Violence & Rider Safety: The Multi-sector Approach

 Violence as a Public Health Issue

Lauren Valdez
SPARCC Program Officer
Low Income Investment Fund

Transit Crimes & Community Policing Approach

John Harrington
Chief of Police
Metro Transit Police Dept.

Community-led Approaches

Oraia Reid
Social Entrepreneur & Consultant
What is Health

A complete state of physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease

-World Health Organization
US State of violence in a year

Motor Vehicle vs Violence Fatalities

35,000 vs 60,000

$450 Billion spent on violence related injuries

PTSD
Heart disease
Substance abuse
Racial Disparities

#1

cause of death for African American & Latino males ages 15-24

Violence Disparity between White & Black population getting worse

Heckler Report on Minority Health

+18%

1985

2015
Violence as an Epidemic

Cholera in Bangladesh

1983-2003

Ruiz Moreno 2010

Homicides in Chicago

2010

Chicago Police Department data
Social Determinants of Health

- **10%** Physical Environment
  - Housing & Transportation
  - Air & Water Quality

- **20%** Clinical Care
  - Access to Care
  - Quality of Care
  - Smoking/Substance Abuse

- **30%** Health Behavior
  - Diet & Exercise
  - Education

- **40%** Social Economic Factors
  - Job/Income
  - Family & Social Support
Violence negatively affects Social Determinant of Health

- Reduced school attendance/performance
- Reduced business investment & commercial activity
- More resources for policing rather than prevention & community services
- Increased healthcare costs for violent injuries
- Reduced social cohesion
- Unsafe public spaces and reduced usage
People problem to community problem

Individuals  Bad People

Victim

Blaming

Solution = punishment
People problem to community problem

Systems View

Social Problem

Bad Environment

Solution = Multi-sector approach
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Transit Crimes and Policing
Criminal behavior

Part 1 offenses
• Homicides
• Rape
• Robbery
• Aggravated Assault
• Burglary
• Felony Theft
• Auto Theft
• Arson

Part 2 offenses
• Disorderly Conduct
• Weapons
• Lewd Conduct
• Petty Theft
• Criminal Damage to Property
• Street Harassment
Driver assaults were down -1%
Passenger victims +12%

Clearance Rate
Felony 100%
GM 51%
Misdem 48%

CSC +55%
Robbery +61%
Agg Assault +43%
Theft -58%
MisTheft +29%
What is street harassment?

Street harassment is unwanted interactions in public between strangers that are motivated by a victim's gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, weight, or (dis)ability.
Street Harassment & Public Transit

- Nationally, public transportation cases account for 20% of harassment incidents.²
Street Harassment video

• https://youtu.be/tUevV_Nsmzs-
Type of harassment experienced on Twin Cities public transportation according to data from *Hollaback!* 2014 survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Harassment</th>
<th>Reported Incidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exposed</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groped</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followed</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- Blue: Transit
- Red: Station

Number of reported incidents of harassment in 2014
Metro Transit Customer Stories

Lindsay’s Story (Aug 8, 2014)
“...he put his hand on my thigh and began rubbing up and down...the bus was full and NO ONE reacted...”

Greta’s Story (Apr 19, 2015)
“...I’m in constant fear when I’m only trying to get home from work. That shouldn’t happen. ..”

CH’s Story (July 4, 2013)
“...The driver didn’t intervene, but she may have been frightened of him — I’ve noticed that harassers often escalate when a female driver reprimands them...”
Problem Solving

SARA

ASSESSMENT
Did the response work?

SCANING
What is the problem?

RESPONSE
What can we do to improve the problem?

ANALYSIS
What is contributing to the problem?
Scan

• New York
• Anecdotal Stories:
  Native woman
  Somali Muslim women
  Trans gender women
Analysis

• Customer survey
• Crime Mapping
Customer Service Report - Bus

- In the past year, 15% of bus riders experienced unwanted sexual contact, comments or touching.
- Weekend riders are significantly more likely to report such experiences.

Nearly one-fifth (17%) say that fear for their safety has kept them from using Metro Transit.

Non-rush and weekend riders are significantly more likely to be deterred by this fear.

Statistically significant difference between comparisons.

In the past year while using Metro Transit, have you ever experienced unwanted sexual contact, comments, touching and/or exposure? Has fear for your safety and security ever stopped you from using Metro Transit?

N=3,818/3,779
Customer Service Report - Light Rail

- Nearly one-fifth (18%) say that fear for safety has prevented them from using Metro Transit.

- Across lines and week parts, riders were equally likely to have experienced unwanted sexual contact or comments.

*Statistically significant difference between comparisons*
Hot spots

- BCTC
- DID-Warehouse
- Franklin
- Lake ST
- Uptown
- Chicago Lake
- MOA
Responses

• Increase awareness
• Prioritize Investigative cases
• Directed patrol and Decoy operation
  • Enhanced Crime victim service
  • Text to TCC
Transportation Peer Efforts

Chicago Transit Authority

Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority

Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

New York City Metropolitan Transit Authority

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Metro Transit
Poster/PSA Campaign

Street harassment is...

- whistling
- flashing
- groping
- unwanted comments
- following
- sexist, racist, homophobic or other slurs
- leering

not okay

I see someone being harassed on the bus but I'm not sure what to do...

Your safety is the #1 priority. It’s okay not to do anything if you don’t feel safe. If you do choose to take action, here are a few ideas:

- Check in with the person being harassed - ask if they’re okay or if they need any help
- Confront the harasser and tell them what they’re doing is not okay
- Create a distraction by asking for directions or offering the person being harassed your seat

Metro Transit
Directed and Decoy Patrol
See Something - Say Something!
Assessment

• Goal: Reduce occurrences and increase reporting of street harassment, to aid victims hold perpetrators accountable.

• Increased reporting
• Arrests, Trespasses and Convictions
• Better victim services
Thank You

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Community-Based Responses to Violence in Mass Transit

Case Study - New Yorkers for Safe Transit

Oraia Reid, Founding Member
Ten Years of Action
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensuring that the NYPD tracks and publicly reports on subway sexual harassment and assault crimes

Increasing NYPD presence on subway trains and in subway stations

Introducing and upgrading needed safety amenities throughout the transit network

Launching an ongoing public awareness campaign to educate riders about the risk of sexual harassment and assault in the subway system
Sexual Harassment is a Crime in the subway, too—

A crowded train is no excuse for an improper touch. Don’t stand for it or feel ashamed, or be afraid to speak up. Report it to an MTA employee or police officer.

Initial PSA Campaign

2008
NYFST Actions

- Participatory Action Research
- Token Booth Closings
- Leadership Circle
- Policy Changes
- Bystander Intervention Trainings and Education Initiatives
- Metrocard Brochures

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Bring Back the Booths
Sign the Petition

4 5 6 Uptown Platform
Station Booths & Agents Removed

How does this affect my trip?

- **Safety** entering and exiting the subway station will be affected without an agent on hand to deter or address dangerous situations.
- **Security** for MTA property will be limited, leading to more vandalism and broken MetroCard vending machines.
- **Accessibility** will be hampered with few working machines and no agents to assist customers in need of special assistance.
Improper Sexual Conduct is a Crime
A crowded train is no excuse for an improper touch

Current Campaign
2012-Present
Sex crimes are skyrocketing in NYC subways: state senator

By Kirstan Conley

June 6, 2017 | 6:58pm | Updated June 6, 2017 | 7:02pm

51% Increase in 3 Years

June 2017
DONT KEEP CALM
GET ACTIVE
CHANGE THE WORLD