



**Community Activation Network: CAN
March 25, 2021 Meeting**

Meeting Notes

Members of the Community Activation Network (CAN) met via Zoom on March 25, 2021.

The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

- Welcome
- Community Response to Public Safety: Intro by Co-Host Anthony Smith
- Interview, discussion, and Q&A with Dr. Eddie Woods, CEO, No More Red Dots; Deborah Barnes-Byers, Project Manager, Pivot to Peace (Peace Education Program); and Trinidad Jackson, Project Manager, Youth Violence Prevention Research Center
- *CAN-DID* Breakout Discussions and Report Out
- Closing

Welcome

Ann Coffey, CNPE CEO and CAN host, opened the meeting – extending a welcome to new members of the group as well as previous participants. She then reviewed the purpose of CAN, its [seven Guiding Principles](#), and the agenda for the meeting.

The Community Response to Public Safety

CAN co-host Anthony Smith lifted up the 48 homicides already experienced within the Louisville community and noted we are on a pace to exceed last year's total. He reiterated the need to increase public safety by addressing the root causes of violence and to work toward healing.

Anthony then introduced the guest presenters: Dr. Eddie Woods, CEO, No More Red Dots; Deborah Barnes-Byers, Project Manager, Pivot to Peace (Peace Education Program); and Trinidad Jackson, Project Manager, Youth Violence Prevention Research Center. He asked each to share briefly about their work and then engaged them with a series of questions:

- What is it that sets you apart from other organizations in your approach to public safety?
- What values undergird your work?
- What unique contributions are you making to the community in this work?

Main points shared by each presenter included:

Pivot to Peace, Deborah Barnes-Byers

- Pivot to Peace works with the survivors of violence (particularly gun and stabbing violence) as well as those living at a high risk of violence. It provides support post-injury by helping individuals plan how to stay safe and address factors that put them at risk of violence.

- The evidence-based program has its roots in a program started in Oakland, CA; it operates on the premise that individuals are more open to change after a traumatic event like an assault. Often, Pivot to Peace works with individuals while they are still in the hospital and shortly after. The program addresses the post-violence trauma that much of the community does not understand or overlooks.
- Pivot to Peace has a 96% success rate in preventing retaliation and reinjury.
- The staff have all survived violence; they understand trauma firsthand.
- Values that undergird their work include equity and equality, honesty, and authenticity. “Staff show up in their truth” and strive to provide a secure environment where everyone can be vulnerable. They do not see the program’s participants as criminals – like much of the community does.

No More Red Dots, Dr. Eddie Woods

- No More Red Dots intervenes in gun violence situations by interacting directly with the shooter and victim to head off retaliation, which is the cause of many shootings. Once they receive notification of a shooting, they arrive at the scene, get a feel for what has happened, and learn who they need to engage to prevent retaliation. They have developed a database of networks and individual connections to assist in this work. They also get referrals from the juvenile justice system.
- No More Red Dots’ work includes helping educators in the school system understand the total context surrounding gun violence. It also runs a program that teaches life, social, and business skills through the creation and marketing of art and art products.
- Last year, during a ranging pandemic, No More Red Dots responded to 122 of 451 shootings, providing 77 interventions.
- No More Red Dots has an all-volunteer staff. Each staff member began as a participant in the program who then became an ally to the organization and then finally became a worker. Each is trained in intervention, mediation, and de-escalation. Each feels called to this work and cannot imagine doing anything else to help the community.
- No More Red Dots’ work is rooted in the belief that “no one is born a shooter.” Bad choices are the result of being raised in an environment of misinformation that leads to limited opportunities. There is a sub-culture of violence completely divorced from the reality constructed by the history, stories, frame, etc. taught and reinforced by the dominant culture. No More Red Dots meets individuals where they are, situated in that sub-culture, and works with them within that context. It gives these individuals the opportunity to “play in a positive space.”

Youth Violence Prevention Research Center, Trinidad Jackson

- Youth Violence Prevention Research Center researches violence among youth, its sources and causes, and intervention strategies for its mitigation and prevention. Strategies include:
 - ✓ Social skills training
 - ✓ Parenting support

- ✓ Helping individuals to understand the causes of poverty and oppression
 - ✓ Helping individuals to develop the skills to navigate and fight for liberation from the cultural and structural violence and interpersonal racism driven by white supremacy
 - ✓ Engagement with critical literature, film, and practical activities to learn history in real time and to connect with the generational trauma that affects them
- Understanding and working to heal the trauma producing, resulting from, and pervading youth violence is critical to all its work.
 - Youth Violence and Prevention Research Center hires young people to engage in this work – not merely surveying them to understand their experience. The organization understands that these young people “bring every fiber of their being” and experience with them: their trauma, their involvement with street life, their experience of and internalization of racism, etc.
 - Undergirding the work of Youth Violence and Prevention Research Center is the belief that youth violence must be examined within the context of justice, equity, white supremacy, and liberation. We must examine the culture, institutions, and structures of white supremacy and how it drives structural violence. We must see how racism and white supremacy have been internalized by the Black community. We must understand the trauma (personal and generational) that pervades it all. And we must reorient our paradigms for understanding youth violence to align with the experience, the worldview, and lives of the individuals involved.

CAN-DID Breakout Discussions and Report Out

CAN co-host Ashley Parrott introduced the CAN-DID breakout discussions, asking participants to consider what resonated from the presentations and discussions:

- What reflections do you have?
- What questions do you have? What more would you like to know?
- How can nonprofits engage/support these organizations and others to increase public safety?

Ashley reminded the group that the CAN-DID breakouts have a dual purpose. One is to make new connections and strengthen relationships; the other is to learn and generate ideas with a bias toward action. She also offered to connect participants with Louisville Metro Police Chief Shields, who spoke at the previous CAN meeting.

Participants then broke into small groups, shared what resonated, and reconvened in the large group to share their discussions. Anthony facilitated the report-out; comments and points of discussion included:

- There is an opportunity to shift funding from some functions of LMPD to organizations implementing intervention strategies, like the organizations represented by today’s guest presenters. Such a shift would be in LMPD’s best interest, alleviating it of certain roles and responsibilities and allowing it to focus its resources more strategically. Can this CAN group advocate for this funding shift to Metro Council?
- The guest presenters were encouraged to share what specific needs they have to carry on their work, including those that can be met by CAN members:

Pivot to Peace

- Multi-year funding for salaries and extended support for participants that includes assistance with housing, food, transportation, access to mental health resources and the like.
- More work to remove the white supremacy lens at a personal level that hinders funding and other support for their work.

No More Red Dots

- Multi-year funding (in at least three-year commitments) at \$600,000 per year. More funding means more intervention and a decrease in gun violence – critical in a year where street violence is projected to increase 50% to 100% over last year's totals. "We're currently working with a staff of eight. When we had 22, we rocked the streets."
- Capacity to develop relationships with individual donors – which takes a great deal of time.

Youth Violence Prevention Research Center

- A leveraging of CAN's social capital—collectively and among its individual members and leaders—to:
 - ✓ Equip community leaders with a justice/equity lens
 - ✓ Create an ecosystem of partners engaged in this work
 - ✓ Advocate for this work and fight marginalizing policies
- What is needed is the development of budgets that reflect the actual resources required to effectively address these issues – not budgets that merely fund organizations' current operations and capacities. Go big!

Closing

Host Ann Coffey thanked the guest presenters for sharing their time and expertise, the co-hosts for their work, and the participants for their thoughtful and candid engagement. She encouraged participants to invite others to be in this space.

She also reminded participants that CAN will next meet on April 22. The topic will be *Metro Council's Response to Public Safety* and will feature presentations by and Q&A/discussion with members of Louisville Metro Council (to be named).

[Note: You can see a video of the first part of this meeting (before breakouts) [here](#).]