WestEd

Fredericksburg Youth Violence Prevention Plan

Kerwin Henderson, Shaun Ali, and Lori Toscano

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VPNF Analysis in Partnership with Muflehun

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Executive Summary

Background

In August 2023, the City of Fredericksburg and Fredericksburg City Public Schools convened the Steering Committee on Teenage Violence following gun violence incidents that claimed the lives of two young people in the community. The committee comprises more than 30 members from city government, law enforcement, education, public health, faith communities, parks and recreation, the NAACP, and parents and is funded through a Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services grant. In summer 2025, the city contracted WestEd's Justice and Prevention Research Center (JPRC) to lead a structured strategic planning process. This document is the current state assessment and analytical foundation for a five-year Youth Violence Prevention Plan.

Findings and Implications

This assessment draws on school, juvenile justice, and regional health data; 15 focus groups and stakeholder interviews across key sectors; direct youth engagement across three program populations; and a community survey of 96 respondents. Analysis used WestEd's Violence Prevention Navigation Framework (VPNF) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Connecting the Dots shared risk and protective factor approach.

Community Finding	Result
Youth violence is a serious concern in the community	81% agree
Youth have adequate access to mental health support	23% agree
Not knowing what services exist is a top barrier to prevention	72% agree
Responses to violence are equitable across youth of different backgrounds	16% agree
Unmet mental health needs are a top driver of youth violence	76% agree
Juvenile arrests are system-compliance charges, not new offenses	35%–40%

Fredericksburg is not starting from zero. The assessment found substantial community assets, declining deep-end juvenile justice involvement, and strong cross-sector willingness to collaborate. Public safety has improved. The structural conditions shaping youth vulnerability have not. The city's greatest opportunity is building a coordinated prevention infrastructure that strengthens early intervention, trusted relationships, behavioral health access, and system alignment before youth reach crisis points.

Education and Health Emerged as the Primary Vulnerability Sectors

Education has been the most sustained source of vulnerability across the decade, with access, attainment, and school safety all showing persistent strain. Health shifted from resilience to vulnerability beginning in 2021 and has not recovered—drug overdose deaths rose more than 30% in the post-pandemic period. Child poverty is approximately 60% above the statewide rate, concentrated among Black and multiracial households, and violent crime increased approximately 51% from 2012 to 2022.

Schools Are the Primary Prevention Frontline, With Significant Unmet Need

One in four students is chronically absent. Walker-Grant Middle School climate data shows 62.5% of students report bullying as a problem and 36.3% report persistent sadness or hopelessness, compared to 29.9% statewide. Short-term suspensions declined 24% between 2022/23 and 2023/24 and have continued declining. Black students represent 33% of enrollment and 50.5% of suspensions. Restorative practices remain limited relative to exclusionary responses, used in 57 incidents over four years compared to 2,827 in-school suspensions.

Current Interventions Are Reaching Youth Too Late

Approximately 35% to 40% of juvenile arrests are system-compliance charges—not new offenses, but failures to meet existing court requirements. This indicates the system is cycling involvement rather than intercepting new cases. Every measure of juvenile justice system depth declined between fiscal year (FY) 2023 and FY2025, reflecting genuine progress at the deep end.

Programs and Services Are Not Reaching Families Who Need Them

Seventy-two percent of survey respondents named not knowing what services exist as the top barrier to prevention. Justice system professionals reported in their own session that they do not know what the city offers for youth. Forty percent named distrust between community and government or law enforcement as a barrier to collaboration.

A Substantial Share of Violence Is Not Visible in Justice System Data

Fifty-seven percent of violence-related emergency department patients across Planning District 16's three regional hospitals are women and girls—a pattern that does not appear in arrest or suspension data. No current local program was identified as specifically designed to address this pattern. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) youth were identified across sessions as facing elevated bullying risk with no dedicated local programming.

Recommendations

Thirteen recommendations are organized in two tiers. The sequencing is intentional.

Part 1 – Governance and coordination infrastructure must be established before programmatic investment can hold. Several actions require no new funding and can begin before formal plan adoption

- Establish shared goals, clear accountability, and coordinated leadership structures.
- Establish active, visible leadership with decision-making authority.
- Build coordination infrastructure that makes collaboration structural, not relationship-dependent.
- Strengthen stakeholder engagement conditions, including a formal youth advisory role.
- Align independent organizational efforts and pursue complementary funding streams.

Part 2 – Programmatic strategies where evidence identifies the highest-leverage opportunities

- **Close the mental health gap before crisis –** Expand school-based capacity at the middle school level; fund community-based support in nonclinical, accessible settings.
- **Invest in earlier intervention –** Expand mobile recreation as a multipartner teen platform; develop a lived-experience outreach program; build warm referral pathways from schools.
- **Treat families as the primary unit of intervention –** Recruit family therapy providers, launch accessible parenting education, and integrate economic navigation into family support.
- **Ensure that prevention reaches all youth affected by violence –** Develop programming for young women and girls and LGBTQIA+ youth; incorporate emergency department data as a plan accountability metric.
- **Strengthen system coordination and data infrastructure –** Establish shared key performance indicators, expand restorative justice, build frontline staff capacity, and close identified data gaps.

What This Plan Requires to Succeed

Implementation requires a formal governance commitment with named institutional accountability, a dedicated full-time coordination role, and several foundational actions that can begin before formal plan adoption. The coordination infrastructure in Part 1 is not preliminary — it is the condition that determines whether Part 2 works.

Introduction

Background and Purpose

The City of Fredericksburg is a small, but regionally significant independent city located along the Interstate 95 corridor, roughly 50 miles south of Washington, D.C., and 53 miles north of Richmond, Virginia. Though its resident population is approximately 28,000, the city functions as the institutional and commercial center of Planning District 16, a five-jurisdiction region with a combined population exceeding 400,000. As a centralized space, it draws families, youth, and working residents from Spotsylvania, Stafford, Caroline, and King George counties for healthcare, courts, social services, recreation, and employment. That regional role, combined with concentrated poverty in certain neighborhoods and demographic pressures common to fast-growing corridor cities, has created conditions that strain families and increase risk for young people.

The Fredericksburg Steering Committee on Teenage Violence was formed in August 2023 by the Fredericksburg City Public Schools and the City of Fredericksburg in direct response to incidents of gun violence that claimed the lives of two young people in the community. The Steering Committee, which is composed of more than 30 members from various city agencies, community organizations, law enforcement, education, and parents, was tasked with confronting the root causes of youth violence and building a durable, coordinated plan to address youth violence.

In summer 2025, the City of Fredericksburg tasked WestEd's Justice and Prevention Research Center (JPRC) with leading the Steering Committee through a structured strategic planning process, producing a five-year plan with goals, tactics, and indicators of success. This planning initiative was funded through a grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, which supports local planning and implementation of violence reduction efforts across the Commonwealth. This project was primarily funded to better understand the current climate of the community and to use this information to make recommendations that would help guide the Steering Committee in creating a violence prevention plan. This document is a current state assessment—the analytical foundation for the five-year Youth Violence Prevention Plan, which will be developed as the immediate next deliverable.

Methodology

This plan is the product of a structured, multiphase planning process carried out by the JPRC in close partnership with the Steering Committee and the City of Fredericksburg from late 2025 through spring 2026. The work was organized across five phases, each building directly on the last. A full project roadmap is included in Appendix A.

The analytical foundation for this work is a shared risk and protective factor approach, applied through the JPRC's Violence Prevention Navigation Framework (VPNF) and consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Connecting the Dots framework. The core premise is that violence does not arise from a single cause in a single system, but from the accumulation of conditions across education, health, economic opportunity, neighborhood dynamics, public safety, and social cohesion. These conditions, which include economic stress, family instability, and limited behavioral health access, are shared across multiple forms of violence. Addressing these conditions will have compounding benefits.

The JPRC team applied this framework in Fredericksburg by analyzing more than 70 community-level data points across seven sectors demographics, economics, education, health, neighborhood dynamics, public safety, and social cohesion. These sectors reflect the domains that public health and violence prevention research identifies as primary drivers of or buffers against community violence. The VPNF produced a sector-level picture of where vulnerability was concentrated and where resilience existed or could be built over time.

December 2025 was devoted to project framing establishing communication infrastructure, clarifying roles with city and school leadership, and identifying key data contacts across systems. Phase 2 Data Review & Community Engagement began in January 2026. The JPRC team organized school, juvenile justice, law enforcement, and regional health data into a quantitative picture of youth safety conditions across Fredericksburg. During January's Steering Committee meeting, the JPRC team introduced the planning methodology and workplan and facilitated a Data Walk in which committee members moved through key data displays, interpreted trends, and surfaced their own observations. This approach facilitated the development of a shared understanding within the committee before moving into engagement planning.

Phase 3 Strategic Direction & Goal Setting began in February 2026 shifting from data to direction. The JPRC team presented an emerging synthesis of findings, validated priorities with the committee, and finalized the approach to focus groups and listening sessions, including which sectors to prioritize, who would serve as conveners, and how to sequence outreach. Focus groups began in February and continued through March and April, with sessions conducted across Fredericksburg's key systems: the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, the Criminal Justice Reform Alliance, Rappahannock Area Community Services Board prevention partners, Fredericksburg City Public Schools faculty and staff, faith community leaders, a community-based organization director, community members with youth mentorship experience, and youth engaged in restorative justice programming through the Office on Youth. A community survey was distributed to focus group participants and shared broadly through the Steering Committee's partner network to broaden participation. The survey yielded 96 responses and is referenced throughout this report; findings are summarized in the Community Perspective section.

Phase 4 Plan Development & Review began in March 2026. Key quantitative patterns were presented to committee members to gather feedback on which trends warranted deeper exploration through the ongoing focus group process. The April Steering Committee meeting brought together the full arc of the work to date, including data, focus group themes, and survey findings, and oriented the committee toward emerging findings and priority areas.

A department alignment analysis mapping city and county agencies to the shared risk and protective factors identified through the CDC Connect the Dots framework was completed during this process and is included in Appendix B.

Scope and Data Context

The data and engagement activities described above focus primarily on the City of Fredericksburg. Where broader geographic data are included, particularly in the juvenile justice and health sections, they are identified accordingly and used to provide additional context. School data throughout this report reflects Fredericksburg City Public Schools exclusively and does not include Stafford County Public Schools, which operates independently and is not part of Fredericksburg City Public Schools.

School data were obtained directly from Fredericksburg City Public Schools, covering chronic absenteeism, discipline trends, graduation and dropout rates, and court referrals for absences. Juvenile justice data were drawn from the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, Court Service Unit 15, and local law enforcement records. Health and community stress data came from a direct request to regional health partners, centered on violence-related emergency department visits in Planning District 16; these data reflect the planning district as a whole and cannot be disaggregated to the city level. Behavioral health utilization data specific to Fredericksburg were not available; regional Rappahannock Area Community Services Board data were referenced for context. Community service demand data from 211 Virginia were identified as relevant indicators, but were also unavailable, and this is noted as a gap. Qualitative data were gathered through focus groups and stakeholder interviews, with thematic summaries used to interpret the quantitative picture. The community survey, conducted in spring 2026, yielded 96 responses. The sample consists primarily of adults, with youth under 21 representing only 4% of respondents. As such, survey results reflect adult community perception, not direct youth voice.

Several limitations have bearing on how the data in this report should be understood. School data were the most comprehensive source available and receive significant attention accordingly, but school indicators are proxies for broader conditions rather than direct measures of violence. Discipline data reflect administrative decisions as much as student behavior. For other data streams, particularly behavioral health utilization and community service demand, available data captures only the portion of need that surfaces through formal systems. Some data requests were not fulfilled in time for inclusion in this version, and those

gaps are noted where relevant. The community engagement process was designed to surface thematic insight rather than a statistically representative sample of opinion. As such, focus group data add depth and texture to the quantitative picture, but they do not provide a comprehensive accounting of every perspective in Fredericksburg. Taken together, the data and engagement documented in this report are sufficient to support a clear analysis of current conditions and a set of grounded recommendations.

Current State Assessment

Conditions and Trends: How Vulnerability Has Changed Over Time

Understanding the conditions that produced the current environment in Fredericksburg requires looking across a decade of change, not just at the incidents of violence that prompted this plan, but at the structural and sectoral shifts that created the environment in which those incidents became possible. Vulnerability in this framework refers to the degree to which conditions across a community's sectors, collectively, increase its exposure to violent crime, while resilience describes the inverse. Neither is fixed, which is what makes the decade-long view useful.

The picture that emerges for Fredericksburg is not one of a community in uniform decline. It is more complicated and more instructive. Fredericksburg is a city that made real progress on some dimensions of safety while allowing deeper vulnerabilities to accumulate in others.

Between 2012 and 2022, Fredericksburg's population grew modestly, peaking around 2018 before declining slightly in the years that followed. The city's violent crime rate moved in the opposite direction, increasing roughly 51% over the same decade, even as property crimes declined. That divergence is itself a signal. The conditions producing violent crime are not the same as the conditions producing property crime and addressing them requires a different kind of analysis and response.[1]

Examining Fredericksburg across sectors, the VPNF analysis shows that prior to 2020, the city had been making measurable progress. Public safety improvements drove a reduction in overall vulnerability between roughly 2018 and 2020, and the city's resilience profile improved. Both are measured through the VPNF's composite scoring of community-level data points across

[1]VPNF High Level Analysis, Fredericksburg, VA (Muflehun & WestEd JPRC, 2025); U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2012–2022.

seven sectors; changes in individual indicators (e.g., crime rates, health outcomes, housing stability, school performance) aggregate into sector-level scores that track whether conditions are moving toward greater vulnerability or greater resilience over time. Those gains reflected real institutional investment in community-oriented policing, behavioral health diversion, and public safety infrastructure. The post-pandemic period, however, disrupted the broader vulnerability trajectory. Beginning in 2021, overall vulnerability began rising again, and the violent crime rate rose with it.[2]

The sectors driving that resurgence are instructive. Public safety continued to contribute to resilience and the investments held. Education has been the most consistent source of vulnerability across the entire decade, with access to education, educational attainment, and school safety all showing sustained strain. Health worsened noticeably in the post-pandemic years: Drug use increased, overdose deaths rose by more than 30%, and other health indicators shifted in ways that reflect cumulative resident stress. Housing added further pressure, with vacancy rates declining nearly 18% and a high proportion of residents concentrated in renter-occupied housing with limited capacity to move. Economic and social cohesion sectors represent the clearest area of unrealized opportunity, neither driving vulnerability sharply nor building resilience.[3]

This sectoral picture is not just an analytical framework. When the Steering Committee reviewed data in March 2026, the patterns aligned with what members were already seeing: peer conflict concentrated in schools, youth reaching the justice system after upstream supports had not caught them, families under economic pressure with limited access to services, and a health system that engages after crisis. Similarly, the data confirmed what the committee had already sensed: that public safety has improved relative to where it was a decade ago, but that the underlying conditions shaping youth vulnerability have not.

Vulnerability in Fredericksburg is not evenly distributed. Black and Hispanic or Latino students are disproportionately represented in chronic absenteeism, discipline, and court referral data. The economic pressures documented in the city's poverty data, concentrated among Black and multiracial households, do not exist in isolation from these patterns; they are part of the same system of conditions.

The VPNF analysis, combined with available local data, shaped the focus of the sections that follow. Education has been the most sustained source of vulnerability across the decade. Health shifted from resilience to vulnerability beginning in 2021 and has not recovered. Public safety has moved in the right direction. These patterns, combined with the available local data, directed the current assessment toward three areas: schools (education sector), juvenile justice (public safety sector), and health and community stress (health sector). These are the systems

[2] VPNF High Level Analysis, Fredericksburg, VA (Muflehun & WestEd JPRC, 2025)

[3] VPNF High Level Analysis, Fredericksburg, VA (Muflehun & WestEd JPRC, 2025)

where vulnerability signals were strongest, local data made deeper analysis possible, and the Steering Committee identified the greatest need. Other sectors are addressed throughout as contributing conditions and in the recommendations.

Table 1. VPNF Sector Analysis: Conditions and Trends, 2012–2022

Sector	10-Year Direction	Key Signal
Education	Persistent vulnerability	Most sustained driver of vulnerability across the decade; access, attainment, and school safety all show strain
Health	Increasing vulnerability	Shifted from resilience to vulnerability beginning in 2021; drug overdose deaths up more than 30%; has not recovered
Public Safety	Improving resilience	Investments in community policing and behavioral health diversion held; overall vulnerability declined 2018–2020 before post-pandemic reversal

Schools

VPNF Sector: Education – Most Sustained Source of Vulnerability Across the Decade

School systems are among the most powerful intervention points in violence pathways and among the first places where warning signs become visible. The data reviewed in this section span chronic absenteeism, school discipline, school climate, and educational attainment across Fredericksburg City Public Schools (FCPS). These indicators reveal a school system in which significant proportions of students, particularly those who are homeless, economically disadvantaged, or Black or who have disabilities, are disengaged, disciplined disproportionately, and operating in environments they describe as unsafe and discouraging. Below is an account of what the FCPS data reveal and what they demand in response.

Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy

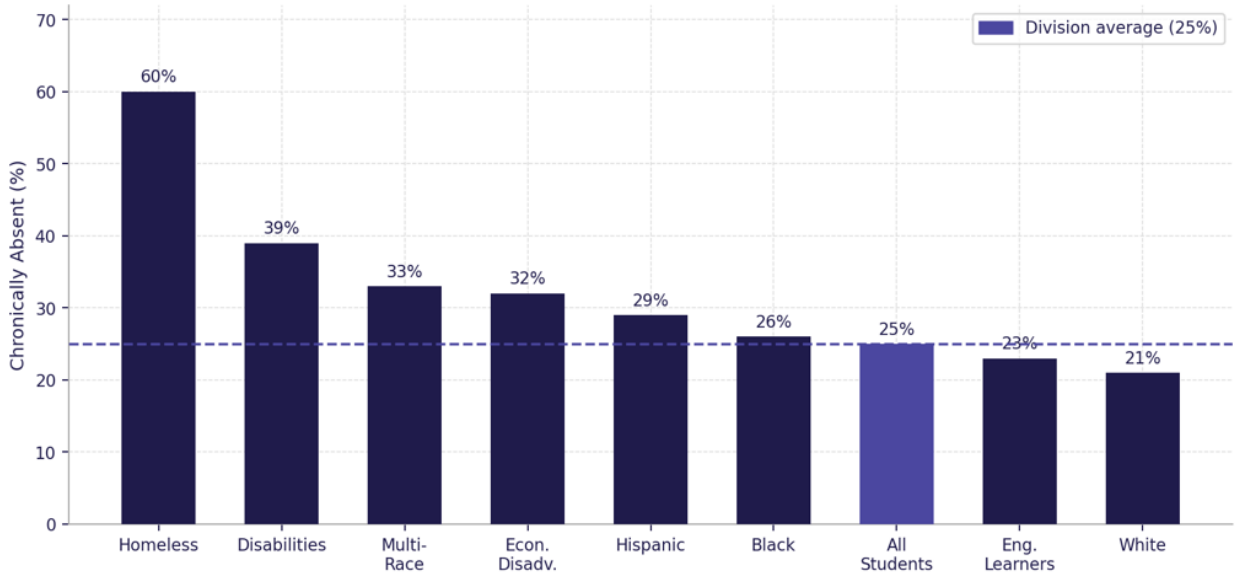
One in four Fredericksburg students is chronically absent, missing 10% or more of the school year. The rate has not recovered from its pandemic-era peak and has worsened year after year.[4]

Chronic Absenteeism: Division Totals

The rate increased year over year:

- 25.2% chronically absent, 2022/23 (911 of 3615 students)
- 27.0% chronically absent, 2023/24 (922 of 3412 students)

Figure 1. Chronic Absenteeism Rate by Student Subgroup, 2022/23



Despite elevated absenteeism rates, Fredericksburg referred relatively few students to court for unexcused absences: 14 referrals in 2021/22, 15 in 2022/23, and 10 in 2023/24. The declining trend suggests the division has moved away from punitive enforcement responses, consistent with the more targeted approach the data supports.[5]

White students had the lowest chronic absenteeism rate at 20.6%; Hispanic or Latino students (29.2%) and students identifying as multiple races (32.7%) fell above the overall average. These

[4] Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Chronic Absenteeism Data, Fredericksburg City Public Schools, 2022–2024.

[5] VDOE, Number of Students with a Court Referral Due to Unexcused Absences, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24.

disparities are not incidental; they track closely with poverty, housing instability, and access to support services.

The most recent available data, from 2024/25, shows a modest improvement: 24.9% of students (849 of 3406) were chronically absent, with homeless student rates declining to 51.9% and students with disabilities to 34.3%. These trends suggest early progress but remain well above pre-pandemic norms and above state averages across all subgroups.[6]

Chronic absenteeism is both a symptom and a condition associated with elevated violence risk. Students who are not in school are cut off from the relationships, routines, and adult oversight that research associates with lower violence risk. The especially severe rate among homeless students, more than double the already-elevated overall rate, identifies a specific, reachable population that requires targeted, non-punitive, and trauma-informed outreach. Punitive truancy enforcement for students in housing crisis is not an appropriate or effective response and may deepen disengagement.

School Discipline

Short-term suspensions declined 24% between 2022/23 and 2023/24, from 375 incidents to 285, a meaningful and encouraging trend. Long-term suspensions (four in 2022/23; two in 2023/24) and expulsions (one in 2023/24) remain very low.[7]

However, the racial distribution of discipline is significantly skewed. Black students represent approximately 33% of FCPS enrollment but accounted for 49.3% of suspensions in 2022/23 and 50.5% in 2023/24. White students represented 25.7% of enrollment and 14.9% of suspensions in 2022/23, and 23.1% of enrollment and 16.1% of suspensions in 2023/24. This disparity has persisted across both measured years.

Cumulative behavioral incident data from the Student Behavior and Administrative Response system (SBAR, 2022–2026) reveals that classroom disruption (1,209 incidents) and minor physical altercations (1,012 incidents) account for the largest share of school-based offenses. Use of force by staff was recorded in 255 incidents, a figure warranting scrutiny alongside student behavior data. Restorative practices were used in only 57 incidents, compared to 2,827 in-school suspensions and 1,327 out-of-school suspensions, a stark imbalance.[8]

- Short-term suspensions declined 24%, from 375 (2022/23) to 285 (2023/24).
- Black students account for 33% of enrollment and 50.5% of suspensions in 2023/24.
- White students account for 25.7% of enrollment and 14.9% of suspensions.

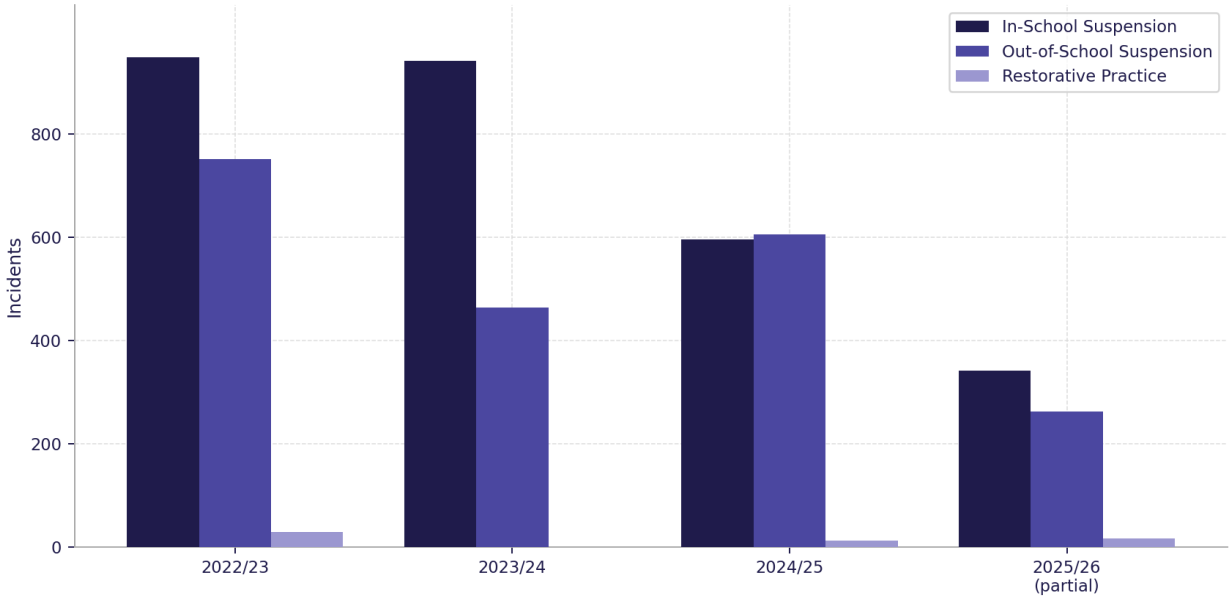
[6] VDOE Chronic Absenteeism Data, FCPS, 2024/25.

[7] VDOE Short-Term and Long-Term Suspension Data, Fredericksburg City Public Schools, 2022–2024.

[8] VDOE Student Behavior and Administrative Response (SBAR) Data, Fredericksburg City Public Schools, 2022–2026.

- Restorative practices were used in 57 incidents compared with 2,827 in-school suspensions.

Figure 2. School Disciplinary Responses by Academic Year



The suspension decline is real progress and reflects sustained effort. FCPS behavioral data also show no incidents meeting the threshold for Persistently Dangerous School designation, which is an important baseline marker given the volume of behavioral incidents recorded.[9] But the racial disparity in who is disciplined remains embedded in the data, and the near absence of restorative practice as a response tool represents a concrete, addressable gap. Research consistently shows that exclusionary discipline, particularly for Black students, increases the likelihood of long-term disengagement, dropout, and contact with the justice system.

School Climate

Research consistently identifies middle school as a critical developmental window when violence trajectories are particularly malleable and responsive to intervention. We therefore analyzed the 2025 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions at Walker-Grant Middle School, the city's sole middle school. Results suggest that aspects of the school environment may warrant further attention.[10]

- **62.5% of students say bullying is a problem at their school.**

[9]VDOE Standards of Accreditation Offenses Data, 2023/24.

[10]2025 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions — Walker-Grant Middle School / FCPS Division Summary, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and Virginia Department of Education.

- **35.9% report being personally bullied this school year.**
- **57% report physical fights occurring sometimes to always.**
- **38% worry about violence at school sometimes or more often.**
- **36.3% report persistent sadness or hopelessness vs. 29.9% statewide.**
- **10.8% seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months.**
- **54.9% rate the school atmosphere as slightly to very negative.**

What the Walker-Grant Climate Data Means for Prevention: Walker-Grant's climate data does not describe an outlier. It describes the normal experience of students at the city's only middle school during a critical developmental window. The mental health and safety gaps are not separate problems; they are the same problem, and the data show it clearly enough to act on.

Only 20.5% of Walker-Grant students report having participated in suicide prevention or mental health training. Students report in direct terms that they do not feel safe, that bullying is pervasive, and that physical conflict is a normal part of their school experience. The mental health indicators, particularly the suicidal ideation rate of 10.8% and the persistent sadness rate that is more than six points above the state average, signal significant untreated distress. Students in this condition are not positioned to learn, and unaddressed distress is a recognized risk factor for both violence perpetration and victimization.

Graduation and Dropout

Fredericksburg's on-time graduation rate has remained below the state average by 7 to 11 percentage points for more than a decade, reflecting a persistent gap over time.[11]

- **85.5% FCPS on-time 2024 graduation rate vs. 93% statewide**
- **10.87% dropout rate, James Monroe High School, Class of 2024 (25 of 230 students)**
- **46% 3rd grade reading proficiency in 2020 vs. 61% statewide**
- **3.13% K–3 grade repetition rate vs. 1.30% statewide**

The gap is sharpest among Hispanic or Latino students and English learners, two of the division's fastest-growing subgroups. In 2024, Hispanic or Latino students graduated at 68.1% and English learners at 66.7%, both well below the division average of 85.5% and the state average of 93%. Among the class of 2021, 56% enrolled in higher education within 16 months,

[11] VDOE On-Time Graduation Rate and Dropout Data, Fredericksburg City Public Schools, 2024; VDH Virginia Plan for Well-Being.

but that figure drops to 39% for economically disadvantaged graduates and 40% for Hispanic or Latino graduates.

These early indicators matter because they compound over time. Research consistently shows that students who cannot read proficiently by third grade are at significantly elevated risk for continued academic struggle, disengagement, and eventual dropout. Youth who do not complete high school are at elevated risk for violence involvement.

Taken together, the data suggests the graduation gap begins well before high school. Third grade reading proficiency and early-grade retention rates point to patterns that compound over time, accumulating into trajectories that are difficult to reverse and contributing to the persistent gap at graduation. Consequently, early literacy, grade-level progression, and strategies to combat school disengagement early belong in the prevention conversation alongside middle and high school interventions.

Juvenile Justice

VPNF Sector: Public Safety – System Contact Concentrated in Early Adolescence, Downstream of Prevention Opportunities

The data in this section covers juvenile intake, probation, detainment, commitments to state custody, and arrest patterns, drawn from the Court Services Unit (CSU) 15 and the Fredericksburg Police Department. By most measures, the system is moving in a positive direction, with fewer youth processed at deeper levels of system involvement. The arrest data introduce a critical complication: A disproportionate share of arrests are driven not by new offenses, but by compliance with existing court orders, suggesting the system is cycling involvement more than intercepting new cases.

Youth do not enter the juvenile justice system in a vacuum. They arrive carrying the accumulated weight of chronic poverty, school disengagement, family stress, and limited access to behavioral health support, all conditions documented in the preceding sections. Indeed, survey respondents identified exposure to violence or trauma (78%), mental health challenges and social media conflict (each at 76%), poverty (67%) and school disengagement (52%), as the top drivers of juvenile justice contact, highlighting the role of upstream conditions and pressures in shaping risk trajectories.

System Involvement Trends

All CSU 15 intake cases, probation placements, and detainments declined meaningfully in FY2025, representing genuine progress and reflecting the sustained work of CSU 15 and local court partners. Commitments to state custody, the deepest level of system involvement, have

remained low throughout the measured period and have continued declining.[12] Fewer youth being processed at deeper levels of involvement is the goal, and the trend is moving in the right direction. Indeed, state custody placements are costly, disruptive, and associated with elevated recidivism and long-term harm.[13] The fact that Fredericksburg is successfully resolving most cases without resorting to that level of intervention is a meaningful marker of a system that is reserving its most restrictive responses for its most serious cases.

- **Intake cases: 850 in FY2025, down from 1,113 in FY2023 (24% decline)**
- **Probation placements: 68 in FY2025, down from 92 in FY2023 (26% decline)**
- **Detainments: 159 in FY2025, down from 178 in FY2023 (11% decline)**
- **State custody commitments: 5 in FY2025, down from 9 in FY2023 (44% decline)**

The cautionary note is that declining system numbers do not automatically translate to improved community safety or reduced youth violence risk. They reflect the system's outputs, not the underlying conditions that generate youth involvement in the first place. Arrest data, examined in the next section, add important nuance to what the CSU 15 numbers alone do not capture.

Arrest Patterns

Between January 2023 and March 2026, Fredericksburg police recorded 289 juvenile arrests. The annual count peaked in 2024 before declining in 2025, consistent with the CSU trend, though the 2023–2025 window is not perfectly aligned to fiscal year reporting.[14]

The charge composition is where the data tells its most important story. System-compliance charges, detention order violations, failure to comply with court orders, contempt of court, and court order violations account for 35% to 40% of all juvenile arrests. These are not new offenses. They are charges generated by youth who are already inside the system, failing to meet its requirements.

- **289 total juvenile arrests: 99 (2023), 109 (2024), 77 (2025)**
- **Shoplifting under $200: 41 arrests; most common individual charge (14% of total)**
- **White youth: 52% of arrests (149); Black youth: 48% (139)**

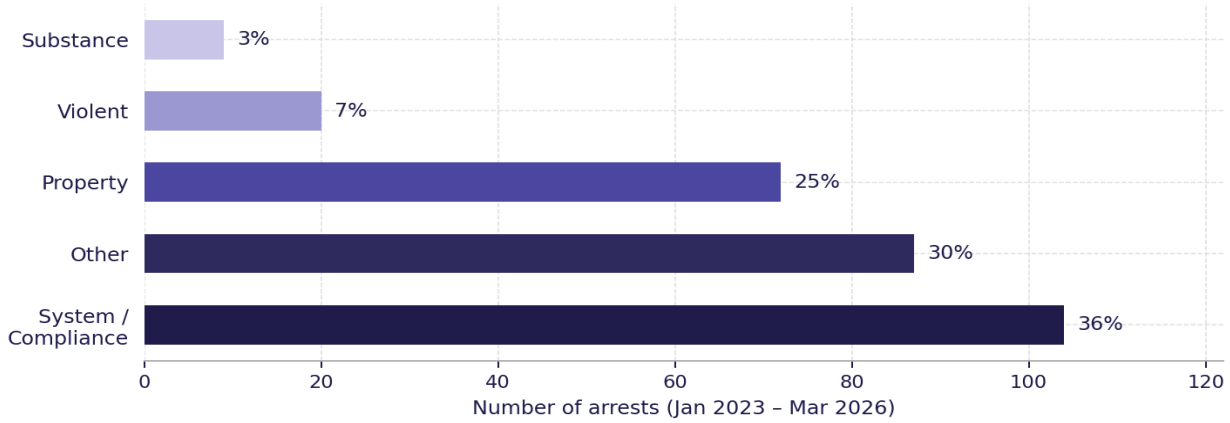
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[12] Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice Data Resource Guide FY2025, CSU 15.

[13] Mendel, R. A. (2011). *No Place for Kids: The Case for Reducing Juvenile Incarceration*. Annie E. Casey Foundation; Holman, B., & Ziedenberg, J. (2006). *The Dangers of Detention.* Justice Policy Institute.

[14] Fredericksburg Police Department Juvenile Arrest Data, January 2023 – March 2026.

Figure 3. Juvenile Arrest Composition, 289 Arrests



The dominance of compliance-based charges is the most consequential finding in the local arrest data. When more than a third of juvenile arrests are generated by youth failing to meet existing court obligations rather than committing new offenses, the system is, in significant part, sustaining its own workload. The leading individual noncompliance charge reinforces this picture: shoplifting under $200 accounted for 41 arrests, most frequently linked to material need and opportunity rather than criminal disposition and representing youth who are not yet caught in the compliance cycle but are at risk of entering it. Youth caught in cycles of technical violations are accumulating justice involvement that deepens their risk profile without making the community safer.

This pattern has a well-documented downstream effect: Each additional point of system contact increases the probability of further involvement, reduces educational engagement, and erodes the family and community connections that protect against violence.[15] Reducing unnecessary system contact for technical violations could meaningfully reduce the total arrest count without any reduction in public safety.

The racial disparity in arrests is observed. Black youth are arrested at a rate disproportionate to their share of the city's youth population. Whether this reflects differential offending, differential enforcement and/or surveillance, or some combination of both, it is a pattern that the recommendations must be designed to address. Compliance-based arrests, concentrated as they are in youth already inside the system, are one concrete mechanism through which racial disparity compounds over time.

[15] Petitclerc, A., Gatti, U., Vitaro, F., & Tremblay, R. E. (2013). Effects of juvenile court exposure on crime in young adulthood. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 54*(3), 291–297; Wiley, S. A., & Esbensen, F. A. (2016). The effect of police contact: Does official intervention result in deviance amplification? *Crime & Delinquency, 62*(3), 283–307.

Health and Community Stress

VPNF Sector: Health – Shifted From Resilience to Vulnerability Beginning in 2021

The health data in this section reveals a community absorbing a volume of violence that does not fully show up in police reports or court records. Emergency department visits and behavioral health capacity each capture dimensions of harm that the justice system alone cannot see. Community service demand data were not available for this assessment period, and is noted as a gap. Specific Fredericksburg Department of Social Services caseload data were not available for this assessment; however, the department's publicly available FY2024 Annual Report documents 594 Child Protective Services reports and a 76% increase in foster care placements, figures that indicate the scale of family-level stress this section can only partially capture through health system data. Together, the available health data point to a pattern of violence that is persistent, disproportionately affecting women and girls, and embedded in conditions of chronic stress that the broader system has not yet fully addressed.

Violence-Related Emergency Department Visits

Between January 2023 and September 2025, 705 violence-related emergency department (ED) visits were recorded across the three hospitals serving Planning District (PD) 16: Mary Washington, Stafford Regional, and Spotsylvania Regional. Physical assault dominates the picture: unarmed brawl and fight-related injuries account for nearly half of all presentations, followed by strike and impact assaults. Firearm and knife injuries are comparatively rare, representing fewer than 20 combined visits over the period.[16] While small in number, such injuries represent the most severe outcomes and warrant dedicated attention.

- **705 violence-related ED visits across PD 16's three regional hospitals**
- **57% of patients are female (403 of 705 visits)**
- **46% unarmed brawl– or fight-related assault (324 visits), most common presentation**
- **8% maltreatment or neglect (55 visits), third-highest diagnosis category**
- **15% of PD 16 visits coded to Fredericksburg City census tracts (104 of 705)**

The age distribution skews young: teens 13–17 and young adults 18–25 together represent the majority of visits. By race and ethnicity as recorded in hospital data, White patients account for 39% of visits (274), Black patients 30% (212), and patients recorded as Hispanic-White 12% (88).

[16] Virginia Healthcare and Hospital Association emergency department data, January 2023–September 2025 (Mary Washington, Stafford Regional, and Spotsylvania Regional hospitals). Note: Only 15% of Planning District 16 visits are coded to Fredericksburg City census tracts; the city-specific burden may be underrepresented in regional totals.

Most patients, 91 percent, are discharged home; 26 were hospitalized and 2 deaths were recorded.[17]

The most significant and least anticipated result in the health data is the gender distribution. More than half of violence-related ED patients are women. Maltreatment and neglect are the third-leading diagnosis category in ED visits, suggesting that a substantial share of this burden is rooted in family and intimate partner violence affecting women and girls in the region.

This matters for planning because most visible prevention responses, including school discipline, juvenile arrests, and street-level intervention, are oriented toward male youth. If the predominant form of violence reaching the health system is interpersonal and domestic, and its primary victims are female, a prevention strategy that does not explicitly name the population most at risk may overlook a substantial share of the violence burden that surfaces in regional health data, even if the precise city-level proportion cannot be confirmed.

Behavioral Health

The Rappahannock Area Community Services Board (RACSB) is the primary behavioral health provider for Fredericksburg and four surrounding counties. Its programming portfolio, which includes Mental Health First Aid, Applied Suicide Intervention (ASIST), ACEs Interface trainings, parent education, and youth after-school and summer programming, is active and directly relevant to this plan's focus areas. RACSB's 2025–2030 strategic priorities which include reducing ACEs exposure, expanding youth programming, strengthening family support, and building community connections, mirror this plan's emerging recommendations with notable alignment.[18]

For statewide context, Virginia Community Services Board (CSBS) collectively delivered 639 suicide prevention trainings, reaching 9,296 people, and 707 ACEs trainings, reaching 5,057 people in the most recent reporting period. Utilization data specific to Fredericksburg City residents were not available for this assessment; only regional-level figures are reflected here.

RACSB is not a gap to identify; it is an existing asset to activate. The alignment between its strategic priorities and this plan's direction means that the primary opportunity is not building new behavioral health infrastructure, but deepening coordination, co-locating services where youth already are, and ensuring RACSB capacity is matched to local demand. Substance abuse frequently co-occurs with the mental health conditions documented in this section. The Fredericksburg Department of Social Services FY2024 Annual Report notes that most families served by the department are experiencing mental health and substance abuse disorders

[17] Virginia Health and Hospital Association (VHHA) Emergency Department Data, Planning District 16, January 2023–September 2025.

[18] RACSB Strategic Plan 2025–2030; Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services' Substance Use Prevention Block Grant Annual Report FY2024–2025.

simultaneously, a pattern that compounds family instability and limits the effectiveness of single-issue interventions.

Survey respondents echoed this priority directly. Mental health and trauma were identified as leading drivers of youth violence, alongside school disengagement and peer pressure. Specifically, 72% of respondents identified mental health and trauma support as a top focus area for the prevention plan, and 76% named mental health challenges as a leading driver of youth violence. Multiple respondents noted that school-based mental health support capacity does not meet current demand and that additional embedded support within schools would make a meaningful difference. Across both the quantitative data and community feedback, there is clear alignment around the need for stronger mental health and trauma-informed support.

Community Service Demand

Community service demand data, including referral call volume, service request categories, and waitlist data from key community organizations, were not available. This represents a gap in the current picture of unmet need in Fredericksburg.

Community Perspective

What This Engagement Produced and Why It Matters

Quantitative data can tell us what is happening in a community. It cannot tell us why or what it feels like from the inside. From the beginning, this planning process was designed to hear directly from the people closest to the problem and to treat what they said as evidence, not anecdote. As such, our community engagement brought together residents, youth, educators, behavioral health providers, law enforcement, juvenile justice professionals, faith and community leaders, and frontline prevention workers. Sessions included in-person focus groups, virtual stakeholder interviews, and a community survey that reached 96 respondents. Youth were engaged directly across three program populations representing a range of proximity to and experience of violence in this city: restorative justice diversion participants (ages 16–18), system-involved high school youth under supervision, and youth in an alternative educational support program. Youth also participated in the community survey, though respondents skewed heavily adult (approximately 4% of the respondents were youth under 21). Youth voices shared through focus groups anchor this section, and survey findings help confirm and deepen understanding of the themes raised.

The goal of this engagement was: to validate what the quantitative data showed, to surface what it could not show, to hear the community's own account of what is driving violence, what gets in the way of getting help, and what is already working.

Perceptions of Safety

Community members described youth safety in Fredericksburg less in terms of constant danger and more in terms of disconnection, isolation, and absence. Across youth focus groups, community conversations, and professional stakeholder sessions, participants repeatedly described a city where many young people feel there is "nothing to do," nowhere to go, and limited access to spaces where they can safely gather, build relationships, or spend time constructively.

Notably, youth themselves did not primarily describe Fredericksburg as frightening or chaotic. Their framing was more often one of emptiness and limitation. Youth participants described a city caught between two larger metropolitan areas where opportunities, entertainment, employment, and recreation often feel inaccessible without transportation, money, or existing social connections. Multiple youth described the city as quiet, disconnected, and lacking spaces intentionally designed for teenagers.

Adult stakeholders, particularly school staff, law enforcement partners, and behavioral support personnel, described safety somewhat differently. Their concerns centered more directly on conflict escalation, social media dynamics, peer-group tensions, and the ways interpersonal disputes increasingly follow youth across settings and throughout the week. School staff repeatedly noted that conflicts often begin online over the weekend and enter the school environment already escalated by Monday morning.

At the same time, both youth and adult stakeholders described meaningful progress over the past several years. School staff consistently emphasized that school-based violence and conflict levels have improved compared to prior years and described stronger relationships between students and trusted adults, increased willingness among students to report concerns before situations escalate, and positive impacts associated with the phone prohibition initiative. Many also described a noticeable shift toward more authentic socialization and fewer social-media-driven disruptions during the school day.

Perceptions of safety were shaped not only by actual violence, but also by social media exposure, uncertainty about what support exists, and whether youth feel connected to opportunities around them. Youth participants noted that many activities and opportunities already happening in Fredericksburg are poorly promoted and spread primarily through word of mouth. Youth who are already socially connected are more likely to know what resources exist, whereas those who are more isolated remain disconnected from supports and opportunities entirely.

Collectively, youth voices pointed toward a broader understanding of safety, one rooted not only in reducing violence, but in creating environments where young people feel seen, supported, connected, and hopeful about their future.

Community-Identified Drivers of Violence and Contributing Conditions

Across focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and survey responses, community members described youth violence and conflict in remarkably consistent ways. While participants came from different systems and perspectives, the themes that emerged converged closely around relationship disruption, emotional distress, social isolation, family stress, lack of structured opportunities, and the escalating role of social media in youth conflict.

The strongest convergence between survey responses and focus group discussions centered on unmet mental health needs, social media conflict escalation, family and economic stress, and limited access to positive activities and opportunities for youth. Rather than describing violence as driven primarily by organized criminal behavior or isolated individual choices, participants consistently framed youth conflict as connected to accumulated stress, unmet needs, and the absence of structures that give young people somewhere to be and someone to turn to.

Mental health and emotional well-being emerged as one of the clearest themes throughout the engagement process. Youth participants described peers as “not great” emotionally and emphasized that many existing supports feel too formal, too expensive, or too crisis-oriented to feel realistic or accessible for everyday struggles. One youth participant described the difference between formal intervention and meaningful support succinctly: what often helps most is not a hotline or formal counseling referral, but simply having someone say, “Do you want to go do something together?”

> *“What often helps most is not a hotline or a formal referral. It’s having someone say, ‘Do you want to go do something together?’”*

The connection between activity access and emotional well-being surfaced across nearly every session. Participants consistently described the absence of free, accessible, teen-centered activities not as a recreation gap, but as part of a broader gap in the informal structures that reduce isolation, build peer relationships, and give young people somewhere to be. Youth were specific about what they wanted: not more programs in general, but places that feel designed for them rather than incidentally available to them.

Trusted adult relationships were described as one of the strongest protective factors currently operating in Fredericksburg. Practitioners across systems emphasized the importance of counselors, coaches, teachers, behavior specialists, and community mentors who build authentic relationships with youth over time. School staff described students increasingly approaching these adults proactively to report conflicts, express distress, or seek support before situations escalate. Participants consistently framed these relationships, not as secondary supports, but as an important part of the community's violence prevention infrastructure.

Youth participants added important nuance to discussions of social media's role in conflict, distinguishing between social media "gun-flexing" and actual weapon carrying, suggesting that online presentation and perceived status may sometimes amplify fear and tension beyond the underlying reality. Participants consistently described social media as shaping perceptions, visibility, status, and conflict dynamics in ways that are difficult for adults and systems to fully interrupt once conflicts begin circulating online.

Family and economic stress also emerged consistently throughout the engagement process. Stakeholders across systems described housing instability, financial strain, transportation barriers, limited childcare flexibility, and unmet basic needs as underlying pressures affecting youth well-being and family functioning. Practitioners repeatedly described young people carrying substantial levels of stress connected not only to school or peers, but also to broader instability affecting households and caregivers.

Barriers to Support and Prevention

The most consistent pattern across the survey and every focus group is that programs and services are functionally invisible to families and to the professionals meant to connect youth with them. Seventy-two percent of survey respondents named not knowing what services exist as the top barrier, the highest of any option offered. Justice system professionals acknowledged in their own session that they do not know what the city offers for youth. A youth participant put it plainly: "Things happen and you don't find out until after, because information travels only through word of mouth." The problem is compounded: Even known programs are not demonstrably reaching the people they exist to serve. The right question is not what is missing; it is whether what already exists is actually reaching people. Visibility alone does not explain the gap. Even when families know a service exists, trust determines whether they will use it.

Trust gaps with systems are real and take more than one form. System-involved youth described the justice system as a process that moves young people through without seeing them, with interactions that leave them feeling dismissed rather than heard. Law enforcement participants acknowledged the trust deficit directly and confirmed that officers with lived experience in similar circumstances can reach youth that others cannot. Participants consistently emphasized that trust is built through sustained presence and authentic

relationships, not short-term or inconsistent engagement. Forty percent of survey respondents named distrust between community and government or police as a barrier to collaboration.

A distinct trust gap exists for recently arrived immigrant youth. Significant underreporting of violence occurs within this population due to trauma history, cultural norms, and institutional distrust. Formal liaison arrangements are producing surface-level compliance, not honest communication. Across professional sessions, peer mentoring from culturally relatable young people emerged as a more promising approach, rather than engagement through adult institutional representatives.

Structural barriers, including transportation, cost, hours, and physical access, shape whether available services and opportunities are meaningfully accessible in practice. Across nearly every engagement session, transportation emerged as a foundational factor influencing access to programs, employment, services, and broader community connection. Youth were similarly direct about affordability, consistently emphasizing that free programming is often the only realistic option for sustained participation. Participants also described how institutional constraints, including cost recovery requirements that limit subsidized teen programming, can further restrict access even where community benefit is widely recognized. Taken together, these barriers help contextualize why only 23% of survey respondents agreed that young people have access to the mental health support they need.

Table 2. Barriers to Accessing Prevention and Support Services

Barrier	What It Looks Like
Visibility	72% of survey respondents said not knowing what services exist is the top barrier; even justice system professionals reported not knowing what the city offers for youth.
Trust	40% named distrust between community and government or police as a barrier; system-involved youth described feeling processed rather than seen.
Structural Access	Transportation named across nearly every session as the enabling condition for everything else; youth were direct—free is the only price point that reliably works.

What Is Already Working—Community Assets and Strengths

Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents agreed that Fredericksburg has strong community assets to build on, suggesting broad recognition of the community's existing strengths and resources. The remaining challenge is whether those assets are sufficiently visible, coordinated, and accessible to the young people and families who need them most.

The asset the community returns to most consistently is not a program, but a person. Across every session, youth and adults named the same thing: a specific individual who showed up for them consistently over time. Practitioners framed it clinically by describing the relationship as the treatment, but youth expressed the same idea in simpler terms. The credible messenger model, in which individuals with shared lived experience build trust and redirect youth away from violence, already exists in Fredericksburg and operates informally without coordination or funding.

That same asset carries a fragility that must be named. System-involved youth were precise about it: when the one person whom a young person trusts completely betrays that confidence, the result is not disappointment, it is total withdrawal from social connection. Trusted relationships are the most powerful protective factor the community identified, and their loss is among the most destabilizing events a young person can experience.

The programs the community trust are not the most resourced or the most formally structured. What they share is sustained presence: the same staff, the same space, the same commitment, year after year. Many are operating without stable funding. Several are unknown beyond the populations they directly serve. The assets are real. The gap is visibility and coordination, not absence.

The community has also demonstrated it can mobilize at scale. An annual community event draws thousands of people and brings together faith communities, civil rights organizations, and local businesses. The organized community response to the 2023–2024 violence produced a 30-plus member steering committee that participants described as something the plan should sustain, not re-create from scratch.

What these assets share most is not funding or infrastructure, but consistency. The credible messenger comes back every year. Programs run on the same schedule, year after year. Staff members check in every morning. Community practitioners have been showing up for decades. Trust is not built through events. It is built through showing up repeatedly over time.

Key Findings

What Is Working

Fredericksburg enters this planning effort with hard-won, documented progress in its schools and juvenile justice system, and with a community that has consistently shown it will organize when the stakes are high. That progress is real, and it matters. The structural conditions shaping it, including a decade of rising violent crime against a backdrop of persistent poverty, constrained housing mobility, and sustained vulnerability in education and health, are documented in full in the Current State Assessment section. What follows examines both what has evolved since 2022 and the existing strengths the city can build upon.

Progress in Schools

The most concrete measurable progress the city has made in recent years is in school discipline. Short-term suspensions declined 24% in a single year, from 375 incidents in 2022/23 to 285 in 2023/24. The longer arc reinforces it: Suspension events tracked across four academic years show a consistent downward trend, from 1,679 in 2022/23 to 607 in the partial 2025/26 school year. The most severe disciplinary responses are now rare: Long-term suspensions declined from four to two, and expulsions reached one in 2023/24. That is a documented, multiyear shift in how schools are responding to student behavior.

Behind the numbers is a deliberate shift in school culture. The cell phone prohibition, introduced at the start of the 2024/25 school year by FCPS, is associated with behavioral changes that school administrators describe in specific terms: more authentic face-to-face socialization and a reduction in social-media-driven conflict arriving at school after weekend escalation.

Equally significant is what has changed around the culture of reporting at Walker-Grant Middle School. Staff describe a shift from a prior environment where students witnessed threatening situations without alerting adults to one where students now proactively flag concerns before situations escalate. This matters beyond the discipline data. Connection to a trusted adult within the school environment is a well-established protective factor against youth violence,[19] and students who report potential threats to school staff are demonstrating exactly that connection. Fredericksburg has built some of that trust. The plan ahead depends on deepening it.[20]

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[19] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Preventing Youth Violence: Opportunities for Action*. CDC Division of Violence Prevention. cdc.gov/violenceprevention.

[20] FCPS Student Behavior and Administrative Reports (SBAR) Data, 2022–2026; FCPS Faculty and Staff Focus Group.

Progress in Juvenile Justice

Data through FY2025 shows declines across every major level of juvenile justice system involvement. Intake cases at CSU 15 dropped from 1,113 in FY2023 to 850, a 24% reduction over three years. Probation placements fell from 92 to 68. Detainments declined from 178 to 159. State commitments dropped from 9 to 5. These are not isolated data points; they represent a consistent directional trend across every level of the juvenile justice system, from first contact through its most serious interventions. Local arrest volume declined as well, from 109 arrests in 2024 to 77 in 2025. This reflects a one-year trend in juvenile contacts, not a reversal of the longer-term pattern documented in the Conditions and Trends: How Vulnerability Has Changed Over Time section above; the two measures are distinct and should be read together.

The composition of those remaining arrests tells a more complicated story, addressed directly in the Arrest Patterns section above. The volume decline is real, but the nature of the arrests reflects a system that is still doing more cycling than redirecting. The progress is genuine; it is also incomplete. What both trends share is a directional signal that the systems working with Fredericksburg youth are capable of movement and that the asset landscape described below has something real to build on.[21]

An Operational Asset Landscape

Fredericksburg has a community asset landscape that most cities its size do not. The assets described below are not aspirational, but rather operational. They have relationships, they have funding, and they are reaching young people and families that formal institutions do not. None of them have been directed, coordinated, or resourced as part of a unified prevention strategy. That is both the gap and the opportunity.

Operational Assets: What Fredericksburg Already Has

One-to-one mentoring: A locally operated program backed by strong evidence; youth who complete structured mentoring are significantly less likely to be arrested. This capacity already exists locally and is a platform to grow, not a model to import.

Continuum of services for court-involved youth: A regional continuum of services for court-involved youth currently exists, including prevention and intervention services, a restorative justice curriculum that remains underutilized, and a recently launched 24-week violence interruption program.

[21] Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Data Resource Guide FY2025, CSU 15; Fredericksburg Police Department Juvenile Arrest Data, 2023–2026.

Regional behavioral health portfolio: RACSB operates Mental Health First Aid, ACEs Interface training, parent education, and youth after-school programming directly aligned with this plan's priorities. Its 2025–2030 strategic goals reflect the same analysis as this assessment, reached independently.

Community-rooted reentry and restorative justice: A family-first organization with lived experience, credibility with the justice system, and active internal workgroups already doing informal coordination could be resourced and sustained.

A locally operated one-to-one mentoring program provides supportive adult relationships backed by one of the strongest evidence bases in youth development. A randomized controlled trial found that youth participating in structured mentoring programs were 54 percent less likely to have been arrested and 41 percent less likely to have engaged in substance use by the 18-month follow-up than comparable peers in a control group. This appears here rather than in the Recommendations section because it already addresses the protective factor most consistently identified throughout the engagement process: connection to a caring adult. That capacity already exists locally. It is a platform to expand, not a model to import.

A regional continuum of services for court-involved youth spans prevention through intervention, including a restorative justice curriculum available to local schools that is currently underutilized and a recently launched 24-week violence interruption curriculum that represents the most direct local programmatic response to the high-end violence dynamics this assessment documents.

The region's primary behavioral health provider operates a prevention portfolio that includes Mental Health First Aid, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Interface training, parent education, and youth after-school and summer programs This portfolio maps directly onto the risk and protective factors that the CDC's Connect the Dots framework identifies as most consequential.[22] Its 2025–2030 strategic priorities reflect the same analysis as this plan's emerging recommendations, reached independently by the organization with the deepest local behavioral health expertise.[23]

A community-rooted reentry and restorative justice organization brings credibility, a founding story built on lived experience with the justice system, and a family-first philosophy that reaches households formal services do not. Its active internal workgroups, focused on restorative justice, law enforcement and crime prevention, and trauma-informed care, are doing coordination work informally that a unified plan could resource and sustain.

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[22] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). *Connecting the Dots: An Overview of the Links Among Multiple Forms of Violence.* CDC. cdc.gov/violenceprevention.

[23] Virginia DJJ FY2025; Rappahannock Area Office on Youth Regional Intervention Programs; RACSB Strategic Plan 2025–2030; Community Engagement Session reports.

Community Mobilization: A Demonstrated Capacity

When violence escalated in 2023 and 2024 beyond what the community felt it could absorb, Fredericksburg did not wait for an external response. Mothers Opposed to Violence organized and showed up at James Monroe High School. Community study groups formed independently. Parent engagement networks activated. FCPS administrators and city officials sat at the same table with parents who had lost children and agreed that the response needed to be systematic. Out of that effort came the Steering Committee on Teenage Violence, now a coalition of more than 30 members representing the city, FCPS, the NAACP, faith organizations, health services, and law enforcement. Many communities must build this kind of governance infrastructure before planning can begin. Fredericksburg built it in real time, under pressure.

Beyond the formal infrastructure, the engagement surfaced a landscape of community-organized activity that operates without city support but carries deep community trust. Examples include a neighborhood basketball league; community basketball and barbering events; a twice-monthly life skills and mentorship program serving 12 to 15 students in Mayfield that is free, but limited by transportation access; a free drum therapy program; and the Juvenile Recovery Court, which legal practitioners described as producing meaningful outcomes for youth who complete it. These are not programs searching for participants. They are trusted relationships, routines, and spaces already providing the structured engagement and adult connection that research consistently identifies as among the strongest protective factors against youth violence. Yet many continue to operate without coordination, visibility, or the infrastructure support that could help them reach more of the youth who may benefit most.

Taken together, Fredericksburg has a strong foundation. The problem is not the absence of assets. It is that those assets are not functioning as a system. The Key Themes and Areas of Opportunity section below examines opportunities to strengthen alignment, coordination, and access across the community's existing assets.

Key Themes and Areas of Opportunity

The data and engagement in this assessment produced eight recurring observations, grouped below by theme. Taken together, they describe a community whose conditions, systems, and assets are pulling in the same direction and where the distance between what exists and what is needed is smaller than it might initially appear.

Opportunities to Strengthen Early Intervention and Diversion Pathways

Across the data and community engagement, a consistent pattern emerged: Young people are reaching formal systems after multiple earlier challenges have already accumulated. System-compliance charges account for 35 – 40% of juvenile arrests, restorative practices remain

substantially underused relative to exclusionary discipline, and practitioners across multiple sectors independently described intervention points that arrive too late. The convergence across these sources points toward earlier, community-rooted pathways as a priority before system contact becomes a record.

Community Example – Pre-Charge Diversion: Hopewell, Virginia (Project SAF)

Approved by the Hopewell City Council in January 2023 and launched operationally in summer 2023 after a significant increase in violent crime, Project SAF (Safe, Alive, and Free) uses crime data to identify individuals most likely to be involved in violence and deploys life coaches for direct outreach before a charge is filed. According to Hopewell Police, gun violence incidents declined 45% in 2023. Between June and December 2023, shootings resulting in injury or death were reduced by 71% compared with the same period in 2022. The relevant takeaway for Fredericksburg is the value of having a structured, staffed, community-trusted pathway that functions before arrest. Hopewell is a comparable Virginia city of approximately 24,000 residents also served by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Sources: Hopewell Police Department / REAL Life Program, 2023–2024; WWBT NBC12, September 4, 2023; WTVR, February 22, 2024.

Chronic Absenteeism Continues to Affect a Significant Number of Students

Chronic absenteeism rates remain well above prepandemic norms and state averages, and the data show that the burden is not evenly distributed. Students experiencing homelessness, disabilities, and economic disadvantage are disproportionately affected. Community members and practitioners consistently connected attendance challenges to housing instability, caregiving responsibilities, and unmet family needs rather than student disengagement, a framing that points toward family-centered prevention rather than punitive enforcement.

Racial Disparities in Discipline and Arrest Data Remain Important Areas for Continued Attention

Black students are overrepresented in both school suspensions and juvenile arrests relative to their share of enrollment and population. The full scope of disparity is likely broader than available data reflect because of limitations in how Hispanic or Latino youth are categorized in local arrest records. Community members, youth, and practitioners consistently described these disparities as visible, consequential, and central to any credible prevention strategy. Only 17% of survey respondents agreed that responses to youth violence are consistent across youth from different backgrounds.

Community Example – Cross-System Disparity Accountability

Colorado has maintained legally mandated race and ethnicity tracking at each juvenile justice decision point since 2015 under its Community Law Enforcement Action Reporting (CLEAR) Act. Indiana established a statewide juvenile justice data oversight body in 2022 through HB 1359, which is charged with developing a comprehensive plan for collecting and reporting statewide juvenile justice data, including performance measures across the system. The relevant element is not a specific program but a practice: regular, disaggregated reporting that makes disparities visible to decision-makers at consistent intervals. Fredericksburg already collects much of the data needed for this type of ongoing review.

Sources: Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, CLEAR Act (Senate Bill 2015-185); Indiana General Assembly, HB 1359 (2022); Youth Justice Oversight Committee.

Youth Underserved by Current Prevention Strategies

Regional emergency department data show that 57%of violence-related patients are female, a pattern not reflected in arrest, suspension, or juvenile intake data because the forms of violence involved often do not result in police reports. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) youth were also identified across engagement sessions as facing elevated bullying risk without dedicated local programming or support. Both populations appear underserved by prevention strategies primarily shaped around the youth most visible in criminal justice data.

Youth Mental Health and School Climate Continue to Be Areas of Significant Need

School climate data, community surveys, and practitioner accounts converge on the same picture: A significant share of Fredericksburg youth are carrying levels of emotional distress that formal systems are not equipped to address. Seventy-six percent of survey respondents named unmet mental health needs as a top driver of violence. Only 22% agreed that young people can access the support they need. Walker-Grant's climate data confirm the scale at the middle school level. The gap is not solely a funding issue within any single agency, but reflects broader challenges related to coordination, capacity, and access.

Regional Context – Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Restorative Practices

Practitioners working in the Fredericksburg region referenced a prior restorative practices implementation in a neighboring school division that produced measurable improvements in classroom climate and adult-student relationships before leadership turnover disrupted the effort. The lesson is not that the approach failed; it worked until institutional support was withdrawn. The expertise to implement SEL and restorative practices at scale exists regionally. Sustained leadership commitment is what determines whether results hold.

Source: RACSB Partners Focus Group; Community Prevention Providers Focus Group.

Existing Youth Programming Assets Could Be Expanded and Better Connected

Fredericksburg has operational youth-serving assets, including mentoring, restorative programming, recreation programs, and behavioral health support, that are not yet functioning as a connected system. The restorative curriculum within FCPS is underutilized. Parks and Recreation programming does not yet reach teenagers at scale during the hours of greatest need. Community stakeholders and youth consistently named coordination, visibility, and access as the gaps, not the absence of programs. What exists needs to be better connected before new investments are made.

Community Example – Summer Youth Employment

A randomized controlled trial of Boston's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) found that participants experienced a 35 percent reduction in violent crime arraignments and a 29 percent reduction in property crime arraignments during the 17 months following program participation, compared to a control group. Researchers attributed these reductions in part to improvements in conflict resolution skills. A comparable randomized evaluation of Chicago's SYEP found a 43 percent reduction in violent crime arrests. New York City's SYEP produced more limited effects, concentrated among at-risk youth with prior justice contact.

Source: Modestino, A. S. (2019). Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 38(3), 600–628; J-PAL Poverty Action Lab, povertyactionlab.org.

Social Media and Peer Dynamics Are Increasingly Influencing Youth Conflict

Social media's role in conflict escalation was identified across nearly every session. Conflicts that begin online frequently reenter schools already heightened, and Fredericksburg's single-high-school geography concentrates this dynamic. Youth offered an important distinction: They separated the online performance of threat from actual danger, identifying perceived prevalence as a risk factor independent of actual weapon access. Stakeholders consistently

described these dynamics as rooted in neighborhood-based peer affiliation rather than formal gang organization, a distinction that shapes which prevention approaches are appropriate.

Broader Economic and Housing Pressures Continue to Affect Youth and Families

Economic stress, housing instability, and unmet family needs were named consistently across practitioner sessions as the conditions that shape whether individual interventions and supports can be sustained over time. Child poverty in Fredericksburg remains substantially above the statewide rate. Practitioners repeatedly described difficulty sustaining outcomes for youth when family-level conditions remain unchanged. These pressures are not a separate problem from youth violence; they are among its most persistent upstream conditions.

Where Focused Investment Will Move the Needle

The data and community engagement in this assessment do not point in dozens of directions. Each opportunity area below reflects a convergence across quantitative data, professional stakeholder sessions, and community voice that identifies where focused investment is most likely to produce durable change. These are not recommendations in themselves, but the conditions and priorities surfaced through the evidence and the foundation on which the Recommendations section is built.

Earlier Intervention

Every data source in this assessment describes a system that meets young people after the conditions for violence have already developed. The intervention window the data identifies is early adolescence, before school disconnection becomes a pattern and before justice contact becomes a record. The organizations capable of operating in that window already exist locally. What does not exist is a coordinated pathway connecting young people to these supports before crisis. Survey respondents confirmed the demand: 75% prioritized prevention, 74% prioritized intervention, and only 38% agreed that families in crisis currently have somewhere to turn.

Coordination of Existing Assets

Seventy-two percent of survey respondents named not knowing what services exist as the top barrier to prevention. Fifty-six percent named organizations working separately without coordinating. These results did not surprise practitioners, who had been describing exactly this throughout the engagement: organizations working in silos while serving the same families, in the same building, sometimes on the same cases. Long-standing family support services, free community-based mental health offerings, and youth programming designed for the highest-risk populations are effectively invisible to the families they could serve and to each other. The

coordination body that would enable a practitioner to identify a need and immediately connect to someone who can meet it does not yet exist in a sustained and staffed form.

The pattern was consistent enough across sessions that when cross-system stakeholders gathered in the same room, they discovered, in real time and more than once, that information sharing they had assumed required formal agreements required no such thing, that programming already deployed to neighborhoods simply needed partners to show up, and that informal working relationships could be formalized at essentially no cost. None of those discoveries required new funding or new programs. They required people being in the same room with a common purpose. The coordination gap is not a resource problem; it is a structural one.

Teen Programming During High-Risk Hours

The city's Parks, Recreation, and Events budget includes approximately $1.2 million in student program expenditures, targeted but constrained relative to documented need. The department has a new Teen Coordinator and a mobile recreation van reaching low-income neighborhoods, and staff have expressed strong interest in further expansion. The programming currently reaches primarily younger children; the infrastructure to deliver sustained, teen-specific programming during the 4 to 8 PM window and throughout summer does not yet exist at scale. Youth described the gap directly: There is nowhere to go that is free, accessible, and designed for them. Fifty-nine percent of survey respondents prioritized safe spaces and after-school activities, and a community center was the single most common concrete need in open-ended responses.

Mental Health as Prevention Infrastructure

The regional behavioral health picture describes a gap between existing investment and population-level need that is not primarily a funding problem within any single agency. It is a structural capacity and coordination problem. Seventy-six percent of survey respondents identified unmet mental health needs as a top driver of violence; only 22% agreed that youth can access the support they need; and Walker-Grant's climate data shows that more than a third of division students report persistent sadness or hopelessness. The formal mental health system is too crisis-oriented to reach young people in ordinary emotional distress. The informal support that works depends on the same infrastructure as the opportunity above: somewhere to go, a consistent adult, a community of peers. These are not separate investments approached from different entry points.

Youth Who Are Underserved by Current Prevention Strategies

Fifty-seven percent of violence-related emergency department patients in Planning District 16 are female. This pattern does not appear in arrest records, suspension data, or juvenile intake counts that typically shape local prevention strategies because many of the forms of violence

reflected in emergency department data do not result in police reports. No current local program is specifically designed to address those experiences. LGBTQIA+ youth were also identified across engagement sessions as populations facing elevated bullying risk without dedicated local programming or support. A prevention strategy built primarily around the populations most visible in criminal justice data risks overlooking a significant portion of the region's violence-related harm. Together, these five opportunity areas are not a wish list, but the places where the evidence, community voice, and existing assets of the city most clearly converge. The Recommendations section outlines how those opportunities can be translated into action.

Recommendations

The assessment is consistent across every source: Fredericksburg has the assets, institutions, and community commitment to address youth violence. What it lacks is the organizational infrastructure that connects those assets into a system capable of reaching young people before crisis, not after it.

Theory of Change

Governance and coordination infrastructure comes first. Without it, programmatic investments produce disconnected results: a mental health program no one can refer to, a diversion pathway that does not connect to restorative follow-up, a recreation initiative that reaches youth already engaged while missing those most isolated. With it, the same investments reach further: Practitioners can connect a young person in distress to the right resource immediately, and a family navigating housing instability encounters a coordinated response rather than a referral chain. Without governance, programs reach the youth who would have found them anyway.

Programmatic investment follows because the evidence identifies several specific and addressable conditions where intervention is most likely to change trajectories. These include early adolescence before system contact becomes entrenched; the hours between 4 and 8 PM, when youth are unsupervised and conflict is most likely to occur; the widespread and largely unmet mental health needs reflected in Walker-Grant's climate data; and the family instability practitioners across sectors described as shaping whether progress made in programs can be sustained.

The plan's strategic thesis stated plainly: build the coordination infrastructure first. Then invest in the specific programmatic areas where need is documented and assets are available. Sustain both through a governance structure with real accountability and a measurement system that tracks what matters. The result, over five years, is a community where fewer young people reach the justice system, more access support before crisis, and the organizations doing this work are no longer doing it in isolation. As such, the recommendations that follow are organized in two parts: (1) foundational governance and coordination conditions that must be in place before programmatic investment can hold, and (2) the programmatic strategies the evidence identifies as highest leverage for this city. The sequencing is intentional.

Theory of Change

If: Fredericksburg builds governance and coordination infrastructure first, including shared goals, a dedicated coordinator, and structured cross-sector communication.

Then: Programmatic investments in early intervention, mental health access, family support, restorative justice, and frontline capacity operate through connected pathways rather than in isolation.

Result: Over five years, fewer young people reach the justice system, more access support before crisis, and the organizations doing this work are no longer doing it alone.

What Kind of Change Does the Plan Require?

Adaptive – Shifts in mindset, culture, and shared ownership that no new tool or program can produce on its own

Technical – New programs, protocols, and systems that can be designed, funded, and implemented

Structural – Governance arrangements, formal roles, and accountability mechanisms that hold the work in place when people and priorities shift

Relational – Trust, communication, and sustained connection across organizations that have not yet operated as a system

Foundational Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Establish Shared Goals, Clear Accountability, and Coordinated Leadership Structures

The City of Fredericksburg has already demonstrated that it can mobilize quickly and collaboratively in response to youth violence concerns. The formation of the Steering Committee on Teenage Violence in 2023 brought together the right institutional partners with genuine urgency and sustained engagement. Schools, city leadership, law enforcement, behavioral health providers, community organizations, faith leaders, and residents all participated meaningfully in the process that produced this assessment. That foundation is real and represents a significant strength for the city moving forward.

What this assessment now makes clear is that the next phase of the work requires a different kind of effort: moving from collaboration and concern into a shared operational framework with clearly defined goals, responsibilities, and accountability structures.

Many collaborative efforts currently depend on individual relationships, informal coordination, and parallel activities rather than a shared implementation structure. Organizations are doing important work with strong alignment in values, but without a framework that defines what the collective effort is trying to achieve, which organization is responsible for which outcomes, how progress will be measured, and how partners will coordinate over time. The evidence points less toward a lack of commitment and more toward a need for stronger alignment, coordination, and accountability across systems.

The Violence Prevention Navigation Framework (VPNF) identified social cohesion as one of Fredericksburg's strongest opportunities for resilience-building and long-term prevention capacity. The community engagement process strongly reinforced that conclusion. Fredericksburg has active institutions, trusted community organizations, engaged leadership, and demonstrated willingness to work collaboratively across systems. The opportunity now is to organize those efforts around a shared structure capable of sustaining long-term implementation rather than episodic coordination.

This assessment also demonstrated that some of the infrastructure for deeper coordination already exists. The engagement process revealed that partners working across education and juvenile justice identified opportunities for information sharing that participants had previously assumed required formal agreements. That pattern surfaced repeatedly: In many cases, the challenge is not the absence of willing partners but the absence of intentionally designed coordination structures that clarify expectations, ownership, and shared responsibility.

Education and health emerged through the VPNF analysis as the sectors associated with the greatest concentration of vulnerability. School data reflected persistent chronic absenteeism, ongoing disparities in disciplinary outcomes, and continued reliance on exclusionary discipline

responses relative to restorative approaches. Juvenile justice patterns suggested that many youth enter formal systems after challenges and unmet needs have already intensified. These patterns will not shift through goodwill or collaboration alone. They require shared goals, defined ownership, measurable benchmarks, and leadership structures capable of maintaining focus across multiple years of implementation.

Recommended Action

Before final adoption of the youth violence prevention plan, the Steering Committee should convene a dedicated goal setting and implementation alignment session with the full committee membership. The purpose of this session should be to produce a shared mission statement for the initiative; three to five goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) grounded directly in this assessment's findings; a clear accountability structure identifying which goals are shared collectively and which are owned by specific agencies, departments, or partner organizations; defined scopes, responsibilities, and measurable contributions for each working area of the committee; and shared indicators and reporting processes for measuring implementation progress over time.

This process should be externally facilitated to support candid discussion, cross-sector alignment, and development of shared ownership across participating systems. The products of this session should be publicly available, including the mission statement, strategic goals, accountability map, implementation structure, and progress indicators. Public visibility matters because long-term prevention work requires continuity that extends beyond individual leaders, grant cycles, staffing changes, and moments of crisis response. Clear public commitments create a mechanism for sustained accountability and help ensure the work remains collectively owned over time.

The Steering Committee should also pursue formal establishment through a City Council resolution, charter directive, or administrative order that confers defined authority over implementation planning, budget alignment, and cross-agency coordination. Without a formal mandate, the committee's ability to hold institutional partners to commitments and sustain implementation beyond the current grant cycle will depend entirely on informal relationships and individual goodwill.

Fredericksburg does not lack engaged partners, committed organizations, or community willingness to collaborate. The assessment suggests that the city's next stage of progress depends on whether those existing efforts can be translated into a shared framework with clear goals, defined ownership, measurable outcomes, and sustained accountability across systems.

Recommendation 2: Establish Active, Visible Leadership with Decision-Making Authority

Achieving the goals described in Recommendation 1 will require not only coordination, but also consistent leadership engagement from individuals with the authority to make decisions, direct resources, and sustain institutional commitment over time.

One of the clearest patterns that emerged throughout this engagement was the consistency and dedication of the practitioners, frontline staff, and community organizations closest to the work. School personnel, behavioral health providers, youth-serving practitioners, nonprofit leaders, and community-based organizations participated consistently throughout meetings, focus groups, and collaborative discussions. Their continued engagement reflects a significant level of commitment within Fredericksburg and represents one of the community's strongest existing assets.

Participation from individuals with institutional authority to formalize partnerships, authorize changes, and make long-term implementation commitments was less consistent over time. As engagement continued, those who remained most consistently involved were often carrying the day-to-day realities of the work rather than those positioned to make broader institutional decisions. Sustained progress requires visible leadership participation and decision-makers who remain actively engaged, in addition to practitioners.

The assessment also highlighted the extent to which coordination efforts currently depend on relationships, informal communication, and individual initiative rather than durable implementation infrastructure. Participants acknowledged that informal coordination models become difficult to sustain over time, particularly during staffing transitions, leadership changes, shifting organizational priorities, or periods of reduced public attention.

Community survey results reinforced the importance of visible leadership and trusted partnership structures. Forty percent of respondents identified distrust between community members and government or law enforcement as a barrier to collaboration. Respondents strongly favored governance structures that combined institutional leadership with community partnership, with 67% identifying community-based organizations and 62% identifying city and community organization partnership models as important components of effective implementation. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of visible, sustained leadership commitment operating alongside authentic community partnership and relationship-based implementation.

Coordinating a five-year violence prevention plan across schools, courts, behavioral health systems, law enforcement, parks and recreation, community organizations, and the Steering Committee requires ongoing operational capacity between meetings. This level of coordination exceeds what can reasonably be sustained as an informal or secondary responsibility added onto existing institutional roles. Communities that have sustained long-term progress in youth

violence prevention have generally established dedicated coordination capacity responsible for maintaining continuity, alignment, accountability, and implementation momentum across systems over time.

Recommended Action

The City of Fredericksburg, FCPS, and law enforcement leadership should each designate a named senior representative with decision-making authority to serve as a consistent leadership representative for implementation of this plan. These representatives should attend committee meetings regularly, participate consistently in implementation discussions, have the authority to advance operational decisions internally, and serve as publicly identified points of accountability for their respective institutions. These roles should not rotate between delegates depending on availability. Long-term implementation depends on continuity, relationship-building, institutional memory, and visible leadership commitment over time.

Fredericksburg should identify or create a dedicated coordinator or backbone implementation role responsible for sustaining implementation between meetings and across systems. This role maintains cross-sector partner relationships, tracks implementation commitments and progress, supports communication across the committee's work areas, and serves as a standing point of contact for partner organizations and residents. It functions as a bridge between institutions and community partners rather than solely as an internal administrative position, and it represents a full-time responsibility that should be resourced accordingly.

Fredericksburg has already demonstrated that strong collaboration is possible during periods of urgency and community mobilization. The next phase of the work will require leadership structures and dedicated implementation capacity capable of sustaining that alignment beyond moments of crisis.

Recommendation 3: Build Coordination Infrastructure That Makes Collaboration Structural, Not Accidental

Recommendations 1 and 2 focus on establishing shared goals, clearer accountability, visible leadership, and dedicated implementation capacity. This recommendation focuses on ensuring that coordination itself becomes part of Fredericksburg's ongoing operating structure rather than something dependent on individual relationships, well-attended meetings, or informal communication networks.

Throughout the engagement, participants repeatedly described organizations serving the same youth or families without knowing it. School personnel were unaware a student was participating in a diversion process; community organizations learned about neighborhood programming only after it had already launched; coordination relationships depended on specific individuals rather than shared institutional processes. Participants did not describe these situations as failures of commitment. They described a system in which coordination

occurs informally, inconsistently, and through relationships that are vulnerable to staffing changes and competing priorities.

The engagement process also surfaced several examples of coordination structures that participants viewed as promising foundations for future work. Partners in the behavioral health and juvenile justice space described previous efforts to align organizations around shared data collection and collective advocacy, though those efforts were difficult to sustain without dedicated ownership and long-term infrastructure. Participants also referenced prior regional collaborative models that regularly convened a broad cross-section of institutional and community leaders around a shared challenge and described those models as potentially informative for Fredericksburg's long-term coordination efforts.

Survey responses reflected similar themes. Seventy-two percent of respondents identified lack of awareness about available services as a major barrier to prevention efforts. Fifty-six percent identified organizations working separately without coordination, 44% identified lack of trust between organizations, and 42% identified limited data-sharing across systems. At the same time, the engagement process repeatedly demonstrated that relatively small coordination improvements can create immediate opportunities for stronger alignment. During several cross-sector discussions, participants identified in real time that information-sharing practices they had assumed required formal agreements could often begin through existing processes and communication pathways.

Recommended Action

Fredericksburg should establish a standing quarterly cross-sector coordination convening focused on implementation alignment and operational coordination. This should function as a working session rather than a reporting meeting, with consistent participation from city government, schools, juvenile justice, behavioral health, Parks and Recreation, community organizations, law enforcement, faith communities, and local business partners. The purpose is to identify overlapping work, strengthen referral pathways, surface gaps in service awareness, and create regular opportunities for cross-sector problem-solving.

Fredericksburg has working relationships between systems that are producing real value. Those relationships are also fragile: When they depend entirely on the individuals who built them, they are one personnel transition away from disappearing. This recommendation is not to replace informal relationships with bureaucratic process. It is to protect what is working by giving it a structure that survives the people who created it. The existing coordination between juvenile justice and regional behavioral health partners is the clearest example: Formalizing it as a standing monthly meeting with a shared agenda and a named contact at each organization costs nothing and protects the relationship from the disruptions that end informal relationships. Thus, where informal relationships exist, they should be formalized. And where they do not yet exist, they should be built intentionally.

Fredericksburg partners should also establish a standard practice for communication between the juvenile justice system and schools regarding students participating in diversion-related processes when those students are enrolled in school. The engagement process suggested that opportunities for stronger coordination already exist within current information-sharing practices and may not require additional formal agreements to begin.

The city and Steering Committee should support the development and ongoing maintenance of a living public resource map that includes youth-serving programs, referral pathways, contact points, and available supports across systems. This resource should be publicly accessible, updated regularly, designed for both families and practitioners, and include clear entry points for youth, caregivers, and referral partners navigating services.

Finally, Fredericksburg partners should revisit prior efforts to establish shared or aligned data collection practices across youth-serving organizations. Future efforts in this area will benefit from clearly assigned ownership, realistic implementation expectations, routine review processes, and integration into existing coordination structures rather than stand-alone initiatives.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the Conditions for Broad Stakeholder Engagement

Building on recommendations for strengthening shared goals, leadership accountability, and coordination infrastructure, this recommendation focuses on who remains connected to the work over time, whose perspectives continue shaping implementation, and whether the people and neighborhoods most affected by violence-related conditions experience the plan as something being done with them rather than to them.

Throughout the engagement, participants consistently emphasized that youth violence cannot be separated from broader neighborhood conditions, long-standing inequities, family stress, housing pressures, and community trust. Participants repeatedly described violence and instability as connected to deeper patterns of disinvestment, limited opportunity, economic pressure, and uneven access to resources and support. The neighborhoods referenced most consistently throughout community conversations were not discussed as isolated problem areas, but as places shaped by long-standing structural conditions and uneven investment over time.

Participants also repeatedly emphasized that residents in these neighborhoods are often discussed during planning conversations without being consistently included in shaping the responses intended to affect them. Community survey responses reflected similar themes regarding trust, representation, and consistency. Forty-two percent of respondents indicated that responses to youth violence are not experienced consistently across youth from different backgrounds, and 40% identified distrust between community members and government or law enforcement as a barrier to collaboration. Stakeholders consistently emphasized that trust

is built through visible follow-through, sustained presence, equitable engagement, and inclusion of trusted community voices in decision-making processes over time.

The engagement highlighted gaps in who participated consistently throughout planning conversations. Some neighborhoods, youth populations, and informal community leaders were underrepresented. The engagement also repeatedly surfaced the importance of informal community assets already operating in Fredericksburg: trusted adults, neighborhood leaders, faith communities, coaches, and mentors with long-standing relationships. These individuals and organizations were described not as supplemental supports, but as some of the most trusted and accessible parts of the city's existing prevention infrastructure.

Recommended Action

As implementation begins, Fredericksburg should conduct a deliberate re-engagement effort focused on neighborhoods, populations, and sectors that were underrepresented during portions of the planning process. This outreach should use survey participation patterns, focus group participation gaps, neighborhood representation, and community partner feedback to guide where additional engagement should be concentrated. Particular attention should be given to neighborhoods most frequently referenced throughout the engagement, youth and caregivers not currently connected to formal systems, historically underrepresented community voices, and informal community leaders and organizations already trusted by youth and families.

The city and Steering Committee should formally recognize and incorporate informal community assets into the long-term prevention infrastructure rather than treating them solely as supplemental or short-term partners. The business community should also be included as a standing implementation and governance partner, given its potential contributions to youth employment pathways, mentorship opportunities, and broader community stabilization.

Fredericksburg should establish a regular communication cadence between partner organizations and community stakeholders outside of formal Steering Committee meetings. This structure should provide regular implementation updates, share upcoming engagement opportunities, communicate visible progress, maintain ongoing partner connection, and reduce reliance on crisis moments as the primary driver of collaboration.

The committee should establish a formal youth advisory role within its governance structure. Young people should participate in implementation and accountability decisions, rather than only as a beneficiary population. Youth in Fredericksburg demonstrated clear, specific, and actionable perspectives throughout the focus group process; that input should inform governance on an ongoing basis. Only 16% of survey respondents agreed that young people are meaningfully involved in prevention efforts, the lowest agreement rate of any survey statement, and youth under 21 represented only 4% of survey respondents. The plan was built

with limited input from the population it is designed to serve. A formal advisory role is how that gap should be addressed going forward.

Recommendation 5: Align Independent Organizational Efforts and Pursue Complementary Funding

Recommendations 1 through 4 focus on strengthening the shared infrastructure needed to support long-term coordination, leadership, communication, and stakeholder engagement. This recommendation focuses on how individual organizations, institutions, and partners can advance the broader goals of the plan through their own missions, funding strategies, and operational work.

Throughout the engagement, participants consistently emphasized that the responsibility for improving youth outcomes in Fredericksburg cannot rest solely with a single committee, agency, funding stream, or coordinated initiative. This recommendation is not intended to suggest that organizations subordinate their own missions or operational priorities to a single shared initiative. Rather, the opportunity is for organizations to identify where their existing goals, services, and strategic priorities already intersect with the themes, needs, and conditions surfaced throughout this engagement and to then pursue those opportunities proactively.

Participants repeatedly described violence prevention not as a stand-alone issue, but as being interconnected with school climate, youth employment, housing stability, behavioral health access, mentorship, economic stress, family support, neighborhood conditions, and community trust. The VPNF similarly identified education and health as sectors associated with elevated vulnerability within Fredericksburg, whereas community conversations consistently connected violence-related concerns to broader pressures affecting families and neighborhoods. Many of the conditions discussed throughout this report extend beyond the scope of traditional violence prevention funding alone. Independently pursued, but strategically aligned efforts can meaningfully strengthen the overall prevention ecosystem.

Recommended Action

Organizations participating in this initiative should actively identify where their existing work, strategic plans, and funding pursuits align with the broader priorities established through this process. Schools can pursue funding related to attendance intervention, school climate, restorative practices, and behavioral health. Law enforcement can pursue youth engagement, community policing, and diversion resources. Behavioral health providers can pursue trauma-informed care and capacity funding. Community organizations can pursue youth development, family stabilization, mentoring, and violence intervention grants. Organizations should not feel limited to traditional violence prevention funding streams alone.

Organizations should not feel limited to traditional violence prevention funding streams alone. Implementation efforts may benefit from pursuing complementary funding opportunities

across education, workforce development, behavioral health, housing stabilization, youth employment, community development, family support, and economic mobility. The city and Steering Committee can support this work by consistently communicating that the goals and priorities established through this process represent a broader civic direction. Visible support from city leadership may help reinforce alignment across sectors, strengthen organizational prioritization, and increase confidence among partners and funders that this work reflects sustained community commitment.

Programmatic Recommendations

Recommendation 6: Expand Early and Relational Mental Health Support

Unmet mental health needs were identified as a top driver of youth violence by 76% of survey respondents. Only 23% agreed that young people in Fredericksburg have access to the mental health support they need. Local school climate data show that more than a third of students report persistent sadness or hopelessness, a rate more than six percentage points above the statewide average of 29.9%. Existing mental health responses are often concentrated at the point of crisis, limiting the mental health system's capacity to reach young people proactively before situations escalate.

The most consistently valued mental health support described across this engagement was not clinical. Participants across every session returned to the same image: one consistent, caring adult, present and trusted by the young person over time. What works relationally must be structurally supported to survive leadership transitions, a lesson the region has already learned firsthand.

Recommended Action

School-based mental health capacity should be expanded with priority at the middle school level, where local climate data show the sharpest concentration of unmet need. The goal is one qualified mental health professional embedded in each school's counseling team, building on the existing school-based therapist model—not as the sole point of support, but as a clinical anchor within a broader network that extends into community and recreational settings. Community-based mental health programming in accessible, nonclinical settings with people youth already trust should be funded. Offerings should not be intake-dependent and should not be crisis-only. School and community-based supports should be coordinated so that a young person moving between settings encounters a connected system rather than disconnected referrals.

Recommendation 7: Invest in Earlier Intervention and Accessible Opportunity

The data identify a consistent pattern: Young people are reaching formal systems after earlier intervention opportunities have already passed. The most common individual charge is shoplifting under $200, a charge that often reflects material need and unmet opportunity more than an entrenched criminal trajectory. System-compliance charges account for 35% to 40% of all juvenile arrests, representing youth already inside the system failing to meet its requirements rather than committing new offenses. Both patterns point to the same gap: a shortage of accessible, non-formal options for young people before system contact becomes a record. Research consistently identifies early adolescence as the period when engagement patterns are established and when consistent adult relationships matter most. The request for a community center was the most common concrete recommendation in open-ended survey responses, reflecting broad recognition of the need for accessible youth space, connection, and structured opportunity.

The conflict dynamics this recommendation is designed to address increasingly originate online. Practitioners across multiple sessions described a consistent pattern: disputes that begin on social media over the weekend arrive at school already escalated by Monday morning, often reinforced by group chats, public posts, and peer commentary that continue circulating throughout the week. Fredericksburg's single-high-school geography concentrates this dynamic because youth from neighborhoods in conflict share the same building daily. Programming that addresses belonging, identity, and peer relationships needs to be designed with this context explicitly in mind, not built around a model of conflict that ends when youth leave a physical space. Youth themselves offered important framing here: they distinguished between the online performance of threat and actual danger, and they identified the peer dynamics that make de-escalation difficult when a conflict is visible to everyone in a social network simultaneously. Mentorship, outreach, and structured programming that give youth an alternative social context as well as a trusted adult with whom to process these situations are the most appropriate responses the evidence supports.

Recommended Action

The mobile recreation program should be expanded as a multipartner platform specifically for teens during the 4 to 8 PM weekday window and throughout summer. The Teen Coordinator is the operational hub and would benefit from a defined partner network, regular communication cadence with community organizations and schools, and a budget proportional to what it is being asked to do. Law enforcement participation in summer deployments should be formalized as a standing element. Develop a community outreach program staffed by trained, compensated individuals with lived experience who conduct outreach in neighborhoods with the highest documented need. Build referral pathways from schools to community services with warm handoffs rather than cold referrals. Programming deployed through these platforms should explicitly incorporate conflict de-escalation content that addresses the online-to-in-

person dynamic, equipping youth and outreach workers with shared frameworks for interrupting social media–driven conflict before it escalates into physical confrontation.

Recommendation 8: Treat Families as the Primary Unit of Intervention

Child poverty in Fredericksburg is 60% above the statewide rate. Housing vacancies have declined 18% since 2012, and residents are not leaving high-poverty neighborhoods because the market will not allow it. Programmatic gains erode when families remain in structural crisis. That observation was made in nearly identical terms by partners across behavioral health, prosecution, community organizations, faith communities, and focus groups, each independently. Youth who returned from system-involved programming to unchanged home environments described difficulty sustaining positive changes. When families remain in structural crisis, programmatic gains are harder to sustain. The Fredericksburg Department of Social Services FY2024 Annual Report documented 594 Child Protective Services reports received that year and foster care placements at a 76% increase over the prior year. The department's leadership noted that most families served are experiencing mental health and substance abuse disorders alongside insufficient provider capacity to meet that demand.

Recommended Action

The city should actively recruit and contract family therapy and intensive family therapy providers as a deliberate procurement strategy, not a passive market expectation. State funding through the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA) and the Virginia Firearm Violence Intervention and Prevention (FVIP) program is available. The barrier is supply: Fredericksburg does not have enough qualified family therapy providers to meet current demand, and families who are referred often face long waitlists or cannot access providers within a reasonable distance. Launch accessible, nonpunitive parenting education programming in community settings at times working parents can attend, in the languages the community speaks. Integrate economic navigation, including housing, employment, and basic needs, into family support programming rather than treating it as a separate referral. Establish family engagement as a design standard for any programming the plan endorses, built in from the start and not added on.

The structural conditions driving these pressures—housing costs, concentrated poverty, limited economic mobility—extend beyond the scope of what a violence prevention plan can address through programming alone. What this recommendation can do is reduce the degree to which those conditions undermine the gains that direct service investment produces, by ensuring that family support, economic navigation, and therapeutic capacity are built into the plan's programmatic infrastructure rather than treated as someone else's responsibility.

Recommendation 9: Ensure That Prevention Efforts Reach All Youth Affected by Violence

Emergency department data surface a pattern that arrest records, suspension data, and juvenile intake counts do not: 57% of violence-related emergency department (ED) patients are women/girls, and the most common diagnosis is unarmed assault. It is important to note that only 15% of these visits were specifically mapped to Fredericksburg City census tracts, meaning this reflects a broader regional pattern rather than a confirmed city-specific rate. A prevention plan built primarily around the population most visible in criminal justice data risks systematically underserving a substantial share of the violence that surfaces in health systems data. No current local program is specifically designed to address violence affecting young women and girls. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) youth were named across sessions as facing elevated bullying risk with no dedicated local programming. Forty-two percent of survey respondents disagreed that responses to youth violence are consistent across youth from different backgrounds.

Recommended Action

Prevention programming should include dedicated attention to violence affecting young women and girls, including relationship violence, family-based violence, and interpersonal conflict that does not produce police reports but that does produce health system contact. Conduct an inventory of which current programs reach this population, and which do not. Partner with local domestic violence and intimate partner violence organizations to integrate prevention-oriented programming — not only crisis response — into the broader youth-serving infrastructure this plan supports, with priority on healthy relationships education for adolescents. Integrate gender-responsive approaches into existing programming where appropriate, rather than building parallel systems. Identify specific programming needs for LGBTQIA+ youth. Use the ED data as an accountability metric alongside arrest and suspension data so the population most affected by violence in regional health data is visible in how the plan measures progress.

Explore whether Mary Washington Hospital or a regional partner is positioned to establish a hospital-based violence intervention protocol. A full hospital-based violence intervention program is most effective at high-volume trauma centers; Fredericksburg's regional ED data do not indicate that volume. What the data does indicate is that violence-related patients are presenting at regional hospitals and being discharged without a structured connection to community-based support. A more targeted and feasible starting point is a notification and referral protocol: a formal arrangement through which hospital staff alert the community outreach program when a patient affected by violence presents, enabling a trained outreach worker to follow up. Virginia's FVIP program provides technical assistance and funding for this type of hospital–community coordination and is an available resource for developing this pathway.

Recommendation 10: Connect the Systems That Are Working in Silos

The case for cross-system coordination is not theoretical for Fredericksburg. The city's own data show patterns that coordinated data review and aligned programming are designed to address. Cross-system data review of program participation against 4 to 8 PM law enforcement contact patterns is the kind of analysis that allows for real-time adjustment. That analysis requires a functioning coordination structure and a data-sharing agreement. A previous attempt at shared-data infrastructure fell apart, and the lesson is that the governance agreement has to precede the technical build, not follow it.

Recommended Action

Partners should establish a shared Key Performance Indicator (KPI) agreement across participating organizations before building new data infrastructure. Each partner commits to tracking a defined set of indicators and contributing data at quarterly meetings. Build toward a shared-data dashboard in Years 2 and 3 that enables cross-system analysis of program participation, service utilization, and law enforcement contact data. Explore underutilized regional data platforms as potential shared infrastructure. Administer a biennial community survey with a named institutional owner and consistent methodology; the 2026 survey establishes the baseline. Align recommended strategies to fundable grant categories before the plan is finalized; the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services FVIP, Operation Ceasefire, VJCCCA, and the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program are the primary vehicles aligned to near-term priorities.

Recommendation 11: Expand and Formalize Restorative Justice Across Systems

The school discipline data establishes the scale of the current imbalance: In-school suspension used in 2,827 incidents over four years while restorative practices were only documented in 57. Black students represent 33% of enrollment and nearly 50% of short-term suspensions. Restorative approaches, sustained over time, address both the behavioral and the equity dimension of that pattern. A previous initiative in a neighboring school system was producing measurable improvements in classroom climate and adult–student relationships, though it was never institutionalized at the leadership level. What works relationally must be structurally supported to survive leadership transitions.

The accountability concern that appeared independently across multiple survey responses and focus group sessions deserves a direct answer: Restorative justice is not an alternative to accountability. It is a more demanding form of it, one that requires the young person to understand the harm caused, engage with those affected, and commit to repair. The frustration with consequences that do not change behavior is precisely the frustration that restorative practice is designed to address.

Recommended Action

Before expanding, partners should map and connect what already exists across organizations currently delivering restorative programming locally and how those efforts relate to the existing juvenile diversion and accountability structure. Formalize restorative justice as a school discipline alternative within FCPS, prioritizing middle school and aligned to Virginia's legislative direction and the documented racial disparities in suspension data. Establish a coordinated pathway so that youth entering diversion have a clear, connected route to restorative practice. Engage existing practitioner partners as named technical resources in implementation planning. Name restorative justice expansion as a multiyear structural and relational commitment: trained facilitators, sustained organizational investment, and willingness to shift institutional culture in schools that have historically relied on exclusionary responses.

Recommendation 12: Build Frontline Staff Capacity Through Trauma-Informed and Relational Training

A request for structured training in youth engagement and relationship-building emerged directly from this engagement process. That request reflects something important: The people doing this work already understand that their effectiveness with youth depends on more than tactical skill. The informal mentorship and relationship-building that individual staff members do on their own works, but it depends entirely on individual initiative; it is not institutionally reinforced and can disappear when the individual moves on.

Recommended Action

The city should invest in structured, trauma-informed relational training for frontline staff across youth-serving sectors: law enforcement, school-based staff, community organization workers, Parks and Recreation youth workers, and outreach or credible messenger program staff. The goal is a shared framework across all the adults a young person encounters so the quality of interaction does not depend on who happens to be working that day. Identifying and committing to a specific training program and delivery timeline should be a Year 1 planning priority. Training is most effective when sustained rather than delivered once; it should be accompanied by organizational support that reinforces the skills over time.

Recommendation 13: Commit to a More Complete Data Foundation

The conclusions in this assessment are limited by the data currently available and by the systems that hold the data. In several critical areas, relevant information exists but cannot be meaningfully connected across agencies because the infrastructure and governance needed for cross-system coordination do not yet exist. The challenge is not primarily technical; it is structural. Systems were designed to serve individual agency functions, not to provide a shared picture of community conditions.

Several important gaps emerged through this assessment. Housing instability and homelessness are not tracked in ways that can be connected to school, justice, or health system data. Law enforcement calls for service and non-arrest contacts, which may identify youth experiencing repeated distress before formal system involvement, are not integrated into prevention planning. Behavioral health data reflect who receives services, but not unmet demand, waitlists, or failed referrals. Cross-system utilization patterns remain largely invisible, making it difficult to understand how many youth and families are simultaneously interacting with multiple systems. In addition, local arrest data do not currently identify Hispanic or Latino youth as a distinct category, limiting the accuracy of disparity analysis.

Recommended Action

The Steering Committee should treat data development as an ongoing implementation priority rather than a future phase of work. Begin by establishing the governance agreements, trust relationships, and shared review structures necessary for responsible cross-system data use. Build a shared framework for tracking key indicators across agencies before investing in more advanced technical infrastructure. Prioritize the development of data-sharing approaches that improve visibility into housing instability, unmet behavioral health needs, repeated non-arrest law enforcement contact, and cross-system service utilization. The measurement framework in the Measuring Progress section identifies the KPIs, baseline measures, and review cadences that operationalize this recommendation.

Sequencing

Translating these recommendations into action is best approached in phases. Implementation science consistently finds that organizational conditions surrounding a program explain more about its outcomes than the program itself. Communities that move directly to program launch without establishing foundational conditions produce the same pattern: Interventions that work briefly and then degrade when the conditions that were never formally established shift. The three phases below reflect that knowledge applied to Fredericksburg's context. They are not a fixed sequence but a recommended progression, with the specific path determined by where the gaps are.

Phase One: Evaluate Readiness

Before any program is launched or any resource committed, the Steering Committee should take stock of which foundational conditions currently exist and which do not. Implementation science describes this as the exploration and installation stage, the period in which an organization honestly assesses its capacity before it attempts to implement. The Foundational Recommendations of this report function as that assessment. Existing gaps in shared goals, leadership accountability, coordination infrastructure, or stakeholder engagement define where the work begins.

The readiness evaluation does not require a formal instrument. It requires the committee to answer a small number of direct questions: Is there a shared, measurable definition of what this effort is trying to achieve? Are the people with the authority to act consistently present and accountable? Do partner organizations have standing mechanisms to coordinate or are they working in parallel on the same families without knowing it? Does the community most affected have a meaningful seat in the governance structure? The answers determine which foundational recommendations are most urgent and should be addressed before programmatic spending begins.

Several moves require no funding, no new agreements, and no organizational infrastructure, only decisions, for example, establishing standard practice for juvenile justice to inform schools when a student enters diversion; Parks and Recreation distributing the mobile recreation schedule to a standing partner list; law enforcement confirming summer participation in mobile recreation deployments; and juvenile justice and behavioral health partners formalizing their early warning coordination as a standing monthly meeting. These should be in motion before this plan is formally adopted. Action before publication is the most credible signal available to a community that has seen plans before.

Phase Two: Organizational Development and Investment

Once readiness gaps are identified, the foundational recommendations in the Foundational Recommendations section become the investment agenda. This is the work of filling the coordinator position, establishing the quarterly summit, reaching the KPI agreement, formalizing data-sharing protocols, and establishing the shared goals to which all partners have genuinely committed. Implementation science identifies this as the installation phase: building the structures and relationships required for sustained implementation before programs are scaled. Each programmatic recommendation in the Programmatic Recommendations section depends on at least one of these conditions being in place. Launching programs before those conditions exist produces initiatives that run in isolation, reaching whoever finds them rather than the youth who need them most.

Phase Three: Implementation

With the organizational foundation in place, the recommendations in the Programmatic Recommendations section become executable in a coordinated, reinforcing way. Earlier intervention, access to mental health support and family support, restorative justice, and frontline capacity operate through connected referral pathways, are tracked against shared metrics, and are reviewed at standing cross-sector summits where partners can identify what is working and adjust what is not.

The specific activities, owners, and timelines for each phase are laid out in the Implementation Roadmap.

Implementation Roadmap

Fredericksburg has the data, the community input, and the cross-sector relationships needed to address youth violence in a sustained and coordinated way. This section translates the recommendations and data from the preceding sections into an operational plan: the governance structure that owns implementation, the five-year timeline that sequences the work, and the measurement framework that tracks whether it is working.

The plan is built on what the community asked for. In the 2026 survey, 81% of respondents agreed that youth violence is a serious concern in their community. Seventy-two percent named not knowing what services exist as the top barrier to accessing help; 67% named community-based organizations as necessary governance partners; and 50% called for a community-led advisory structure with real decision-making power.

This plan is aspirational. It reflects the limited availability of data, the time constraints of the planning process, and the thematic rather than the statistically representative nature of the community engagement. The same limitations described in the Scope and Data section apply here, and the plan should be read with those considerations in mind. Where data gaps exist, this plan directly addresses them: Year 1 builds the data infrastructure, data-sharing agreements, and measurement baselines that will enable future iterations of this plan to be grounded in a fuller picture of what is happening in Fredericksburg.

Every element of this roadmap is grounded in the recommendations made in the Recommendation section. The governance structure, the cross-sector summit, the coordination role, the programmatic investments, and the measurement framework are not new ideas introduced here. They are the operational form of what the Recommendation section recommended, sequenced into a timeline and assigned to owners. Readers who want to understand the reasoning behind any element of this plan should refer to the Recommendation section.

Governance

The Steering Committee on Teenage Violence owns this plan. It is the implementation and accountability body for everything that follows, ensuring that commitments are tracked, that partner organizations are coordinating, and that the plan is revised as conditions change.

Community input reinforced this directly. In the 2026 survey, 67% of respondents named community-based organizations as necessary governance partners, 62% named a city-community partnership as the right structure, and 50% called for a community-led advisory council with real decision-making power. Only 40% said the existing Steering Committee should

simply be expanded. Across focus groups, participants described the 2023 to 2024 coalition as the model to build on: multisector, with authentic relationships and clear role assignments. Governance works, they said, when the people closest to the problem have genuine authority.

That preference reflects a pattern that holds across communities with sustained violence prevention progress: a standing, multisector committee with defined accountability rather than a city-led body with community input on the margins, and one that functions as standard practice rather than activating only in crisis. The coalition Fredericksburg built in 2023 and 2024 is proof that this city can operate that way. This plan encodes it as standing practice.

One gap in the current governance structure is meaningful youth participation. Only 16% of survey respondents agreed that young people are meaningfully involved in prevention efforts, the lowest agreement rate of any survey statement, and only 4 of 96 respondents identified as a young person under 21. The community engagement process reached youth through focus groups and produced some of the most direct and useful input of the engagement, but youth are not represented in the committee's governance structure in any formal way. This plan identifies that as a gap to be addressed: Young people should have a defined role in implementation and accountability as governance participants with genuine standing.

The cross-sector summit described in the Recommendation section, Recommendation 3, is the Steering Committee's standing operating mechanism. It convenes partner organizations across city government, schools, juvenile justice, behavioral health, parks and recreation, community-based organizations, law enforcement, faith communities, local businesses, and the neighborhoods most directly affected to share observations, cross-reference data, and make coordination decisions between formal committee meetings. It is a working session, not a reporting meeting.

The coordination role described in the Recommendation section, Recommendation 2, is the plan's backbone between meetings. The coordinator maintains partner relationships, tracks commitments against the plan, connects organizations working on the same populations without knowing it, and serves as the standing point of contact for community members navigating the system.

Phased Timeline

The five-year plan moves in three phases. Year 1 builds the governance structure, coordination infrastructure, and data foundations the programmatic work depends on. Years 2 and 3 launch programmatic investments at scale. Years 4 and 5 confirm that the system is successful and self-sustaining and prepares for the next planning cycle.

The table below provides an overview of each phase by focus area. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are the agreed set of metrics each partner organization tracks and contributes to shared data review. The detailed activities for each phase follow the table.

Table 3. Focus Area by Phase

Focus Area	Year 1	Years 2–3	Years 4–5
Governance & Coordination	Committee structure established; coordination role filled; youth advisory role active; cross-system protocols in place	Governance operating; data dashboard active; first public progress report published	Self-sustaining; functions through transitions without outside facilitation
Prevention & Outreach	Mobile recreation expanded; trauma-informed training scoped; provider recruitment begun	Community outreach program active; pre-arrest deflection launched; trauma-informed training extended across sectors	Programs evaluated; programs sustained or redesigned based on outcome data
Behavioral Health & Family	Mental health capacity contracts initiated; family therapy provider recruitment active; parenting education first cohort launched	Behavioral health capacity expanded; family therapy services active; parenting education at scale	Sustained; evaluated against referral completion and family-level service baselines
School Engagement	Diversion–school information gap closed; restorative justice coordination pathway formalized	Restorative justice expanded at middle school level; shared relational framework active across sectors	Evaluated against absenteeism and suspension trend data
Data & Analysis	KPI agreement reached; resource map published; community survey baselined; data-sharing conversations initiated; race/ethnicity data gaps addressed	Data-sharing agreements finalized; KPI dashboard operational; behavioral health and calls-for-service data incorporated	Independent evaluation commissioned; second planning cycle grounded in Years 1 through 3 data

Year 1: Governance and Coordination Infrastructure

Year 1 establishes the organizational foundation and prioritizes the completion or initiation of key activities before large-scale Year 2 programmatic investments begin. Items marked with an asterisk (*) require decisions only, with no new funding or formal agreements, and can be activated immediately upon plan adoption.

- The Steering Committee establishes a regular meeting structure, standing participant list, and decision-making protocol.

- A coordination role is established and filled, with institutional backing and a defined relationship to the committee.
- Community representation from the neighborhoods most affected is formalized as a standing element of governance, not an occasional invitation.
- A formal youth advisory role is established within the committee's governance structure. Young people participate in implementation and accountability decisions, rather than only as program participants.
- A cross-system protocol is established so that juvenile justice and school systems share timely information on shared youth. No formal agreement is required; this is a standing practice decision.*
- Juvenile justice and behavioral health early warning coordination is formalized as a standing monthly meeting.*
- Recreation programming schedules are distributed to all partner organizations, with an open invitation to co-locate at existing deployments.*
- A diversion and restorative justice coordination pathway is formalized between youth programming and juvenile justice, with relevant technical partners engaged.
- A KPI agreement is finalized across participating organizations before dashboard infrastructure is built.
- A living public resource map is published in a first functional version: a regularly updated, accessible directory of youth-serving programs and entry points for frontline workers and families.
- A community survey is fielded to establish baselines for perceived safety, resource awareness, and service access. The 2026 administration (N=96) is the starting point. Subsequent survey rounds maintain consistent methodology to allow year-over-year comparison.
- Data-sharing conversations are initiated with juvenile justice, behavioral health, social services, and public health to address the data gaps identified in this assessment. Access to community resource referral data is requested. Demographic data collection in the juvenile arrest system is expanded to capture race, ethnicity, gender, and, where appropriate, sexual orientation and gender identity, so that disparities across all affected populations are visible in ongoing review.
- Trauma-informed relational skills training is scoped and scheduled. The initial cohort is law enforcement; school-based and community organization staff follow in Years 1 and 2.
- Teen programming expands through multipartner mobile recreation deployments in the neighborhoods identified through survey and focus group data as highest need. Law enforcement participation in summer deployments is formalized as a standing element.*

- Family therapy provider recruitment begins. The gap is provider capacity, not funding. Active recruitment is required.
- School-based mental health capacity expansion begins—additional therapist capacity is contracted, with priority given to the middle school level.
- Parenting education launches its first cohort, building on existing community infrastructure.

Years 2–3: Programmatic Investment at Scale

With Year 1 infrastructure in place, the programmatic strategies below launch at scale. All require dedicated grant funding. The coordination infrastructure built in Year 1, including a functioning meeting structure, a KPI framework, data agreements, and referral pathways, ensures that these investments reach the right youth rather than whoever happens to find them.

A community outreach program staffed by trained, compensated individuals with lived experience launches in the neighborhoods with the highest documented concentration of need. Outreach workers are connected to the referral network built in Year 1. A pre-arrest deflection program launches alongside it: a community-based pathway for youth first contacts, co-designed across juvenile justice, law enforcement, and community organizations, targeting the approximately 35% to 40% of current juvenile arrests that are system-compliance charges. Teen programming deepens in highest-need neighborhoods, with mobile recreation deployments expanded and supplemented with structured programming and transportation barriers addressed as part of program design.

School-based strategies. School-based restorative justice expands at the middle school level, aligned to Virginia's legislative direction and built through the coordination pathway established in Year 1. Sustained institutional support is required for these practices to hold. Trauma-informed relational skills training extends to community-based organization staff, youth workers, and outreach program participants, building a shared framework across every sector a young person encounters.

Behavioral health and family support. Behavioral health capacity expands further at the middle school level, building on the Year 1 contracts. Family therapy services launch, drawing on the provider pool built through Year 1 recruitment. Parenting education scales to additional cohorts and locations based on Year 1 participation data.

Data, accountability, and reporting. A KPI dashboard becomes operational for use at regular summits. Cross-system data review, including program participation, service utilization, and law enforcement contact patterns, informs real-time programming decisions. Data-sharing agreements are finalized, and behavioral health utilization and calls-for-service data are incorporated into the regular data review, addressing gaps identified in this assessment. A first

public progress report is produced and shared with the community, reporting against Year 1 baselines and the agreed KPI framework.

A note on gaps. The Recommendation section, Recommendation 9, identifies prevention efforts reaching all youth affected by violence as a priority, including programming responsive to young women and girls, LGBTQIA+ youth, and populations whose contact with violence surfaces in emergency department data rather than arrest records. No dedicated programming for these populations currently exists locally. Developing it is a goal for Years 2 and 3, beginning with an inventory of which current programs reach these youth and which do not.

Years 4–5: Sustainability and Evaluation

Years 4 and 5 are the test of whether the plan has built something durable. The governance structure, programmatic investments, and data infrastructure either function through leadership and staff transitions or they do not. This phase answers that question and prepares the next planning cycle.

An independent evaluation of program outcomes is commissioned in Year 4. It assesses what has worked, what has not, and where investment should shift. It is not primarily an accountability exercise; it is the evidence base for the next planning cycle. Investments are adjusted based on those results and ongoing KPI data. Programs not producing outcomes are discontinued or redesigned.

The governance and coordination structure is assessed against a clear sustainability benchmark: Does it function through staff and leadership transitions without outside facilitation? The coordination role transitions from implementation support to a permanent function of the Steering Committee. An annual public reporting cycle is formalized, with plain-language reports on progress accessible to residents and families, rather than only to system professionals.

The plan is then revisited for a second five-year cycle. The data development work of Years 1 through 3 produces a substantially richer evidence base for the next planning iteration than was available for this one. That is the compounding value of doing the foundational work first.

Measuring Progress

The metrics below are tied to the structure of the work: governance and coordination, earlier intervention, community access and safety, behavioral health and family support, school engagement, and community perception. Each has a named owner and is reviewed at regular cross-sector summits. The 2026 community survey (N=96) establishes the baseline for community-level indicators.

Table 4. Metrics Framework

Metric	Focus Area	Data Owner	Baseline
Cross-sector summit attendance & KPI data submission rate	Governance & coordination	Committee coordination lead	Year 1 – first summit establishes baseline
Youth first contacts diverted before formal system involvement	Earlier intervention	Juvenile justice / court services	Available – current year data
System-compliance charges as % of total juvenile arrests	Earlier intervention	Law enforcement	Available – ~35%–40% (2023–2026)
Teen program participation by neighborhood, disaggregated by race & income	Community access & safety	Parks and recreation / youth services	Partial – full baseline Year 1
Youth behavioral health referrals completed vs. initiated	Behavioral health & family	Behavioral health / school services	Partial – Year 1 development
Families receiving family-level services (not child-level only)	Behavioral health & family	Behavioral health / social services	Year 1 – build baseline
Chronic absenteeism rate, by school & subgroup	School engagement	Public school system	Available – 27% division (2023/24)
Short-term suspension rate, disaggregated by race	School engagement	Public school system	Available – 2022–2024 data
Community survey: perceived safety & resource awareness, year-over-year	Community perception	Designated survey owner	2026 survey (N=96) – baseline

These metrics are a starting framework. As the data infrastructure described in Year 1 matures, including data-sharing agreements, behavioral health utilization data, and expanded juvenile justice data, additional indicators will be incorporated. The KPI agreement process in Year 1 is where this framework is confirmed and refined by the organizations that will own each metric.

Metrics Details

Each metric includes what it tracks, the responsible data owner, and the known or planned baseline.

- **Cross-sector summit attendance and KPI data submission rate.** The most direct indicator of whether the governance infrastructure is functioning. If partner organizations are not attending and contributing data, the cross-system analysis the plan depends on cannot happen. Baseline established at the first summit.
- **Youth first contacts diverted before formal system involvement.** Tracks the proportion of first contacts resolved through diversion rather than formal processing. The target is a consistent year-over-year increase.
- **System-compliance charges as a proportion of total juvenile arrests.** Current baseline is 35% to 40%. A sustained decrease indicates that diversion and coordination investments are reducing arrests for youth struggling to meet system requirements rather than for committing new offenses.
- **Teen program participation by neighborhood, disaggregated by race and income.** Aggregate participation numbers mask whether programming is reaching the highest-need youth in the highest-need neighborhoods. Disaggregation is the test. Full baseline established in Year 1.
- **Youth behavioral health referrals completed versus initiated.** The gap between referral and engagement is where the most at-risk youth are lost. Completion rates, not just referral counts, reveal whether the handoff infrastructure is working.
- **Families receiving family-level services, rather than only child-level services.** Tracks whether family engagement is built into programming as a structural requirement. Baseline built in Year 1.
- **Chronic absenteeism rate, by school and subgroup.** Chronic absenteeism is the leading school-based indicator of disengagement. The current division wide rate is 27% (2023/24). Year-over-year change reflects whether school engagement investments are taking hold.
- **Short-term suspension rate, disaggregated by race.** Racial disparity in suspension rates is a documented pattern in the data. This metric tracks whether restorative practices and school climate investments are closing that gap over time.
- **Community survey about perceived safety and awareness of available resources, year-over-year.** The community's own assessment of whether the plan is working. Administered biennially with consistent methodology. The 2026 survey (N=96) is the baseline.

Reporting Cadence

The cross-sector summit meets on a quarterly basis. Each meeting has a standing agenda: Partner organizations report against their agreed KPIs, the coordination lead presents a summary of implementation activity since the prior meeting, and the group identifies any coordination issues or resource deployment adjustments needed. The Steering Committee

chair is responsible for maintaining the meeting structure and ensuring consistent attendance from institutional representatives with decision-making authority. If a partner organization misses two consecutive summits without sending a designated substitute, the coordination lead follows up directly with that organization's leadership contact. The committee chair is responsible for maintaining the meeting structure and ensuring consistent attendance from institutional representatives with decision-making authority, including youth representatives.

An annual public progress report is produced each year beginning at the end of Year 1. It reports against the KPI baselines established in Year 1, describes what has been implemented, identifies what has not been completed and why, and states what the plan calls for in the coming year. The report is written in plain language and published in a format accessible to residents, families, and young people, rather than only to system professionals and grant administrators. A named institutional owner is responsible for producing the report on a consistent annual schedule. The 2026 community survey serves as the baseline against which subsequent annual surveys measure change in perceived safety and resource awareness.

An independent evaluation of program outcomes is commissioned in Year 4. The evaluation assesses each active program against its stated outcomes, identifies which investments are producing results and which are not, and produces results that directly inform the second five-year planning cycle. The evaluator is selected in Year 3 to allow sufficient lead time for scope development and contracting. The evaluation is not a compliance exercise, but rather the primary basis on which the Steering Committee decides what to continue, what to discontinue, and where to concentrate resources in Years 6 through 10.

Implementation Overview

Governance. The Steering Committee on Teenage Violence owns this plan. It establishes the meeting structure, fills the coordination role, formalizes the youth advisory, and ensures institutional accountability from Year 1 forward.

Coordination. A dedicated coordinator maintains implementation between meetings, tracks partner commitments, and serves as the standing point of contact for community members and partner organizations.

Reporting. KPI data are reviewed quarterly at cross-sector summits. An annual public progress report is produced beginning at the end of Year 1. An independent evaluation is commissioned in Year 3 and delivered in Year 4 to inform the second planning cycle.

Next steps. Before this plan is formally adopted, the Steering Committee should complete the goal-setting and implementation alignment session described in Recommendation 1; confirm the institutional owners for the coordination role, community survey, and public resource map; and identify the Year 1 activities that can begin immediately with no new funding or formal agreements.

Appendix A: Project Roadmap

The table below presents the full project timeline for WestEd's engagement with the City of Fredericksburg on the Youth Violence Prevention Plan, spanning December 2025 through June 1, 2026. This roadmap is referenced in the How This Assessment Was Conducted of the report.

The engagement was organized across six phases: Phase 1 (Communication & Stakeholder Outreach), Phase 2 (Data Review & Community Engagement), Phase 3 (Strategic Direction & Goal Setting), Phase 4 (Plan Development & Review), Phase 5 (Plan Refinement), and Phase 6 (Report Finalization & Closeout).

Month	Week / Milestone	Key Activities
December 2025 – Phase 1: Communication & Stakeholder Outreach		
Dec	Phase 1 – Ongoing	Establish communication infrastructure; clarify leadership structures and roles; identify key data contacts; begin stakeholder mapping.
January 2026 – Phase 2: Data Review & Community Engagement		
Jan 6	Data collection begins	City and school data collection underway; available datasets organized.
Jan 13	Initial analysis; stakeholder discussions begin	Data analysis initiated across school, juvenile justice, law enforcement, and health datasets; stakeholder discussions begin.
Jan 20	Youth and family engagement begins	Continue stakeholder discussions; youth and family engagement launches.
Jan 27	Early synthesis drafted	Continue youth/family engagement; draft synthesis of early findings.
February 2026 – Phase 3: Strategic Direction & Goal Setting		
Feb 3	Review findings; validate priorities	Present emerging data synthesis to committee; validate priority focus areas.

Feb 10	Goal-setting; success indicators drafted	Goal-setting workshop(s); draft goals + success indicators.
Feb 17	Refine goals and indicators	Refine goals and indicators; confirm priority focus areas.
Feb 24	Finalize strategic direction	Finalize strategic direction, goals, and success measures.
March 2026 – Phase 4: Plan Development & Review		
Mar 3	Draft strategies and partner roles	Draft strategies, tactics, timelines, and partner roles; align resources.
Mar 10	Continue drafting; prepare draft package	Continue plan development; prepare draft plan package for review.
Mar 17	Submit Draft Plan	Submit Draft Plan (mid-March); City of Fredericksburg review begins.
Mar 24	Steering Committee validation	Steering Committee validation session; begin rollout + accountability framework development.
April 2026 – Plan Refinement & Rollout Preparation		
Apr 1	Incorporate feedback; continue refinement	Incorporate city review feedback; continue plan refinement.
Apr 7	Continue refinement; draft executive summary	Continue draft refinement; draft executive summary.
Apr 14	Submit Revised Final Plan	Submit Revised Final Plan; develop public-facing materials.
Apr 21	Implementation roadmap + monitoring framework	Develop implementation roadmap and monitoring/accountability framework.
May 2026 – Phase 6: Report Finalization & Closeout		

Apr 28 / May 1	Close out data collection; advance draft	Community survey closed May 8. Conduct final scheduled focus group and document themes. Compile and clean all survey data for integration. Continue drafting the full report, incorporating data analysis, focus group themes, and priority area strategies. Finalize executive summary and implementation roadmap.
May 11	Complete draft; internal review	Complete full working draft of the Youth Violence Prevention Plan. Internal team review—structural and content adjustments before distribution.
May 13 / 14	Draft report distributed to Steering Committee	Distribute draft report to the full Steering Committee with a structured section-by-section feedback survey. Feedback survey opens upon distribution and remains open through May 20.
May 18	Close feedback survey; finalize report	Feedback survey closes May 20. Compile all committee responses. Incorporate committee feedback into final draft. Resolve outstanding questions about recommendations, partner naming, and implementation language. Produce final polished version of the plan.
May 25	Final report delivery	Deliver the final Youth Violence Prevention Plan to City leadership.
June 2026 – Closeout		
June 1	Closeout meeting; project completion	Closeout meeting with city leadership: walk through the final plan, address remaining questions, formally conclude the engagement. Provide Executive Summary to support city-side implementation planning. Project completion: June 1, 2026.

Source: WestEd JPRC / City of Fredericksburg engagement workplan, 2025–2026. Funded through the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

Appendix B: Department Alignment Chart (CDC Connect the Dots)

The table maps City of Fredericksburg departments, Spotsylvania County departments, and regional partner agencies to the shared risk and protective factors in the CDC Connecting the Dots framework. Dots (•) indicate a meaningful functional role based on the department's core mandate. This analysis is referenced in the Methodology Section of the report.

		SOCIETAL RISK FACTORS					COMMUNITY RISK FACTORS					RELATIONSHIP RISK FACTORS						INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS						PROTECTIVE FACTORS							
Jurisdiction	**Department / Entity**	Cultural norms supporting aggression	Media violence	Societal income inequality	Weak health / education / economic / social policies	Harmful norms around masculinity / femininity	Neighborhood poverty	High alcohol outlet density	Community violence	Diminished economic opportunities	Poor neighborhood support / cohesion	Social isolation / lack of social support	Poor parent–child relationships	Family conflict	Economic stress	Associating with delinquent peers	Gang involvement	Low educational achievement	Lack of nonviolent problem-solving skills	Poor behavioral control / impulsiveness	History of violent victimization	Witnessing violence	Psychological / mental health problems	Coordination of resources across agencies	Access to mental health & substance abuse services	Community support / connectedness	Family support / connectedness	Connection to a caring adult	Association with pro-social peers	Commitment / attachment to school	Skills in solving problems nonviolently
City of Fredericksburg	FCPS															•	•	•	•	•				•		•		•		•	•
	Commonwealth's Attorney								•	•								•												
	Community Planning & Building						•				•																				
	Economic Development & Tourism			•						•																					
	Fire Department																					•				•					
	Health Department																						•	•	•						
	Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court												•	•							•			•							

		SOCIETAL RISK FACTORS					COMMUNITY RISK FACTORS					RELATIONSHIP RISK FACTORS						INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS						PROTECTIVE FACTORS							
Jurisdiction	**Department / Entity**	Cultural norms supporting aggression	Media violence	Societal income inequality	Weak health / education / economic / social policies	Harmful norms around masculinity / femininity	Neighborhood poverty	High alcohol outlet density	Community violence	Diminished economic opportunities	Poor neighborhood support / cohesion	Social isolation / lack of social support	Poor parent–child relationships	Family conflict	Economic stress	Associating with delinquent peers	Gang involvement	Low educational achievement	Lack of nonviolent problem-solving skills	Poor behavioral control / impulsiveness	History of violent victimization	Witnessing violence	Psychological / mental health problems	Coordination of resources across agencies	Access to mental health & substance abuse services	Community support / connectedness	Family support / connectedness	Connection to a caring adult	Association with pro-social peers	Commitment / attachment to school	Skills in solving problems nonviolently
	Parks, Recreation & Events											•														•		•	•		
	Police Department								•								•				•	•		•							
	Public Works										•																				
	Sheriff								•								•				•										
	Social Services												•	•	•									•			•				
	Transit (Fredericksburg Regional Transit / FXBGO)									•		•																			
Regional Partners	RACSB																		•	•			•	•	•						•
	Central Rappahannock Regional Library																									•		•		•	
Spotsylvania County	Spotsylvania County Public Schools															•		•						•				•		•	
	Commonwealth's Attorney								•									•													
	Community Development						•			•																					
	Community Engagement																							•		•					

		SOCIETAL RISK FACTORS					COMMUNITY RISK FACTORS					RELATIONSHIP RISK FACTORS						INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS						PROTECTIVE FACTORS							
Jurisdiction	**Department / Entity**	Cultural norms supporting aggression	Media violence	Societal income inequality	Weak health / education / economic / social policies	Harmful norms around masculinity / femininity	Neighborhood poverty	High alcohol outlet density	Community violence	Diminished economic opportunities	Poor neighborhood support / cohesion	Social isolation / lack of social support	Poor parent–child relationships	Family conflict	Economic stress	Associating with delinquent peers	Gang involvement	Low educational achievement	Lack of nonviolent problem-solving skills	Poor behavioral control / impulsiveness	History of violent victimization	Witnessing violence	Psychological / mental health problems	Coordination of resources across agencies	Access to mental health & substance abuse services	Community support / connectedness	Family support / connectedness	Connection to a caring adult	Association with pro-social peers	Commitment / attachment to school	Skills in solving problems nonviolently
	Economic Development			•						•																					
	Fire, Rescue & Emergency Management																					•				•					
	Health																						•		•						
	Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court												•	•							•			•							
	Parks & Recreation																									•		•	•		
	Planning & Zoning						•				•																				
	Public Works										•																				
	Sheriff								•								•				•										
	Social Services												•	•	•									•			•				
	Transportation									•					•																
	Virginia Cooperative Extension																										•				•

Source: WestEd JPRC department alignment analysis, 2024/25. Alignment reflects departmental function. Spotsylvania County is included for regional planning context.

Appendix C: Focus Group and Engagement Summaries

Appendix C contains one-page summaries of each focus group session and stakeholder interview conducted as part of the Fredericksburg Youth Violence Prevention Planning process, followed by full community survey findings. Individual session reports are maintained in WestEd's project file. All summaries are non-attributable: Participants are identified by role only and no individual identifying information is included.

Sessions were conducted from February through May 2026 across 13 distinct groups. Three additional sessions with youth involved in Office on Youth programs are consolidated into the youth section below.

Methodology note: Sessions were facilitated by JPRC staff. Most sessions were audio-recorded with participant consent; CJRA was conducted from freehand notes only. Role labels (e.g., Prosecutor, Youth Participant, CBO Director) are used throughout. Organization names are retained where they appear in the record and do not identify individuals. Sensitive, off-record, or attributable content has been omitted.

C.1 Session Summaries – Professional and Community Stakeholders

Sessions are identified by participant role type and sector, consistent with the labeling used in the report body. Individual names are omitted throughout. For community-based stakeholder interviews, organization names have been generalized to protect participant confidentiality.

JDR Court Prosecutors

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: 3–4 prosecutors, Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania region | Duration: ~75 min

Overview	Prosecutors bring a downstream vantage. They see cases after multiple upstream failures, and they named that explicitly. The session was candid about systemic limits, including the absence of proactive pre-charge intervention tools, caseload pressures that prevent cross-system coordination, and the gap between what prosecution can do and what prevention actually requires.
Key Themes	1. Gun normalization as cultural flex, not purely protective—social media is the primary accelerant, with neighborhood rivalries (Bragg Hill / Mayfield) as the organizing structure | 2. Generational family instability as the root driver—older siblings and fathers introducing younger family members to criminal dynamics | 3. One public high school funneling neighborhood rivals into a single institution amplifies conflict | 4. Absent proactive intervention—no structured pathway exists for reaching youth before a charge is filed | 5. Afghan refugee population identified as a distinct, growing dynamic requiring culturally specific response—distinct language, trauma history, and family structure | 6. Juvenile Recovery Court and Office on Youth named as effective—particularly for youth with weapons-adjacent charges
Assets Named	Office on Youth; Juvenile Recovery Court (diversion with documented graduations); CSU diversion programs; cross-system information-sharing (Steering Committee example: JM assistant principal and CSU discovered real-time coordination to be possible without MOU)
Gaps Identified	No pre-charge diversion pathway; prosecutors unable to identify or navigate available youth programming; cost and transportation barriers, even for motivated youth; no data on which programs are working systemically
Planning Implication	The justice system is a late-stage intervention. The most consequential gap it identified is the absence of community-trusted, pre-charge pathways that can intercept youth before they reach prosecutors.

Criminal Justice Reform Alliance (CJRA) – Stakeholder Session

Format: In-person session (freehand notes—not recorded) | Organization: Criminal Justice Reform Coalition, Fredericksburg region | Duration: ~60 min

Overview	CJRA is a community-rooted coalition with a founding philosophy built on family-first, prevention-centered work. The organization's origins—a leader who started the reentry work because her own son was incarcerated—shape its philosophy throughout. The session identified multiple programs and coordination opportunities that were unknown to or underutilized by the broader system.
Key Themes	1. Family-first philosophy: the unit of intervention is the household, not the individual—family support, not just individual treatment or supervision | 2. Restorative justice subcommittee working to connect to FailSafe programming; active interest in linking to FCPS and juvenile diversion pathways | 3. Trauma-Informed Care Network in process of community certification—potential cross-sector training resource | 4. Youth programming (Youth Empowerment Program) launching through FailSafe with school and community entry points | 5. CJRA operates independently of formal systems—trusted in communities of color where institutional credibility is limited
Assets Named	CHIPS (violence prevention in schools); Juvenile Drug Treatment Court (connection possible); Trauma-Informed Care Network (certification in progress); family support group meeting monthly at FailSafe; YMCA book clubs on trauma
Gaps Identified	Limited coordination with schools and juvenile justice; programs not visible to families or practitioners outside the organization's immediate network; no shared referral pathway
Planning Implication	CJRA represents the kind of community-owned coordination infrastructure that the plan recommends building. Formalizing its connection to the broader cross-sector structure is low cost and high return.

RACSB Community Prevention Partners

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: 10–12 (school social workers, prevention educators, behavioral health staff, home visitors, CBO staff) | Geographic scope: Fredericksburg City, Spotsylvania, Caroline, Stafford | Duration: ~90 min

Overview	This was the most technically expert session of the engagement. Participants brought deep prevention knowledge and a shared frustration with systemic barriers, particularly leadership buy-in, school system rigidity, and insufficient prevention funding. The session was analytically rich and produced specific, actionable insights.
Key Themes	1. Shift from risk-factor lens to strengths-based, protective-factor approach needed throughout the system | 2. SEL and restorative practices starting in early childhood—not middle school—named as the intervention timeline that works | 3. Caring adult relationships described as the most powerful protective factor currently operating; their absence is the clearest root driver | 4. System fragmentation: organizations serving the same families in the same building sometimes on the same cases, without knowing it | 5. Prevention works when properly resourced and sustained—but it is rarely either; the evidence base is strong and the funding is thin | 6. A previous restorative practices implementation in a neighboring school division produced measurable improvements before leadership turnover ended it—the lesson being that institutionalization, not the model, is what fails | 7. Violence is normalized: kids see it at home, on social media, and in neighborhoods—it is the default frame of reference for many
Assets Named	Powerhouse; Empower House; Big Brothers Big Sisters; United Way; RACSB behavioral health portfolio; home visiting programs; prevention-trained school social worker network
Gaps Identified	Prevention funding chronically insufficient; school system resistance to sustained SEL implementation; no cross-county coordination mechanism; family support services disconnected from school and justice interventions
Planning Implication	RACSB and its partner network represent the most sophisticated prevention infrastructure in the region. Treating them as contractors rather than governance partners is the structural gap this plan must close.

FCPS Faculty and Staff

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: ~6 (school administration, behavior support, counseling, athletic coordination, nonprofit program leader) | Setting: Walker-Grant Middle School and affiliated facilities | Duration: ~90 min

Overview	Participants knew each other well and brought substantial combined experience with the specific students, families, and neighborhoods driving Fredericksburg's youth violence dynamics. The session was notable for its specificity about what is working and what is structurally missing.
Key Themes	1. Community mobilization post-2023 violence was real, organized, and community-owned—Mothers Opposed to Violence; parent networks; student speakouts—and produced the Steering Committee | 2. Phone prohibition has produced observable behavioral change: more authentic socialization, fewer social-media-driven conflicts arriving at school on Monday | 3. Trust and reporting culture shift: students now proactively report threats before situations escalate—a meaningful change from prior years | 4. Social media conflict carries across school lines and throughout the week; what happens online over the weekend arrives at school already escalated | 5. CTE pathways and summer employment are critically missing—economic aspiration without legitimate pathway is a pressure point specifically for older youth | 6. Afghan refugee population named as a distinct, growing, underserved population with language, cultural, and family-structure needs not met by current programming | 7. Program in Mayfield runs twice monthly, completely free, 12–15 students—serves its population well but transportation barriers prevent it from reaching further into the community.
Assets Named	Phone prohibition initiative; student speakouts; bullying prevention programming; behavior support relationships; Teach to Reach Teens nonprofit (free, community-based life skills); Moms Against Violence mobilization; advanced weapon detection deployment
Gaps Identified	CTE pathway infrastructure; summer employment; culturally specific support for Afghan refugee youth; transportation for after-school programs; sustained funding for nonprofit youth programming already working
Planning Implication	The school system has made real, documented progress. The conditions that threaten that progress—CTE gaps, idle time, social media spillover, refugee population needs—are knowable and addressable.

Faith Community Leader – Stakeholder Interview

Format: One-on-one virtual interview | Participant: Faith community leader and youth mentoring ministry leader | Duration: ~55 min

Overview	The participant brought a pastoral perspective grounded in two decades of direct work with incarcerated youth and young adults. His most consistent message: Somebody has to show up, walk with youth, and demonstrate that someone cares. No program replaces that.
Key Themes	1. Peer pressure as the primary driver—affiliation with groups perceived as caring when institutions are not | 2. Youth who have made mistakes and want a second chance are reachable—the differentiation is willingness to accept genuine support | 3. Three E's framework for engagement: Education, Entrepreneurship, Entertainment—legitimate pathways that compete with street affiliation | 4. Presence and sustained relationship—not events—as the core intervention; adults who are too busy to walk with youth have no standing to complain about the outcomes | 5. Exposure to other worlds matters—youth who have never been outside their neighborhood cannot imagine different futures; field trips, mentorship networks, and college visits open those possibilities | 6. Faith community as an underutilized anchor for mentorship and after-incarceration support
Assets Named	Local youth mentoring ministry (middle and high school boys, free); NAACP Youth Council (reactivating); JDC ministry at local juvenile detention center (pending); NCNW
Gaps Identified	Insufficient structured programming for youth recently released from detention; limited connection between faith community assets and formal referral pathways; NAACP Youth Council needs activation infrastructure
Planning Implication	Faith institutions offer a trusted, non-institutional entry point for youth who have already disengaged from formal systems. Connecting them to referral pathways and governance is the ask.

Community-Based Organization Director – Stakeholder Interview

Format: One-on-one virtual interview | Participant: Director, youth-serving community organization with long-term Fredericksburg presence | Duration: ~60 min

Overview	The participant operates entirely outside institutional structures and brings 20 years of direct relationships with youth and families that formal systems do not reach. The session produced some of the most specific and analytically grounded observations in the engagement.
Key Themes	1. Fundamental root cause: absence of stable adult guidance—youth with caring adults make different decisions; the intervention is the relationship, not the program | 2. Low threshold for emotional regulation among youth—instant-gratification orientation; social media accelerates and amplifies; the shift from angry to happy with no in-between | 3. School's reliance on blanket suspension without addressing root cause is the discipline equivalent of treating symptoms without diagnosis | 4. Racial disparities in discipline are visible to and felt by youth—they name it and internalize it; trust in school systems erodes accordingly | 5. Service landscape is fragmented with no central navigator—programs are invisible to families and to practitioners, who are equally unaware of what exists | 6. A quarterly community coalition meeting (facilitator's own) has identified information-sharing gaps that practitioners assumed required formal agreements—those agreements were not needed | 7. Drum therapy program (free, ~1 year old) and other community assets exist, but are invisible beyond their immediate participants
Assets Named	Community coalition (Roundtable Talk); drum therapy program; FailSafe; Healthy Families; Fredericksburg Food Bank; Heritage Park community center; YMCA sliding scale; D9 fraternity/sorority giveaways
Gaps Identified	No central hub or navigator for families; law enforcement / SRO relationships outside of disciplinary context essentially nonexistent; CBO sector coordination absent
Planning Implication	Twenty years of direct service has produced a picture of the gap: assets exist, but they are invisible, and there is no navigator. The resource map and coordination role this plan recommends would address what this participant described most precisely.

Community Member and Youth Mentor – Stakeholder Interview

Format: One-on-one virtual interview | Participant: Community member and youth mentor; basketball coach; LGBTQIA+ youth program leader | Duration: ~55 min

Overview	The participant brought a distinctive combination: a structured leadership framework, direct LGBTQIA+ youth mentorship experience, and a data accountability orientation that directly challenged the plan about whether programs actually reach the youth they claim to serve.
Key Themes	1. Trigger identification as the first intervention—youth often cannot name what triggered them; working backward from trigger to root cause is where behavior change begins | 2. The bully in charge: put the so-called problem youth in a leadership role—responsibility reframes behavior more powerfully than punishment | 3. LGBTQIA+ youth are at elevated bullying risk with no dedicated local programming; visible community for these youth reduces bullying by making them harder to isolate | 4. Data accountability: the question is not whether programs exist, it is whether they are reaching youth—organizations with compelling stories but no auditable metrics should not receive plan endorsement | 5. All-levels coordinated tasking—effective mentorship requires clear roles at every tier, not just front-line enthusiasm | 6. Restore the Police Athletic League as the most actionable single step toward rebuilding the law enforcement-community relationship
Assets Named	NCNW Good Health Wins mental health webinar series (seeking to expand to teens); NAACP chapter network; basketball program (co-ed); LGBTQIA+ youth groups
Gaps Identified	LGBTQIA+-specific programming absent; PAL not active; no structured mechanism connecting informal mentors to referral networks or planning processes
Planning Implication	This session surfaced the LGBTQIA+ youth gap more specifically than any other. The data accountability critique is a direct input to how the plan designs its evaluation framework.

Violence Intervention Program – Stakeholder Interview

Format: Virtual interview | Participants: 2—program director and youth program lead, reentry and prevention organization | Duration: ~65 min

Overview	FailSafe operates across the full continuum—pre-release programming inside Rappahannock Regional Jail, post-release reentry support, and prevention-oriented youth programming—and sees the same families at every stage. One participant is from the Bragg Hill neighborhood with personal justice system history. Together they produced the most regionally framed, most data-accountability-focused, and most operationally precise perspective of any session.
Key Themes	1. Sustained presence vs. photo-op outreach: organizations that show up, take photos, bring food, and leave are named explicitly as ineffective and performative—the community knows the difference | 2. Data accountability: the nonprofit sector locally has compelling stories but limited auditable metrics; the plan must evaluate what actually reaches youth, not what is claimed | 3. Regional problem: youth violence in Fredericksburg City is inseparable from PD 16 dynamics—any plan limited to city geography will miss significant drivers | 4. Credible messenger model: one person from the neighborhood who has been through the system and made a different choice reaches youth that institutional actors cannot | 5. Gun-flexing vs. protection: most of what youth see as gun culture on social media is status performance, not actual threat preparation—the distinction shapes which prevention approaches are appropriate | 6. YEI (Youth Empowerment Initiative): yearlong monthly program serving ~40 middle and high school youth, open to all community youth, with documented early success but no sustainable funding
Assets Named	YEI (PhD-developed curriculum, ~40 youth, monthly themes: mental health, financial literacy, career exposure, college access); reentry and family programming (pre- and post-release); community events and coalition work
Gaps Identified	YEI lacks sustainable funding despite demonstrated success; no regional coordination mechanism; data systems in the nonprofit sector generally weak; intake assessment capacity insufficient for complexity of youth being served
Planning Implication	The year-long YEI is the clearest investment-ready program in the engagement. Stable funding and connection to referral pathways from schools and the justice system would allow it to scale.

School Resource Officers – Fredericksburg City

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: 4–5 SROs and law enforcement staff assigned to FCPS | Duration: ~90 min

Overview	SROs provided a dual perspective—as embedded law enforcement and, in at least one case, as a parent of a city school student. The session was candid and operationally precise, with notable frustration about the absence of proactive intervention tools and the limits of what the school placement can accomplish without broader system support.
Key Themes	1. Guns are significantly more present than in prior years—B&E produced 20–30 firearms; shots fired calls were weekly at peak; every social gathering venue (mall, movie theater, gym parking lot) had incident history | 2. Social media beef is the primary conflict escalation mechanism—it continues outside school hours and reenters the building already elevated | 3. Gun normalization as social media flex—officers distinguish between gun performance and actual threat, but note the lines blur as possession becomes more common | 4. Afghan refugee population: language barriers, distinct cultural dynamics, and peer isolation create a separate set of needs; interpreter access and culturally competent response are absent | 5. School behavior standards perceived as inconsistently enforced—students notice and interpret inconsistency as permission | 6. SROs with lived experience in similar circumstances reach youth that others cannot—the relational dimension of the role is where it produces results; the badge alone does not
Assets Named	Office on Youth PASS program; criminal justice club; Breakfast Buddy; Henderson neighborhood basketball league; Badges and Barbers/Basketball; Midnight Madness; SRO informal mentoring relationships
Gaps Identified	No proactive pre-charge intervention pathway; no structured interpreter resources for Afghan population; community center absence; off-hours youth programming inadequate; summer unsupervised time is the highest-risk window
Planning Implication	SROs are positioned at the inflection point between school and community. Their observations about what youth respond to—consistent trusted adults, structured activities, informal mentoring—directly confirm the plan's prevention logic.

Parks and Recreation Staff

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: 4 (teen program coordinator, sports coordinator, mobile recreation coordinator, facilities director) | Duration: ~75 min

Overview	Parks and Recreation staff offered the most operationally grounded perspective of any focus group—direct program experience, real budget numbers, and years of front-line observation. They were forthcoming about gaps, genuinely frustrated by barriers, and clear-eyed about what additional capacity would require.
Key Themes	1. Mobile recreation van is reaching lower-income neighborhoods but skews toward elementary-age children—teenagers are largely absent from current programming | 2. Supervision, not just space, is what makes programs safe: the pool and informal gathering spaces without structured supervision become conflict points | 3. Transportation determines whether programming reaches the youth it is designed to serve—Forest Village has no shade; 95-degree days eliminate most outdoor programming | 4. Teen Coordinator role is new and under-resourced for the scope of what is needed; after-school programming is in development but not operational at scale | 5. Cost recovery mandate prevents the department from subsidizing teen programming even when community benefit is documented | 6. 4–8 PM weekday window and summer are the highest-risk, lowest-coverage periods—no structured alternative to unsupervised neighborhood time | 7. Generational gap: serving Gen Z and Gen Alpha requires understanding how they socialize, what they want, and why traditional sports and recreation don't always land
Assets Named	Mobile recreation van; city pool; youth sports leagues; summer camp; Junior Counselor program; Teen Coordinator position; new after-school program in development; genuine departmental will to expand
Gaps Identified	Teen-specific infrastructure absent; no sustainable funding for scale; transportation unaddressed; cost recovery mandate structurally limits subsidized programming; interdepartmental coordination informal and inconsistent
Planning Implication	Parks and Recreation already has the infrastructure, relationships, and intent. The gaps are funding, transportation, and a mandate to serve teenagers specifically during the highest-risk hours.

C.2 Session Summaries – Youth Focus Groups

Three focus groups were conducted with youth across two age ranges: younger teens (approximately age 13) in the Office on Youth PASS program and a restorative justice program, and older system-involved high school youth (aged 14–17) in the Office on Youth SWV program. Summaries follow.

Youth Focus Group – Alternative Education Program (Age ~13)

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: 6 youth, approximately age 13, alternative education support program | Duration: ~45–60 min

Overview	Participants were a racially diverse group of young teenagers. The session was lively and candid. Youth spoke freely about conflict dynamics, what they would actually use if it existed, and what adults consistently misunderstand about their needs and environments.
Key Themes	1. Conflict happens anywhere—not location-specific; what makes someone fight is relational (words, relationships, disrespect), not geographic | 2. Social media escalates disputes that would otherwise resolve—conflicts that start online carry through the week | 3. Activities and opportunities are missing: youth named basketball, video games, swimming, a rec center, a community garden, a dirt bike track—the common thread is somewhere to go that is free and accessible | 4. Employment was a consistent ask—youth want jobs, not just programming; the desire for income is legitimate and unmet | 5. Trusted adults make a difference when they are authentic—youth can identify who cares and who is performing; authenticity is the threshold | 6. Emotional regulation and connection to programs has developed through participation—youth credited the program with helping them manage situations differently than they would have otherwise
Assets Named	Office on Youth PASS program (structure, relationships, program environment cited as protective); basketball access; peer accountability within program context
Gaps Identified	Free, accessible, transportation-supported programming for teenagers; employment pathways; summer activities; spaces that are designed for and welcoming to teenagers specifically
Planning Implication	Youth at this age are articulate about what they need and honest about what the barriers are. Their ask is not complicated: somewhere to go, something to do, someone who means it.

Youth Focus Group – Office on Youth Program (Ages ~13)

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: 6 youth, approximately age 13, Office on Youth program | Duration: ~45–60 min

Overview	Session ran parallel to the PASS group, same age range, similar dynamics. Themes converged closely across both sessions with this group surfacing more on what the program has given them and what changes they attribute to it.
Key Themes	1. Fighting stems from relational triggers—words, social media, relationship conflicts; not random | 2. Social media beef is the most common escalation mechanism; youth describe it as inevitable once it starts online | 3. Recreation gap is immediate and concrete: nowhere that is free, close, and designed for teenagers | 4. Growth through program: youth described learning to step back from conflict, consider consequences, and regulate—they attributed that to specific program relationships and practices | 5. The desire for economic opportunity is genuine and strong: jobs, not just activities, are what teenagers say they want | 6. Trusted adult relationships—specifically program staff—named directly as what changed their approach to conflict
Assets Named	Office on Youth restorative program (credited with meaningful behavioral change); peer relationships within program; trusted adult connections
Gaps Identified	Free recreation; employment; awareness of what programming exists (youth not connected to programs don't know they exist)
Planning Implication	Restorative programming in this context is producing the outcomes the plan recommends. The gap is scale and pathway—most youth in Fredericksburg have no route to this kind of program.

Youth Focus Group – System-Involved Youth (High School Age)

Format: In-person focus group | Participants: 5–8 high school age youth (ages 14–17); system-involved, structured supervision program | Duration: 45–50 min

Overview	These are young people who have been processed through courts, probation, and programming. Their account of the justice system—and of what helps versus what performs—is the most direct and analytically significant youth voice in the engagement. The session started guarded and became increasingly candid and precise.
Key Themes	1. Gun-flexing is status performance, not primarily protective—most of what appears on Snapchat is fronting; distinguishing performance from actual threat is something youth do naturally; adult systems often cannot | 2. Social media beef escalates into real violence; neighborhood geography (Graber, specific streets) is the organizing structure | 3. System critique: courts process youth like machines; judges laugh at defendants; probation officers have two weeks of training and are expected to change lives; the whole structure functions more like revenue generation than rehabilitation | 4. Trust betrayal is the most destabilizing event in a young person's life—when the one person you fully trust violates that trust, the result is total withdrawal from social connection, not disappointment | 5. What helps: someone saying, "Do you want to go do something together?"—the informal, unstructured, relational offer is more meaningful than any formal program or hotline | 6. Locked fields: one participant described going to kick a soccer ball and receiving a trespassing warning; the field was fenced and locked—a concrete equity finding | 7. Community service cited as unexpectedly positive—the compelled activity produced relationships and structure that youth described as genuinely beneficial
Assets Named	Office on Youth SWV program; informal trusted adults in youth's own networks; community service as unexpected intervention point
Gaps Identified	Authentic, sustained adult relationships outside institutional context; accessible open recreational space (literally—locked fields); justice system reform at the interaction level (training, culture, consistency); proactive relational outreach rather than only crisis-triggered engagement
Planning Implication	This group named more clearly than any other what the research says—one trusted adult, consistently present, who asks, "Do you want to go do something together?" is the most powerful intervention available. Everything else is infrastructure for that relationship.

C.3 Community Survey Results – N=96

The community survey was administered via SurveyMonkey from March through May 2026. Of 97 responses received, one was excluded for poor response quality (flagged for "Not a Full Word" responses). Analyzed N=96. The sample is adult-dominant: parents/caregivers (56%), community residents (37%), school staff (22%), behavioral health/social services (20%). Youth under 21 = 4 respondents (4%). Results reflect adult community perception; youth voice is provided by the focus group summaries above.

C.3.1 Respondent Profile

Role / Background	Count	% of N=96	Connection to Fredericksburg
Parent, caregiver, or family member	54	56.2%	74% live in Fredericksburg
Community member / resident	35	36.5%	57% work in Fredericksburg
Teacher, school counselor, or school staff	21	21.9%	50% have children/family here
Government or city / county staff	16	16.7%	31% serve/work with youth here
Behavioral health / mental health / social services	19	19.8%	5% go to school here
Law enforcement or juvenile justice professional	8	8.3%	
Youth program staff or mentor	9	9.4%	
Faith or community leader	7	7.3%	
Young person (under 21)	4	4.2%	
Other	3	3.1%	

Note: Select-all-that-apply; totals exceed 100%. Youth under 21 = 4 respondents (4%). Survey reflects adult community perception.

C.3.2 Agreement Statements – Youth Violence and Community Role

5-point scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. Agree % = Strongly Agree + Agree.

Statement	Str. Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Str. Dis.	Agree %
Youth violence is a serious concern in my community	39	38	13	4	1	**81.1% (n=95)**
Schools and community organizations play an important role	67	24	4	1	0	**94.8% (n=96)**
Young people can play a role in preventing violence	71	19	4	2	0	**93.8% (n=96)**
Families play an important role	87	6	2	0	0	**97.9% (n=95)**
Law enforcement plays an important role	60	26	7	3	0	**89.6% (n=96)**
Fredericksburg has the resources needed to reduce violence	15	21	36	21	3	**37.5% (n=96)**
Young people are meaningfully involved in efforts to address violence	4	11	51	23	7	**15.6% (n=96)**

C.3.3 Top Drivers of Youth Violence

Select-all-that-apply. N=96. Results ranked by frequency.

Driver	%	% Selected	%
Exposure to violence or trauma	**78.1%**	Family conflict or instability	**74.0%**
Unmet mental health needs	**76.0%**	Peer pressure or gang involvement	**74.0%**
Social media and online conflict	**76.0%**	Poverty or economic hardship	**66.7%**
Lack of supportive relationships/mentors	**75.0%**		

Driver (continued)	%	% Selected	%
Lack of safe spaces and activities	**62.5%**	School challenges or disengagement	**52.1%**
Cycle of violence or retaliation	**61.5%**	Boredom or lack of opportunity	**43.8%**
Easy access to weapons	**59.4%**	Community disinvestment or neglect	**30.2%**
Glorification/normalization of violence	**59.4%**		

C.3.4 Current Efforts – Agreement Statements

5-point Likert scale. Agree % = Strongly Agree + Agree. Disagree % = Disagree + Strongly Disagree.

Statement	Str. Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Str. Dis.	Result
Youth have access to the mental health support they need	6	16	35	33	6	**Agree 22.9% | Disagree 40.6%**
Families in crisis have somewhere to turn for help	6	31	36	19	4	**Agree 38.5% | Disagree 24.0%**
Organizations serving youth work well together	4	24	52	13	3	**Agree 29.2% | Disagree 16.7%**
Juvenile-justice-involved youth receive meaningful support at reentry	2	12	43	27	12	**Agree 14.6% | Disagree 40.6%**
Responses to violence are consistent across youth backgrounds	4	13	38	26	14	**Agree 17.9% | Disagree 42.1%**
Fredericksburg has strong community assets to build on	22	34	29	7	4	**Agree 58.3% | Disagree 11.5%**

C.3.5 Barriers to Collaboration

Select-all-that-apply. N=96. Results ranked by frequency.

Barrier	%	% Selected	%
Not knowing what services exist	**71.9%**	Competition for funding	**47.9%**
Not enough staff or capacity	**63.5%**	Lack of trust between organizations	**43.8%**
Organizations working separately	**56.2%**	Policies making collaboration difficult	**43.8%**
Cultural or language barriers	**40.6%**	Transportation or geographic barriers	**38.5%**
Limited data sharing	**41.7%**	Distrust between community and government / police	**39.6%**
Different goals or priorities	**37.5%**	High staff turnover	**34.4%**

C.3.6 Plan Focus Priorities

Select-all-that-apply. N=96.

Priority Area	%	% Selected	%
Prevention (stopping before it starts)	**75.0%**	Mentoring / supportive adult relationships	**62.5%**
Intervention (reaching high-risk youth)	**74.0%**	School engagement / alternatives to suspension	**52.1%**
Mental health and trauma support	**71.9%**	Economic opportunity / job training	**50.0%**
Family support and stability	**71.9%**		

Priority Area (continued)	%	% Selected	%
Safe spaces and after-school activities	**58.3%**	Community organizing / neighborhood safety	**35.4%**
Conflict resolution and de-escalation	**44.8%**	Better coordination across systems	**43.8%**
Youth leadership and civic engagement	**40.6%**	Policy and systems change	**30.2%**
Reentry and support after justice involvement	**37.5%**		

C.3.7 Governance Preferences

Select-all-that-apply. N=96. Ranked by frequency.

Governance Option	# Selected	% of N=96
Community-based organizations as governance partners	**64**	**66.7%**
A partnership between city government and community organizations	**60**	**62.5%**
A community-led advisory council with real decision-making power	**48**	**50.0%**
City government (dedicated office or designated staff)	**46**	**47.9%**
Expand the existing Steering Committee as part of ongoing coordination	**38**	**39.6%**

Appendix D: Steering Committee Membership

The Fredericksburg Steering Committee on Teenage Violence (the Committee) was established in August 2023 as a joint initiative of the City of Fredericksburg and Fredericksburg City Public Schools, convened in response to incidents of gun violence that claimed the lives of two young people. The Committee is chaired by Captain Rashawn D. Cowles of the Fredericksburg Police Department.

The Committee includes more than 30 members representing city government, law enforcement, education, health, juvenile justice, faith communities, community-based organizations, and residents. It operates through four subcommittees: Youth Activities & Education, Youth Wellbeing, Parenting & Family Dynamics, and Community.

WestEd staff (Kerwin Henderson, Lori Toscano, and Shaun Ali) served as planning and assessment partners throughout the engagement and are listed below for reference. They are not members of the Committee.

Name	Organization / Affiliation	Email
Rev. Aaron Dobynes, Sr.	Faith Community	aaron.dobynes@yahoo.com
Allison Balmes-John	Mary Washington Healthcare	allison.balmesjohn@mwhc.com
Angie Roenke	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	aroenke@cityschools.com
Interim Chief Betsy Mason	Fredericksburg Police Department	mmason@pd.fredericksburgva.gov
Bradley N. Anderson	City of Fredericksburg	bnanderson@fredericksburgva.gov
Brenda T. Martin	City of Fredericksburg	bmartin@fredericksburgva.gov
Carla White	Rappahannock Juvenile Detention Center	cwhite@rjdc-va.com
Charlie L. Frye Jr.	City of Fredericksburg	clfrye@fredericksburgva.gov
Christen Gallik	Virginia Department of Social Services	Christen.Gallik@dss.virginia.gov

Name	Organization / Affiliation	Email
Corey L. Dobson	Fredericksburg Police Department	CDobson@pd.fredericksburgva.gov
Dan Czajka	Virginia Department of Health	dan.czajka@vdh.virginia.gov
Danielle Hicks	Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice	danielle.hicks@djj.virginia.gov
Davy Fearon, Jr.	Office on Youth	davy@officeonyouth.org
Deb Cain	Restorative Solutions	deb@restorativesolutions.support
Dr. Marceline Catlett	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	mcatlett@cityschools.com
Dr. Matt Eberhardt	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	meberhardt@cityschools.com
Libby K. Humphries (Co-Chair)	City of Fredericksburg	ekhumphries@fredericksburgva.gov
Jacque Kobuchi	Rappahannock Area Community Services Board	jkobuchi@rappahannockareacsb.org
Rev. Jarvis Bailey	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	jbailey@cityschools.com
Jennifer L. Casarotti	City of Fredericksburg	jlcasarotti@fredericksburgva.gov
Rev. Joe Hensley	St. George's Episcopal Church	joe.hensley@stgeorgesepiscopal.net
Joe Wickens	Rappahannock Area Community Services Board	jwickens@rappahannockareacsb.org
Rev. Joseph Henderson	Faith Community	revhenderson@yahoo.com
Joseph J. Porter	City of Fredericksburg	jjporter@fredericksburgva.gov
Katie Hornung	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	mhornung@cityschools.com
Rev. Keenan Thomas	Shiloh New Site Baptist Church	keenanthomas@shilohnewsite.com
Kenneth Gantt	Steering Committee on Teenage Violence	kdgantt.scotv@gmail.com

Name	Organization / Affiliation	Email
Kisha Turner	Community Member	daralturner@yahoo.com
Langston Carter	Community Member	lridgecarter@gmail.com
Lori Toscano	WestEd (Planning Partner)	lori.toscano@wested.org
Lynne C. Seay	City of Fredericksburg	lseay@fredericksburgva.gov
Malvina Kay	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	mrkay@cityschools.com
Marchellanie Ingram	Community Member	marchellanie@gmail.com
Michelle Wagaman	Rappahannock Area Community Services Board	mwagaman@rappahannockareacsb.org
Rashawn D. Cowles (Chair)	**Fredericksburg Police Department**	rdcowles@fredericksburgva.gov
Sabrina Johnson	Community Member	sa1jon1@cox.net
Sandy Corvin	Office on Youth	sandy@officeonyouth.org
Sonja P. Cantu	City of Fredericksburg	spcantu@fredericksburgva.gov
Tammie Coghill-Bish	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	tcoghillbish@cityschools.com
Timothy J. Baroody	City of Fredericksburg	tjbaroody@fredericksburgva.gov
Trudy Wilson	Community Member	16smithtm@gmail.com
Xavier Richardson	Mary Washington Healthcare	xavier.richardson@mwhc.com

Source: FSCTV Updated Membership List, April 2026. Organizational affiliations reflect members' primary roles as of spring 2026.

Appendix E: About the Violence Prevention Navigation Framework

This appendix provides a brief reference description of the Violence Prevention Navigation Framework (VPNF), which forms the analytical foundation for the Conditions and Trends section of this report. The VPNF is an initiative of WestEd's Justice and Prevention Research Center (JPRC), developed in partnership with Muflehun.

What Is the VPNF?

The Violence Prevention Navigation Framework is a method for analyzing community- and societal-level risk and protective factors related to violence. It uses big data, machine learning, and local stakeholder knowledge to produce a sector-level picture of where vulnerability is concentrated in a community and where resilience exists or can be built.

The VPNF begins from a core premise shared with the CDC's Connecting the Dots framework: Violence does not arise from a single cause in a single system. It develops from the accumulation and interaction of conditions across education, health, economic opportunity, neighborhood dynamics, public safety, social cohesion, and other sectors—conditions that either increase a community's exposure to violence or protect against it.

Applied to Fredericksburg, the VPNF analyzed more than 70 community and societal data points across seven sectors, producing a longitudinal vulnerability and resilience profile for the city spanning 2012 to 2022. That sector-level analysis is introduced in the Conditions and Trends section of this report and informs the focus of the Schools, Juvenile Justice, and Health and Community Stress sections.

How the VPNF Works

Source: WestEd JPRC / Muflehun, Violence Prevention Navigation Framework. Learn more at https://jprc.wested.org/resource/violence-prevention-navigation-framework-vpnf/.

Step	Description
1. Analyze Data	Gather data on more than 70 community- and societal-level factors that contribute to or protect against violence. Machine learning is applied to identify the factors with the greatest impact on violence in the specific locality and to show how each factor has changed over time.
2. Engage Partners	Collaborate with local governments, community organizations, and stakeholders to analyze data trends and apply local knowledge. Interviews and surveys with residents, practitioners, and people directly affected by violence add the human perspective behind the statistics.
3. Interpret Findings	Analyze qualitative and quantitative data together to produce a comprehensive understanding of the community's specific risk and protective factor profile—including how structural inequities, historical conditions, and current resource gaps interact.
4. Make Recommendations	Provide actionable, data-informed recommendations for programs, policies, and strategies that address identified root causes, align resources with evidence-based practices, and promote equitable outcomes.

The Seven VPNF Sectors and Their Role in This Assessment

The VPNF organizes data into seven sectors corresponding to the primary domains that research consistently identifies as drivers of or buffers against community violence. The table below summarizes each sector and its role in the Fredericksburg analysis.

Sector	What It Measures	Relevance to This Assessment
Demographics	Population composition, age distribution, residential stability, migration patterns	Provides baseline context; rapid growth in PD 16 shapes demand for youth services
Economics	Poverty rates, unemployment, income inequality, housing cost burden, economic opportunity	Identified as opportunity area; persistent poverty concentrated in certain households and neighborhoods
Education	School attendance, discipline, graduation, early literacy, engagement	Most sustained source of vulnerability across the decade; focus of the Schools section

Sector	What It Measures	Relevance to This Assessment
Health	Behavioral health utilization, substance use, overdose, violence-related injury, mental health	Shifted from resilience to vulnerability beginning in 2021; focus of the Health and Community Stress section
Neighborhood	Housing vacancy and affordability, concentrated disadvantage, physical environment	Housing pressure limiting mobility; vacancy rates declined ~18% since 2012
Public Safety	Violent crime rates, juvenile justice system contact, law enforcement deployment	Has improved relative to peak; gains held through investment in diversion and community policing
Social Cohesion	Community trust, civic participation, inter-institutional coordination, collective efficacy	Clearest area of unrealized opportunity—neither driving vulnerability sharply nor building resilience

How to Read the VPNF Results

The VPNF produces sector-level vulnerability and resilience scores that can be tracked over time. A sector with high vulnerability indicates that conditions in that domain are contributing to elevated violence risk. A sector with high resilience indicates that conditions are buffering against violence.

In Fredericksburg, the VPNF analysis revealed that the Education sector has been the most sustained source of vulnerability across the entire decade studied. Health shifted from a source of resilience to a source of vulnerability beginning in 2021. The Public Safety sector, by contrast, has moved in the right direction—the gains from investment in diversion and community-oriented approaches held. The Social Cohesion sector represents the clearest area of unrealized opportunity: neither driving vulnerability sharply nor building measurable resilience. These findings shaped the structure and focus of this assessment.

For more information on the VPNF methodology, contact WestEd JPRC at jprc.wested.org/resource/violence-prevention-navigation-framework-vpnf/

Appendix F: Data Tables and Technical Notes

Appendix F documents the data sources used in the Current State Assessment, presents the key quantitative tables referenced in the report body, and provides technical notes on methodology, suppression, and data limitations. Section F.1 inventories all sources. Section F.2 presents the primary data tables. Section F.3 contains source-specific technical notes.

F.1 Data Source Inventory

Dataset	Source	Time Period	Unit of Analysis	Subgroups / Notes
Chronic Absenteeism	VDOE	2022/23 to 2024/25	Division / school	Race/ethnicity, economic status, English learner, disability, homeless, gender
Short-Term Suspensions	VDOE	2022/23 to 2023/24	Division	Race/ethnicity, disability, gender
Long-Term Suspensions	VDOE	2022/23 to 2023/24	Division	Race/ethnicity, disability
Expulsions	VDOE	2022/23 to 2023/24	Division	Race/ethnicity
On-Time Graduation Rate	VDOE	Class of 2024 (4-yr cohort)	Division / school	Race/ethnicity, disability, English learner, economic status, gender
Dropout Rate	VDOE	Class of 2024	School cohort	James Monroe High School
SOA Offenses	VDOE	2023/24	School	Offense category by school
SBAR Events	VDOE / FCPS	2021/22 to 2023/24	Division / school	Behavior category by school and year

Dataset	Source	Time Period	Unit of Analysis	Subgroups / Notes
SBAR Sanctions	VDOE / FCPS	2021/22 to 2023/24	Division / school	Sanction type by school and year
Student Truancy	FCPS	2021/22 to 2024/25	Division	Annual court referral counts
School Court Referrals for Absences	VDOE	2020/21 to 2024/25	Division	Annual counts
Restraints and Seclusions	VDOE	2024/25	Division (statewide)	Enrolled vs. re-strained/secluded
Average Daily Attendance	FCPS	2022/23, 2024/25	Division / school	School-level
Walker-Grant / FCPS Division School Climate Survey	Virginia DCJS & VDOE	2025	School / division	Safety, bullying, mental health indicators
Juvenile Arrest Records	FPD	Jan 2023–Mar 2026	Individual-level (de-identified)	Age, race, sex, charge; 289 total
DJJ Data Resource Guide (FY2025)	Virginia DJJ	FY 2025	Statewide / CSU 15	Intake, probation, detention, commitments, recidivism
CSU / VJCCCA Program Data	DJJ / VJCCCA	FY 2025	CSU 15	Program type, outcomes
Violence-Related ED Visits (PD 16)	VHHA	Jan 2023–Sep 2025	ED visit (3 hospitals)	Diagnosis, sex, age, race, census tract, discharge; 705 total
RACSB Strategic Plan & Annual Report	RACSB	FY 2025, 2025–2030	Regional service area	Prevention programming, utilization trends, coalition metrics
VDH Community Health / Virginia Plan for Well-Being	VDH	2022–2024	PD / locality	Health indicators, demographics
VPNF High-Level Analysis – Fredericksburg	Muflehun & WestEd JPRC	2012–2022 (longitudinal)	City of Fredericksburg	7-sector vulnerability / resilience profile

Dataset	Source	Time Period	Unit of Analysis	Subgroups / Notes
Big Brothers Big Sisters – Greater Fredericksburg	BBBS Greater Fredericksburg	Feb 2026	Local chapter	Match counts, demographics, outcomes
RAOOY Regional Intervention Programs	Regional Asset Mapping	2024/25	Fredericksburg region	Program type, provider, target population
Community Survey – Youth Violence Prevention Initiative	WestEd JPRC / City of Fredericksburg	Mar–May 2026	Adult community (N=96; 1 excluded for quality)	Perceptions, priorities, barriers, governance preferences

F.2.1 Chronic Absenteeism – FCPS (All Students)

Source: VDOE Data Explorer. Fredericksburg City Public Schools, Division 110.

Year	Not Chronically Absent	Chronically Absent (10%+ missed)	Rate	Notes
2022/23	2,704	911	25.2%	Rate had not recovered from pandemic peak
2023/24	2,490	922	27.0%	Rate increased year over year
2024/25	2,557	849	24.9%	Modest improvement; still above state average and pre-pandemic norms

F.2.2 Chronic Absenteeism by Subgroup

Source: VDOE. 2023/24 unless noted. Suppressed subgroups omitted.

Subgroup	% Not Chronically Absent	% Chronically Absent	Context
All Students	73.0%	27.0%	2023/24 division rate
White	79.4%	20.6%	Lowest among reported groups
Asian	82.2%	17.8%	2022/23 data
Black	73.9%	26.1%	2022/23 data
Hispanic	70.8%	29.2%	Above division average
Multiple Races	67.3%	32.7%	Highest among reported groups
Economically Disadvantaged	68.2%	31.8%	2022/23 data
Students With Disabilities	65.7%	34.3%	2024/25 data
Homeless Students	48.1%	51.9%	2024/25; more than double the division rate

F.2.3 Short-Term Suspensions and Racial Disparity

Source: VDOE Data Explorer. Division level. Long-term suspensions and expulsions shown in notes column.

Subgroup	% of Enrollment	Suspensions 2022/23	Suspensions 2023/24	Notes
All Students	100%	375 incidents	285 incidents	24% decline year over year
Black	33% (2022/23); 32% (2023/24)	185 (49.3%)	144 (50.5%)	Consistent overrepresentation

Subgroup	% of Enrollment	Suspensions 2022/23	Suspensions 2023/24	Notes
White	25.7% (2022/23); 23.1% (2023/24)	56 (14.9%)	46 (16.1%)	Below enrollment share both years
Hispanic	22.1% (2022/23); 24.3% (2023/24)	71 (18.9%)	Data suppressed	
Long-Term Suspensions	—	4 (2 Black, 2 White)	2 (1 Black, 1 White)	Very low and declining
Expulsions	—	0	1 (Hispanic)	Remains very low

F.2.4 SBAR Sanctions – Cumulative 2021/22 to 2023/24

Source: VDOE / FCPS SBAR Sanctions Data. Totals across all FCPS schools and years in dataset.

Sanction Type	Total Sanctions 2021/22 to 2023/24	Students Affected	Code
In-School Suspension (1/2 day or more)	2,850	1,374	ISS
Out-of-School Suspension – School Administration	1,680	976	OSS
Suspension of Bus Privileges	331	254	SBP
Detention Outside Regular School Hours	251	200	DS
Loss of School Privileges / Extracurricular	77	68	LOP
Class Removal (less than 1/2 day)	61	58	CR
Restorative Practices / School-Based Community Service	3	3	SBCS

Restorative practices were used in three incidents over the full period, compared to 2,850 in-school suspensions and 1,680 out-of-school suspensions.

F.2.5 On-Time Graduation Rate by Subgroup – Class of 2024

Source: VDOE Data Explorer. FCPS. Class of 2024 (4-year cohort). Dropout: 25 of 230 students at James Monroe High School (10.87%).

Subgroup	Cohort Size	On-Time Graduates	On-Time Rate	State Avg	Gap
All Students	269	230	85.5%	93%	–7.5
White	71	69	97.2%	~96%	+1.2
Black	87	76	87.4%	~88%	–0.6
Hispanic	72	49	68.1%	~84%	–15.9
Asian	23	22	95.7%	~97%	–1.3
Economically Disadvantaged	112	91	81.3%	~86%	–4.7
English Learners	45	30	66.7%	~75%	–8.3
Students With Disabilities	25	21	84.0%	~80%	+4.0
Female	145	126	86.9%	—	—
Male	124	104	83.9%	—	—

F.2.6 Juvenile Arrests and Justice System Involvement

Sources: Fredericksburg Police Department (arrests); Virginia DJJ Data Resource Guide FY2025, CSU 15 (system data). *System-compliance charges: detention order violation, failure to comply, contempt, court order violations.

Category	2023	2024	2025	Notes
Total Juvenile Arrests	99	109	77	Jan 2023–Mar 2026; 289 total
Black Youth	—	—	—	139 total (48% of all arrests)
White Youth	—	—	—	149 total (52% of all arrests)
Top Charge: Shoplifting <$200	—	—	—	41 arrests over full period (14%)
System-Compliance Charges*	—	—	—	35%–40% of all arrests
CSU 16 Intake Cases	1,113 (FY23)	—	850 (FY25)	24% decline FY2023–FY2025
CSU 16 Probation Placements	92 (FY23)	—	68 (FY25)	Consistent decline
CSU 16 Detainments	178 (FY23)	—	159 (FY25)	Consistent decline
CSU 16 State Commitments	9 (FY23)	—	5 (FY25)	Very low and declining

F.2.7 Violence-Related ED Visits – Planning District 16

Source: Virginia Healthcare and Hospital Association (VHHA). Jan 2023–Sep 2025. Three hospitals: Mary Washington, Stafford Regional, Spotsylvania Regional.

Category	Count	% of Total	Notes
Total Violence-Related ED Visits	705	100%	Jan 2023–Sep 2025; PD 16 (3 hospitals)
Female patients	403	57.2%	Majority of all violence-related visits
Male patients	301	42.7%	

Category	Count	% of Total	Notes
Unarmed brawl/fight (most common)	324	46.0%	Most common single diagnosis
Strike/impact assault	115	16.3%	Second most common
Maltreatment or neglect	55	7.8%	Third-highest category
Black patients	212	30.1%	
White patients	274	38.9%	
Hispanic-White patients	88	12.5%	
Teens 13–17	136	19.3%	
Young adults 18–25	267	37.9%	Largest single age group
Discharged to home / self care	644	91.4%	
Hospitalized	26	3.7%	
Deaths recorded	2	<1%	
Coded to Fredericksburg City census tracts	~104	~15%	Remainder reflects broader PD 16 region

F.2.8 School Court Referrals for Absences – FCPS

Source: VDOE. Students with a court referral due to six or more unexcused absences.

School Year	Court Referrals	Trend / Context	Source
2020/21	0	Referrals suspended—(COVID-19)	VDOE
2021/22	14	Referrals resumed	VDOE

School Year	Court Referrals	Trend / Context	Source
2022/23	15	Consistent with prior year	VDOE
2023/24	10	Declined—shift away from punitive enforcement	VDOE
2024/25	15	Slight increase; still below 2022/23 level	VDOE (as of 12/18/2025)

F.3 Technical Notes

Data Source	Technical Note
School Data (VDOE)	All figures reflect Fredericksburg City Public Schools (Division 110) unless stated. Stafford County Schools data are not included and should not be conflated with FCPS data.
Cell Suppression	VDOE suppresses counts below 10 students. Suppressed cells appear as "<10" or blank. Where a numerator is suppressed, percentages are not calculated.
Chronic Absenteeism Definition	A student is chronically absent if they miss 10% or more of instructional days (approximately 18 days in a 180-day year) for any reason (excused and unexcused).
Juvenile Arrest Data	Records provided by the FPD for January 1, 2023, through March 16, 2026. Analyzed in aggregate; no personally identifiable information is reported. Race codes in source: B = Black, W = White, A = Asian. No separate Hispanic/Latino category—Hispanic youth may be recorded under another code.
System-Compliance Charges	Includes detention order violation, failure to comply with court order, contempt of court, and similar charges. These represent youth already inside the system failing to meet its requirements,—not new offenses. Estimated at 35% to 40% of all arrests in the 2023–2026 period.
CSU 16 vs. FPD Arrest Data	DJJ CSU data use Virginia's July–June fiscal year. FPD arrest data cover calendar years. These are distinct sources counting different things and should not be directly added or compared without accounting for overlap.
ED Visit Data	Provided by VHHA in response to a formal data request. Three PD 16 hospitals: Mary Washington, Stafford Regional, Spotsylvania Regional. January 2023–September

Data Source	Technical Note
	2025. Only approximately 15% of visits are coded to the City of Fredericksburg census tracts.
Community Survey	Administered via SurveyMonkey, March–May 2026. N=97 respondents; 1 excluded for poor response quality (flag: "Not a Full Word"). Analyzed N=96. Sample is adult-dominant: parents/caregivers (56%), community residents (37%), school staff (22%). Youth under 21 = 4 respondents (4%). Results reflect adult community perception.
Walker-Grant School Climate Survey	2025 Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions. Source: Virginia DCJS and VDOE. Comparable data for James Monroe High School were not available for this assessment.
Behavioral Health Data	RACSB utilization data specific to the City of Fredericksburg were not available. Figures reflect the five-jurisdiction regional service area.
211 / Community Service Demand	211 Virginia data were not available for the assessment period. Noted as a data gap in Sections 1.3 and 2.4.
VPNF Analysis	Conducted by Muflehun in partnership with WestEd JPRC using U.S. Census ACS data, FBI UCR/NIBRS, and local administrative records for 2012–2022. Sector scores reflect relative vulnerability/resilience, not absolute risk levels.

Abbreviations and Initialisms

All abbreviations and initialisms used in this appendices document are defined below. Entries are listed alphabetically.

Initialism	Full Form	Context in This Document
ACS	American Community Survey	*U.S. Census Bureau survey; source for VPNF longitudinal data*
ADA	Average Daily Attendance	*School-level attendance metric; Appendix A*
BBBS	Big Brothers Big Sisters	*BBBS Greater Fredericksburg; Appendix A data source*
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	*Source of the Connecting the Dots framework; Appendix B*
CHIPS	Community-based violence prevention program in schools	*Named in focus group session; specific program name not disclosed*
CJRA	Criminal Justice Reform Alliance	*Fredericksburg-region stakeholder session; Appendix C*
CR	Class Removal	*VDOE/FCPS SBAR sanction code; Appendix A, Table A.2.4*
CSU	Court Services Unit	*Virginia DJJ field unit; CSU 15 serves Fredericksburg*
CTE	Career and Technical Education	*FCPS pathway program referenced in focus group findings; Appendix C*

DCJS	Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services	*State grant funder for this engagement*
DJJ	Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice	*Source of CSU intake, probation, detention, and recidivism data; Appendix A*
DS	Detention Sanction Outside of Regular School Hours	*VDOE/FCPS SBAR sanction code; Appendix A, Table A.2.4*
ED	Emergency Department	*ED visit data from VHHA; Planning District 16 hospitals; Appendix A*
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation	*Source of UCR/NIBRS crime data used in VPNF analysis; Appendix F*
FCPS	Fredericksburg City Public Schools	*School division; Division 110 in VDOE data*
FPD	Fredericksburg Police Department	*Source of juvenile arrest records; Appendix A*
FSCTV	Fredericksburg Steering Committee on Teenage Violence	*Full name of the Steering Committee; Appendix D source note*
FXBGO!	Fredericksburg Regional Transit	*City transit service; Appendix B department alignment*
FY	Fiscal Year	*Virginia state fiscal year: July 1 – June 30*
ISS	In-School Suspension	*VDOE/FCPS SBAR sanction code; Appendix A, Table A.2.4*
JDC	Juvenile Detention Center	*Referenced in faith community leader session; Appendix C*

JDR	Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court	*Virginia court system serving youth; Appendix B, C*
JJ	Juvenile Justice	*General shorthand for the juvenile justice system; Appendix A, C*
JM	James Monroe High School	*Fredericksburg City Public Schools secondary school*
JPRC	Justice and Prevention Research Center	*WestEd research center; developer of the VPNF; Appendix F*
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Aromantic, and more	*Youth population referenced in stakeholder interview; Appendix C*
LOP	Loss of School Privileges or Participation in Extracurricular Activities	*VDOE/FCPS SBAR sanction code; Appendix A, Table A.2.4*
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	*Member represented in two stakeholder sessions; Appendix C*
NCNW	National Council of Negro Women	*Referenced in community member stakeholder interview; Appendix C*
NIBRS	National Incident-Based Reporting System	*FBI crime data system; part of UCR/NIBRS; used in VPNF analysis*
OSS	Out-of-School Suspension	*VDOE/FCPS SBAR sanction code; Appendix A, Table A.2.4*
PAL	Police Athletic League	*Referenced as a gap in community member stakeholder interview; Appendix C*
PD16	Planning District 16	*Regional planning district covering Fredericksburg and surrounding localities*

RACSB	Rappahannock Area Community Services Board	*Regional behavioral health authority; Appendix A, B, C*
RAOOY	Regional Assets of Office on Youth	*Regional intervention program inventory; Appendix A data source*
SBAR	Student Behavior and Administrative Reports	*VDOE/FCPS school behavior and sanction tracking system; Appendix A*
SBCS	School-Based Community Service	*VDOE/FCPS SBAR sanction code; Appendix A, Table A.2.4*
SBP	Suspension of Bus Privileges	*VDOE/FCPS SBAR sanction code; Appendix A, Table A.2.4*
SEL	Social-Emotional Learning	*Referenced in RACSB focus group session; Appendix C*
SOA	Standards of Accreditation	*Virginia SOA school offense reporting; Appendix A*
SRO	School Resource Officer	*Law enforcement officer assigned to a school; Appendix B, C*
UCR	Uniform Crime Reports	*FBI crime data system; part of UCR/NIBRS; used in VPNF analysis*
VDH	Virginia Department of Health	*Source of community health and well-being data; Appendix A*
VDOE	Virginia Department of Education	*Primary source of school data throughout Appendix A*
VHHA	Virginia Healthcare and Hospital Association	*Source of ED visit data for Planning District 16; Appendix A*

VJCCCA	Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act	*State funding mechanism for local youth diversion programs; Appendix A*
VPNF	Violence Prevention Navigation Framework	*WestEd JPRC analytical framework; described in Appendix F*
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association	*Referenced as community asset in focus group sessions; Appendix C*