MI
 Lowell, MA
 Milwaukee, WI
 Omaha, NE
 Philadelphia, PA
 Portland, OR
 San Antonio, TX
 San Bernardino, CA
 Seattle, WA

● FY 2013 Sites

Baton Rouge, LA
 Cleveland, OH
 Corning, CA
 Erie, PA
 Evansville, IN
 Kansas City, MO
 Los Angeles, CA
 Nashville, TN
 Providence, RI
 San Francisco, CA
 Springfield, MA
 Syracuse, NY
 Tampa, FL
 West Albany, GA

● FY 2014 Sites

Alameda County, CA
 Battle Creek, MI
 Coahoma County, MS
 Denver, CO
 Durham, NC
 Flint, MI
 Highland County, OH
 Huntington, WV
 Miami-Dade County, FL
 Minneapolis, MN
 New Haven, CT
 Newark, NJ
 Philipsburg, NJ
 Rockdale County, GA
 Towaoc, CO
 Tulsa, OK
 Worcester, MA

● FY 2015 Sites

Atlanta, GA
 Berea, KY
 Brooklyn, NY
 Harrisburg, PA
 Hayward, CO
 Indianapolis, IN
 Langley Park, MD
 Madison, WI
 Meridian, MS
 Minneapolis, MN
 Norwalk, CT
 St. Louis, MO
 Washington, DC
 Youngstown, OH

Sustaining Impact

As the first cohort of BCJI sites wrap up their grant-funded work, many are continuing to convene their cross-sector teams, including residents, to ensure that the collaborative, data-driven approach to improving neighborhood safety and well-being continues. The Lowell, Massachusetts BCJI final report states several initiatives begun under their BCJI program will be sustained, some at increased capacity. These initiatives include youth programs that have gained the trust of neighborhood families, and the work of a police-led Drug Abatement Response Team, which is enhanced by information shared by residents and housing development organizations on the BCJI cross sector team. In San Bernardino, BCJI has spurred the formation of multi-agency coalitions for neighborhood planning which have secured private funding for revitalization activities. In Seattle, the success of the BCJI team has been recognized by municipal leaders who are providing funding to ensure that youth engagement and violence prevention efforts continue after BCJI resources are expended.



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