

TORY TRAUMA PROGRAM

# What does it mean to be BRAVE?

INTRODUCING A HOSPITAL-BASED VIOLENCE  
INTERVENTION STRATEGY IN TORONTO

January 11, 2024  
North York Human Services and  
Justice Coordinating Committee (NY-HSJCC)



**Sunnybrook**  
CENTRE FOR INJURY PREVENTION



# At Sunnybrook

The Tory Trauma Program at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre has seen an increase in violently injured patients, now accounting for 17% of all trauma activations.

## Rate per week change:

2014: 2.88

2020: 7.21

150% increase



Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, 2023





# Toronto

The City of Toronto has seen an upward trend in homicide rates. The City's shooting incidents have doubled since 2014 from 166 to 364.





# Canadian Context

Firearm-related violent crime has increased in Canada in since 2013

- **Moncton, NB:** increase since 2009, **AND** increase since 2013
- **Ottawa, ON:** decrease since 2009, **BUT** increase since 2013
- **Hamilton, ON:** increase since 2009, **AND** increase since 2013
- **Windsor, ON:** increase since 2009, **AND** increase since 2013
- **Thunder Bay, ON:** increase since 2009, **AND** increase since 2013
- **Winnipeg, MB:** increase since 2009, **AND** increase since 2013
- **Regina, SK:** increase since 2009, **AND** increase since 2013
- **Victoria, BC:** decrease since 2009, **BUT** increase since 2013



# Global Context

- Youth violence is a global **public health problem**.
- Homicide is the **fourth leading cause of death** in people aged 10-29 years
- For each young person killed, many more sustain injuries requiring **hospital treatment**.
- **When it is not fatal**, youth violence has a serious, often lifelong, impact on a person's physical, psychological and social functioning.
- Youth violence **increases the costs** of health, welfare and criminal justice services; reduces productivity; decreases the value of property

(WHO, 2020)



"VIOLENCE IS AN EPIDEMIC  
THAT DISPROPORTIONATELY  
HURTS YOUNG PEOPLE OF  
COLOR."

THE HEALTH ALLIANCE FOR VIOLENCE INTERVENTION (HAVI)



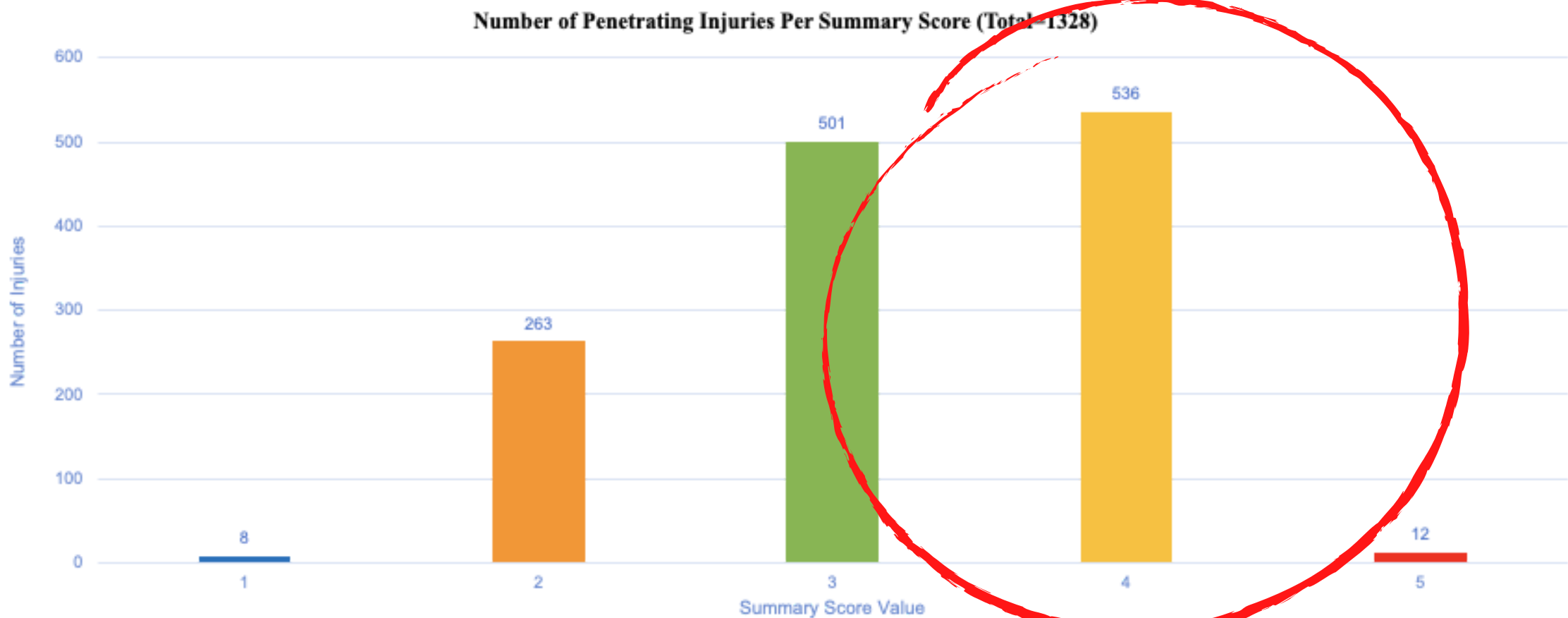





Frequencies of Patient's racial or ethnic group

Levels	Counts	% of Total
Asian - East (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Korean)	1	1.8 %
Asian - South (e.g. Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)	6	10.9 %
Asian - South East (e.g. Malaysian, Filipino, Vietnamese)	1	1.8 %
Black - African (e.g. Ghanaian, Kenyan, Somali)	2	3.6 %
Black - Caribbean (e.g. Barbadian, Jamaican)	4	7.3 %
Black - North American (e.g. Canadian, American)	23	41.8 %
Do not know	3	5.5 %
Latin American (e.g. Argentinean, Chilean, Salvadoran)	2	3.6 %
Middle Eastern (e.g. Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese)	3	5.5 %
Mixed heritage (e.g. Black - African & White - North American)	2	3.6 %
White - North American (e.g. Canadian, American)	8	14.5 %

## Marginalization Analysis for Penetrating Injuries







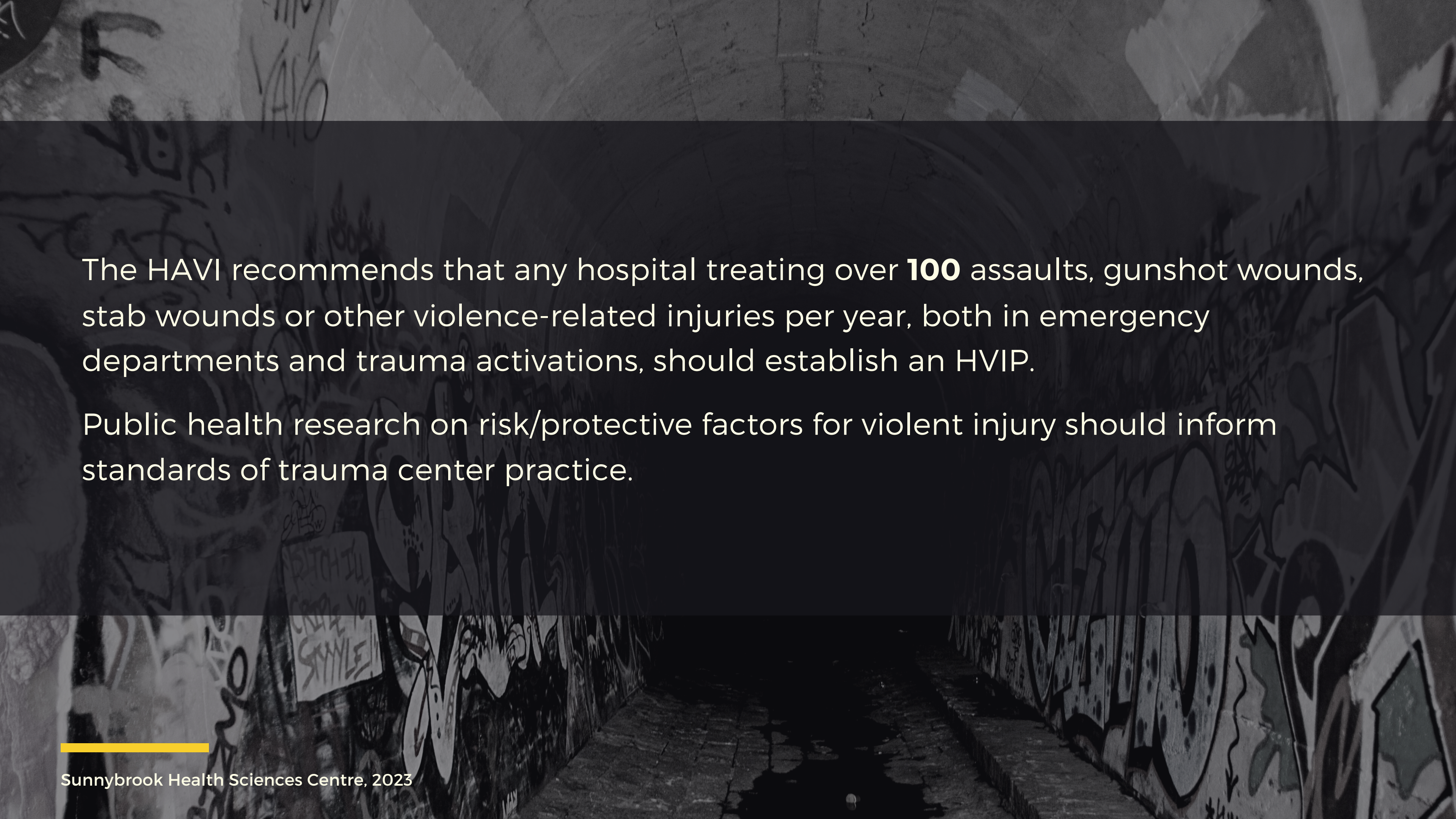
# WHAT IS A HOSPITAL- BASED VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM (HVIP)?

"HVIPs are multidisciplinary programs that combine the efforts of medical staff with trusted community-based partners to provide safety planning, services, and trauma-informed care to violently injured people, many of whom are boys and men of color.

Engaging patients in the hospital, during their recovery, is a golden opportunity to improve lives and reduce retaliation and recidivism. The support network continues once patients are released with a pathway for outpatient care and other services."

Source: <https://www.thehavi.org/>



A dark, atmospheric photograph of a tunnel or alleyway. The walls are covered in dense, colorful graffiti. A bright light source at the far end of the tunnel creates a strong lens flare and illuminates the path ahead. The overall mood is gritty and urban.

The HAVI recommends that any hospital treating over **100** assaults, gunshot wounds, stab wounds or other violence-related injuries per year, both in emergency departments and trauma activations, should establish an HVIP.

Public health research on risk/protective factors for violent injury should inform standards of trauma center practice.



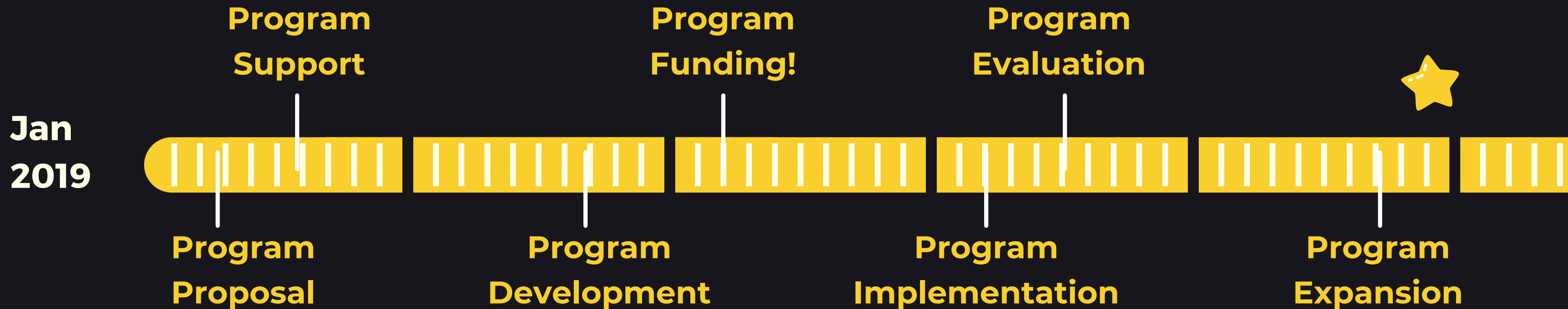
A black and white photograph of three healthcare professionals standing in an operating room. On the left is a man wearing a dark sweater, glasses, and a surgical mask. In the center is a woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark top, a necklace, and a surgical mask. On the right is a man wearing light-colored scrubs, glasses, and a surgical mask. They are standing in front of a surgical table covered with a white cloth. The background is filled with medical equipment, including large overhead surgical lights, multiple monitors displaying vital signs, and various medical carts and supplies. The room is brightly lit, and the overall atmosphere is professional and clinical.

# BRAVE

**Breaking the Cycle of Violence with Empathy**  
**Launched Fall 2020**



# Programming Process







## Motions

*1 - Motion to Add New Business at Committee moved  
by Councillor Michael Thompson (**Carried**)*

*2 - Motion to Amend Item moved  
by Councillor Michael Thompson (**Carried**)  
That:*

The Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, review the BRAVE program, investigate any opportunities the City, the Province and the Federal Government might be able to work with the Tory Trauma Program at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, including the possibility of providing assistance for case workers, and report back to the November 6, 2019 meeting of Economic and Community Development Committee.



**8. Regent Park Social Development Plan**

- To coordinate and implement priority actions of the Regent Park Social Development Plan, enable capacity building and resident engagement, \$0.635 million gross and net will fund the one permanent Community Development Worker position and provide \$0.500 million in grant community groups. The Action Plan will increase the number of Regent Park residents engaged from approximately 4,000 to approximately 10,000.

**Community Safety and Well-Being:****9. Community Safety and Well-Being Plan**

- To develop and implement a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan to meet Provincial legislative requirements, \$0.207 million gross and \$0 net is required. Funding includes \$0.043 million from Province as well as a one-time draw of \$0.165 million from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve (offset one-time costs). The plan will be developed through collaboration with residents and community stakeholders to contribute to safer and healthier communities through social development, prevention intervention and incident response.

**10. Expand Community Crisis Response Grants**

- Funding of \$0.100 million gross and net will support youth living in areas impacted by community violence by providing grants to plan and implement neighbourhood based activities that promote healing, connection and action. Funding will provide up to 20 more grants that will support 60 youth to work in communities and create activities, events, workshops that promote community healing and safety.

**11. Community Youth Violence Prevention Grants**

- Funding of \$2.100 million gross, partially offset by \$0.100 million in funding from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve, will provide \$2 million in additional community grants to support not-for-profits that provide programming and services to youth in communities that have experienced youth violence, as well as one temporary Agency Review Officer position, starting March 2020, to facilitate the granting process. Through the additional grants, 10 more agencies will receive funding to provide youth focused programming for up to 300 youth depending on metrics identified in grant proposals.

**12. Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program Pilot**

- Funding of \$0.100 million gross and net will fund the development of a new hospital-based violence intervention program which aims to promote positive alternatives to violence in order to reduce re-arrest, criminal involvement and re-injury among youth injured by violence. The new BRAVE (Breaking the Cycle of Violence with Empathy) Program will provide case management support for individuals directly supported by Sunnybrook following gun violence, identify Hospital-based Community referral and develop an evaluation framework.

To address increasing gun violence and strengthen youth violence prevention, the 2020 Recommended Operating Budget for SDFA. Funding was previously requested from the federal government in 2019 for these initiatives, which was not approved. The division will proceed with the initiatives below and continue to advocate for Federal funding in 2020.

**13. TO WARDS Peace**

- Funding of \$1.201 million gross in 2020 will enable the development and implementation of an intervention violence interruption model geared at engaging those most vulnerable to or involved in serious violence and crime, as well as an outreach campaign to popularize the message of peaceful communities and engagement, capacity building, targeted investments and access to relevant programs.

TORONTO STAR

# Proposed distribution of \$6 million

4 Feb 2020

+1 more

\$2.1 million for community youth violence prevention grants, up to \$200,000 per year, per established organization for funding would go to 15 organizations which operate in a similar way.

\$635,000 to fund the Regent Park social development plan proposed by city staff but not yet included in the 2020 budget.

The plan developed with the community is focused on increasing safety and spurring economic and other opportunities.

\$100,000 for a Sunnybrook hospital pilot called Breaking the Cycle of Violence with Empathy, which is meant to connect patients involved in community violence with interven-

\$1.2 million for six new youth hubs in community centres,

tions and other services. \$100,000 to expand the city's crisis response grants to help communities rebuild after violence.

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TORONTO STAR

For the city's \$3.5 billion operating budget, \$6 million is a drop in the bucket. But community workers say the new funds would be a sign of change for communities struggling with youth violence.



It's a breath of fresh air

Metrolinx accused of keeping plans for new line under wraps

Ottawa defends price of coronavirus evacuation

Toronto Star  
4 Feb 2020 (A15)



## Sunnybrook launches new BRAVE (Breaking the Cycle of Violence with Empathy) Program

October 7, 2020



From left to right: Michael Lewis, case manager, BRAVE; Illana Perlman, social worker, Tory Trauma Program; and Dr. Avery Na surgeon-in-chief at Sunnybrook.

SHARE



Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre ✓  
October 7, 2020 · 🌐

This week, Sunnybrook's Tory Trauma Program enrolled the first patients in its new BRAVE (Breaking the Cycle of Violence with Empathy) Program. It's the first program of its kind at a Canadian trauma centre.



SUNNYBROOK.CA

Sunnybrook launches new BRAVE (Breaking the Cycle of Violence with Empathy) Program



TORONTO STAR

STAR EXCLUSIVE

How Toronto can rethink its fight against near-record gun violence — with or without defunding police

by Betsy Powell Courts Reporter  
on., Dec. 13, 2020 | 14 min. read  
Article was updated 3 days ago



Unauthorized vehicles may be  
ticketed/towed at owner's expense.

## FIRST PATIENT

September 29, 2020

## OVERALL ENROLLMENT (AS OF DEC 31, 2023)

162

## BY THE NUMBERS: (AS OF DEC 31, 2023)

989 home/community visits

707 risk factor identified

656 service referrals



## MISSION

Promote positive alternatives to violence in order to reduce retaliation, criminal involvement and re-injury among youth injured by violence.

## GOAL

Reduce risk factors and increase protective factors for violence.

## OBJECTIVES

- Facilitate referrals to community services
- Link patients and families to mental health supports
- Support medical follow-up for physical injury care

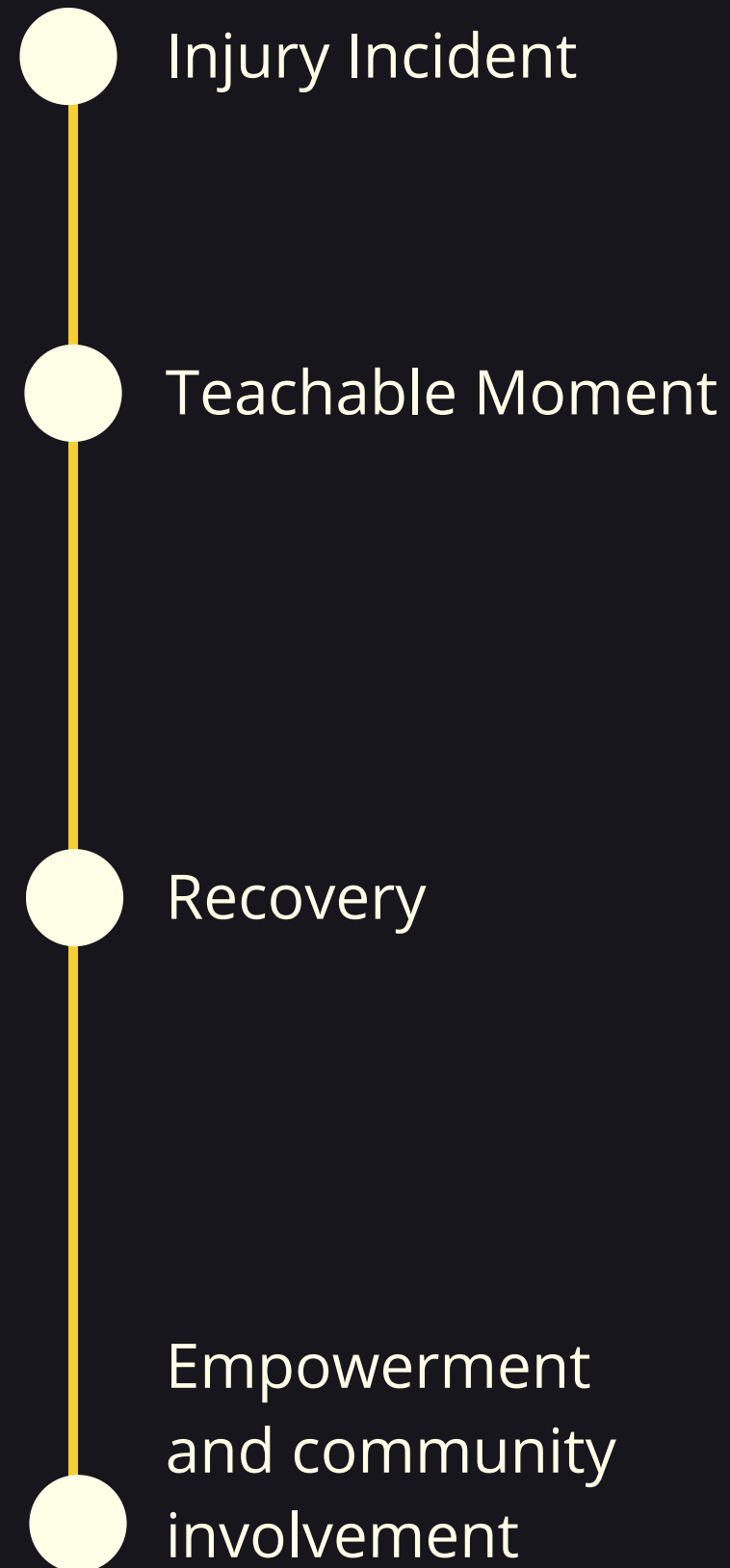
## PRINCIPLES

We use a public health approach to violence prevention recognizing the modifiable risk factors including the social determinants of health and systemic racism.



# BRAVE Program Methodology

- BRAVE uses the "teachable moment", approaching hospitalized target-population patients with culturally competent Case Manager.
- The Case Manager develops rapport with patients and family and helps to identify short and long-term needs and goals
- The Case Manager remains connected up to 6 months post discharge to help patient and family navigate systems and address psycho-social impact of injury





# Evaluation

- Mixed-methods approach included analysis of patient data as well as patient, family and staff interviews (conducted by YouthREX).
- Key findings:
  - **35% reduction in risk factors** for violence following program participation
  - BRAVE's service delivery was therapeutic in impact but did not conform to the conventional therapy mold in that it didn't operate based on 'appointment', was available during typical off-hours, was combined with case management services, and was dependent upon a peer-type relationship with the Case Manager.



*"And I think a lot of people feel that they can relate to [Case Manager] in a lot of ways.... But like just his presence. He's so friendly and open and engaging. That I think he's very good at developing rapport really quickly with people and especially people who may have walls up. Right. So I've definitely seen a benefit to that patients who like won't give me the time of day."*

**(Program and Hospital Staff)**



*"I didn't know I'd be more motivated to go back to work ... it's the encouragement, it's someone pushing me, someone always checking up on me, someone always saying, 'You good? What are you trying to do in the next five years?'"*

(Youth Participant)



*"Honestly, I'm doing well now you know. I'm doing this training; I'm staying out of trouble. I moved out of the place I was living before, cut off ties with stupid friends that were causing and jeopardizing my freedom and well-being. So it helped me a lot with learning to focus on myself more and putting myself before anything. And yeah, taking care of all of my issues I have in life, so it really helped me out a lot."*

**(Youth Participant)**



# The shift...

## Current Approach

Violently injured patients are difficult to care for and are probably gang-involved

My job is to care for the patient's physical wounds

It's not the responsibility of the hospital to do public health work

## BRAVE Approach



The trauma of violence has symptoms that can be recognized



A trauma-informed approach can shift the patient-practitioner relationship



Hospitals are the ideal setting to initiate early intervention in collaboration with public health and partner agencies



# Next steps

## SECURE FUNDING

In the 2022 budget, the City of Toronto has allocated additional funding for BRAVE/hospital-based violence intervention programs as part of the SafeTO Plan.

The City of Toronto continues to advocate to the provincial government on sustainable funding.

Expanding the program across the city/hospitals will support this effort.

## COLLABORATION

Sunnybrook has partnered with Humber River Hospital (HRH) and Scarborough health Network (SHN) to create a BRAVE network across the city with shared resources/centralized programming.

An additional Case Manager has been hired through Sunnybrook and co-credentialed at the other locations.

We are looking for additional opportunities to grow the BRAVE network





# For more information:

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# References & Resources

- National Network of Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs (The HAVI). Hospital-based violence intervention: practices and policies to end the cycle of violence [Internet]. Jersey City (NJ): Health Alliance for Violence Intervention; [cited 2021 Mar 18]. (NNHVIP Policy White Paper). Available from:  
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d6f61730a2b610001135b79/t/5d83c0d9056f4d4cbdb9acd9/1568915699707/NNHVIP+White+Paper.pdf>
- The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI): [www.thehavi.org](http://www.thehavi.org)
- Violence is Preventable: A Best Practices Guide for Launching & Sustaining a Hospital-based Program:  
<https://www.thehavi.org/violence-is-preventable>
- Supporting Male Survivors of Violence : Best Practices for Training Frontline Violence Intervention Workers  
<https://www.thehavi.org/best-practices-training-frontline-workers>
- Furthering Our Community by Uniting Services (FOCUS): <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/public-safety-alerts/community-safety-programs/focus-toronto/>
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/youth-violence>
- Statistics Canada: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/89-28-0001/2018001/article/00004-eng.pdf?st=0F-VRUx2>