

Durbin announces \$3.7 million to address youth violence

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) today announced that the U.S. Department of Justice has awarded Illinois counties and agencies grants totaling \$3,738,028 to address the problem of youth violence in Illinois. These investments will support programs that provide critical intervention services to keep youth from entering the juvenile criminal justice system and prevent juvenile offenders from relapsing into criminal behavior.

“Exposure to violence has a profound psychological impact on young people, affecting their physical health and their ability to succeed in school,” said Durbin. “Today’s funding is an investment in the future of Illinois and delivers on our promise not to give up on any child. It will help us empower our youth to break the cycle of violence and offer them the second chance that every child deserves.”

Under this announcement, the following public entities will receive funding:

- **Illinois Department of Human Services:**
 - \$1,445,363 for prevention and intervention services aimed at preventing youth from entering the juvenile justice system and reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders;
 - \$267,262 for reducing reliance on confinement and improving community-based responses for girls at risk of entering the juvenile justice system;
 - \$25,403 to enhance the safety of individuals in Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) custody through education of youth and IDJJ staff. Funding for this program is provided under the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA);
- **Cook County:** \$1,000,000 to address youth violence and safety in targeted communities in South Suburban Cook County, including Ford Heights, Harvey, and Robbins, by working with stakeholders to link 300 youth ages 10 to 24 to prevention, intervention, and workforce development services and supports;
- **St. Clair County:** \$1,000,000 for prevention efforts in communities experiencing high levels of youth violence, including East St. Louis, Alorton, Washington Park, and Centreville.

Additionally, the following research institutions will receive Department of Justice grants totaling \$574,997 to study how exposure to violence influences young people's decision making:

- **Northwestern University:** \$425,000 to study how involvement with firearms during adolescence predicts perpetration and victimization of firearm violence in adulthood;
- **Loyola University Chicago:** \$75,000 for research on violence exposure among juvenile offenders to understand the prevalence and impact of continuous violence exposure;
- **Chapin Hall Center for Children at University of Chicago:** \$74,997 to study how childhood exposure to trauma affects juvenile justice involvement.