



## Research Brief: Evaluating Oneida County's Save Our Streets (SOS) Program

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### Academic Partner:

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### Summary:

The Finn Institute conducted an evaluation of Oneida County's Group Violence Intervention (GVI) model, known locally as Save Our Streets (SOS). Researchers solicited feedback from stakeholders to assess fidelity to the GVI model. They also measured SOS's impact on shooting incidents in the city of Utica.

### Background

The Group Violence Intervention (GVI) model is designed to reduce group-related homicide and gun violence by directly engaging a small number of individuals actively involved in gun violence. This is primarily done through the call-in, a face-to-face meeting between group members and a partnership of community and law enforcement leaders at which the partners communicate a credible moral message against violence, provide notice of the consequences of further violence, and offer services. Individual custom notifications are also delivered outside of the call-ins to reinforce the GVI message. Since the Save Our Streets (SOS) program began in 2016, Oneida County has had two call-ins: one in November 2016 and one in January 2018; and delivered 10 custom notifications.

### Design

Researchers provided technical assistance and evaluated the program. They attended monthly meetings of the SOS partnership, which tracks data on group intelligence, message and service delivery, and enforcement actions. They surveyed members of the workgroup about the effectiveness of the partnership, program implementation and sustainability. To measure outcomes, researchers examined 68 months of shooting data pre- and post-intervention (January 2013 – August 2018). During that time, Utica experienced 128 shootings with injury; just under half of all

shootings were group-involved (63 of 128), and two were unknown to be group or non-group involved.

### Results

- The process, structure and content of the call-ins and custom notifications are consistent with the GVI model. The partners delivered the SOS message to 20 percent of identified group members (61 of 300).
- Not every group-involved shooting was followed by enforcement action. Of the nine group-involved shooting incidents since the first call-in, law enforcement responded to two with enforcement actions.
- 46 percent of those who attended a call-in or received a custom notification engaged in services.
- Members of the partnership were generally positive in their responses regarding group effectiveness, progress to full implementation and ability to maintain programming over time.
- Compared with the pre-SOS period, overall shootings declined 7 percent post-intervention (from 2 shootings per month to 1.86 per month), while group-involved shootings declined 36 percent (1.04 to 0.67 per month). Over the same period, non-group shootings increased 40 percent (0.85 to 1.19 per month).

### About the Research Consortium

*An initiative of the state Division of Criminal Justice Services, the Research Consortium promotes criminal justice research and the use of data and evidence by facilitating partnerships between local practitioners and college and university-based researchers. The research design and conclusions detailed here are the sole work product of the academic partner that conducted the research. Neither DCJS nor the State of New York endorse the program, methodology or results.*