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AN EVALUATION
OF THE
CITY OF CONCORD - POLICE DEPARTMENT
"COMMUNITY RESOURCE UNIT"

GRANT NUMBER

78-I-A2044 C03

PROJECT PERIOD

January 6, 1978 - March 31, 1979

Virginia Garrell-Michaud
Evaluation Specialist

New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency

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BACKGROUND

In 1975, the City of Concord received a grant from the Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the Police Department's organization, operations and administration. In addition, the study was to identify opportunities for improvement and to recommend solutions to the problems found.

The final report of that study indicated that in order to adequately meet the growing demands for police services, the department would have to improve its community services and crime prevention activities.

In September 1976, the Concord Police Department requested technical assistance from LEAA to assist the department in defining specific problem areas with respect to the services provided to the community and to subsequently recommend solutions to those problems. That assistance was subsequently provided, and the final report concluded that since Concord had a manageable crime situation, the City and its Police Department had adequate opportunity to mount a preventative program regarding crime in general and juvenile delinquency and drug abuse in particular. The report recommended that the police department implement a viable police-community relations program.

On March 4, 1977, the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency approved a grant to the City of Concord for the establishment of a Community Resource Unit. The Unit was to be a separate organizational subdivision of the Concord Police Department, concerned primarily with juvenile delinquency diversion and crime prevention.

On January 6, 1978, this Commission awarded second year funding in the amount of \$12,801 for the continuation of the Community Resource Unit.

Funds were apportioned as follows:

	Federal	Crime Commission	Local
78-I-A2044 C03	\$11,521	\$1,280	\$12,802

The project period has been established as January 6, 1978 through March 31, 1979.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Community Resource Unit is a two-man subdivision of the Concord Police Department. The unit is primarily concerned with juvenile delinquency diversion and crime prevention. In addition, the Unit is concerned with the establishment of an effective network of communication between Concord residents and the police.

The specific objectives of the Community Resource Unit are as follows:

1. To present preventative programs to elementary school children in the city.
2. To continue involvement in Junior and Senior High School educational programs aimed at providing students with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and to instill proper attitudes in the youth with regard to the Criminal Justice System.
3. To continue a close involvement with teenagers and service agencies intended to reduce referrals to the Juvenile Court System.
4. To continue crime prevention programs aimed at reducing the conditions and circumstances which lead to the vulnerability of crime.
5. To continue group meetings with neighborhood leaders to maintain an essential communications network between residents and the police.

Two positions, those of Project Supervisor and Project Assistant, were to be funded through this grant. The supervisor was to be responsible for supervision of the Community Resource Unit and the crime prevention activities conducted by the unit. The Project Assistant was to be responsible for diversionary activities of the unit and the coordination of all in-school programs.

PROJECT OPERATION

When this project was first implemented in March of 1977, Officer Kevin Marzoli of the Concord Police Department was selected for the position of Supervisor. Mr. Marzoli occupied that position until February 3, 1978 when he was transferred to another position within the Concord Police Department. At that time, Police Officer James McGonigle, who was formerly the Project Assistant, assumed the position of Supervisor.

On February 13, 1978, Officer Ralph Lewis was assigned to the position of Project Assistant. He served in that position until October, 1978 when he was promoted to Sergeant.

On October 29, 1978, Officer Darrell Gwinn assumed the position of Project Assistant. Officer Gwinn had been with the Concord Police Department since 1975.

As proposed, preventative programs have been presented to elementary school children in the City of Concord. Thirteen public and private elementary schools in the Concord/Merrimack Valley School District have been contacted.

An anti-molestation program, entitled Patch the Pony, has been presented to every first grade and kindergarten student in the service area. In addition, this program has been presented, upon request, to a number of day schools and nursery schools. In excess of 1,500 children under the age of eight have been exposed to this program.

As of November, 1978, a pedestrian-safety program called Will WalkWright, had been presented to an additional 900 students in grades one through three.

A new pedestrian safety program, entitled Mini-Intersection was introduced to the elementary school system in November, 1978. The Mini-Intersection Program, which creates a simulated street intersection is to be used in conjunction with the Will WalkWright Program. Since its introduction, the program has been presented to four elementary schools.

Project involvement with Junior and Senior High School students has been aimed at providing students with an understanding of their rights and responsibilities and to instill proper attitudes in youth with regard to the Criminal Justice System. Towards accomplishing this goal, presentations on the following topics have been offered:

- Role of Police

- Role Playing

- Substance Abuse

- Mini Law Courses

- Career Day

- Driver Safety

- Rights

- Reason and Responsibility within the Law

- Informal Rap Sessions

Approximately 2,500 junior and senior high school students from the Concord/Merrimack Valley School District have been reached through these presentations.

Thus far, the total school program has consisted of 283 presentations made to area schools which have reached an estimated 6,808 children.

It was further proposed that the staff would continue a close involvement with teenagers and service agencies intended to reduce referrals to the

Juvenile Court System. By maintaining close liaison with local elementary and secondary schools, Officers McGonigle and Gwinn have been able to identify pre-delinquent youth and divert them to appropriate outlets. Approximately thirty youth per month are counseled by the unit staff. Youth in need of further assistance are directed to the Youth Services Division of the Concord Police Department where they are subsequently dealt with or referred to an appropriate social service agency. In addition, numerous meetings have been conducted with school administrators and social service agencies to find improved methods of handling juveniles both within the school system and the community.

In addition, a Concord Police Explorers Post has been established. Its membership consists of youth interested in law enforcement as a career as well as youth who have or have had behavioral problems. The purpose of the explorers post is to provide constructive activities and interests for its members and to improve the relationship between the police and the youth of the community.

In an attempt to maintain community coordination, members of the department actively participate in the activities of the Child and Family Service Agency, Hassle House, the Friends Program, the Salvation Army, the Board of Advisors of the Concord Mental Health Agency, the Merrimack County District Advancement Committee and the Youth Services Council.

In addition, in June of 1978 the Community Resource Unit implemented a summer park visitation program. Each of the thirteen Concord parks were visited at a minimum of once a week by a member of the Community Resource Unit and the patrol officer assigned to the unit. The purpose of park visitation is to maintain, over the summer months, the relationship developed during the school year between the police and youth. During the summer of 1977, prior to the implementation of the park visitation

program, over 200 complaints with reference to the city's parks were received by the Concord Police Department. During the summer of 1978, however, the number of complaints decreased to thirty.

Close association in the schools and recreation areas, as well as an open door policy for youth having problems, has resulted in an increase in non-delinquent police contacts and a decrease in delinquency contacts. Program data indicate that during the period April 1976 through October 1976, the department recorded a total of 590 individual juvenile contacts. Of these, 76.3 percent were delinquency contacts while 23.7 percent were non-delinquency contacts. During the same period in 1978 (during which time the Community Resource Unit has been active) there have been 534 individual juvenile contacts; 51.3 percent delinquency and 48.7 percent non-delinquency contacts. These figures represent a 9.5 percent decrease in the total number of juvenile contacts; a 39.1 percent decrease in the number of delinquent offenders and a 85.7 percent increase in the number of non-delinquent youth.

It was also proposed that the unit would reduce the conditions and circumstances which lead to the vulnerability of crime by implementing crime prevention programs. Towards achieving this end, the members of the Community Resource Unit sponsored a crime prevention booth at a three-day Kiwanis Trade Fair. It is estimated that in excess of 30,000 people attended the affair.

The Community Resource Unit has presented forty-six additional crime prevention programs to individual clubs, businesses and religious organizations and has reached a population of 2,020.

Following is a sample of the crime prevention programs presented by the Unit during the period February, 1978 through November, 1978:

PROGRAM

AUDIENCE

Drug Abuse Presentation	Salvation Army
Self-Protection for Women	Blazing Star Lodge
Self-Protection for Women	LDS Church
Need for Youth Programs	East Concord Lamplighters
Crime in the Home	LDC Church
(2) Burglary Prevention Seminars	Greater Concord Chambers of Commerce
(3) Robbery Prevention Seminars	Greater Concord Chambers of Commerce
Crime Prevention Security for Senior Citizens	Kennedy Apartment Senior Citizens

Thus far during the grant period, the Unit has conducted eighty security surveys of residential and business locations. Local businesses have been contacted by the Unit concerning target hardening, risk management and theft prevention.

Crime prevention information is also presented to local citizens through a column in a local weekly newspaper. The column, entitled Know Your Police, features profiles on individual officers of the Concord Police Department and special interest articles concentrating on crime prevention and explanations of various laws. The Community Resource Unit has also prepared a manual on robbery which has been distributed to all Concord merchants.

During this grant period, the Community Resource Unit continued group meetings with neighborhood leaders in order to maintain an essential communications network between residents and police. Neighborhood meetings were held in the eight city wards of Concord. The meetings featured discussions on park problems, the citizens role in the community, crime prevention techniques and general information. These meetings were adver-

tised through the Concord Monitor, Shoppers News, WKXL radio and poster board advertisements.

In February 1978, Officer Ralph Lewis attended a one-week crime prevention school sponsored by the Crime Prevention Officers Association, the Police Standards and Training Council and the Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency. In May 1978, Sergeant James McGonigle attended a three-day Police School Liaison Seminar in Flint, Michigan. In addition, in October 1978, he attended a four week Crime Prevention and Police Management Workshop at Southwest Texas State University.

The Community Resource Unit is currently attempting to orientate all members of the Concord Police Department in crime prevention and community relations techniques. Each member of the patrol force has been provided four hours of training on crime prevention and four hours of training in community relations and the functions of the Community Resource Unit. Additionally, a one-week rotating assignment to the Community Resource Unit was implemented in May. As of December 10, fifteen patrol officers have spent forty hours or more in the Community Resource Unit. It is the Police Chief's intention that every member of the department will participate in this training program.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Concord Community Resource Unit has now been operational for two years. During the current grant period, 283 presentations have been made to area schools reaching approximately 6,808 children. Surveys conducted by school authorities prior to and after these programs attested to the effectiveness of teaching students a respect for the law through close association with police officers. Members of the Community Resource Unit have made forty-six presentations to a number of social, civic, and religious groups on a variety of topics. In addition, a total of eighty

residential and commercial security surveys have been conducted since the beginning of the grant period. The unit has also conducted several neighborhood meetings in order to increase communications between police and residents.

The major thrust of all these activities is to bring the police closer to the people in order to improve the police-citizen relationships. As a result of this close association in the schools and recreation areas, as well as an open door policy for youth, the number of non-delinquency juvenile contacts has increased while delinquency contacts have decreased. During the period April 1976 through October 1976, prior to project implementation the department recorded a total of 590 individual juvenile contacts. Of these 76.3 percent were delinquent contacts while 23.7 percent were non-delinquent contacts. During the same period in 1978 (during which time the Community Resource Unit has been active) there have been 534 individual juvenile contacts; 51.3 percent delinquency and 48.7 percent non-delinquency contacts. These figures represent a 9.5 percent decrease in the total number of juvenile contacts; a 39.1 percent decrease in the number of delinquency contacts, and a 85.7 percent increase in the number of non-delinquency contacts.

In other areas, as well, the impact of close association with police can be illustrated. Since the introduction of the Park Visitation Program, the number of complaints received by the police in reference to the city's parks has decreased by 85 percent. In addition, the number of anti-police letters received by the area's newspapers has decreased drastically. Over the course of the year, the Community Resource Unit has received over 700 citizen inquiries and requests for services. The Concord Police Department, as a whole, reports increased community cooperation and support since the implementation of the Community Resource Unit.

The Concord Community Resource Unit is clearly successfully meeting each of its proposed objectives. No administrative or programmatic problems have been identified with reference to this project.

The Concord Community Resource Unit will be seeking third year funding from sources other than the Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

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