



## Project Ujima at Children's Wisconsin Violence prevention and intervention program



Firearm-related injuries are the leading cause of death for children and teens nationwide\*. Justifiably, the issue has been categorized a national public health epidemic. At Children's Wisconsin alone, the number of kids treated for gunshot wounds in our Emergency Department and Trauma Center **more than tripled since 2019, jumping from 39 to 142.**

The trauma inflicted by gun and physical violence goes well beyond those injured or killed — it ripples across families, friends and communities.

### Our kids need us

When a child arrives in our emergency room with a gunshot wound or as a victim of physical assault, they receive more than just immediate medical care. Project Ujima — the nation's first hospital-based violence prevention and intervention program — is there to help kids and families heal after violence shatters their world.

A child exposed to violence is more likely to engage in violence or be a victim of violence in the future. To make matters worse, young victims experience higher rates of anxiety and depression and score worse in psychosocial, emotional and school functioning compared to kids with cancer and other chronic diseases. That's why we intervene to care for them and their families after such traumatic experiences.

### Breaking the cycle of violence

Beyond immediate interventions, the Project Ujima teams provide mentoring and grief support, and teach kids healthy ways to process trauma. They also empower families, offering mental health care and helping them navigate issues related to housing, food and education. Ultimately, the goal is for families to heal and feel safe as they work to break the cycle of violence and realize their full potential.

**By building kids' confidence and self-esteem, teaching them nonviolent coping strategies and helping them establish positive peer support systems, we help prevent re-victimization and promote violence-free communities.**

\*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Today, Project Ujima is supporting more kids and families than ever, helping them heal physically, mentally and emotionally. These stats from 2023 reflect the breadth and depth of our program:



**10,000+**  
hours of direct support



**2,400+**  
victims and families served



**15 months**  
average time kids spend in the program

## Path to the Future

As instances of gun violence increase, so does the demand for Project Ujima in Wisconsin. This life-changing program — voluntary for participants, offered at no cost and not reimbursed by health insurance — depends on the generosity of donors. Your support of Project Ujima is critical to continue these services and provide even more kids and families with:

- Medical intervention
- Crisis intervention and case management
- Social, emotional and mental health support
- Youth development and mentoring
- Programming and enrichment opportunities
- Programs to safely store firearms

We must also focus on prevention, raising awareness and providing ongoing education in the community to increase firearm safety and reduce violent incidents. We must protect kids from violence before it happens.



## How you can help

As a pediatric hospital and health system, Children's Wisconsin is called to invest in programs that protect children and empower families. Your philanthropic support will expand Project Ujima to help even more families heal from trauma and learn how to break the cycle of violence.

**If you'd like to make a gift to Project Ujima, please contact Kara Muchow, Senior Director of Development, at (920) 205-8717 or [kmuchow@childrenswi.org](mailto:kmuchow@childrenswi.org).**

**Together, we can work to promote violence-free communities and ensure brighter futures for kids and families!**