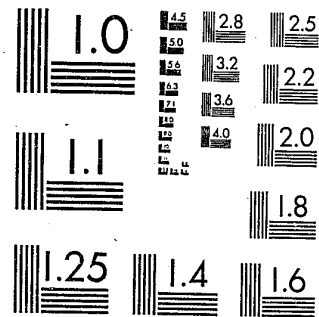


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City of Chicago  
Richard A. Daley, Mayor

Resident Security  
Programs

Prepared by  
Arthur Young & Company

Under the Supervision of  
The Department of Planning,  
City and Community Development

Thomas Kapsalis, Commissioner  
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# Contents

	Page
1 Introduction	1
2 Cabrini-Green Resident Safety Aide Program	5
3 Other Models of Resident Security Programs	15
4 Implementing a Resident Security Program	23

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## Introduction

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, many alternatives have been proposed to combat the high crime rates and the debilitating fear of crime characteristically present in deteriorating neighborhoods with concentrated numbers of poor, unemployed, and low-skilled households. Several programs involving neighborhood residents have emerged in response to the crime problem. Many of these programs seek the involvement of local residents in maintaining neighborhood security by asking them to assume some portion of responsibility for residential safety. Underlying this type of program is the belief that the solution to the crime problem lies, at least in part, in the active and serious involvement of local residents. They, together with local police authorities, appear to be able to contribute substantially to the reduction of crime and the fear of crime.

These resident security programs may assume a wide variety of roles, ranging from loosely structured neighborhood groups to highly structured and scheduled residential patrol programs. Whatever the nature, however, the basic philosophies are similar. Involving residents in security efforts appears to help create a community feeling wherein residents develop greater concern for the environment surrounding them. It also appears to help in fostering concern for the well-being of the community, for family members, friends, and neighbors.

Sociologists believe that this involvement, concern, and responsibility for security among neighborhood residents works to reduce the residents' alienation and to increase the degree of social integration within the community. Conversely, high crime rates and rampant fear of crime among community residents is thought to produce a high degree of alienation within a community. By motivating residents to work together and to share the responsibility for reducing community crime and fear, it is felt that social bonds are formed which have a positive effect on

the residents. The social bonds appear to result in reduced feelings of alienation and greater mutual concern for the community.

Resident security programs may be described as "turf reclamation."<sup>1</sup> The concept of turf reclamation begins when residents take control of their own semi-private residential areas, thereby engendering a sense of community. The residents agree upon a specific standard to be achieved, such as a reduction of crime, and they develop a mechanism to deal with that issue. An organized effort on the part of residents, such as residential security programs and, more specifically, resident patrols, reflects the aggressive step required to begin reclaiming the community turf.

A variation of the turf reclamation theory is Oscar Newman's concept of "defensible space."<sup>2</sup> Newman proposes using the architectural design of multi-unit buildings to take advantage of the natural sense of community in each of us. The environmental design is used to foster community concern; hardware features are used to augment residential programs of crime control. Newman argues that designing housing to heighten the sense of community and concern for well-being will result in a natural interest in security. This interest can be enhanced by developing programs where residents play an active role in maintaining neighborhood security.

In traditional public housing developments, where there are high proportions of distressed households, the above concepts of resident responsibility for community security may play an

<sup>1</sup>This term was used to describe a Department of Housing and Urban Development program designed by Seymour J. Rosenthal, School of Social Administration, Temple University.

<sup>2</sup>Defensible Space: Crime Prevention Through Urban Design, Oscar Newman, Macmillan Company, New York, 1972.

extremely important role in crime reduction. On a philosophical basis, the concepts of turf reclamation and defensible space can be most logical in the "public" housing environment. In fact, the importance of developing a secure community can be highlighted in a public housing development where residents may experience many alienating situations which, in turn, provoke criminal activity. Criminal activity, in turn, heightens social disintegration, and soon a destabilizing cycle is established. Psychologically, if residents can be motivated to be concerned with and involved in securing their own residential area, the effect of alienating circumstances can be reduced. Then the greater concern for self and community should result in a reduction in the opportunities for crime.

Furthermore, residential security programs in public housing maintain pragmatic values. They appear to foster a more conducive living environment which should work to reduce management problems of vandalism, resident turnover, and vacancy. This, in turn, conserves housing authority resources which can be utilized to provide better maintenance and other development services, thereby improving community desirability.

The following discussion is divided into three chapters. Chapter 2, which follows, describes one resident security program - Chicago's Cabrini-Green Resident Safety Aide Program - in detail. Chapter 3 presents several models for other resident security programs used in Chicago and elsewhere. Finally, after reviewing these programs, we present an implementation scheme in Chapter 4 to enable readers to begin structuring their own resident programs.

The information presented in this report was assembled from a variety of sources. Data for Cabrini-Green were compiled through in-depth interviews with Resident Safety Aide staff members, Cabrini-Green Management personnel, and staff members from the City of Chicago's Department of Planning, City and Community Development

(DPCCD). Additional information was extracted from DPCCD'S records of this and other programs. Resident perception data were collected in an Attitude and Perception Survey of over 500 Cabrini-Green youth and adult residents.

Information about resident security programs in other public housing authorities was collected through in-depth telephone interviews with public housing security directors and their staffs in housing authorities around the country. This was supplemented by a literature review of other existing programs which have already been documented.

The last chapter, which deals with implementing a resident security program, is the result of the analysis of all the data and is complemented by existing documentation of other implementation schemes.

This report evolved as one part of Arthur Young & Company's evaluation of the Cabrini-Green High Impact Program, of which the Improved Resident Safety Aide Program is one component. We have prepared this report as a means of assisting the Department of Planning, City and Community Development in sharing its experiences with other cities where similar problems exist. We believe that the last chapter of this report should be especially helpful in establishing other resident security programs.

## Cabrini-Green Resident Safety Aide Program

## 2. CABRINI-GREEN RESIDENT SAFETY AIDE PROGRAM

### BACKGROUND

Cabrini-Green is a public housing development of the Chicago Housing Authority, located on the Near North side of Chicago. It is one of the largest public housing developments in the country, with 3,500 units and approximately 13,500 residents. Cabrini-Green consists of three different housing developments within the total development: Cabrini Homes, Green Homes, and Cabrini Extension. It contains natural groupings of three building types: high rises, medium rises, and low-rise (or rowhouse) structures.

In 1972, the City of Chicago, Department of Planning, City and Community Development (DPCCD), conceptualized a Comprehensive Security Program for the Cabrini-Green Housing Development as a prototype security program which could be adapted to other high-rise public housing projects in Chicago. This comprehensive plan had three specific objectives:

- To provide protection to residents in all public areas of the buildings and on the grounds.
- To provide for efficient protection of property and grounds.
- To create an atmosphere of safety and security for residents and their visitors and for staff working in the buildings.

In 1976, the program was finally implemented, under the title of the Cabrini-Green High Impact Program. While the major emphasis of the program was on architectural changes to enhance "defensible space" and on electronic security measures, the Department of Planning, City and Community Development (DPCCD) and the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) found the involvement of residents in the management of their buildings to be a critical

component of the Comprehensive Security Program. This involvement of residents in the Cabrini-Green security efforts evolved from the Management Outpost concept pioneered by CHA in its Target Projects Program (TPP), funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Management Outpost sought to extend CHA management to each building through resident employees. From this concept, a multi-service team concept evolved, utilizing residents to enhance security and, at the same time, to aid employment within the development.

### PROGRAM STRUCTURE

A four-person Management Service Team (consisting of a Building Supervisor, Resident Aide, Resident Service Aide, and Resident Safety Aide) is assigned to each building within Cabrini-Green. In the early days of the program, the number of service teams differed from building to building, depending upon the number of residents, the incidence of crime and vandalism in the building, the number of multi-problem families within the building, and the proximity of the building to problem areas within the development. In the evolution of the program, however, there is now a Management Service Team in almost every Cabrini-Green building and three in the Rowhouse area. (A few buildings share the same management service team.)

The Management Service Team works from a Management Outpost Office in the building. This office serves to coordinate management and social services within that building. While the Management Outpost and three members of the team are funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the security service component, or Resident Safety Aides, is financed by a grant from the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission. The unique quality of this program is its coordination of management under the umbrella of the Management Outpost Office.

Each Resident Safety Aide (RSA) is directly supervised on a day-to-day basis by the Building Supervisor in that building. The Resident Safety Aide is supposed to work closely with the building council to increase support and influence among tenants.

During the first year of program funding, the Resident Safety Aide was recruited from each building's residents to act as the "crime-fighting" member of the resident team. The Aide was responsible for anti-crime activities and for projects relating to juvenile detention, truancy, and curfews. At the same time, the RSA would leave the police free to arrest or provide armed deterrence where necessary. The Resident Safety Aide was also expected to play an aggressive role and to be a catalyst for security changes within the building. The Aide was viewed as a leader for his or her building, and was expected to encourage other tenants from within to serve as volunteers in promoting security-oriented changes.

#### PROGRAM COMPONENTS

In the second year, funding for the Resident Safety Aide program resulted in three program improvements: training sessions, uniforms, and two-way radio equipment. These three components were specifically incorporated into the program to enhance the image and expand the role of the Resident Safety Aide.

The training sessions consisted of a 20-week course with 52 hours of instruction. The classes were conducted by instructors from the University of Chicago, and covered topics relating to personal safety, first aid, and administrative procedures. The courses also covered skills in communication techniques so the RSAs could deal more effectively with resident problems.

Uniforms, provided to RSAs as part of the second-year funding, were intended to provide a more professional image for the Aides. These were identical to the jackets worn by Chicago Housing Authority personnel and helped create an image of legitimacy

and respect. They were also intended to project the RSA as a highly visible team member while patrolling buildings and surrounding grounds.

Two-way radios were perceived as an important tool for the RSAs. First, they greatly facilitated the RSA's ability to cope with emergencies by allowing the RSA to communicate with a central security location. If RSAs are in need of additional help, they can call the central headquarters and receive an immediate response. This capacity helped to legitimize the role played by the RSAs. Even when the radios are not being used, the presence of the radio, in itself, was intended to enhance the image portrayed by the Aide.

#### DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES

The total responsibilities and duties of the Resident Safety Aides are generally defined in written job descriptions. These state that the RSA is:

"Responsible for providing supervision of halls, fire stairs; operating elevators during rush hours; assisting police in truancy control; enforcing curfew; and counseling and supervising youth in diversionary and probation problems. Also he is to follow up and assist police on social service problems. Examples of his duties are to:

- Provide supervision of halls and fire stairs; help maintain elevator controls during rush hours; assist police in truancy controls.
- Help to enforce curfew.
- Counsel and supervise youth in diversionary and probation programs.
- Follow up and assist police on social service problems."



The RSA job varies, according to the building in which the RSA functions and according to the directions of the individual Building Supervisor. In general, the RSA reports for work Monday through Friday at 8:30 a.m. and works until 4:30 p.m. In addition, the RSA is "on call" for emergency situations and may be reached either by phone or by two-way radio.

Most RSAs are women because women comprise the majority of leaseholders in each building, and an RSA must live in the building in which he/she works. Each RSA is expected to follow a general daily routine in the building so they are familiar with the normal events occurring in and around the structure. Each morning, the RSA inspects the elevators for vandalism and maintenance problems which are then reported when signing in at the CHA Management Outpost in the building. For the next half hour, the RSA monitors the children leaving for school, to help prevent truancy among building residents. While observing the children, the RSA also monitors the number of children using the elevators to reduce their overloading. The RSA also pays attention to the area around the building and reports any unusual observations, such as abandoned cars or vandalism/maintenance problems.

Shortly after completing the above activities, the RSA returns to the Management Outpost to complete administrative forms, complaint forms, and other paperwork. Later in the morning, the RSA patrols the building interior on a floor-by-floor basis. Although the patterns of monitoring may vary, the RSA generally rides the elevator to the top floor and walks down, checking hallways for cleanliness and vandalism. The RSA is instructed to challenge unfamiliar strangers and report suspicious activities to the Management Outpost. The RSAs are encouraged to modify these daily activities so that their presence is not routine and they are not "expected" to be at a particular location at a particular time.

In buildings where mailboxes are particularly vulnerable to theft, the RSA patrols the area after the mail has been delivered and before the residents arrive to pick up their mail. This is especially important on days when Social Security and AFDC payments arrive.

A typical weekday afternoon for the RSA consists of events similar to those of the morning. The RSA conducts an afternoon patrol of the building, performing the same functions as earlier. The RSA also watches for the children to return from school and supervises the number of children using the elevators, to prevent overloading and vandalizing of the elevators.

Throughout the course of the day, the RSA is encouraged to become acquainted with residents of the building. Some RSAs will visit residents' apartments to meet the families, especially in the case of elderly residents. In addition, the RSA is expected to hold monthly meetings with residents to discuss security and resident-related matters, and to encourage residents to participate in keeping the buildings clean and secure.

#### PROGRAMMATIC EXPERIENCES AND RESPONSES

By and large, there have been mixed responses to the Resident Safety Aide program. In June 1977, before training sessions, uniforms, and two-way radios were introduced, a survey of Cabrini-Green residents showed that the overwhelming majority of leaseholders (62 percent) saw the Resident Safety Aide in their building at least several times a week. Furthermore, over 85 percent of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the assistance they had received from the RSAs. On the other hand, monitoring staff for the High Impact Program report that they did not frequently see Resident Safety Aides while conducting on-site visits to the development. They also expected to see a greater improvement in the conditions of building locations which the RSAs were to monitor.



One of the most common suggestions for improving the RSA program is its scheduling. The majority of problems in Cabrini-Green occur at times when people are in the buildings and not during the midday hours. With limited manpower and budget, it appears that the most appropriate time for the majority of RSAs to patrol would be the early evening and weekend hours, as opposed to an 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. shift, and a smaller roving patrol to work the daytime hours. The current schedule addresses the problem hours when children go to and from school and vandalize the elevators and mailboxes. The program does not cover the hours when crime and the presence of suspicious strangers appears to be most common.

Given the need for RSAs at different hours, it was felt by some persons interviewed that the program might be more effective if the Resident Safety Aides were men because men would be less apprehensive about patrolling the buildings (in particular the stairwells of the high-rise buildings) alone. Alternatively, assigning two women in each building to patrol together may also be more effective, as it would reduce the lone woman's apprehension and create a stronger front against possible criminal offenders.

The lack of either a substitute Resident Safety Aide staff or a system of "doubling-up" for an Aide who is ill or on vacation was also perceived as a problem. The program did not provide an automatic replacement mechanism for either emergency situations or planned vacations. Therefore, buildings were simply not patrolled when the assigned RSA was not available. During times of the night or weekends when the RSA was not actively working, there was no standardized back-up system for providing resident security. It was felt that the program could be strengthened with an organized response to these substitution problems.

While most of the RSA's daily and monitoring activities appear structured, there is some confusion about the exact way in which the RSA is expected to act. For example, there is an underlying principle which stresses that RSAs should attempt to motivate the residents to become involved in the security of their own building but the manner in which they are to go about this is unclear. Furthermore, to compound this concern, the RSAs have selected "floor captains" for each floor of the building. The floor captain assumes a good share of the responsibility for the cleanliness of his/her floor and the attitudes of other residents. However, it is not certain how this floor captain is selected, yet a chain-like response is expected in order to involve as many residents as possible in building matters and to weave a social integration pattern for building residents.

While the second-year improvements were significant additions and enhancements to the RSA program, several aspects should be carefully considered in replicating the program in other locations. For example, the Resident Safety Aides do not appear to have any pressing need for two-way radios, other than daily check-ins to the Management Outpost.

The greatest value of the radios seems to be in terms of legitimizing the role of the RSA and improving the esteem associated with the position.

The training sessions appeared to be a vital improvement to the program and drew a positive response from most participants. The sessions covered a wide range of helpful security and nonsecurity topics, such as reporting procedures and good communications skills. However, for the program to be even more effective, the participants would have benefited from a manual which reiterated the course content so that they could refer back to appropriate topics when necessary. Furthermore, if a manual, and perhaps training film, had been prepared to supplement the training sessions, any Resident Safety Aide hired after the sessions took place would also benefit from the training effort.

The uniforms provided to the RSAs did not seem to play an especially important role in the program. Most of the uniforms arrived late and in the wrong sizes. Therefore, they had to be returned or refitted. Since the Aides worked without them for so long and there did not seem to be much of a difference in the program when the uniforms finally arrived, there does not seem to be a pressing need for these uniforms.

Aside from providing opportunities to improve specific program components, the Cabrini-Green Resident Safety Aide program has provided additional insights into the responsibilities and duties of the staff. The fact that the RSA program is integrated with the other Cabrini-Green security and management programs has inhibited the RSA program from developing a cohesive structure of its own. Each RSA is unique and has little integration with other RSAs (except in cases where two buildings are joined to each other and there are two RSAs assigned to the unit). With supervision largely by individual building, the role of the RSA varies from building to building.

In four buildings (five lobbies), at Cabrini-Green, there are some additional security employees, such as the Senior Public Safety Aides (SPSA), who monitor the security lobbies of the High Impact Program experimental buildings. In these lobbies, the RSA is often integrated with the SPSAs, yet there is little coordination of their duties with those of the SPSAs.

One of the major criticisms of the RSA program is the fact that it is not supervised by the Cabrini-Green Security Manager, who supervises the SPSAs. Instead, the RSAs are individually supervised by their Management Outpost Supervisor. This lack of coordinated and intensive supervision is likely to impede the effectiveness of the entire program. First, a security manager would be better equipped to act as the program supervisor, based upon the experience and skills which that person has acquired, and

would help in dealing with any security problems that may arise. Secondly, the coordination of this RSA program under one person should lead to coordinated roles for all security personnel functioning within a building, including the roving police patrols. This, in turn, should provide more efficient security services to the residents. Thirdly, a program coordinated on the development-wide level, as opposed to individual buildings, may produce greater visibility of the RSAs among the residents, as their roles become more clearly defined and distinct. Finally, the morale of the individual RSAs is likely to be boosted with the increased camaraderie and sense of participation in the RSA program as a development-wide experience.

#### CONCLUSION

This resident security program is just one type which is designed to address security in environments like Cabrini-Green Homes. However, there are many differing environments in public housing and alternative types of resident security. To provide a broader perspective on residential security in other public housing environments, we explore, in the following chapter, alternative security models to contrast with the Cabrini-Green experience.

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## Other Models of Resident Security Programs

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### 3. OTHER MODELS OF RESIDENT SECURITY PROGRAMS

The resident security concept covers a wide variety of programs in public housing developments. It includes any program which involves the assistance of residents to provide or enhance security. It varies, depending on the physical structure of the housing development and the intended function of the program. Cost factors also contribute to variations among resident security programs.

The physical structure of the development is one of the most important factors in determining the resident security involvement, because it affects all other factors. The structure of and access to buildings determine how the security patrol can function, which directly affects the cost of the program.

Generally, public housing consists of three basic building types: (1) high-rise buildings, (2) medium-rise buildings, and (3) rowhouses (or low-rise buildings). Basically, the same type of resident security programs would apply to high-rise and medium-rise buildings. Rowhouses may require a different type of security program.

Security programs may vary, depending upon whether there are a number of buildings within a development or whether the development contains scattered site housing. Finally, security programs must also be developed in line with the ease of access to buildings; whether there are multiple entrances, security doors, etc.

Historically the emphasis in post-World War II public housing was upon high-rise, elevator buildings. This style comprises much of the public housing in the United States. Recently, a great deal of attention has focused on these buildings and on the extent of crime within them. Therefore, housing authorities throughout the country have turned to increased security measures to reduce crime levels; many of these measures include residential security programs.

There are several ways in which to categorize models of resident security programs. Robert K. Yin of the Rand Corporation has developed a typology of patrols<sup>3</sup> that ranges from an armed community protection group to elderly watchmen and gatekeepers for a development. To qualify for Yin's definition of resident security, the program had to: (1) follow a specified patrol or surveillance routine, (2) function mainly to prevent criminal acts or apprehend criminals, (3) operate under the control of a group of citizens, and (4) concern itself primarily with safety in residential (as opposed to commercial) areas.

Typically, resident police forces are seldom found in public housing developments, but the other programs in Yin's typology are very common in the nation's public housing. We have placed these programs on a "security continuum," ranging from "intensive security" (such as police-like programs) to "low security," as provided by block group organizations. Five of the steps along this continuum are:

- Police-like security forces.
- Vertical and roving patrols.
- Stationary guards.
- Escort service staffed by youths.
- Block security programs

Variations to each of the programs can be found in housing authorities across the nation. A survey of security departments in several public housing authorities provided information on certain of these programs, which are described below. Some cities had only one security program, while others maintained different ones for different public housing developments.

<sup>3</sup>Patrolling the Neighborhood Beat,  
Robert K. Yin, Rand Corporation,  
Santa Monica, California.

#### POLICE-LIKE SECURITY FORCES

This type of security program is common to many housing authorities and to all types of buildings. While there is a uniqueness to each of these programs, police-like security forces generally involve uniformed armed patrolmen with powers to fight crime and arrest suspects in the public housing development.

Police-like programs are on the intensive end of the security continuum because they offer a high degree of security services: quick response and protection from crime and an accompanying sense of security to reduce the residents' fear.

One housing authority which attempted a resident 24-hour police force concept was the St. Louis Authority. However, the Authority found that when residents worked in their own buildings, they often did not patrol but returned to their apartments, even though on duty. The Authority attempted to change the concept by assigning members to other buildings rather than their own, but there appeared to be little impact on the crime rates. The program was recently replaced with another termed "Security Uplift," where nonresident participants were armed and uniformed like police officers. The program requires the officers to perform conventional patrols of the buildings. There has not yet been an evaluation of this revised program.

In Pittsburgh, the housing authority also employed both residents of their development and nonresidents to serve as a uniformed and armed security force. These employees were to function in the same capacity as regular Pittsburgh police officers but were only responsible for public housing property. Interviews with Pittsburgh officials indicate that this program is successful and will be continued in the future.

#### VERTICAL AND ROVING PATROLS

Vertical and roving security patrols are fairly typical in public housing developments. While they may assume a wide variety

of roles, the common thread among these programs is that the security patrol members are continuously moving around the development. Vertical patrols are those whose members patrol each floor of high-rise buildings; the name arises from their pattern of moving vertically through the building. Roving security patrols also move about, but generally around the outside of the buildings and into building lobbies. While they may also patrol each floor of a high rise, it is more common for these patrols to be involved in patrolling the total development (both inside and out). These patrols are also common to rowhouse-style developments.

The intensity of security services provided by these patrols varies from program to program. For example, some roving patrols may be the same as police-like forces, while others may be closer to an escort-type of program. Much of the intensity depends upon the power assigned to the patrol and its ability to respond quickly in crime situations. In addition, the intensity level is also determined by the type of protection and equipment carried by the patrol members.

Chicago's Cabrini-Green Resident Safety Aide program typifies the usual resident patrol program found in public housing. The program was structured so that Aides maintained a working relationship with the Chicago Police Department but did not have police powers or arms. Other cities have attempted Cabrini-Green-type patrols but with less success. For instance, very few authorities will permit residents to patrol their own buildings. Unlike the patrols at Cabrini-Green, where management claims that RSAs work well in their own buildings, many authorities have found that residents tend to report to work and then return to their apartments. One reason the Cabrini-Green program may be more successful is that the RSAs are expected to check in with the three other employees in the Management Outpost several times a day. Another reason may be that residents are hired with wages and career paths comparable to jobs in the general community. Many cities have, for reasons of cost, asked the residents to perform similar duties as volunteers or for a small stipend.

The Pittsburgh Housing Authority has developed a Community Security Organizer program where public housing residents are paid to patrol building hallways and to organize residents into security groups for protection of their own hallways. The Community Security Organizer is also a program where residents are not generally permitted to work in their own buildings.

Variations on the above program are found where residents are assigned patrols around exterior areas but are not permitted to patrol the building interiors. The New York City Housing Authority's Tenant Patrol Program is a volunteer program where residents patrol outside the buildings in public housing developments. New York has between 12,000 and 14,000 resident volunteers involved in security programs and many belong to this roving patrol. In two San Francisco public housing developments, residents and nonresidents are hired to walk around the development at night to patrol. However, similar to the St. Louis experience, staff members often return home after reporting for duty. The San Francisco Housing Authority considers this program unsuccessful and claims that it will soon be disbanded.

Conversely, the San Francisco Housing Authority has developed one of the most interesting and apparently successful resident security programs involving elevator guards. In eight high-rise buildings, the Authority has hired shifts of residents to ride the elevators 24 hours a day to reduce crime and vandalism in elevators. Through Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) funding, the Authority is able to employ residents to ride in the elevators, where fear and crime are considered to be extensive. Response from residents toward this program has been positive.

#### STATIONARY GUARDS

The program of stationary security guards is perhaps the most popular type of resident involvement in public housing security. Many housing authorities station residents in security

posts in building lobbies, especially in high-rise buildings. These programs fall somewhere in the middle of the security continuum. Their intensity is derived from their ability to control access to the building. However, their presence in one single location limits their ability to survey the development, although this is also dependent upon other supporting security equipment. The New York City Housing Authority in Brooklyn has the largest resident security program of this kind, where adult residents monitor the building lobbies to provide an image of security. The Pittsburgh Housing Authority also has a lobby monitoring program in 11 high-rise buildings where individuals, not necessarily residents, are hired to monitor traffic within the lobbies.

#### ESCORT SERVICES

Escort services are another less intense variety of resident security program. Frequently, youth and adult patrols will provide escort services around the development to women and elderly tenants after dark. The New York City Housing Authority in Brooklyn maintains a volunteer youth patrol to serve as an escort squad, especially in the larger developments where there are up to 30 to 40 buildings. This program was judged by the Authority to be very successful in the local Brooklyn developments.

#### BLOCK SECURITY PROGRAMS

On the least intensive end of the security continuum are "block security" programs. The "block program" concept originally described programs which were organized on the neighborhood block by residents who wished to personally participate in neighborhood affairs. It has since been extended to include the vertical residential groupings found in high-rise public housing buildings. While this type of program is not specifically limited to fighting crime or to creating a secure feeling among residents as much as it is designed to heighten residents' concern for their own safety, a

wide variety of programs of this type exists in public housing. The block security program is often one aspect of a more involved resident security program. The Cabrini-Green program is typical of this additional involvement because one function of the Resident Safety Aide is to hold monthly meetings among residents and to recruit "floor captains" who assist the RSA in gaining resident participation at these meetings. The Boston Housing Authority has a program where volunteers receive a \$50 monthly stipend to organize other volunteer security programs within the development. The volunteer is responsible for supervising floor captains in their respective hallways. In Pittsburgh, the Community Security Organizers are hired to instruct the tenants on how to improve their own security. The Community Security Organizers patrol the halls and are responsible for organizing residents together in security groups to be concerned with security in their respective hallways. In addition, they hold monthly meetings among the residents to develop residents' concern for personal safety.

#### CONCLUSIONS

As previously mentioned, one of the major determinants of the type of resident security program employed is the cost of the program. Many local housing authorities are finding that outside funding for resident security programs is not readily available and that the cost of these programs must come from their own budgets. The cost of a program may vary from very inexpensive to highly expensive. There are primarily two kinds of costs: capital investments which, once paid for, require only minimal maintenance, and the ongoing labor costs needed to maintain a patrol.

Resident security programs staffed by volunteers, as in New York, obviously keep costs to a minimum. Paying staff members a small stipend will increase the cost of a program, although these costs can be controlled. For example, Boston's program, which pays \$50-per-month stipends to the volunteer organizer, keeps costs relatively low. Fully paid resident programs, especially those designed to provide career ladders for employees, can be very costly. For example, the Resident Safety Aides at Cabrini-Green



were paid about \$9,000 each year. Since there were 26 Resident Safety Aides, that program cost about \$234,000 in salary alone for one year. However, such programs may be specifically designed to create employment for public housing residents.

Costs also vary depending upon the time and commitment demands of the program. Twenty-four hour security programs are, by far, the most expensive. On the other hand, patrols which cover only high-crime times (early and late evening hours), help to keep costs under control.

The other nonlabor expenses of resident security programs include such additional costs as uniforms, training, walkie-talkies, and other security equipment. The amount spent on these items may be paid by the residents or by the housing authority. The extensiveness of these components will vary according to the needs and objectives of the program. In general, the more the resident program is designed to assume police-like functions, the greater the expense of the program will be.

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## Implementing a Resident Security Program

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#### 4. IMPLEMENTING A RESIDENT SECURITY PROGRAM

The Cabrini-Green Resident Safety Aide program and other resident security programs in public housing developments provide a wealth of information that can be useful in developing new programs. Successful aspects of these programs can be transferred to other public housing developments, while less successful elements can be excluded.

The process of implementing a resident security program can be considered in three phases:

- Planning the program.
- Implementing the program.
- Identifying and adjusting to problems.

All resident programs should go through these three stages of program implementation. The following discussion is a guide for developing a resident security program. It presents the various issues to be resolved when developing a program, and identifies alternatives to be considered.

##### PLANNING THE PROGRAM

The first stage requires considerable thought and discussion. It involves having a program developer recognize the important problems, especially the ones which can be resolved through a resident security program. This stage requires that a specific detailed plan be developed, and that the organization and structure of the program be carefully planned. It is vitally important to complete the planning stage of the project before seeking funds to support the program.

##### Recognizing the Problem

Sometimes, what a housing manager considers as basic problems are really symptomatic of deeper problems. Is crime really a problem or is the problem residents' fear of crime? Perhaps

the problem is more the residents' lack of concern about what happens in the development and the fact that this attitude has led to high crime rates. If crime is the major problem, are the crimes being committed by residents or outsiders?

Being able to identify the real problem is one of the keys to a successful program, because once the true problem is recognized, the objectives of the solution can be detailed.

##### Identifying the Objectives

If the problems are known, the tailoring of objectives should be straightforward. Generally, the objectives of resident security programs can be summarized as:

- Crime and vandalism reduction.<sup>4</sup>
- Increased sense of security on the part of residents.
- Improved police and community relations.
- Improved police coverage.
- Increased social integration.

The objectives of any program need to be refined to reflect a specific response to a known problem. Often there is the sensed need for the program but little factual information on which to base support for it. That is, there may be widespread fear of crime in a community but the crime statistics reflect much less criminal activity. It is important to be able to document the need for a resident security program with data that lend credibility to its existence. This may be particularly important in convincing funding sources that the program is worthy of their support. Whatever data are available from local authorities on

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

crime, vandalism, and fear<sup>5</sup> should be retrieved and used to document a need for the security program. The data should also be used to help identify specific program objectives. For example, if crime data show that crime only becomes problematic on weekends, then the objectives should be targeted for those days. If building stairwells invoke the greatest fear, then the objective must specify reducing fear in the stairwells. This emphasis on specificity is extremely important during the planning stage, because it dictates what goals will be attempted during the program's day-to-day operation.

In addition, quantitative data provide an opportunity to measure the success of the program in achieving its objectives as the project progresses. However, even if the data are not completely quantitative, specificity is still important in order to assess where the major problems lie.

#### Developing a Plan

Developing a resident security program plan is one of the most important steps in implementing a program. At this point, realistic estimates must be made as to what can be accomplished with available funding. Will the program be successful on a volunteer basis, or will there be a need for salaried employees? The physical scope of the project needs to be identified. Is an indoor building patrol or an outdoor neighborhood patrol required?

<sup>5</sup>Inquiries for data on crimes should be made to the local police department. Any vandalism data would be maintained by the local housing authority. Data concerning residents' fear of crime would require the greatest effort to obtain. Sometimes local universities have conducted attitude surveys of the target residents but generally this information must be newly collected for the specific program with the assistance of professional public opinion organizations.

In Yin's evaluation of resident security programs,<sup>6</sup> each general program type (see program typology in Chapter 3) was evaluated for its advantages and disadvantages. Some programs appear more feasible than others for use as resident-oriented programs in public housing.

Police-like programs are expensive because of the salaries, overhead, and administrative costs involved and require a high level of organization. More importantly, the type of person needed in the program is difficult to recruit (especially due to the education and work experience of public housing residents) and, generally, such staff members have not been public housing residents. These programs apply to all types of buildings in public housing developments.

Vertical and roving resident patrols can be quite diverse. Vertical patrols are most appropriate in high-rise buildings where they patrol floor by floor, in the stairwells, and in elevators. Roving patrols are more appropriate for rowhouse types of public housing developments and for the lobbies and outside grounds of high rises where these people may continuously circulate and be highly visible.

Vertical and roving patrols appear to work best in public housing when there is a high degree of program organization and supervision. These programs require a good deal of structure, especially in terms of defined responsibility and duties of the resident. This type of resident patrol need not be expensive, especially since it may successfully utilize volunteers. However, the commitment of a volunteer recruit is a continuing problem

<sup>6</sup>Patrolling the Neighborhood Beat, Robert K. Yin, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, California.

and motivational techniques must be continually applied. Paying residents as security patrols can be very expensive and may not guarantee high motivation. The commitment and motivation of resident patrols must be established through appropriate job structure and careful monitoring and supervision. Volunteers should be continually encouraged and supported for their participation. Award ceremonies and special meetings or group outings play a role in encouraging additional volunteer effort.

Yin feels that stationary resident guards can be successful in public housing developments. They are most appropriate in the lobby areas of high-rise buildings rather than in rowhouse structures. The critical element in the use of these stationary resident guards is to have them maintain their authority and perform their jobs effectively. The ability to maintain this authority and to quickly obtain police assistance, either by telephones or walkie-talkies, appears to determine the success of this type of program. This program can be low-cost and can be effective with volunteers, if they are properly supervised. The services that stationary guards perform can vary from the duties of a full-fledged security guard to the presence of a person sitting on a folding chair in the building lobby and informally monitoring lobby traffic. Some housing authorities find, however, that these programs are most effective when residents do not monitor the buildings in which they live, such as was the experience in a San Francisco public housing development. In that instance, residents would return home rather than remain on the job for the duration of the day.

Youth patrols appear to be most effective as escort services in rowhouse areas and in buildings in public areas with high crime rates, and least effective when the members attempt to assume more authority. The real reward of youth patrols is to provide constructive projects for the youth residing in a public housing

development and to increase the youths' degree of concern for what is happening in their development. These programs require strong supervision and coordination efforts and are most successful when the program has a coordinator who can win the enthusiasm, support, and respect of the youths. Youth programs can perform at a very low cost by using volunteers or, at least, at a small cost by paying the youths stipends or small salaries. Financial incentives can be very helpful in these circumstances as unemployment among black youths is exceptionally high and as they are ineligible as welfare recipients. Therefore, money can more strongly motivate youths than adults, whose income limits their welfare benefits.

Youth patrols are frequently synonymous with resident escort services, although an escort service need not be provided only by development youth. Resident escort services are frequently used when there is an abundance of personal crime against women or elderly persons. They appear to be effective stop-gap measures to assist people around the development after dark, but do not solve the real problem of criminal victimization when escort services are unavailable. They are often formed on a voluntary basis, which keeps costs low and requires only limited supervision but high coordination.

Block security programs are useful in gaining the support of residents and are applicable to all building types. They are low-cost programs where residents may join together to collectively express their concern over problems in the development. These programs are often coupled with more extensive and active resident involvement and are good channels for relaying information to other less actively involved residents.

In assembling a resident security program, variations and combinations of each of these types should be considered. It is important to recognize the strengths, weaknesses, and appropriateness of each program to an individual development.

## PROGRAM ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Once a specific plan has been decided, based upon the services needed, it is then necessary to develop the specifics of the program. The manner in which a security program is organized and structured is an individualized topic for each housing authority and management. Most housing authorities maintain security departments with ongoing activities and a resident security program would be organized within that department. Other housing authorities have organized resident security programs through their management offices. Some have been organized purely on an individual development or building level, tailored to that specific situation. Regardless of the department organizing the program, there are some basic principles to consider, which have been learned from already existing resident security programs.

### Personnel

As Yin states in his evaluation, the size and composition of a patrol are important factors in the legitimacy of the patrol, the coverage it can provide, and its members' inclination toward vigilante behavior. The size of the patrol is directly related to the scope of the patrol activities. If the patrol uses volunteers, it is especially important to limit the scope of their activities so that they are not required to contribute large amounts of time. The reverse situation, where the volunteers do not have enough activity, can also present problems, because such groups often become bored and discontented, and may turn to vigilante behavior.

The composition of the patrol appears to be a key element in establishing its legitimacy within the community. Patrols that appear to form cliques within the development, or that are not well known, tend to arouse the suspicion of residents and police. Selection on the basis of social channels or personal preference should be avoided because such fractional membership can foster vigilante behavior.

The leadership of a single, hard-working, strong individual appears to be especially important in the success of resident security programs. Leaders may be either residents or housing authority management. Resident leaders are recommended in order to emphasize the need for residents to be integrally involved in the program. Erratic and disorganized leadership can cause discouragement and attrition among members.

### Organization Affiliations

The organization affiliations maintained by a resident security program may influence its success because community affiliations tend to legitimize the effort, enhance accountability, and provide access to resources and new members.

The relationship of the resident security program to other organizations should be well defined. Rather than functioning independently of all other groups, a successful resident security program should work closely with the bureaucracy of the local housing authority.

In particular, the resident security program should have a strong relationship with housing authority management to promote its legitimacy and to assure itself that its goals and procedures are acceptable to the management officials. Housing authority managers are in a position to endorse these types of programs and can assist in gaining the cooperation of other agencies such as the police department. Their endorsement may also be important for those security programs which are seeking funding from outside sources.

A good working relationship with tenant councils and other tenant organizations is also highly desirable. These relationships should be flexible enough to address the concerns of already existing tenant organizations and to seek their support and cooperation in defining community needs and recruiting residents to participate in the program.

### Bureaucratization

Bureaucratization of the program may be helpful to its overall success because it seems to enhance its ability to sustain operations over a longer period of time. Such techniques as maintenance of logs and other records, scheduling, and multi-level hierarchies tend to diffuse power and information throughout the program, thereby reducing dependency on the strong leadership mentioned earlier. Formalized training procedures also help to ensure continuity of service despite turnovers, and help to set uniform standards of behavior.

### Financial Resources

In any program, the financial resources are a critical element in determining the scope of operations. The amount of funding will vary according to the type of program. Police-like programs tend to be very expensive, as they require uniforms, guns, training sessions and salaries commensurate with the educational and working experience of participants. Vertical and roving patrol programs can be relatively inexpensive or rather costly, depending on their extensiveness. For example, funds may be needed to provide equipment, uniforms, and other furnishings. Salaries, training, and administration can require substantial amounts of money. Stationary guards and youth escort services can often be volunteer programs and therefore are usually considerably less costly. However, even they may vary in price, depending upon whether the guards are paid, trained, and provided with uniforms, walkie-talkies, or similar amenities. Block security programs typically use volunteers and generally cost very little. Occasionally, the block program will purchase a few walkie-talkies for when the participants are patrolling the neighborhood.

### Program Relation to Police

One of the primary concerns to be dealt with in the development of a program is its relationship with the municipal police. Program participants often cite police appreciation of their efforts as a major source of satisfaction.

Police support may be material or psychological and may include offices, funds, equipment, or the assignment of liaison personnel. The underlying purpose of this support should be to reduce duplication of services and enhance cooperation. This relationship should be handled with care because criticism by community members of vigilante behavior may result. This may also alienate residents due to frequent mistrust of police and groups who traditionally associate with police.

### IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

In beginning a resident security program, a wide variety of administrative questions needs to be answered by the program's originators. These can be segregated into seven general areas:

- Funding.
- Operations.
- Organization.
- Recruiting.
- Program regulations.
- Training.
- Police relations.

### Funding

Before any program can begin, the funding for the program, whether limited or substantial, must be located and committed to the proposed program. Such funding may come from the community, the local housing authority, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, or other sources.

In soliciting funding and then administering the program, it is important to develop detailed budgets which project the program's expenditures during the coming year. Once a budget is established and funding committed, the program organizers should

establish a system of record and accounting procedures to ensure proper administration of the program.

#### Operations

The term "operations" is synonymous with the scope of the program. Key elements that determine the scope of the program must be considered before actual operations can begin. These elements are:

- Scheduling.
  - Hours of operation.
  - Days of operation.
  - Season of operation.
- Area served.
- Boundaries and limits to access.
- Shift length.
- Residents per shift.
- Absenteeism rules.
- Contingency planning for emergencies.

Once the above questions have been answered, the program administrators should begin planning how the program will be introduced to the housing development and community organizations. In introducing the program to the community, the organizers must be careful to ensure that mechanisms exist to handle complaints about the patrol, about security, and to obtain community feedback.

#### Organization

Organization issues to be considered in establishing the program are twofold: (1) what will the formal program organization be, and (2) what are the career or advancement opportunities? In the case of formal organization, the following issues must be resolved:

- Levels of authority.
- Accountability.
- Designation of a leader.

Organization development issues which must be addressed are:

- Advancement competition.
- Basis for advancement.

#### Recruiting

Recruitment is the core of a resident security program. Qualified personnel must be continually recruited to ensure a successful program. Generally, program supervisors are recruited first, followed by recruiting of the program staff. Characteristics which may be important in staff selection are:

- Previous job experience demonstrating reliability.
- Previous job experience in public housing.
- Commitment to the development.
- Length of residence in development.
- Ability to relate to others.

In recruiting personnel with the above qualities, the program administrators will need to resolve the following issues:

- Men/women.
- Paid/volunteer.
- Residents/nonresidents.
- Youth/adult.

#### Program Regulations

All program activities must be governed by specific regulations which will determine responses to situations encountered

by program members. While not all activities and situations can be anticipated, key items which should be expected are:

- Witnessing of a crime.
- Reporting of crime.
- Incidents to be handled.
- Most serious incident to be handled.
- Emergency situation regulations.
- Response to mishaps and incidents.
- First-aid regulations.

Important regulations will be those dealing with members' behavioral standards and police coordination activities.

#### Training

To enforce program regulations and to improve the quality of program responses to crimes and other challenges, the training component of the program will be important. In the Cabrini-Green program, the attitudes toward the program of both the participants in the program and residents of the development improved following the second-year training program. Program administrators should carefully consider the following:

- Amount of training.
- Who provides the training.
- Purpose of training.
- Behavior guidelines.
- Use of equipment.
- Use of records.
- Procedures in handling incidents.
- Refresher training courses.

Initial training should be provided to all new security employees. In addition, refresher courses should be offered at least once a year. Furthermore, once a security employee has been successful over an extended period of time, that person should participate in the training of new employees. This provides additional insight into the job for the new employee, and increases the responsibilities of older and experienced employees.

#### Police Relations

One of the primary concerns to be dealt with in developing a residential security program within a public housing development is the relationship between the local housing authority and the local police department. The program administrators should identify organizational agreements and policies. In the case of police-like programs, if the program staff is to have arresting powers, these responsibilities must be carefully delineated. It must be clear where and when these persons may arrest and under what legal authorization. In addition, the following issues should be addressed:

- Functional responsibility between forces.
- Relationships with local precinct officers.
- Influence of police on program operations.

#### ADJUSTING TO PROBLEMS

Most of the problems identified for residential security programs stem from an evaluation of program activities, but these have been few in number. The identified problems should be considered suggestive and not characteristic of all programs.

Cost appears to be a common problem with most programs, since programs usually consist of local groups organized on a volunteer



basis. Generally, the programs are operated on a small budget with major expenditures related to radios, uniforms, and administrative costs of maintaining records.

Resident programs are occasionally susceptible to vigilantism. This situation should be carefully monitored when operations become dull and routine, or where members share a social compatibility with program directors and, therefore, attempt to assume greater authority than is legitimately attached to their role as a resident security person.

Programs operating in public housing developments may require both access monitoring and patrol activities to effectively address crime prevention. Experiences of programs discussed here has emphasized the importance of resident involvement in security. Program activities should be coordinated with both police and community representatives.

Implementation factors, such as personnel, community affiliation, and bureaucratization can have significant influence on the program. Those programs that devote considerable attention to matching the level of activities to personnel, and to screening and training applicants, appear to enjoy the greatest success. Also, programs that engender community affiliation and support are viewed as more legitimate and receive more financial support from the community. Finally, bureaucratization, involving a paid administrator, maintenance of logs and other records, pre-arranged scheduling, and quality control of members' behavior while on duty generally enhances the program's effectiveness.

Whatever type of program is developed, the members should be encouraged to report incidents but should not intervene in these incidents unless they are professional guards. Legal penalties and other dysfunctional results may severely affect a program's activities as a result of inappropriate intervention.

**END**