

Violence Reduction Initiative Forum #4
January 13, 2014 | NHC Downtown Library

Presenters:

- Ms. Lisa Burris, NHCS Student Support Services and Lead Counselor
- Lt. Novella Frieslander, NHC School Resource Officer Commander and Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Chair
- Mr. Marrio Jeter, Communities in Schools Cape Fear Program Director
- Ms. Donna Lynn Pleasants, NHCS School Based Licensed Clinical Supervisor
- Ms. Teresa Huffman, NHC Youth Empowerment Services Coordinator

Panel overviewed the various programs and services offered in the schools to aid our youth's ability to learn. This included: school resource officer services, dropout prevention, summer and after school programs, treatment, counseling, rehabilitation, restitution, court diversion, prevention, intervention, behavioral modification, anger management, conflict resolution, tutoring and programs for teen parents.

Challenges:

- Lack of hope, graduating to do "what"
- Inadequate transportation to and from programs
- Lack of youth appreciation for the importance of education
- Too many students deemed "not capable" early in education process, a label that sticks (some students do not take the standardized tests well)
- Parents not having the "tough conversation" with kids
- Growing pool of at risk kids and shrinking resources to assist them
- Inadequate parental leadership and involvement
- Don't be friend, be parent
- Don't allow kids to get away with everything
- To discipline is to teach!
- Parents feel overwhelmed by the plethora of issues that need to be worked on

Short and long term solutions

- Parents need to know what is happening in their children's lives
- Know what services are available
- Know who your kids friends are
- Drop by school unannounced
- Parents need to be accountable for follow up
- Give kids no downtime; provide multiple outlets
- Create sense of wellness
- Create routine
- Access the services that are available (some people are reluctant to let others know of their need)
- More early detection of youth issues
- Open the centers at public housing facilities and other facilities- giving kids a safe place to develop
- Invest in kids

Gaps

- Adequate transportation
- Mobile population due to inability to maintain a basic household or address
- Behavioral health and special education needs going undetected
- Lack of continuity of treatment
- Lack of a productive relationship between the parent and the child

Q and A

- How do you take the "sexiness" out of gangs
- How can non-parents get engaged—volunteerism
- Why are there so many cases of individuals with mental health diagnosis – all diagnoses are not permanent
- Where are the resources for the 16- 30 age group
- Where is the services inventory—lots of providers, tracking a problem
- Need more group home (smaller setting) intervention opportunities
- Budget/funding needs are great