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Philly leaders encouraged by drop in homicides so far this year

After recent years of unprecedented levels of violence, city and law enforcement officials say they've seen a significant drop in reported homicides in Philadelphia so far this year.

As of April 30, there were 87 reported homicides in Philadelphia in 2024, down 35 percent from the same time last year, according to data from police.

"The last time in Philadelphia we had 87 homicides at this time of the year. The last time was 2016. That's eight years ago," Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner said. "Well, right now, we are at a point where the number of homicides as compared to a few years ago is getting close to being cut in half."

For Pastor Carl Day of Culture Changing Christians, helping to stop the violence in Philadelphia is part of his life's work.

"We believe in building better men and businessmen. And that's how we beat the blocks and get those men off the block and everything that comes with the culture of the block in Philly," he said.

"Beat the Block," Pastor Day's transformative training program in the city's Kensington neighborhood, recruits 40 men between the ages of 18 and 25 and pays them \$2,000 each month over a four-month span to receive professional and personal development training.

“They go through poverty. You know so, my idea after spending years upon years going outside trying to just preach to people, convince them to do a thing, I said, ‘You know what? We need to respect them. Respect their dignity and pay them for their time,’” Day said. “We get them employed after 30 days and we take them through our curriculum which really helps them to unpack their mindsets and to change their lifestyles.”

Seeking Peace in Philly

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Pastor Day told NBC10 the work his program does is part of the community-based efforts that are helping to reduce Philadelphia's homicide rate. He also acknowledged that more work needs to be done, however, as the weather gets warmer. In the past, violence has spiked in Philadelphia during the summer months, according to police.

“I mean, yeah, we are coming up on the summer, so I would like to caution people as far as like taking the victory laps right now,” Pastor Day said. “Communities and cities across America are showing the reasons as to why that help is needed, that help should still remain there so that for the foreseeable future we can continue to keep our communities together, close-knit and provide options and resources for our youth.”

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