



PHILLY TRUCE:

PEACE PATROL REPORT

ISSUED BY PHILLY TRUCE AND THE
DATA COLAB | **AUGUST 2026**



CoLab



District Attorney's Transparency
Analytics (DATA) Lab



ABOUT THE PHILLY TRUCE - DATA COLAB PARTNERSHIP

In 2024, Philly Truce partnered with the District Attorney's Transparency Analytics (DATA) CoLab. The goal of working with the DATA CoLab was for Philly Truce to use criminal legal data to inform their peace patrols, as well as improve their data collection and capacity to better measure the peace patrol's impact and reach.

This report is the product of this partnership and aims to summarize the peace patrol program, as well as look at the peace patrol's ability to collect and use data in their work.

ABOUT THIS REPORT*

This report will discuss the problems that Pickens and Casher set out to address with Philly Truce, including the historical and present context of the City of Philadelphia, the social determinants of crime, and distrust in the legal system that has stemmed from a history of disinvestment, overpolicing, and mass incarceration in Black communities.

The report will also provide an overview of the organization, and then discuss one of their initiatives, Operation Hug the Block Peace Patrol, which aims to reduce violence in public spaces by employing justice-impacted men to patrol disadvantaged areas and provide intervention, restorative justice services, and access and information to resources that are beneficial to the community.

*The views and opinions expressed in this report do not reflect the views of the DAO and its staff.

In 2020, childhood friends Steven Pickens and Mazzie Casher founded Philly Truce in response to the rising gun violence in Philadelphia. Both men were born and raised in Philadelphia and understood that it would require a holistic approach. They also understood that gun violence was a response to deeper systemic problems, such as trauma, lack of generational wealth, poor mental and physical health outcomes in impacted neighborhoods, lack of strong educational opportunities, and more. In response, they founded an organization built on the foundation of building and uplifting sustainable manhood among the boys and men in their community.



Problem

Rising gun violence and other pressing matters



Solution

Philly Truce Peace Patrol





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Historical & Present Context in West Philadelphia

In order to understand violent crime, and gun violence in particular, in Philadelphia today, it is essential to understand the historical context, which includes systemic oppression rooted in both racism and classism. The history of racism in what we now know as the United States begins with the colonization and genocide of the land's indigenous people. Philadelphia as we know it today, is located on indigenous Lenape land. This history, rooted in white supremacy and colonialism, also led to the institution of slavery in the Americas, which is an identifiable source for the lack of equity in Black communities today. During slavery, Philadelphia was an active Underground Railroad site, making it home to many freed Black individuals and families who were active in the abolitionist movement (1). Following the end of slavery, many Black people continued to come to Philadelphia, however, the end of slavery did not bring the end of racist and discriminatory policies (2). In the late 19th century, W.E.B. DuBois published *The Philadelphia Negro*, which was an ethnography of the African American community in Philadelphia and identified how racism and segregation kept the Black community trapped in impoverished conditions (3).

Despite this, Black Americans were able to thrive in West Philadelphia, which became a popular destination due to its employment opportunities and relatively positive race relations (4). During this time, West Philadelphia became a thriving middle class area, but post-World War II shifts began to destabilize the neighborhood. Factors such as discriminatory hiring practices, federally backed redlining of minority communities, and the white flight phenomenon contributed to the economic decline of West Philadelphia neighborhoods (5). Ultimately, the conditions forced upon Black communities like West Philadelphia through governmental policies, as well as financial and educational institutions, have served as catalysts for the high rates of violence and incarceration that exist in the Black community at present (6).

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1. Tomek, B., C. (2018). *Underground Railroad*. Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia.
 2. Alexander, M. (2012). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press.
 3. Du Bois, W. E. B. (1899). *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*.
 4. Wolfinger, J. (2013). *African American Migration*. Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia.
 5. Shields, M., & Siddique, M. (2020, June 4). *The Color of Inequality Part 1: Housing and the Built Environment*. Economy League of Greater Philadelphia.
 6. Alexander, M. (2012). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press.
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Redlining & Disinvestment

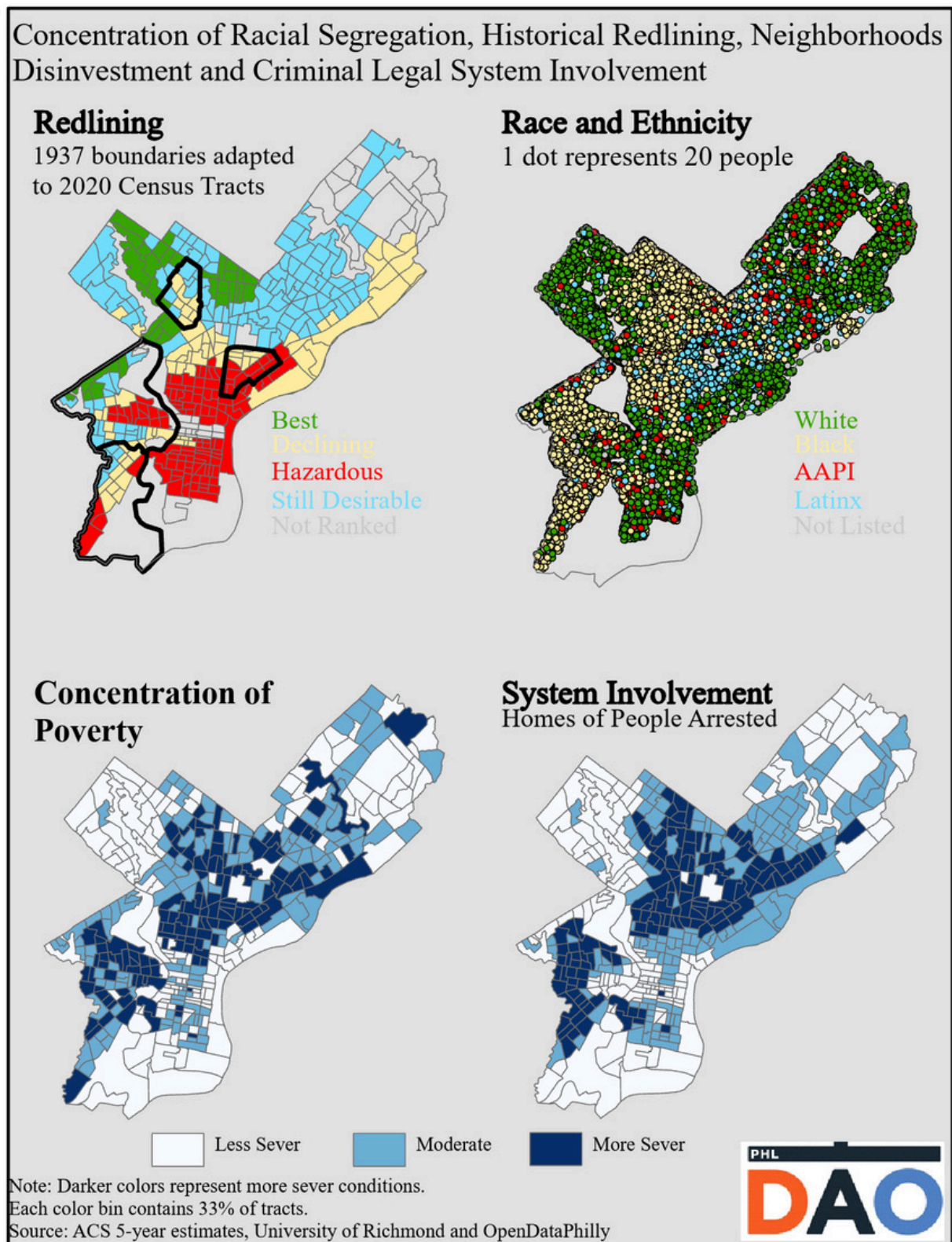
One such institutional practice was redlining, which significantly lowered Black homeownership rates, as well as devalued homes that Black individuals and families already owned (7). During the 1930s, the federal government, through the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) began to grade neighborhoods on perceived investment risk (8). To do so, they created maps which labeled neighborhoods as either hazardous, declining, still desirable, or best, to determine where they would provide home mortgages to. The geographic boundaries were drawn largely along racial and ethnic lines, labeling Black and immigrant communities as hazardous and declining (9). As such, residents of these neighborhoods were unable to get mortgages or were only able to get mortgages with extremely high interest rates (10). Many properties were abandoned or demolished, leaving large swaths of vacant land and neighborhoods suffering from blight and disinvestment. At the same time, many white Philadelphians moved to the suburbs during "white flight" (11). The mass exodus of white families from cities to suburban areas, depleted the tax base and investments in Philadelphia (12). As middle-class Black families also moved out, vacancies in housing and schools contributed to a rise in crime and poverty (13).

Today, the impact of redlining and disinvestment in majority Black neighborhoods can be seen in property appreciation (see Figure 1). According to an analysis completed by the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia looking at appreciation values over the last 70 years, there is a \$57 billion gap in appreciation values between properties in majority-white vs. majority non-white neighborhoods (14).

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7. Rothstein, R. (2017). *The color of law: A forgotten history of how our government segregated America*. Liveright Publishing.
 8. *Map of Home Owners' Loan Corporation [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania] {1937}*. (2022). Big Ten Academic Alliance Geoportal.
 9. *Mapping Inequality*. (2023). Digital Scholarship Lab, University of Richmond.
 10. Rothstein, R. (2017). *The color of law: A forgotten history of how our government segregated America*. Liveright Publishing.
 11. Shields, M., & Siddique, M. (2020, June 4). *The Color of Inequality Part 1: Housing and the Built Environment*. Economy League of Greater Philadelphia.
 12. Shields, M., & Siddique, M. (2020, June 4). *The Color of Inequality Part 1: Housing and the Built Environment*. Economy League of Greater Philadelphia.
 13. Pattillo-McCoy, M. (2000). The Limits of Out-Migration for the Black Middle Class. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 22 (3), 225–241.
 14. Hornstein, J., & Shields, M. (2023, December 18). Know Your Price Philadelphia: An Analysis of Property Values by Neighborhood and Race in Philadelphia, 1950–2022.
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Figure 1: Concentration of Racial Segregation, Historical Redlining, Neighborhoods Disinvestment and Criminal Legal System Involvement



Educational Inequity & Gentrification

In addition to the government-backed and institutionally supported redlining, higher education institutions and associated policies also impacted the area. In the post-war era, the federal government implemented the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the GI Bill, which provided returning veterans with improved access to higher education (15). Similar to many regions across America, this enabled veterans to attend local colleges and universities in West Philadelphia, such as the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, University of the Sciences, and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, contributing to the continued growth and development of these institutions (16). However, while the GI Bill appeared race-neutral on paper, Black veterans in Philadelphia faced limited access due to discrimination in admissions at predominantly white institutions (17). Meanwhile, historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were underfunded, under-resourced, and overcrowded (18). Representative of this issue, a study that examined historical records of 2.5 million students at elite private and public U.S. colleges over the past 100 years found that the G.I. Bill had little success in increasing the representation of lower- and middle-income students at elite colleges (19). It was also concluded that there was no evidence of an increase in the proportion of Black students, in private or in public colleges, but instead, a decline was observed (20). Additionally, the study noted that their findings suggested that eliminating financial barriers was not an efficient means of overcoming existing inequalities that prevent students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds from attending elite colleges (21). Today, among Philadelphians age 25 and older, 53% of White residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 21% of African American or Black residents (22). This highlights a significant disparity in educational attainment between the two groups, which is reflective of the historical context and its impact today.

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15. U.S. Congress. (1944). *Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944*, Pub. L. No. 78-346, 58 Stat. 284.
 16. The US' GI Bill: The "New Deal for Veterans." (2019, September 2). Centre for Public Impact.
 17. Abramitzky, R., Kowalski, J., Perez, S., & Price, J. (2024). The G.I. Bill, Standardized Testing, and Socioeconomic Origins of the U.S. Educational Elite Over a Century.
 18. *Never A Level Playing Field: Blacks and The GI Bill | PDF*. (n.d.). Scribd. Retrieved September 2, 2025
 19. Abramitzky, R., Kowalski, J., Perez, S., & Price, J. (2024). The G.I. Bill, Standardized Testing, and Socioeconomic Origins of the U.S. Educational Elite Over a Century.
 20. *Id.*
 21. *Id.*
 22. U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. (2023). Educational Attainment. American Community Survey, ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1501. Retrieved May 1, 2025.
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Not only were Black and low-income students largely unable to attend these institutions, but their growth contributed to the gentrification of the Black neighborhoods where they were situated (23). As the educational institutions gained prestige and financial support due to the influx of servicemen and former servicemen, their financial and political influence also grew, allowing the campuses to shape the development of West Philadelphia. This period saw the rise of urban renewal programs, notably the federal urban renewal program of 1949, which used eminent domain to clear "blighted" areas and redevelop them (24). The federal government provided federal subsidies for redevelopment projects in areas deemed "blighted." This process disproportionately affected Black communities, contributing to the displacement and gentrification that defined the history of neighborhoods. In 1959, the previously referenced institutions (University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, University of Sciences, and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine,) collaborated to create the West Philadelphia Corporation (WPC), which focused on revitalizing the area, continuing the displacement efforts (25). This led to loss of generational wealth of Black families in the West Philadelphia area while providing financially convenient means for educational institutions and other businesses to establish an immovable presence as regional economic powers.

Today, education inequity exists not only in higher education, but also in K-12 education in West Philadelphia, due to both disinvestment in the neighborhood, as well as gentrification largely related to the growth of the very same higher education institutions that are inaccessible. Due to a history of disinvestment in the neighborhood, West Philadelphia schools are often underfunded, under-resourced, and overcrowded. This contributes to poor student outcomes, high dropout rates, limited extracurricular activities, and ultimately, fewer educational pathways out of poverty. Unfortunately, despite higher education institutions playing a role in much of the disinvestment and gentrification in the neighborhood, they contribute very little to neighborhood schools and educational opportunities.

23. James, C. (2020). The Case for Housing Justice in Philadelphia.

24. Shields, M., & Siddique, M. (2020, June 4). The Color of Inequality Part 1: Housing and the Built Environment. Economy League of Greater Philadelphia.

25. Puckett, J. (n.d.). West Philadelphia Collaborative History—The West Philadelphia Corporation. West Philadelphia Collaborative History.

For example, according to an analysis completed by The Daily Pennsylvanian, it is estimated that the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania own over \$3.3 billion worth of real estate in University City, according to city property records (26). The analysis further clarifies that the number is more likely closer to \$3.9 billion when considering the University's 2024 financial year fiscal report, as the city records are not up to date (27). However, despite their vast wealth, most educational institutions, including the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University, do not pay property taxes (28). This is especially concerning given that property taxes are the primary funder of Philadelphia public schools.

Many have argued that these institutions should pay Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS), which are voluntary contributions to local government by institutions that are otherwise exempt from taxes (29). However, the University of Pennsylvania, for example, argues that they give back to the community in other ways, such as scholarships for local students, donations, and school-partnerships such as their Penn Alexander School (30). Notably, the Penn Alexander school is located very close to the University of Pennsylvania campus, which leads to it serving youth who live in a school catchment zone of wealthy residents, many of whom are connected to the university (31).

In general, developers are often provided tax incentives in the form of tax abatements which further places a strain on the revenue and tax base that would otherwise be allocated to funding public services, specifically public education (32).

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- 26. Scolnick, E. (2025, April 17). Penn owns over \$3 billion in University City real estate, DP analysis finds. The Daily Pennsylvanian.
 - 27. *Id.*
 - 28. McCrystal, L. (2019, September 30). \$29.6 billion of Philly real estate is exempt from property taxes. Should nonprofits be asked to pay up? The Inquirer.
 - 29. *Id.*
 - 30. Sutton, C., & Kreth, C. (2020, July 11). Penn's history of refusing to pay PILOTs, explained | The Daily Pennsylvanian. The Daily Pennsylvanian.
 - 31. Ehlenz, M. M. (2016). Neighborhood Revitalization and the Anchor Institution: Assessing the Impact of the University of Pennsylvania's West Philadelphia Initiatives on University City. *Urban Affairs Review*, 52(5), 714–750.
 - 32. Wen, C., A, T., McLean, M. U. D., Welner, T. C. K., Boulder, U. of C., Jensen, N., & read, T. U. of T. at A. 27 min. (2024, February 15). Students lose out as cities and states give billions in property tax breaks to businesses – draining school budgets and especially hurting the poorest students.
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Importantly, lack of educational opportunities contributes to long-term poor socioeconomic outcomes (33). Additionally, when youth do not have access to extracurricular and afterschool activities, they may feel less connected to prosocial adults and institutions and seek out opportunities to connect to peers in environments that may include criminalized activities (34).

Lack of Economic Opportunity

Lack of education means that residents of West Philadelphia are unable to attain certain employment opportunities that require higher education (35). However, they are additionally blocked from other opportunities that do not require college degrees. The historical context of redlining, gentrification, and disinvestment contributed to loss of Black-owned businesses due to the inability of these businesses to access loans, poverty in the surrounding neighborhoods, and displacement of residents who patronized the businesses.

Lack of economic opportunity leads to high rates of unemployment, poverty, and in some instances, residents turning to an underground or informal economy as a means of survival. Further, lack of investment in youth, including education, out-of-school time activities, and youth employment, can increase their vulnerability to participate in illegal and informal means of economic and social gains.

33. Shields, M., & Siddique, M. (2020, June 17). *The Color of Inequality Part 3: Structural Racism and Public Education*. Economy League of Greater Philadelphia.

34. *Id.*

35. *Id.*

Distrust in Law Enforcement & the Legal System

Distrust in law enforcement and the legal system is deeply entrenched in West Philadelphia due to a history of brutality and over-criminalization by the system. In the 1980s, for example, federal and local policies encouraged aggressive policing in Black neighborhoods under the guise of the “war on drugs” (36). During this period in the late 20th century, stop-and-frisk policies, militarized raids, and oversurveillance and policing disproportionately targeted Black neighborhoods like West Philadelphia. Harsh and lengthy sentences and policies such as the three strikes law, mandatory minimums, and the crack-cocaine sentencing disparity led to mass incarceration, tearing families apart and destabilizing the community (37).

This distrust was further compounded by the 1985 MOVE bombing. MOVE was a Black liberation and environmentalist organization that was founded by John Africa in Philadelphia in the 1970s (38). MOVE advocated for natural living and rejected modern technology and institutions (39). MOVE had a number of standoffs with the police. In 1978, police attempted to remove MOVE members from their home in the Powelton Village neighborhood of West Philadelphia (40). The standoff resulted in a shootout and a police officer being killed (41). Nine MOVE members were convicted to lengthy prison sentences and became known as the MOVE 9 (42).

36. Alexander, M. (2012). *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Press.

37. *Id.*

38. Puckett, J., & DeSilvas, D. (n.d.). *MOVE in Powelton Village: 1973-1978*. West Philadelphia Collaborative History. Retrieved May 2, 2025.

39. *Id.*

40. *Id.*

41. *Id.*

42. *Id.*

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In 1982, they moved to the Cobbs Creek area of West Philadelphia, where neighbors complained about noise and confrontations with the group (43). For the next three years, rising tensions persisted as neighbors became increasingly uncomfortable with the MOVE house's behaviors, which included broadcast demands for the release of the MOVE 9 through loudspeakers and fortifying the house with weapons (44). In May of 1985, there was another armed standoff between the police and the MOVE home (45). This came to an end when the mayor and the police commissioner authorized the bombing of the MOVE home (46). The bombing killed 11 people, including five children, and destroyed over 60 homes (47). Following the bombing and fire, a report by a Philadelphia Special Investigation Commission (the MOVE Commission), blamed City officials for ignoring the West Philadelphia residents who expressed concerns about the MOVE house before later choosing to exercise extreme violence in response to the MOVE group's actions (48).

They were also criticized for letting the fire burn and for police gunfire preventing MOVE members from escaping the burning house (49). Later, a grand jury absolved Mayor Wilson Goode Sr. and other city officials of criminal intent but noted that their actions were "morally reprehensible" and demonstrative of "political cowardice in its inception, inexperience in its planning and ineptitude in its execution" (50).

The MOVE bombing not only demonstrated the City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Police Department ignoring the concerns of the Black community in West Philadelphia, but also the brutal lengths they were willing to take against Black residents instead of taking appropriate and lawful action to ensure the safety of a community. In 2022, activist and writer Abdul-Aliy Muhammed stated that the MOVE bombing "Proves and shows that there's systematic disregard for Black lives and Black afterlives" (51).

43. Puckett, J. (n.d.). MOVE on Osage Avenue 1982-1985. West Philadelphia Collaborative History. Retrieved May 2, 2025.

44. *Id.*

45. *Id.*

46. *Id.*

47. *Id.*

48. Puckett, J. (n.d.). *The Long Shadow of the MOVE Fire 1985-2018*. West Philadelphia Collaborative History. Retrieved May 2, 2025.

49. Puckett, J. (n.d.). MOVE on Osage Avenue 1982-1985. West Philadelphia Collaborative History. Retrieved May 2, 2025.

50. *Id.*

51. Philadelphia's Independent Report On Mishandling Of MOVE Bombing Victims' Remains Fails To Answer Key Questions. (2022, June 10).

Today, Philadelphia, and West Philadelphia in particular, continue to deal with the historical implications of disinvestment and the community impact of mass incarceration and criminalization. The Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office Racial Injustice Report notes that racial disparities observed in Philadelphia’s criminal court system are rooted in severe historical injustices and wealth inequality (52). The report further highlights that Black Philadelphians have historically and are currently overrepresented in arrests and criminal charges, in comparison to the city’s overall population. Additionally, the discrepancies and imbalance have not been addressed and in many cases have been worsened by federal, state, and local laws and policies (53). As of 2020, the population of Philadelphia was 1,603,797, of which, about 39% identify as Black or African American (54). In *Commonwealth v. Lavar Brown*, the defense cited in their brief for post-conviction relief that racial minorities account for 64% of the population of Philadelphia but also account for more than 90% of state prisoners sentenced in Philadelphia (55).

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49. Puckett, J. (n.d.). MOVE on Osage Avenue 1982–1985. West Philadelphia Collaborative History. Retrieved May 2, 2025.
50. *Id.*
51. Philadelphia’s Independent Report On Mishandling Of MOVE Bombing Victims’ Remains Fails To Answer Key Questions. (2022, June 10).
52. Racial Injustice Report: Disparities in Philadelphia’s Criminal Courts from 2015–2022. (2023). [Analysis]. The Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office (DAO).
53. *Id.*
54. P8: RACE – Census Bureau Table. (n.d.). Retrieved November 7, 2025.
55. *Commonwealth v. Lavar Brown*. Brief of Respondent Lavar Brown On Petition for Exercise of King’s Bench Jurisdiction to Review the May 5, 2023.
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In West Philadelphia (57), per the 2020 census, there was a total population of 207,311 people, of which 66% identified as Black or African American, 19% as White, 8% as Asian, 4% as Hispanic/Latino, 5% two or more races, and 2% some other race (58).

An analysis by the Prison Policy Initiative found that the area defined as West Philadelphia-West Market Street (Zip code 19139) had the fourth highest rate of people in prison (791 per 100,000), after three North Philadelphia neighborhoods with similar historical contexts (59). Importantly, this area is largely outside of the West Philadelphia area known as University City, which is highly gentrified. Further, a 2015 analysis by the City of Philadelphia found that this zip code also had one of the highest numbers of returning citizens in the city (n=776) (60). It also found that about 95% of returning citizens to zip code 19139 were Black (n=737) and that the majority (n=637) were returning from county jail as opposed to state prison, suggesting that they were being held pretrial or on a county sentence usually reserved for lower-level offenses (61). In zip code 19143, which is shared between West and Southwest Philadelphia, the Prison Policy Initiative found that the zip code had the fifth highest rate of people in prison (791 per 100,000) (62). The City's 2015 analysis found that zip code 19143 had 1,125 returning citizens, of whom about 97% were Black (63).

The aforementioned policies and practices further disenfranchised Black individuals and communities for years to come. Due to this systemic disenfranchisement, these neighborhoods are subject to lack of generational wealth, poor mental and physical health outcomes, and poor educational outcomes. These issues subsequently contribute to high rates of crime and violence which negatively impact the community's health and well-being. The following section looks more closely at how this appears today.

57. Note: Our analysis of West Philadelphia defines it as encompassing the following census tracts: Census Tracts 77 through 96, 98.01, 98.02, 98.08, 100-122.04, 369.1, 369.2, 375, It was determined that census tracts are most efficient and accurate method of reporting data. However, zip codes are used in analysis for other purposes in this report.

58. P8: RACE – Census Bureau Table. (n.d.). Retrieved November 7, 2025.

59. Widra, E., & Geffen, B. (2022). Number of people in prison in 2020 from each Philadelphia neighborhood. Prison Policy Initiative.

60. City of Philadelphia – Office of Criminal Justice. (2021). People released to Philadelphia from prison & jail in 2015 [Dataset].

61. Id.

62. Id.

63. Id.



The Problem: A Gun Violence Crisis

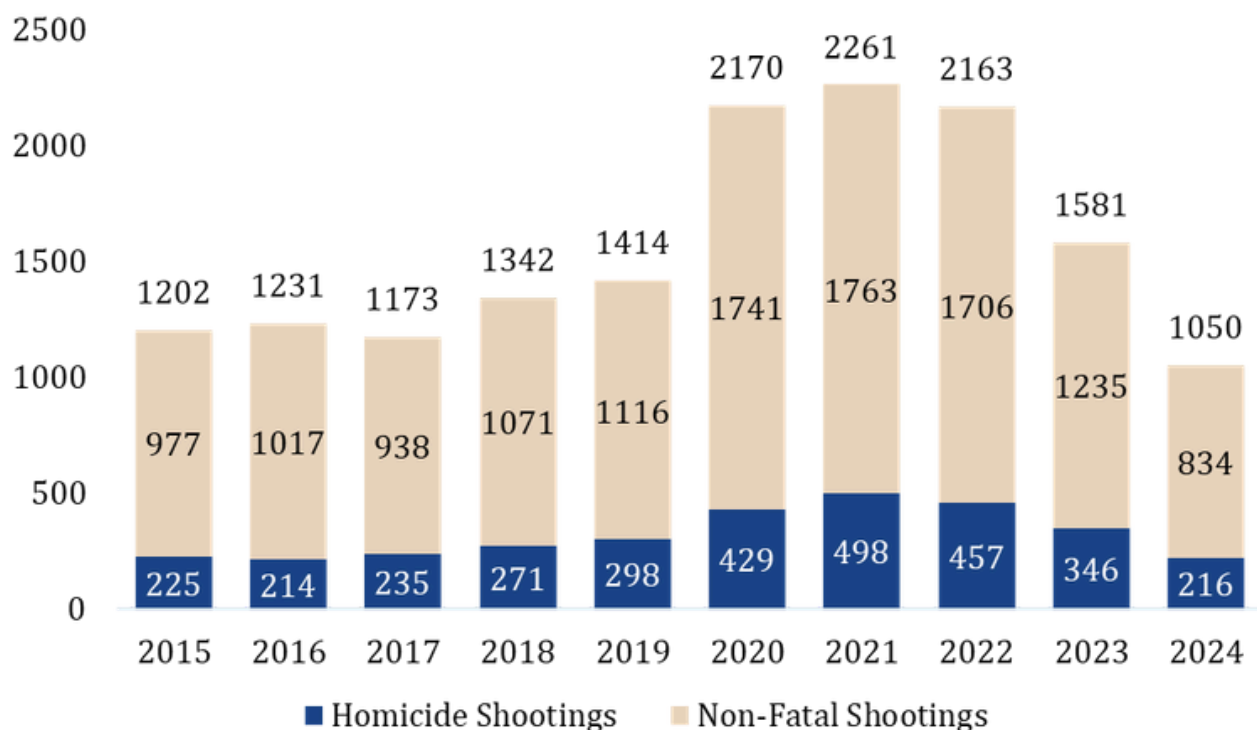
Gun Violence in Philadelphia has grown into a public health issue which disproportionately impacts Black men. In regard to the national climate of gun violence, almost 18,000 Americans die by firearm homicide per year (5.9 per 100,000)(64). Additionally, the firearm homicide rate in the United States is 25.2 times higher than other industrialized countries (65). The epidemic of gun violence nationally is reflected and even heightened in Philadelphia.

Figure 2 below displays homicides and non-fatal shootings in Philadelphia over the ten-year period of January 1st, 2015, to December 31st, 2024. In total, there were 3,189 homicide shootings and 12,398 non-fatal shootings during this ten-year time period, totaling 15,587 fatal and non-fatal shooting incidents. Of those fatal and non-fatal shootings, there were a total of 16,316 victims, of whom, 13,362 were Black (including those identified as both Black non-Hispanic and Black Hispanic).

64. CDC. (2024, August 19). *Firearm Homicide Trends* . Firearm Injury and Death Prevention.

65. Choron, R. L., Spitzer, S., & Sakran, J. V. (2019). Firearm Violence in America: Is There a Solution? *Advances in Surgery*, 53, 195–208.

Figure 2: Philadelphia 10- Year Counts of Homicides and Non-Fatal Shootings

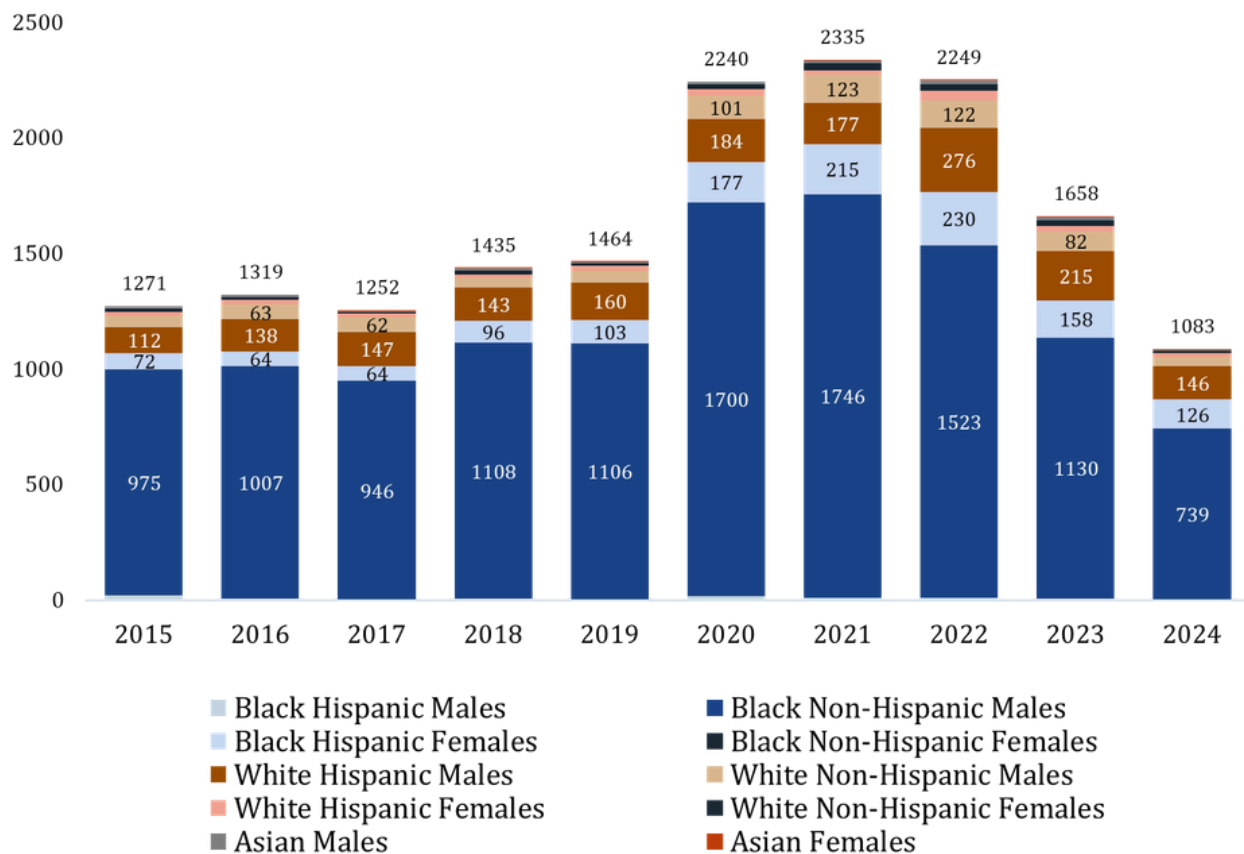


As demonstrated, gun violence is a public health crisis in Philadelphia that disproportionately affects Black community members. More specifically, Black males account for a disproportionate amount of both gun violence victims and offenders. (66) According to the Philadelphia Center for Gun Violence Reporting, between 2015 and 2024, 12,054, or 74%, of shooting victims were Black males (including both Hispanic and Non-Hispanic) (67).

66. Choron, R. L., Spitzer, S., & Sakran, J. V. (2019). Firearm Violence in America: Is There a Solution? *Advances in Surgery* , 53 , 195–208.

67. *Philadelphia Shooting Victims Dashboard—The Philadelphia Center for Gun Violence Reporting* . (2020, July 31).

Figure 3: Shootings Victims by Race, Ethnicity and Gender 2015-2024



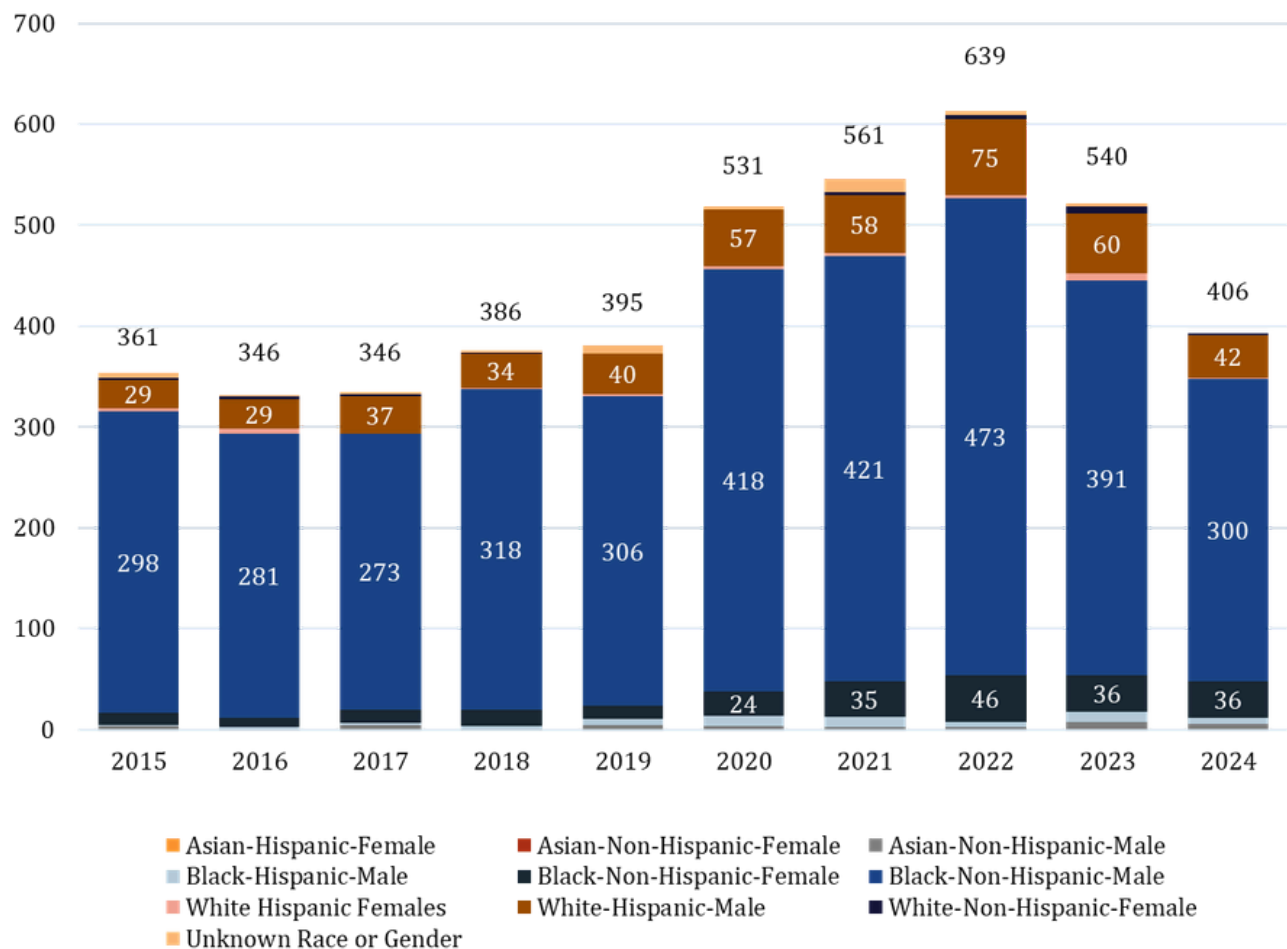
While victim data is more easily captured because most shooting victims report to the police, offender demographic data can be more difficult to track because it relies on arrests. Unfortunately, arrest rates are often low. The *100 Shooting Review Committee Report*, produced by a consortium of law enforcement related agencies, establishes that most shooting perpetrators are not apprehended and charged by law enforcement (68). Out of 11,306 shootings in Philadelphia since 2015, 8,918 did not result in arrest. Additionally, the report states offenders in fatal shootings are more likely to be arrested and prosecuted, but even so, two thirds of fatal shootings do not result in arrest (69). The recorded outcome of arrest and prosecution of perpetrators of gun violence in Philadelphia is referred to as shooting clearance rates. The low clearance rates for such crimes reflect a failure of justice for Black communities who are disproportionately impacted by gun violence.

68. City of Philadelphia interagency group. (2022). *100 Shooting Review Committee Report*.

69. *Id.*

The previous offender data considered arrests between the years of 2015–2021. When reviewing the available shooting offender data from 2015–2024, the same trends persist. Specifically, the complicated and very nuanced trend of over representation of Black males as shooting offenders. Of the 4,511 shooting arrestees from 2015–2024, 3,479 or 77% were Black males.

Figure 4: Shootings Offenders by Race, Ethnicity and Gender



Due to Black males being disproportionately represented as both shooting victims and offenders in Philadelphia, a substantive amount of Philly Truce’s resources and efforts are directed specifically at Black males in Philadelphia. This, in addition to Philly Truce’s objective to restore the nuclear family unit in Black communities, are the motivations for the organization’s commitment to the Black males of Philadelphia.



About the Program: Philly Truce's Peace Patrol

Philly Truce has diverse programming and initiatives aimed at addressing the gun violence crisis in Philadelphia as well as the socio-economic factors that contribute to it. In addition to the Peace Patrol initiative, Philly Truce hosts several services, programs and initiatives including but not limited to: Safe City Solutions, Year of Brotherly Action, The Philly Truce App, research partnerships and several others that aim to promote peace, collaboration, socioeconomic and systemic changes for Black and brown people within the city of Philadelphia. Their programming supports youth, young adults, adults, community organizations and communities toward self-determination, collaboration, and transformation while re-solidifying community assets to provide long-term support for community members.

While Philly Truce has a number of programs, this report sets out to discuss one program in detail: Operation Hug the Block Peace Patrol. This program aims to reduce violence in public spaces by employing justice-impacted men to patrol disadvantaged areas and provide intervention and restorative justice services. The Peace Patrol aims to address crime in areas where it has been historically concentrated. In addition, Peace Patrol documents and collects data on blight and conflicts observed in the community. Just as disinvestment and redlining are major contributors to the current state of Philadelphia neighborhoods, conflicts within the community, improper upkeep, and cleanliness are factors as well.

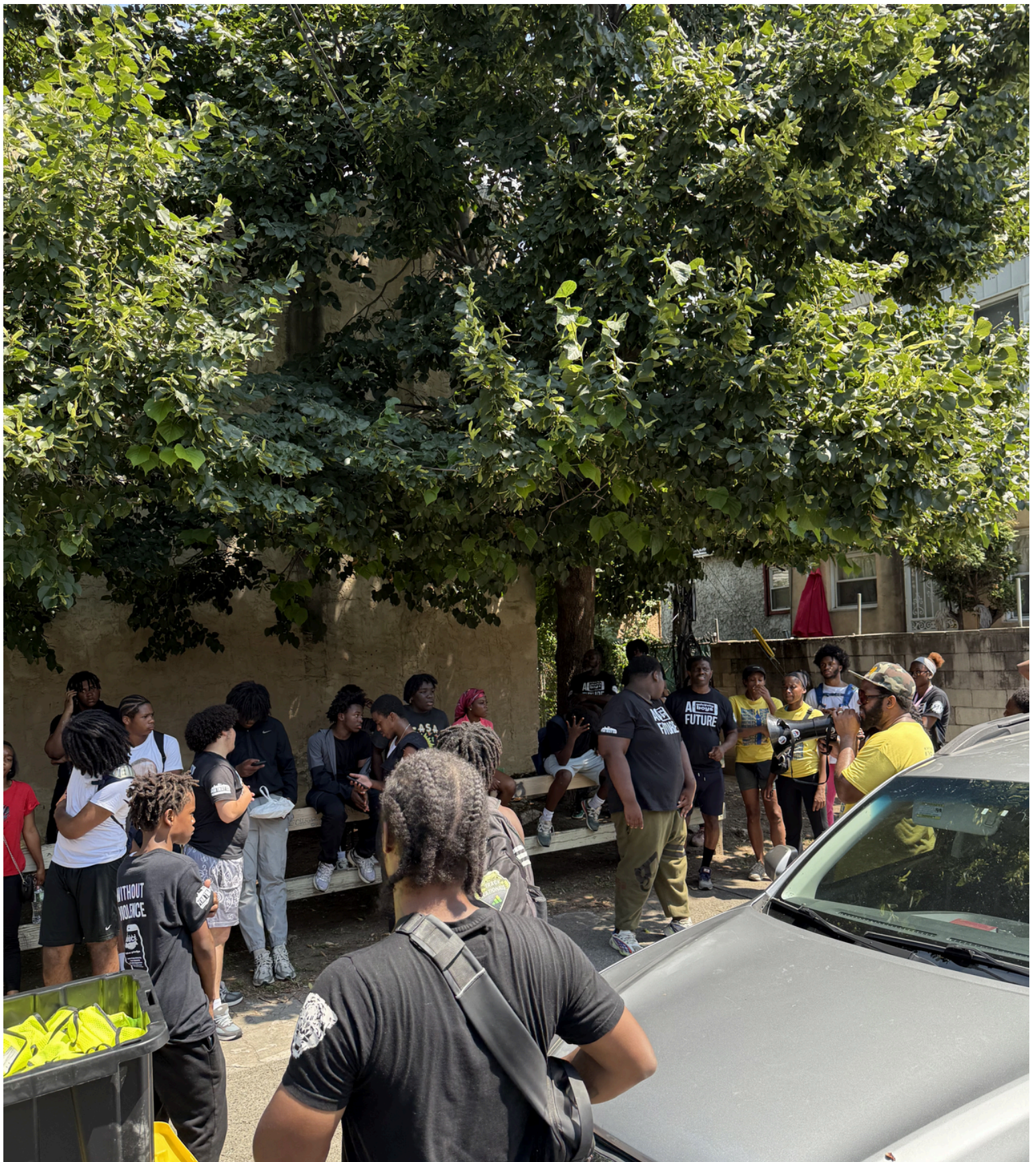
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As a group, we stay together, and people ask us what we're doing. And we say we're hugging the block, hug the violence, bring the violence down. And I feel good I can be able to talk to citizens who respect us being out here, and we are out here safe. It's a kind of a dangerous job, but no harm come to us. And most of the time, it'll be joy and happiness because we're out here.

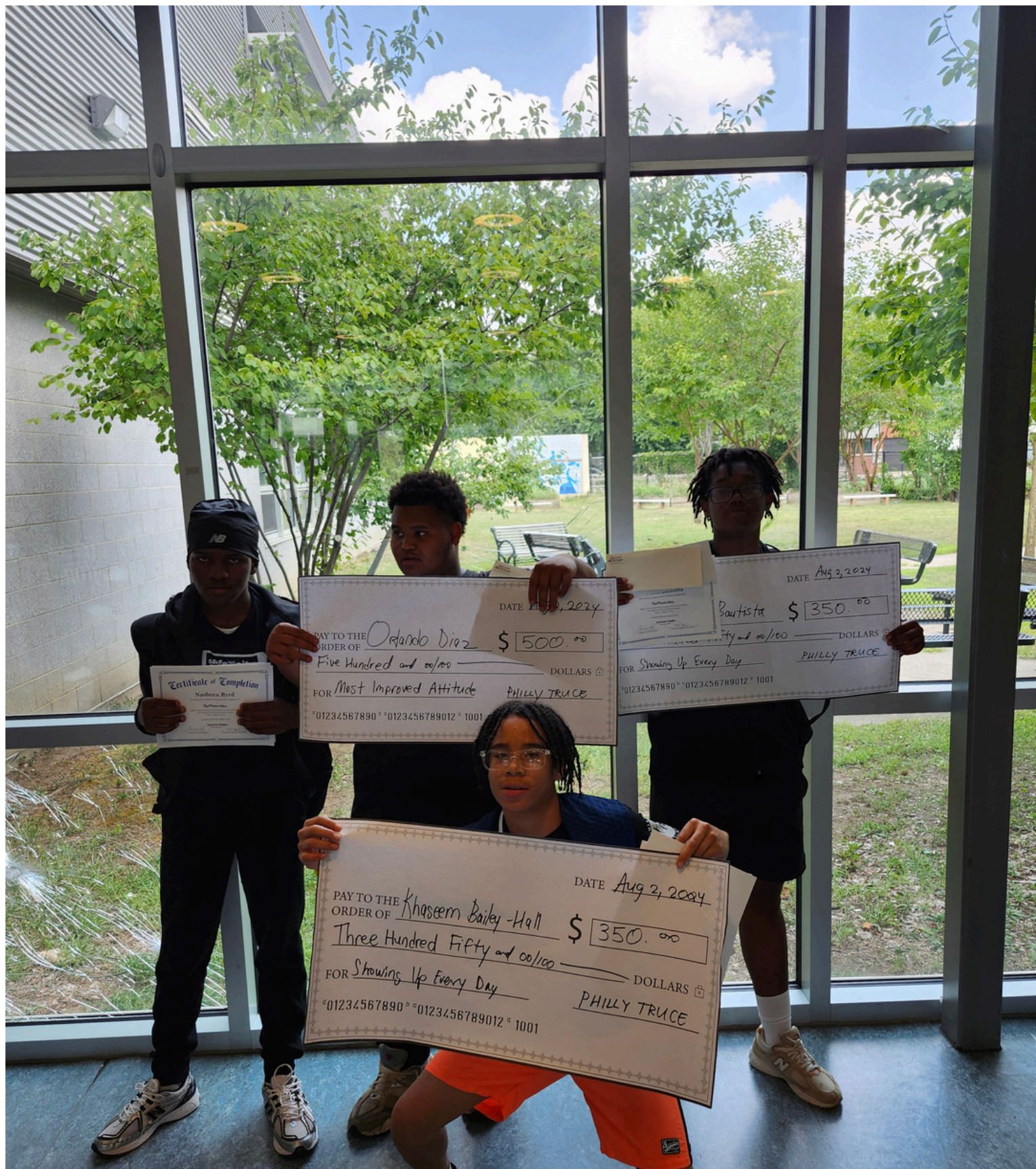
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Year of Brotherly Action Parade, July 4th, 2025



Philly Truce and CLIP partnership: Youth Community Cleanup, July 2025



Philly Truce Safe City Boys Youth Mentorship Program Awardees, December 2024



Program Objectives

The two main objectives of the Peace Patrol are: (1) to use visible, place-based deterrence and data collection to make communities safer and cleaner; and (2) to do so while serving and supporting justice-impacted men. In regard to visible, place-based deterrence, the Peace Patrol aims to act as a community-led visible deterrence (C-LVD) initiative. C-LVD methods include non-punitive collaboration between law enforcement and community, supportive visibility and efforts to deter crime (e.g. adequate lighting, signage, fencing, green spacing abandoned lots), community engagement/insight, and supports for vulnerable and high-risk community members. In recognition that the justice-impacted men employed and supported by the Peace Patrol are the anchor of the program in the community, Philly Truce also sets out to provide them with a full spectrum of holistic supports. These include structured workforce development and career opportunities, efforts and opportunities to strengthen relationships between justice-impacted men and law enforcement, and personal and professional development resources such as leadership and trauma-informed trainings. The opportunity to earn income for participation in Peace Patrol while receiving the aforementioned supports makes it more likely that participants will immerse themselves in the program.

The Peace Patrollers: Roles & Structure

Philly Truce partnered with the District Attorney's Transparency Analytics (DATA) CoLab to identify city blocks with high crime statistics to serve as the start point for Peace Patrols. When the team arrives on site, they set up a pop-up tent that serves as "the hub." The hub contains emergency resources for the patrollers, as well as literature about Peace Patrol and other community resources. From the hub, patrollers go out on multiple 30-minute walks through the community, starting out in a different direction each time. There are always at least two patrollers manning the hub while a patrol is in session.

During its early inception, Peace Patrol participants were volunteers, and community members of all genders and races were invited to join Peace Patrol. As the program grew, the focus shifted to empowering justice-impacted people to embrace accountability and lead the charge to improve their respective communities. Today, most of the peace patrollers are returning citizens who have been released from jail or prison or have had other criminal legal system involvement. Peace Patrol chooses to employ justice-impacted men of all races to provide opportunities to those most affected by the criminal legal system with roles that aim to disrupt and prevent further conflict and criminalization of the community. Due to socioeconomic reality of Philadelphia and the over incarceration and criminalization of Black and brown people, the majority of Peace Patrollers are Black men.

“ Just coming out of jail and not really having anything to fall back on, they helped me learn how to build a resume, they helped me get work, they sent me to school. So, they pretty much, you know, I had to start my whole life over again, and they were a big catalyst in, you know, helping me do that and pointing me in the right direction. And it would be a huge thing if a lot more people could get involved with it, especially coming out of jail to try to, because, you know, that could be the difference of somebody going back to jail or somebody doing the right thing. ”

With this targeted shift that aimed to hire justice impacted individuals as patrollers, Philly Truce worked to secure funding to pay them. The patrollers are paid a wage of \$15 per hour for their work. Philly Truce acknowledges that a living wage of \$23.26 is most optimal and aim to achieve this in the future but are proud of the strides and developments that resulted in the opportunity for patrollers to be paid. The current funding and circumstances allow current programming to provide a minimum wage but with more support and visibility, a living wage for Peace Patrollers can be a reality.

The Peace Patrol team includes a lead patroller, peace patrol coordinator, peace patrol assistant, and the patrollers. The lead patroller is responsible for managing and supporting the team of patrollers while out in the community on patrols. Philly Truce aims to employ a lead who has prior experience working with justice impacted men and may or may not be justice impacted themselves. In addition to leading a patrol team, the lead is also responsible for coordinating with Philly Truce leadership to ensure the patrols are effective and communicates any changes or developments from leadership directly to the patrollers. The coordinator and assistant roles are responsible for administrative and organizational development tasks, such as networking with other stakeholders, organizing professional development for the patrollers, data and case management tasks, and general coordination and planning. Finally, the patrollers are responsible for conducting the patrols in the community and staffing “the hub” to engage the community or anyone passing by.

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“So, after the initial two months, they actually kept me on because I learned how to use the tablet and all the all the apps and everything on that. So, they kept me on kind of just to be in charge of that and then show the other guys how to do it. And then from there, another spot opened up, and another spot opened and I ended up becoming a lead. And then the driver, I guess it's just, you know, doing the right thing and being in the right place at the right time.”

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Patrollers, including those staffing the hub, are expected to engage with the community. Engagements can include greeting a community member and explaining the purpose of the peace patrol; providing curated resources, information, support to the community; and other roles that relate to the data collection objectives of Philly Truce. The patrollers document their engagements, observations of blight, conflicts, and if time permits, provide community engagement surveys to members of the community. Said surveys are designed to collect information regarding pressing matters in communities, attitudes, and needs, as well as to inform, evaluate, and improve peace patrols. Results from these surveys show that the majority of respondents rated their experience with peace patrollers as a great experience, with many of them reporting that the patrollers are approachable, helpful in deterring violence, and make them feel safer and supported (See Appendix 1 for detailed results). The patrollers and lead work in tandem to ensure that their presence in the community is welcomed by being transparent about their objectives to the community members but also by being open and receptive to any feedback or concerns that are expressed.

“

“So when we're on peace patrol, we get so much positive feedback, which when I first started, I was kind of skeptical about that. But it's kind of it's definitely uplifting to see, you know, all the people like even, you know, now that I've been doing this for a while, like a lot of people know of peace patrol. And every time we interact with them, it's always positive. It's always good. And, you know, I've even ran into people later down the road that I interacted with before. And, you know, some of them were going through Philly Truce at the time and, you know, getting the help they needed.”

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As mentioned, Peace Patrol has a coordinator and an assistant that are tasked with administration, coordination, and support tasks. For example, the coordinator works with Philly Truce's partners at The Healing Way, an outpatient treatment program, and Kintock, a reentry program. Additionally, they are responsible for reviewing applications and selecting applicants who demonstrate the ability to both contribute to the Peace Patrol and benefit from its unique objectives. The coordinator and assistant are also responsible for supporting the programming and training that are provided to the patrollers. Specifically, patrollers receive programming sessions and resources related to personal, career and educational development; substance abuse and recovery support; goal setting and action planning; and a host of other programming and trainings that are designed to assist patrollers in their personal and professional development. The coordinator and assistant support Philly Truce leadership with any case management or networking duties necessary for the continued collaboration between Philly Truce and the relevant agencies that support the Peace Patrol. The coordinator also works closely with Philly Truce leadership to grow outreach and identify stakeholders and assets in the community that may be willing to support Philly Truce and the presence of Peace Patrollers in communities. In similar fashion, the assistant has additional responsibilities with regard to data collection which is discussed in more detail below.

“

“I was incarcerated. I learned respect and loyalty and to be honest and patient. When the young kids came into these prisons, I motivate them, help them. They don't know right from wrong. And I took that skill from inside. I brought it outside to Peace Patrol. Once Peace Patrol knew what I was about and what they're about, they helped me. They helped me and I helped them. And I like it and will keep doing it, doing it, doing it. It's wonderful. I can get out there and help others. Probably save somebody's life. I don't know. But to me, I feel good about it.”

”



Philly Truce Septa Peace Patrol Pilot, December 2025



Philly Truce Septa Peace Patrol Pilot, December 2025



Trauma-Informed Care, Personal/Professional Development

As mentioned, Philly Truce intentionally hires justice-impacted men to be peace patrollers. In doing so, Philly Truce recognizes that the Peace Patrol should also include personal and professional development opportunities for the patrollers. As such, Philly Truce provides personal and professional development programming. Additionally, Philly Truce provides transport to and from programming and patrols. Each peace patrol cohort receives 23 hours of foundational training as part of the orientation process. This orientation includes volunteer and safety training to prepare them for patrols. Other development and training opportunities are designed to be trauma-informed and oriented for personal and professional development. Examples of opportunities for the patrollers include workshops on career portfolios, guidance on industry-recognized credentials or certifications relevant to participant career goals, workforce development, case management and participant success plans, and access to a resource manual for other needs (e. g. housing, employment, behavioral health, physical health, support groups, re-entry supports and food access).

Each peace patrol cohort lasts about 9 weeks. The above resources, trainings and workshops are implemented within the first half of the cohort and the remaining half focuses entirely on peace patrols and securing work or career opportunities. For the first three weeks, Peace Patrol participants attend programming at Philly Truce offices from mid-morning until 5 PM and are then transferred by a company van to that night's patrol area. During weeks four to six, the programming focuses exclusively on career preparedness. Philly Truce partners with local non-profits Energy Coordinating Agency and Uplift Solutions to provide meaningful training during the day and patrollers report to the assigned patrol community to begin Peace Patrol by 6:30 PM. The referenced agencies provide HVAC (Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning) training and CDLB (Class B - Commercial Driver's License) training which are both industries providing a living wage. At the conclusion of week 6, the referenced agencies transition and escalate participants training exclusively without Philly Truce. Philly Truce no longer provides financial support to the patrollers after week 6. Patrollers train with the respective agency during the day and report for patrol in the evening. After the particular Peace Patrol cohort has concluded, participants have much more professional job experience and can leverage the networks of training partners to gain full-time employment.

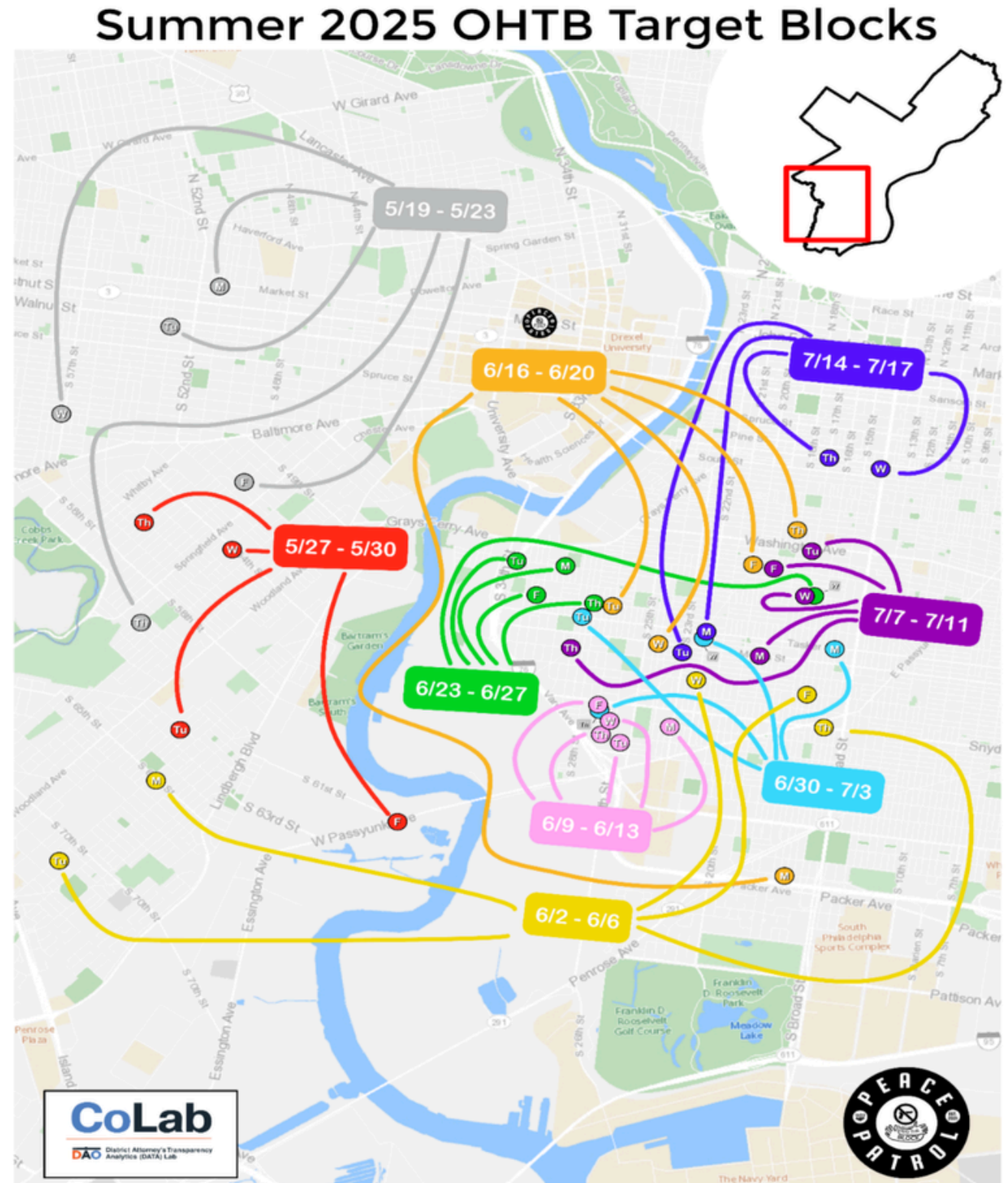
Peace Patrol Schedule and Patrol Zone

Philly Truce determines their priority blocks for peace patrols by referring to an analysis provided by the DATA CoLab. The analysis identifies five priority blocks by the number of shooting victims (within a quarter mile buffer) within areas Philly Truce's chosen priority areas. The chosen areas were based on Philly Truce's personal knowledge, input from community members, constituents and previous consultations with the Philadelphia Police Department. This analysis was produced for three time periods - the prior 12, 18, and 24 months from the time of the request in early spring of 2025. After reviewing all three analyses, the DATA CoLab and Philly Truce determined that the eighteen-month analysis was the most optimal to use as it provided a moderate length of time that captured recent incidents and an adequate number of target blocks. Thus, Philly Truce used the top five blocks with the most shooting victims in the pre-identified police districts within the past eighteen months to develop their Peace Patrol schedule. The schedule consists of thirty-six weeks of patrols over four cohorts of patrollers.

Patrols start at the assigned hub, which is preselected by Philly Truce based on DATA CoLab coordinator input, DATA CoLab asset and geographic data, and proximity to businesses that receive frequent patrons or areas of high foot traffic. Busy and high activity areas are prioritized for Peace Patrol visibility and an increased likelihood of engagements. The Peace Patrol hub is a spacious tent with Philly Truce logos on it, which not only provides a base for peace patrols but also houses chairs, flyers, resources and serves as a location for community members to engage with the patrollers that are not on patrol. All patrollers are required to wear vests that are branded with the Philly Truce Peace Patrol logo. The vests make patrollers easily identifiable to the community and demonstrates the official capacity of the patrols.

Patrols occur between the hours of 6:30 PM and 10:30 PM. There is a general uptick in activity during these hours that coincide with the end of the business day, closed schools, and minimized or diminished societal supports that make it an optimal time for community patrols. During the referenced hours, the patrollers commence patrols of the assigned neighborhood in thirty-minute increments. Some of the patrollers remain back at the hub to engage with any community members who may stop by. Patrols are 30-minute shifts throughout the four-hour patrol period. Patrollers return to the hub at the end of each shift. Throughout the four-hour shift, patrollers swap roles so that everyone has an opportunity to patrol blocks and cover the hub. The lead patroller helps ensure that all of the target blocks are patrolled and shift schedules are followed. Upon return from the final patrol of the evening, patrollers assist with packing up the tent and loading all materials and resources back on to the Philly Truce transportation van. The group complete a debrief to discuss any challenges, concerns, highlights or any general thoughts about the completed community patrol.

Figure 5: Summer Peace Patrol Target Areas (Map)



Peace Patrol Data Use & Collection

Mapping Patrols & Tracking Work

As mentioned above, Philly Truce collaborates with the DATA CoLab to inform which blocks to patrol, as well as to collect data while on patrols. In regard to data collection, Philly Truce utilizes a combination of electronic forms and Google Earth to collect data and document engagements, conflicts, and blight observed during peace patrols. Google Earth is a free web and computer program created by Google Inc. that allows users to interact with a realistic 3D representation of Earth. The globe is informed and supported by satellite imagery, GIS data and geolocation software, making Google Earth a cost-effective tool for mapping projects and generally to explore Earth's surface. Google Earth is particularly useful for peace patrols because the interactive maps allow for user to create projects, plan routes, leverage geolocation technology, and record data or content that can be specifically assigned to a landmark or area on a map.

The DATA CoLab provided Philly Truce with trainings to use Google Earth, as well as worked with them to think through what sort of data should be collected on patrols. One piece of data that the Peace Patrol tracks on their patrols with Google Earth is blight. So, when a patroller observes blight, they record it in Google Earth by dropping a geolocation pin in the area where they have observed it. Upon dropping the pin, Google Earth prompts the patroller to enter details of the blight observation. This includes the type of blight (e.g. abandoned and un-boarded homes, hazardous items in the street, trash, potholes, roadkill or dead animals, extreme instances of unkempt grass, abandoned lot or vehicles, graffiti), a minor description of it, and a media requirement to take a still image of the blight. The previous details are documented and collected on iPads that have wireless connection. The Peace Patrol lead and assistant are responsible for sorting the recorded blight submission into prearranged weekly and daily folders so that they can be used for data analysis and reports.

“It's actually pretty easy. I would say a scale of one to 10, probably a two. You know, even people like one of the other guys, he's never really used any type of technology. And I was able to show him in a couple of days. So, it's pretty basic. It's pretty easy.”

Figure 6: Peace Patrol Google Earth Data Collection Step-by-Step Instruction Guide

PATROLLER GOOGLE EARTH STEP-BY-STEP



Step 1: Drop the Pin & Save

- Use the compass arrow on the right-hand side to place pin at your location (there are other methods, but this is simplest)
- Select Save to Project in the bottom-left of the screen.

Step 2: Name the Pin

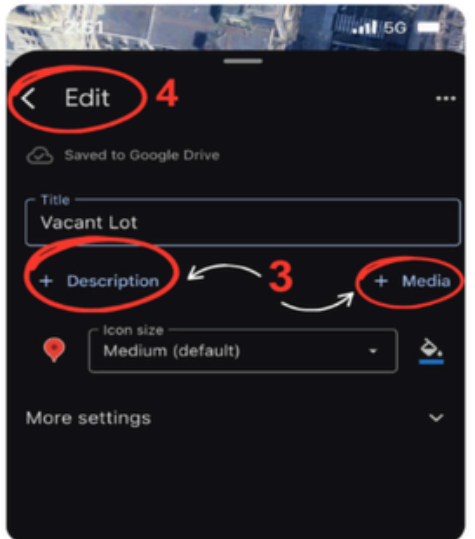
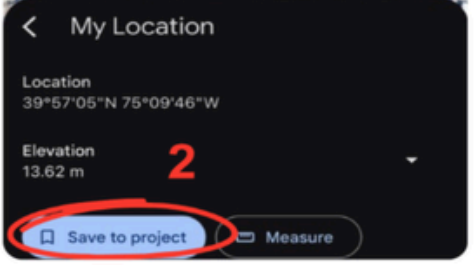
- Accurately describe what is being observed.
- A reviewer should be able to understand what is being captured, and to place it into one of the blight categories in the nightly Exit Ticket.

Step 3: Detail the Pin (Media + Description)

- Under title, click Media, then Camera to snap a photo
- If you would like to add further contextual information you can do so in the Description

Step 4: Get Back

- Select the back arrow in the top left of the panel, this will take you back to home screen of the project



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In addition to blight, patrollers also document engagements with community members. To do so, patrollers carry clickers that they utilize to keep an active count of community members that they interact with or disperse informational and resource flyers/pamphlets to. If patrollers witness any conflicts while on patrol, they document these instances. Unlike blight and engagement documentation, patrollers are instructed to prioritize their safety and refrain from documenting conflicts during the active patrol. Instead, patrollers are asked to make mental note of the details of the conflict and the response to it so that it can be recorded in a safe location, such as back at the hub. Patrollers rely on one another to exchange and confirm details when recollecting and documenting conflicts upon return to the hub. Similar to the blight documentation process, patrollers are provided with a written guide to summarize how to record instances of conflict. Documenting a conflict requires the patrollers to clarify if the conflict was physical or verbal and how the conflict was resolved, e.g. by a community member, police or peace patroller de-escalation.

At the end of the evening, the lead patroller submits an electronic exit ticket that summarizes all the engagements, conflicts, blights, and other notable observations. The exit ticket also includes a short summary of any Philadelphia Police Department support or lack of response to incidents. The exit ticket, in combination with the Google Earth submissions, and the assigned roles of the lead and assistant to organize the data, creates an efficient system to quantify the interactions and observations that occur during the peace patrols. The community engagement surveys provide an additional qualitative tool that can inform programing, outreach and improved services in various ways. Using data reported by the Peace Patrol, the DATA CoLab produces a two-part weekly recap and preview report. The weekly recap report summarizes the previous week's patrol by providing key metrics such as total miles walked on patrols, blocks visited, engagements, observations, and surveys distributed. The weekly report not only summarizes the work done by the patrol but also builds patroller morale and pride in their work as they can visualize their impact. The weekly preview report provides a preview of the next week's patrol blocks, the expected weather and a map of the community being patrolled. Additionally in the preview report, DATA Lab analysts utilize spatial exposure modeling to generate a list of 5 suggested places that show the highest risk for shootings. This helps direct Peace Patrol on potential areas to visit correlating to an increase in efficiency and impact while out on patrols.

Figure 7: Peace Patrol Weekly Recap Report

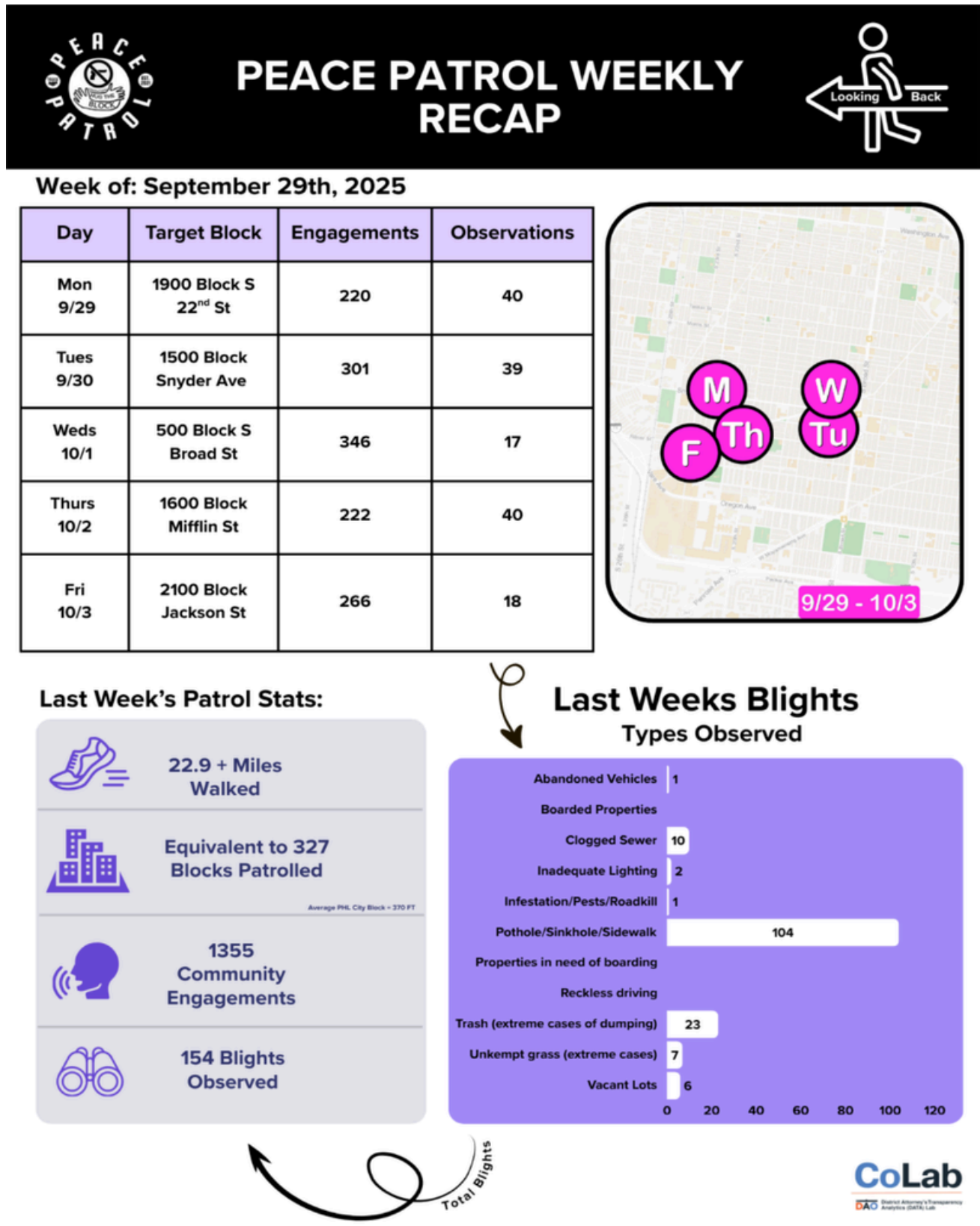
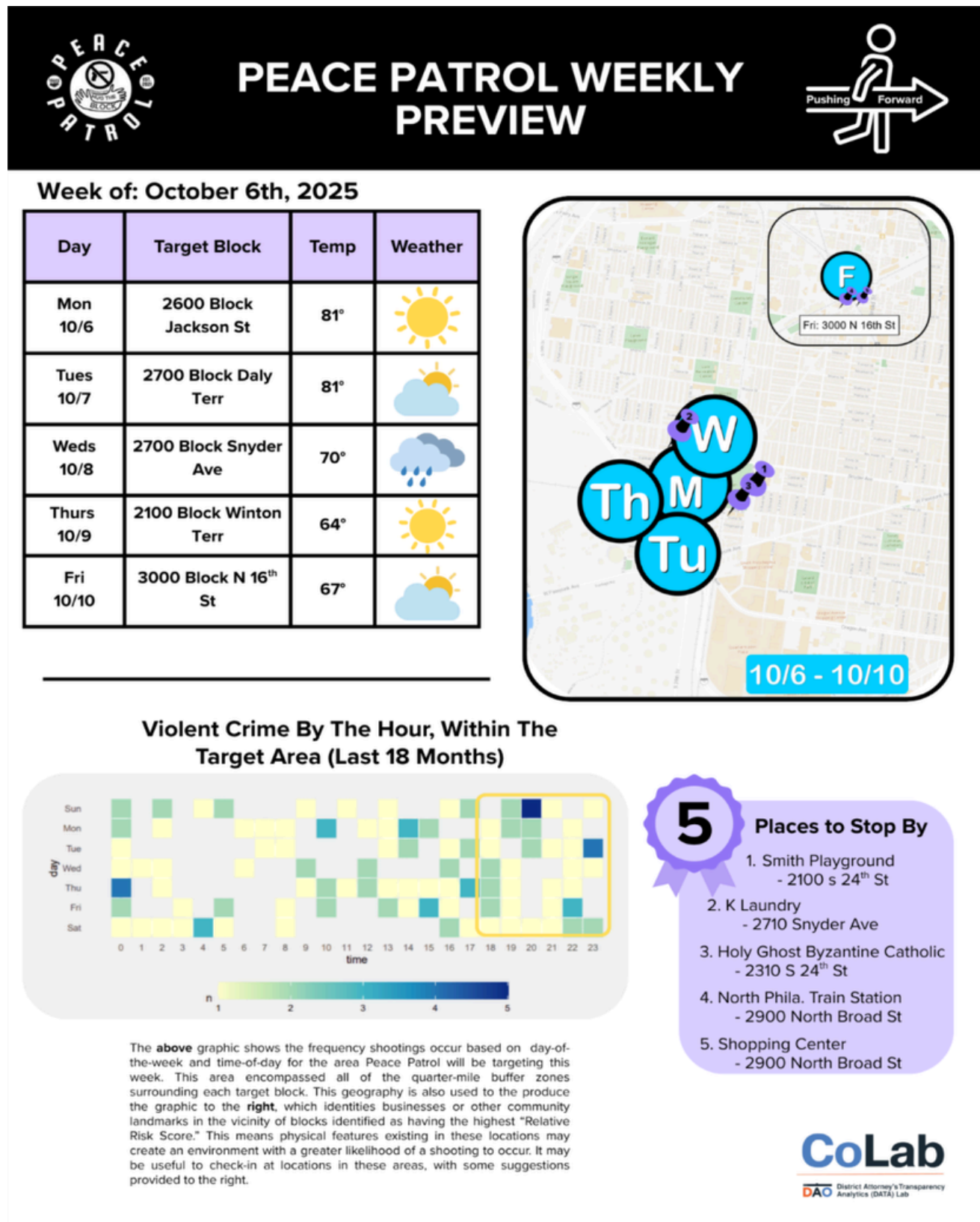


Figure 8: Peace Patrol Weekly Preview





Results So Far for Peace Patrol

Peace Patrol has now been in effect since 2023. In 2025, Philly Truce partnered with the DATA CoLab to build out their data capacity in order to better measure impact and reach.

Totals for 2025 Peace Patrols

- Total Observations: 2,666
- Total Engagements: 13,058

Results for the SEPTA Peace Patrol

Due to the success and infrastructure established by Peace Patrol, Philly Truce launched a SEPTA Peace Patrol pilot program. Philly Truce partnered with the District Attorney's Transparency Analytics (DATA) CoLab and SEPTA to educate the public regarding increased enforcement of theft of services, provide resources, and address crime and quality-of-life crimes on public transportation during the holiday season.

Totals for the 2025 SEPTA Peace Patrol

- Total SEPTA passengers encountered and/or engaged: 39,201
- Stations patrolled: 30
- Average number of patrols per day: 4
- Total observations of disorder* logged: 1,760
- Average number of observations per day: 65.2
- % of observations on platforms: 68.8%
- % of observations on trains: 31.2%
- Most common disorder type observed: Turnstile jumping

*The SEPTA Peace Patrol was tracking types of social disorder such as turnstile jumping; public disturbances; panhandling; verbal, physical, and sexual harassment; drug use and sales; verbal and physical conflict; and more.



Measuring Impact & Collecting Feedback

Philly Truce prides itself on continuous growth, development and progression towards meeting their organizational objectives. A key factor in their organizational objectives is listening to community voices to inform their work. As such, program evaluation that includes qualitative methods to measure community-based impact is essential. Specifically, implementation and utilization of surveys, focus groups, and interviews help Philly Truce collect information on how their programs are impacting the community, including their strengths and areas for improvement. The same approach is applied to Peace Patrol, to gather information from both Peace Patrol patrollers and community members. Specifically, Philly Truce administers a Peace Patrol participant survey to patrollers upon their entry into the program and at the end of the program. Peace Patrol aims to employ patrollers who have had contact with the legal system, so their input on how the program is operating and serving their needs as participants is valuable information. For community members, Philly Truce conducts a community survey, interviews and focus groups to learn about their impact and how to improve. These tools are not only effective for measuring growth and program success, but also can be utilized for reports, grant opportunities, analyses and research when appropriate.

Participant and Community Feedback

Peace Patrol patroller surveys are administered to collect feedback throughout programming. There are three distinct surveys that each serve its own purpose and measures particular aspects of Peace Patrol. The first survey is a general program survey and consists of a pre- and post-program component to measure program impact. This survey aims to receive feedback about the patrollers' experience, attitude, growth, opinion of usefulness of the skills and resources provided, suggestions to improve programming and more. The second type of survey is administered after a workshop, training, or professional development session to gather feedback on the session. It aims to understand their knowledge, views and comfort level with the subject before and after the event, and level of interest in the content area. The third type of survey is administered to the patrollers, and it specifically aims to retain feedback about the effectiveness of the facilitator after the workshop, trainings or professional development opportunity is completed. Peace Patrollers come from diverse and very different educational backgrounds, so it is important to ensure that the facilitators are always open to adjusting to meet the learning and training needs of all participants.



The peace patrol post-survey aims to gather information on the patrollers' attitudes regarding the effectiveness of programming, such as, personal career preparedness, trauma-informed care, community engagement, deescalation techniques, and feedback on participant experience and growth. Responses showed that most peace patrollers felt that they were confident in their skills to deescalate conflict and prevent violence in their community. Most also believed that community patrols can help prevent violence and did not endorse violence as a necessary means of resolving conflict. The majority also reported that they understood trauma-informed approaches to conflict resolution and felt that law enforcement can work positively with community members. Almost all peace patrol participants were confident in their ability to obtain a professional certification, and the majority felt like they had the resources needed for successful reentry. The detailed results of these surveys are available in Appendix 2.

Community Engagement Survey

A community survey is also distributed by Peace Patrollers while they are patrolling the assigned neighborhood. In the spirit of community-based participatory research (CBPR) practices, community members are respected and compensated with gift cards for completing the community survey. Although Philly Truce is an extension of the community, adhering to CBPR practices ensures that the interactions and information collected are de-identified, are not extractive, and that community members are valued and compensated for their lived experience. The community survey is extensive and aims to collect feedback regarding the most pressing concerns and matters in the community. It also seeks attitudes regarding the presence of Peace Patrols in the community, its effectiveness, and community characterization of the interactions with the relevant Peace Patroller that administered the survey. The feedback generated contributes to evaluating and improving Peace Patrol and Philly Truce. Understanding community perceptions and attitudes offers valuable insight into the most effective and innovative methods to combating long standing community issues. The below figures summarize some key insights from community members.

Figure 9: Do you think blight is an issue in your community? (64 Responses)

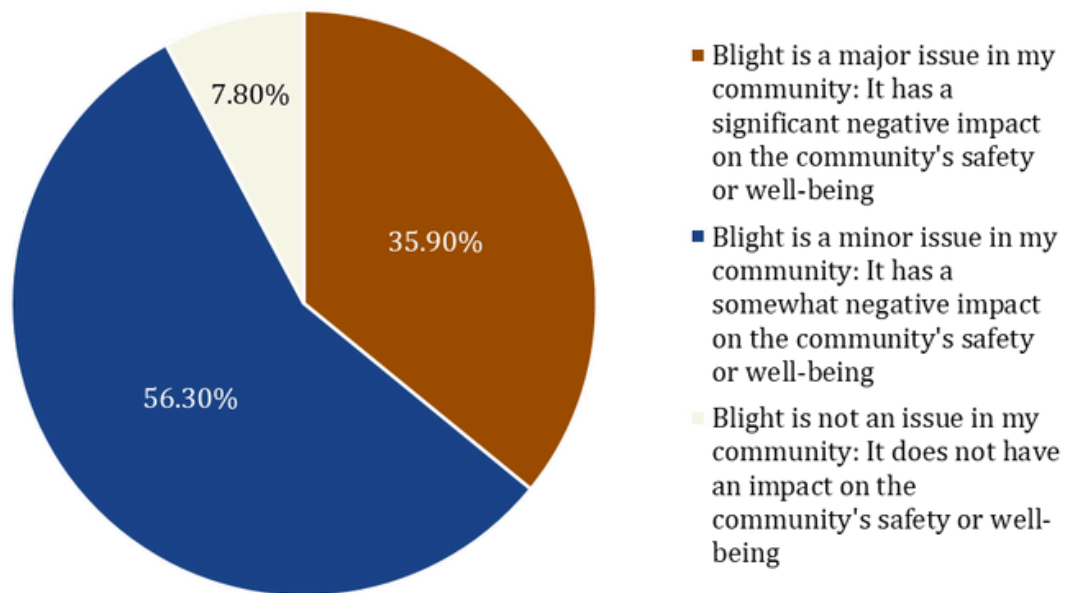
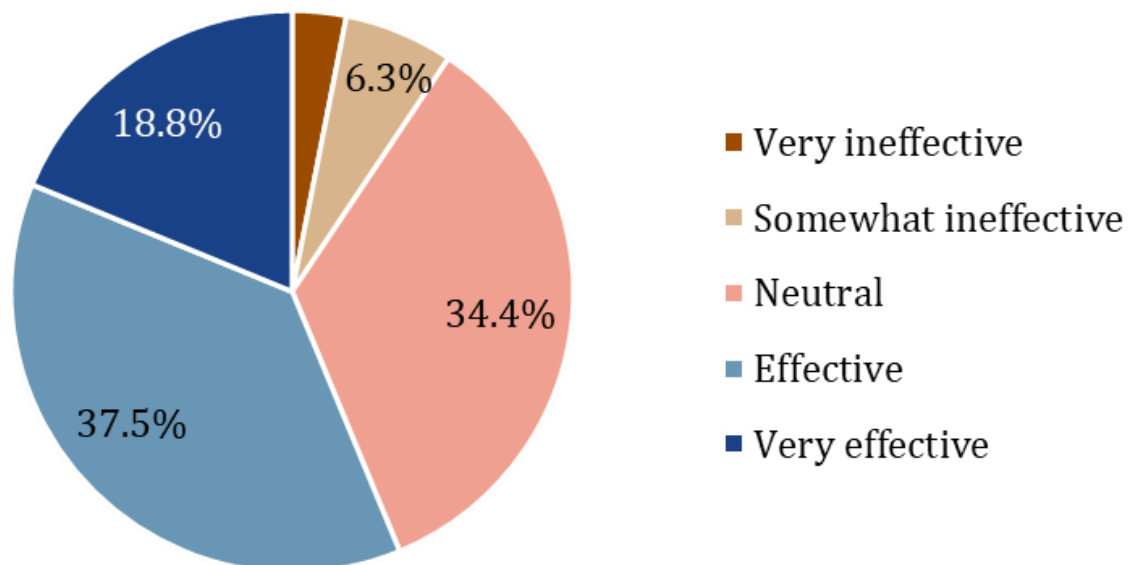


Figure 10: Structured Awareness: Using tools like security cameras, lighting, or patrols to make people feel more aware and help prevent potential risks (64 responses)





Interviews

Interviews are utilized to collect feedback regarding the patroller's lived experiences, their opinions on the effectiveness, community reception of patrols and any recommended changes to the Peace Patrol program. Feedback from the interviews can be used for research papers, reports, future grant support, and general informative content. Philly Truce personnel and its board consist of professionals with a capacity for research and data analytics and are diligent in protecting and respecting any information or data collected. The appropriate data collection, deidentification, and storage measures are utilized to ensure all interactions are equitable and protected.

“ —
So, when I first started, I was very withdrawn. You know, I was not good with talking with people like strangers and, you know, I was just kind of withdrawn to myself. But now that I've been doing it for a while, it's just kind of second nature now. So it's definitely made me open up as a person more, talk to more people. I'm a lot more confident when I speak to people.
— ”

Focus groups

Peace Patrol utilizes focus groups as an opportunity to seek feedback to improve programming, internal structures and procedures. Focus groups provide an opportunity to meet new community members and professionals, as well as reconnect with stakeholders, supporters and volunteers. In addition, the feedback and perspectives of current and previous Philly Truce staff, as well as Peace Patrol participants, are highly valued. Interviews, surveys and a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) are utilized to optimize the opportunity of such an impactful gathering of diverse contributors. At the conclusion of the focus group, the feedback collected is implemented and utilized to inform direct changes when necessary and reaffirm procedures and foundational structures that were identified as successful.



Program Stories

Though it is not exclusively only for justice-impacted men, the Peace Patrol program has primarily featured justice-impacted men. Philly Truce understands the importance of celebrating and acknowledging participants for their efforts and commitment to improving their lives and meeting the moment by being active in their communities. There are many exceptional participants that embody the values and mission of Peace Patrol by going beyond the call of duty. There are unique efforts to support said participants even after their cohort and time with Peace Patrol has concluded.

A Spotlight on Anthony:

One such instance involves Peace Patrol participant Anthony L. Ant entered the program and exemplified leadership qualities amongst his peers. He embraced the programming just as many of the other participants but his willingness to assist other participants with engaging community members and gaining the capacity required for the data collection requirements of the position was instrumental to the success of his cohort.

Ant's effort brought some much-needed relief to Peace Patrol and the daily responsibilities of managing participants while out in community. Philly Truce invited Ant to return as a member of the team after his cohort, and he currently has an intermediary role between administration and the Peace Patrol participants. As part of his new role, he operates the Philly Truce van loaded with the resources required to facilitate Peace Patrol to the scheduled patrol location. Once there, he sets up and at the end of the evening, he breaks down the hub and drops off participants to a logistically convenient area with access to public transportation. Additionally, he coordinates with the DATA CoLab coordinator and GIS analysts to clarify any questions about the data collection processing pipeline, including information about the observations and specific routes taken while on patrol

“ ———

So, after the initial two months, they actually kept me on because I learned how to use the tablet and all the all the apps and everything on that. So, they kept me on kind of just to be in charge of that and then show the other guys how to do it. And then from there, another spot opened up, and another spot opened and I ended up becoming a lead. And then the driver, I guess it's just, you know, doing the right thing and being in the right place at the right time.

————— ”



A Spotlight on Keith:

Similarly, participant Keith S., was invited back to continue working with Peace Patrol after his original cohort ended. Keith’s personal commitment to helping misguided youth and identifying blights and other factors that devalue communities is admirable. Keith is particularly knowledgeable about the various regions of the city of Philadelphia, the historical background and current the climate of the various communities that Peace Patrol are active in. This perspective allows for optimal, informed and equitable engagements in communities that have a history of experiencing marginalization, violence, racism, systemic racism and inequality.

Keith’s lived experience as a justice-impacted, seasoned Black male resident over the age of 50 provided an invaluable beneficial experience for Philly Truce, Peace Patrol participants and the general community. In his current role, he operates the data collection tools and helps manage and lead participants before and during patrols. Below is a quote regarding his thoughts and experiences collaborating with Philly Truce Peace Patrol.

“ ———
My job now, it's more important than before. Because the responsibilities. I got a team. And I taught them how to do things. Philly Truce showed me. And I hadn't thought I was going to go this far, being a leader in Peace Patrol. But since they liked me, they made me a leader. And my job is to make sure the job gets done right. Make sure I take my pictures, engage, talk to others, you know. Talk to the group. Make sure everybody's signing in on their phones. Signing the book. Make sure they're on time. And my job is to make sure their job, their hours is correct. And when it's correct, if they're late, they get marked late. If they don't know what they got to do, I will help them, engage them, and talk to them. They'll know that this is serious. It's not a game. Our life is out here. You can't go to the neighborhood if people don't want us in there. But thank God, it never happened. So now, it's more joyful. And the groups we have, each time we get better, better, better. ——— ”



Looking Toward the Future

Philly Truce Peace Patrol has developed tremendously since its inception. The emphasis on community feedback, personal and professional growth of participants, addressing blight and other factors that devalue communities, crime, and being data informed, are just several areas in which Philly Truce and its stakeholders have collaborated to improve Peace Patrol. Program evaluation and innovation are reoccurring and are staples of the continued growth of Philly Truce and Peace Patrol. Community, stakeholder and institutional support were and will be crucial to the continued growth of Philly Truce and Peace Patrol. In the case of Peace Patrol, an increase in the number of participants in the program directly correlates to a significant amount of justice-impacted men with employment, personal and professional development, and lastly but equally as important, accountable, active and empowered men in Philadelphia communities. As citizens of Philadelphia, we may not all be responsible for its current state, but we are all responsible for collaborating to improve it.

Philly Truce's objective for Peace Patrol is to develop several simultaneous year-round and city-wide community patrols. Specifically, Philly Truce intends to service the major regions of Philadelphia. As originally funded, Philly Truce obtained support and funding to provide income to justice-impacted men to patrol during the spring and summer months of the year. There are multiple cohorts between said duration, but only one active group at any given time patrolling citywide, accordingly with the designed schedule. The program received a temporary source of funding to extend the program from the summer of 2025 to the fall. Thus in 2025, Peace Patrol was active from March to mid-November. This allowed for additional employment and support of justice-impacted men, community engagement, and patrols. Otherwise, as previously indicated, patrols occur from late spring through summer. With additional support and funding, Philly Truce can train and prepare several groups of Peace Patrollers to patrol several communities simultaneously. With an expanded team, Peace Patrol can occur in multiple communities on the same evenings, effectively deterring crime across key regions of The City of Philadelphia. In addition, data collection of observations of blight and other factors that devalue communities, and coordination with the proper City, private and non-profit entities for servicing of said recorded observations, is an additional added benefit for communities.

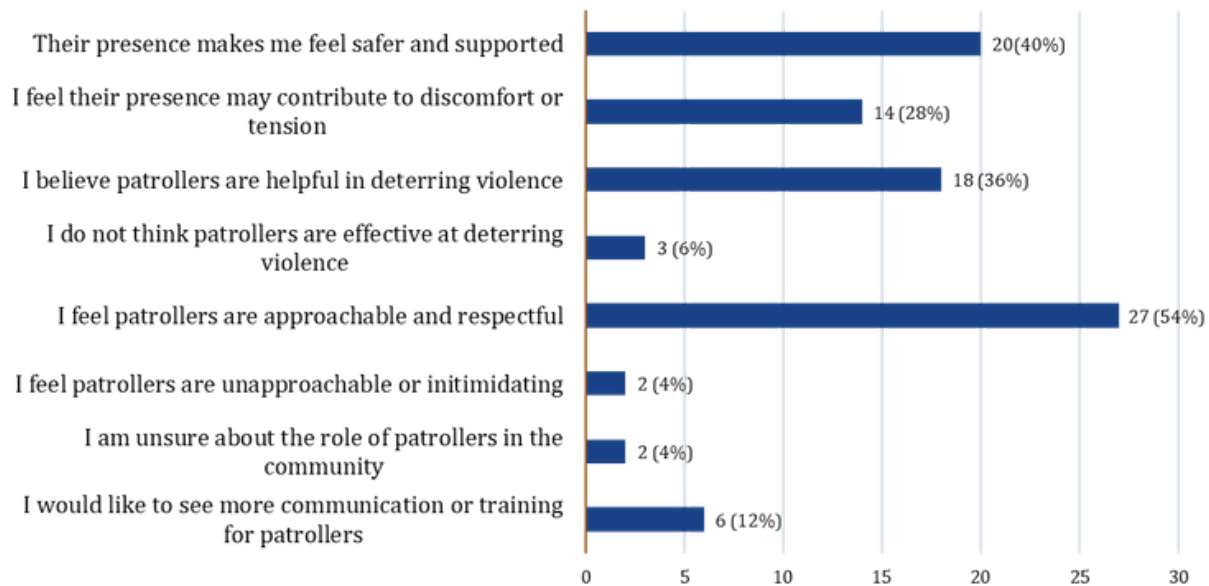


Philly Truce's advocacy, initiatives and programming are ever-growing and changing. Along with Peace Patrol, their other pressing objective is their Year of Brotherly Action campaign. The campaign collaborates with community members and over 30 community organizations, stakeholders and institutions to host several key initiatives and events focused on mentorship, community engaged employment and meeting other pressing needs of Philadelphia communities. From July 4, 2025, through July 4, 2026, the Year of Brotherly Action is dedicated to uplifting and positioning black men, who are often amongst the most marginalized in society, as central to Philadelphia's future. This inclusive movement aims to provide information, knowledge, and networks to access resources, such as housing, youth engagement, the power of political and social advocacy and cooperative economics. By design, the Year of Brotherly Action starts July 4, 2025 and culminates in celebrating Philadelphia's semiquincentennial, marking the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Though the climax of this initiative is on the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Philly Truce hopes to build a climate where the collaboration, resources sharing, advocacy and engagement exemplified during the previous year becomes the standard in Philadelphia. Philadelphia's 250th anniversary celebration of America's Independence is a fitting moment to celebrate the growth and accomplishment of Philly Truce, Peace Patrol and Philadelphia. It also serves as a moment to assess the current climate and work required to build sustainable coalitions for advocacy that aim to protect and support the most vulnerable members of society.

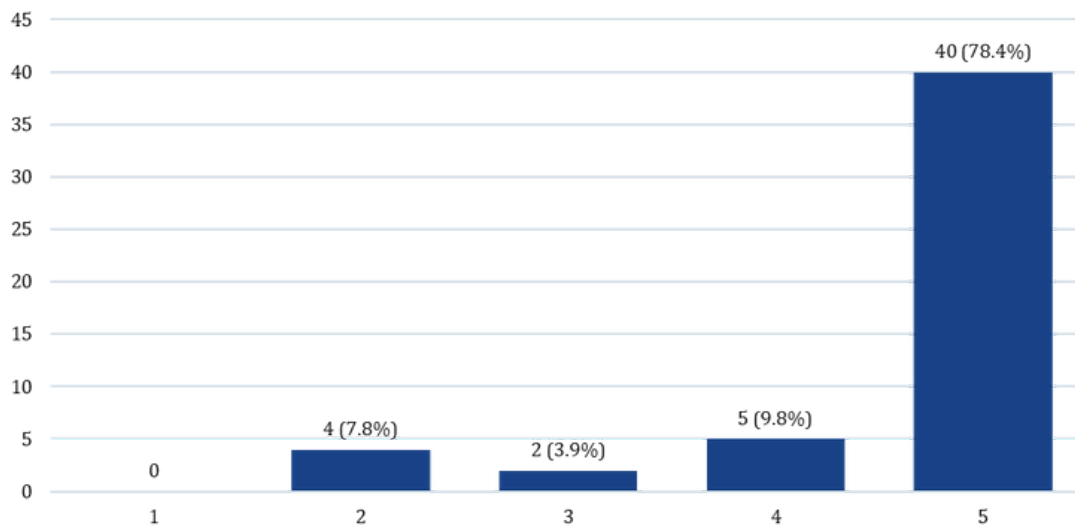
Appendices

Appendix 1: Community Survey Results

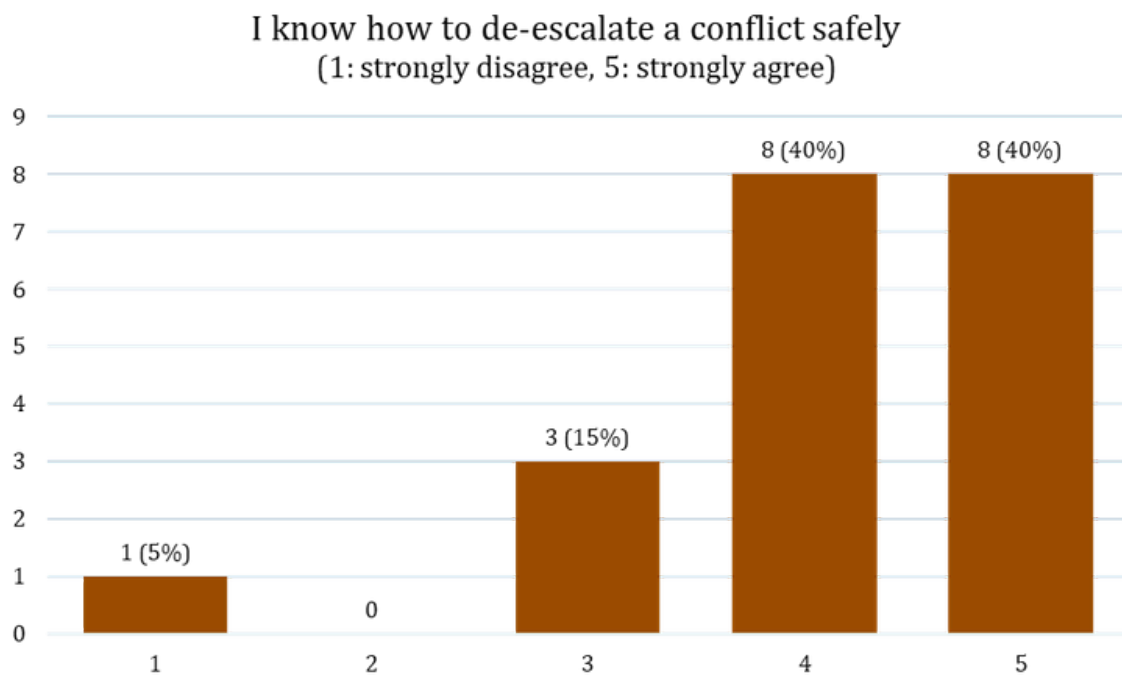
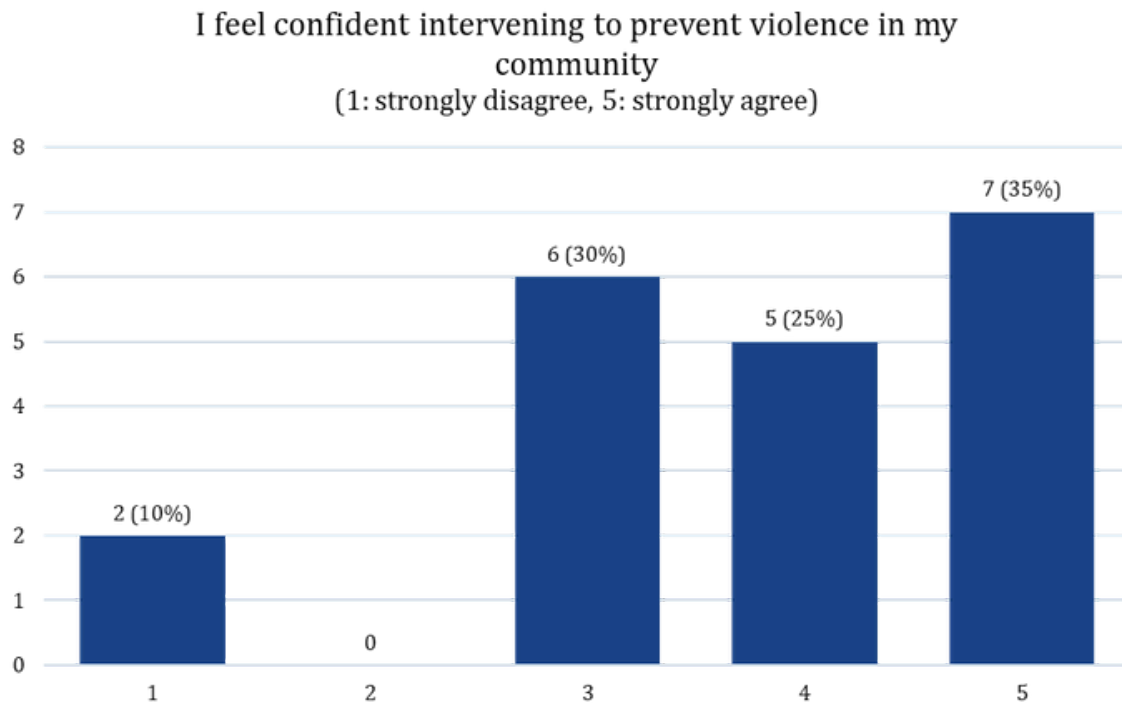
If you interacted with a Philly Truce Peace Patroller (select all that apply)



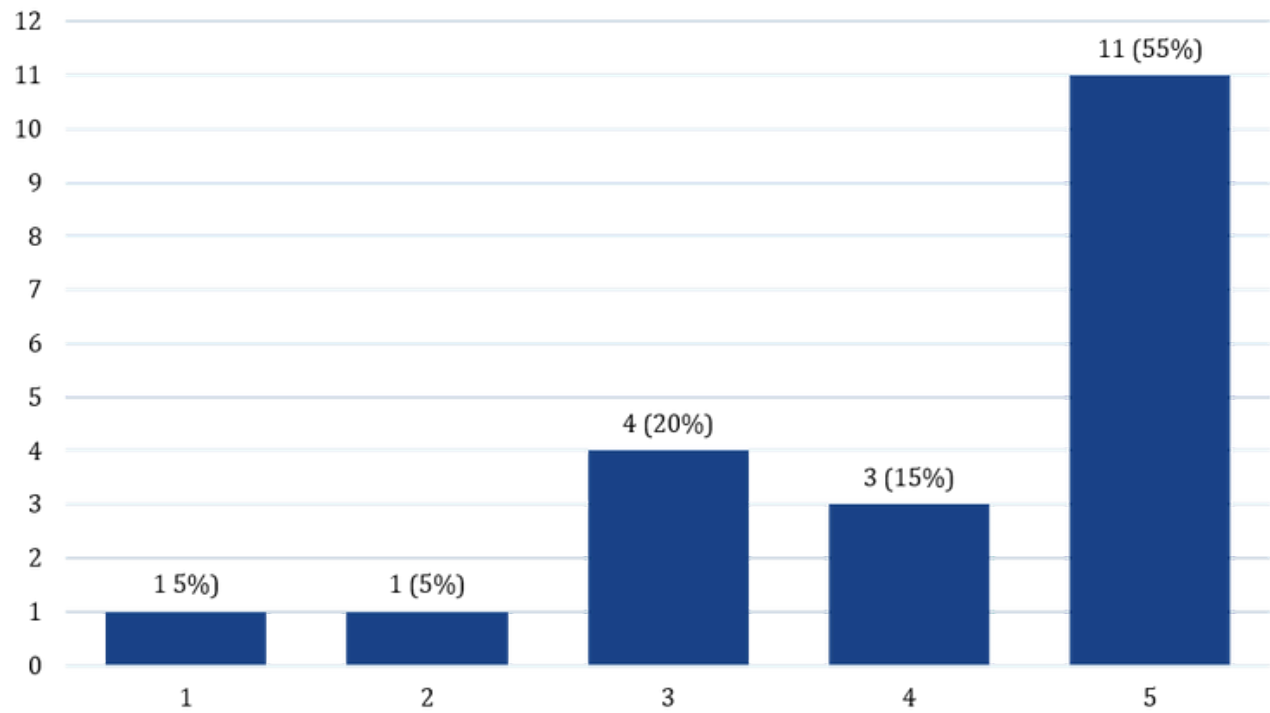
If you interacted with a Philly Truce Peace Patroller, how would you rate your experience (1 being bad, 5 being great)



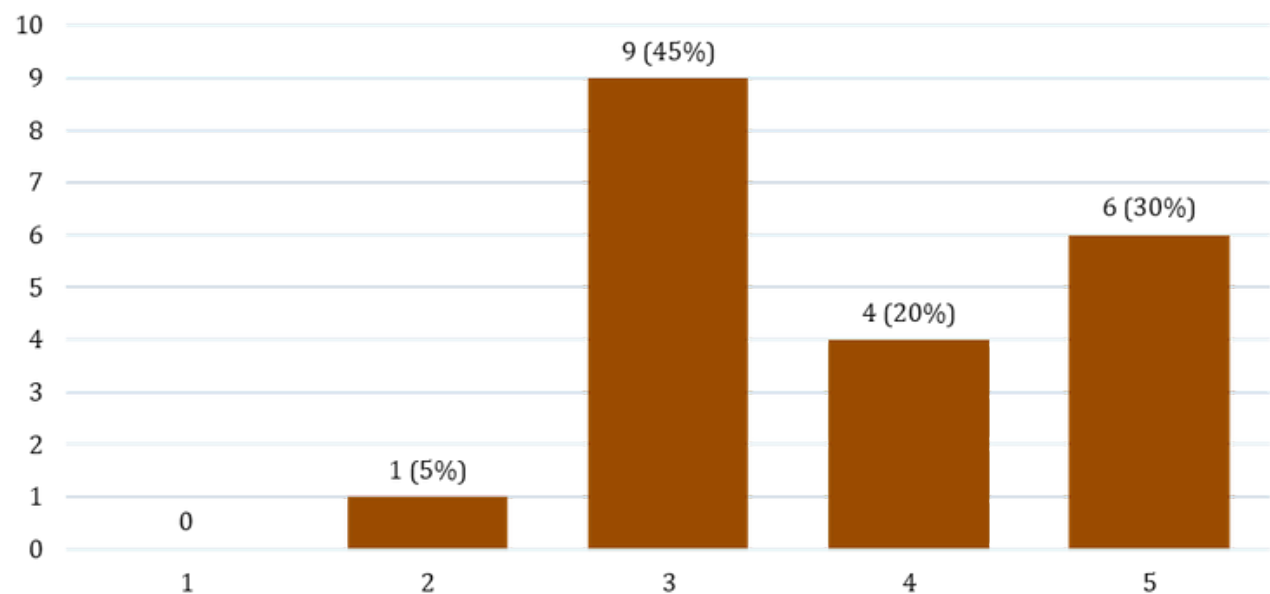
Appendix 2: Patroller Survey Results



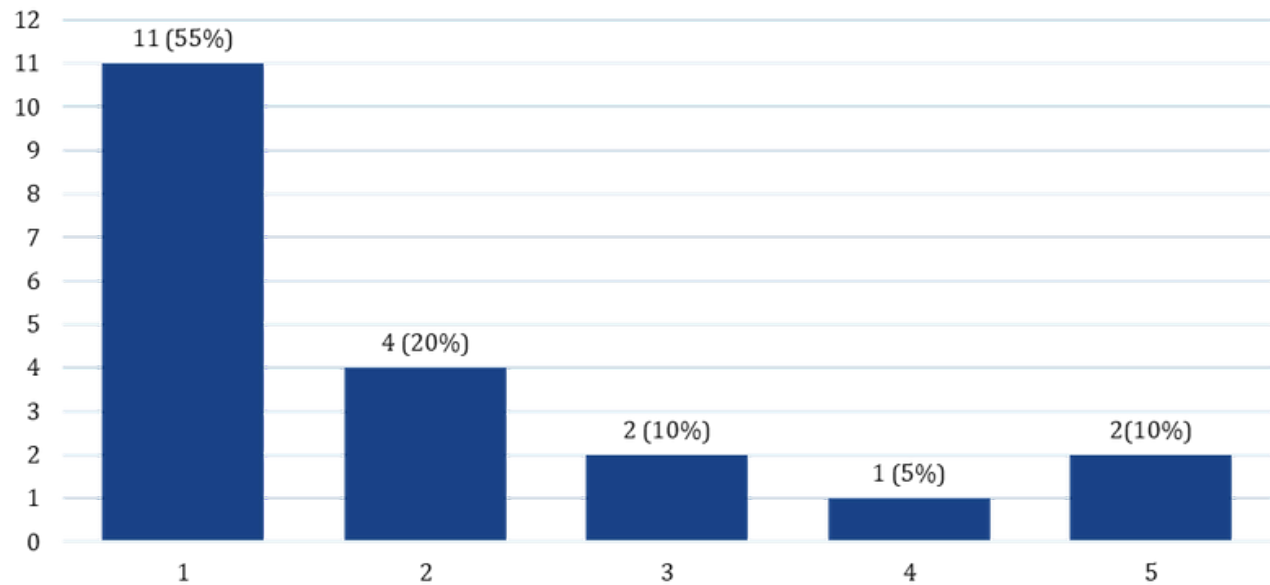
Community Patrols can help prevent violence
(1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)



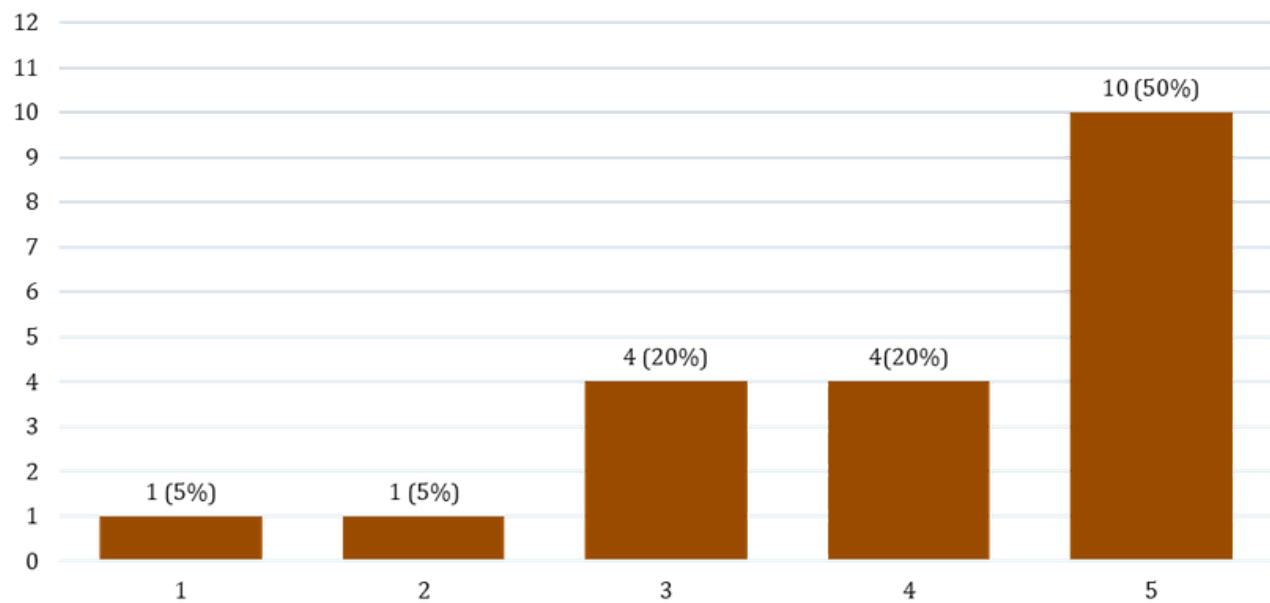
I understand trauma-informed approaches to conflict resolution
(1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)



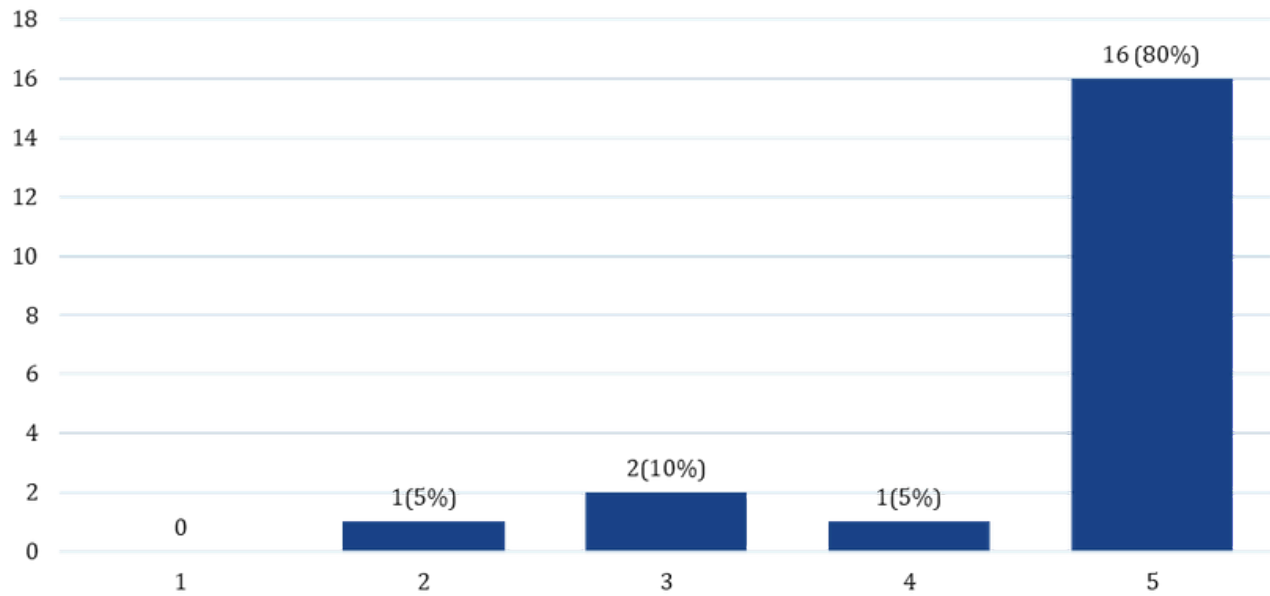
Violence is a necessary means of resolving conflicts
(1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)



Law enforcement can work positively with community members
(1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)



I am confident in my ability to obtain a professional certification
(CDL, forklift, security, etc)
(1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)



I have/had access to the resources needed for
a successful reentry
(1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree)

