



What Can Prosecutors Do to Prevent Crime?

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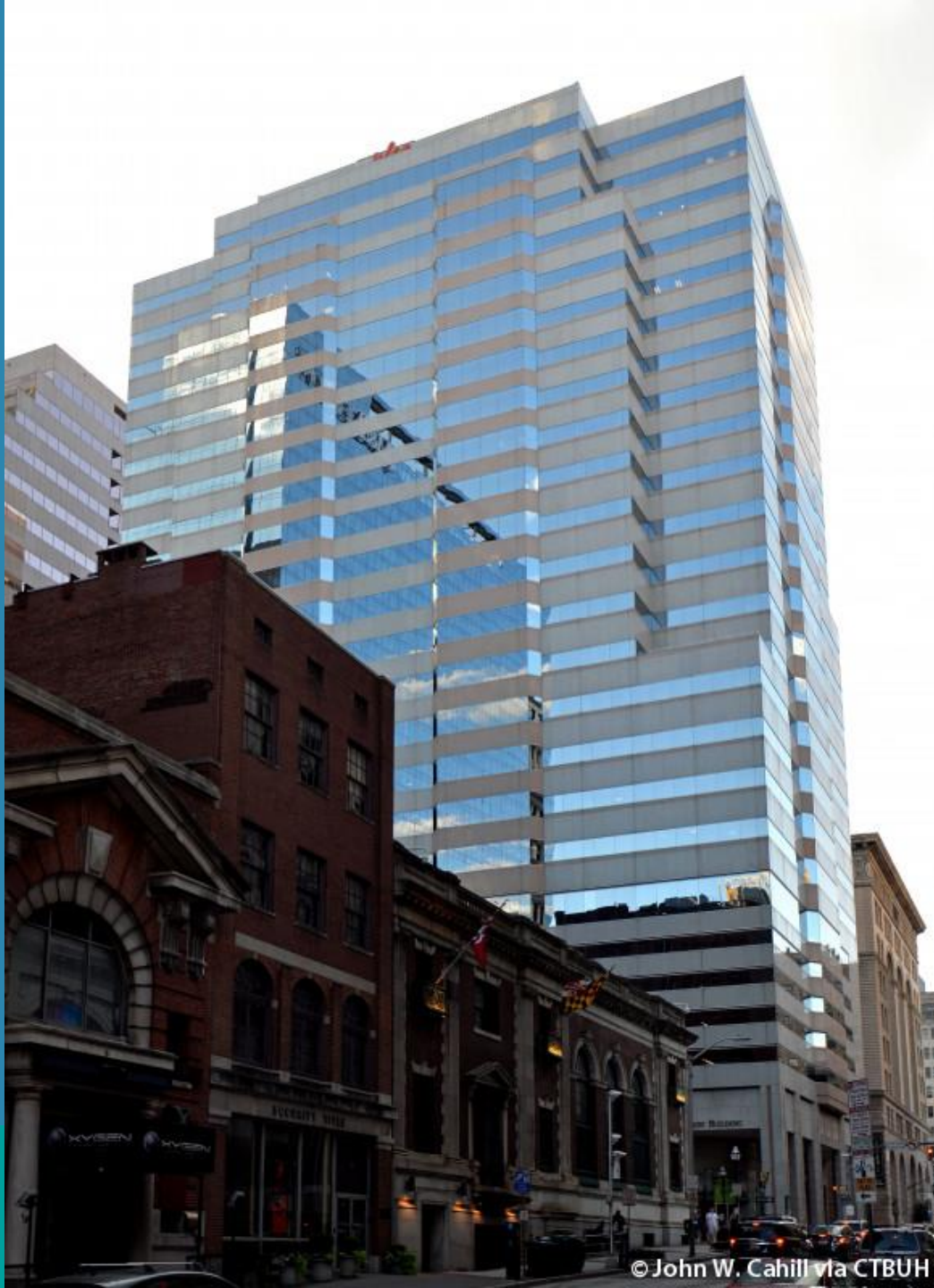
Some governments I have worked with...



Prosecutors/courts I have worked with...



Embedded researchers in Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and Baltimore State's Attorney's Office



The roles of a modern prosecutor

- Trial Lawyer
- Innovator
- Convenor
- Data Collector
- Community Partner
- Problem Solver
- Educator
- Public Safety Protector
- Treatment Facilitator
- Conviction Reviewer
- Policy Advocate
- Crime Prevention Strategist
- Victim and Witness Advocate



PROSECUTOR INITIATIVES TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE



PCE



Crime and Justice Policy Lab
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

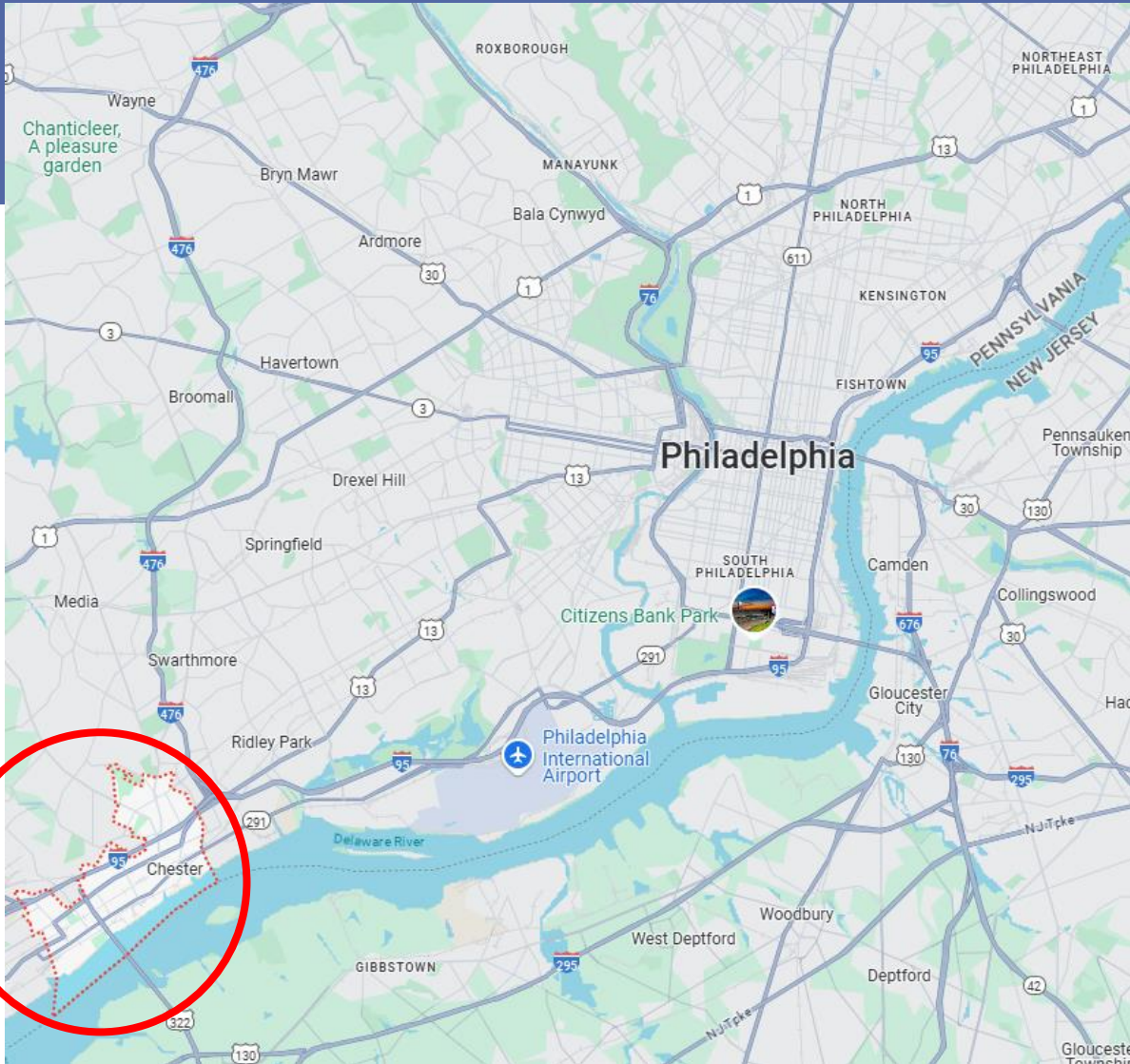
Four innovative districts

- Delaware County, PA
- Lake County, IL
- Oakland County, MI
- Ramsey County, MN

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Chester, PA



Pennsylvania's oldest city

- Just West of Philadelphia
- Lost over half its population in 20th century and most of its jobs
- Went bankrupt in 2022

Delaware County District Attorney's Office (DCDAO)

Delaware County

- Population: 575,000
- Homicide rate: 5.56 per 100,000 in 2022
- Poverty rate: 9.6%

Chester

- Population: 33,000
- Homicide rate: 32.9 per 100,000 in 2022
- Poverty rate: 28.3%

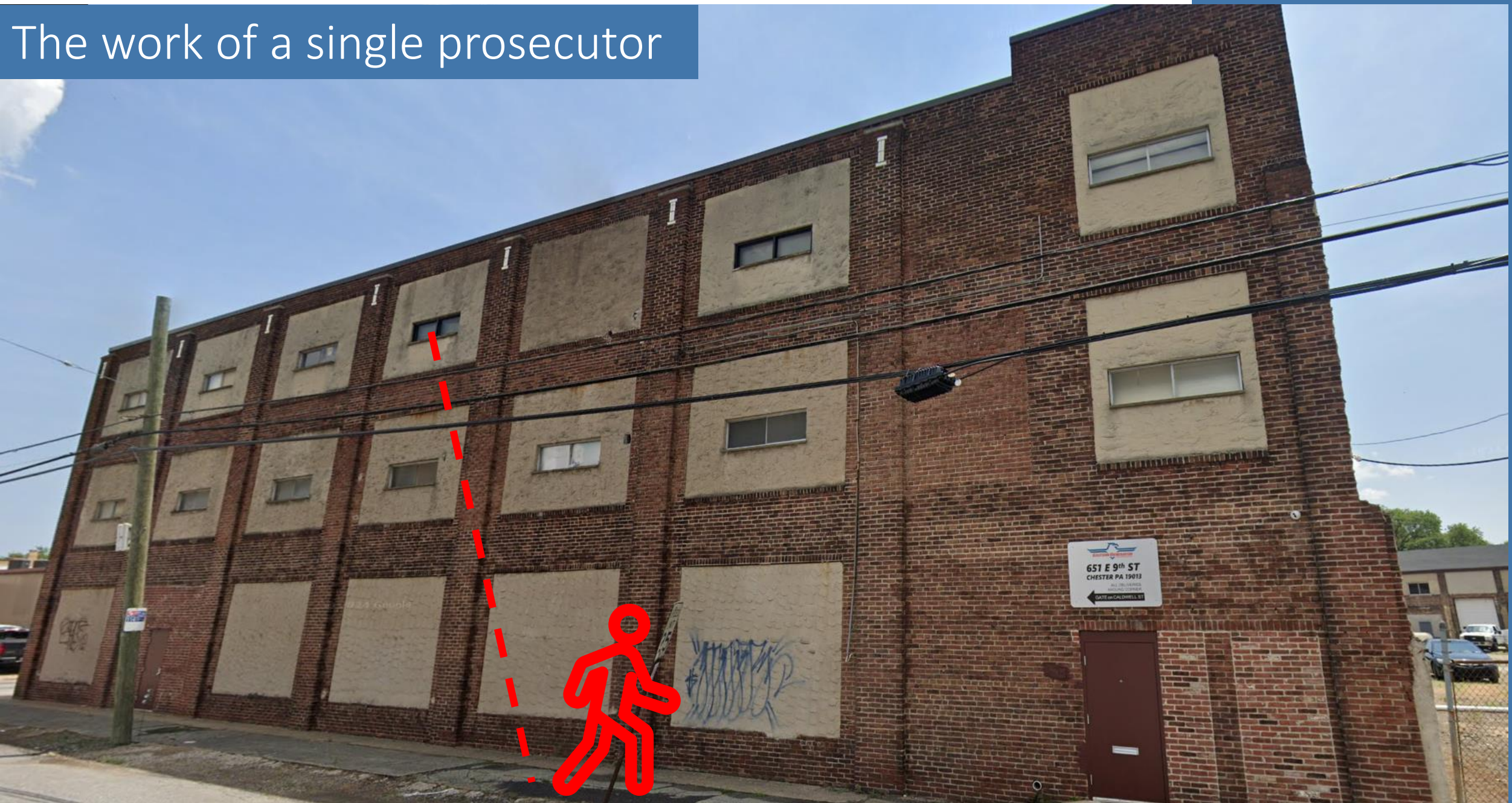
DCDAO Chester Initiatives


- Established Chester Partnership for Safe Neighborhoods to bring resources to the community.
- Engaged in a problem analysis of the city.
- Instituted shooting reviews weekly to track violence dynamics in the city.



- Hired trusted messengers to contact individuals who are at risk of creating violence and to connect them with resources and support systems.
- Gathered high-risk individuals to deliver anti-violence messaging and connect to services

The work of a single prosecutor





**All of this work was following
research evidence that has
built up over decades of
government experience.**

But before getting into that...

What does research really tell us?



Most research pays very little attention to these things

Process

Results

A blueprint for reducing violence

1. Select a **priority public safety problem** (e.g. gun violence)
2. **Convene a Strategic Partnership:** Convene government agencies and community partners who are well-positioned to address that problem (police, prosecutors, street outreach organizations, hospital response programs, etc.)
3. **Define the Problem:** Systemically analyze the problem with input from police and other practitioners knowledgeable about street and violence dynamics to identify the *very small* number of people directly involved in violence.
4. **Direct Engagement:** Partnerships of community leaders, law enforcement officials and service providers directly engage people and groups at the highest risk of violence now, communicate a tailored message of risk/concern, support and potential consequences.
5. **Provide supports and resources:** Engage in relentless outreach and provide robust CVI and wrap around services to those impacted by violence.
6. **Focused Enforcement:** *As a last resort*, criminal justice partners focus enforcement efforts narrowly on individuals who persist in engaging in violence.
7. **Devoted Management:** A dedicated management team and process is necessary to maintain quality implementation and impact over time.



The research supporting this blueprint



GVRS - the research record

- 51 total research studies
 - 14 in cities under 200,000
 - 12 in cities 200,000 – 500,000
 - 23 in cities over 500,000
 - 2 multi-city studies
- Eight randomized controlled trials (RCTs)
- New paper presented at National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)
 - “We’re Building Something Here” – in Baltimore
 - Extensive exploration of mechanisms and how the program runs
- Research in Stockton, California
 - Seeking more insights on services

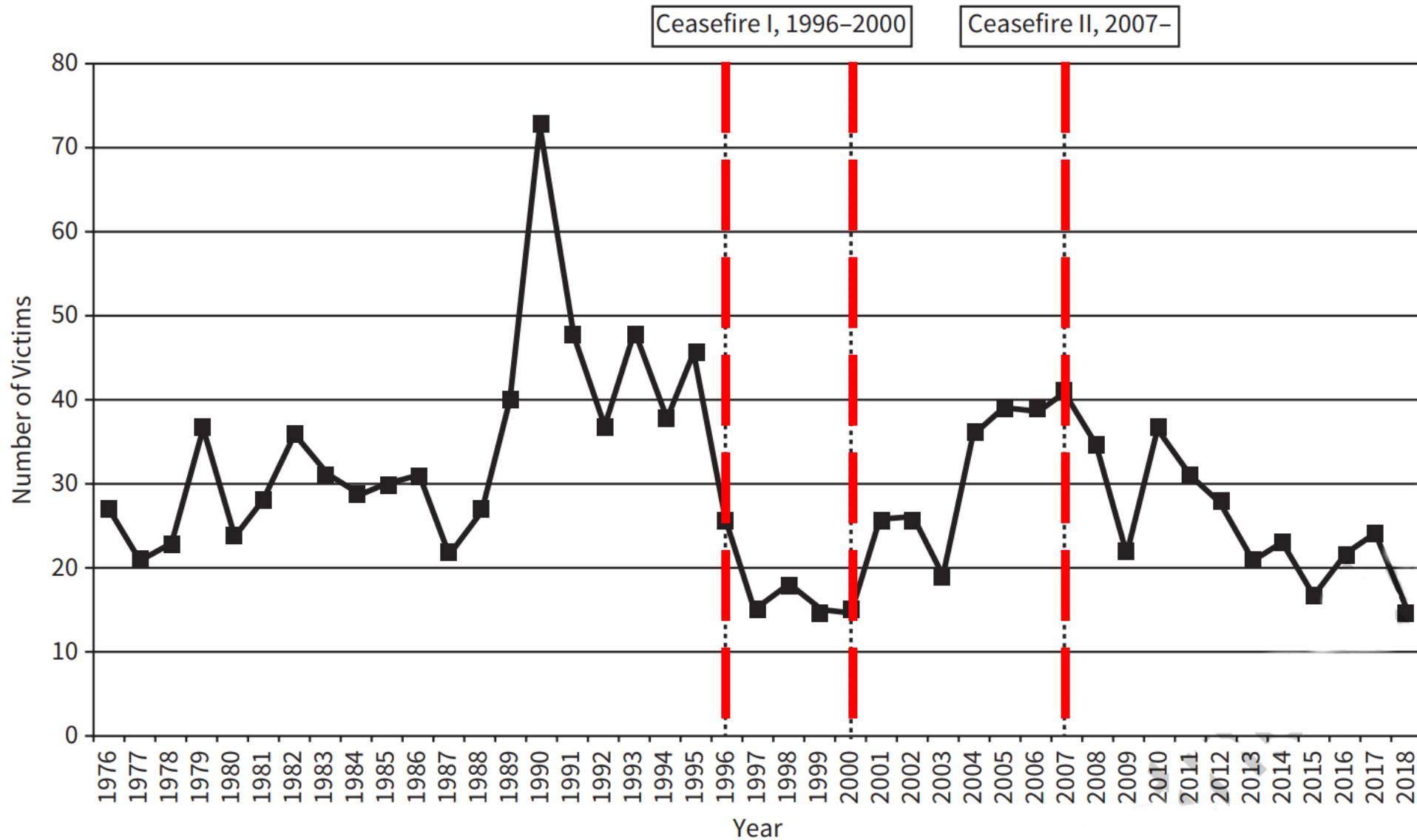


Figure 6.4 Youth homicides in Boston, 1976–2018 (victims aged 24 years or younger).

Source: Anthony A. Braga and David M. Kennedy, *A Framework for Addressing Violence and Serious Crime* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 16.

What Boston is doing

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Innovation has to start somewhere

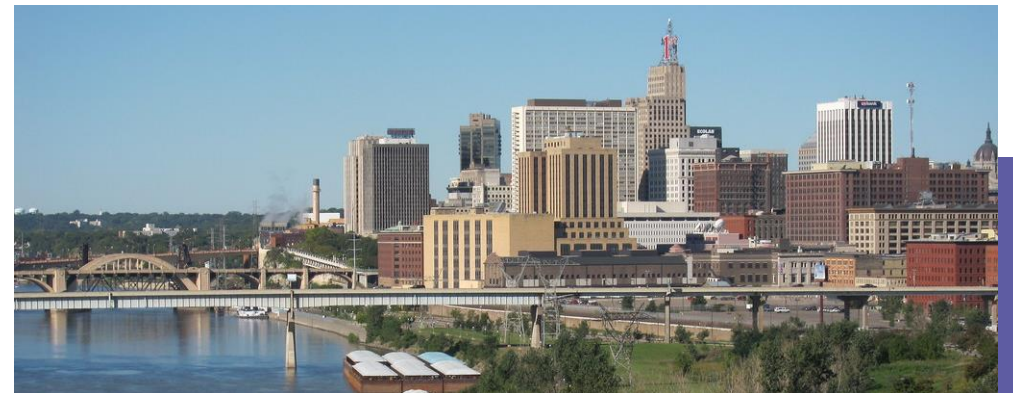
King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office



Philadelphia District Attorney's Office



Ramsey County Attorney's Office



Shooting Investigations

A Review of Research
Plus: Policy Suggestions

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SEPTEMBER 2022

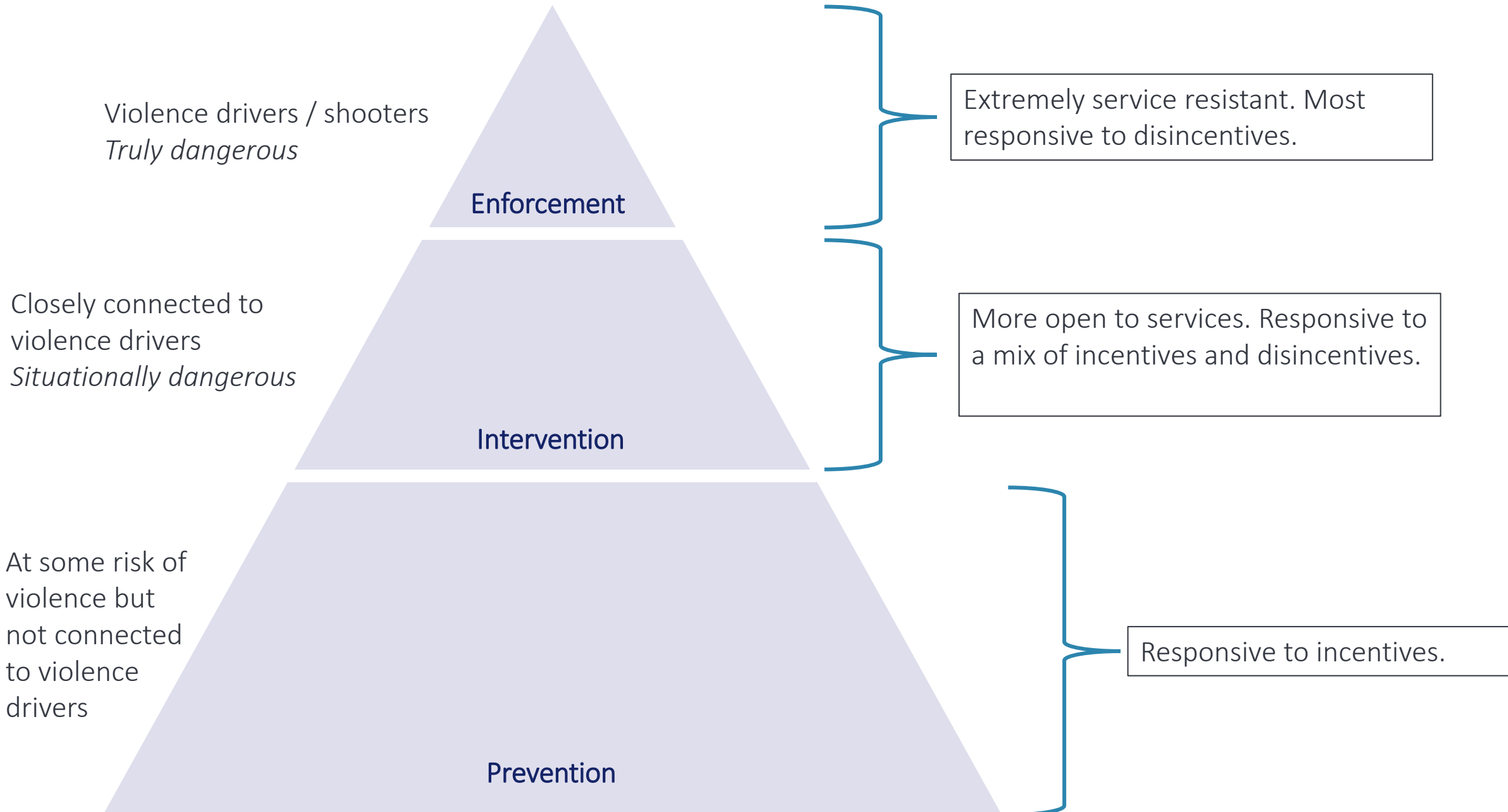




Questions?

Extra content





“We focus on everyone everywhere”

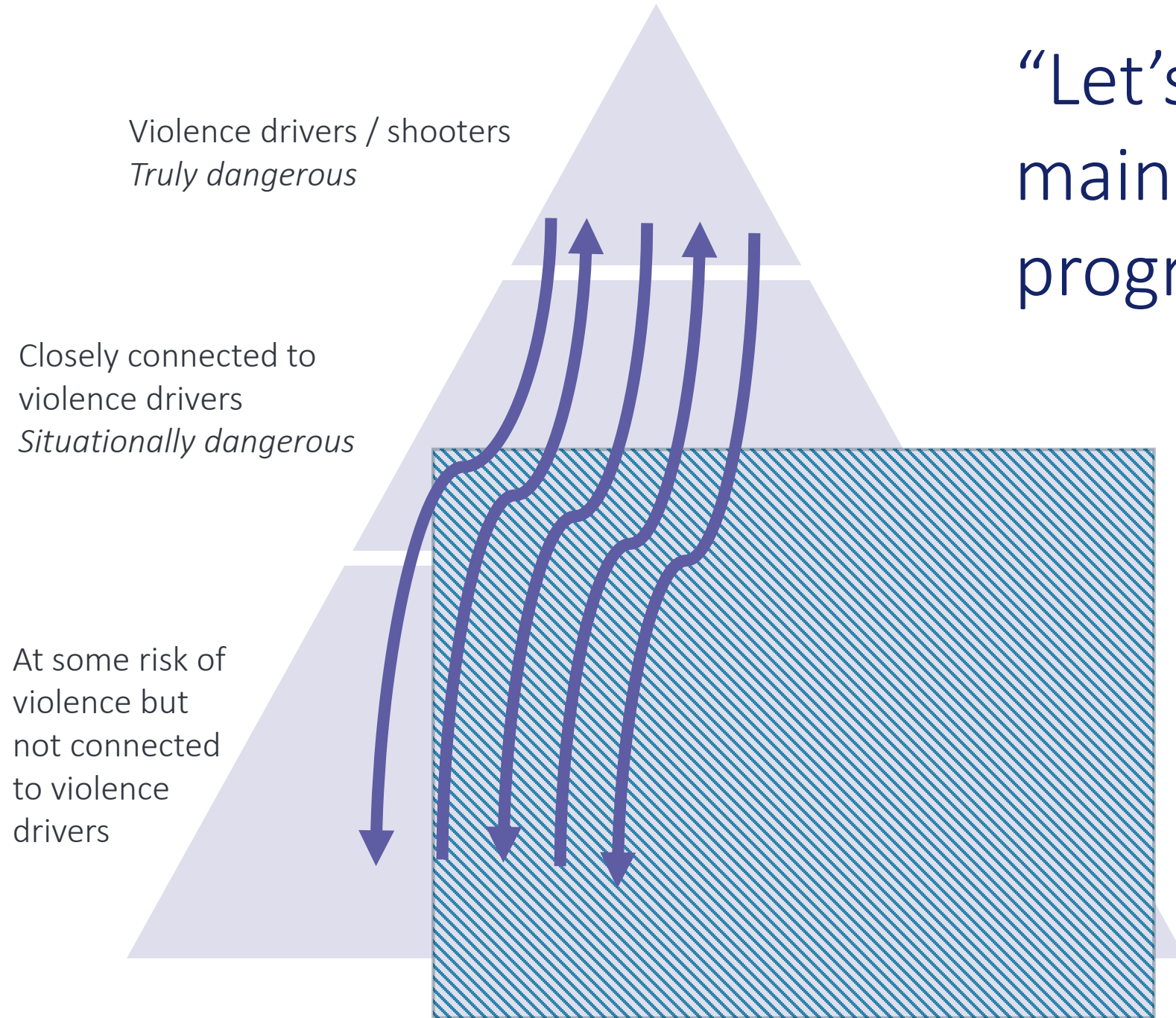
Violence drivers / shooters
Truly dangerous

Closely connected to
violence drivers
Situationally dangerous

At some risk of
violence but
not connected
to violence
drivers



“Let’s focus our efforts mainly on prevention programs”



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“Let’s lock up the criminals”

