



Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center

Partners

University of Michigan
School of Public Health
School of Medicine
School of Nursing

University of Pennsylvania
Penn Injury Science Center
Urban Health Lab
Cartographic Modeling Lab

Rutgers University
School of Public Health
School of Criminal Justice

Flint, Michigan
Genesee County Land Bank (Lead Organization)
Genesee County Health Department
Flint Police Department
Hurley Medical Center

Youngstown, Ohio
Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corp. (Lead Organization)
Mahoning County District Board of Health
Youngstown Police Department
St. Elizabeth Medical Center
Mahoning County Land Bank

Camden, New Jersey
Coopers Ferry Partnership (Lead Organization)
City of Camden
Camden County Department of Health and Human Services
Camden County Police Department
Camden Special Services District
Cooper University Hospital
New Jersey Tree Foundation

For more information:

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2015-2020

Community Engagement and Revitalization

From 2015-2020, the MI-YVPC studied the effects of vacant property improvements on violence, property crimes and intentional injuries in three U.S. cities: Flint, Michigan, Youngstown, Ohio and Camden, New Jersey.

The Center focused on supporting work that engaged residents, particularly youth, in caring for properties in their neighborhoods by mowing, planting gardens, or other “greening” activities.

We assessed whether involving community youth and adults in greening reduces violence to a greater degree than either professional greening or no maintenance. This work built upon and supported programs developed by local land use organizations and previous research that indicated that caring for vacant properties can have beneficial effects on the health and safety of residents.

The goals of the research were to:

- Evaluate and support the implementation of community-level strategies to improve vacant properties and analyze the relationship of changes in the physical environment to youth violence;
- Test the effects of alternative approaches to greening on police incidents, youth intentional injuries, conditions of nearby properties, and resident’s perceptions of their neighborhoods;
- Document the process of community readiness and capacity needed to implement community-engaged greening programs; and
- Identify lessons learned that support community and youth engaged greening programs, and share the results with local, state, and national audiences through a wide variety of methods, including a freely available implementation guide.

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Selected Publications:

Reischl, T. M., Krusky, A. M., Zimmerman, M. A., Aiyer, S. M., Kruger, D. J., Franzen, S. P., & Lipton, R. (2016). Assessing Physical Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods: Reliability and Validity of the Parcel Maintenance Observation Tool. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 44(1), 7–21. <http://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21730>

Krusky, A. M., Heinze, J. E., Reischl, T. M., Aiyer, S. M., Franzen, S. P., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2015). The effects of produce gardens on neighborhoods: A test of the greening hypothesis in a post-industrial city. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 136, 68–75. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2014.12.003>

