

2023 CHARLES E. SHANNON COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVE

HOLYOKE/CHICOPEE

Funded Partners: Chicopee Boys & Girls Club, Chicopee Police Department, Hampden County Sheriff's Department, Holyoke Boys & Girls Club, Holyoke Community College, Holyoke Police Department, MassHire Holyoke, Pa'lante, The Center for Resilience

Funded by the Office of Grants and Research, a state agency that is part of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, the Charles E. Shannon Community Safety Initiative (Shannon) is modeled after the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Comprehensive Gang Model. Shannon is a multi-sector approach used to address a community's gang and youth violence problem. Each community receiving Shannon funding demonstrates the presence of risk factors for youth and gang violence. Shannon participants must be between the ages of 10-24 years.

Strategies, Outcomes, and Funding Allocation

Total Funding: \$566,355.26

Strategies	Outcomes		Funding Allocation
Community Mobilization	3,693 community members attended events, meetings, & presentations	65 community events, meetings, & presentations held	\$108,209.14
Education & Employment	16 youth completed a subsidized year-round employment program	16 youth participated in employment programs	\$116,852.20
Positive Youth Development & Recreation	667 youth participated in recreation programs	708 youth participated in youth development programs	\$173,055.40
Suppression	69 hot spot patrols completed	28 gang members/high impact players arrested	\$168,238.52

Youth Risk Assessments

- 15% **LOW-RISK*** Youth in danger of engaging in risky behavior or gang activity.
- 14% **MODERATE-RISK*** Youth exposed to the same risk factors as low-risk youth, as well as additional risk factors such as truancy.
- 72% **HIGH-RISK*** Youth who are perpetrators or victims of shooting or stabbing violence, and/or are known gang members.

* % of youth assessed for risk

Success Highlight

"One of our students had been transferred from an out-of-district high school back into the district. He was a very energetic student who had not consistently attended school in a very long time and had experienced extensive institutional trauma in the school setting. He made a strong connection with our clinician, who advocated for him throughout the year when the school was repeatedly trying to relocate him to what they deemed would be a more appropriate learning environment. The student was an incredible leader and participant in our youth leadership squad and social-emotional learning classes. Some more senior students took him in, and he responded incredibly well to this mentorship. By the end of the year, this young man had the best attendance record and was one of the top credit earners at Opportunity Academy for many weeks in a row. Administrators and the probation department repeatedly cast aside this student because of his history of disruptive behavior and lack of engagement at school. Still, his participation in our program undoubtedly impacted the trajectory of his life and high school career."

~The Center for Resilience

Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, Secretary Terrence Reidy
Office of Grants and Research, Executive Director Kevin Stanton

To learn more visit: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/shannon-community-safety-initiative-csi>

Community Risk Factors

Massachusetts

Holyoke

Chicopee

Total Population (2022/2023 Estimates)	7,001,399	37,720	54,980
Population Lives in Poverty	10.4%	26%	15.5%
Unemployment Rate (Jan. – Nov. 2023)	3.1%	4.5%	3.8%
Total School Population (2022-23)	964,066	5,420	7,689
Low-Income (2023)	42.2%	85.1%	66.4%
High School Dropout Rate (2020-21)	2.1%	3.5%	3.5%

Sources: www.census.gov/quickfacts; profiles.doe.mass.edu; www.lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/LMI/LaborForceAndUnemployment

Gang Activity in Holyoke/Chicopee

Recruitment of youth into gangs increased in 2023. Recruitment takes place in schools, through peer relationships, and via social media. Holyoke Police Department estimates that gangs were responsible for 75% of violent crimes in 2023, including shootings, stabbings, armed robberies, and assaults. Additionally, gangs were responsible for about 90% of the drug trade, specifically cocaine and heroin, leading to inter-gang conflict, turf battles, and violent crime. One of the challenges in the communities is that Holyoke is a nexus of drug trafficking on the I91 corridor. This corridor connects drugs from NYC – via New Haven, Connecticut, to Northern Vermont. The national gangs, specifically, are engaged in trafficking via the I91 corridor, creating challenges to the safety of the community and to our high-risk youth. Both residents and agencies are in agreement that the most serious issues affecting the neighborhoods are gangs.

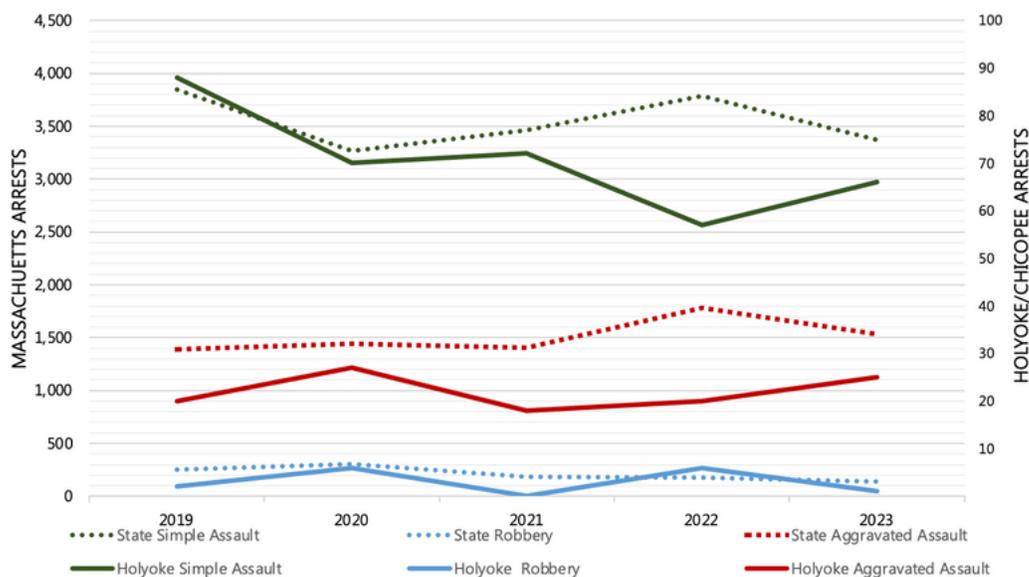
9

Street Gangs

300

Gang Members

5-Year Crime Trends for Offenses Committed by Youth Ages 10-24, 2019-2023



Changes in Crime for Young People Ages 10-24, 2019-2023

- Simple assaults in...
- Massachusetts decreased 12%
 - Holyoke/Chicopee decreased 25%
- Robberies in...
- Massachusetts decreased 46%
 - Holyoke/Chicopee decreased 50%
- Aggravated assaults in...
- Massachusetts increased 10%
 - Holyoke/Chicopee increased 25%

Source: National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

Information contained in this report is from funding applications, reports supplied by the site, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, US Census, MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, and Office of Grants and Research / Research Policy and Analysis Division. Special thanks to the Statewide Research Partner, Northeastern University, and the Crime and Justice Policy Lab of the University of Pennsylvania, for preparing this brief.