

South Coast Youth Safety Partnership

c/o CommUnify of Santa Barbara County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Violence Response Statement

Goleta, CA January 8, 2021

As members of the South Coast Youth Safety Partnership (SCYSP), we are devastated by the recent tragic loss of youth in our community from violence. We represent an ongoing collaborative effort across youth-serving sectors to reduce youth and gang violence and build safe and healthy neighborhoods for everyone, especially our vulnerable youth populations. As service providers, public safety officers, educators, elected officials, and community members, we have been committed to working together and doing whatever it takes to build a safe community and support a bright future for our youth.

The work to ensure the safety of our youth started over a decade ago as a call to action following a tragic incident involving youth in 2007 and has been ongoing throughout the years, even in the midst of the current COVID-19 pandemic. The SCYSP is grounded in a foundation of shared responsibility and shared accountability, both contributing to building strong relationships and trust. We recognize that no one person, agency, organization, or group alone can be responsible for reducing youth and gang violence and building a healthy and safe community for our youth and their families. Youth and gang violence is a community issue, requiring a community response. In continued partnership with communities in the Central Coast region, we commit to creating a unified response that allows community voices to be heard and acknowledged.

Our law enforcement professionals have committed to being strong partners in this community-led effort, along with local and county government, our schools, stakeholders, and community members. We continue to promote the use of restorative approaches in schools, social justice in the community, and alternatives to incarceration through diversion programs and other community-focused solutions.

Collectively, we work to address the needs of our youth and build on their strengths. As a community, we can ensure our youth are more resilient and strongly connected to their families, schools, and community, as they develop into our next generation of leaders.

OUR RESPONSE:

As a partnership our immediate response was to lead communications efforts between all of our stakeholders, to ensure that the immediate needs of the community were addressed by crisis response professionals. The Community Engagement Team (CET) members were encouraged to reach out to the youth and families they serve. We will be continuing to assess the needs and necessary responses of the community as we gather more information. Any member of the community can feel free to contact the Partnership for resources, referrals, or questions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Value our Youth

Our youth should live in safe and healthy communities, attend safe schools, and be valued as contributing members of their community. We are committed to building on our community's resilience, improving youth developmental assets, and expanding after school, evening, weekend, and summer programs.

Trusting Relationships

We value trust-based relationships that reflect productivity, accountability, and mutual respect.

Shared Responsibility

We are guided by a culture of evidence, exchange, excellence, and shared accountability. We will align our efforts with other initiatives at the local, county, state, and national levels aimed at building safe and healthy communities for youth and families.

Building Safe Communities

We are committed to building safe communities for all youth and families. They should be ensured a sense of place in our communities and neighborhoods, which should be places to learn, live, work, and play. We advocate for enhanced student engagement and truancy prevention policies, strategies, and programming by collaborating with school districts, parents, and community-based organizations.

Community Response

We will lead the effort to address community challenges through a community response. We commit to providing parents, educators, public safety professionals, care providers, and public health professionals with the capacity to engage all our youth in reaching their potential. We will build community awareness through outreach and engagement strategies using a targeted, well-conceived communications plan.

Violence Prevention

We advocate for comprehensive violence prevention strategies that balance prevention, intervention, enforcement, and reentry efforts. We commit to reducing violent crime.

WHO WE ARE

Policy Team

The Policy Team directs the efforts of the SCYSP through a collaborative process involving policy and decision-making community leaders. The team is co-chaired by the Mayors of Carpinteria, Goleta, and Santa Barbara and consists of the Chief of Police, Sheriff, Chief Probation Officer, District Attorney, Superintendents of Schools, social services, behavioral health, business leaders, community based organizations, faith community representatives, the philanthropic community and others whose organizations interface with the issue of youth and gang violence including parents and youth. These leaders help to overcome bureaucracies and obstacles that hinder the implementation and success of our work.

Strategy Team

Members of the strategy team are led by the SCYSP Coordinator and act as an advisory body to provide leadership and guidance towards the implementation of our strategic work plan. The Strategy Team promptly addresses issues or potential issues of youth safety by engaging members of the Community Engagement Team. The team also assists partner agencies to seek funding sources to help implement programs and services to meet our strategic work plan goals.

Community Engagement Team

The Community Engagement Team includes a diverse representation of direct service providers, crisis response teams, educators, law enforcement, probation, social services, recreation and parks, and other providers. This multidisciplinary team of firstline professionals has the expertise in their field to directly meet the needs of our youth and families and to provide violence prevention and intervention services.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

[Partnership Webpage](#)

[Partnership Strategic Plan](#)

[2-1-1 Santa Barbara County](#)

[Santa Barbara Response Network \(SBRN\)](#)

District Wide Mental Health and Wellness Resources [HERE](#) [\(Español\)](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

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