

SCY ANNUAL REPORT: LOOKING BACK TO MOVE AHEAD

January 17, 2013



In 2013, [Strengthening Chicago's Youth \(SCY\)](#), convened by [Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago](#) celebrated our 1st birthday. We are excited to share with you our first annual report describing SCY's work in the past year – growth, accomplishments, and partnerships – and SCY's focus and plans for 2014.

2013 Growth

In 2013, SCY's collaboration grew by more than 1000 individuals representing more than 100 newly engaged organizations bringing SCY's total membership to nearly 1900 individuals from 550+ organizations. SCY also added two new staff members: Kelli Day, Operations Coordinator, and Alyssa Petersel, Program Assistant/Public Interest Fellow.

Kelli manages SCY's day-to-day operations, including the membership database and communication, administrative and fiscal tracking systems, budget development, and monthly reporting. In addition, Kelli manages event planning and coordination, staff/intern onboarding and orientation, and SCY's website development and maintenance. Alyssa assists in the development of advocacy plans, training activities, and communication materials, including SCY's blog and other social media. She is active in SCY's community outreach and partner engagement.

SCY also hosted ten interns from a variety of academic institutions, including Illinois Institute of Technology, Northwestern University, Morehouse College, University of Illinois at Chicago, and University of Michigan. These interns worked on projects related to restorative justice, youth engagement, technology development, built environment assessment, and SCY's policy agenda.



SCY also grew our social media presence with the development of [SCY's blog](#) and our Director's blog, "From Becky's Desk" – topics have included school push-out, domestic violence, mental health awareness, bullying prevention, contact cards and documentation of violence, mentoring, and youth employment. SCY also transitioned from a letter-format, monthly email to a dynamic, bimonthly e-newsletter and has continued to expand our website with the addition of a Calendar of Events and Upcoming Trainings page.

Knowledge Sharing Events & Presentations

In 2013, SCY kicked off its monthly training series facilitated by SCY partners. These events provided training to over 150 SCY members and covered topics including:

- Using Data, Telling the Story ([Child Health Data Lab](#) at Lurie Children's)
- Safety Audit Tool Training (co-hosted by [West Humboldt Park Development Council](#), [Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children](#) and [Local Initiatives Support Corporation](#))
- Gangs 101 ([UCAN](#))

- The Intersection of Restorative Justice and Trauma-Informed Care ([Youth Service Project](#))
- TR⁴IM Program: Trauma-Informed Community within a Sustainable Framework ([I AM ABLE Center for Family Development](#))

In addition, approximately 500 people attended the 2nd Symposium on Child Trauma in the Public Sector in July, co-hosted by SCY with partners from the Department of Psychiatry at Lurie Children’s and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and the Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition. SCY also co-hosted the Data-Driven Advocacy for Chicago Youth Retreat in November, a collaboration with Child Health Data Lab.

SCY held four quarterly meetings in 2013 that were attended by nearly 200 SCY members:

- Taking Action on SCY’s Policy Agenda
- Childhood Trauma (co-hosted by [Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition](#))
- Violence Prevention in Parks (co-hosted by [Friends of the Parks](#))
- Restorative Justice

SCY focused on knowledge sharing through invited presentations as well; a few of note include:

- “Addressing Violence as New Social Workers: Collaboration/Partnerships for Prevention and Interventions” – a panel discussion with introduction by Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle at UIC’s Jane Addams College of Social Work
- “Gun Violence: Examining Public Health Solutions” a panel discussion at UIC’s School of Public Health Dean’s Forum
- “Firearm Violence as a Public Health Issue” at the 2013 Annual Educational Conference of the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy Of Pediatrics
- “Development of a Policy Agenda by a Hospital-Based Violence Prevention Collaborative” at the 2013 National Meeting of the Safe States Alliance and the Society For Advancement Of Violence And Injury Research (SAVIR)
- “Violence as a Public Health Issue” at John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County Monthly Community Pediatrics Lecture
- “Connecting to Prevent Violence” at Loyola University, School of Law Child Rights Symposium



Policy Agenda & Focus on Five

[SCY’s Policy Agenda](#) was finalized in February of 2013 after a 3-month, collaborative and participatory development process with SCY’s membership and Steering Committee. The 12-point policy agenda details specific priorities that drive SCY’s advocacy efforts, policy-maker education, and legislative recommendations. In February, SCY provided testimony at the Hearing before the Illinois House of Representatives Judiciary Committee regarding concealed carry. In October, SCY provided testimony before the Illinois House of Representatives Restorative Justice Committee regarding juvenile justice

reform in terms of adolescent development and exposure to trauma. A number of related bills supported by SCY passed the 2013 legislative session, including:

- [HB2401](#): Redeploy Illinois (Policy Agenda Priority 7)
- [HB2404](#): Raise the Age (Policy Agenda Priority 7)
- [HB1538](#): Mental Health First Aid Training Act (Policy Agenda Priority 4)
- [HB2879](#): Violence Prevention Task Force (All Policy Agenda Priorities)
- [SB1192](#): Juvenile Aftercare (Policy Agenda Priority 7)

As part of the National Youth Violence Prevention Week in March, SCY developed the [Focus on Five](#) and presented at a joint press conference with Governor Pat Quinn and Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck on the preventability of violence and the roles of policy makers and individual community residents to strengthen youth and community. *Focus on Five* describes actionable items derived from the priorities identified by SCY's Policy Agenda and is the framework of SCY's 2014 strategies and activities:

- Sustained investment in children and youth will enable our young people to reach their full potential.
- Equitable access to high quality mental health services will enable troubled individuals to get services that will help prevent substance abuse, interpersonal violence, and self-harm.
- Common sense approaches to gun violence prevention will reduce the lethality of violence in Chicago.
- Juvenile justice system that reflects what we know about adolescent development will allow a child's involvement in the justice system to be an opportunity for intervention to prevent further delinquent behavior.
- Sustained investment in strong communities will rectify the fact that the toll of violence falls disproportionately on low-income, minority communities.



Projects & Partnerships

In 2013, SCY was funded by the National Institutes of Health to initiate a 3-year project entitled, "Community-Academic Collaboration to Prevent Violence in Chicago." The goal of this project is to establish and enhance connections between community organizations, researchers, and funders to better develop, implement, and evaluate strategies to prevent violence and strengthen youth, families, and communities in Chicago.



SCY also partnered with the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) and the West Humboldt Park Development Council (WHPDC) on a pilot project funded by Grainger Foundation to unite The Healthy Communities Initiative Collaborative (HCIC), a multi-faceted, community-wide effort convened by WHPDC, with members of the

Mary Ann and J. Milburn Smith Child Health Research Program ([SCHR](#)) of Lurie Children's, including CLOCC, SCY, [Injury Prevention and Research Center](#) (IPRC), and [Chicago Youth Programs](#) (CYP), to develop better action-oriented tools for improving safety in the West Humboldt Park community.

In order to address the gaps in media coverage around youth violence, specifically the lack of the community voice, SCY has partnered with [Community Media Workshop](#), an organization working to diversify voices in news and public debates by providing a unique mix of communications coaching for grassroots, arts and other nonprofit organizations, to connect organizations with journalists. The mission of this partnership is to tell the story of how communities respond to violence in Chicago in a way that is data-driven, accurate, comprehensive, and compelling, which will lead to meaningful change.

SCY is currently working on a new initiative with the Friends of the Parks called “Engaging Communities to Create Peaceful Parks in Chicago” that began over the summer. This pilot project will involve conducting in depth assessments of the barriers to park use in four Chicago parks, including evaluation of park programming, safety of the physical environment in and around the park, and resident perceptions about the safety of the park. The goal of this project is to build community resident capacity to identify barriers and advocate for improvements.

Looking Forward

Many of the projects and partnerships of 2013 will continue in 2014 and we look forward to continued progress on SCY’s Focus Areas (*Focus on Five*) and Policy Agenda. SCY’s 2014 efforts will be pursued through four strategies. These strategies and SCY’s 2014 activities are:



Strategy	2014 Activities
Coordinate advocacy efforts around the SCY policy agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for SCY policy agenda by educating policymakers, testifying at hearings, and participating in awareness campaigns. • Support SCY partners’ advocacy around the policy agenda by providing updates on pending legislation and regulations, offering training and technical assistance, and developing sample advocacy tools and resources.
Support neighborhood-level engagement in violence prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) to engage neighborhoods in addressing the intersection between violence and obesity. • Initiate “Engaging Communities to Create Peaceful Parks in Chicago” to empower residents to reclaim parks as community hubs.
Facilitate sharing of knowledge among and provide technical assistance and training to community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer monthly trainings and host quarterly meetings. • Communicate with SCY partners through biweekly newsletter, social media, and website. • Continue partnership with Community Media Workshop to build connections between community organizations and the media. • Participate in coalitions, attend events, and meet with violence prevention stakeholders to grow SCY’s network of connections.
Foster connections between community organizations and researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host meetings with community residents and community organizations as part of National Institutes of Health-funded “Community-Academic Collaboration to Prevent Violence in Chicago.” • Facilitate connections with researchers and provide training and technical assistance to enable community partners to make better use of data to inform public policy.

SCY is also planning monthly trainings throughout the year; our first (in January) was an informative panel discussion regarding the role of mental health services in schools to reduce violence. Upcoming training topics include youth dating violence, school transformation, and youth programming. For a complete list of upcoming trainings, please visit scy-chicago.org/training.

Be sure to save the dates for SCY's 2014 Quarterly Meetings:

- February 6, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
- May 1, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
- August 13, 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm
- November 5, 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm

The topic of our first quarterly meeting is Storytelling. "How Long Will I Cry? Voices of Youth Violence" will be presented as an example of how storytelling can be used in violence prevention. Lina Cramer and Renee Jackson have planned an interactive storytelling and story harvesting session to help each of us improve in our ability to describe our work and its impact and help the group tell the full story of how working together is preventing violence in Chicago. If there's a topic that you'd like to see at one of our quarterly meetings or trainings, please contact info@scy-chicago.org.

SCY is also a partner for the 2014 Childhood Exposure to Violence Week Campaign (3rd week of April), spearheaded by the City of Chicago Department of Public Health Office of Violence Prevention (download a list of [2014 Public Health Awareness Dates](#) here). In addition, SCY is hosting the Midwest Injury Prevention Alliance (MIPA) Annual Summit in the Fall. MIPA is an organization of injury professionals from states in Federal Health and Human Services Region V (Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin) that works collaboratively to reduce unintentional and intentional injury-related death and disability.

SCY is also gearing up for the 2014 Illinois Legislative Session with plans to implement an electronic weekly policy update. This will help our membership stay abreast of the legislation that SCY is tracking related to our focus areas. These updates will include status updates, action alerts, and SCY related activities. To sign up to receive these updates, please click [here](#) and check the "SCY Weekly Policy Update" box.

SCY's work in 2014 will continue with new initiatives, strengthening of existing collaborations, and growth through technology and new partnerships. SCY's mission is to build capacity among hundreds of public and private stakeholders to connect, collaborate and mobilize around a public health approach to violence prevention —adopting consistent messaging about the preventability of violence, promoting use of evidence-based violence prevention strategies and fostering multi-sector collaboration—encouraging partnerships that strengthen existing efforts and benefit the children of Chicago.