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Building "A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth" through problem-oriented community organizing: A quasi-experimental evaluation

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Abstract

Research Summary: This paper describes *Rainier Beach: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth* (ABSPY), a community-led, place-based, data-driven initiative to improve community safety and reduce crime involving young people at hot spots in Seattle, Washington. The ABSPY model puts crime prevention into the hands of the community, compared to traditional problem-solving approaches that may involve community stakeholders but are led by the police. We evaluated the initiative using a quasi-experimental research design comparing the five hot spots in the Rainier Beach neighborhood, where ABSPY was implemented, to five similarly situated hot spots elsewhere in the city. We used 9 years of police calls for service and offense reports, from 2011 to 2019, to assess ABSPY's effects on crime and a five-wave community survey conducted pre- and 4 years post-implementation to examine community perceptions. Although there were no significant effects on calls for service or crime, ABSPY significantly improved

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community members' perceptions of serious crime and the police in the short and medium term.

Policy Implications: Our results show positive changes in community perceptions that offer a foundation for relationship and capacity building in problem-solving efforts. Although ABSPY is not associated with reductions in crime, our results suggest that even communities with entrenched crime problems can leverage this capacity to reduce crime in the longer term. Community coalitions also offer some benefits relative to police-led efforts, such as shared culture and values; stability; and consistency. However, community coalitions must build capacity for action as well as community engagement, and consider if and how the police should be involved, ensuring that the specific expertise of each coalition member is leveraged. Furthermore, our study highlights the importance of identifying measures of crime that are not affected by increased trust and collaboration between the police and the community.

KEYWORDS
community organizing, crime & place, crime prevention, policing, problem-solving, quasi-experiment, youth

The police are traditionally considered the "experts" in dealing with crime and are called upon to lead crime prevention efforts in neighborhoods or at microgeographic "hot spots." Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1994) argue that no other profession provides obvious leadership for public safety efforts, and the police have at their disposal a range of options that other non-law enforcement organizations, social service providers, and local residents do not. However, although many proactive place-based policing efforts are effective at reducing crime (Braga et al., 2019; Weisburd & Majmundar, 2018; Weisburd & Telep, 2010), they often fail to center the experiences and expertise of those most affected by crime at place—local community members.

Problem-oriented policing (POP) involves a proactive, systematic approach to identifying, prioritizing, and responding to crime problems at places (Eck & Spelman, 1987; Goldstein, 1990) and is effective at preventing crime (Eck & Spelman, 1987; Goldstein, 1990; Hinkle et al., 2020; Weisburd et al., 2010). In his original conceptualization of POP, Goldstein (1990) explicitly called for the police to draw on the expertise of community members in problem solving. However, in practice, these programs are often entirely police led and do not involve community partnerships (Hinkle et al., 2020). Even when the police do try to establish partnerships, studies have found that community stakeholders were resistant to working with the police, and lack of trust in the police among neighborhood residents was a significant barrier to collaboration (Hinkle et al., 2020; see

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also Gill, Weisburd, et al., 2018a, 2018b; Gimenez-Santana et al., 2022; Kochel & Weisburd, 2017; Tuffin et al., 2006).

Third-party policing (TPP) involves the police leveraging external processes, such as local government agencies and civil remedies, to persuade or coerce community members to alter behaviors that are conducive to crime (Buerger, 1998; Mazerolle & Ransley, 2005). An example of a successful TPP program is Oakland, California's Beat Health, in which the police collaborated with code enforcement agents and inspectors to persuade landlords to clean up their properties or face fines for violating local regulations (Mazerolle & Roehl, 1999). TPP is also effective at controlling crime (Mazerolle & Ransley, 2005), but it typically emphasizes the role of formal enforcement strategies as a failsafe when informal social controls are insufficient, rather than collaboration with community members on an equal footing. In some cases, these strategies may have harmful collateral consequences for marginalized and vulnerable community members, such as landlords evicting domestic violence victims after receiving citations related to repeat calls for service to their properties (Desmond & Valdez, 2013).

Community-oriented policing (COP) comes closest to centering community voices. A core component of COP is the idea that public safety should be a "co-production" between police departments and the communities they serve. This is achieved through collaborative problem solving and transforming the organizational structure to increase responsiveness to community needs (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014). COP improves community members' satisfaction with the police and, to a lesser extent, their perceptions of police legitimacy (Gill et al., 2014) but has weaker crime prevention benefits than POP or TPP. One possible reason for this is that COP is theorized to prevent crime indirectly, via improved collective efficacy and collaboration, rather than directly, and therefore takes much longer to realize crime control gains (Gill et al., 2014; Weisburd & Majmundar, 2018). It is also possible that increasing community collaboration and, subsequently, satisfaction with and trust in the police may cause community members to call the police more, limiting the utility of official crime data as a measure of success (Weisburd, Gill, et al., 2021). Weisburd and colleagues (2022) term this phenomenon "crime reporting sensitivity."

However, like POP and TPP, COP has been criticized for not fully taking advantage of the concept of co-production in practice (Cordner, 2014; Gill et al., 2014; Gimenez-Santana et al., 2022; Kerley & Benson, 2000; Thacher, 2001). There is little guidance on what the police should actually do to engage the community, and the approach rests on the assumption that community members are ready, willing, and able to engage with the police (Gill et al., 2014). This assumption may not hold up in communities where crime rates are high, social cohesion and collective efficacy are low, and/or relationships with law enforcement are strained (Skogan, 1989).

The limitations of police–community collaborations raise the question: what if we stopped assuming that the police need to take the lead in crime prevention and situate community members themselves as the "experts?" Scholars have long recognized the central role of communities as the foundation on which all social institutions operate (Sherman, 1997), and that the risk factors underlying crime problems at place require a much more diverse set of responses than the police have in their toolbox. As Goldstein (1990) recognized, "[a] community must police itself. The police can, at best, only assist in that task" (p. 21). Similarly, Eck (2015) argued that the police do not have the capacity or knowledge to address all of the issues that create crime problems at hot spots, and highlighted the importance of drawing on the expertise of other stakeholders. Overall, research supports the involvement of a wide variety of stakeholders including residents, community leaders, social services, and governmental institutions in collaborative efforts to identify and address crime-related problems (Abt, 2017; see also Beckett, 2014; Cordner, 2014; Gill, Weisburd, et al., 2018a; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1994). Furthermore, centering community expertise is

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particularly important in the context of recent calls inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement and worldwide protests against police brutality to divert resources to non-law enforcement community services.

In this article, we report on a quasi-experimental evaluation of *Rainier Beach: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth* (ABSPY), a community-led, place-based, data-driven initiative to improve community safety and reduce crime involving young people at hot spots in the Rainier Beach neighborhood of Seattle, Washington. Although ABSPY was not explicitly an effort to divert resources away from the police, and the city's police department was involved in the effort, the initiative was developed and led by a coalition of community stakeholders and organizations, emphasizing non-law enforcement solutions. Given the lack of guidance in the policing literature on how to engage communities in crime prevention efforts, we first review the literature on community organizing from other fields to provide context for ABSPY's innovative approach to collaborative problem solving, before discussing the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program.

1 | COMMUNITY-LED PREVENTION APPROACHES

Community members, grassroots organizations, and institutions have organized to collaboratively address social issues as diverse as teen pregnancy; alcohol, tobacco, and other substance use; cardiovascular disease; and cancer. Many of these efforts show favorable results in both experimental and nonexperimental studies (for a review, see Zakocs & Edwards, 2006; see also Flewelling & Hanley, 2016; Flewelling et al., 2005). One of the most successful and rigorously evaluated examples is the Communities That Care (CTC) model of positive youth development, which mobilizes community members to engage in the selection and implementation of tailored evidence-based policies and programs that target risk and protective factors contributing to risky behaviors among youth (Hawkins et al., 2002, 2004). Young people in communities randomly assigned to participate in this process have experienced significant and sustained reductions in antisocial behavior, violence, and substance use through early adulthood (Hawkins et al., 2012, 2014; Oesterle et al., 2018).

A common theme emerging from successful examples of community coalitions is that the connection and coordination of multiple sectors of the community within a common geographic area lead to more impactful problem solving and better integrated and localized solutions than any single group or organization can achieve individually (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2002; Butterfoss et al., 1993, 2006; Gimenez-Santana et al., 2022; Kania & Kramer, 2011; Lardier et al., 2019). Furthermore, in the context of crime prevention, public participation in a community-led process may help to mitigate the potentially alienating effects of law enforcement efforts, especially in historically marginalized communities (Factor, 2019).

The processes of cultivating community engagement and adopting effective coalition-building practices prior to problem solving are inherent to the success of community coalitions. In contrast to POP and COP, which often focus more on the "action" of identifying and resolving the problem and less on the process of community engagement, many prevention-focused coalitions have adopted problem-solving models that specifically promote collaborative partnerships to address a potential lack of community readiness and reduce threats to successful coalition building. The CTC model is one example of this; another is SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019), which uses a five-step framework for prevention planning and implementation that includes (1) assessing needs and resources;

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(2) building capacity and mobilizing community members; (3) developing a strategic plan; (4) implementing programs and policies; and (5) evaluating program activities.

Community involvement in coalitions can be linked to social exchange theory, which suggests that the exchange of information and resources among people who are engaged in a social relationship produces social capital—a common set of values, mutual trust, and shared norms that establishes collective agreement on social order and helps maintain effective social control (Blau, 1964; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1995). Communities with social capital have higher levels of collective efficacy—the willingness to intervene to address problems and realize shared goals—which ultimately provides a foundation for collective action (Sabol et al., 2004; Sampson, 2012; Sampson et al., 1997). The ability of community coalitions to tap into this collective efficacy lends itself well to prevention-focused programming (MacDonald et al., 2013). At the same time, collective efficacy can also be strengthened by active participation in community coalitions, so community involvement yields mutually beneficial outcomes for both those seeking to engage and those being engaged (Wallis, 2006).

Cultivating community engagement involves three key elements: participation, mobilization, and outreach. Participation can occur on a continuum, ranging from "token" or "symbolic" participation that grants no real power to "active" participation in which members take ownership and are empowered to lead the effort (Arnstein, 1969; International Association for Public Participation, 2018). Community coalitions tend to land at the more active end of the continuum, in contrast to community participation in most COP and POP programs. Mobilization involves a strategic approach aimed at turning participation into sustainable action, including situating the work within the community context (e.g., geographic location and population characteristics); collaborative planning; establishing leadership and expectations for participation; designing and evaluating interventions and strategies; and ultimately weaving the coalition into the fabric of the community (Fawcett et al., 2000; see also Backer & Guerra, 2011). Finally, outreach involves ensuring that the diverse set of stakeholders needed to make the effort mutually beneficial is actually brought to the table. Outreach and recruitment techniques vary depending on the culture and expectations of the specific community, but should be designed to bring awareness to the issue and be targeted toward the community members most affected by it (Kim, 2005).

Coalitions need to adopt effective coalition-building practices in order to move from engagement to effective problem solving, that is, collective action. Many coalitions fail because they lack the core competencies and/or characteristics associated with successful implementation (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001; Kreuter et al., 2000; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). At the macrolevel, communities with high levels of readiness—that is, members believe that change is needed and are willing and prepared to engage in efforts to make it happen—are better able to plan, implement, and sustain a collaborative prevention effort (Castañeda et al., 2012; Domlyn & Wandersman, 2019; Donnermeyer et al., 1997; Feinberg et al., 2004, 2005; Foster-Fishman et al., 2007).

Foster-Fishman and colleagues (2001) highlight four core competencies for realizing collective action: member, relational, organizational, and programmatic capacity. Member capacity, which is heavily emphasized in the planning and preimplementation phases of the CTC and SPF models described above, recognizes that the primary assets of a coalition are the diverse resources and perspectives each member brings to the table (Butterfoss et al., 1993), and requires a focus on enhancing communication and conflict resolution skills; building motivation and commitment; and providing training and logistical support for participation (Backer & Guerra, 2011; Chilenski et al., 2007). Relational capacity refers to the internal processes that allow members to work together productively, including mutual trust; a shared vision; power and resource equity; and an inclusive culture (Butterfoss et al., 1993; Chavis, 1995, 2001; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001).

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Organizational capacity requires members to organize around a shared agenda and specific tasks needed to produce the desired outcomes (Wandersman et al., 1997), which involves active participation and communication; diverse but cohesive membership; strong leadership; formal rules, roles, and responsibilities; and financial resources (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001; Kania & Kramer, 2011; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Zakocs & Edwards, 2006). Finally, programmatic capacity involves developing a clear implementation and evaluation plan with specific, measurable, and culturally appropriate goals (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2002; Chavis, 1995; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001).

2 | THE EVALUATION STUDY

Rainier Beach: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth (ABSPY) is a community-led, place-based, data-driven initiative to improve community safety and reduce crime involving young people at hot spots using nonarrest approaches. Its development began in 2012, led by a coalition of community stakeholders, local government agencies (including the police), grassroots community organizations, and a research partner, and it was funded from 2012 to 2016 by a $1 million Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance. After the grant ended, ABSPY was incorporated into the City of Seattle's budget and has subsequently been funded on an annual basis. We evaluated ABSPY's effects on calls for police service (CFS), offenses recorded by police, and community members' perceptions of safety, collective efficacy, and the police.

2.1 | Study setting

Seattle is the largest city in the Pacific Northwest United States, with an estimated population of approximately 750,000 in 2018 (an increase of 17% from 2012, when ABSPY began).[1] The Rainier Beach neighborhood is located at the far southeastern end of the city, about 7 miles from downtown. It is home to more than 5000 residents and is racially and ethnically diverse: 31% Black/African American, 31% Asian, 13% Hispanic, and 14% mixed race. More than 160 languages are spoken in the zip code area that includes the neighborhood. The neighborhood's population skews young (30% of residents are under 18). These demographics contrast with the city overall, which is 63% non-Hispanic White and 85% age 18 or older. Indicators of education and employment in the neighborhood are lower than other city neighborhoods, and poverty rates are higher.[2] As a result, Rainier Beach is stereotyped as a "bad neighborhood" and, although much of Southeast Seattle has experienced gentrification (which has brought positive economic development as well as challenges), Rainier Beach has not benefited from similar investments.

Nonetheless, Rainier Beach is a vibrant neighborhood with a long history of community organizing. The 2012 Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan Update (RBNPU)[3], a comprehensive city-supported planning process, describes it as "rich with cultural and physical resources" and "supported by strong social and cultural institutions and services that provide stability during changing times," a description that remains true today. Among other resources, Rainier Beach boasts a renovated community center and pool; several schools, including a K-8 school, a high school, and an alternative high school that are all clustered at the same intersection as the community center; transit links; numerous small businesses and restaurants; and public art. Gentrification is a concern for Rainier Beach residents: they would like to see more of the business, housing, and infrastructure investments enjoyed by neighborhoods to the north, but they also recognize that these investments have priced out most of the original residents and fundamentally

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changed the culture of those neighborhoods. Residents have therefore advocated for investments that support and preserve the existing culture and dynamics of their community. These physical and cultural resources speak to the readiness of the local community to engage in and sustain a problem-solving coalition like ABSPY, as we discussed above.

2.2 | The ABSPY model

Although effective community problem-solving coalitions often focus on environmental and systems change (e.g., Yang et al., 2012), ABSPY is unique in its focus on comprehensive assessments of place-based risk factors (as opposed to individual or community-level predictors), especially at the microgeographic level. The ABSPY problem-solving framework was inspired by the CTC and SPF models described above and the SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment) model used in POP (Eck & Spelman, 1987).

The model brings together several bodies of research related to crime at place. First, crime—especially youth crime—is highly concentrated at microgeographic "hot spots," and targeting these locations with proactive prevention efforts is effective (e.g., Weisburd, 2015; Weisburd & Majmundar, 2018; Weisburd et al., 2009). Second, environmental and routine activities theories of crime suggest youth crime typically clusters around the places and times at which young people congregate in the absence of supervision and structure (e.g., Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993, 1995; Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson & Boba, 2010; Gottfredson et al., 2001; Maimon & Browning, 2010; Osgood et al., 1996; Roman, 2002, 2005; Svensson & Oberwittler, 2010; Weisburd et al., 2009). Third, in line with the community's desire to avoid criminalizing youth and prioritize nonarrest responses (Petrosino et al., 2010), we also drew on research supporting community interventions for youth that take advantage of the informal social control and collective efficacy inherent within communities at places, which is often overlooked in police-led interventions (Gimenez-Santana et al., 2022; Weisburd, Gill, et al., 2021; Weisburd et al., 2015; see also Bursik, 1988; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson et al., 1997), and noncriminal responses (i.e., civil remedies) to problematic behaviors that, when thoughtfully implemented within the context of shared social norms, may help to encourage rather than force compliance (Eck & Wartell, 1999; Mazerolle & Ransley, 2005; Mazerolle et al., 2000; Sherman et al., 2006; Taxman & McEwen, 1997).

Based on this literature, we developed a list of place-based risk factors akin to the individual/peer, school, family, and community risk factors that underpin the CTC process (Hawkins et al., 1992). These included low collective efficacy, lack of supervision and structure, environmental issues, and lack of enforcement of civil codes and regulations. Following on from these risk factors, we proposed four broad categories of intervention that the research suggested could reduce crime and improve community members' perceptions of safety: increasing supervision and providing structure for young people; changing the physical environment; changing policies and rules (e.g., place management, code compliance for local businesses and landlords, etc.); and enhancing collective efficacy. The theory of change is illustrated in Figure 1.

2.3 | Implementation

Figure 2 provides a detailed overview of ABSPY's implementation. The program built on two existing coalitions—the RBNPU described above, and the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

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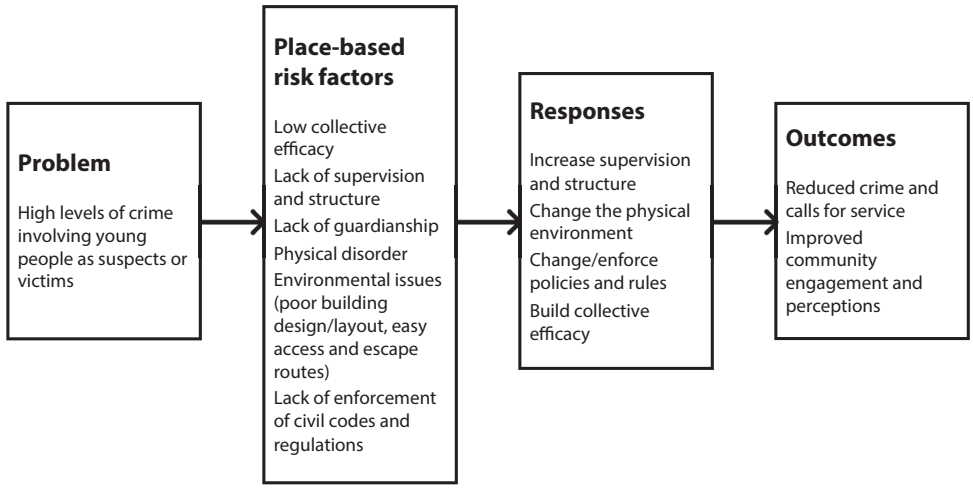

FIGURE 1 Theory of change, ABSPY problem-solving model.

(SYVPI), a multi-agency program within the city's Department of Neighborhoods that supported at-risk youth in several areas of the city, including Rainier Beach, and also served as the fiscal agent for the BCJI grant. A steering committee, the ABSPY Core Team, was set up to oversee the initiative, with members drawn from grassroots community organizations affiliated with these efforts, as well as Seattle Police Department (SPD) and a variety of local government departments (see Figure 2). Research partners from the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP) at George Mason University also participated on the Core Team. All organizations participated on a level playing field: Seattle Neighborhood Group (SNG), a nonprofit organization focused on crime prevention, provided project management, but no single organization led the effort. The first phase of the project involved a comprehensive planning process to identify youth crime hot spots and the place-based risk factors associated with them; build a "community task force" (CTF) to represent each hot spot and train them in systematic problem solving; and work with the CTF to develop and implement evidence-informed interventions to address the specific risk factors at each hot spot.

2.3.1 | Identifying and selecting the hot spots

CEBCP researchers conducted a street segment analysis of criminal offenses[4] recorded in 2012 in SPD's South Precinct, where Rainier Beach is located, to identify hot spots of youth crime and victimization. We defined "youth" as children under 18 and young people aged 18–25 inclusive. We geocoded offenses based on the location address in the police report and linked them to street segments. We classified each street segment in the South Precinct into one of five categories using the natural breaks (Jenks) method in ArcMap 10 and, in collaboration with the Core Team, selected five single or connected clusters of street segments in Rainier Beach that fell into categories 3–5 (medium, high, and very high concentration of crime involving youth) as our final target areas. Figure 3 shows these hot spots in relation to nearby geographic features and community resources, along with the names assigned to them by the Core Team.

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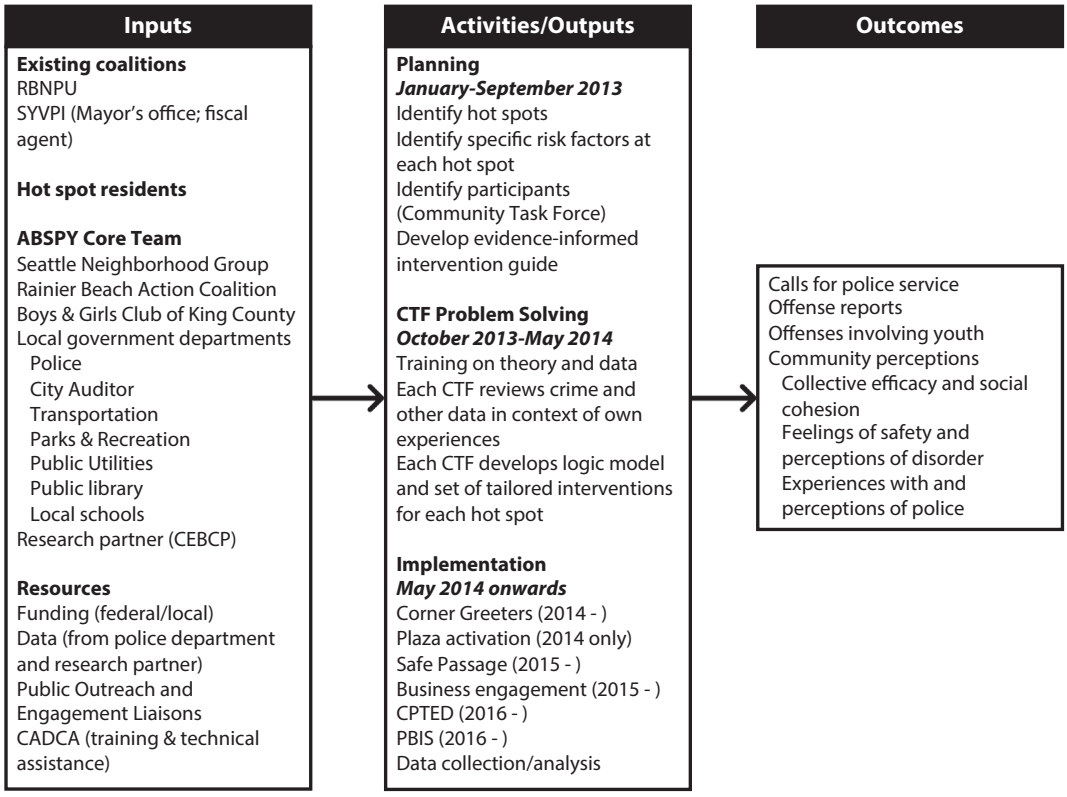

FIGURE 2 ABSPY logic model.

2.3.2 | Building and training the community task force

After the hot spots were identified, we identified a representative group of community members from each location to participate in the coalition. SNG took the lead on conducting outreach to residences, places of worship, businesses, and schools in the selected street segments, including door-to-door visits and asset mapping of existing and new contacts. We also collaborated with the City of Seattle's Public Outreach and Engagement Officers (POELs), who serve as "cultural ambassadors" and interpreters for a variety of historically underrepresented communities in the city, to ensure that the coalition was as inclusive as possible. These efforts led to the development of an overall CTF of more than 100 members who attended an initial problem-solving training in October 2013 and subsequently formed five hot spot teams that engaged in a series of problem-solving workshops during the following 6 months. The initial training, developed by our technical assistance partner, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA; see Yang et al., 2012) in collaboration with the Core Team, introduced community members to ABSPY's theory of change (Figure 1) and began engaging them in a five-stage problem-solving process: (1) *what is the problem*, based on data and personal experience; (2) *why is the problem occurring, and why here*, drawing on theories about the "root causes" of crime and how they manifest as place-based risk factors at the specific hot spot; (3) *what can we do about it*, that is, proposed interventions; (4) *why do we think it will work*: what mechanisms connect the proposed solutions back to the risk factors and root causes; and (5) *what outcomes do we expect to influence*.

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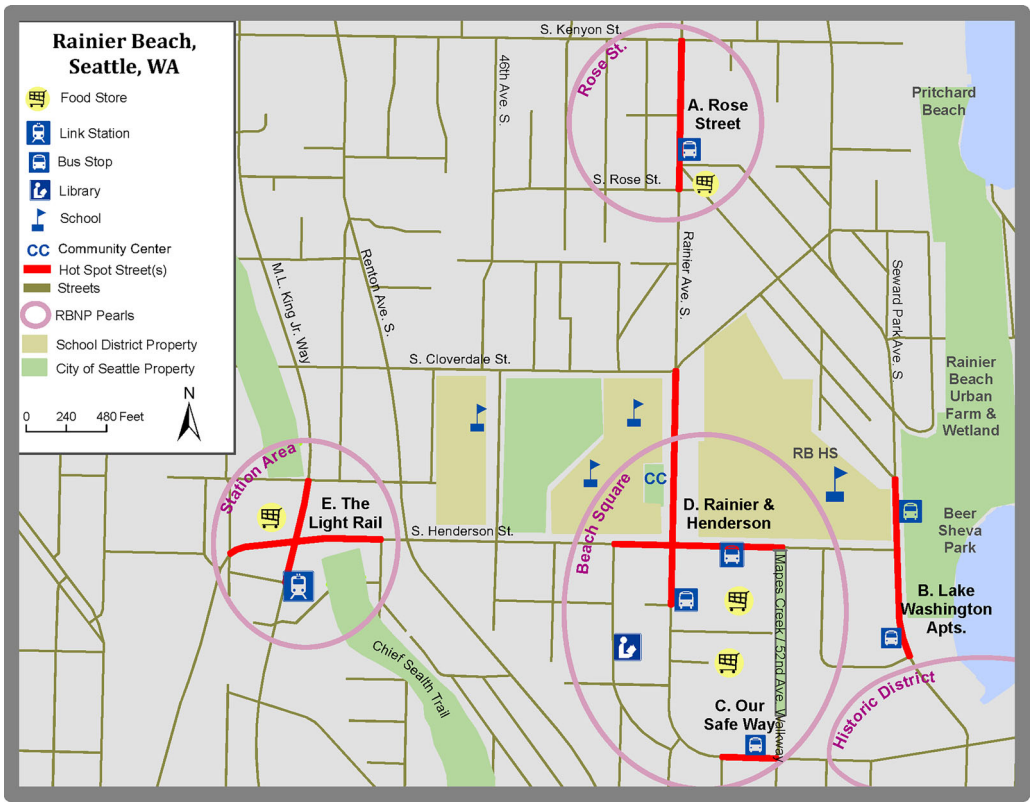

FIGURE 3 Target hot spots identified for intervention. [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

2.3.3 | Developing and implementing the interventions

During the 6-month problem-solving process, each of the five hot spot teams developed tailored logic models, which reflected the model in Figure 1 but detailed the specific problems, risk factors, interventions, and desired outcomes for their hot spot. The teams had broad discretion to create their own interventions within the boundaries of the four broad categories listed in Figure 1. The Core Team then assumed responsibility for implementing these interventions, and an additional implementation team was created that met regularly and comprised partners from the various organizations involved in delivering the interventions.

Ultimately, there was substantial overlap between the proposed interventions at each site, resulting in the development of several "signature" ABSPY interventions that were applied at some or all of the hot spots on an ongoing basis. The first intervention to be implemented in all sites was the "Corner Greeters," teams of local young people from the Rainier Beach Action Coalition who aimed to "take back" hot spot spaces on the days and times shown by police data to be at highest risk from crime by organizing activities and outreach on site. Second, Safe Passage (e.g., Curran, 2019), in which trained community members overseen by the Boys and Girls Club of King County provided supervision, guardianship, and a friendly face for young people walking to and from school, was implemented at Rainier & Henderson, which featured multiple schools and a community center. Business engagement and Crime Prevention Through Environmental

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Design (CPTED), two separate but related interventions, focused primarily on commercial properties in the Rose Street, Light Rail, and Our Safe Way hot spots, although CPTED also took place on public property in these sites in collaboration with the city. SPD and community representatives conducted outreach to businesses to provide support and crime prevention education. SNG conducted comprehensive CPTED assessments of each hot spot, and teams of community volunteers, including young people and a veterans' service organization, assisted with community clean-ups, landscaping, and helping to paint and repair storefronts.

Later in the implementation period, an additional collective efficacy-building intervention was added to the ABSPY portfolio. ABSPY partners received two additional federal grants from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the National Institute of Justice to develop an extension of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and restorative practices in Rainier Beach schools and the surrounding community (Gill et al., 2023). These projects involved developing shared values and expectations for behavior within the community and implementing healing circles for conflict resolution. Although these interventions were not specifically targeted at the ABSPY hot spots, the majority of the neighborhood's schools are located in or near Rainier & Henderson and the ABSPY Core Team served as the steering group for this new work. There were also several other "one-off" or time-limited interventions, such as working with the school district to stagger school release times to reduce the convergence of multiple students into the Rainier & Henderson intersection, leading to fights and other issues, and renovating the plaza outside the community center to serve as a community gathering space.

Given the complexity and variety of these interventions, ABSPY had a "rolling start" rather than a firm start date. The Corner Greeters program started in May 2014, but stopped and started several times in the first 2 years of implementation, partly because it started as a seasonal activity. Major initiatives like Safe Passage and CPTED took more planning and coordination with government and private agencies, and took longer to get started—Safe Passage did not start until March 2015, whereas the first CPTED improvements began on the ground in June 2016. There was also a complete break in implementation for all interventions except Safe Passage[5] between January and March 2016, due to an issue with the city's contracting process that prevented the participating agencies from working. Figure 4 shows a detailed timeline of program implementation and locations.

2.4 | Evaluation design and analysis

We evaluated the effects of ABSPY on officially recorded crime and community perceptions of collective efficacy, safety, and policing using a quasi-experimental evaluation design. Although randomized controlled trials are considered the "gold standard" for assessing cause and effect in program evaluations, the small neighborhood size and clustering of "hot" street segments restricted the available units for random assignment. We approximated experimental conditions by matching each treatment hot spot with a similarly situated location in the same SPD precinct, but outside Rainier Beach's boundaries. We used a qualitative matching process. We initially narrowed down the pool of locations in the precinct that also had medium, high, or very high concentrations of crime involving youth in 2012 by comparing the number and type of overall and youth-involved offenses with the treatment locations. We further refined the matches based on similarities in physical and social characteristics such as demographics, poverty, employment, education, and the number of households with children.[6] We then visually assessed each potential match via Google Street View and in-person visits. Although the treatment hot spots had many

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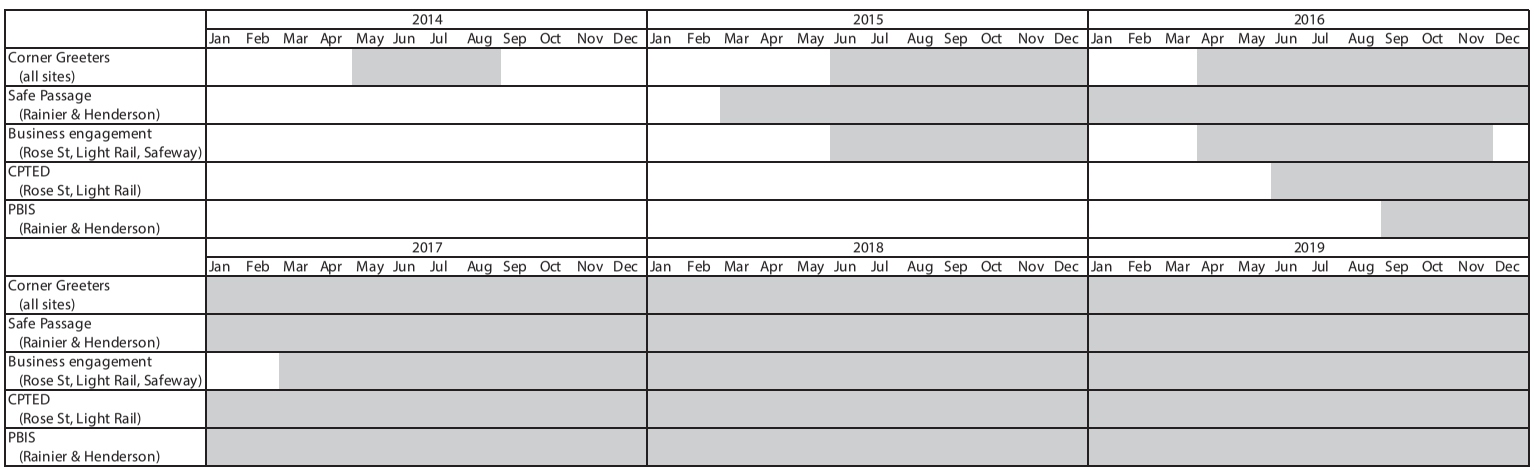

FIGURE 4 Timeline and locations of ABSPY interventions.

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TABLE 1 Mean monthly preintervention counts of calls for service and offenses.

	Calls for service Mean (*SD*)	All offenses Mean (*SD*)	Youth offenses Mean (*SD*)
Treatment sites			
Rose St	13.7 (5.8)	6.2 (3.8)	2.3 (2.1)
Rainier & Henderson	41.9 (12.1)	11.1 (4.1)	4.0 (2.8)
Light Rail	5.1 (3.1)	2.0 (1.6)	0.6 (1.0)
Lake Washington	29.2 (11.0)	9.6 (3.2)	4.2 (2.7)
Safeway	19.4 (8.1)	8.0 (5.3)	3.4 (3.5)
Comparison sites			
Rose St comparison	29.3 (8.3)	8.6 (3.4)	2.2 (2.1)
Rainier & Henderson comparison	24.2 (10.1)	6.8 (3.7)	2.7 (2.4)
Light Rail comparison	8.1 (3.4)	3.3 (1.8)	0.6 (0.9)
Lake Washington comparison	3.5 (2.1)	2.1 (2.0)	1.0 (1.4)
Safeway comparison	15.8 (12.5)	6.6 (6.4)	3.1 (4.7)

unique features that we could not completely match (such as multiple schools clustered around a single intersection), we were able to match each treatment hot spot with a similarly situated comparison location (e.g., a location with a light rail station was selected as a match for the Light Rail treatment hot spot). The final comparison site locations were known only to the research partners.

2.4.1 | Analysis of crime outcomes

We assessed ABSPY's effects on crime using monthly data on CFS and offense reports from January 2011 to December 2019.[7] We assessed both CFS and offenses because CFS reflect the concerns of the community (i.e., what people are calling the police about), but do not contain the age of people involved. Offense reports contain details such as the ages of suspects, victims, and witnesses and are generated when the police respond to a CFS and find substantive evidence that a crime may have occurred. We conducted separate analyses of total offenses and offenses involving young people up to and including age 25 as suspects, arrestees, or victims. We *excluded* traffic calls, police checks (e.g., abandoned vehicles), automated alarm calls, and police administrative actions (e.g., logging a break) from the CFS data set. From the offense data set, we *included* all offenses with a NIBRS[8] broad classification of "crimes against persons," "crimes against property," "crimes against society," and "all other crimes," except for traffic offenses. We also excluded reports classified as noncrimes, such as natural deaths. Table 1 shows the mean monthly preintervention counts of each crime outcome in each treatment and comparison hot spot.

We estimated the effects of ABSPY on CFS and offenses using difference-in-differences random-effects negative binomial regression. The negative binomial distribution fit our data better than the Poisson distribution, and the random effects approach allowed us to model the clustering of crime within each hot spot. Each model includes a crime outcome, an intervention status term (coded 1 for active or 0 for inactive) indicating the months in which at least one

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ABSPY intervention was active in the treatment hot spots (see below), a treatment assignment term (1 = treatment, 0 = comparison), and the difference-in-differences interaction term between treatment assignment and intervention status (see Kondo et al. [2015] for a similar methodology). The models also control for seasonality via monthly indicator variables and include a linear variable from the first to last month to control for the overall crime trend throughout time. We also controlled for autocorrelation using a series of variables representing the logged value of the current month's crime count minus the previous 1–4 months. Finally, we included indicator variables representing each matched treatment–comparison pair. We describe the results using the exponentiated coefficient—the incidence rate ratio (IRR)—of the interaction term, which represents the ratio of outcomes in the treatment and comparison areas associated with the intervention period. IRR = 1 indicates no difference between groups, whereas IRR < 1 indicates that the treatment is associated with a lower rate of the outcome relative to the comparison group.

ABSPY's "rolling start" presented a challenge for our analysis, because there was no clear delineation between the pre- and postimplementation periods. As described above and illustrated in Figure 4, the first interventions started in May 2014 in all the treatment sites, but some interventions stopped and started several times, and others took much longer to get off the ground. Furthermore, some interventions took place in all the treatment sites, whereas others took place in selected locations. We wanted to model this complexity to account for all the time periods in which treatment sites were *not* receiving any interventions, which may have affected the overall outcomes. Thus, instead of coding each month as pre- or postimplementation, we coded months from May 2014 onward as "active" for each individual treatment/comparison pair if *at least one* intervention was occurring in the treatment site during that month or "inactive" if no interventions were occurring there. For example, referring to Figure 4, all sites were coded as "active" from May to August 2014, as Corner Greeter activities were occurring in all locations. However, from March to May 2015, only the Rainier & Henderson treatment site and its matched comparison were coded as "active," because only Safe Passage was being implemented during that time, and only at that specific location.

2.4.2 | Survey of community perceptions

We assessed the effects of ABSPY on community perceptions of social cohesion, collective efficacy, feelings of safety, and police satisfaction and legitimacy via a five-wave community survey at the ABSPY and comparison hot spots. The baseline survey (Wave 1) was conducted in the summer of 2014, with follow-ups (Waves 2–5) in the summers of 2016 through 2019. All surveys were conducted by a team of local researchers that included young people from the neighborhood. Not all of the hot spots were residential, so the team collected data through several different methods: going door to door at randomly sampled residential addresses; engaging owners, managers, employees, and customers in local businesses; and setting up booths on the street to engage passersby. This final method generated the most interest and engagement from community members, but meant that we were not able to survey the same people in each wave. Our analysis is therefore cross-sectional and does not account for within-individual change.[9] We also limited participation to respondents aged 18 and above due to the challenge of obtaining parental consent in a street setting, although we were successful in surveying a predominantly younger age group, including 18- to 25-year-olds. We obtained a total of 1495 valid surveys during the five waves (Table 2).

Table 3 shows the characteristics of survey respondents in each wave. Participants were slightly more likely to be male, between the ages of 18 and 35, and/or identify as Black or African

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TABLE 2 Number of surveys completed, by site and wave.

	Wave				
	1	2	3	4	5
Treatment sites					
Rose St	27	32	29	29	30
Rainier & Henderson	36	30	28	33	30
Light Rail	25	31	30	25	30
Lake Washington	26	26	27	30	31
Safeway	31	35	32	30	25
Comparison sites					
Rose St comparison	27	21	27	31	32
Rainier & Henderson comparison	42	26	28	34	31
Light Rail comparison	31	33	30	28	31
Lake Washington comparison	28	32	29	33	33
Safeway comparison	24	34	30	32	30

American.[10] Around two thirds of respondents were born in the United States and slightly more than half had children of any age. Most participants had completed high school or its equivalent, and around one fifth were currently in school either full or part time. Most of the respondents lived in the hot spot in which they were interviewed; others typically worked there, shopped there, or used public transit. There were significant differences between the treatment and comparison site respondents at baseline in age, race, and current school attendance, and we control for these variables in our analysis.

Most of the questions in our survey measured agreement, frequency, or likelihood using 4- or 5-point Likert scales, in which higher numbers represent higher levels of these measures. We combined multiple questions into scales to assess the underlying concepts of social cohesion, collective efficacy, feelings of safety, and perceptions of police. All scales have a Cronbach's alpha (α) greater than 0.75, indicating that each question in the scale reasonably captures the same underlying concept (Table 4). We analyzed the effect of ABSPY on these scales using multilevel mixed-effects linear regression models with random effects to account for the nesting of respondents within hot spots. To account for the five survey waves, our models include interaction terms comparing each subsequent wave to Wave 1, which allow us to assess the short, medium, and longer term effects of ABSPY (see Kochel & Weisburd [2017] for a similar methodology).

The models also include control variables for age, race, and school status as noted above.

3 | RESULTS

3.1 | Effects on CFS and offenses

Table 5 shows the results of the random-effects negative binomial regression models on CFS, total offenses, and offenses involving youth. The rate of CFS was about 8% higher in the ABSPY hot spots relative to the comparison sites while treatment was active, but this was not statistically

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TABLE 3 Sample characteristics by wave and by group at baseline (Wave 1).

	Wave						
	1	2	3	4	5	Comparison at Wave 1	Treatment at Wave 1
Gender (%)							
Female	43.5	49.7	43.2	46.6	51.5	43.8	43.2
Male	56.1	50.3	56.4	52.4	47.1	55.6	56.8
Other	0.4	0.0	0.4	1.0	1.4	0.7	0.0
Age* (%)							
18–25	22.1	23.5	24.3	15.6	18.9	17.2	27.9
26–35	24.3	22.8	26.8	26.9	27.5	23.4	25.4
36–45	15.4	17.0	17.5	20.4	19.6	13.1	18.0
46–55	15.4	15.9	12.5	18.4	14.8	18.6	11.5
56–65	15.4	14.5	13.9	12.2	12.4	16.6	13.9
Over 65	7.5	6.2	5.0	6.5	6.9	11.0	3.3
Race*** (%)							
Black/African American	36.6	41.7	33.0	30.4	36.8	31.2	42.7
African immigrant/refugee	7.5	11.9	8.1	17.1	6.6	5.0	10.5
White	24.9	23.0	26.7	22.5	19.4	34.0	14.5
Asian	12.5	6.5	11.0	16.0	12.8	17.7	6.5
Native American/Pacific Islander	3.4	3.2	2.9	3.4	1.7	3.6	3.2
Hispanic	4.9	5.4	2.9	0.0	6.9	2.8	7.3
Other/more than one race	10.2	8.3	15.4	10.6	15.6	5.7	15.3
Born in United States (%)	63.1	70.8	68.3	64.3	69.6	65.3	60.5
Has children (%)	56.3	61.4	51.7	55.1	60.9	57.6	54.8
Education (%)							
Primary/elementary school	3.0	1.7	0.7	0.4	2.8	0.7	5.6
Some middle/high school	7.5	5.5	6.0	6.0	3.8	7.1	8.0
High school diploma/GED	26.4	21.1	29.1	24.2	25.3	22.1	31.2
Some college credit	23.0	33.6	27.6	27.0	32.6	24.3	21.6
Associate's degree	15.5	12.8	9.0	10.7	10.1	17.1	13.6
Bachelor's degree	16.2	15.2	16.0	20.6	17.7	18.6	13.6
Masters/graduate/professional degree	8.3	10.0	11.6	11.0	7.6	10.0	6.4
Employment (%)							
Full time	42.5	43.3	54.4	60.8	47.4	44.5	40.0
Part time	18.7	23.9	21.0	13.4	19.8	17.5	20.0
Not working	29.0	19.0	14.0	13.1	17.7	27.0	31.3
Retired	9.9	10.0	7.0	8.1	10.6	10.9	8.7
Currently in school* (%)	21.9	21.0	24.1	16.1	19.1	17.1	26.9
Main activity at hot spot (%)							
Live	47.8	35.7	36.3	40.7	32.7	46.1	49.7
Work	13.1	10.0	11.4	23.6	15.5	9.9	16.6

(Continues)

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TABLE 3 (Continued)

	Wave						
	1	2	3	4	5	Comparison at Wave 1	Treatment at Wave 1
School	0.3	0.3	1.0	0.7	1.3	0.0	0.7
Own business	1.7	1.3	2.1	1.0	1.0	2.6	0.7
Own property/land	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.7	0.0
Shop	12.8	22.3	17.0	13.4	14.2	11.2	14.5
Use public transit	15.5	15.7	17.6	10.8	14.5	18.4	12.4
Use local resources	1.7	6.0	6.6	1.6	8.3	1.3	2.1
Walk/drive through	4.0	6.3	4.8	3.9	8.3	5.9	2.1
Other	2.7	1.7	2.8	3.9	4.3	3.9	1.4
Duration of main activity (%)							
Less than 1 year	20.6	22.0	21.5	23.0	19.3	21.1	20.1
1 year or more, but less than 5 years	36.8	37.3	39.2	35.3	34.3	35.4	38.2
5 years or more, but less than 10 years	18.6	13.9	16.0	19.3	21.0	22.4	14.6
10 years or more	24.1	26.8	23.3	22.3	25.3	21.1	27.1

Note: Significant differences between treatment and comparison groups at baseline:
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

significant ($p = 0.116$). We see very similar results for reported offenses (9% higher rate in the treatment sites, $p = 0.188$) and offenses involving youth suspects or victims (8% higher, $p = 0.506$). Figure 5, which shows the monthly trend for each outcome in the treatment and comparison hot spots, reflects the fact that the treatment hot spots had consistently higher numbers of CFS and reported offenses compared to the comparison areas throughout the study period.

3.2 | Effects on community perceptions

Tables 6–8 show the effects of ABSPY on community perceptions of social cohesion and collective efficacy; safety, crime, and disorder; and police. The program had no statistically significant effects on social cohesion or collective efficacy among those who responded to the survey in any of the waves, although Table 6 shows that, with the exception of Wave 3, perceptions of these concepts improved more in the comparison hot spots relative to the treatment sites. The predicted margins from the model allow us to better visualize the difference between the sites (Figure 6). They show that perceptions of both social cohesion and collective efficacy were consistently *higher* among respondents in the treatment sites (with the exception of collective efficacy in Wave 4) and improved steadily throughout time before tapering off slightly in the longer term (Waves 4 and 5). However, these measures also increased throughout time in the comparison sites.

ABSPY also had no significant effects on feelings of safety or perceived frequency of disorder among those who responded to the survey in each wave (e.g., how frequently residents reported seeing issues like graffiti and trash on the streets; Table 7). Feelings of safety in the treatment hot spots were higher in each subsequent wave relative to respondents at baseline (Figure 7), but were consistently higher in the comparison sites and improved more sharply there. In both areas,

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TABLE 4 Descriptive statistics for survey outcomes.

		Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3		Wave 4		Wave 5	
	α		Mean		Mean		Mean		Mean		Mean
	(Items)	*N*	(*SD*)	*N*	(*SD*)	*N*	(*SD*)	*N*	(*SD*)	*N*	(*SD*)
Social cohesion/community resources[a]	0.847 (11)	295	2.72 (0.52)	288	2.73 (0.43)	289	2.76 (0.50)	301	2.81 (0.45)	303	2.79 (0.45)
Collective efficacy[b]	0.782 (4)	280	2.45 (0.71)	278	2.53 (0.64)	280	2.54 (0.72)	277	2.64 (0.70)	294	2.57 (0.63)
Feelings of safety[a]	0.879 (8)	290	2.85 (0.58)	284	2.93 (0.48)	284	2.99 (0.59)	297	2.97 (0.63)	303	2.99 (0.56)
Frequency of disorder[c]	0.932 (9)	266	2.52 (0.98)	264	2.22 (0.91)	274	2.03 (0.88)	275	2.21 (0.97)	293	2.31 (0.90)
Likelihood of crime[b]	0.942 (11)	265	3.00 (0.64)	266	2.83 (0.67)	272	2.73 (0.66)	275	2.66 (0.75)	285	2.71 (0.66)
Frequency of police activity[c]	0.811 (6)	269	2.34 (0.75)	268	2.34 (0.73)	267	2.27 (0.78)	263	2.35 (0.76)	287	2.33 (0.78)
Satisfaction with police[a]	0.831 (2)	251	2.67 (0.80)	252	2.78 (0.65)	248	2.73 (0.75)	243	2.86 (0.70)	252	2.62 (0.86)
Police legitimacy[a]	0.888 (3)	244	2.64 (0.85)	247	2.72 (0.70)	251	2.64 (0.72)	244	2.81 (0.71)	266	2.63 (0.72)

[a]Outcomes based on a 4-point agreement scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 4 = *strongly agree*).
[b]Outcomes based on a 4-point likelihood scale (1 = *very unlikely*, 4 = *very likely*).
[c]Outcomes based on a 4-point frequency scale (1 = *less than once a month*, 4 = *every day*).

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TABLE 5 Random effects negative binomial regression on calls for service and offenses.

	Calls for service	All offenses	Youth offenses
Fixed effects	IRR (*SE*)	IRR (*SE*)	IRR (*SE*)
Program active	0.891* (0.046)	0.833* (0.063)	0.894 (0.121)
ABSPY	1.230 (0.180)	1.190 (0.210)	1.248 (0.226)
Program active × ABSPY	1.078 (0.051)	1.094 (0.074)	1.083 (0.130)
Matched pair (ref: Rainier & Henderson)			
Rose St	1.137 (0.266)	0.614 (0.172)	0.540* (0.141)
Light Rail	1.112 (0.307)	0.545 (0.172)	0.255*** (0.072)
Lake Washington	1.054 (0.264)	0.591 (0.169)	0.589* (0.150)
Safeway	0.726 (0.150)	0.515* (0.153)	0.641 (0.169)
Month (ref: January)			
February	0.976 (0.059)	1.012 (0.089)	1.211 (0.195)
March	1.155* (0.067)	1.176 (0.101)	1.325 (0.209)
April	1.070 (0.063)	1.142 (0.098)	1.286 (0.204)
May	1.174** (0.066)	1.281** (0.106)	1.775*** (0.260)
June	1.042 (0.060)	1.110 (0.094)	1.425* (0.217)
July	1.101 (0.062)	1.183* (0.099)	1.260 (0.196)
August	0.979 (0.056)	1.117 (0.094)	1.285 (0.198)
September	0.916 (0.054)	1.021 (0.086)	1.078 (0.170)
October	0.981 (0.056)	1.092 (0.091)	1.390* (0.211)
November	0.952 (0.055)	1.019 (0.086)	1.046 (0.167)
December	0.858* (0.051)	1.011 (0.086)	1.028 (0.166)
Trend	1.000 (0.001)	1.001 (0.001)	0.997 (0.002)
Autocorrelation controls			
1 month	1.477*** (0.051)	1.175*** (0.043)	1.112* (0.057)
2 months	1.167*** (0.041)	1.212*** (0.044)	1.180*** (0.059)
3 months	1.058 (0.038)	1.079* (0.039)	1.131* (0.056)
4 months	1.058 (0.035)	1.014 (0.036)	1.028 (0.051)
Constant	2.074*** (0.436)	4.933*** (1.367)	2.118* (0.618)
Dispersion parameters			
ln(r)	11.552 (6.865)	16.417 (10.603)	22.545 (15.093)
ln(s)	12.374 (7.627)	10.730 (7.143)	17.719 (12.309)
Log likelihood	−31,66.726	−2511.737	−1758.882
Wald χ^2	534.028***	136.410***	141.600***
N	1040	1040	1040

Note: Data represent exponentiated coefficients (incidence rate ratio, IRR).
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

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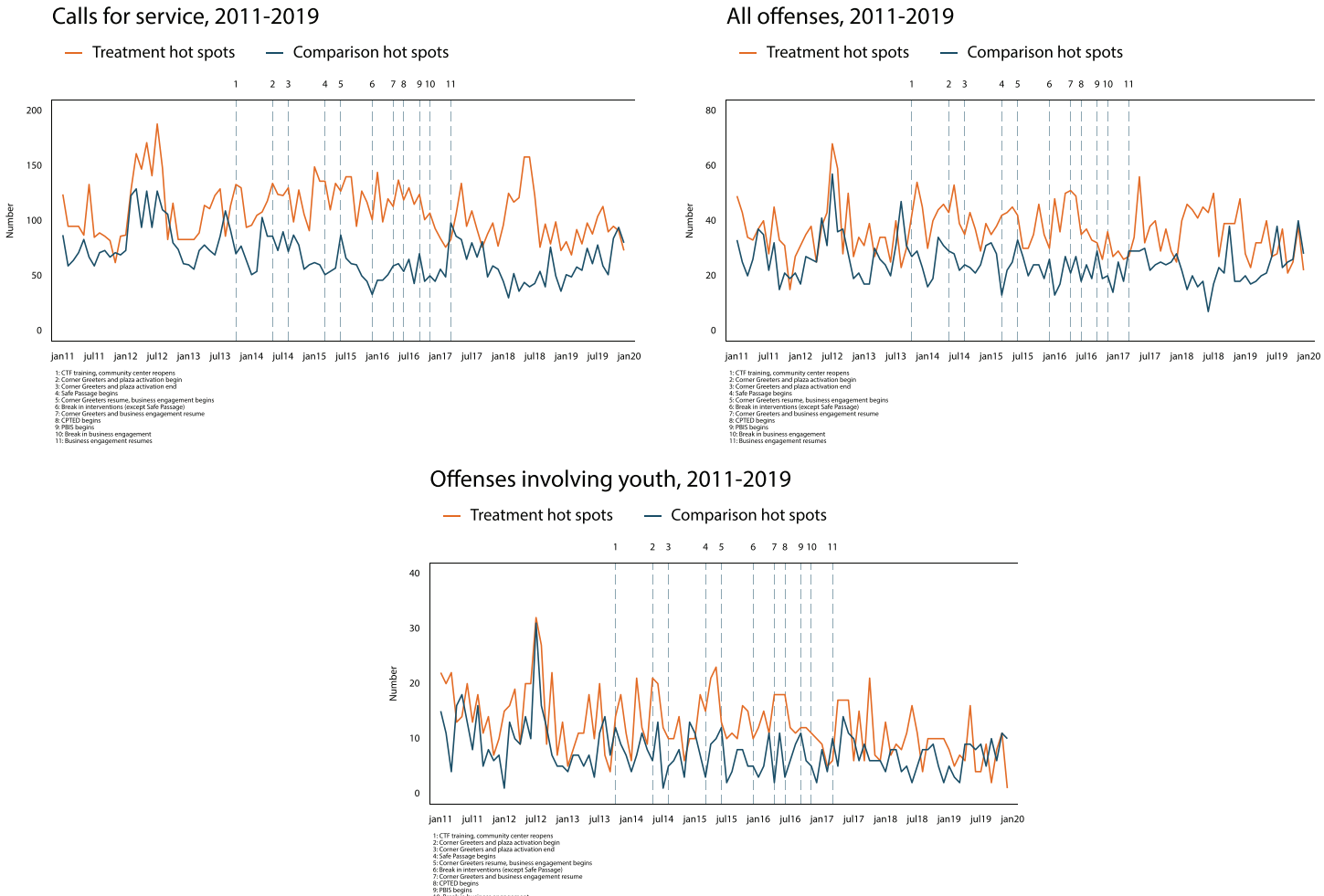

FIGURE 5 Monthly calls for service and offenses in treatment and comparison sites, 2011–2019. [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

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TABLE 6 Social cohesion and collective efficacy (treatment vs. comparison spots).

	Social cohesion	Collective efficacy
Fixed effects	*b* (*SE*)	*b* (*SE*)
Wave 2	0.057 (0.057)	0.090 (0.086)
Wave 3	0.049 (0.056)	0.070 (0.084)
Wave 4	0.130* (0.054)	0.243** (0.082)
Wave 5	0.107* (0.054)	0.152 (0.082)
ABSPY	0.057 (0.069)	0.051 (0.094)
Wave 2 × ABSPY	−0.021 (0.081)	−0.014 (0.121)
Wave 3 × ABSPY	0.012 (0.081)	0.067 (0.120)
Wave 4 × ABSPY	−0.027 (0.079)	−0.092 (0.119)
Wave 5 × ABSPY	−0.023 (0.079)	−0.010 (0.118)
Age (ref: 18–25)		
26–35	−0.038 (0.038)	−0.092 (0.057)
36–45	−0.068 (0.042)	−0.194** (0.063)
46–55	−0.004 (0.044)	−0.146* (0.066)
56–65	0.024 (0.046)	−0.050 (0.069)
Over 65	0.042 (0.060)	−0.164 (0.090)
Race (ref: Black/African American)		
African immigrant/refugee	0.022 (0.045)	0.071 (0.068)
White	−0.006 (0.034)	−0.093 (0.050)
Asian	0.005 (0.042)	−0.074 (0.064)
Native American/Pacific islander	−0.064 (0.078)	−0.166 (0.114)
Hispanic	−0.047 (0.065)	−0.116 (0.097)
Other/more than one race	−0.032 (0.042)	−0.133* (0.062)
Currently in school	0.017 (0.033)	−0.095 (0.050)
Constant	2.692*** (0.059)	2.580*** (0.084)
Random effects	σ (*SE*)	σ (*SE*)
Hot spot	0.003 (0.002)	0.003 (0.003)
Residual	0.208 (0.008)	0.451 (0.018)
Log pseudolikelihood	−874.783	−1350.634
Wald χ^2	21.165	39.225**
N	1371	1320

Note: The table shows multilevel mixed-effects linear regression.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

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TABLE 7 Perceptions of safety, crime, and disorder (treatment vs. comparison spots).

	Feelings of safety	Frequency of disorder	Likelihood of crime
Fixed effects	*b* (*SE*)	*b* (*SE*)	*b* (*SE*)
Wave 2	0.103 (0.069)	−0.258* (0.116)	−0.164 (0.085)
Wave 3	0.161* (0.068)	−0.513*** (0.112)	−0.272*** (0.082)
Wave 4	0.170* (0.066)	−0.240* (0.111)	−0.196* (0.081)
Wave 5	0.148* (0.066)	−0.191 (0.109)	−0.274*** (0.080)
ABSPY	−0.049 (0.092)	0.114 (0.159)	0.146 (0.097)
Wave 2 × ABSPY	−0.032 (0.099)	−0.072 (0.164)	−0.007 (0.121)
Wave 3 × ABSPY	−0.038 (0.098)	0.118 (0.161)	0.003 (0.119)
Wave 4 × ABSPY	−0.052 (0.096)	−0.043 (0.159)	−0.277* (0.117)
Wave 5 × ABSPY	−0.001 (0.096)	0.060 (0.158)	−0.008 (0.117)
Age (ref: 18–25)			
26–35	0.004 (0.046)	−0.141 (0.077)	−0.001 (0.057)
36–45	−0.058 (0.052)	−0.050 (0.086)	0.015 (0.063)
46–55	−0.072 (0.054)	−0.055 (0.089)	0.042 (0.066)
56–65	−0.042 (0.056)	−0.125 (0.094)	0.027 (0.069)
Over 65	−0.042 (0.072)	−0.472*** (0.122)	−0.162 (0.089)
Race (ref: Black/African American)			
African immigrant/refugee	−0.054 (0.055)	−0.066 (0.091)	−0.166* (0.067)
White	−0.060 (0.041)	−0.062 (0.068)	0.122* (0.050)
Asian	−0.285*** (0.051)	−0.163 (0.086)	−0.078 (0.063)
Native American/Pacific islander	−0.282** (0.093)	0.139 (0.155)	0.249* (0.112)
Hispanic	−0.186* (0.080)	0.204 (0.131)	0.107 (0.098)
Other/more than one race	−0.005 (0.051)	−0.018 (0.083)	0.080 (0.062)
Currently in school	−0.025 (0.040)	0.056 (0.067)	0.021 (0.049)
Constant	2.974*** (0.077)	2.545*** (0.132)	2.885*** (0.085)
Random effects	σ (*SE*)	σ (*SE*)	σ (*SE*)
Hot spot	0.009 (0.005)	0.029 (0.016)	0.005 (0.004)
Residual	0.305 (0.012)	0.801 (0.031)	0.433 (0.017)
Log pseudolikelihood	−1134.567	−1717.129	−1303.075
Wald χ^2	59.949***	71.415***	87.759***
N	1366.000	1306.000	1298.000

Note: The table shows multilevel mixed-effects linear regression.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

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TABLE 8 Perceptions of police (treatment vs. comparison spots).

	Police activity	Police satisfaction	Police legitimacy
Fixed effects	*b* (*SE*)	*b* (*SE*)	*b* (*SE*)
Wave 2	−0.056 (0.094)	−0.114 (0.098)	−0.067 (0.098)
Wave 3	−0.085 (0.092)	−0.080 (0.095)	−0.029 (0.094)
Wave 4	0.073 (0.091)	0.027 (0.095)	0.017 (0.094)
Wave 5	−0.037 (0.089)	−0.074 (0.095)	0.037 (0.092)
ABSPY	0.048 (0.099)	−0.160 (0.105)	−0.103 (0.102)
Wave 2 × ABSPY	0.102 (0.134)	0.417** (0.138)	0.242 (0.137)
Wave 3 × ABSPY	0.096 (0.133)	0.328* (0.137)	0.101 (0.136)
Wave 4 × ABSPY	−0.062 (0.132)	0.310* (0.136)	0.274* (0.135)
Wave 5 × ABSPY	0.107 (0.130)	0.079 (0.136)	−0.056 (0.132)
Age (ref: 18–25)			
26–35	−0.199** (0.064)	−0.087 (0.066)	−0.043 (0.065)
36–45	−0.049 (0.070)	−0.005 (0.074)	0.084 (0.072)
46–55	−0.086 (0.074)	0.108 (0.077)	0.202** (0.075)
56–65	−0.092 (0.077)	0.125 (0.081)	0.200* (0.079)
Over 65	−0.327*** (0.099)	0.179 (0.103)	0.149 (0.101)
Race (ref: Black/African American)			
African immigrant/refugee	−0.108 (0.076)	0.226** (0.078)	0.165* (0.076)
White	−0.245*** (0.055)	−0.122* (0.058)	0.046 (0.057)
Asian	−0.281*** (0.071)	0.058 (0.074)	0.113 (0.072)
Native American/Pacific islander	−0.118 (0.124)	−0.029 (0.127)	0.015 (0.134)
Hispanic	−0.090 (0.110)	0.052 (0.110)	0.034 (0.108)
Other/more than one race	−0.087 (0.069)	−0.072 (0.072)	−0.099 (0.070)
Currently in school	0.076 (0.055)	0.015 (0.058)	0.076 (0.056)
Constant	2.502*** (0.090)	2.723*** (0.095)	2.560*** (0.092)
Random effects	σ (*SE*)	σ (*SE*)	σ (*SE*)
Hot spot	0.002 (0.003)	0.003 (0.004)	0.002 (0.003)
Residual	0.544 (0.021)	0.541 (0.022)	0.522 (0.021)
Log pseudolikelihood	−1446.433	−1333.994	−1319.592
Wald χ^2	66.368***	67.776***	54.675***
N	1296.000	1197.000	1204.000

Note: The table shows multilevel mixed-effects linear regression.
*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$.

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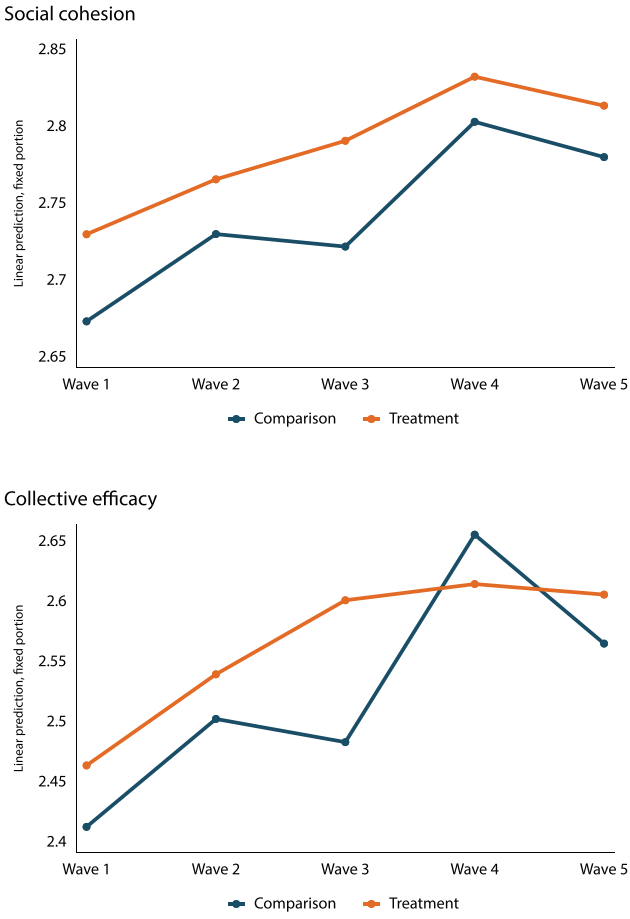

FIGURE 6 Change in community perceptions of social cohesion and collective efficacy, 2014–2019. [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

survey respondents reported seeing disorder less frequently in the short and medium term (Waves 2 and 3), but more frequently in the long term (Waves 4 and 5). ABSPY did have a significant and favorable long-term effect on Wave 4 respondents' perceptions that a serious crime was likely to occur in the hot spot, relative to respondents at baseline. The interaction between Wave 4 and treatment was statistically significant and negative in direction ($b = -0.277$, $p = 0.019$), indicating that respondents in the treatment sites thought that a serious crime was significantly *less* likely than those in the comparison sites. However, by Wave 5, this effect, although still in the same direction, was much smaller and no longer statistically significant.

Table 8 shows respondents' perceptions of the frequency of police activity, their satisfaction with police, and perceptions of police legitimacy. In general, respondents in the treatment sites reported seeing the police more frequently than those in the comparison sites in all waves except Wave 4 (Figure 8), but none of these results was statistically significant.

Respondents in the treatment hot spots were significantly more satisfied with the police in Waves 2 ($b = 0.417$, $p = 0.003$), 3 ($b = 0.328$, $p = 0.017$), and 4 ($b = 0.310$, $p = 0.023$), although there was a slight drop relative to respondents in the comparison sites in Wave 3. Nonetheless, these findings show that ABSPY had a sustained positive effect on satisfaction with the police for most of the project period. However, in Wave 5, treatment site respondents' satisfaction, although still positive in direction, was no longer statistically significant and minimally different from

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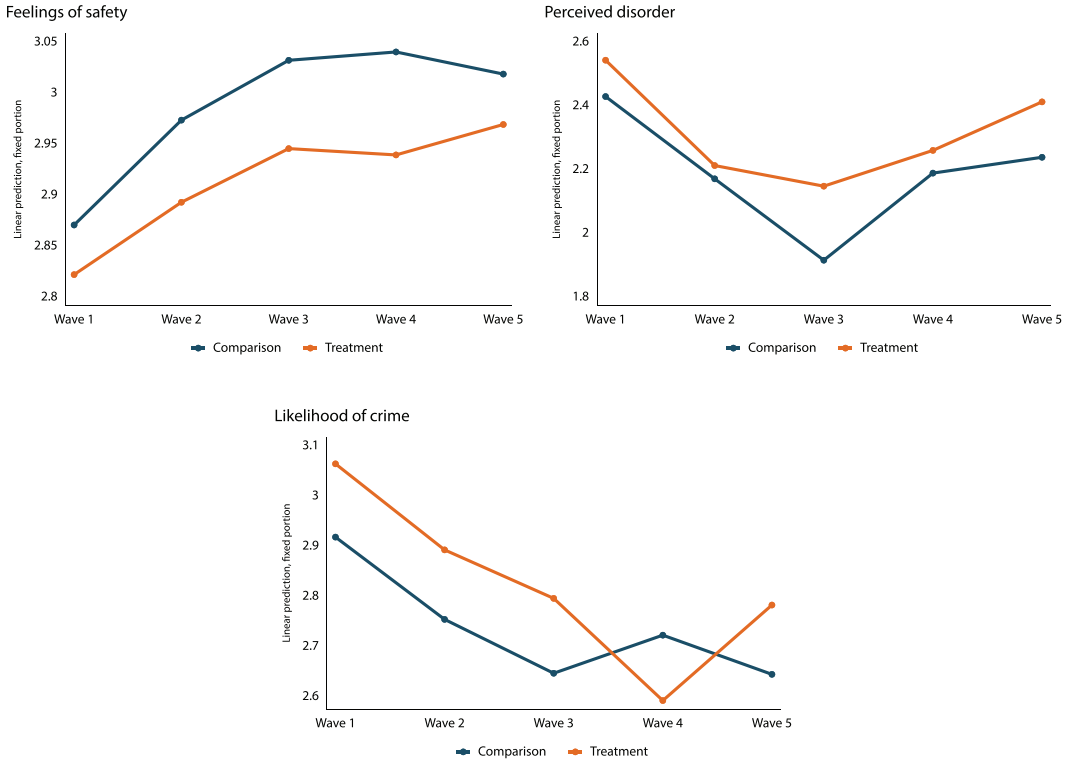

FIGURE 7 Change in community perceptions of safety, disorder, and crime, 2014–2019. [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

baseline. Finally, perceptions of police legitimacy varied considerably in the treatment sites each year, but improved steadily in the comparison sites after a slight drop between Waves 1 and 2. ABSPY was associated with significantly better perceptions of police legitimacy among treatment group respondents in Wave 4 compared with those at baseline ($b = 0.274$, $p = 0.042$). However, in Wave 5, the direction of the effect reversed, though the difference from baseline was small and not statistically significant.

4 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this article, we examined the implementation and evaluation of *Rainier Beach: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth* (ABSPY), a community-led, place-based, data-driven initiative to improve community safety and reduce crime involving young people in youth crime hot spots in the Rainier Beach neighborhood of Seattle, Washington. During a 9-year evaluation period from 2011 to 2019, including 5 years postimplementation, we found mixed results. CFS and youth and overall offenses were higher in the treatment hot spots while ABSPY was active, although not significantly so. We found significant improvements in perceptions of serious crime, police satisfaction, and legitimacy in the short to medium term. However, these positive trends reversed in the fifth year of implementation.

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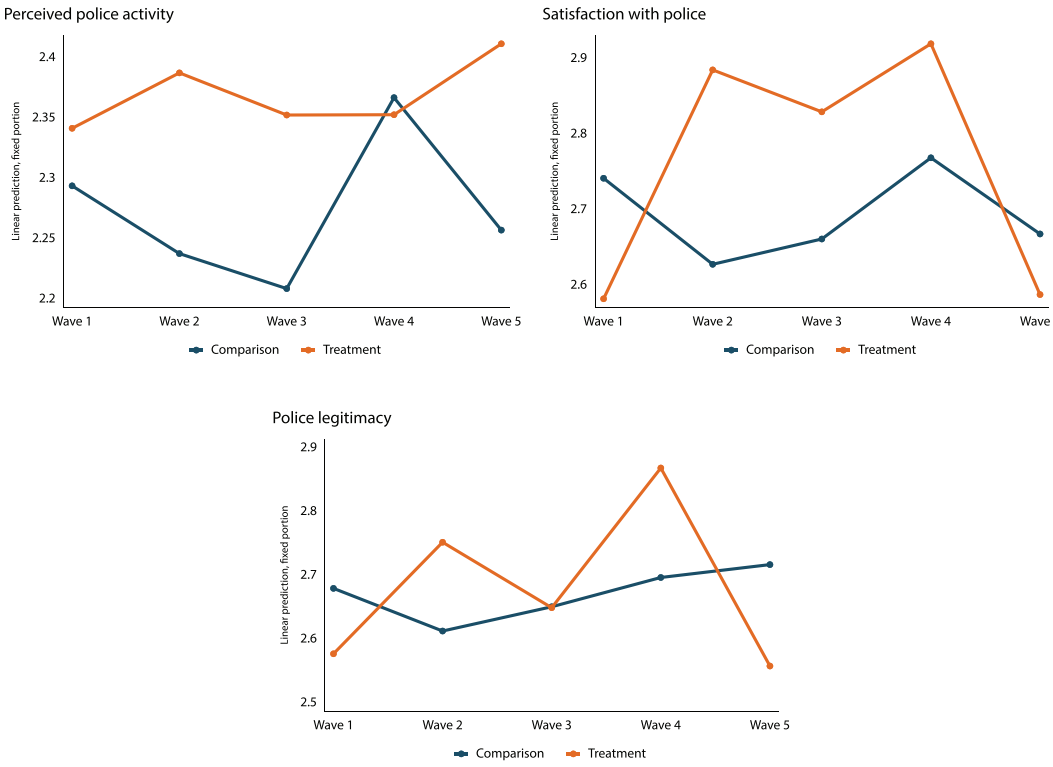

FIGURE 8 Change in community perceptions of the police, 2014–2019. [Color figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

Some of our findings may simply be explained by the limitations of our evaluation strategy. Our study was underpowered to detect statistically significant effects on crime outcomes: as Table 1 shows, all three crime outcomes had relatively low monthly mean counts preimplementation, which is not surprising given the small size of the hot spots.[11] Nonetheless, the rates of crime outcomes were still slightly higher in the treatment sites postimplementation. It is important to note that the preintervention counts of CFS and offenses were also higher in the treatment sites (Table 1), although Figure 5 shows that the overall trends were fairly similar.[12]

Relatedly, the matching of treatment and comparison sites had some limitations, as in any quasi-experiment. We identified the treatment and comparison hot spots based on 2012 data, and the ensuing decade brought a substantial amount of gentrification to most of our comparison hot spots. At the same time, Rainier Beach did not benefit from many of the positive aspects of economic development experienced by the neighborhoods encompassing the comparison sites. We did not have appropriate data to control for these changes, although our crime outcome models do control for preintervention crime rates and other (unmeasured) covariates are accounted for in the selection process (i.e., the treatment variable).[13]

Furthermore, as we explore later in this section, some of the ABSPY interventions that were intended to increase guardianship and collective efficacy may have led community members to call the police more as they participated in or became more aware of crime prevention efforts, similar to the phenomenon of crime reporting sensitivity in COP interventions (Weisburd et al., 2022; Weisburd, Gill, et al., 2021). Beyond the crime outcomes, we did not survey the same people

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each year, so it is possible that the mixed results from our surveys are driven by participants in a given year differing from those in prior years in ways that affected their perceptions of safety and policing.

Despite these limitations, we also want to explore possible substantive reasons for the mixed results and discuss how lessons from ABSPY's implementation and outcomes can inform future research and practice. To do so, we first return to the two core elements of effective community problem-solving coalitions discussed earlier: cultivating engagement and adopting effective coalition-building practices (i.e., building member, relational, organizational, and programmatic capacity in order to take action). To what extent did ABSPY reflect these elements of successful coalitions, and how might this have affected the results of our study?

It is clear that community engagement with ABSPY was strong. Notably, our community survey showed that social cohesion and collective efficacy were consistently stronger in the treatment sites than the comparison sites throughout the study period, including at baseline (see Figure 6). This was true even though the treatment hot spots were substantially "hotter" than the comparison sites, and the comparison sites experienced significant economic development and revitalization, a benefit not enjoyed by the treatment neighborhood. Although this may explain why we could not detect any postintervention changes in these outcomes, it also highlights the community's initial readiness and continued willingness to engage.

This observation is important because it shows that community engagement exists and can be cultivated even in high-crime communities, which contrasts with traditional ideas about social disorganization (e.g., Skogan, 1989) but aligns with more recent research showing that although hot spots of crime do have lower levels of collective efficacy than non-hot spots, levels are higher than we might assume (Kuen et al., 2022; Weisburd et al., 2023; Weisburd, White, et al., 2021). The creation of ABSPY's Community Task Force demonstrated that within a handful of microplaces, there may be literally hundreds of people with interest, good ideas, and willingness to participate, if the right steps are taken to conduct outreach and mobilize them. The microplace approach was particularly useful here, because it was feasible to go door to door in the hot spots to ensure that the coalition was representative of the people who lived and worked in these spaces. Another strength was the use of the POELs to reduce barriers to participation based on language, culture, and relative power and influence.

Member capacity within the ABSPY coalition was also strong. Many of the original Core Team members who helped develop ABSPY also worked on the RBNPU years before and remain on the team today. In addition to representing the various organizations involved in ABSPY, several members are lifelong residents of the hot spots or Rainier Beach more broadly, and are raising their own children and grandchildren there. They have a deep understanding of neighborhood dynamics and experience with engaging in local planning processes and collaborating with a variety of agencies. Community-led processes can reinforce existing, long-standing local culture and shared values that are already aligned with the work (Backer & Guerra, 2011; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Chavis, 1995; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001; Kim, 2005). The initial positive effects of ABSPY on some community perceptions, such as the short- to medium-term improvements in perceptions of serious crime among treatment hot spot residents, align with research suggesting that community coalitions that can tap into these high levels of social capital are successful at achieving their goals (MacDonald et al., 2013; Sabol et al., 2004).

ABPSY's strong member capacity brought stability and consistency, often lacking in bureaucratic organizations, which also contributed to its organizational capacity (i.e., ability of members to organize around a shared agenda for taking action: Foster-Fishman et al., 2001). For example, between 2013 and 2020, the city had five mayors (including two interim), six SPD chiefs

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(including four interim), and 10 South Precinct captains, whereas—as noted above—many of the original ABSPY members have been involved from the start and have longstanding ties to Rainier Beach. Furthermore, the equal footing on which organizations participated in the Core Team meant (in theory) that any changes in participants would not change the overall structure of the coalition or its ability to move forward with the work. However, ABSPY also experienced challenges with organizational, programmatic, and relational capacity that illustrate the extent to which the core competencies of coalition building are intertwined, and that all four areas must be strong in order for the coalition to reach its goals.

In practice, the lack of clear leadership and formal roles and responsibilities on the ABSPY Core Team—also vital elements of organizational capacity (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001)—sometimes meant that it was unclear who should be responsible for implementing the decisions of the coalition or how to proceed when there was no consensus among all members. This meant that work was sometimes delayed, or proposed adjustments to the implementation plan were not followed up on, which ultimately compromised ABSPY's programmatic capacity (including its credibility, which is an important aspect in creating and sustaining programmatic capacity: Foster-Fishman et al., 2001; see also Butterfoss et al., 1993; Chavis, 1995; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Wandersman et al., 1997). This may partly explain why, despite the variety of signature interventions targeted at the hot spots, ABSPY did not significantly reduce crime or residents' perceptions of safety and disorder.

Challenges with relational capacity may also have affected ABSPY's organizational and programmatic capacity, and subsequently its effectiveness. Although there was stability in membership on the Core Team, challenging conversations and disagreements became increasingly frequent within the group throughout the years. These conversations focused on ABSPY's goals, ownership and leadership of the work, and the relative power and influence of institutional and community partners. As individual organizations, many of ABSPY's community partners were used to competing with each other for funding and resources, and had different expectations of who owned certain aspects of community organizing work in the neighborhood. This sometimes led to tensions flaring up around how much money was allocated to different ABSPY interventions (each of which was overseen by a different partner) and who had authority to speak on the coalition's behalf. Deep-seated issues of systemic and institutionalized racism underpinned many of these challenges. Those with longstanding ties to Rainier Beach pointed to the neighborhood historically being "overpoliced and underserved," and they sometimes found it challenging to work with institutional partners whom they perceived as having perpetuated these injustices.

Nonetheless, the Core Team intentionally worked to address these challenges (Chavis, 2001; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001). They engaged in regular restorative "peace circles" with an external facilitator to work through conflict and brought elements of this process (such as using a talking piece) into regular meetings. They addressed power imbalances by establishing a weighted voting system for decision making in which community partners had multiple votes each and institutional and governmental partners either had one vote or did not vote at all. However, one effect of the Core Team shifting its attention to these higher level issues was that less attention was paid to implementation. ABSPY's separate implementation team, which oversaw the interventions and maintained fidelity and dosage, eventually fizzled out. Thus, ABSPY's programmatic capacity may have been compromised at the expense of rebuilding relational capacity (Chavis, 1995), and some of its crime prevention goals may not have been realized as a result.

Another interesting finding in our study is ABSPY's significant, positive effects on community perceptions of the police. In particular, a significant improvement in police satisfaction was sustained across three different waves of survey respondents. The idea that a community-led

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crime prevention coalition, in which police were at the table but not leading the effort, could have consistent effects on perceptions of police is interesting in itself, but the change in these trends toward the end of the study period is also noteworthy. One possible reason for the dropoff in perceptions of satisfaction and legitimacy in Wave 5, which may also explain the corresponding increase in the number of survey respondents who were concerned about the likelihood of a serious crime occurring, was an uptick in gun violence in the neighborhood in 2019. In one particularly shocking case, which occurred only a couple of months before we began Wave 5 data collection, a gang-related shooting in a crowded park adjoining one of our hot spots left a mother and several children, including a baby, seriously injured (Bush, 2019). This incident shook the community for a long time afterward and likely influenced residents' survey responses that summer. Although this incident likely would not have been prevented by increased attention to the implementation of ABSPY interventions, it highlights the sensitivity of community perceptions of police effectiveness and safety to the occurrence of serious crimes.

However, the change in perceptions of the police also ties more broadly into ABSPY's challenges with relational capacity, especially the tension between community and institutional partners. The relationship between ABSPY's community partners and the police deteriorated during the study period, which may explain the shift in community perceptions. Consistent with the pattern of survey findings, SPD was an integral partner in the earlier years of implementation. The precinct captain at that time was not only highly supportive of the work but also personally and regularly involved (including helping to paint and repair run-down buildings as part of CPTED efforts), which went a long way toward building trust among skeptical community members. However, SPD engagement dwindled after the captain moved on during the turbulent period of turnover we described above, and SPD subsequently struggled to provide consistent representation to the Core Team. This led to a lack of clarity around SPD's role and some negative interactions between Core Team members and what they perceived as a "revolving door" of SPD representatives, some of whom (in the team's opinion) did not understand the work or the neighborhood. Thus, ABSPY members began questioning their support for police involvement in the initiative at all, as part of the broader exploration of the balance of power between community partners and government institutions (see also Gimenez-Santana et al., 2022). The dropoff in police involvement, coupled with the lack of support for it within the coalition, may be related to the reversal in positive perceptions of police legitimacy in Wave 5.

This raises interesting questions about the appropriate role for the police in community-led crime prevention coalitions, especially as some communities call for less police involvement in general. As we have noted, the community provides the mandate for policing (Sherman, 1997; see also Tyler, 2004). Thus, to the extent that the police are still primarily responsible for responding to calls about crime, they should be deeply interconnected with the community in pursuit of effective crime prevention. A procedurally just police response to crime requires community support and cooperation based on feelings of obligation and trust rather than coercion (Gill, 2023; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2004). However, our study suggests that community engagement with the police is fragile, and even a long-term initiative like ABSPY may not be sufficient to protect it against breakdowns in trust created by serious crime events or inconsistent participation.

What lessons do these observations offer for future research and practice around community problem-solving coalitions to prevent crime? A key issue emerging from the story of ABSPY's implementation is that strong community engagement may not be sufficient to realize crime prevention gains—coalitions need to build capacity and sustain effective coalition-building practices in order to move from engagement, interest, and participation to collective action, even in communities where the conditions for engagement and building member capacity are strong. This is

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an obvious corollary to the criticisms of police-led crime prevention efforts we described at the outset of this paper. Efforts like TPP and POP emphasize the "taking action" part of problem solving and are effective at preventing crime, but have not always paid close attention to involving the community in these efforts on an equal footing (Hinkle et al., 2020). On the other hand, the evidence base for COP suggests that police efforts to engage the community improve the community's perceptions of the police, but the crime prevention effects are weak (Gill et al., 2014). In community-led coalitions, community engagement is crucial for getting the effort off the ground and may represent a microlevel systems change that could ultimately have a larger impact (Yang et al., 2012), but it may not be enough to move the needle on crime prevention in the shorter term (Gill et al., 2014). Lessons from both policing research and other community coalitions suggest that although community engagement may indirectly affect crime by putting in place the necessary conditions for successful crime prevention efforts to take hold, sustained collective *action* is the mechanism by which crime can be reduced.

Our results also suggest that the police play an important role in community problem solving for crime prevention, even if they are not leading the effort. At a time when calls to redirect policing resources to community-led programs have become progressively louder and police–community relations are fraught, the first step for communities is to decide whether they want the police at the table at all. However, as Gimenez-Santana et al. (2022) point out, crime prevention coalitions that *do* involve the police could provide the most comprehensive "reimagining" of public safety because each participating organization, including the police, can tap into their own area of expertise, allowing for flexibility, capacity building, and effective responses to a variety of issues. For police, this may require a different level of participation than they may be used to in their traditional bureaucratic organizational structures, such as deferring to the needs and desires of other community partners and moving more slowly toward taking action as a result. Similarly, if community groups are willing to invite police to the table, they need to understand the specialized tools and limitations of the police and consider how best to take advantage of what they have to offer.

Whether the community or the police lead the effort, future research on crime prevention coalitions should focus on better understanding the interplay between member, relational, organizational, and programmatic capacity (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001) and the mechanisms that help coalitions develop strong working relationships and move from engagement to action and results. Qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews and ethnographic/participant observer research that document the development and activities of coalitions, would add valuable contextual detail to quantitative evaluations of these processes (Nazaire, 2018). Participatory action research (Baum et al., 2006; Kidd & Kral, 2005; McTaggart, 1991; Whyte, 1989) offers a natural framework within which to conduct mixed-methods evaluations. It centers community experiences and involves many of the same activities and goals of problem-solving coalitions, such as community planning, identifying and prioritizing problems, sharing responsibility for implementation, and breaking down barriers and power imbalances between participants (e.g., Gill, 2023). Given the length of time it may take to build community engagement, move to collective action, and achieve measurable effects on crime, research funders should also consider offering longer term support for the implementation and evaluation of these initiatives.

As we highlighted above, future research should also examine alternative metrics of success in evaluations of crime prevention efforts to address the possibility of crime reporting sensitivity (CRS: Weisburd et al., 2022). We could not directly assess CRS in our study because of the preexisting differences between the treatment and comparison sites, but the fact that ABSPY was associated with higher (albeit non-significant) rates of CFS and offenses at the same time as

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residents generally reported feeling safer could point to a reporting effect that would make it more difficult to detect a crime reduction effect if one exists. Coalitions and researchers should consider collecting alternative measures that are less sensitive to increased reporting, such as community and victimization surveys and systematic social observations (see also Gimenez-Santana et al., 2022). Relatedly, future evaluations should attempt to parse out the possible differential effects of interventions implemented within complex crime prevention efforts like ABSPY. We opted not to examine this issue in this paper due to the low statistical power of our study and the risk of multiple test bias, but it is possible that each of ABSPY's multiple interventions affects crime in different ways, and they may differentially affect the likelihood of CRS as well. We have some preliminary evidence that the effects of specific ABSPY interventions differ in magnitude and direction (Gill & Prince, 2021).

In summary, this evaluation of *Rainier Beach: A Beautiful Safe Place for Youth* highlights the many benefits and challenges of involving multiple partners in crime prevention and shifting the balance of ownership away from police—who undoubtedly have unique tools, experience, and skillsets, but may not be fully embedded in the community or understand its history and dynamics—and toward community members who have deep, long-term stakes in the well-being of their neighborhoods and families. In line with prior research on police-led collaborations, our results show that significant and meaningful reductions in crime require collective action as well as improved community engagement, and may take a long time to be fully realized, but improvements in community perceptions can help to build or sustain informal social control and a sense of safety that may improve the credibility of the coalition and encourage people to keep participating in order to reach the goal. The challenge for communities is to identify measures of success and learn how to effectively and intentionally leverage the expertise of each member of the partnership. If the police are involved, they may have to let go of traditionally held feelings of ownership and their reliance on leveraging coercive powers, and be willing to defer to community expertise. More generally, we think it is critical for crime prevention coalitions to identify measures of crime outcomes that are not affected by increased reporting of crime resulting from greater collaboration with and trust in the police.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors confirm that they have no conflict of interest to declare.

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Notes

[1] Population data from 2012 and 2018 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, retrieved July 6, 2020 from data.census.gov.

[2] City statistics from 2018 American Community Survey 1-year estimate, retrieved July 6, 2020 from data.census.gov. Neighborhood statistics from Rainier Beach Action Coalition, a key ABSPY partner, retrieved May 18, 2023 from rbcoalition.org/neighborhood-information/demographics/.

[3] seattle.gov/documents/Departments/OPCD/OngoingInitiatives/RainierBeach/RainierBeachNeighborhoodPlanUpdate.pdf, retrieved May 18, 2023.

[4] We excluded reports that did not relate to crime and disorder, such as accidents, suicides, and natural deaths. Following prior crime and place research, we also excluded traffic offenses and other crimes that cannot be linked to a specific place (e.g., DUI), as well as offenses occurring at intersections, which comprised about 10% of the citywide total. If a report involved more than one offense, we prioritized person-related crimes as the "primary offense," in keeping with ABSPY's focus on youth violence. See Gill et al. (2015) for a detailed description of the process we developed to identify and geocode youth-involved offenses.

[5] Safe Passage's implementation partner, the Boys and Girls Club of King County, used alternative funding to keep the program active during this time.

[6] This information was derived from city and county data sets, Google Maps layers, and block-group-level Census data on demographics, poverty, employment, education, and the number of households with children.

[7] ABSPY is still active at the time of writing this paper, and we continued to evaluate its effects through 2022. However, we elected to include results through 2019 for the purposes of this paper because of the significant changes to both the program and data collection that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in early 2020. On the evaluation side, we continued to receive police data during the pandemic but had to switch to online community surveys from 2020 onward, which were conducted in the treatment neighborhood only. We have produced technical reports of the evaluation results annually since 2016 (Gill & Faison, 2023; Gill & Prince, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; Gill & Vitter, 2017; Gill et al., 2016; Gill, Jensen, et al., 2018). The start date for the analysis of police data was selected because SPD changed their data collection and recording methods significantly in June 2010, so prior years' data were not comparable. SPD also rolled out a new records management system in May 2019 to improve NIBRS compliance. They backfilled prior years' data into the new system and provided us with a full replacement offense data set going back to 2011.

[8] National Incident-Based Reporting System; see bjs.ojp.gov/national-incident-based-reporting-system-nibrs (accessed June 9, 2023).

[9] We made an effort to return to the same households in subsequent waves, but the household surveys made up a smaller part of the overall total. Due to population turnover, especially in large rental apartment buildings, returning to the same address did not always mean that we spoke to the same people.

[10] We included a separate race/ethnicity category for African immigrants and refugees, because many members of these communities did not identify as Black or African American.

[11] At the recommendation of an anonymous peer reviewer, we conducted a post hoc power analysis by reestimating the models and randomizing the treatment and comparison locations in a permutation test. We ran 10,000 permutations due to the complexity of the models. We then used the standard deviation from the resulting distribution of coefficients from the interaction terms to calculate the minimum detectable effect size (MDES), where 2.8 times the standard deviation gives the MDES at 80% power and $\alpha = 0.05$. This analysis indicated that the MDES for all three models was larger than the effects we observed in our models, supporting our assertion that our models lacked statistical power. We appreciate the anonymous reviewer's guidance in running this analysis and the assistance of Prof. David B. Wilson in implementing the analysis in Stata.

[12] At the recommendation of an anonymous peer reviewer, we tested whether the differences between the sites violated the parallel trends assumption of the difference-in-differences approach. We re-estimated our models using Stata's xtdidregress command. We found that the assumption was not violated in the CFS or total offenses models, but it was violated in the youth offenses model, likely due to the very small number of youth offenses in both the treatment and comparison sites. The youth offenses model should therefore be interpreted with particular caution.

[13] We conducted several sensitivity analyses to assess whether the differences between the treatment and comparison sites might be driving the results observed. We first ran the random effects negative binomial models

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for crime outcomes without the comparison sites or difference-in-difference term, interpreting the treatment active/inactive variable as the coefficient of interest. None of the active versus inactive differences for crime outcomes were statistically significant. We also ran interrupted time-series models with the treatment group data only, using Stata's xtitsa command (we used a pre/post design here with May 2014 as the intervention start date for simplicity). Again, the results were similar and not statistically significant. We opted to report on the models with the comparison group in this paper, as this aligned with the original study design.

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