

Community Readiness & Action Planning Lab

Impact-Focused Community Mapping Activity

Purpose

This activity is designed to help multidisciplinary county and city teams take stock of their current violence prevention and intervention ecosystem and use that understanding to identify where focused attention could have the greatest impact. Participating communities will enter the Lab at different stages. Some may be building basic infrastructure and partnerships, while others may already have multiple strategies underway and be focused on coordination, quality, reach, sustainability, or continuous improvement.

The goal is not to determine which communities are more or less advanced. The goal is to help each team answer: "Given where we are today, what could we strengthen, build on, or address to deepen our impact?"

Core Design Principle

Current state provides context. Impact drives prioritization.

Teams will consider where they are across key components of a comprehensive violence prevention ecosystem, but it's only a starting place that helps teams determine where additional focus could make the greatest difference.

What Teams Will Leave With

- A shared picture of what is currently working across their local violence prevention and intervention ecosystem.
- A clearer understanding of opportunities to strengthen or deepen existing work.
- An initial sense of where focused attention could have the greatest impact.

Activity at a Glance

Step	Focus	Core Question	Output
1	Frame the Exercise	What's working now, and where could we deepen impact?	Individual observations
2	Individual Reflection and Shared Perspectives	What do we see when we put our perspectives together?	Collective observations
3	Populate the Shared Map	What do we currently have or need within the domains?	Community map
4	Look Across the Full Ecosystem and Capture Takeaways	Where could focused attention make the greatest difference?	Potential impact areas
5	Peer Learning	How can our peers experiences help shape ours?	Learning questions

Domains

The activity continues to look across the same seven domains so that teams consider the broader ecosystem rather than only individual programs or services:

- Understanding the Local Problem

- Leadership & Coordination
- Community Partnerships
- Prevention & Intervention Strategies
- Victim Services & Supports
- Continuous Learning & Data
- Sustainability

Step 1. Individual Reflection and Shared Perspectives

You each have received a simple individual reflection sheet listing each domain with a brief descriptor. For each domain, consider two questions:

- What's working now?
- Where could we strengthen the work or deepen impact?

Record one idea per sticky note. You do not need to respond to every domain. The intent is to surface individual perspectives before the team discussion begins.

Step 2. Populate the Shared Map

Each participant will next place their sticky notes in the relevant sections within each domain under the two headings:

- WHAT'S WORKING
- WHERE COULD WE DEEPEN IMPACT?

Teams may combine duplicate ideas, clarify wording, move notes between domains, and add ideas that emerge through discussion.

Step 3. Look Across the Full Ecosystem and Capture Takeaways

Once the map is populated, teams step back from individual domains and look across the entire ecosystem. This is the critical shift in the activity: teams move from describing their current state to considering where additional focus could produce meaningful movement. Teams will use the provided document to capture takeaways:

WHAT WE CAN BUILD ON	WHERE WE COULD DEEPEN IMPACT	WHAT WE WANT TO EXPLORE
What existing strength, asset, or momentum can help us move forward?	Where could focused attention make the greatest difference?	What do we need to learn, discuss, or see from others before deciding what comes next?

Step 4. Peer Learning

Teams carry their identified opportunities and questions into the peer-learning portion of the day. Peer learning is an opportunity for teams to test assumptions, hear how other communities have approached similar challenges, and gather ideas that may inform their own next step.

Step 5. Wrap Up

Your team will return to their Community Map following the peer-learning sessions and have an opportunity to briefly reflect on what you've heard and how it connects to the earlier

discussion. The goal is not to select a priority or develop an action plan during the symposium, but to capture any new thinking that you want to carry forward.

Teams should consider:

- What are we leaving today thinking differently about?
- Did anything we heard reinforce or challenge what we captured on our map?
- Is there anything we want to add, change, or make note of before we leave?
- What do we want to continue exploring as a team?

Teams make any final additions or notes directly on their Community Map. Following the symposium, teams should revisit their map, consider their readiness across the domains, and determine where focused attention could have the greatest impact.

Close Out: What's Next

The Community Map developed today is intended to be a starting point for continued discussion rather than a finished product.

Following the symposium, teams will receive a **Next Steps Guide** by email from pennvptta@wested.org to help continue the process. The guide will support teams in revisiting their Community Map, considering their current readiness across the domains, identifying potential high-impact opportunities, and ultimately determining where focused attention could make the greatest difference.

Before you leave today:

- Identify who will take responsibility for convening the team after the symposium.
- Determine when the team can reconvene. If possible, set the meeting date before leaving today.
- Make sure someone is responsible for keeping the completed Community Map and bringing it to the follow-up conversation.
- Watch for the Next Steps Guide from pennvptta@wested.org, which will provide instructions for continuing the process.