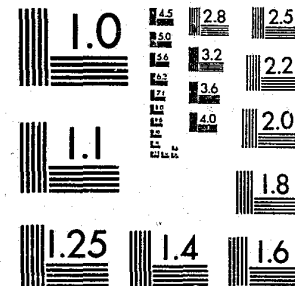


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Canada



*The Good Neighbours*  
Crime Prevention Handbook



Solicitor General  
Canada

Solliciteur général  
Canada

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## Preface

**B**ecause of the rising costs of providing police protection, it makes sense for everyone to help prevent crime. Of course, people can and do act as individuals to protect themselves and their property. While this is an important first step, many of these actions may lead to a sense of isolation and withdrawal from public places — responses that tend to increase both fear and crime.

This handbook is about carrying out community-based crime prevention. Crime prevention, according to one commonly accepted definition, is the "anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to reduce that risk." By community we mean any collectivity of people with common interests and concerns whether or not they share a common geographical area. Communities may either be "natural" or created through the concerted organizational efforts of individuals.

Community crime prevention programs bring people together to solve common problems. The results are two-fold: a measurable reduction in crime and stronger, more closely knit communities. And since these programs use mostly voluntary resources, they are cost effective.

Many community organizations are already active in the area of crime prevention. Often these groups were formed for other purposes, but having recog-

nized the important benefits of public safety and security, they now include crime prevention among their goals — applying their leadership skills, credibility, and proven team of volunteers in helping achieve real results.

This practical guide is part of a broader initiative of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada to encourage and support Canadians to become involved in community crime prevention programs. Such programs, when carried out by local organizations in partnership with the police, can significantly reduce crime and enhance the overall quality of life.

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ACQUISITIONS

# Looking Out for Each Other

Part of being good neighbours means keeping a friendly eye out for each other, or being alert to occasions when help might be needed. A hundred years ago, this was common practice. Survival, after all, depended on cooperative support. But this aspect of our heritage has changed. Today we rely on professionals to do things for us, so it seems only natural that we've gradually transferred some of our basic responsibilities as neighbours to an expanding law enforcement network.

Ironically, crime has grown faster than the police forces we've established to "look after" it. Recent evidence even suggests that no matter how much money is poured into increasing police patrols and investigation, crime rates will not decrease proportionately as a result.

Clearly it's time we tried a fresh tactic. It's time we took more social responsibility for each other. The easiest and most obvious place to start is by being good neighbours, willing to help protect each other's interest.

Few people can safeguard their home and property around the clock. Vacations, shopping and business trips, and social outings make it impossible to do so. Nor do the police have the resources to provide a constant protective surveillance. The truth is, no one can watch your house as well as you and your neighbours can. That's part of what

community crime prevention is all about.

## Community Crime Prevention

Community crime prevention means people sharing the responsibility for making the place where they live more secure. It doesn't mean taking on the role of the police, but using valuable police resources more effectively.

The premise for community crime prevention is the same as for any community endeavour — when people pull together to solve common problems, much is possible. And since residents know their own communities better than anyone, they can often find solutions ideally suited to the social and cultural identity of their community.

Obviously, for a community to undertake a successful crime prevention program, an organized approach and a strong sense of commitment are needed. In most communities, there are individuals and groups with a proven track record at organizing any number of local projects. Frequently these people — leaders and volunteers alike — will have a long-standing commitment to improving the quality of community life.

A growing number of community-based organizations are now taking action or looking for ways they can get involved in crime prevention programs. Some

### Community Crime Prevention Means:

1. Looking out for yourself. Everyone can and should take basic risk-reduction measures such as locking doors and securing windows.
2. Taking action with your neighbours and local police to deter criminals from operating in your neighbourhood. Programs such as Operation Identification (valuable property is marked for later identification) or Neighbourhood Watch (reporting the presence of strangers or other suspicious persons) are good examples of this kind of combined effort.
3. Joining with your neighbours to direct potential offenders towards positive pursuits. Often this involves addressing issues that can breed crime, such as high youth unemployment, or drug and alcohol abuse.
4. Generally, helping people feel better about themselves and their community through voluntary involvement in social service programs and community events.

take part in programs such as Neighbourhood Watch. Others are creating new programs, designed to meet the specific situation in their community. Here are some examples:

- Service clubs, trained by police,

are conducting home security checks door-to-door.

- Women's groups, concerned about sexual assault, are holding awareness workshops and setting up Community Watch programs.
- Small business associations are implementing Operation Provident programs (similar to Operation Identification in homes), as well as supporting Neighbourhood Watch programs.
- Recreation centres and YM-YWCAs are setting up special programs for high-risk youth.
- Seniors Groups are involved in providing house-sitting services for vacationers.

Despite their primary focus, these groups and many others are tackling crime prevention because they realize the importance of enhanced public safety. By joining them, your organization can actively help reduce crime and the fear of it. And that can lead to safer, stronger communities and a richer quality of life.

## A Working Partnership

*"Crime prevention is not a game of cops and robbers in which citizens play the trees."*

(Project Prevention, Manitoba Society of Criminology)

Successful crime prevention programs all result from a strong team effort, built around a good working relationship between community leaders and

the police. This partnership has advantages for both parties. For the sponsoring organization, it offers a source of experience, credibility, and resources, as well as solid back-up in those instances requiring a professional. For police, it offers a different kind of credibility and an opportunity to work with volunteers experienced in mobilizing community resources. This partnership, with each side contributing from its strengths and sharing the responsibility for neighbourhood security, is already at work in communities throughout Canada.

- By working together, police and residents in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, achieved a dramatic reduction in crime. Within a year of implementing Operation Identification and Operation Provident programs, business break and enters had decreased by 70% and residential break and enters by over 50%.
- In Saanich, British Columbia, a ratepayers group and local businesses and schools are working together with the police to reduce juvenile crime. Volunteers have security-checked 5000 homes and peer-pressure education sessions have been held in all schools.
- In Saint John, New Brunswick, an innovative youth project was initiated by the local police chief. Members of the police department, social agencies, and civilians pooled their resources to educate young people and divert first-time offenders into constructive activities. After two years, this successful project has improved communication all round, as well as stimulated public interest in dealing with youth crime.

- Across Canada, provincial, regional and municipal police forces are working with youth on a wide range of summer projects — from bicycle safety and cottage checks, to anti-vandalism campaigns. Community interest and support have been positive as young Canadians develop work skills that everyone benefits from.

While this partnership is still new with some police forces, many are backing community organizations in a variety of crime prevention programs. They recognize that a strong link with community groups is the best way to realize greater safety levels, especially in a time of budget constraints. Many police departments have full-time crime prevention officers who are available to assist community-initiated programs. These officers can offer advice based on experience, lend credibility to the program, provide access to media and public relations support, and provide resources such as publications and promotional materials.

This partnership is desirable from the perspective of community organizations because, properly supported by police, crime prevention programs can offer these groups just what they thrive on — an important issue, high public profile and credibility, an opportunity for some real and quantifiable impact, and a receptive and appreciative community.



## Working with the Issue

Crime is a national issue that places a social and economic burden on everyone. This issue, however, tends to be extremely coloured by subjective perceptions that can create a sense of fear and helplessness in people. Breaking through this barrier is a major challenge.

According to public opinion surveys, over two thirds of the Canadian population believe crime, including violent crime, to be a rapidly growing problem. Property crimes — break and enter, vandalism, burglary, motor-vehicle theft — which make up nearly 50 percent of total crime, have indeed been increasing. These are the crimes that have the greatest impact on Canadians in terms of frequency and cost. For example, in 1981, one out of every 39 occupied dwellings in Canada reported a burglary. However, the rate of increase of violent crimes — which constitute about 6 percent of total reported offences — declined between 1970 and 1980.

While all crime is serious in its impact on victims and in its potential to arouse fear in communities, it is useful to examine three aspects of the problem: incivility, fear, and actual crime.

An immediately uncomfortable reality counts more than crime statistics to many people. Some individuals are disturbed by behaviour that disrupts their sense of propriety or order — for instance, teenagers loitering on a street corner or playing loud music. These actions, called "incivilities," while not

crime, may be viewed by citizens and police as socially undesirable or even as precursors of crime.

Some people, fearing conditions they see as personally threatening, restrict their own behaviour. In these instances, fear of crime becomes more important than any actual occurrence in terms of restricted freedom and quality of life.

Finally, crime itself has a different meaning for everyone. To police and other professionals, for example, crime is a very specific matter, defined by criminal statutes and legislated precedents. Limited resources make it virtually impossible to deal with every offence or crime — often police can only focus on the most serious of these, and so their attitude will naturally differ from the average citizen's.

Getting an accurate picture of the nature and frequency of crime in your community can be highly beneficial. Police statistics may show, for example, that violent crime is limited to a small percentage of total crime occurrences, most of it involving violence among family members. Such information can go a long way in reducing people's fear of physical attack on the street or in other public places. An analysis of such statistics may also point out some interesting patterns. For instance, a significant percentage of property crimes are *unforced* break and enters. Residents might see new meaning in securing windows and doors once they realize how they may be contributing to crime.

While statistics can be a powerful tool for crime prevention, it's worth noting that there are problems in actually gathering them. To start with, statistics are based on police definitions of crime categories. Break and enters, for example, are not considered violent crimes. Yet to the victim whose living space has been violated and who recognizes that he or she could have been there when the intruder entered, a break and enter often feels like a violent offence.

Compiling community crime statistics may be difficult and time-consuming because generally this information isn't computerized. Police, too, may be hampered in making the data available because of competing demands on their time. Statistics can also understate the problem and distort the real picture of crime occurrences. For example, it has been estimated that only 40% of break and enters are actually reported. And these statistics may be outdated as well. National crime statistics, for instance, are often two years out of date by the time they're made public and are usually not detailed enough to be useful in planning specific crime programs.

Clearly, crime statistics are not enough to shape prevention approaches. A study of public perceptions of crime — especially your own community's response — is needed.

Knowing what residents perceive as crime will give your organization a focusing point. Incivilities and "minor" crimes will often be stressed. Over time,

these issues generally merge with those police view as important, although not always in a predictable way. In The Pas, Manitoba, for example, police found breaking and entering to be the major crime that should be addressed through a prevention program. Citizens decided otherwise. They identified speeding on the main street as the biggest contributor to crime. At first, this "minor" issue served as a focus for the group. Since then, they've initiated a number of crime prevention activities, including Operation Identification and Neighbourhood Watch, both of which directly address the problem of break and enters.

Another example of how seeming differences in perception can be ironed out occurred in an American city. The police had identified break and enters as the major crime problem, whereas the community was more concerned about rape. Later investigations revealed that a number of rapes in that community had occurred during break and enters. A powerful alliance was immediately formed to challenge both problems. In other communities, perceptions and priorities might not align so neatly and the partnership process may take longer.

### Approaches

After studying how your community views crime, it's important to consider your group's orientation to the problem. There are two general views your group might take.

Many people are reacting to threats to their property or family when they become involved in crime prevention. Often they choose to participate in programs that directly increase the

security of their homes and communities, such as Operation Identification and Neighbourhood Watch, home security checks, door-locking campaigns, installation of dead-bolt locks, and so on.

Other groups see crime as a social problem and become involved in programs aimed at influencing potential offenders. These social approaches include diversion projects for first-time offenders, recreation projects for high-risk youth, and community employment and counselling programs.

Both of the above approaches can be valuable in the overall crime prevention effort. Whichever is selected will naturally depend on your group's orientation and motivation, as well as the nature of the issue you hope to address.

A final difference in the way various groups approach crime prevention lies in how broad or narrow a context the project is perceived. Certain groups might take on community work with a strong issue-orientation. Their aim is to solve one problem, then move on to the next. Others focus on community development. Regardless of the issue, their goal is to build a more cohesive community, capable of solving its own problems.

Obviously, the context in which a group approaches crime prevention will affect the kinds of projects it undertakes. An issue-oriented approach, for instance, may, depending on the issues, result in a successful community watch program or a youth diversion project. A community-development approach may achieve the same goals but then use them as a springboard to other activi-

ties. A community-development approach to juvenile crime, for example, would probably address the whole youth scene in the community, including recreation and employment aspects.

In crime prevention, there is enough room for all approaches. In fact, there is a need for a variety of approaches. The reason that community-development approaches are favoured by a growing number of practitioners is that unified and closely knit communities as a rule have fewer crime problems than communities that lack social cohesion.

Perhaps the most important key to success in crime prevention is the need to target programs to specific audiences and issues. After these are defined, a uniquely tailored approach can be created, relying on a range of tactics and the appropriate sponsoring groups.

Community-based organizations that take a rigorous and targeted approach to crime prevention can expect to achieve significant results, especially when the community itself helps identify issues they can work on with the support of the police.

The following sections of this guidebook outline the steps that community organizations in North America have taken to maximize their success in preventing crime.

## Defining the Issue

*"It is not enough to say that we are going to prevent crime. We must attack specific crime in limited geographical areas with measures that are tailored to fit the particular problem."*  
(John Donohue, 1982)

The first step to take in addressing crime is to define exactly the specific issues or problems in your community. Without this information, it will be impossible to target action to deal with the problems, and equally impossible to measure the impact and effectiveness of your group's efforts.

These issues will, of course, vary depending on whom you ask, but will generally fall within three categories:

1. **Incivility**, which includes loitering and rowdiness;
2. **Fear of crime**, which has a negative impact on lifestyle and personal freedom;
3. **Crime**, which may be classified as violent, property, or personal.

Frequently, a community's perception of the issues will differ from that of the police. It has already been pointed out that sometimes these differing perceptions can be mutually supporting, as in the case of the American city where community concern centred on rape and police concern on break and enters. However, it's a well-established fact that residents are usually concerned about events that the police don't even consid-



er to be crimes. For instance, a community may see its major crime problem as an inability to control disrespectful people. These may include drunks, panhandlers, prostitutes, and the emotionally disturbed, as well as rowdy teenagers and loiterers — any of whom may cause fear among residents, especially the elderly. Yet these concerns do not show up at all in police statistics.

What happens when the community and police cannot agree on the nature of the problem? Disagreement over crime-solving strategies may be one result. That's why an accurate definition of the problem is so critical. An agreement on what the problems are doesn't necessarily mean that an accord will be reached on solutions, but it is certain that with-

out an agreement on problems, there will never be an agreement on solutions.

This chapter describes approaches that can be used to gather, analyse, and portray information about crime problems as part of a strategy for taking positive action.

The process of defining crime problems in your community and presenting these findings to people can be extremely powerful in debunking myths, reducing fear, and suggesting how crime can be prevented.

## Police Crime Statistics

Good problem-solving takes into account a basic knowledge of *how* and *when* crime occurs. Since statistics regularly published by police and government agencies may not be sufficiently detailed for a targeted or specific crime program, special information might have to be sought from the police. Even given their limitations (low reporting rates, inappropriate geographical areas, out-of-date information), police statistics can still be a useful source of information. Ask your local police force for help in getting the necessary data, or have your group make a formal request for access to police files.

The police, however, concerned to protect the privacy of victims, might be re-

luctant to let outsiders view this material. And sometimes, even when access is allowed, your own resources may prohibit detailed analysis. In one Canadian city, for example, a community group undertook a crime prevention program, but couldn't collect the statistical information for the project because they were understaffed and lacked the extra volunteer help needed to do the job.

If it is possible for your group to check police files, several types of crime occurrence reports can be used for planning information, ranging from simple logs of calls made to the police to far more elaborate files developed as a case goes through the criminal justice system. Logs or index cards can be used to count and map the numbers of various offences. In Winnipeg, Manitoba, for instance, six students hired on a summer employment grant from the Federal Government were able to code and analyse over 50 000 crime occurrences in less than three months. The coding forms gave only the names of victims and/or offenders, address, date, and type of complaint, yet the researchers could pick out sections of the district where crime problems existed, and could identify the most frequently occurring crimes in these areas. For example, high rates of wilful damage, mischief, and theft from cars were noted, especially in the parking lots of high-rise apartments and in car dealership lots.

A detailed knowledge of local crime patterns and victim/offender characteristics is necessary if prevention efforts are to be targeted successfully, but obtaining this knowledge may cost time and

money. Existing studies of this nature, supplemented with whatever local information is readily available, are probably easiest to use.

Once the pertinent data has been gathered, it can be used to spark community interest and involvement through a press release, or in combination with "block" meetings held throughout the community. Use graphic means of portraying the information you've collected. You might want to display it on a street map, choosing coloured pins for different crimes. Be specific — for instance, distinguish night-time break and enters with forced entry from unforced, daytime residential break and enters.

Certain crime patterns will begin to suggest solutions. A high proportion of unforced break and enters might lead to a simple "lock-up" campaign, or a high number of daytime and evening residential break and enters might lead to watch programs.

## Community Perceptions

Because crime prevention is a shared responsibility, the community itself must be directly involved in defining its crime problem. Community opinions and perceptions can be obtained through surveys, interviews, and neighbourhood group meetings. Pros and cons for each of these methods must of course be weighed. Formal surveys, for instance, are the most accurate means of identifying community concerns, while key person interviews and group meetings ensure better community participation.

Who should be approached? As a rule of thumb, anyone who can provide information about the problem or who can be expected to help implement the program should be included.

**Conducting a community survey** is an excellent idea. Not only does it engage your volunteers in an immediately interesting and satisfying task, it also increases your entire group's understanding of the issues as they affect both residents and business people. Even if crime rates are low in your community, for example, you may find that residents are afraid to go out after dark because of a perceived crime threat. The results of your initial survey can also be used later to evaluate the success of your prevention campaign.

The community survey is the most systematic method of collecting information, but not every resident and business must be surveyed. Sampling from a list of households and businesses will give good results. It is important, however, to ensure that this sample is representative and large enough to yield statistically valid results. If possible, involve an experienced survey researcher at this stage.

The far-reaching effects of surveys may be unexpected. In The Pas, Manitoba, survey results indicated residents were most concerned about issues that police didn't consider important. The information has since served as a basis for police-citizen collaboration on bridging the gap.

In carrying out a survey, mail questionnaires and personal and telephone interviews are among the options open to you.

Mailed questionnaires are relatively inexpensive and the format standardized, which makes it simpler to collate data. The major disadvantage is that the response rate may be low. Response can be encouraged, however, by simplifying the format, keeping questions short and to the point, and sending follow-up letters to non-respondents.

Personal interviews draw a good response, but they can be costly. Interviewers must be hired and trained, and often travel expenses are incurred.

Telephone surveys are comparatively inexpensive and offer a high response rate. Random-digit dialing allows even those with unlisted numbers to be included in random samples if the geographical area can be defined by telephone exchanges.

**Key person interviews** are useful in tapping both information and resources. Key persons might include local political, school, and welfare officials, church and service club leaders, media representatives, lawyers, judges, police, social workers, and probation and parole officers. Key community people will be aware of general community trends and problems, and of current planning and development activities. They can also help identify major allies such as community agencies and opinion leaders, and put you in touch with participants.

**Neighbourhood group meetings** may provide a rich source of community data. These small meetings, usually arranged on a block basis, should be held in the targeted neighbourhood to discuss crime problems. The opinions presented are not likely to be representa-

tive of the entire community, but in this setting, ideas and perceptions can be freely explored in great depth.

In addition to selecting the method of research that your group will use, the amount of information to be gathered must also be considered.

### Conducting a Community Survey

If you choose to conduct a questionnaire survey in your community, here are some pointers:

- If possible, consult an experienced survey researcher to tailor questions to your community, to advise on sample selection, and to instruct interviewers in techniques such as probing and rotating multiple-choice questions. Check with your local university, community college, or police department to see if a researcher is able to help at no cost.
- Your survey sample must be chosen on a random basis. Telephone directories and polling lists are good sources for sampling. Piercing the pages with a pin can generate a sufficiently random sample.
- A 2% population sample is probably enough to get an accurate picture of a large community's perceptions. A larger percentage will be needed in very small neighbourhoods. This is one area where the advice of an expert is valuable. When in doubt, conduct as many interviews as you can manage with the volunteers and resources you have available.
- Let participants know when you will be publicizing the results of the survey. They will naturally be interested in how others answered the same questions.

## Sample Questionnaire

Questions should be tailored to the nature of your community and to the needs of your project. The following are some sample questions, adapted in part from a Winnipeg Police Department crime fear survey:

1. Where does crime fit into your list of priority concerns?  
a) top of list  
b) high  
c) medium  
d) low  
e) not at all
2. What do you think are the three major crime problems in your neighbourhood?  
a) Theft  
b) Break and enter  
c) Vandalism  
d) Assault  
e) Rape/Sexual assault  
f) Other (specify)
3. In the past year have you been a victim of any type of crime?  
a) Yes  
b) No
4. If yes, what type(s) of crime?  
a) Theft  
b) Break and enter  
c) Vandalism  
d) Assault  
e) Rape/Sexual assault  
f) Other (specify)
5. Did you report the crime(s) to the police?  
a) Yes  
b) No  
If no, why not?

6. If you were victimized where did the crime occur?  
a) House  
b) Garage  
c) Yard  
d) Street  
e) Other (specify)
7. How long have you lived in this area?
8. In your opinion, has there been an increase or decrease in crime in this area in the last few years?  
a) Increase  
b) Decrease  
c) Same  
d) Don't know
9. If increase, what crimes have increased?  
a) Theft  
b) Break and enter  
c) Vandalism  
d) Assault  
e) Rape/Sexual assault  
f) Traffic Offences  
g) Other (specify)

10. How does your neighbourhood compare to others in your community in terms of amount of crime?  
a) More  
b) Less  
c) Same  
d) Don't know
11. To what extent do you fear becoming a victim of crime in this area?  
a) None  
b) Very little

- c) Somewhat  
d) A great deal  
e) Don't know
12. Have you changed the pattern of your activities — are there things which you now do, or no longer do — because you fear being a victim of crime?  
a) Yes  
b) No  
If so, what changes?
13. Do any of these conditions exist in your area and if so do they make you feel uneasy about your safety?  
i) Poorly lit streets  
a) Yes  
b) No  
c) Don't know  
ii) Strangers or kids hanging around  
a) Yes  
b) No  
c) Don't know  
iii) Intoxicated persons  
a) Yes  
b) No  
c) Don't know  
iv) Abandoned buildings  
a) Yes  
b) No  
c) Don't know  
v) Unconcerned neighbours  
a) Yes  
b) No  
c) Don't know  
vi) Other conditions
14. Which of the following types of crime do you feel you can help reduce, either through personal preventive actions in your own

home or by getting involved with your neighbours in crime prevention programs?

- a) Theft
- b) Break and enter
- c) Vandalism
- d) Assault
- e) Rape/Sexual assault
- f) Other (specify)
- g) None

15. Have you done anything in the last year to protect your house (apartment, store) from crime ... things like stronger locks, outside lighting, alarms, etc.?

- a) Yes (specify)
- b) No

16. Do you have an arrangement with any of the neighbours on your street to watch each other's house while you are away?

- a) Yes
- b) No

17. Generally speaking, are you satisfied with the quality of police services in your community? If not, why not?

18. Are you familiar with any Crime Prevention Programs in your community?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, which ones?

- a) Neighbourhood Watch
- b) Block Parents
- c) Operation Identification
- d) Other (specify)

19. What kinds of Crime Prevention Programs would you like to see undertaken in your community?

20. Would you be willing to participate with your neighbours in a community involvement Crime Prevention Program?

- a) Yes
- b) No

21. For our analysis purposes, how would you categorize yourself?

- a) Homeowner
- b) Tenant
- c) Business person

22. What is your age?

- a) under 30
- b) 30 to 39
- c) 40 to 49
- d) 50 to 59
- e) 60 or over

23. Are you a parent with children still at home?

- a) Yes
- b) No

24. (Interviewer should indicate sex of respondent and code their location for later analysis.)

## Selecting Priorities

Merging the results of crime statistics analysis and of the community survey can provide a powerful view of the problem. If there are conflicting viewpoints, your community's perception should take precedence over that of the police, since this will enhance initial participation and begin the process that often leads to treating issues that are priorities with police.

The combined information can now be used to set priorities, a critical task in any planning process. Obviously, not all problems or areas of your community will call for equal treatment. By identifying and selecting which crime problems to target, costly resources can be directed to the program's advantage. Ideally, crime prevention programs should be aimed at dealing with one or two priority crimes, concentrating resources as needed. Success will be that much more likely and results more easily measured to document changes brought out by your group.

Community prevention programs generally focus on crimes such as breaking and entering, vandalism, shoplifting, auto theft, robbery, and fraud — all of which are highly preventable. In choosing which problem to focus on, consider the frequencies and rates of particular offences. This will give you some idea of the extent to which people are affected. Frequencies are tabulations of the number of reported offences, and rates consist of the frequency divided by the population of the area. When measuring crime impact, the *rate of change* in rates should also be considered, along

with the financial and personal costs of potential target offences.

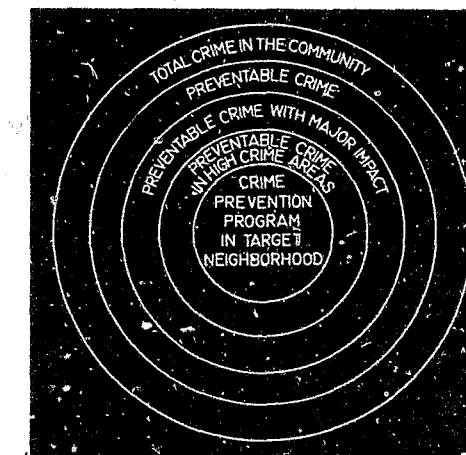
Consider, too, the impact your program is likely to have. Planners should definitely avoid the problem encountered in one program where the number of burglaries was already so low that the program could not possibly have a significant impact.

## Detailed Crime Analysis

Having identified a problem that is solvable and that your group feels it can deal with, the final step in defining it is to describe it through crime analysis. Its nature must be examined in as much detail as possible in order to arrive at a clear and precise definition of the issue. Any information that might be useful later in implementing the program should naturally be used.

Take, for example, the problem of teenage shoplifting in a local shopping mall. Program planners can collect a wealth of information by meeting with mall management and security personnel, police, store owners, high school students, school officials, and representatives from the retail clerk's union and from the small business section of the Chamber of Commerce. Each of these sources can probably shed light on how and why shoplifting is occurring. If not enough information can be obtained, a systematic survey of mall businesses may fill out the picture.

Carrying out this detailed work should result in a problem statement that will



*The task of choosing priority crimes is illustrated in this figure.*

serve as a guide for the remaining steps in the planning process. The statement will contain what you know about the problem, the manner in which it is linked to other crime problems, and its possible causes and effects.

To help develop this problem statement, make sure your crime analysis covers the following points:

- **Target/victim characteristics.** These help suggest the most appropriate type of program. A different approach, for example, might be used for elderly victims than for school children.
- **Offender characteristics.** This information is not as likely to be available as data about the victim, since many offenders are not caught. But even where suspects have not been identified, educated

guesses may be made. Certain types of break and enter may appear to be the work of amateurs, for example, rather than professionals.

- **Time.** The time the offence is committed has important implications for program implementation. A high number of day or evening, or seasonal offences, clearly indicates when preventive measures are most likely needed.
- **Modus Operandi.** Knowledge of the manner in which the crimes are carried out may provide valuable prevention information. For instance, if most break and enters are unforced apartment entries rather than forced single-family dwelling entries, factors such as poor key control in apartments or residents not locking their units may be at fault.
- **Spatial aspects.** Studies of crime patterns show that crime rates vary, depending on the physical layout and the boundaries of a neighbourhood. Major streets, for instance, may offer the criminal a good escape route.
- **Opportunity factors.** Some crimes are made easier because of specific opportunities made available to potential offenders. For example, an apartment building might be fitted with ineffective locks, a shopping centre poorly supervised, or most community residents absent from their homes during the day.
- **System response.** What else is being done about the problem, by whom, and with what results? If the "system" is not performing well, what are the reasons?



## Community Analysis

The general physical and social conditions operating in a community play a large role in determining the success of crime prevention efforts. A well laid-out, socially cohesive community with a high level of interaction among its residents is a particularly conducive setting for an effective approach. In other communities, rifts between different cultural groups, high mobility, and a steady flow-through of non-residents can all put constraints on programs. Now — before a program gets underway — is the time to take these factors into consideration.

### Environmental Characteristics

You may feel you know your community quite well, but the small amount of time required to run through the following exercise will undoubtedly yield new insights that will be useful. A crime prevention program cannot be adequately planned without knowing your community's physical and social environmental characteristics, such as its

- transportation and circulation patterns
- population size and density
- type and condition of housing
- concentration and types of businesses and industries
- geographical boundaries
- general economic conditions.

This kind of information may be obtained from community leaders, city planners, municipal boards, community surveys, and actual observation of the target neighbourhood.

### Characteristics of Residents

Since residents are involved in crime as victims, offenders, and participants in prevention programs, it is important to learn as much as possible about them and their activities. In collecting this data, consider

- age
- socio-economic status
- race and ethnicity
- household composition
- language, culture, and religion
- stability (percentage of residences owned/rented and length of time at same address)
- interaction among neighbours, local organizations, and police.

Again, this information may be obtained from city planners, municipal boards, community surveys, and on-site observation of your neighbourhood.

### Key Actors and Opportunities

Use your existing knowledge of your community to detail the context of the issues you've identified to work on. Try

brainstorming with members of your core group. Start by asking what institutions, organizations, or individuals will be involved as key actors. Who else might be interested or have a potential role in the issue? Are there any other related community issues — traffic or housing, for example — or any upcoming opportunities, such as festivals or parades, your organization might want to make use of?

Next, investigate other programs whose goals might overlap yours. Include activities of groups that don't call their work crime prevention, though it is related — for instance, recreation or youth employment programs.

Talk with other groups — their networks may complement your group in reaching target audiences. Take advantage of the credibility and skills of a seniors group in approaching seniors, of youth groups in approaching youths, and so on.

Any key person interviews previously held to define the issue will now yield an analysis of potential participants, opinion leaders, allies, and experts that you'll want to involve during your campaign.

## Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a creative process that pulls everything together into an overall master plan. It starts with assembling all the data collected on the nature of the problem, as well as on your community context, and then

- sets specific goals and objectives;
- identifies opportunities and develops the approaches that can best achieve the desired results;
- maps out a strategy that takes into account resources, possible alliances, and the local social "climate";
- specifies a detailed work plan to achieve each objective;
- addresses the questions of who to link up with, how to link up with them, and the time frame;
- identifies specific audiences and details specific tactics for reaching them.

Strategic planning might involve tailoring a traditional approach to your community and its issues (e.g., Neighbourhood Watch, Operation Identification) or developing a unique approach that's right for your particular situation.

Here's a basic approach for developing a strategy for your crime prevention program:

Once both the crime and community analyses have been done, hold a brainstorming session with members of your core group, some of the key actors identified during the community analysis, and representatives of your target audi-



ence. Don't forget to include the Crime Prevention Officer from your local police department. This diverse group can formulate a set of goals and objectives and can then develop a number of strategies for further consideration. One side benefit is that these people will naturally have a high degree of ongoing interest in the success of your project.

Next, list and evaluate each suggested strategy in terms of how it would address the problem, its potential for success, its costs, possible side benefits and objections to its implementation, likely sources of funds and personnel, and so on. This will probably include several strategies that can be implemented with the resources available. (Make sure to consider using National Crime Prevention Week to launch or highlight your

program in your community through media or special events.)

### Goals and Objectives

Once you have defined and analysed your particular crime prevention issue and conducted your community analysis, it's important to set specific goals and objectives for your project. Often groups fail to spend the time required on this step in detailing and later documenting what they wanted to achieve. The major benefit of taking the time needed to carry out this task is that it provides a vital and sustaining focal point for your working group. Assuming that all members are active in developing goals and objectives, a clear statement of these will reduce the risk of future disagreements, which could undermine success. These documented statements are also standards against which progress can be measured, forming an essential part of your evaluation activity.

The process of detailing and documenting goals and objectives is particularly important when linking with the police and other organizations to achieve results. You may have been working with your core group for years and know what a member is thinking before he or she speaks, but when new working relationships are being built, this step could avoid costly misunderstandings.

Make sure to state and examine your



group's goals and objectives in taking on a crime prevention project, and to outline specific project-related goals and objectives. By being clear about what's in it for you as you establish working relationships with police and other community groups, you'll help keep their expectations realistic. For example, if your group's interest in crime prevention is short-term, other organizations can anticipate and plan for your moving on to another issue in a year's time.

When setting program-related goals and objectives, make certain they're detailed and measurable, so that you'll be able to gauge your progress at any point.

Here we are using "goals" to refer to the final aim of the program. A goal, for instance, might be "to reduce the incidence of break and enters in our community by 10% by December 1985."

"Objectives" refer to the specific targets you set for each of the program elements needed to accomplish your goal. For example, one of the objectives of a program with the above goal might be "to involve 30% of the houses on each block in a Neighbourhood Watch Program by June 1985."

It is useful to state goals and objectives in a standard format:

To reduce	ACTION
vandalism at neighbourhood schools	PROBLEM
by 50 per cent	RESULT
by the end of this school year	DATE

Setting such precise targets and dates for results is obviously somewhat arbitrary. Your police department will be able to help you ensure these are realistic and achievable, yet still challenging. As you have probably found in other projects, it's best to start with a relatively straightforward objective that can be accomplished in a reasonable time frame in order to stimulate community confidence and involvement in further activity.

#### Benefits of Detailing Goals and Objectives

- Builds consensus, understanding, and clarity of purpose in core group.
- Forms the basis of the partnership with police.
- Helps clarify and maintain alliances with other groups.
- Provides a basis for attracting and allocating resources.
- Provides a means of monitoring progress.

## Tactics to Choose From

Here are some of the crime prevention tactics that other community groups have found effective in achieving their goals. These are examples only. Obviously, you will need to tailor your activities to fit your particular community's needs.

**Police/Community Boards:** Police and community leaders jointly plan crime

prevention — leaders by presenting their priorities and concerns, and police by sharing information on departmental resources and services.

**Street Observation:** While walking or driving through a neighbourhood, police or residents systematically note opportunities for crime (open garage doors, keys left in cars), then inform residents of these potential problems.

**Environmental Design:** Lighting levels, traffic flow patterns, and the design of public spaces can all influence crime occurrence and, in some communities, are obvious steps to take in preventing crime. Working with municipal politicians, police, planners, and architects, community leaders ensure that new community facilities are designed and implemented to reduce the opportunities for crime.

**Crime Hotlines:** Community-minded radio stations and newspapers offer anonymity and/or cash awards to telephone callers for reporting crimes or suspicious behaviour. This information is immediately forwarded to the police.

**Block Clubs:** Neighbours on a block are organized, usually by an elected captain, to receive crime prevention education, help improve relations with the police, and participate in crime prevention activities, such as escort services and home security surveys.

**Tenants Organizations:** Tenants initiate and support many of the same crime prevention activities as Block Club members, but issues will often focus on safety of common areas, building maintenance, and so on.

**Neighbourhood Watch:** Block captains

and participating residents work with the police, acting as their "alternative eyes and ears" whenever they spot trouble.

**Apartment Watches:** These are similar to block watches, but emphasize the special problems created by an apartment building's structure and management organization.

**Other Opportunities for Watch Programs:** Any area can be defined and protected by concerned citizens — porches, subways, alleys, parks, marinas, and so on are only a few of the possibilities.

**Vehicle Radio Patrols:** Using two-way radios, neighbourhood patrol members and cab drivers contact police as the need arises.

**Escort Services:** In an effort to reduce vulnerability to and fear of crime, trained volunteers may drive or accompany senior citizens on various errands, or provide moral support to victims or witnesses of crime.

**Block Houses:** These provide a safe refuge for children or elderly people who feel threatened on the street.

**Victimization Surveys:** These surveys may be carried out on a door-to-door basis, to determine crimes that victims have not reported to the police.

**Residence or Small Business Security Surveys:** Police officers or knowledgeable civilians conduct in-depth, on-site inspections to determine the safety level, suggest improvements, and reduce break-in opportunities.

**WhistleSTOP:** Participants use whistles to alert the police to trouble, one whis-

tle triggering as many responses as possible from all nearby participants.

**Operation Identification:** A window sticker advertises that valuable property has been engraved with a traceable number, which will help police in recovering the goods, if stolen.

**Neighbourhood Directories:** These directories or maps, used by many block watches, give names, addresses, and phone numbers for every house on a block in order to speed news of a neighbourhood threat.

**Police Directional Aids:** These are highly visible numbers, legible at night, that are painted on houses and vehicles to help police officers in their search activities.

**Postal Alert:** Letter carriers, trained by police, report suspicious activities along their routes.

**Automatic Timers:** These will turn lamps and radios on and off to give unattended residences the appearance of being occupied.

**Buddy Buzzers:** These alarm systems sound off in a neighbouring store or apartment when one partner is in trouble.

## Designing Your Approach

Tailoring your approach to fit community conditions requires a detailed description of the crime problem you're addressing. Usually, a thorough analysis of the problem will suggest appropriate activity. For example, perhaps a local

service club or chamber of commerce sets out to solve a significant shoplifting problem at a suburban shopping mall. Investigation shows that several of the stores are poorly organized and have attractive items on open display near store entrances. Shop owners and clerks are not clear about their legal right to detain shoplifters and what procedures they should use. Owners are reluctant to prosecute because they feel that the Crown will not pursue the case and that judges do not impose meaningful sentences.

In this instance, the major group of offenders may be students from a nearby junior high school who gather at the mall during lunch hour and after school. Store personnel have the impression that the students don't understand the implications of shoplifting and are responding to peer pressure. Students seem to feel that store owners will not bring charges against them. Finally, certain types of items are stolen more often than others.

Using this information, a comprehensive implementation plan can be developed. The specific objectives of the program should be stated as clearly as the goals.

A combination of goals and strategies might be presented as follows:

#### Goal:

To reduce reported instances of shoplifting at Mitchell Mall by 20% by March 1985.

#### Objectives:

1. To redesign and rearrange each of five stores with poor layouts by April 1984.

**Activity:** Volunteers, trained by police, conduct surveys and make recommendations. Mall store owners and managers volunteer time to help rearrange store displays.

2. To educate 150 store owners, managers, and clerks on shoplifting laws by April 1984.

**Activity:** Project volunteers, in cooperation with the police department, will prepare and conduct a series of seminars on shoplifting.

3. To educate 315 students at John Smith Junior High about shoplifting laws and the implications of shoplifting by April 1984.

**Activity:** Project volunteers, police school liaison officer or crime prevention officer, and selected students will develop and prepare an educational program to train senior high school students by February 1984. These students will deliver the program in the junior high by the target date.

4. To reduce peer pressure on students to shoplift.

**Activity:** Develop with students and counsellors a counter-peer-pressure program by May 1984.

5. To make students and others aware that store owners will prosecute for shoplifting by April 1984.

**Activity:** Prepare and post signs in all cooperating stores. The signs will be posted at the time of

the education programs. The media will be contacted for publicity about this change.

6. To make it more difficult to steal the most vulnerable items by September 1984.

**Activity:** Place electronic sensors on vulnerable items. Cooperating stores will order equipment by May 1984.

7. Meet with criminal justice personnel to discuss possible programs by September 1984.

**Activity:** Arrange a meeting between project leaders, the Chief of Police, crime prevention officer, mall representatives, Crown Attorney, and juvenile court judge. Try to develop a restitution program for juveniles involved in shoplifting.

Note that each problem or problem component has an objective and that each objective has a strategy. For program planners, the explicit statement of objectives and strategies clearly shows everyone what must be done.

## Planning for Continuity

Even the best thought-out and implemented crime prevention program can diminish in effectiveness over time. Strategies must be generated not only for launching the program, but also for keeping it effective. It can be very discouraging to both organizers and participants to see the incidence of the target

crime rise again after a dramatic drop in the first six to eighteen months of the program.

Maintenance activities must be slotted into the program right from the outset. These include awards and other recognition programs, refresher courses, special advisory committees, regular follow-up of participating individuals, newsletters, and so on. Taking maintenance needs into consideration will help organizers be more realistic about setting goals.

## Approaches that Work

This section gives some examples of well-planned and executed community crime prevention programs. These examples illustrate what can be accomplished when the framework and techniques outlined in this guidebook are successfully applied. Each of the projects was based on a careful study of a particular crime problem and was implemented with the cooperation of both police and local residents. The approaches themselves are as diverse as the communities and issues they address. What they have in common is their effectiveness in tailoring their approach to the needs of their particular community.

### West Island Juvenile Diversion Project

**West Island YMCA  
Montreal, Quebec**

In 1974, the West Island "Y" of Montreal undertook a community-based crime prevention program aimed at youth in conflict and established an extensive program of community education. A community board representing seven Quebec municipalities now helps the "Y" direct this effective program.

The program offers a series of innovative projects for "hard to reach" young people. These projects are linked to existing social service systems and operate through volunteers. Participants of the *Entente* project, for instance, are all young offenders referred by police, court and social workers. Youth are encouraged to correct their behaviour positively by giving 40 hours of community service or restitution to "pay back" for their illegal act. *Diversion Club* participants are referred from the courts, schools, police, or families to take part in a unique blend of activity and life-skills training that includes human relations exercises and motorcycle riding. *Learning Places*, a group discussion project, is directed at high school dropouts and is designed to stimulate and develop work or educational interests and self-esteem.

The Juvenile Diversion Project also helps to develop other activities such as prison visiting programs and family support groups in order to deal with specific youth problems like drug abuse. As well, it actively supports citizen groups, such as the Juvenile Court Citizens Committee, that are involved in improving community justice programming and services for youth.

In addition to youth projects, the "Y" has collaborated with six municipalities to establish Neighbourhood Watch programs that now involve over 9000 households. Yet another project offers a service for victims of crime, including

information on home security, possible police, judicial and insurance procedures, and appropriate community programs.

Funding sources for these projects include Solicitor General Canada, the Ministère des Affaires Sociales du Québec, local school boards, municipal governments, and community social services.

### Riverborne Community Crime Prevention Program

**Riverborne Community Development Association, Inc.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba**

In 1980, residents of the Fort Rouge area of Winnipeg expressed a significant amount of fear regarding their personal safety and property protection. As a result, the Riverborne Development Association, Inc. (representing local residents, business people, and members of local organizations and religious congregations) set up a Community Safety Sub-Committee. This group held a number of community forums and worked with police and government agencies to develop a community response to the problem.

In 1982 they implemented the first phase of their approach. With funding from Solicitor General Canada, a full-time Community Liaison Officer was

hired and a store-front "Safety Office" opened to provide a point of access and information for local residents and business people. The Liaison Officer was charged with the task of identifying area concerns and designing and developing appropriate initiatives to address these concerns.

Workshops and seminars have been offered to the general public touching on topics ranging from drug and alcohol abuse to rape and property protection. In addition, special emphasis has been placed on work with area seniors, juveniles, schools and businesses, and establishment of Neighbourhood Watch groups and tenants' associations.

The Crime Prevention Project is managed by the Community Liaison Officer who is accountable to the Riverborne Development Association's Board of Directors — made up of local residents, business people, a day-care worker, a clergyman, and a representative of a seniors' group.

## Crime Prevention Through Public Awareness

University College  
of Cape Breton,  
Nova Scotia

In 1981, the Continuing Education Division of the College of Cape Breton initiated a project aimed at developing community leadership and initiative around crime prevention. Taking an adult education approach, project staff encourage and support local organiza-

tions to discuss crime problems, then explore the role each group can play in addressing these problems. The groups are then connected with other resources to carry out their approach. The project is managed by a board drawn from a cross-section of the community and receives funding support from Solicitor General Canada.

Project staff (four in all) work with professional associations, criminal justice officials, the RCMP, and local police forces in sharing and gathering information for a criminal justice library, and in planning various workshops (for example, on "victims" or crime opportunity reduction). Service clubs such as the Sydney Rotary, the New Waterford Rotary, and the Sydney Kinsmen have been approached about the role they might play in crime prevention programs such as Block Parent and Neighbourhood Watch.

Media efforts include the use of radio, television, and newspapers to inform the community of crime prevention programs.

Future plans include establishing a home for juveniles with the Howard House Association; helping the Sydney Outward Bound Program set up an "Outward Bound" program as a sentencing alternative for delinquents; working with New Dawn Enterprises Limited to operate an employment project for ex-offenders; and continuing to search for ways to be of assistance to criminal justice personnel who are operating crime prevention programs.

### Conditions for Success

Study of community crime prevention approaches around North America indicates the following characteristics and components are needed to maximize success:

- thorough crime analysis
- adaptation to local issues/conditions
- active support of police
- target audience involvement in planning and implementation
- rigorous planning with clear and measurable objectives
- an approach modified as needed, based on evaluation of each step or activity
- emphasis on maintaining momentum and continuity.

## Gathering Resources

A needs-identification exercise, based on your group's implementation plan, should yield a detailed view of the resources needed to accomplish your objectives. These will fall into three distinct areas: other organizations, goods and services, and funding.

### Other Organizations

Because of the nature of the crime problem and the breadth of community interest in solving it, it only makes sense to involve other groups in tackling the issue. Probably your group has already done so for other issues and you might want to approach those same organizations again.

The first organization you'll want to team up with, if you haven't already, is the police. Your local force's Crime Prevention Officer can be a valuable resource, able to link you up with groups that share your concern and to lend both information and experience. A Crime Prevention Officer can also help acquire prevention publications and promotional tools, such as posters and films.

Once you have the support of your local police force, contact groups that either represent or are made up of the target audience you're trying to reach. Youth groups, seniors' organizations, and ethnic groups can all contribute. In fact,



not only will you want them to pitch in with the work, but you'll need them to help shape the most effective approach. Present your research findings to them and outline the approach you're planning to take. Listen to their reactions and suggestions, then begin exploring a common ground from which cooperation can grow.

Here are some other key community groups to involve:

- **Churches and synagogues** often play important roles in community crime prevention, ranging from providing meeting facilities or office space to taking on vital organizational and communications tasks.
- **Business associations.** Concerned

with the overall safety and desirability of the communities in which they do business, these associations can offer both perspective and resources.

- **Service clubs**, such as Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, and Kinsmen can be powerful allies in your campaign, given their strong organizational and fund-raising abilities, as well as their commitment to community betterment.
- **Schools** offer access both to young people and their households, via take-home materials. Parent-teacher associations can also be used to good advantage if there's a youth crime problem, such as vandalism or drug abuse.

Finally, don't forget to contact recreation and community centres, the local media, and housing groups. All are important allies whose support can ensure the greatest impact on the problem.

Over time, these informal links with various organizations and individuals can develop into formal ones. Community alliances, coalitions, and committees are perhaps the best way of mobilizing the community around crime prevention. Just as your group enjoys the credibility and trust of certain segments of the community, so do other established groups. Joining with them makes it possible to reach a larger portion of the community, thereby maximizing the impact of your program.

This "community partnership" will also help ensure continuity if, for some reason, your group is unable to continue applying resources to crime prevention.

## Goods and Services

"In-kind" donations are usually easier to obtain than money to buy the goods and services your group needs. For example, not many funding sources are keen on paying for basics such as rent. Local businesses or institutions, however, may have extra office space available, either free or for a nominal cost.

Be creative in looking for forms of in-kind help your community can offer. Some groups have been successful in finding local businesses or institutions willing to help in the following ways:

- supplying accounting services;
- loaning audio-visual equipment;
- offering advertising advice;
- contributing supplies or used office equipment;
- providing legal advice;
- printing and photocopying program materials;
- paying for postage;
- loaning company vehicles;
- providing media time or space for public service announcements.

Remember, always offer something in return — mutual help is an enticing motivation. Businesses that benefit from your program's work on street order and physical security, for instance, are likely to respond positively to requests for in-kind donations.

## Funding

Money may be the most difficult resource to obtain. Before approaching any funding source or potential donor, you must develop a justification they can respond to. And that means showing what the program has accomplished so far and what future success it might achieve. Obviously, record-keeping within your organization will be extremely important in documenting activity-to-date. As for future success, you might attempt to estimate the impact of your project (given adequate funding) in terms of the dollar savings to governments, local businesses, and residents resulting from increased security and a stronger sense of community. Put this information together with a clear description of your project and the extent of community participation and sponsorship, package it as attractively as possible, and you're ready to start fund-raising.

Tap your local community first. Here are some important funding sources:

- **Service clubs.** As suggested earlier, these groups might apply their fund-raising expertise for a local crime prevention program they felt a part of.
- **Local business and manufacturers** often contribute to non-profit groups. Identify companies that might benefit from your crime prevention work. Be prepared to discuss what your group is providing the community, including the business segment, in exchange for funding.
- **Foundations.** Usually set up by

wealthy families and businesses, foundations generally choose a couple of specific issue areas in which to concentrate their philanthropy. Check with your public library on how to identify foundations interested in areas related to your project. Consult "The Canadian Directory of Foundations and Granting Agencies," published by the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy.

- **Municipal government.** A representative from your group or police force might approach your local government. A solid police-community working relationship will definitely improve your chances of obtaining support, as will a history of good relations with municipal politicians and officials from your group's past activities.
- **Events** such as auctions, raffles, bazaars, flea markets, and bake and book sales can be profitable. They can give a boost to group and community spirit.

Funding from provincial or federal criminal justice agencies may be available, depending on the nature of your approach. However, because of limited budgets, only those projects that are extremely innovative get funded. Job creation funds may be a better avenue to explore. Consult with the nearest "Consultation Centre" of Solicitor General Canada or your provincial government for assistance in identifying possible project funding sources. The addresses of the Consultation Centres are given on the last page of this handbook.

# Community and Media Relations

Your group's public image is obviously key to your success, regardless of the particular issue and project you are working on. However, in the crime prevention area, how you approach the public and deal with the media are especially critical. There are two important elements to keep in mind:

1. **Credibility.** Because of public perceptions and fears related to crime, you will have to build on your existing credibility for people to understand and trust your involvement in the issue. Most people will be somewhat wary of even well-established groups until they know that the police support your initiative. To ward off the problem, you might involve the local Crime Prevention Officer in your core group. (This person, in any case, will bring valuable experience, perspective, and resources.) And make sure that at public meetings and media events, someone in uniform makes at least an appearance. If you do any door-to-door canvassing or security checks, provide your volunteers with some identification from the police department, as well as from your organization. Any publications you distribute should also clearly indicate police endorsement.
2. **Profile.** Studies indicate that high rates of participation by householders (that is, over 50 percent in target areas), in programs such as Operation

Identification and Neighbourhood Watch are necessary for effective crime prevention. Obviously, a strong community profile for your activities is needed. A blue-ribbon steering committee, public support from City Hall, involvement of media or other personalities, media relations help from the police department, and "pet project" status with a major media outlet are all mechanisms that groups have used to achieve this necessary profile.

## Building Community Support

An experienced community organization with an established network of contacts with other "active citizens" should have no difficulty in building the level of community support required to prevent crime.

Clearly, the most effective way of generating interest and support is by involving other local organizations and institutions — either as co-sponsors of your initiative or as "supporters." Groups to consider (in addition to the police) are major employers, schools, small business associations, libraries, service clubs, and any organization that can reach specific audiences such as seniors, youth, or women. Getting their executives to adopt crime prevention as a priority, making presentations to their

general meetings, and disseminating information through their newsletters are some of the ways to take advantage of what these groups can offer.

Some other ways that groups have built public interest and participation in crime prevention programs include

- disseminating the results of the community survey and crime analysis through community meetings, door-to-door delivery of a pamphlet, and media coverage;
- recruiting "block captains" who are responsible for personally approaching all block households;
- recruiting volunteers through volunteer bureaus, newspaper ads, and professional associations;
- distributing information and soliciting involvement through utility bill and cheque "stuffers," company and union newsletters, posters, student take-home flyers, and feature coverage in the media.

Experience to date has shown that using a variety of communications media will effectively raise public awareness, but ensuring a high participation rate requires personalized recruitment techniques. Organizers can visit church, youth, and senior citizens' groups, or approach employers and school administrators, who may provide opportunities to recruit volunteers. In one city, project staff conducted door-to-door visits and left crime prevention information along with stamped postcards that could be returned by



people interested in holding at-home neighbourhood meetings. Once a program is established, word-of-mouth neighbourhood persuasion can be used to get additional community support. A network of "block captains" can really speed the process.

## Media Relations

Even if your organization is already well versed in dealing with the media, you'll need a new local media list if you haven't been active in a related field. Get your local police media office to give you their list and suggest contacts.

To establish a new link with newspapers, call the "city desk" and ask who is on the police beat. If possible, line up an appointment with the City Editor and the beat reporter to introduce your project. Community newspapers, if they exist in your community, will probably be your most effective news channel. Finally, don't forget to consider using the newsletters of local major organizations, unions, or employers.

Set up appointments, too, with local news directors for radio and TV stations. Identify any media personalities who might be interested in your program and invite them to join your committee or offer on-air support.

Your first media release might well be to announce the results of your community survey and/or crime analysis. Use this opportunity to announce any organizational meetings and to give a public relations telephone number.

Over time, have the media co-ordinator in your group develop a network of key media contacts. Maintain ongoing communications with these — don't just call them when you want coverage. Give them background information as the project progresses and ask their advice on how to package special events or identify other opportunities to increase your coverage.

## Keep Going

Experience has shown that concern about crime is not enough to sustain the high levels of community participation necessary for effective crime prevention programs. Creative methods must be found to maintain interest, momentum and continuity over a long period of time. This can be accomplished in a number of ways.

### Teamwork

A strong sense of teamwork can carry a program on its own. If program leaders make a point of sharing the responsibilities and the work load, commitment will be shared by all team members as well. This not only helps prevent "burn out" among your key people, it rewards others by giving them an opportunity to develop their skills.

Teamwork requires good communications. Team members need information on how the overall program is progressing as well as an opportunity to offer their ideas for improving the program. Regular meetings with block captains, telephone chains and periodic newsletters can help keep people feeling informed and part of something significant.

### Recognition

Few people become involved in crime prevention for the glory of it. The usual rewards for volunteer efforts lie in



personal satisfaction with a job well done, as well as in seeing small changes in the neighbourhood and in receiving occasional thank you's from people helped. But more formal recognition of people's effort can go a long way in maintaining interest and attracting new participants.

When volunteer efforts are recognized through newsletter or newspaper articles, thank you letters, certificates, awards, dinners and parties, morale is boosted and participation strengthened.

Leaders of a Neighbourhood Watch program in Toronto got some unexpected attention when their local Crime Prevention Officer suggested them for the cover of this Handbook. Yet, the best part of it for them was that their local newspaper ran one of

the photos with a short article on their successful program.

### Festivities

Try to make the work enjoyable, involving and rewarding. When drawing up an events-schedule for your program, be sure to include an informal get-together for volunteers and their families. Besides relaxing and making new friends, you may find the informal atmosphere produces ideas that didn't emerge at your committee meetings. Hold spontaneous gatherings to celebrate significant milestones or take advantage of community events — picnics, fairs, parades, rummage sales, etc. — can be used to sustain and stimulate involvement in the program and enable people to get to know their neighbours better. Informal events like these can make a surprising contribution to keeping your program going.

### Moving On

Blending crime prevention with work on other community issues may be the most important maintenance technique of all. Expand your program by moving into other crime prevention activities or related efforts. For example, participants in a Neighbourhood Watch program might stage a street party, organize a recreation program for high-risk youth, or branch into providing escort services for senior citizens.

# Evaluation

**E**valuation is simply a logical series of steps for assessing how well a program is achieving its goals and objectives. While funding sources sometimes require it, evaluation is mainly of use to the sponsoring group itself.

## Why Evaluate?

Evaluation is a key component in the ongoing success of your crime prevention program. Funding and commitment — both from professionals and the community — is more likely to be won when a program can demonstrate its effectiveness. Evaluation also permits program organizers to reallocate personnel and resources to ensure a greater impact. No matter what your group's resources are, ensuring that the best possible level of evaluation is carried out will ensure your program's success.

## When Should It Be Done?

Different kinds of evaluations need to be carried out to determine how well you have planned and implemented your program. Surveys conducted before and after your program begins allow you to measure its impact. One kind of survey can be used to assess the citizen-police relationship, the level of crime fear, the degree of participation in crime

prevention activity, and the safety and crime concerns of potential program participants. This general survey can be conducted with a representative sampling of potential participants. Victimization surveys might also be carried out to indicate how many people in your community have been targets of criminal activity and whether they reported their victimization to the police.

Ideally, final surveys to measure the project's impact should be conducted three to nine months after the completion phase. If impact evaluations are done too soon, the program won't have had a chance to show any effect. And if done too late, the effects of the program may have begun to diminish.

Process evaluations, which monitor the planning and implementation phases, need to be conducted periodically as the project is being implemented. These are important for assessing whether objectives are being met or whether the program should be modified to handle any problems that might have cropped up.

## How to Proceed

Suppose your group's goal is to reduce the incidence of burglary in a given area.

Once objectives have been set, some measurable indicators of success should be identified — for example, the percentage of area homes that received

security inspections, of homeowners and tenants who complied with suggestions, and of residents who joined Neighbourhood Watch, as well as the percent decrease in burglary in the target area. These success indicators closely parallel the goals and objectives set in the planning stage, and will provide a structure for the evaluation.

Next you need to decide what numerical factors will constitute success — 50% of homes inspected, 30% compliance with suggestions, 30% joining Neighbourhood Watch, and 25% decrease in incidence of burglary, for example. All of the four measures above can be documented quite easily.

If your goal is to reduce the incidence of vandalism by juveniles in a particular area, one objective might be to offer an after-school recreation program at the local high school. Some indicators would be the percentage of target group participation, the percent reduction in the incidence of vandalism both overall and between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., and the level of participation and support by members of your community.

The basic information that you use for comparison must also be readily available. In the first example above, you need to know the total number of households and the incidence of burglary in past years. In the second example, more specific information is required, such as knowing the previous incidence of juvenile vandalism in the after-school time period, as well as the

characteristics of offenders and program participants, in order to decide whether you are reaching the real target group. This information can be obtained from official statistics and a mix of community surveys.

## Who Should Evaluate?

Data collection and analysis can be done by the project team (staff and volunteers) of your organization. To get the most out of evaluation, get a specialist involved, either as a volunteer or by using funds raised for this purpose. Such a person might be found in a private consulting firm or in the social science department of a university or community college. Their assessment might carry more weight with funding agencies, too, since they won't be seen to have a vested interest in the project.

If consultants or outside evaluators are used, it's important that they be involved in the project from the beginning, so as to be able to design the evaluation component prior to implementation. They may also be able to provide assistance to planners by making them aware of potential problems while changes are still possible.

The evaluation team in your organization should include people from all levels of the project. Volunteers especially can have a key role to play in the evaluation process, and may need to be impressed with the importance of keeping good records and communicating results to the program's directors.

## Next Steps

This handbook has outlined a process that your group can use to become involved in crime prevention in your community. A good first step is to contact your local police to find out what other groups in your community are doing, or might be interested in doing, to prevent crime. Invite representatives from the police and other organizations to talk with your group about sharing the work. Then, together with any interested groups and individuals, begin a crime and community analysis.

When the project begins to take shape, you might want to contact the nearest Solicitor General Canada Consultation Centre or your provincial government for advice and resources, as well as information about how to link up with National Crime Prevention Week activities to help maximize exposure for your efforts. See the inside back cover of this Handbook for a list of Consultation Centres.

## Crime Prevention Pamphlets

The following pamphlets are available from the **Communication Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, Ottawa K1A 0P8** in both English and French. For additional resources, contact your local police or provincial government.

### Pamphlets

Operation Identification  
Neighbourhood Watch

## Further Reading

The following publications are available in most reference libraries, or through inter-library loan.

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

*Amer, Elizabeth.*

**Yes We Can: How to Organize Citizen Action.** Ottawa: Synergestics, 1980. Uses case histories, personal experience, and good common sense to support the reader through all stages of organizing people to act in the public interest.

*Huenefeld, John.*

**The Community Activist's Handbook: A Guide to Organizing, Financing, and Publicizing Community Campaigns.** Toronto: Saunders, 1970.

*Stinson, Arthur.*

**Citizens Participate.** Ottawa: Carleton University, Centre for Social Welfare Studies, 1979.

*Wharf, Brian, ed.*

**Community Work in Canada.** Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979.

### CRIME

*Canada. Ministry of the Solicitor General.*

**"Crime and the Community."** Impact no. 1/1982. Ottawa: A

Programs Branch Report published by the Communication Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General.

*Canada. Ministry of the Solicitor General.*

**Selected Trends in Canadian Criminal Justice.** Ottawa: A Programs Branch Report published by the Communication Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General.

*Canada. Ministry of the Solicitor General.*

**The Canadian Urban Victimization Survey Bulletin,** published by the Communication Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General.

### CRIME PREVENTION

*Birenbaum, Rhonda.*

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.** *Habitat*, Vol. 26, No. 2 1983, pp 2-8.

*Feins, Judith D.*

**Partnerships for Neighbourhood Crime Prevention.** Washington: A Guidebook for police and community groups published by the U.S. National Institute of Justice, 1983.

*Linden, Rick et al.*

**Working Together to Prevent Crime: A Practitioner's Handbook.** Ottawa: A guide for criminal justice professionals published by the Communication Division, Ministry of the Solicitor General, 1983.

*Moffat, R. E., Sergeant.*

**Crime Prevention through Environmental Design — A Management Perspective.** *Canadian Jour-*

*nal of Criminology*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (January) 1983, pp 19-33.

### FUND-RAISING

**Canadian Directory to Foundations and Granting Agencies.** The Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, Toronto. 1982.

*Fisher, J.*

**Money Isn't Everything.** Management and Fundraising Centre, Toronto. 1977.

*Young, J.*

**Fundraising for Non-profit Groups.** Self Counsel Press, Vancouver. 1981.

### PROJECT PLANNING AND EVALUATION

*Canada. Department of National Health and Welfare.*

**Getting Active on Overdrinking: An Action Guide for Groups.** Ottawa: A detailed step-by-step guide to planning, implementing, and evaluating community projects published by the Health Promotion Directorate, 1983.

## Appendix

In recent years, a great number of crime prevention programs have been implemented in North America — mainly by police forces. This appendix reviews two of the most popular approaches: property-marking programs and so-called *Watch* programs. Using reports and evaluation results, each of these model approaches is described and analysed in terms of their effectiveness and the factors contributing to their success.

### Property-Marking Programs

Property-marking programs may be the most widely used in crime prevention. Participants engrave transportable property with an identification number (for instance, social insurance or driver's licence) that the police can trace to its owner. These numbers are then filed in a central police registry. Participants also use warning decals to discourage potential burglars.

Property-marking programs can be applied to households, commercial establishments, cottages, marinas, and construction sites. They have even been used to mark farm chemicals and produce.

Burglary rates for participating households usually decrease but there is no proof that the apprehension, prosecution, or conviction of burglars is hindered. In addition, stolen marked property can be kept for private use, sold informally, or even disposed of in a jurisdiction where identifying numbers cannot be readily traced.

### Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch is a program in which residents commit themselves to watching their immediate neighbours' property and reporting any suspicious activity to police. The program emphasizes the need for people to take collective action, relying on block captains to link the local police, program organizers, and the larger community. A high participation rate is important, as is good organization and planning.

Members have to be properly trained and instructed to respect people's privacy (to avoid legitimizing "busy-bodies") and to contact police as trouble arises. Block leaders must be motivated and their involvement monitored. Finally, maintenance activities must be a major part of the program, or any positive program effects will quickly dissipate.

Watch programs have proven to be highly successful in preventing crime. They're also extremely versatile and can be applied in numerous contexts — for boats, apartments, high-rise office buildings, and so on. In addition, activities can easily be expanded to take in citizen walking patrols, and CB and Taxi Alert programs.

## Offices of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada

### Atlantic

Ministry of the Solicitor General  
Consultation Centre  
Suite 205  
1075 Main Street  
P.O. Box 549  
MONCTON, New Brunswick  
E1C 1H2  
Telephone: (506) 388-6368

### Quebec

Ministry of the Solicitor General  
Consultation Centre  
666 Sherbrooke Street West  
Suite 201  
MONTREAL, Quebec  
H3A 1E7  
Telephone: (514) 283-7362

### Ontario

Ministry of the Solicitor General  
Consultation Centre  
2 St. Clair Avenue West  
Suite 12A8  
TORONTO, Ontario  
M4V 1L5  
Telephone: (416) 966-8107

### Prairie

Ministry of the Solicitor General  
Consultation Centre  
Cumberland Square  
1501, 8th Street East  
SASKATOON, Saskatchewan  
S7H 0T2  
Telephone: (306) 665-4262

### Pacific

Ministry of the Solicitor General  
Consultation Centre  
Suite 1320  
800 Burrard Street  
VANCOUVER, British Columbia  
V6Z 2J5  
Telephone: (604) 666-5307

### National

Programs Branch  
Ministry of the Solicitor General  
340 Laurier Avenue West,  
OTTAWA, Ontario  
K1A 0P8  
Telephone: (613) 995-4811



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