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TRIAD

reducing crime against the elderly



Triad is probably the greatest program I've seen in my thirty-six years in law enforcement.

Sheriff Robert J. Prinslow
Marion County, Oregon

When somebody breaks into your home, it is worse than anything that you can imagine. I want to put it behind me. It's done something to me.

A senior citizen

The fact of being a victim traumatizes an older person.

Captain Audrey Thibodeaux
Special Services Director
St. Martinville, LA

Older people don't come to meetings in the city at night. They're afraid.

A senior citizen

Law enforcement has in many cases operated almost in isolation with the feeling that 'we can do it alone'. We must effectively work together in order to serve the people we're sworn to protect.

Chief William Miller
Skokie, IL

He was pushed to the ground in his own yard. He still has nightmares and bad dreams.

Wife of elderly mugging victim

Triad gets results — it breaks down barriers and encourages cooperation.

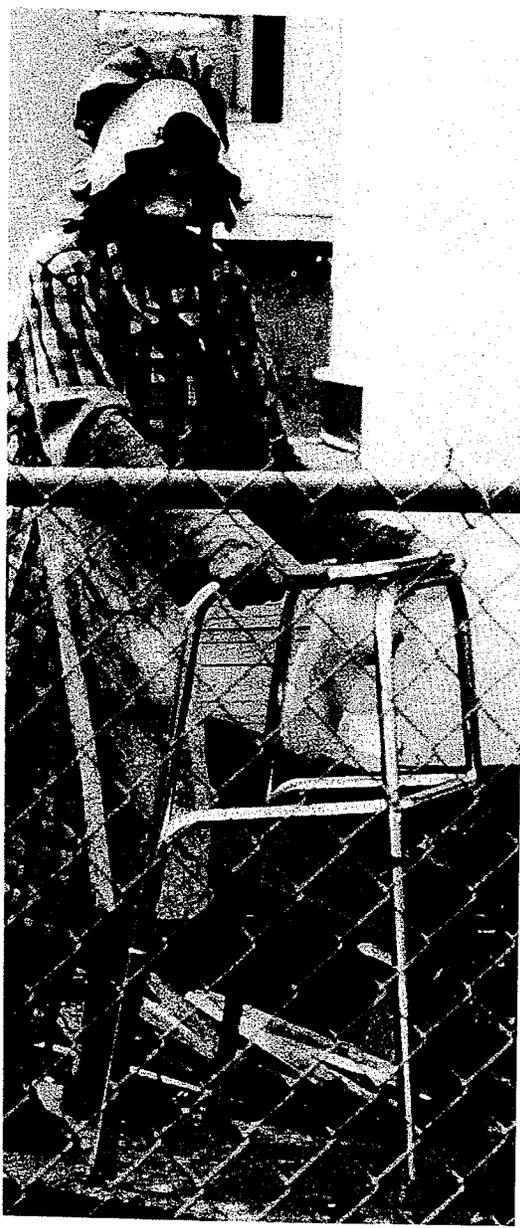
Undersheriff Ted Freeman
Monmouth County, New Jersey

Since working with the young officers, I have more respect for them and the job they are doing.

Triad senior volunteer

The cover picture is of the official signing of the St. Martin Parish, Louisiana, Triad program, the first local Triad program formed. Participating were Elma Resweber (seated), AARP/RTA; and (standing from left to right) Audrey Thibodeaux, S.A.L.T. program director; Arnaudville Police Chief Gervis Guidroz; Sheriff Charles A. Fuselier; St. Martinville Police Chief Jerry Curry; and Breaux Bridge Assistant Police Chief Steve Champagne.

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TRIAD

reducing crime against the elderly

An Implementation Handbook

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U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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Sheriff Charles Fuselier, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana;
Retired Chief Ira Harris, Chicago, Illinois;
Chief Bill Hogan, Newark, Delaware;
Dr. Charles Mendoza, Columbus, Georgia;
Chief William Miller, Skokie, Illinois;
Anne Seymour, National Victim Center;
Sheriff Patrick Sullivan, Arapahoe County, Colorado.

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Terri Hicks, who transformed notes into a finished document with assistance from the NSA editorial staff.

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A special word of thanks to those dedicated individuals who are working hard to make Triad a success in their communities.

Betsy Cantrell
Triad Program Manager at NSA
November, 1993

Foreword

This implementation handbook to assist older citizens combat and avoid being victimized is the product of several very important collaborative efforts. One of the most important of these has been taking place on the local level whenever the leaders of three critical groups — police, the sheriff's office, and older or retired persons — have agreed to work together in Triad programs to reduce criminal victimization of older citizens and enhance the delivery of law enforcement services to these individuals. Much of the material in this book has been drawn from and tested in such local programs.

The formal beginning of the national Triad program occurred in 1988, when the American Association of Retired Persons, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the National Sheriffs' Association signed a cooperative agreement to encourage the growth of local Triads and to sponsor annual meetings to provide information and support to local leadership.

The National Institute of Justice, the research and development branch of the U. S. Department of Justice, has recognized the value of the Triad concept and supported the production of selected training and technical assistance resources, including this handbook, a quarterly newsletter, and a forthcoming video.

At a period in our history when the importance of collaborative community law enforcement efforts is being increasingly recognized, the National Institute of Justice values its partnership with AARP, IACP, and NSA in promoting Triad.

Michael J. Russell
Acting Director
National Institute of Justice

Introduction

Purpose of Handbook

This handbook is designed to assist those law enforcement officers and senior citizens interested in implementing a comprehensive crime prevention program for older persons.

This guide explains what Triad is, why it is needed, and how to start a Triad.

Triad — A Concept in Action

Triad means a three-way commitment among the chief(s) of police in a county, the sheriff and older or retired leaders. They agree to work together to reduce the criminal victimization of the elderly and enhance the delivery of law enforcement services to older persons.

A major purpose of a Triad is to develop, expand and implement effective crime prevention and education programs for older community members. Activities center on both pre-victimization (preventive) and post-victimization (victim/witness assistance) aspects.

Triads work to improve the quality of life for seniors. By providing an opportunity for the

exchange of information between law enforcement and older persons, Triad can also focus on reducing unwarranted fear of crime.

Triad's Beginnings

Three national organizations agreed that the crime-related needs of the elderly could best be met by a cooperative effort. The Triad relationship was cemented when the three — American Association of Retired Person (AARP), International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) — signed a cooperative agreement in 1988.

The Triad Logo

The Triad logo illustrates the program's joint leadership. The three triangles signify cooperation on the national level and the working relationship among local Triad leaders.



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All would live long, but none would be old.
Benjamin Franklin

Chapter one

Why Triad Is Necessary

Consider the elderly resident of a quiet suburban neighborhood — victim of a stroke, partially blind and using a white cane — who was mugged twice, once in his own front yard during daylight hours.

Consider the eighty-one-year-old woman pushed to the ground as her purse was snatched at a shopping mall. She feels fortunate that she received only scrapes and bruises and no broken bones. But she is now afraid to go out alone; her independence and self-confidence have been stolen.

Consider the sixty-seven-year-old man who lost half of his life savings in a fraudulent stock transaction.

And consider the elderly widow who paid a \$1000 deposit to roofers who never returned to do the job.

In a world that is often unfair, to be old and victimized seems among the cruelest of the inequities.

Today approximately one of every eight Americans must face the realities of aging. Their situations vary as do the ways they deal with growing older.

Regardless of their circumstances, however, most older people say they worry about crime. Many fear they may become victims.

As a group, older people can be a powerful and active force. As individuals, they can be vulnerable and may need help.

The vulnerability of some of its members sets this population apart from other age groups also concerned about crime. This vulnerability requires an innovative community-wide approach to the singular problem of the elderly and crime. Fortunately, large numbers of active and capable older adults are willing to invest time and energy in this community-wide approach. This approach is Triad.

WHO ARE THE ELDERLY?

One could say the elderly are just like everybody else, only older.

It is important to remember that older people are not a breed apart and must not be thought of as other than an integral — and necessary — component of the general population. But they do have special needs, the way the very young or juveniles have special needs.

In a heretofore youth-oriented society, the focus has been on understanding the young. But the shift in population numbers changes the playing field. The present and future effect of the expanding number of older persons cannot be over-emphasized.

A child may describe "older persons" as white-haired, stooped, hard of hearing, spending their days in rocking chairs or slumped beside television sets. Some adults also share this perception of the aged. Regrettably many of the elderly themselves embrace the stereotypical view held by a sizable segment of the general public.

Attitudinal studies reveal that some older Americans believe aging "happens to someone else." Older people who are healthy, active and alert see themselves as different from others in their same age bracket.

There is no such thing as a typical older person; an older person could be house-bound and ill or a vigorous tennis player.

Chronological age can be quite misleading; the majority of those sixty-five or older describe themselves as healthy and enjoying life. A significant number of seniors continue to work and are active in their communities in paid or volunteer capacities.

Generalizations are no more valid when describing the aging than when used in connection with other categories. But whatever the physical and mental condition, an older person can become a crime victim — as can anyone of any age.

The difference lies, in part, in the effects of the crime. Whatever the reasons leading to victimization, the results could have lasting and unhappy consequences for the older person whose resources — physical, emotional and financial — are limited.

The elderly may not recover with the same agility of years gone by. A broken hip as the result of a mugging, the frightening encounter with a criminal bent on harm or the loss of savings to a con artist may diminish the quality of life to the point of overshadowing all that has been pleasant. Some old people may live the last of their years in fear and distress. Time can heal, if there is time.

WHAT ARE THE CRIMES?

Many of the crimes committed against the elderly reflect what is happening to the country's population in general.

While many types of crime could involve any age, a few categories — frauds and scams, purse snatching, pick pocketing, theft of checks from the mail and crimes in long-term care settings — claim more older than younger victims, according to AARP studies. One category — elder abuse — finds all of its victims in the older population.

But whatever the offenses, when the elderly are victimized this adds another cruel dimension to the crimes.

The litany of brutal and heartbreaking crimes against the elderly is almost endless. Virtually every community can contribute such distressing accounts.

It is this litany that causes many of the elderly to fear crime, even if they have not been victimized. Some seniors take sensible precautions and then get on with their lives. For others the fear of crime alters their lifestyle and even governs their existence. If this is an extreme reaction and based on imagined rather than actual situations, it is no less debilitating and stressful.

The fear of crime is a disturbing element in the existence of many older people.

Triads — *through the cooperative efforts of law enforcement professionals and community leaders* — are geared to deal with crime and the fear of crime.

Violent Crimes

A nation beset by increasing numbers of crimes seems both aghast at the prevalence of violence and increasingly *resigned* to the rising toll.

But even a public jaded by daily reports of murders, rapes, assaults and drive-by shootings takes note when the victims are found among the most vulnerable: the very young and the elderly.

Crimes involving children are noted with heightened distress as are assaults against old people.

Reports of rapes of elderly women or the robbery and beating of a frail senior citizen spread rapidly through the older community and affect this population dramatically.

Although statistics show that violent crime against the elderly is rare as compared to other age groups, physical harm is feared by many older people. Many old people, aware of their diminished strength and mobility,

realize that chances of outrunning or fighting off an attacker would be slim.

Property Crimes

Burglary, theft and vandalism plague neighborhoods and homes in urban, suburban and rural areas. These crimes affect individuals of all ages, but can be especially distressing for older people.

The invasion of one's living quarters and damage to possessions may be economically and emotionally destructive. Individuals whose security and well-being are tenuous or whose ability to replace stolen or damaged property is limited, may be seriously affected by property crimes.

A prominent U.S. senator recalls the burglary of his mother's apartment. The loss of possessions was less destructive than the fact that she never felt secure in that apartment after the incident.

Some older persons indicate that they do not report crimes and suspicious activities because they fear retaliation. If vandalism has occurred they may fear a repeat. Defacing of a building, damage to lawn and plants or

automobile — all of these can be seen by many of the elderly as a personal attack.

Frauds and Scams

Loss of money can be critical for anyone with limited financial resources. For many older persons, it can be devastating. Unfortunately some of the elderly are particularly susceptible to fraudulent schemes.

While it is difficult to draw general conclusions about such a large group, there are various factors (and combinations of factors) that can lead to victimization — especially when they are combined with reduced mental and physical abilities. Several of these factors are listed here:

Loneliness: Those older persons who do not have a chance to talk with others as much as they wish to may be receptive to a friendly, smooth-talking con artist.

Grief: An older person who has lost close friends or relatives to death may be seeking companionship.

Loss: An older person deprived of friends, family, job or routine may become depressed and can, in some instances, be a target for swindlers.

Sensory impairment: Older people with poor eyesight or hearing loss can become easy marks for con games such as those involving fraudulent contracts with small print.

Illness: An older person who is ill and in pain may grasp at the promise of a miracle cure.

Vanity: The reluctance to exhibit characteristics of aging may make older persons vulnerable to products and schemes to "cure" aging or the symptoms of aging.

Limited income: The older retiree who is on a fixed income and alarmed about unforeseen inflation may take risks when apparently easy money is offered.

Mistrust of banks: Some older persons may keep substantial amounts of cash at home, wanting their resources readily accessible. They may retain a post-Depression era concern about bank failures, worry about more recent accounts of depositors losing money, and also find it difficult to get to the bank. This money could be lost to them not only through frauds and scams but robberies and burglaries as well.

Isolation: Some elderly people who live alone may be unequipped to deal with home

repairs. Lacking a readily available second opinion, they may succumb to the offers of the proverbial dishonest roof repairer or driveway resurfacers.

Elder Abuse

Although it is generally recognized that elder abuse may be vastly underreported, some authorities suggest that there could be as many as 2.5 million incidents of abuse of older persons in any given year. Mistreatment occurs both in domestic and institutional settings.

As the older population increases, it is likely that the incidents of mistreatment also will grow.

While there is no consensus about definitional terms, which vary from state to state, abuse is generally classified as *physical*; *psychological*; *material* or *financial*; and *abandonment*.

The abuse can also take the form of self-neglect, which is often the result of diminished mental or physical ability or social isolation. Cases in this category are often difficult to identify.

Although the criminal justice system is actively involved in prevention and prosecution of child abuse cases, awareness of and protocols for

dealing with abuse of the elderly may not be as well defined in some jurisdictions. Despite the number of estimated cases, abuse of the elderly remains a hidden problem in many areas. There are numerous established procedures for intervention and treatment within the social services network, but fewer exist in the criminal justice system.

According to a congressional report, only one of every eight cases of elder abuse is revealed. In contrast, one of every three child abuse situations is reported.

Elder Abuse: A Decade of Shame and Inaction was released in May 1990 by the House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Health and Long-Term Care of the Select Committee on Aging. This study found that "about 5 percent of the nation's elderly may be victims of abuse from moderate to severe," and "about 1 out of every 20 older Americans, or more than 1.5 million persons, may be victims of such abuse each year."

Many mistreated older persons may feel that they do not have any options other than remaining in neglectful or actively abusive situations.

Some of those elderly persons, dependent upon others and mistreated, indicate feeling

unwanted, sad, lonely and helpless. They often have no one in whom to confide and trust.

Some researchers suggest that passive neglect occurs more often than that which is intentional. The failure to provide proper nutrition or to administer medication can lead to serious health problems. Passive neglect has left seniors in unclean, poorly heated housing, existing on inadequate diets. They may also be dirty and ill-groomed because without help they can no longer maintain proper personal hygiene. The caregivers appear to ignore their spoken or unspoken requests for physical and emotional support.

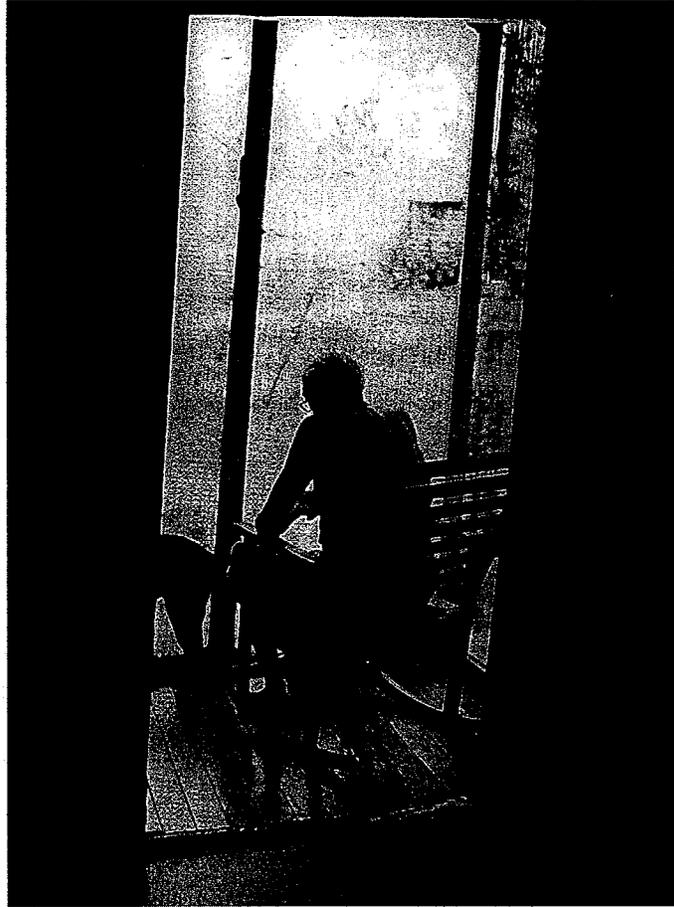
An abusive situation within a family can be quite difficult for outsiders to detect. Some of the abused may feel that such situations are family matters not to be dealt with by outsiders. Shame and lack of alternatives play parts in ongoing unreported abuse.

Inter-family abuse may be physical, psychological or economic. It ranges from criminal assault to neglect, and may result from the frustration and stress of the caregivers — spouse, child, grandchild or other relative. Some studies cite the abuser's resentment, which may stem from past events or the present situation, as one of the causes of mistreatment.

More than two-thirds of those who mistreat the elderly are members of the victim's own family — another pain to be borne by the abused.

Techniques and methods used when dealing with other ages may not necessarily be effective with the elderly. Some characteristics of aging demand special attention.

Triad — a cooperative community effort — was designed to provide special attention.



*Old age is the most unexpected
of all the things that happen to a man.*
Russian philosopher

Chapter two

Starting a Triad

AGREEING

The first step in forming a Triad involves the chief law enforcement leaders within a county — the term *county* referring to both incorporated and unincorporated sections. It is understood that older people in both the incorporated and unincorporated areas need many of the same services.

In most cases, *law enforcement leaders* means the sheriff and police chiefs within the jurisdiction. Whether these individuals work together on a regular basis — or rarely — this is an opportunity for them to help develop and support a program which can enhance the security and well-being of the area's elderly.

The process begins when someone sees the concept as valuable to the community, takes the initiative, makes the calls and explains what Triad is and what it can do. For example, a chief of police may contact other chiefs within the county, the sheriff, and someone to represent older residents. This representative may be an AARP leader or another senior with experience, knowledge of the community and the ability to get things done. This representative could also be someone who works with the elderly. Or a sheriff could be the one to take the initiative and make the first call, as could a senior in the community.

“Although the crime prevention officers in the county have always worked together, Triad has helped to bring the law enforcement leaders together. They are cooperating toward the betterment of the citizens,” said the coordinator of a Florida Triad.

MEETING

Scheduling of the first meeting would be a logical second step. The goal of this first meeting is to agree to work together to assess the needs of older citizens in the county and enhance the delivery of those services, especially those relating to crime. The stage is set for communication based on talking and listening and *hearing*. And communication is the linchpin of a Triad.

At one of the early meetings a Triad Cooperative Agreement could be signed. A sample agreement can be found in *Appendix A*. This signing, although not a requirement, offers an ideal opportunity for media coverage, not only of the cooperative agreement but also of a community focusing on the crime-related needs of the elderly.

This is the time to emphasize to all those attending that the Triad approach offers a unique opportunity to effect positive change in the realm of criminal victimization and safety — especially when all agencies work jointly and cooperatively.

Topics to be considered for discussion at the preliminary meeting might include:

- The growth of the elderly population in the area;
- How calls for law enforcement service are affected by changes in the population;
- The number of older persons who may not know how or where to obtain services they need;
- Benefits to law enforcement officers who are able to refer older persons to needed services;
- Ways of providing law enforcement officers with the necessary information regarding the elderly;
- Learning to communicate with older people without frustrating both parties;
- How a common strategy for working with the elderly benefits law enforcement, other service providers, older residents and the entire community; and
- The importance of the interchange afforded by a senior advisory council consisting of law enforcement leaders and older persons.

GETTING UNDERWAY

The establishment of this senior advisory council is the very important next step. It is time to consider potential members for the council and set a date for the first council meeting. This process is discussed in detail in *Chapter Three: Making Triad Work*.

The strongest, most effective approach to reducing crimes against the elderly is the agreement to cooperate. Many law enforcement agencies have established a departmental policy on the Triad cooperative approach to crime and the elderly. A model policy is in *Appendix B*.

The three-way involvement of the police department(s), sheriff's office, and the community as represented by older leaders and those who work with seniors is powerful. Working together on Triad can lead to future joint endeavors of equal importance and benefit.

VARIABLES

Population variables and law enforcement variables may present special challenges to this three-way approach.

"When we first heard of the Triad approach we all thought of this as another job, an added responsibility. Now we realize that we all push the wheel just a little and it goes a long way," says a pleased Triad coordinator in a county where the level of cooperation among agencies has reached a new high.

Some heavily populated counties contain dozens or even hundreds of municipalities. In other counties, there are a number of one- or two-man law enforcement agencies.

A few counties have *no* police departments at all; the sheriff's department may share law enforcement responsibilities with the state police. In some jurisdictions the sheriff is the principal law enforcement authority for the entire county. And some sheriffs' departments provide court security and civil process only and have no law enforcement duties; it is the police departments who handle all law enforcement.

Triad can accommodate any of these configurations. Its flexibility allows for necessary adjustments to meet various local divisions of responsibilities. Imagination and common sense can mold Triad to meet any county's requirements.

Although there is no cookie-cutter formula for replicating Triad activity and success, established Triads report some commonalities:

- Sheriff and at least one chief attend most senior advisory council meetings;

- Officers and deputies provide guidance and support rather than chairing council meetings;

- Within the first few months, a survey of older residents is reviewed by the council and conducted with members' assistance;

- Monthly meetings of the council. Groups meeting only quarterly move slowly and rely more heavily on the support and involvement of law enforcement professionals;

- Triad-sponsored crime prevention seminars for older persons;

- Recruitment of senior volunteers to work within law enforcement agencies;

- An effort to identify and publicize available programs that assist older persons; and

- Outreach to vulnerable seniors living alone.

Regardless of circumstances, a cooperative approach by law enforcement working with seniors can have tremendous impact. Even if individual chiefs or sheriffs choose only to initiate or expand programs and services to

older persons on their own, at least the elderly will be helped. Perhaps only *some* of the elderly, perhaps only *limited* services, but helped nevertheless.

Progress from this point is in the hands of a group of individuals who know the community and understand many of the concerns of the elderly.



*We cannot do a great deal for the older
person without at the same time
doing a great deal for society.
One is a reflex of the other.*
Lawrence K. Frank

Chapter three

Making Triad Work

An advisory council is a key element in any Triad's success. This group is composed of older members of the community, people who work with the elderly and law enforcement personnel. In close collaboration with the sheriff and police chief(s), the council focuses on the crime-related needs of the older adult.

The open dialogue of this group begins the process of enhancing law enforcement's responses to the crime-related problems of older people. Chiefs of police and sheriffs hear first-hand from older residents about crime — and their fears about crime. Together law enforcement and senior leaders explore unmet needs and concerns.

As Triad's role develops and expands, the council assumes an active and indispensable role. Council members learn of the availability of the programs that already exist and recommend additional strategies for either complementing existing programs or beginning new ones. The term "coalition building" is frequently used to indicate this partnership approach to community issues and solutions.

Triads may accomplish their goals through one countywide council or several, depending upon the size of the county, the population and the wishes and needs of the area's citizens.

Lewis and Clark County, Montana, reported that from the first, their Triad meetings became lively exchanges of information. Older citizens shared their concerns and talked with police officers and deputies about a number of issues of mutual interest. This led to forming the senior advisory council, with heightened interest in seniors' needs.

Many Triads call the advisory group S.A.L.T., an acronym for Seniors and Lawmen Together.

REPRESENTATION

Because the S.A.L.T. Council has such a vital role, careful consideration of the composition of the initial group pays off in the long run. Diverse representation, reflecting the community from which members are drawn, is the key to success for most S.A.L.T. groups. Ideally, membership selection is based on leadership experience and familiarity with senior issues — and the amount of time and energy potential members have to give to this important effort.

Simply asking for volunteers who might like to be part of the Council may be less helpful and have unhappy consequences. Community leaders and agencies working with seniors can assist in suggesting who should receive the invitations. They may know who will work well together to accomplish mutual goals.

Potential members should not only be concerned about senior issues, but also know the community and how to get things done. They should be willing to roll up their sleeves and

make things happen. It should be noted that many roles in Triad are filled by volunteers but only a limited number may actually be S.A.L.T. members.

Law Enforcement Members

It is important for the sheriff and chief(s) to be active executive participants and hear first-hand the concerns and needs of the senior community. If top law enforcement officers place a high priority on a dialogue and planning process that involves seniors, the importance of this program is underlined.

Other law enforcement representatives will probably include one or more staff members working with planning, crime prevention, victim assistance or seniors.

In counties with a large number of incorporated areas and many police departments, each department may rely on the input and support of a mini-S.A.L.T. group. Someone from each of these S.A.L.T. Councils may then attend the countywide meetings. Where there are a large number of chiefs, they may send one or two representatives to the countywide council. In doing so, all areas have the opportunity to participate in Triad plans and programs.

Other Members

At least half of the Council should be composed of older persons who represent various segments of community life and professionals who work with the elderly. These individuals must know the community and its resources. When a name comes to mind or is proposed, reflect on what this person can contribute in the way of ideas, action and attitude. The geographical area represented, as well as an appropriate ethnic and socio-economic mix, should also be considered.

Membership could be drawn from:

- *The clergy* — A representative of the ministerial association or a retired priest, minister or rabbi;
- *The business community* — A representative of a leading business or industry, the Chamber of Commerce, Better Business Bureau or the Senior Core of Retired Executives (SCORE);
- *Health care professionals* — Include someone from the mental health field, hospital auxiliary or a geriatric physician or retired doctor;
- *Service or membership organizations* — AARP, Retired Teachers unit representative, Jaycees, Kiwanis, Exchange Club or

Federation of Women's Clubs. Be sure to include representatives from whichever groups are the most active in the community;

- *Local agencies working directly with seniors* — Public Housing Authority, Council of Governments, City/County Council, mayor's office or the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP);

- *Aging professionals* — A representative from the aging network, including social services, adult protective services, nutrition sites, Agency or Council on Aging, senior centers or others; and

- *Media* — A representative from local newspapers, radio or television stations.

S.A.L.T. Council members can be more effective when they have a working knowledge of the role of the police and sheriffs' offices with whom they are now involved. Departmental personnel can acquaint "civilian" members with the principles and workings of the system along with the mandates and activities of individual departments. Touring the agencies can serve to familiarize Council members with the system and, in turn, introduce personnel to the Triad program leaders.

Social service providers and others with specialized knowledge of community facilities and programs may be willing to conduct training for all Council members — law enforcement and civilian. A format for

It should be noted that Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) are designated by government to coordinate services to older persons. The stated AAA goal is to help the elderly maintain their health and independence in their homes and communities. The AAA is primarily responsible for a geographic area (a city, county or multi-county district). Services of the AAA may include adult day care, legal assistance, senior center programs, in-home services for the elderly, and even institutional care. This organization can be an important source of information for a Triad.

orientation is included in *Chapter Six: Fostering Understanding Through Triad.*

If the tasks of the S.A.L.T. Council are to
assist,
communicate,
suggest,
coordinate
and collaborate,

it may be sensible to start as a small group, with no more than ten members. Additional members can be added as needed. When inviting potential members to participate, it is wise to define their roles, limitations and the general aim of the Council. A letter of invitation explaining the role of the S.A.L.T. Council may clarify these issues, as well as adding significance to the establishment of the Council. A sample letter is included as *Appendix C.*

ROLE OF THE S.A.L.T. COUNCIL

The S.A.L.T. Council's main function is to act as an advisory group for the area's law enforcement personnel. The focus is on crime and security issues as related to the elderly. The Council discusses programs and recommends those which will benefit seniors. The group is also concerned with ways of involving older volunteers in the achievement of its objectives.

Orange County, Florida, with Orlando and 14 other smaller municipalities involved in the Triad, chose a retired state legislator as its first Triad chairman and developed mini-S.A.L.T. Councils throughout the county.

Marion County, Oregon, decided that sections of the county would best be served with individual S.A.L.T. Councils in order to involve more segments of the community and make it easier for older persons to take part closer to their homes.

Las Vegas, Nevada's Triad, began activities with an advisory council composed of professionals and businesses, later diversifying to add retired persons to get their point of view and involvement.

Meetings should offer an opportunity for frank discussion. Ideally, the Council should be a working group as well as the source of ideas. The sessions will also bring together those who provide services and programs and those who are affected by them. A few S.A.L.T. groups have formalized their purpose and role with model policies or bylaws. Samples are included as *Appendix D* and *Appendix E*.

ACTIVITIES OF THE S.A.L.T. COUNCIL

Each Triad pursues issues and activities appropriate for the particular community and the needs of seniors there. In some areas, the crime problems are intense and could be the sole focus of Triad. In other locations, reassurance programs and volunteering in law enforcement agencies may take priority. The following illustrate some areas of involvement for S.A.L.T. groups:

Survey of Seniors

Determine the crime-related concerns of older persons in the community.

Don't just assume that you know what criminal activities and fears are affecting older adults — *ask them*.

A survey of the county's older persons is one of the first items of business for most Triads. Sample surveys are included in *Appendix F* and may be adapted to meet local needs. Such questionnaires should be easy to read, short, simple to complete and printed clearly. If they can be distributed, filled in and collected on the spot, the process will be simplified.

A survey subcommittee composed of S.A.L.T. Council members can adapt and modify the generic survey form. It can then be reviewed by the Council as a whole. The survey committee can also recommend ways of administering the questionnaire, and assist in distributing surveys and tabulating the completed forms.

To reach the greatest possible number of older or retired residents in the county, strive for wide distribution of the questionnaire:

- Include the form in newspapers, senior papers or bulletins of any organizations willing to assist;
- Distribute at libraries and senior centers;
- Hand out during meeting of religious groups and civic organizations;
- Ask Meals on Wheels volunteers and Law Enforcement Explorers to distribute and collect surveys; and

- Request that utility companies include surveys with monthly statements.

Directory

Inventory existing programs

Locating or preparing a listing of available services and programs for seniors is a natural activity for this group. A directory subcommittee may then recommend to the Council that some programs be expanded and others developed. And a subcommittee can help locate capable people to participate.

Council subcommittees can be the movers and doers of a Triad. It is efficient to assign specific tasks to these smaller groups. Remember that the full Council cannot attack every task. Council subcommittee plans and recommendations provide the foundation for the Council's decisions and actions.

Additional Programs

Take part in planning and implementing additional crime prevention programs or services.

In many areas, law enforcement agencies may feel that they lack staff to expand such programs. Council members and other Triad volunteers can work with professionals and

Monmouth County, New Jersey, undertook a directory of programs available to seniors throughout the county — which includes 53 municipalities — as one of its first tasks so that law enforcement, S.A.L.T. members, and seniors in general could locate help when needed.

agencies within the county to make this possible and provide assistance not previously available.

Many counties already benefit from the services of various agencies which help crime victims; it is never the intent of Triad or the Council to duplicate efforts. But filling in the gaps is one of Triad's specialties. For example, the Council may work on methods of identifying elderly victims who may not be reporting crimes, and develop strategies for discovering how this population can be better served.

If there is a victim assistance program in the community, what provisions are made for assistance to older victims *by* seniors? Could a component just for senior victims be useful throughout the county? These are among the questions that must be asked *before* the Council moves to put new or different programs into place or expand an established one.

Evaluation

Monitor and review the impact of Triad activities.

The work of a Triad evolves as circumstances change. Some Triad programs may need to adjust their focus and direction as they evaluate their success. Modification may be

necessary in order to address diverse ethnic and socio-economic groups as well as varied geographic areas. *Chapter Eight: Evaluating Triad* covers this subject in more detail.

Information Sharing

Act as informal liaison.

The Council can provide an ongoing channel for information exchange between the community's seniors and law enforcement.

Education

Become more fully informed about the criminal justice system.

To appreciate and understand the role and the limitations of law enforcement, a S.A.L.T. group needs a working knowledge of the responsibilities and activities of their law enforcement agencies. (See *Chapter Six: Fostering Understanding Through Triad* for discussion of the Citizen Police Academy.)

Advocacy Group

Become an informed support and public relations group for law enforcement.

Having learned about the authority, responsibilities and limitations of law enforcement, members will be able to help their colleagues, clients and friends better understand criminal

justice issues. They can be an important source of information about the abilities of and constraints on criminal justice professionals.

Advisory Group

Serve as an advisory body to law enforcement.

While the Council has no authority and is certainly not intended as a citizen review board, the different perspectives of its members can provide officers with valuable insights. The group can also act as a sounding board for law enforcement on a number of subjects.

Volunteers in Action

Provide hands-on involvement.

The entire Council will be more effective if senior volunteers in the group are active in the speakers' bureau, can introduce and field questions at crime prevention programs, and assist with distribution of surveys and literature. The S.A.L.T. Council that is a working group as well as an advisory body is truly a valuable asset to the entire community.

Marion County, Oregon and Muscogee County, Georgia rely on trained volunteer presenters to convey crime prevention information and conduct programs for older persons. Retired law enforcement officers may be the logical volunteers to conduct such activities.

Reassurance

Take part in locating and expanding reassurance programs.

Older volunteers who are part of a reassurance program report deriving “immense satisfaction” from their work with seniors who benefit from and appreciate this service. Such programs are discussed in *Chapter Five: Elements of Triad*.

Crime Reporting

Assist with strategies to increase crime reporting.

Volunteers can answer a “senior line” in law enforcement agencies. The senior-to-senior approach may encourage reluctant older callers to report suspicious activities or crimes. They can also get additional information through call-back contacts with crime victims. The older volunteer has proven to be especially helpful with those who contact law enforcement with unrealistic expectations or those who are chronic callers. The volunteer can be a helpful and patient listener for some callers previously considered nuisances.

WHAT THE COUNCIL IS NOT

The Council’s activities can be wide-ranging but there are some lines it does not cross. This group is not a review board, nor is it a policy-making body for law enforcement agencies. The S.A.L.T. Council is not involved in the operation of a law enforcement agency, and has no authority over agency

personnel. Members have no supervisory or sworn authority.

S.A.L.T. COUNCIL MEETINGS

When To Meet?

Most councils schedule meetings for the same time each month. Initial meetings may take place more often than once a month as objectives are established, a plan of action is devised and Triad activities get underway.

Daytime hours are best for some older persons, many of whom prefer not to drive after dark or to be out at night.

Where To Meet?

Meetings may be scheduled at the same location each time. It is likely that one of the agencies will have a more convenient meeting room than the others, and this may be the deciding factor. To learn more about the operations — and limitations — of the other agencies, however, meetings might alternate between police and sheriff's offices.

In some cases, the most convenient location could be a senior center, library, community center or church hall. Some S.A.L.T. groups schedule occasional meetings in different parts of the city and county so that it is easier for seniors in those communities to attend.

Who Chairs?

Leadership by a capable older volunteer is desirable. If the sheriff, police chiefs and other professionals can act as resource members rather than actively presiding, the Council may be able to balance "ownership" of the group. Then the chief, sheriff or officers assigned to work with this group can provide technical and managerial guidance without actually running or appearing to control the meetings.

The Muscogee County, Georgia, S.A.L.T. Council is chaired by a retired nursing home director who is active in AARP programs throughout the state. Chairman of the Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Council is an attorney whose firm specializes in elder issues. Experience and the network of contacts are valuable to Triad.

What Is the Best Format?

Most meetings are divided into information and planning segments. Typical agenda items include:

- *Crime update* on recent reported crimes affecting seniors and reminders of seasonal crime awareness (home repair frauds in the spring, home invasions or break-ins when doors and windows are open in summer, holiday shopping problems, etc.). While a law enforcement representative may provide actual crime statistics, older members have the opportunity to bring up the senior community's perceptions and concerns about crime.

- *Reports from committees* on new and ongoing activities;
- *Informative programs* such as crime prevention presentations;
- *Short-term plans* for S.A.L.T. activities; and
- *Long-term goals* to reduce crimes against the elderly and the fear of crime.

A sample agenda for a S.A.L.T. meeting is included as *Appendix G*. Meetings can be as formal or as informal as the group wishes, but most Triads have found some pre-structuring of the meeting to be helpful and time saving.

Supplies?

Name tags, agendas and Triad information packets at each place lead to smoother meetings, particularly when newcomers, visitors and speakers are present. Some groups put refreshments at the top of this list.

Visitors?

In order to encourage input from more seniors, some meetings may occasionally be held at a retirement home, a senior club (such as Golden Agers), a senior center or a service club.

Publicity?

Members of the press may be invited regularly or periodically and their aid sought in publicizing the work of the Triad. Reporters for local newspapers, radio or TV stations, or publications especially for seniors could be invited to join the S.A.L.T. Council as regular members.

Media support can be a tremendous help. Publicity alerts capable would-be volunteers as well as companies and organizations who could contribute to Triad's success. Most communities have print media and at least one radio station. Articles and programs on crime, crime prevention and elder abuse keep these issues before the public.

SUCCESS

When a S.A.L.T. Council meets regularly, when the atmosphere of the meeting affords an opportunity for all members to contribute, when members have increasing understanding of the duties of law enforcement and when planning and action follow discussion, the group will grow in interest, energy and activity. Success in one meaningful activity will lead to identifying and tackling the next.

Although law enforcement executives, crime prevention officers and others have already developed numerous strategies to reduce crime, the S.A.L.T. Council can bring fresh perspective to issues of crime and fear of crime among older citizens. New recommendations — and participation by this new group of interested individuals — may be extremely helpful.

Ten Tips for S.A.L.T. Councils

- 1. Start with a small number of participants. The group can be expanded as need and opportunity arise.**
- 2. Foster involvement and efficiency by creating subcommittees to handle planning and activities.**
- 3. Select a capable senior to chair meetings.**
- 4. Hold a brief planning session before each meeting so that the chairperson and at least one law enforcement leader can review the agenda and determine the desired goals for the meeting.**
- 5. Keep the goal of crime prevention in mind when planning the agenda.**

6. Remind the group of the need to evaluate all efforts, even informally.

7. Try to include all members, giving them the opportunity to participate and provide input. In groups such as advisory councils, silence may not be golden.

8. Plan meetings during daylight hours if possible.

9. Establish a regular meeting day and time and try to stick to it. End meetings on time with follow-up assignments clearly spelled out for subcommittees.

10. Invite members of the media from time to time so that S.A.L.T. activities may receive appropriate publicity and the crime prevention message can reach the public as often as possible.

These suggestions are offered merely as a starting point; the impact of a Triad will be limited only by the interests and imagination of the participants. A vital, lively group representing various segments of the community and involving respected, experienced older persons can be the catalytic force for change. It is an instrument through which the quality of life for present and future seniors is enriched and improved.



*To me, old age is always
fifteen years older than I am.*
Bernard Baruch

Chapter four

What Triad Can Do

When a seventy-year-old man is the victim of a vicious attack after refusing to give up his wallet, Triad's victim assistance program helps him through the ordeal, from emergency room to courtroom.

Before sending a large advance fee to a company selling timeshare vacation condos by phone, a sixty-five-year-old retiree hesitates. She refers to information distributed during a Triad crime prevention presentation warning against just such a venture.

A frail and crippled widow will no longer be mistreated by her nephew because her newly assigned Triad buddy notices the bruises and reports the abuse.

A fiercely independent ninety-year-old man who lives alone won't lie helpless for hours after a fall. Failing to get a call from him at the usual time, the volunteer receiving reassurance calls contacts his neighbor. A deputy who is sent to investigate finds the man immobilized by a broken hip.

These are only a few of the ways Triad aids the elderly. There are as many others as the imagination of Triad leaders can devise.

The primary purpose of Triad is to *prevent* crimes against older persons, but operations focus on both pre-victimization (crime prevention) *and* post-victimization (victim assistance) and may include other issues and needs.

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding is available in every state for compensation and victim assistance.

Many programs are carried out by the county's law enforcement agencies and older persons jointly. Ideas from seniors as well as their time and efforts as volunteers are vital to Triad success. Triad believes that involving experienced, capable older people in solutions to the community's crime problems can provide significant help to law enforcement.

What impact does Triad have on the criminal victimization of the community's elderly?

THE OLDER VICTIM

In any discussion of criminal victimization of older persons, inevitably the following questions are posed: just how many older persons

are crime victims; how many are victims of violent rather than non-violent crimes; and why is fear of crime an issue?

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, older persons are not the most frequently victimized segment of the population. For example, in the category of violent crime, this distinction belongs to young males from eighteen to twenty-five. The statistics, however, do not reflect the differences in lifestyles and the frequent risk-taking which more readily expose young males to harm.

George Sunderland, manager of AARP's Criminal Justice Services says, "By our natural lifestyle and the insidious imposed lifestyle, older persons are not out of their homes during high-risk periods, in high-risk areas."

But statistics are figures and if victims are to be understood and helped, they must be seen as more than just numbers on a page. It is important to consider these aspects:

Impact

The victimization of an older person frequently has far-reaching consequences. The older victim who is injured during the

commission of a crime (a bone broken during a purse snatch or robbery, for example) will almost certainly recuperate more slowly than someone younger. The physical and emotional trauma may lead to permanent incapacity.

Income

Financial loss, whether the result of a street robbery, a burglary in the home, telephone fraud, real estate scam, or other crime may mean the difference between a comfortable existence and deprivation of food, medicine or heat. Many older persons live on fixed incomes, and the unexpected loss of money can do irreparable damage to a limited budget as well as emotional well-being.

Independence

The victimization experience may fracture an older person's already fragile sense of security. Fighting to be independent as age-related physical, financial, and emotional struggles take their toll, an older victim may even lose the will to cope with future problems. The crime may prove to be the last straw in the battle to remain independent, emotionally or financially.

"Whether it's a purse-snatching or an assault, the older victim feels betrayed and is horribly affected," according to Audrey Thibodeaux, manager of Special Services for the St. Martin Parish Triad.

Quality of Life

Recovering from victimization and considering either the possibility of another incident or the consequences of a foolish decision, older victims may become increasingly reclusive and cease to participate in activities beyond their own doors. Embarrassed, distressed, with self-confidence shattered, the individual may literally and figuratively lock the door and lose touch with the world without.

Secondary or Vicarious Victimization

Older persons hearing or reading of crimes against their contemporaries may become frightened and abandon their usual pattern of visiting friends, going to worship, shopping and participating in community activities.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE

A natural activity for Triad is a victim assistance program. Offering information and support for older victims is a legitimate and important component of Triad. But first Triad must find out who actually needs help — a task complicated by the unwillingness of some older people to report crimes.

Estimates vary, but some indicate only fifty to sixty percent of elderly victims report crime to law enforcement.

Some older people justify their failure to report victimization by saying they feel the police cannot or will not do anything, that the police are too busy with other things — or that the crime isn't worth reporting. Some older people aren't sure just what constitutes a crime — and feel that succumbing to a fraud was merely a bad business decision. Others are embarrassed for family or authorities to know they have been conned by a high-pressure salesman presenting an offer too good to refuse.

Through the S.A.L.T. Council, discussed in detail in *Chapter Three: Making Triad Work*, seniors are told why it is important that they report crime. They learn what constitutes a crime, and not only why but when and how to report. They are informed about what law enforcement will do — and about anonymous reporting programs such as Crime Stoppers.

If a victim assistance program is already underway in the community, the Triad may be able to expand the program, involving

older volunteers to assist and support older victims. The volunteers may be just the right people to deal with not only the known victims but also unrealistic or chronic callers to law enforcement agencies. Their insights and experience may be particularly helpful.

The S.A.L.T. Council can establish a committee to recruit older persons in the community with the ability and experience to counsel and work with victims. With sufficient training, these individuals can aid the professional staff. Providing such peer assistance recognizes the fact that some older victims may feel more comfortable discussing their victimization and any resulting problems and concerns with a person close to their own age. In some cases, a former victim may be able to work through a distressing experience by helping others in similar straits.

Few citizens, young or old, understand the workings of the court system and know what to do if and when their cases reach this stage in the criminal justice process. An elderly person's path through the system could be eased by another senior able to share experiences, provide information and offer support. *AARP's Citizen's Guide to the Criminal Justice System* is a helpful resource which is widely used.

In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for the victim assistance volunteer to:

- Visit a crime victim to listen, share experiences, and offer understanding and moral support;
- Act as liaison to providers of services now needed by the victim, such as lock or window replacement;
- Assist in obtaining appropriate counseling;
- Serve as mentor and guide through the criminal justice system's proceedings, including accompanying victims to court or hearings;
- Recommend involvement in Neighborhood Watch; and
- Take part in a call-back program where those who have reported a crime receive follow-up telephone calls informing them of the investigation's progress. At the same time, the volunteer may be able to gather additional information about the crime.

The crimes that produce these victims are varied but each one falls within a category. Triad can help the senior citizen reduce the chances of victimization in any of these classifications.

VIOLENT CRIME

In today's violence-ridden world, even the elderly are sometimes targeted by criminals. Like children, they are relatively defenseless and may attract certain types of predators. When this occurs, headlines report, "Ninety-one-year-old Stabbed to Death" and "Grandmother Shot During Robbery."

Triad crime prevention programs address personal safety, demeanor, avoiding high-risk situations, and taking sensible precautions to reduce the chances of becoming crime victims. Crime prevention presentations and information will take into account the types of problems being experienced in the area.

PROPERTY CRIME

Citizens can be encouraged to take steps to make their property less attractive and available to thieves and vandals. The message to seniors from a trained senior volunteer can be especially effective. Marking valuables with an exclusive identifying number (Operation Identification) is one relatively simple step citizens can take.

The unwary older person with a wallet visible in a back pocket or a purse dangling over the

arm may attract human predators. Many seniors carry a significant amount of money as well as treasured pictures or important papers in their wallets and purses. Triad presentations illustrate ways to carry money safely. Officers and volunteers encourage older persons to leave most valuables at home and even to find alternate ways of carrying money such as wrist wallets and fanny packs.

The stealing of checks from mailboxes is all too common. Social security checks, delivered at set times, are temptingly available to thieves. Representatives of Triad encourage citizens to make use of direct deposit to their banks rather than having the checks delivered by mail.

Triads make every effort to let citizens know what they themselves can do, conveying accurate information without unduly frightening them about crime. The goal is to foster caution and safe habits, not paranoia.

ELDER ABUSE

Among the most difficult victims to identify and help are those who suffer from elder abuse. Underreported and often considered "hidden," abusive situations may

A Baltimore police officer told a group that his 93-year-old grandmother doesn't believe in banks. "She's hard-headed, and carries a large pocketbook everywhere. She's got her life savings and all her special pictures in there." Since she refuses to leave the purse at home, he has taught her how to carry it in order to reduce the likelihood of her purse being snatched and all the contents disappearing — or, even worse, injury if she clings to her purse.

nevertheless surface when Triad groups survey the crime-related problems and needs of older residents of their areas.

Among the strategies to reduce cases of abuse, Triad may foster buddy networks. Buddies are paired in a relatively informal way. Volunteer buddies may be friends, acquaintances, or someone unknown to the elderly individuals. The buddy system is an effective tool for detecting and preventing the mistreatment of older people. Religious organizations and AARP chapters are among the groups to approach for help and involvement.

Whether abuse is noted as a statistically significant problem for a community or not, a Triad may want to make abuse awareness a topic for examination by seniors and law enforcement officers. Abuse *prevention* education should accompany information about detection, assistance and prosecution. Triads may want to make abuse prevention a regular topic for presentations and discussion.

Professionals and trained volunteers have a role to play in abuse prevention. Helpful information can be provided by health care, mental health or certain social service agency personnel, law enforcement officers and volunteers. Joint presentations by professionals and volunteers are particularly effective.

AARP'S videotape and handout materials entitled "Your Future, Who Decides?" are excellent tools to motivate plans to prevent one's own victimization. This is designed to provoke thought and discussion.

FRAUDS AND SCAMS

Knowing the prevalence of schemes to defraud the elderly, a logical emphasis of a Triad is an ongoing program to inform seniors about such activities. Through the efforts of crime prevention officers and trained volunteers, seniors learn about the nature of frauds and scams and how to recognize those who perpetrate them.

Many more citizens need to know what constitutes a fraud and what activities are criminal. Articles, brochures, and presentations — with follow-up bulletins and reminders — can be made available to individuals and senior organizations. Many agencies already provide this information but may intensify their efforts with the help of Triad.

In addition, interaction with law enforcement personnel is extremely important. Officers ask older persons to call their police and sheriff's departments when they suspect someone is attempting to defraud them. Some may be reluctant to do so. But the older people who have met and talked with these officers are more comfortable calling for advice and more likely to report such incidents.

When fraudulent operators have invaded the area, the S.A.L.T. Council and others working with law enforcement can help alert the community. A forewarned citizenry can make a con artist's life downright difficult.

Seniors are encouraged to adopt a prepared or "canned" response to unsolicited offers which sound suspicious. Having a ready answer will lessen anxiety as well as vulnerability. The elderly will be better able to resist high-pressure sales pitches when armed with replies such as:

"Leave your number, and I will get back to you after I check with (the Better Business Bureau, police department, relative, attorney, etc.)."

"Send (or leave) some literature, and I will consider it."

"I no longer respond to telephone solicitations."

"I have to consult my (husband, wife, brother, daughter, attorney) before I make that sort of decision."

"If I have to give you an immediate answer, the answer will have to be 'no'."

Increasingly, citizens are instructed not to make any transaction in which they give their credit card numbers over the telephone unless they themselves have placed the call. Fraudulent use of credit cards has become far too common.

These are a few of the ways Triads combat crimes against the elderly. Each Triad may find that other problems, other situations will give rise to other approaches. "The beauty of Triad is its adaptability," says Sheriff Robert Prinslow of Marion County, Oregon.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

It is this adaptability that allows Triads to develop disaster preparedness plans tailored to the area's probable needs. When disasters or weather-related emergencies threaten or strike, older persons are among those who become worried and even frightened. Recent storms such as Hugo, Andrew, and Emily, as well as earthquakes and floods have affected older people and heightened problems of remaining independent in their own homes.

Triads in disaster-prone areas may consider establishing an emergency preparedness subcommittee to make plans for older residents when special preparations or evacuation are called for.

Triad disaster preparedness plans are underway in St. Martin Parish, Louisiana, where Hurricane Andrew's 1992 visit left a deep impression. S.A.L.T. members, the Council on Aging, and law enforcement personnel have identified agencies and individuals who can assist seniors before, during, or after a disaster. Information about older people living alone and physically challenged persons is computerized for ready access. Law enforcement personnel will be dispatched to these homes to check on citizens' welfare and aid in evacuation should an emergency situation arise.

Whether the needs are related to disaster preparedness or crime prevention, Triads' assistance to seniors is conducted chiefly on the local level.

LOCAL TRIAD

The real impact of most Triads is delivered through a *local* core group of the sheriff, police chief(s), and community leader, who may have a leadership role with an AARP chapter or Retired Teachers Association.

The first local Triad was established in St. Martin Parish, Louisiana, under the leadership of Sheriff Charles Fuselier working with four police chiefs in the county. Shortly thereafter, Louisiana chiefs of police, sheriffs, and AARP leaders signed the first statewide agreement to make the Triad concept a priority.

STATE TRIAD

The first fourteen states to sign cooperative agreements similar to the national agreement are Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

On the state level a Triad may concentrate on training and provide advice and technical support. The state training academy may be involved, making training available to officers on the process of aging, expanding services to older citizens, group facilitation, community organization and other relevant topics. Thus, a core of knowledgeable deputies and officers can be developed and expanded.

Statewide resources can be noted and publicized. The issue of needed legislation can be addressed, if this has not already taken place. A statewide team of law enforcement, AARP and social service agencies can identify issues which affect seniors. Model programs in the state can be located and made known to all.

REGIONAL TRIAD

Especially where a regional planning group exists, Triad activities are conducted for an entire area, sharing information and programs among several towns and counties. Senior leaders from nearby municipalities and counties meet with their law enforcement leaders to plan crime prevention programs to be replicated locally.

The state Triad in Illinois was convinced that a course for law enforcement officers should be offered at the state police academy. A grant from the Attorney General made it possible to put together a course which led to designating officers as Elderly Service Officers. "This adds to the growing resources needed to address the problems of the graying of America and Illinois," says John Janssen, Manager of Training and Field Services for the Illinois Local Governmental Law Enforcement Officers Training Board.

Regional or multi-county Triads like the one in Western Kentucky present programs, resources and information which then are shared in the individual counties. The Kentucky Regional Triad meets during the even months with county S.A.L.T. Councils convening during the odd-numbered months. Each county sends at least one representative to the regional S.A.L.T. group.

"Separately, we might not have the resources to make the Triad approach work," says Sheriff John Bouvier of Daviess County, Kentucky. "Working together, we can sponsor excellent speakers and programs and pursue some really helpful and worthwhile things for seniors."

Triad succeeds wherever law enforcement professionals and community leaders agree to cooperate to accomplish a mutually beneficial goal: reducing crimes against older persons and improving the sense of security and quality of life for these individuals. State and regional efforts enable local Triads to do more with and for older people to reach this goal.



To grow old is a new venture in itself.
Goethe

Chapter five Elements of Triad

Triads get underway by concentrating on the needs and concerns of seniors as indicated by the initial survey. Most start with one or two programs. They then expand their scope of activity as the law enforcement departments and the S.A.L.T. group get more involved.

With the advice of the S.A.L.T. Council, Triads prioritize the activities or programs most needed in a community. It is not expected that any Triad will pursue all of the programs listed in this handbook. Starting with the most pressing activity, Triads build from there.

COMBATING VULNERABILITY

Law enforcement leaders and S.A.L.T Council members develop plans together to help seniors realistically assess their risks of victimization and reduce chances of being crime victims.

When expanding existing crime prevention programs, or adding new ones, consider the following:

- *Crime statistics for reported elderly victimization* — area by area if feasible. It is extremely helpful to know and be able to tell seniors what crimes are occurring — and

when and where. This supplies seniors with factual information which helps to dispel unwarranted or exaggerated fears.

- *Accumulating information about reported crime* by examining the results of the survey of the perceptions of the elderly community. Surveys can indicate whether this is a large problem; sample surveys are in *Appendix F*.
- *Planning a vigorous community education campaign* to reach seniors with positive crime-prevention information — briefly, clearly, and frequently. Where individual agencies already sponsor ongoing crime prevention programs for elderly citizens, the S.A.L.T. Council can look at ways of expanding those efforts as a Triad.

Getting the Crime Prevention Message Across

The crime prevention message, communicated in a variety of ways and repeated often, has the best chance of being retained. To change behavior and affect the safety and well-being of a community's older persons, a concentrated and continuing effort is essential. Remember: **It is equally as important to inform people about what crimes and behaviors should concern them as what they probably need not fear or worry about.**

Consider the following methods and opportunities to get the message across:

- *Print media:* newspapers, community bulletins, papers for seniors, retired veterans, educators and employee bulletins — whatever is available. AARP's popular cartoons offer a whimsical way of conveying the message.

- *S.A.L.T. speakers bureau:* members of the S.A.L.T. Council and other seniors recruited and trained to deliver crime prevention messages tailored for the community. Role-playing and humor may illustrate and dramatize a very serious topic. AARP chapter meetings, religious groups, community groups, senior meal sites and a myriad of other gatherings provide forums.

- *Crime prevention events:* Special programs and morning or all-day events for seniors highlight not only the types of crimes plaguing older persons but techniques for preventing victimization. The Triads in Orange County, Florida, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, have sponsored Senior Safety Fairs with a variety of topics. The Ascension Parish, Louisiana, event is titled a Crime Prevention Expo, and in Frederick County, Maryland, it is a Senior Summit.

In Marion County, Oregon, senior Triad volunteers provide education on home security and personal safety. Police departments, the sheriff's department, and representatives of the State Attorney General's Office of Consumer Affairs take turns making monthly Triad presentations to seniors all over Hampshire County, Massachusetts.

Crime prevention messages are a regular part of the weekly Senior Safe Walks in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where safety information rounds out the morning. In San Juan County, New Mexico, this is a River Walk event.

A crime prevention message may be piggy-backed onto other outings or social events for older adults. Senior centers serving meals may provide a ready audience at lunch time. Crime prevention officers and AARP planners note that offering refreshments along with a brief program garners a receptive audience. At senior centers in Albemarle County, Virginia, the monthly crime prevention events are called C.O.P.S. (Crime and Older Persons Safety.)

- *Triad calendar:* The Triad in Monmouth County, New Jersey, prints a special calendar for seniors which features safety and crime prevention tips for each month. Community sponsors absorb the cost of printing.

- *Public Service Announcements:* Whether sophisticated professionally produced messages or less formal productions, radio and television send forth the word about crime prevention. Kentucky's regional Triad asked the local community college to produce PSA's explaining Triad and its crime prevention emphasis. Both Triad and the students were pleased with the project.

- *Neighborhood Watch groups:* Seniors involved in community crime prevention spread the word to their peers. Many such groups are led and sustained by retired persons. Marion County, Oregon, has expanded Neighborhood Watch to increase attention to elderly neighbors. They are also involving more older persons as the eyes and ears of law enforcement, observing and reporting suspicious activities — and many older persons are taking leadership roles in the program.

- *Senior centers and retirement communities:* Most places where seniors reside or gather are pleased to put practical programs on their agendas. The entire program may focus on law enforcement, crime, crime prevention, or all three. This is a natural opportunity to reach seniors and answer their questions.

- *Public housing projects:* City government, social services, law enforcement, and housing administration officials share a deep concern about crime problems in public housing. Older persons are frequently trapped in living arrangements which are not only unsatisfactory but unsafe. In high-risk areas, delivering a crime prevention message needs to be strengthened by concrete strategies for older persons' safety.

Several Triads plan to recruit police officers to live in senior housing, where they will have some crime prevention assignments but chiefly provide a deterrent presence.

- *Inner city elderly:* For those older persons living in dangerous areas where crime and violence are a dramatic and frightening part of life, a number of programs are underway. For a start, seniors are cautioned about current crime problems and advised about keeping doors well locked and not admitting anyone without proper credentials. They may be supplied with a whistle to blow when threatened by or observing a crime.

They may also benefit from a volunteer escort service. In some cities carefully selected youth accompany the elderly on errands. Churches in some high-risk areas hire off-duty policemen to protect members of the congregation as they go to and from services.

- *Safe Walks:* Experts advise that walking is a safe and beneficial form of exercise, contributing to reduction in blood pressure, tension, stress, stiffness, etc. In some neighborhoods, however, walking can be dangerous.

The Bridgeport Triad-sponsored Senior Safe Walks are popular. Begun as "Walk on the Wild Side," these weekly activities take place at the zoo in good weather. Parking and admission are free to seniors on walk mornings, when as many as 130 older residents gather for exercise, socialization and a crime prevention message.

Other Triads may choose to sponsor or co-sponsor senior walks in a park or mall. This opportunity not only provides an audience for brief crime prevention presentations but also fosters a relationship between law enforcement and older persons.

Local hospitals or other organizations may agree to co-sponsor and organize these walks. Sponsors may agree to provide juice or fruit, or seniors take turns bringing such refreshments. While Triads do not focus primarily on socialization and health issues, S.A.L.T. Councils may see value in such activities.

- *Senior Safe Shopping:* Co-sponsored by Triad and local grocery store chains, this program involves providing safe transportation for seniors to buy groceries. In some cases off-duty police officers escort seniors into the store, where clerks trained in communicating with the elderly await them.

Triad co-ordinator Angela DeLeon, pictured on page 126, accompanies older residents on their trips to buy groceries in Connecticut.

Chairs and refreshments may also be provided. This is another Bridgeport, Connecticut, program.

VITAL INFORMATION ABOUT SENIORS

Refrigerator Cards

Originating in Monmouth County, New Jersey, this idea has caught on and spread across the country. A brightly-colored card displays vital health information. The cards, which are printed and distributed by Triads, are designed to provide quick access to names and numbers of persons to contact in an emergency. The name and number of the senior's doctor, health care plan, allergies and a listing of current medications are highly visible.

To date, the Monmouth County Refrigerator Cards have saved ten lives when emergency response personnel or others have needed quick access to information for persons unable to give this information for themselves. See *Appendix H* for a Refrigerator Card illustration.

File of Life

Another version of this idea uses an envelope, also to be placed on the refrigerator and mounted magnetically. Along with medical information, the envelope can contain a copy of important papers such as a living will.

Older Persons Referral Card

These cards are carried by law enforcement officers as a handy way of referring older persons in certain circumstances to needed services. In Volusia County, Florida, where these Triad-sponsored cards were developed, officers are instructed to pay particular attention to older citizens appearing to be in need of services, even those beyond the normal focus of law enforcement.

The officer who observes someone seeming to be inappropriately dressed or poorly nourished, for example, fills in the card to be turned in at the law enforcement agency at the end of his shift. A system is in place to notify him about the help obtained for the older person. A copy of the card is included in *Appendix I*.

Programs like these address more than crime. They relate to the total quality of life. They

reduce criminal opportunities while meeting the needs of older adults to feel safe and to know that help is available when they need it.

REASSURANCE PROGRAMS

Adopt-a-Senior

Begun in St. Martin Parish, Louisiana, the idea of having law enforcement officers "adopt" vulnerable seniors has been replicated in several other areas. It provides a lifeline for numbers of the isolated elderly as well as furnishing adopted "grandparents" for many officers.

The law enforcement officer visits his or her assigned seniors at least once a week and makes a weekly telephone call as a friendly check on their well-being. Suggested guidelines are in *Appendix J*.

Senior Buddy System

Elder abuse, believed by many to be as much of a problem as child abuse, strikes at far too many helpless older adults. While the social service and criminal justice systems wrestle with effective responses to the problem, Triad focuses attention on ways of preventing elder abuse with seniors joining law enforcement

The 94-year-old woman pictured on page 10 lives alone on a remote island in the Atchafalaya Swamp Basin in Louisiana and receives two visits each week from a deputy sheriff. He travels 45 minutes each way by boat for a brief visit to check on her welfare. When Hurricane Andrew approached the area in 1992, Sheriff Charles Fuselier dispatched deputies twice to evacuate her. "We really worried about her because she refused to leave." When the storm subsided, Sheriff Fuselier went to see for himself if the hurricane had caused serious problems. "You have to admire her independence — she made it through somehow," he reported.

professionals in a cooperative approach. Adults are encouraged to plan for their later years and to develop support networks on which they can rely. Some homebound seniors, however, may not have a viable support system.

Seniors in frequent touch with friends and neighbors are less likely to be victimized. They lessen the chances of vulnerability if they have individuals in whom they can confide. Establishing a Senior Buddy chain may provide one such reassurance program. In some cases, it could literally be a lifesaver. It is comforting to know that friendly persons are aware of one's situation and potential problems. In some cases, a Senior Buddy System can be instrumental in actually preventing or stopping financial, physical or psychological abuse and neglect or even self-neglect. Volunteer buddies are able to recognize and respond to changes in health, well-being, mental attitude or financial situation.

Telephone Reassurance

Telephone contact programs are successful in many communities. They become Triad activities when the law enforcement agencies take a role in sponsoring the program through the S.A.L.T. Council. Many older

individuals' safety and sense of security would be increased by a daily telephone call. Participants may be located through senior groups, media articles, the Office on Aging and referrals from friends, neighbors, relatives and Older Person Referral Cards, among other sources. In virtually every community where this program is used, it has saved lives.

Some areas use automated calling systems. However, the value in providing a chance for a homebound person to chat briefly with a real live person should not be underestimated. Senior volunteers can play an important role, making or receiving calls at the law enforcement agency or other suitable locations. Whether the call originates with the volunteer or whether seniors call in at a scheduled time must be decided. Some see value in the older adult taking the initiative and making the effort to place the call. A model application for telephone reassurance is *Appendix K*.

The S.A.L.T. Council may decide to establish a subcommittee for reassurance programs, such as Adopt-a-Senior, telephone reassurance and recruiting and assigning buddies. Senior organizations including the Area Agency or Council on Aging, Meals on

Henry and Ruth McFee, pictured on page 104, have staffed the telephone reassurance program in Buncombe County, North Carolina, since the end of 1990. Five days a week they place calls to as many as 230 older residents of the county, many of whom look forward to these brief visits and have become the McFees' friends. On weekends a retired minister and his wife share the calling responsibilities.

Wheels, Adult Protective Services and others can identify individuals who could benefit from such programs.

The S.A.L.T. committee may assist in locating existing programs and community and religious groups willing to get involved. Part of the Council's role is to inform seniors about programs available to them, and see that those who need or want to participate know how to do so.



*The mirror tells only the facts,
never the poetry.*
May Sarton

Chapter six

Fostering Understanding Through Triad

Law enforcement officers and older citizens may not often have the opportunity to interact and get to know each other. The elderly may only have contact with officers when there is a problem — not always a time for the officer or the senior to appreciate each other's finer points and a possible time for impatience, misunderstanding and miscommunication.

To provide better law enforcement service to a community's older residents and to make senior citizen-police officer encounters a more satisfying experience for both, Triads arrange for each to learn about some characteristics, roles and limitations of the other. Employing the theory that familiarity and education lead to better understanding, Triads plan the following:

TRAINING FOR OFFICERS

Stereotyped ideas about older persons are common. Many young officers, particularly those with infrequent contact with older relatives or neighbors, know little about the process of aging. They may not be skilled in communicating with older persons. Whether responding to a call for service or delivering a program to a group of seniors, officers can be much more effective when they realize how

aging may affect some older persons' vision, hearing and depth perception. Knowledge of a number of other factors will affect the success of the communication.

AARP's "*Law Enforcement and Older Persons*" is a publication covering this topic in some detail.

Some officers also may not appreciate the impact which fear of crime has on older persons — or the reasons behind certain actions and behaviors that may seem strange.

While it is difficult to draw general conclusions about such a large group of people, some older persons have characteristics which make them particularly susceptible to specific kinds of crime and fraudulent schemes. These characteristics reflect a variety of circumstances but include some common factors.

More of those working with senior citizens need to have factual information about aging and the elderly. To render better service to a community's older persons with fewer frustrations on both sides, departmental personnel receive training on the aging process and victimization of the elderly.

The community relations officer, training officer, senior resource officer or any number of other persons with an interest in older people could obtain materials from AARP or other sources and conduct this training. A doctor, nurse, or social worker skilled in dealing with the elderly may be willing to conduct a session or two. This training may be offered at a state training academy, as in-service training or even as roll-call training.

What Do Officers Typically Know about Older People?

If the general impression is that most elderly persons are stashed in nursing homes or are nearly all deaf or in poor health or a drain on society, the quiz at right may reveal misconceptions.

Subjects to be incorporated into training for officers might include:

- The process of aging.
- Communicating with older persons.
- Impairments: Being aware of possible problems with vision and hearing and making adjustments *if necessary*. And bearing in mind that some older persons have excellent vision and hearing and would resent being shouted at.
- Medication: The effects of medication, mixing medications, or failure to take the appropriate dosage.

PALMORE QUIZ — SELECTED QUESTIONS

- T F 1. In general, most old people are pretty much alike.
- T F 2. Over 15% of the U.S. population are now age 65 or older.
- T F 3. The aged are more fearful of crime than are persons under 65.
- T F 4. The majority of older people (past age 65) are senile (i.e. defective memory, disoriented, or demented).
- T F 5. More older persons (over 65) have chronic illnesses that limit their activity than younger persons.
- T F 6. At least one-tenth of the aged are living in long-stay institutions (i.e. nursing homes, mental hospitals, homes for the aged, etc.).
- T F 7. Old people usually take longer to learn something new.
- T F 8. Most older workers cannot work as effectively as younger workers.
- T F 9. The reaction time of most old people tends to be slower than reaction time of younger people.
- T F 10. The majority of old people are socially isolated and lonely.
- T F 11. The majority of old people are working or would like to have some kind of work to do (including housework and volunteer work).
- T F 12. Most old people are set in their ways and unable to change.

***Questions courtesy of Dr. Erdman Palmore of Duke University. Answers appear as Appendix L.*

- Detecting possible elder abuse.
- Factors contributing to criminal victimization.
- The effects of criminal victimization.

Victimization and Its Effects

It is important to realize that people do not automatically become gullible or unintelligent as they grow older. The circumstances affecting their lives as they age may heighten some seniors' likelihood of becoming victims. Older adults who are lonely, unused to coping with home repairs, experiencing the loss of family, friends and meaningful activities, or trying to stretch a meager pension could be targets.

As mentioned in *Chapter Four, What Triad Can Do*, some reports indicate that older persons are not the most heavily victimized segment of the population — particularly by violent crime. Lee Pearson of AARP Criminal Justice Services notes that if all crimes committed against the elderly were reported and tabulated the picture might be quite different. And certain crimes do indeed affect the elderly more frequently than other age groups: pickpocket, pursesnatch, theft of checks from the mail and criminal fraud.

The effects of crime may be severe for the older victim. Many older persons are

devastated by the fact of being victimized as well as the consequences of the experience. Captain Audrey Thibodeaux, who coordinates special services for the St. Martin Parish Triad in Louisiana, notes that many older victims feel betrayed and ask, "Why did this happen? I never did anything to him or her."

"They may find it very hard to recover from the experience, whether the crime has involved personal injury or not," she adds.

Officers who understand that older victims may be badly traumatized can bear this in mind when taking a crime report, investigating the crime or referring victims for assistance.

Crime Reporting by the Elderly — Why or Why Not?

Those working with older persons may be frustrated to learn how many may not report victimization. The amount of money involved, clues as to who committed the crime or the feeling that reporting will not aid in the apprehension of the criminal affect reporting.

Some law enforcement officers faced with reporting problems divide the issue into three categories: non-reporters, chronic callers and

those who expect miracles from the police. Some of those elderly persons who do not report indicate that they feel that either the police will not or cannot do anything about it — or that the crime isn't worth reporting. They may also indicate that their problem seems small compared to the serious crime problems the police confront every day — or that the deputies are too busy to deal with such relatively insignificant matters.

What the non-reporters see as possible barriers to reporting must be considered. For example, would they be embarrassed if neighbors observed a uniformed officer at their door? Might they fear the police? Could they be hesitant about becoming involved with the judicial process? Do they not know about anonymous reporting programs such as Crime Stoppers?

There could be a dozen rationales, some appearing to law enforcement personnel as less than substantial. No matter how these reasons are perceived by others, some elderly persons see them as sound and they constitute a real, if irrational, roadblock. They cannot be discounted if the victim is to be reached and helped.

On the other hand, some older persons tend to call law enforcement for assistance for all

sorts of problems. They call about problems, real or exaggerated, with neighbors, with loud noises, unwanted telephone calls and many other subjects. Some chronic callers may contact law enforcement agencies repeatedly.

These individuals may be lonely or fearful or even losing perspective about the world in which they live. It may be hard for busy dispatchers and officers responding to repeated calls for service to be patient with these persons. Some of these individuals could be victims of a condition known as Alzheimer's Disease (AD). This is another subject about which every officer needs to be informed.

Alzheimer's Education

Alzheimer's Disease afflicts an estimated four million middle-aged and older adults in the United States. It often affects the patient's behavior and leads him or her into contact with law enforcement officers. As more people live to advanced ages, the susceptible population will increase.

It is important for every officer or deputy to realize the symptoms and behaviors which may indicate this illness and affect the behavior of some individuals they encounter.

AD is a progressive, irreversible disease which affects the brain. It results in progressive loss of mental faculties such as memory, learning, attention and judgment.

Individuals suffering from AD may exhibit memory loss, decline in ability to perform routine tasks, disorientation, behavior change and loss of language skills. Many mildly and moderately impaired AD patients appear as alert and physically fit as anyone else their age, however.

The following behaviors typical of some Alzheimer's victims may bring a patient into contact with law enforcement:

- *Wandering:* A patient may wander away from his caregivers and become lost. Because of the progressive loss of memory, he may become lost quite near his home. The disease affects the associative capability in the brain that normally allows people to relate landmarks to a familiar world.

- *Indecent exposure:* AD patients may fidget and develop repetitive behaviors such as fidgeting with buttons and zippers. An AD victim who zips and unzips his pants or unbuttons a blouse in public may simply be fidgeting.

- *Shoplifting*: AD patients, suffering from forgetfulness, may forget to pay for things. They simply forget they have picked up an item, that they are in a store, or that it is necessary to pay.

They may also forget their pocketbooks or how much money they had with them. Confronted with a charge of “shoplifting” they may become confused and accuse store personnel of stealing from them.

- *Appearance of intoxication*: Several symptoms and behavior patterns of AD victims may give the appearance of intoxication. Confusion, disorientation, problems with short-term memory or language or coordination, all of which might indicate intoxication, may in fact be Alzheimer’s symptoms.

- *Victimization/false report*: Those afflicted with AD may prove to be easy prey for con artists and muggers.

On the other hand, AD patients may get the idea that they have been victimized. They may report a crime which has not in fact occurred — even implicating friends or family members. Typical of this type of report is “an intruder in the house” who turns out to be a spouse; reported thefts of articles which in fact have been lost, mislaid or given away;

and accusations that money and property have been stolen by friends, family and caregivers.

- *Problems behind the wheel:* Many AD patients no longer have valid drivers licenses. However, when memory, judgment and problem solving ability are impaired, those AD patients who continue to drive may be involved in accidents. They may also get lost and “wander,” driving even hundreds of miles from home with no idea of how to get back. In other situations, individuals may forget where they have parked a car and then report the vehicle as “stolen.”

- *Failure to pay bills:* They may also come to the attention of the criminal justice system because of evictions, repossessions or termination of utility service as a result of forgetfulness or inability to handle the payment process.

Behaviors which may indicate Alzheimer’s include:

- *The repeated question:* AD patients may ask the same question over and over. A confused person may repeatedly ask an officer, “Why are you here?” or “What time is it?” This simply indicates forgetfulness of the situation and of the passage of time.

- *Inappropriate reactions or expressions:* Although the AD patient may appear healthy and normal, the facial expression may be blank or inappropriate to the situation. For example, the AD patient may talk about a serious incident while smiling.

- *Inappropriate dress:* An AD patient may wear clothing inappropriate to the weather and season, mismatched or inside-out clothing or even pajamas in public during the day. In the absence of other apparent causes of confusion and disorientation such as a blow to the head, physical trauma and/or alcohol abuse, the unusual clothing may indicate a victim of AD.

- *Delusions:* A delusion is a persistent incorrect belief that remains fixed in spite of all rational evidence to the contrary. Deluded AD patients could appear convinced that they are victims of a crime — even accusing a close relative of being a thief.

- *Short-term memory problems:* The classic symptom of AD is loss of memory. Short-term memory could be totally eliminated, while recall of events long past may be vivid. Realizing that everyone forgets some things at some times, particularly in stressful situations, it is important to be aware that AD patients forget, forget that they have

forgotten, and will not be able to recall what they have forgotten. They may forget events which occurred only minutes before. Although a patient's name is stored in long-term memory, some AD patients may be unable to recall where they live, where they were going, and where they have been even a short time before.

- *Problems with language:* AD patients may ramble on in a confused manner because the brain is sending confused or incomplete messages to the voice center. They may also lose the ability to understand what they hear. Lack of comprehension and confused speech may indicate AD; the patient may appear to be lying or even taunting a law enforcement officer.

An officer who is aware that older persons with unusual behavior could be AD patients will want to keep the following techniques in mind:

- Check for an ID bracelet indicating Alzheimer's Disease.
- Speak slowly, clearly, in a reassuring tone with simple words and sentences. Deal with one step or idea at a time.
- Speak directly to the patient in a non-confrontive fashion.

- Take charge of the situation in a calm manner similar to that used with a lost or distressed child.
- Remember, if there are no positive signs of alcohol or drugs, an older person may be an Alzheimer's patient.

Local Alzheimer's Association chapters offer a variety of educational programs and may be able to assist law enforcement agencies as well as families with training and information. If there is no Alzheimer's Association chapter in the area, Triad volunteers might develop a referral list of health care professionals and institutions familiar with AD.

TRAINING FOR CITIZENS

In this era of greater civilian-police cooperation, as the community oriented policing concept receives increased attention, it is important for older persons to know more about the criminal justice system. This includes the law, the courts and the world of law enforcement. Members of the S.A.L.T. group especially can be more effective if they understand more about the system.

Older persons who hitherto have had little contact with law enforcement may need to learn what law enforcement can be expected

to do — and what officers *cannot* do. The Citizen Police Academy is a good program to combat ignorance about the criminal justice system. A S.A.L.T. Council speakers bureau can carry on further criminal justice education.

Educating citizens about law enforcement and the court system can be an important aspect of Triad. More and more law enforcement agencies are sponsoring an informative academy or "rookie school". Conducting the training as a Triad, with all agencies participating, can make it especially useful to the community at large.

The significance of Triad is enhanced when S.A.L.T. members and others involved realize that the criminal justice system is participatory in nature. Each citizen shares in the responsibility to prevent crime, reduce criminal opportunities and cooperate with law enforcement in the preservation of enacted law. Realizing that the criminal justice system itself does not make laws but simply upholds them can lead to a new appreciation of the duties and limitations of law enforcement.

A Citizen Police Academy can be informal or highly structured. Some Triads make this a part of regularly scheduled S.A.L.T. Council meetings. Other departments that have

initiated academies as part of their Triads have scheduled the law enforcement education as a series of weekly sessions separate from the council meetings themselves.

Topics usually covered include:

- The Law;
- Law Enforcement — structure and duties; and
- The Judicial System.

One established Triad suggests that the academy be the first order of business for a new S.A.L.T. Council so that citizen members understand the law enforcement agencies with which they are now working. Others indicate that the law enforcement education is essential before volunteers begin their work within the law enforcement agencies.

Therefore, consider scheduling a citizen police academy as soon as possible after establishing the S.A.L.T. group. It will be helpful if both seniors and professionals working with seniors receive this training.

The S.A.L.T. Council may be involved in setting up additional police academies for citizens, particularly for those senior volunteers who will be working in the departments and in S.A.L.T.-sponsored crime prevention/victim assistance programs. Logically, law

enforcement education should be offered to the volunteers before they begin their work within the law enforcement agencies.

If enlightenment leads to greater understanding and appreciation, this opportunity will be valuable indeed. The frustration of the frequent question, "Why don't the police just . . ." may be alleviated when the facts are more clearly understood.

How To Start a Citizen Police Academy

Citizens are invited by the chief(s) of police and sheriff to participate. They fill out an application and sign a liability waiver if the departments have decided to add a ride-along portion. A background check is performed on each prospective participant. A sample application and liability waiver are included in *Appendix M*.

Each student receives an outline covering the purpose, schedule and activities. The objectives are outlined as:

- Providing an atmosphere for the exchange of information;
- Providing students with insight into law enforcement training and duties;
- Explaining department policies and procedures in order to promote understanding and dispel misconceptions; and

- Targeting public safety issues, for understanding and future involvement by citizens as appropriate.

Topics To Cover

- Responsibilities of police and sheriff's agencies — similarities and differences;
- Officer training;
- Patrol procedures;
- Crime scene investigation;
- Narcotics and vice investigations;
- Crime prevention;
- Traffic accident investigation;
- Duties of highway patrol; and
- Firearms training, safety and deadly force issues.

Consider conducting some sessions at the police department and others at the sheriff's office. Also consider inviting state police or highway patrol to attend at least one session. Ask several officers to assist in conducting the training. This has the benefit of introducing citizens to a number of different law enforcement professionals. Meeting the S.A.L.T. Council members and citizen volunteers in these sessions will lead to increased departmental acceptance of Triad and a volunteer program as well.

When the Citizen Police Academy is conducted as a separate program (rather than a part of S.A.L.T. Council meetings), a graduation ceremony with certificates and recognition may be worthwhile. Hopefully, the program will be repeated semi-annually or quarterly as part of ongoing community relations and education. Numerous departments throughout the country have recommended this program be established. Several chiefs and sheriffs have termed it "time well spent."

Information, suggestions and procedures concerning the Citizen Police Academy were supplied by the DeSoto, Texas, and Bridgeport, Connecticut Police Departments and the Union County, North Carolina Sheriff's Office.

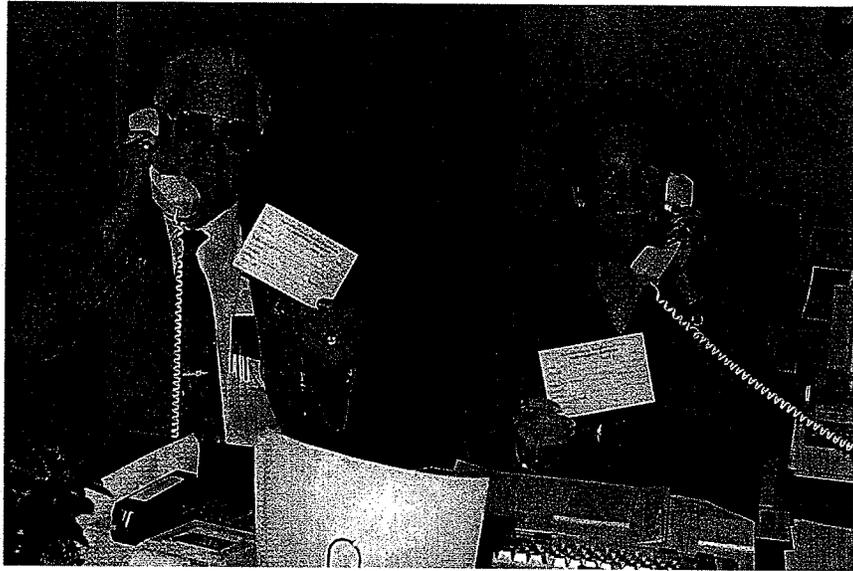
The Alzheimer's Society also furnished material for part of this chapter. For Alzheimer's resources and chapter locations in your area see address on resource page 152.



Members of the Ouachita Parish, LA, S.A.L.T. Council: (front row, left to right) Chief Walter Kemper, III, Sterlington Police; Police Administrator Clifford Thomas, Richwood Police; Chief Deputy Richard Fewell, Ouachita Parish S.O.; Chief Larry Ellerman, NLU Police; Sheriff Laymon Godwin, Ouachita Parish S.O.; Chief Larry Laborde, West Monroe Police; Assistant Chief Willis Warner, Monroe Police. (back row, left to right) Captain Marky Taunton, Monroe City Marshal's Office; Kitty Degree, Chair, S.A.L.T.; Warner Forsyth, AARP, Criminal Justice Volunteer; Betty Forsyth, S.A.L.T.; Corporal April Martin, Ouachita Parish S.O.; Lanell Winston, North Delta Council on Aging.



Members of the Monmouth County, NJ, S.A.L.T. Council: (front row, left to right) Monmouth County Sheriff William M. Lanzaro; Frances Schlesinger, Monmouth County Council of Senior Citizens; Jud Thorne and Paul Bova, Monmouth County Office on Aging. (second row) Officer William Hartung, Past President, Crime Prevention Officers' Association; Carol Hayes, R.N., CentraState Hospital; Toni Freeman, Volunteer; Margaret Felton, Monmouth County AARP; Chief Joseph Hagerman, President, Monmouth County Police Chiefs' Association; (top row) Officer Dan Smith, President, Monmouth County Crime Prevention Officers' Association; Ann Newman, Monmouth County S.O. and Triad Secretary.



Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.
Albert Einstein

Chapter seven Senior Volunteers

"I was looking for something to do when I retired. I've found such interesting volunteer work; I like being with people and a worthy cause. As you know more, you're more useful. It's contagious!"

This seventy-year-old woman and others like her are making a difference in their communities. All across the country, numerous professions and organizations have come to depend upon older people and value their services.

Many law enforcement agencies are enthusiastic about their volunteers because capabilities can be expanded without increasing the paid staff. Officers note that seniors can be especially faithful and often tireless assistants who bring maturity and experience to a task.

Of course the positive advantages for persons with time and experience to share are obvious. "It gives me a place to go to and come from every day," an elderly man stated. "And I'm helping."

RECRUITING

Triad provides an avenue for recruiting and training qualified volunteers. These volunteers can work within the law enforcement agencies and/or participate in crime prevention, victim assistance and other activities of the Triad.

Finding, enlisting, managing and keeping volunteers are largely matters of resourcefulness, tact and persistence. Screening volunteers and selecting the right people for the jobs are among the initial steps. Making the volunteers feel involved, needed, and important to the effort should be considered part of the process.

Numbers of older persons find themselves as busy after retirement as when they were holding down full-time jobs. However, others may want to be involved as volunteers in some meaningful work. Results of an AARP survey about volunteering revealed that many seniors didn't volunteer because "nobody asked me."

Involvement must make sense and seem worthwhile. It is important to explain clearly what the volunteer job is — and what it is not. Obviously, volunteers will not be vigilantes or para-police.

Good recruiters help prospects imagine themselves enjoying the experience and making a difference. They present the opportunities both realistically and enthusiastically. To be effective they must be sold on the worth of the program themselves.

Volunteers keep the files up to date in the records division of the Columbus, Georgia, Police Department and maintain tax records in St. Martin Parish, Louisiana. In Greene County, Missouri, volunteers call to inform citizens that civil warrants have been issued and tell them to go to the sheriff's office to take care of them. Senior volunteers maintain the senior information hotline in Monmouth County, N.J.; and this is just the tip of the iceberg.

The S.A.L.T. Council can play an important role in identifying prospective volunteers. Community groups, civic and charitable organizations, service clubs and professional groups are often pleased to have someone from the speakers' bureau outline opportunities for participation in a practical and worthwhile endeavor.

A personal invitation to volunteer and play a role in Triad can be especially effective. S.A.L.T. members probably know likely volunteers among their friends and acquaintances. Members may also do some recruiting in organizations to which they belong.

The one-on-one approach is usually more successful than issuing a blanket invitation. However, there are numerous ways to spread the word that volunteers are needed. These may include:

- Local newspapers (crime prevention articles, advertisements and letters to the editor);
- Local radio or television (talk shows and public service announcements);
- Community newsletters;
- Bulletins and newsletters of religious groups;

- Pre-retirement seminars;
- Displays in merchants' windows;
- Flyers placed in public libraries, waiting rooms, etc.
- Bulletin boards where seniors shop or gather; and
- Meetings of neighborhood or condominium associations, civic groups, service clubs and seniors' organizations.

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a good source of volunteers in many communities. RSVP also provides liability coverage for volunteers and, in some localities, a modest stipend to the volunteer.

After volunteers are recruited, some education concerning the problems of law enforcement and the elderly will begin. They will learn about the problems, and how volunteers can be part of the solutions. They become a positive link between law enforcement and the community. Their suggestions and input will be solicited, listened to — and implemented, whenever appropriate.

Older people volunteer for a number of reasons. Many say they are interested in:

- Changing a bad situation;
- Solving problems;
- Working with a group;
- Bettering the community;
- Having a feeling of accomplishment;
and
- Easing loneliness.

WHAT CAN VOLUNTEERS DO?

Older volunteers can be of service and support law enforcement in a variety of ways.

Within Law Enforcement Agencies

Anonymous reporting; Administrative/clerical tasks; Bad check alerts; Civil process administration; Communications; Crime analysis; Crime prevention; Crowd and traffic control; Computer data entry; DUI data processing; Evidence packaging; Fraud alerts; Fingerprinting; Hunting safety instructors; Inventory maintenance; Investigative follow-up; Missing persons; Neighborhood patrol; Property records maintenance; Property recovery lists; Public relations/media; Search and rescue; Writing (reports, bulletins, etc.).

Fuzzy Fuson, pictured on page 70, volunteers 40 hours a week at the Marion County, Oregon Sheriff's Office. Mr. Fuson is shown talking to a patrol unit as Marion County Sheriff Robert J. Prinslow looks on.

Within the Community

Block organizing; CB radio patrols; Court watch; Crime reporting; Educational presentations; Escorts for seniors/disabled; Literature distribution; Neighborhood dispute resolution; Neighborhood Watch programs; Pedestrian safety/training; Personal/home security; Property identification; Telephone reassurance; Vacant house checks; Vial of Life program.

Victim and Witness Assistance

Advocacy services; Compensation applications; Complaint referrals; Counseling; Court assistance; Crisis support; Emergency shelters; Impact statement preparation; Legislative watch; Pre-trial briefings; Transportation; Trial date notification.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

For Law Enforcement

Many officers who have worked with senior volunteers list the following as benefits for law enforcement:

- Relieves sworn personnel for other duties;

- Increases the level of service delivery to the community;
- Improves system efficiency;
- Increases flexibility;
- Provides new program opportunities; and
- Increases contact with law abiding citizens.

For the Community

Leaders see the following as benefits for the community:

- Prompts understanding of law enforcement functions;
- Renews community pride;
- Facilitates property return to owners;
- Restores and/or enhances a feeling of community responsibility;
- Helps alter attitudes and behavior — a two-way street;
- Establishes or broadens communication networks; and

- Prompts the development of new programs and activities.

For the Volunteer

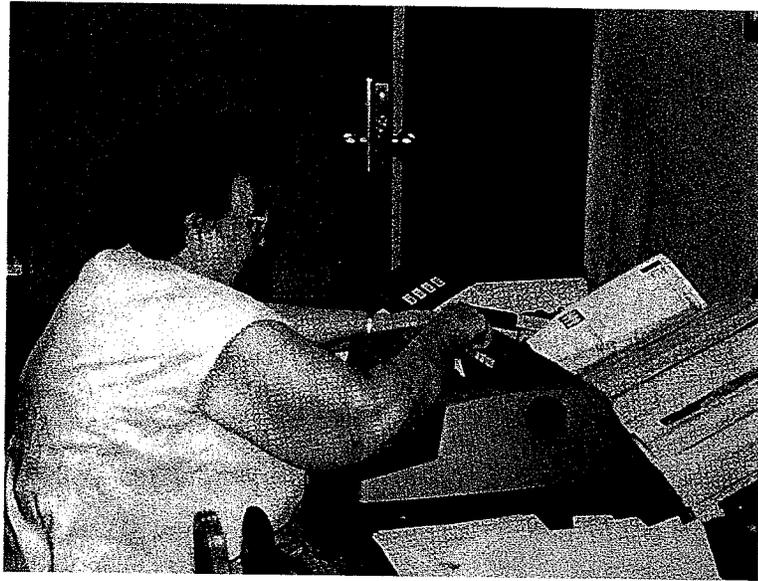
Seniors see the following as benefits for the volunteers:

- Provides a chance to help others;
- Increases the scope of learning;
- Enriches daily living;
- Reinforces self-confidence;
- Develops latent talents;
- Provides fellowship and friends; and
- Gives the satisfaction of contributing to the community.

Before opening the door to volunteers, consider these steps: Departmental personnel should be prepared to accept the idea. Tasks and supervisors should be identified. Screening procedures for the potential volunteers need to be established. Job descriptions must be written. Any liability/insurance requirements must be identified. A plan should be developed to acknowledge the contribution of volunteers.

For more in-depth coverage on volunteer programs, materials are available from AARP Criminal Justice Services on the subject of VALEA — Volunteer Augmentation of Law Enforcement Agencies.

Much of the material in this chapter is based on the monograph "Older Volunteers with Law Enforcement" by Lee Pearson, Assistant Manager, Criminal Justice Services, AARP.



*Old age is ready to undertake tasks that youth
shirked because they would take too long.*
W. Somerset Maugham

Chapter eight

Evaluating Triad

It is tempting to assume that since Triad is such a good idea it will work automatically, and the extent of its effectiveness need never be assessed. But evaluation is a necessary component of any successful Triad.

In order to determine how well Triad is meeting the needs of both law enforcement and seniors throughout a county, it is essential that a plan for assessment be an integral part of the program from the start.

An evaluation should answer these questions:

- (1) Does the program do what you want done?
- (2) Is it being carried out the way you had planned?
- (3) Should it continue as originally begun, or change?

This information could be vital to participating law enforcement agencies which may be called upon to justify continued involvement. They may be able to obtain some funding assistance if they can demonstrate that the program is working well. At some point, a chief or sheriff may be able to build a case for community contributions or budget increases for a demonstrably successful program.

PLANNING FOR EVALUATION

The best approach to a check-up process is to incorporate this procedure into the planning stages. From the start, Triad leaders should plan for an ongoing evaluation. Since a Triad is composed of: (a) members of the police and sheriffs' departments; (b) older persons; and (c) community organizations, all of these groups should be involved when planning or evaluating takes place.

It may be possible to involve a professional skilled in designing and administering evaluations. Perhaps a community college class will conduct or assist with the assessment. In some cases, members of the S.A.L.T. Council will carry out the evaluation. Whoever will be handling the Triad evaluation should be determined soon after the cooperative group is formed.

Spend time planning the evaluation. In addition to deciding who will be responsible for accumulating which bits of data, consider the information you need, how you will collect it, and what should be assembled at the start of the program for comparison purposes.

Ideally, a single person or group will take responsibility for the evaluation. This can be an excellent opportunity to work with

colleges, universities, high school social science classes, local businesses or other organizations having research capability. Try for voluntary support and make every effort to enlist this evaluation partner early in the planning.

Establishing who will evaluate is critical. Those charged with the task should be as objective as possible, both in collecting information and in asking hard questions about the information and its meaning.

Timing

It is tempting to postpone dealing with evaluation until the program is well underway; or to assume that without a big budget allocation, it can't be done. Unless you build in plans for appraisal from the start, however, you can miss measuring important changes brought about by your program.

Holding up a Measuring Stick

These questions can help you focus on what should be evaluated.

- (1) *Does the community know about your Triad?*
- (2) *How many law enforcement people and seniors know what your Triad is and its stated purpose?*
- (3) *Is there duplication of effort between Triad-sponsored programs and others in the county?*

- (4) *Are the individuals who are representing Triad doing so effectively?*
- (5) *Are the Triad goals being met?*
- (6) *Are the goals specific and understandable?*

Goals and Objectives

A program with clearly defined goals and a consistent approach is not hard to evaluate. However, it is difficult to assess a poorly managed program with vague goals that have been loosely designed. In the latter case, it may be difficult to know whether the program is working or not.

It should be possible to gauge progress if a Triad has set out to give older persons a role in: (a) reducing criminal victimization of elderly persons throughout the county; (b) providing crime statistics and crime prevention information to older persons in order to help change behavior and reduce unwarranted fear of crime; (c) starting — or expanding — reassurance programs for seniors; and (d) educating law enforcement officers in dealing more effectively with older persons.

If the objectives are not clearly defined or are unrealistic (“make seniors’ lives safer” or “eliminate all crimes against older residents”) accurate evaluation AND success of the

program may be elusive or even unattainable. If members of the “How’re We Doing?” committee take a hard look at the objectives early in the Triad’s developmental stage, they may be able to distinguish which goals are doable and which might be too broad and/or ambitious.

Keeping Score

Program goals are discussed and agreed upon by the S.A.L.T. Council. Two or three members from this Council may be designated to spearhead and oversee the evaluation — their work to begin at the first meeting. They should be familiar with the goals and bear them in mind during subsequent meetings and planning sessions.

They may consider themselves “scorekeepers” and early in their Triad’s development prepare a tally sheet to keep things on track. For example, an informal check-up sheet might read like this:

Program: Crime prevention presentations (initial programs planned for senior centers during March and April). Topics: (personal safety, spring home-repair scams).

Objectives: (1) Inform seniors about crime-related scenarios and appropriate responses designed to reduce chances of being victimized.

(2) Officer Jones to train Mr. Senior Volunteer to conduct similar presentations.

Participants: Officer Jones, Deputy Smith and Mr. Senior Volunteer.

Notes about attendance, questions asked, level of interest exhibited and requests for future programs would be useful in establishing whether presentations are hitting the mark. Ideally evaluators would attend one or more of the programs to determine interest and reaction.

An evaluation is designed to be used. Program participants, volunteers, supportive agencies and groups and the media can all benefit from the findings. Colleagues become beneficiaries as well; your evaluation can serve those starting similar programs.

The purpose of the evaluation, of course, is to either confirm that the program's objectives are being met or to highlight aspects that need to be changed. Some disclosures may be surprising but none the less valuable — possibly providing insights about events and even attitudes. For example, you may learn that seniors are more concerned about the lack of safe and adequate transportation than crime. That information can be referred to appropriate agencies or volunteer groups.

An informal survey of seniors' concerns in Henry County, Illinois, revealed that unguarded railroad crossings were alarming to older drivers. Law enforcement officers and the railroad worked to eliminate the danger and launched a public information campaign for all drivers.

It would be extremely useful to know whether those receiving Triad crime prevention information are more cautious now and less likely to respond to the offers of a con artist or place themselves at risk from other types of criminals. Interviewing a "control group" — composed of those who attended Triad presentations and those who did not — can afford helpful comparisons.

Triad's officer education programs can be assessed by pre- and post-testing. The level of an officer's understanding can be evaluated by comparing his or her answers to questions about myths and facts of aging, communicating with older persons, officer referral cards and services for seniors in the community.

An officer's ability to deal more effectively with the elderly will be harder to evaluate. Contacting older persons who have reported crimes and received departmental services as victims or witnesses may help to determine how sensitive department members are to the needs of older adults. This portion of the evaluation could be carried out by volunteers in the victim/witness program.

Methods of Gathering Information

Questionnaires are often used. Written questionnaires should be brief, clear and easy to read. If multiple choice and yes/no answers are employed, little writing will be required from those queried. When questioning individuals over the telephone or in person, it is important to ask the same standard questions for comparison purposes.

The sample forms, illustrated here, may all be adapted to fit local programs being implemented.

- (1) I (am) (am not) aware that our police department and sheriff's department are working together to reduce crimes against senior citizens.
- (2) I (have) (have not) attended one or more of the crime prevention programs in the last six months.
- (3) If a salesman or repairman whom I did not know appeared unexpectedly at my door, I (would) (would not) know how to determine if he were legitimate.
- (4) I would (feel comfortable) (hesitate) calling the police or sheriff's department if I saw something suspicious.

(5) I (know about) (do not know about) the Senior Call In program at the police department.

(6) I (know) (do not know) whom to contact about programs or services I might need.

A pre-determined number of seniors might be asked to complete similar simple forms six months after the Triad is up and running. Students or an AARP chapter might be willing to survey these residents.

The following hypothetical situation in a fictitious community illustrates another method of measuring the success of an activity — from desired results to assessment of actual results.

Objectives:

Reduce the incidence of victimization and the level of fear among the elderly residents of Oakdale Manor; increase the number of elderly involved in civic activities.

Activities:

Conduct at least one personal safety and crime prevention presentation per week for an audience composed of older persons; establish volunteer escort service daily from 3:00 PM — 7:00 PM; persuade city to route mini-buses through the area; install street lights in five key areas.

Determining results by:

Measuring numbers and events:

Actual count of reported crime incidents involving elderly victims before Triad effort starts, and at six month and one year points;

- Number of crime prevention presentations and numbers of persons addressed;
- Number of bus routes rescheduled and changes in ridership; and
- Number of new street lights installed.

Measuring attitudes and activities:

- Pre- and post-program surveys of older residents' attitudes and activities, both daytime and evening;
- Residents' reports of attendance at evening events; and
- Residents' reports of changed behavior as the result of crime prevention programs.

Tabulation of this information provides the basis for a realistic evaluation.

Other evaluation techniques can include interviews with participants, volunteers and program staff; analysis of existing data such as census information, crime reports and economic and social data gathered by local and state governments; direct observations by the evaluators; reviews of program materials

and reports; and surveys of key groups. The police crime analysis unit could supply data on actual crimes in the area and volunteers could record meeting attendance.

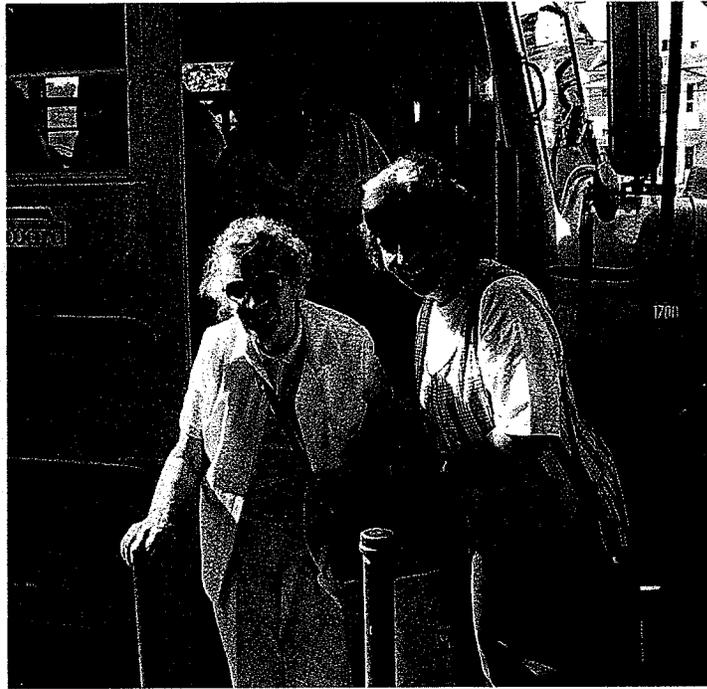
A Triad not pleased by the results of its evaluation should not be discouraged, but increase publicity for program elements and explore new ways of reaching the older population.

Sample surveys are included in *Appendix F*. These may be adapted to suit your goals and program needs.

Key points to bear in mind about evaluation:

- Be sure it gets done.
- Plan for it from the start.
- Look at what took place (process) and what happened (results).
 - Assess changes in feelings and perceptions as well as facts.
 - Use your results to improve the program.

(Much of the material in this chapter is based on a kit "Taking A Stand Against Crime and Drugs" from the National Crime Prevention Council.)



*I have often thought what a melancholy
world this would be without children, and
what an inhuman world without the aged.*
Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Chapter nine

Avoiding Missteps

As Triads develop across the country, leaders have shared potential difficulties encountered and ways of either overcoming these difficulties or working around them. Realizing what a difference the Triad philosophy can make and how important it is to effect a cooperative approach, many believe that it is worth any extra effort to get a Triad underway. A few suggestions are included here to help you avoid missteps.

HOW TO INVOLVE TRIAD PARTNERS

To interest the law enforcement partner, emphasize the advantages to the cooperating agency.

- Indicate ways that the Triad approach will benefit both the citizens served and the department he or she heads up.
- Emphasize the benefit to seniors in both incorporated and unincorporated areas. It seems unfair for only some parts of the county to benefit.
- Discuss the mutual advantage in sharing resources — crime prevention programs, materials, ideas and even volunteers.

- Mention the aspects of Triad into which he or she will have input, such as selection of S.A.L.T. Council members. The department might even decide to have its own senior advisory council which would then be represented in the countywide Council.

- Point out that continuing to do “business as usual” will also mean problems as usual, crime and fear as usual.

- Present the Triad as a shared opportunity to effect positive change. The benefits and the credit will be shared as well.

- Reassure him or her that the S.A.L.T. group is purely advisory and voluntary, and in no way a review board.

- Ask a senior leader to accompany you to strengthen your invitation for participation — or to make a separate appeal in person.

To interest senior or AARP partners, emphasize the opportunities to help older people.

- Ask about older citizens’ crime- and security-related worries.

- Cite local crime statistics, and tell them about suspected crimes victimizing seniors, even unreported crime.

- Indicate the role older persons will play in this Triad, as partners in making the community safer and more secure. Triad is in large measure a program for seniors and by seniors.

- Mention specific areas of involvement and even leadership in Triad through membership on the S.A.L.T. Council and volunteering: surveying seniors, forming a plan for expanded crime prevention and reassurance programs, and learning more about the criminal justice system.

- Invite older individuals who can make the Triad a success. This is best done in person or by telephone, with a follow-up letter to add an element of commitment and importance.

- Contact those seniors who have requested crime prevention programs or home security surveys for their organizations or themselves. They are already interested in this subject.

- Communicate your own hopes for this program, as older persons add their strengths to those of law enforcement.

- Remember that there are older persons in the community who will take part and make this Triad succeed — you just need to locate and include them.

BUDGET

Some Triads have been concerned about cost and point to law enforcement budgets already stretched to the limit. However,

- Most Triads have little or no budget;
- Seniors volunteer their time and can provide much of the leadership;
- Service organizations learning of a program involving both seniors and law enforcement are usually pleased to provide some support;
- Hospitals and medical associations want to see safer, healthier seniors. They often cooperate, adding crime prevention to healthcare events and lend a hand in other ways as well;
- Firefighters, libraries, educational institutions, church-affiliated organizations, civic and Masonic groups are often very supportive; and

- Organizations to whom seniors are important as clients or customers may offer in-kind or other support (Agencies on Aging, grocery stores, drugstores, etc.)

MANPOWER CONSTRAINTS

The activities of many a Triad could consume all the time and energy of an officer from each department. If an officer is not available for this kind of involvement, choose capable seniors or retired officers who can take the lead. In many active Triads, the law enforcement officers serve in an advisory role, taking a back seat wherever possible. They suggest, encourage, help to plan, but do not lead the band.

FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

If the Triad cooperative approach seems reasonable and worthwhile, consider this formula:

- **Experiment with it;**
- **Measure/evaluate the efforts and activities;**
- **Advertise the parts which succeed; and**
- **Enjoy the results.**



*The Senior Safe Shopping aspect of
Bridgeport, Connecticut's Triad
makes grocery shopping
secure and enjoyable.*

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Triad Cooperative Agreement
of _____ (Area, County)

_____ Senior Citizens Group(s)
_____ County Sheriff's Office
_____ Police Department(s)

Preamble

Major polls indicate that crime and the fear of crime impact severely on older Americans. Recognizing the challenging situation presented by a rapidly increasing number of older persons in the county, we desire to identify and offer ways of dealing more effectively with many of the problems faced by older citizens.

Because of the aging of the population and the increasing demands being placed on law enforcement agencies to meet the needs of older citizens, it is important that the county's leading law enforcement agencies devote special attention to the needs of senior citizens.

Statement of Agreement

In light of the above, the American Association of Retired Persons, the Chiefs of Police of _____, _____, and _____ and the _____ County Sheriff's Office are determined to effect change. These groups and organizations agree that the nation's older population has special needs with respect to victimization and fear of crime, perceived and actual loss, and the sense of being alone and unprotected. We agree that these needs can and should be met by law enforcement agencies and the county's premier organization(s) of older citizens, working together at all levels of free societies.

We hereby commit to work together to enhance the quality of life of older persons. Our purpose is to heighten awareness among law enforcement practitioners of older persons' need for dignity and security and to focus our efforts on reducing criminal victimization through cooperative strategies, planning and programming. This initiative is designed to mobilize community resources to continually ascertain the needs and concerns of older citizens and to provide mechanisms for meeting those identified needs.

The sharing of resources is the first step in achieving an effective means of identifying available programs. This process will involve law enforcement practitioners as well as citizens of all ages in the development, implementation and evaluation of acceptable solutions. Together, we will strive for a renewed sense of responsibility for the security and general well-being of older citizens through public awareness, training and the provision of criminal justice services.

Therefore, by agreement, the Triad will initiate the appropriate actions to achieve these objectives.

Accepted:

name	date	name	date
name	date	name	date

MODEL TRIAD DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

Subject: Police Interaction with the Older Person

I. Purpose

The _____ Police/Sheriff's Department will take a leadership role in promoting recognition of a uni challenge, as well as the important source of support for law enforcement that the older person prese. Officers should be aware that the fear of crime and certain types of criminal victimization affect many of elderly. For these reasons, officers shall take all necessary steps to ensure that the rights and protect guaranteed by law are available for the older citizen. The department will seek and use appropriate commur resources to:

- Promote a cooperative expansion of crime prevention within the community;
- Provide educational programs to reduce fear and the opportunity for victimization;
- Rapidly and decisively identify and arrest those who perpetrate crimes against theelderly; and
- Involve older persons as volunteers in support roles in this process.

Crime, harassment and circumstances resulting in fear are serious. It is recognized that crimes against elderly may be subtle or hidden. Some are victimized by family members, health care providers or fraudul business practices. Such acts cause some older persons to be reluctant to fully participate in the activitie the community and society.

The _____ Police/Sheriff's Department will maintain an advisory council whose membership will include a local AARP member, a crime prevention officer, a local clergy representative, a local social services representative and the Chief Executive Officer of any other interested area law enforcement agency. Additional relevant membership is welcome. This Council shall be named S.A.L.T. "Seniors an Lawmen Together."

The purpose of this Council shall be to advise the Chief Executive Officers of local law enforcement of the ne and concerns of the older persons. It shall be a forum for communications and discussion between l enforcement and older Americans. The Council may develop its own agendas, focusing on crime and secur related concerns of older persons. The Council shall determine meeting frequency and the formality of go minutes, topics, projects, etc.

II. Definition

An older person is defined for members of the _____ Police/Sheriff's Department as a person who attained the age of _____ years. (Local statutes may define applicable age.)

III. Policy

It shall be departmental policy to bring investigative and enforcement elements into prompt action follow each reported or observed incident involving a victimized older adult. Emphasis should be placed on vic assistance and accessing community resources to assist the victim. Officers shall be alert to the quality of for the older person and document and report substandard living conditions to the appropriate authority a police supervisor.

IV. Procedures

When an officer determines that an incident involves an older person, that officer shall ensure that the following procedures are activated:

- A. The incident shall be fully investigated and documented;
- B. If circumstances threaten the older person's health, safety or welfare, the officer shall immediately notify his supervisor;
- C. Officers shall refer to the list of those social agencies that may play a supportive or resolution role in mitigating any immediate threat. (The department should prepare and update an appendix to this policy listing all relevant service providing agencies.)
- D. Initial response officers shall:
 - 1. Respond in a manner that is sensitive, taking into consideration the condition of a victim;
 - 2. Preserve the crime scene and evidence;
 - 3. Identify and interview witnesses;
 - 4. Initiate a follow-up visit by family, friend, police department or social service agency, if warranted, and request notification of final disposition; and
 - 5. Advise a police supervisor of additional assistance needed.
- E. The reviewing or notified supervisor shall:
 - 1. Ensure that immediate threats to health, safety or welfare are resolved;
 - 2. Respond to the scene if requested by the officer;
 - 3. Ensure that officer responsibilities identified above are met;
 - 4. Assure victims that the department will render appropriate assistance;
 - 5. Verify arrangements for any support person or agency to provide assistance;
 - 6. If warranted, arrange for increased patrol of the area to either prevent/solve crime and or reassure a victim; and
 - 7. Inform police administrator or his designee of any health, safety or welfare condition that may need follow-up attention.

V. Training and Records (optional)

- A. The department shall provide periodic inservice training to patrol and investigative officers on topics relevant to the aging process, older American crime prevention, older American crime trends, and older American victimization.
- B. The department shall keep such records that will allow for analysis of victimization data so that appropriate countermeasures can be developed for reduced victimization.
- C. To the extent possible, it shall be the policy of the department to share knowledge and records of older American crime, abuse or neglect with other law enforcement and governmental social service agencies that have a legitimate interest in the case.

**SAMPLE
LETTER OF INVITATION**

Dear

I would like to invite you to serve on a committee of lawmen and seniors working together to make our city a safer place for our senior citizens.

A few weeks ago, Sheriff _____, AARP representatives, and I signed an agreement that committed our county's law enforcement to work closer with senior citizens in addressing crime issues that affect the older residents of our area. Also, the State Sheriffs' Association, the State Association of Chiefs of Police and AARP leaders have signed a Triad Agreement committing all organizations to work with senior citizens in their respective communities in reducing crimes against seniors.

If you agree to serve on the Senior Advisory Council with approximately fifteen other senior citizens, it would be necessary to have a couple of meetings within a month, and then meet once every month or two for about an hour. I plan to attend these meetings with Sheriff _____.

The seniors of our county are the fastest growing population group, and their needs must be addressed. A great number of our seniors are being victimized, and we in law enforcement need to do all we can to see that they live out their lives as crime-free as possible. In many areas of our county, senior citizens are afraid to walk the streets that they helped pay for. We need to take care of those who have taken care of us.

Sheriff _____ and I have selected you to serve on this committee and we hope you will. We will try not to ask for much of your time, and I think you will find it rewarding. If you agree to serve, please call my office and let me know.

Respectfully,

Chief of Police

MODEL
SENIOR ADVISORY COUNCIL POLICY

S.A.L.T. Council of _____ County
and
Municipalities of _____ and _____.

The Senior Advisory Council meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm, alternating meeting locations among the Jonesboro Police Department, Town of Francis Police Department, and Smith County Sheriff's Department. At least two meetings each year shall be held at the St. Francis Senior Center and the Senior Haven Center, with all county seniors invited to attend.

Meetings: Meetings are designed to be informative, with the S.A.L.T. Council chairman officiating.

Agenda: The agenda is determined by the chairman, working with the officers/deputies designated by the chiefs and sheriff.

Notification: S.A.L.T. members shall be notified by call, card, or letter at least one week before the scheduled meeting to remind all members of the meeting date and place.

Minutes: Minutes of the meeting will be recorded by a designated member of the S.A.L.T. group and prepared and distributed to all members not more than ten days following the meeting date.

Attendance: It is expected that all S.A.L.T. Council members will attend the monthly meetings unless unavoidably prevented from attending. Those unable to attend will notify the chairman prior to the meeting time in order to continue participation on the Council.

Subcommittees: Expanded community participation shall be encouraged by establishing subcommittees of the S.A.L.T. Council as needed. It is expected that subcommittees will be involved in periodic surveys of the needs and concerns of older citizens, crime prevention education, reassurance program development/expansion, victim services, and special projects.

MODEL
Triad S.A.L.T. Council Bylaws

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Senior Advisory Council (S.A.L.T.) of the _____ Triad.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the S.A.L.T. Council shall be to further the goals and objectives of the Triad, a joint venture between the County Sheriff's Office, the Chiefs of Police in the County and AARP to reduce the criminal victimization of older persons.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The S.A.L.T. Council shall consist of up to twenty but not fewer than twelve members.
- B. Membership shall be ex-officio and at-large
 1. Ex-officio members shall be the designated representatives of each of the Triad organizations:
 - a. AARP
 - b. _____ County Sheriff's Office
 - c. _____ Chief(s) of Police
 2. At-large membership shall be open to representatives of community and civic organizations, service providers, and older citizens.
- C. Selection of S.A.L.T. Council members-at-large shall be made by a membership committee consisting of the elected officers and two members selected at the October meeting. Recommendations for membership may be made to the committee in writing.
- D. The regular term of office for members-at-large shall be three years. Membership shall be staggered so that one-third of the members complete their term each year. Term of membership shall begin January 1 and end December 31. Members unable to attend meetings regularly shall be automatically resigned and the vacancy filled by the membership committee.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION

- A. The elected officers of the S.A.L.T. Council shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer.
- B. A five-member nominating committee shall be elected at the July meeting and shall present a slate of candidates for office at the October meeting. The committee shall elect its own chairman.
- C. The officers shall be elected from within the Council for a one-year term. The election shall be held at the October meeting, with those elected assuming office January 1. Officers may be re-elected to the same office for one succeeding term.

ARTICLE V. DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

- A. Duties of officers:
 1. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Council, shall appoint committee chairmen as needed, and shall serve as an ex-officio member of all committees with the exception of the nominating committee.

(2)

2. The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman, and shall assume such other duties as may be requested.
 3. The Secretary/Treasurer shall maintain a membership list, ensure that minutes are kept of each meeting, send timely notification of all meetings to each member, and keep accurate records of any moneys under the jurisdiction of this Council.
- B. Duties of members:
1. Each member shall be familiar with the purposes of the S.A.L.T. Council, shall attend all regular and special meetings of the Council, and shall serve on at least one standing committee.

ARTICLE VI. STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee shall be comprised of the elected officers, the chairmen of the standing committees, and the immediate past chairman of the Council. The Steering Committee shall have the authority to conduct the business of the Council between meetings and to fill by appointment any vacancy in office, pending the approval of the membership.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

- A. Standing committees of the S.A.L.T. Council shall be:
1. Advisory
 2. Crime Prevention
 3. Legislation
 4. Resource Coordination
 5. Training
 6. Victim Assistance
 7. Volunteers
 8. Membership
 9. Nominating
- B. Special committees may be appointed by the Council Chairman as needed.
- C. Committees shall consist of the committee chairman, at least two Council members, and others as appointed by the committee chairman.

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS

- A. The S.A.L.T. Council shall meet the first Tuesday of the month unless otherwise ordered by the Chairman with the approval of the Steering Committee.
- B. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Council Chairman.
- C. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the current membership. A simple majority of the voting members present shall be the voting rule.

**S.A.L.T. COMMUNITY ACTION SURVEY
AARP/POLICE DEPARTMENT(S)/SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

We need your help to assist us in taking positive steps to improve our community. Please answer each question by placing a check in the column that best describes your views. (Please complete this survey only once). To what extent do each of the following affect your life?

	Major Concern	Minor Concern	Very Little Concern
1. Fear of going out after dark?	_____	_____	_____
2. Fear of fraud or con artists?	_____	_____	_____
3. Vandalism in the neighborhood?	_____	_____	_____
4. Lack of public transportation?	_____	_____	_____
5. Sense of personal isolation?	_____	_____	_____
6. Fear of robbery (i.e. purse snatching)?	_____	_____	_____
7. Fear of burglary (home invasion)?	_____	_____	_____
8. Vendors knocking at the door?	_____	_____	_____
9. Neglect by family or friends?	_____	_____	_____
10. Fear of personal abuse?	_____	_____	_____
11. Other? _____	_____	_____	_____

Some suggested improvements in this community include the following. Would these changes/additions improve your life?

	Very much	To some degree	A total waste
1. Street lighting improvements?	_____	_____	_____
2. Expanded Neighborhood Watch program?	_____	_____	_____
3. Public transportation?	_____	_____	_____
4. Home security recommendations by police?	_____	_____	_____
5. Group housing resident councils?	_____	_____	_____
6. Daily reassurance phone calls?	_____	_____	_____
7. Senior van available at night?	_____	_____	_____

In which section do you live? Northeast ____; Northwest ____; Southeast ____; Southwest ____;
Town of _____. Sex: Male ____; Female ____ Age: 55-65 ____; 65-75 ____; Over 75 ____

Optional information: Your name and address might be helpful, but are not required.

Name: _____ phone number: _____

Address: _____

TRIAD QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

- 1. Which of these communities do you live in or closest to? (Triad to insert list of areas)
2. Do you live alone? Yes _____ No _____
3. Indicate in order of importance (1 being most important) the top five crime-related concerns in your area.

_____ Fear of crime _____ Burglary _____ Solicitors/vendors _____ Vandalism
_____ Vacant/abandoned house _____ Purse snatching _____ Animal problems
_____ Traffic concerns _____ Rape _____ Victimization _____ Fraud/scams
_____ Abuse/neglect _____ Residential burglary _____ Murder _____ Assault

Other: _____

Comments: _____

- 4. Would you be interested in any of the following crime prevention programs?

_____ Neighborhood Watch _____ Home security survey _____ Personal safety skills

Comments: _____

- 5. Would you be interested in participating in a volunteer program to assist law enforcement? _____ Yes _____ No Please specify areas of interest:

_____ Neighborhood watch _____ Reassurance visits _____ Office work

_____ Victim assistance program _____ Home security

- 6. Do you need assistance in: _____ Transportation/courier _____ Shopping

_____ Running errands Other _____

Optional information, helpful but not required: Age: _____ Sex: _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

Thank you for taking time to fill our this survey. This survey will help your Triad and S.A.L.T. Council (Seniors and Lawmen Together) to help you. Please return survey to (Name and address) or call (phone number) to have a S.A.L.T. volunteer pick it up.

AGENDA
SENIOR ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Date, Time, Location

1. Welcome — Chairman, Chief(s) and Sheriff or their representatives
2. Introduction of Council members and any guests
3. Minutes of last meeting
4. Overview of S.A.L.T. purpose and activities to date
5. Crime update (current statistics, problems, trends)
 - a) reported crimes
 - b) input from seniors — unreported crimes? rumors? fears?
6. Reports from committees
 - Crime prevention presentations/programs
 - Volunteers
 - Reassurance programs
 - Victim assistance
 - Training
 - Evaluation
7. Short-term plans to meet needs of older residents
8. Long-term plans
9. Crime prevention information — tips for S.A.L.T. members, also to be shared with friends and acquaintances
10. Other concerns
11. Next meeting

TRIAD
(Local Law Enforcement Agency)
REFRIGERATOR CARD

Name: _____ Date card completed: _____
Address: _____ Telephone: _____
Allergies to Medications: _____
Whom to contact and phone #: _____
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
Date of Birth: _____
Social Security No.: _____
Major Illnesses: _____
Doctor's name: _____
Doctor's phone #: _____
Health Care plan: _____
Medicare #: _____ Other: _____

OVER FOR MEDICATIONS

TRIAD

"Seniors & Law Enforcement Together"

OLDER PERSONS REFERRAL CARD

(NAME OF LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY(IES))

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Nearest relative: _____

Emergency phone #: _____

During the course of my duties I observed the above person in need of the following:

Food _____ Security _____

Clothing _____ Heat _____

Care taking _____ Other _____

Lighting _____

Officer signature ID #

Follow-up

Date: _____

Referrals: _____

Comments: _____

Auxiliary signature

ID #

Adopt-a-Senior Program

Definition:

The Adopt-a-Senior program is a Triad-sponsored program, a joint venture involving the _____ Police Department, the _____ County Sheriff's Department and the _____ Council on Aging. It is intended to provide additional support and reassurance for older adults with special needs. Targeted for participation are those older persons with limited mobility or medical problems, those confined to their homes, and those living alone with limited family support the area. This program is intended to supplement care already being provided by other persons and agencies.

Goal:

The Adopt-a-Senior program is established to open lines of communication and cooperation among the law enforcement community, seniors and state and local agencies in order to maximize the use of available resources and ensure the needs seniors are monitored and appropriate referrals made.

Implementation:

The following law enforcement agencies will provide officers who will adopt one more seniors. Each officer will be provided background information on the older person, explaining any special needs or medical problems. The officer will then make arrangements to meet his or her senior(s). The officer should contact the referral agency in order to schedule the first meeting with advance notice. Some referrals may require that the senior's caseworker be present for the initial visit at introduction. After the initial visit, the officer should make arrangements for future visits — at least one per week. It is expected that the officer will also call his senior(s) at least once each week.

During each visit or phone call, the officer should be aware of needs or attention required for the senior or his household. In the event an officer feels that a referral is in order, the officer should fill out an Older Persons Referral Card to see that the Adult Protective Services, Senior Referral Program, or appropriate service agencies are made aware, as indicated. Officers participating in the Adopt-a-Senior program should be aware of the special needs and problems facing their senior(s) in order to treat these seniors with compassion, care, and concern.

This program will be coordinated by _____.

APPLICATION FOR TRIAD CALL-IN PROGRAM

Name _____

Telephone number _____

Address _____

(Please describe exact location of your residence (example: route number, color of house, right or left side of road, apartment house, etc.)

Nearest neighbor: _____

Name _____

Telephone number _____

Address _____

Medical problems: _____

Doctor _____

Name _____

Telephone number _____

Name of person to be notified in case of illness (name, address, phone #, relationship)

Waiver of property damage: I hereby authorize any state or county law enforcement officer and/or medical unit to forcibly enter my home (address above) in the event there is reasonable cause to suspect that I am in need of immediate medical assistance. I agree to hold the state and county, together with its agents and/or employees, harmless for any damage to my property, both personal and real, resulting from said forcible entry.

Signature _____

Date _____

Palmore Quiz Answers

1. False There appear to be as many differences between older people as any age level. Some evidence indicates that people tend to become more heterogeneous as they age.
2. False Only 10.3% of the population were age 65 or over in 1975 and this will probably not increase to more than 12% by the year 2000.
3. The aged are more fearful of crime, despite their lower rates of victimization. In a nationally representative survey, 23% of those over 65 said that fear of crime was a "very serious problem" for them compared to 15% of those 18-64 (Harris, 1975). Another national survey found that 51% of the 65 and over compared to 41% of those under 65 answered "yes" to the question, "Is there any area right around here where you would be afraid to walk alone at night?" (Clemente & Kleinman, 1976). Women, Blacks, and metropolitan aged have especially high proportions fearful of crime. This greater fear of crime among the aged may be one reason their actual victimization rate is lower.
4. False All the evidence indicates that fewer than 10% of the aged are disoriented or demented. It is more difficult to get accurate estimates of the proportion with defective memories; but clearly, the majority do not have serious memory defects.
5. More persons over 65 have chronic illnesses that limit their activity (43%) than younger persons (10%). The discrepancy is even greater for the percentage with chronic illnesses that limit their major activity: 37% of those over 65 compared to only 7% of those under 65 (National Center for Health Statistics, 1978).
6. False Only 4.8% of persons 65 or over were residents of any long-stay institutions according to census data. Even among those age 75 or over, only 9.2% were institutionalized.
7. True Experiments have consistently shown that older people take longer than younger people learn new material.
8. False Despite declines in perception and reaction speed under laboratory conditions, studies under actual working conditions generally show that older workers perform as well as, if not better than, younger workers on most measures.
9. True One of the best documented facts about the aged on record, it appears to be true regardless of the kind of reaction that is measured.
10. False With frequent visits and contacts with relatives and friends, participation in churches and other voluntary organizations, the majority of old people are far from socially isolated and seldom lonely.
11. True More than three-quarters of old people are working or would like to have some kind of work to do, including housework and volunteer work.
12. False There is some evidence that older people tend to become more stable in their attitudes, but it is clear that most older people do change and adapt to the many major life events that occur in old age.

(2)

What do you expect to gain from attending this academy? _____

Will you be able to attend all of the class sessions? (schedule attached) ___ Yes ___ No

Person to be contacted in case of emergency during your attendance at the Academy:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Relationship: _____ Telephone: _____

Liability Waiver

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. You are hereby authorized to make any investigation of my personal history deemed necessary for consideration to attend the Citizen Police Academy.

Signature _____ Date _____

Resources

Alzheimer's Association, National Headquarters
919 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1000
Chicago, Illinois 60611
phone: 800-272-3900
fax: 312-335-1110

American Association of Retired Persons
Criminal Justice Services
601 E Street, N. W.
Washington, DC 20049
phone: (202) 424-2222
fax: (202) 434-6474

International Association of Chiefs of Police
515 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2357
phone: (703) 836-6767
fax: (703) 836-4543

National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
phone: (800) 424-7827
fax: (703) 683-6541

WHAT IS TRIAD?

**Triad is cooperation between law enforcement agencies
and senior citizens.**

Triad strives to reduce criminal victimization of older persons.

Triad assesses the needs and concerns of older citizens.

Triad leads to a broad dialogue on safety and security issues.

Triad is the link with elderly members of the community.

Triad combines common sense and imagination.

Triad is simple - and it works.

**Triad
National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3490**

Seniors have earned the right to live in peace. Criminal victimization of the older person, or fear of crime, runs contrary to this hard-earned right. Law enforcement has an obligation to assist in increasing the quality of life for senior citizens.

Chief John Cease
Roanoke County Police Department
Roanoke, Virginia

I get the shakes every once in a while since it happened."
Sixty-five-year-old victim of a robbery

Seniors have a great fear of crime; we in law enforcement need to address this. You can best reach the elderly through other older persons.

Sheriff Stanley Glanz
Tulsa County, Oklahoma

Volunteering makes us feel needed in a special way.
A senior citizen

Simple techniques can inform older persons of ways to prevent their own criminal victimization.

George Sunderland
AARP Criminal Justice Services

I am afraid he will come back.
Elderly man after confronting burglar
in his own home.

Who is the driving force behind the Triad? It depends on the county, the people, and the issues there. But whatever it takes to get a Triad underway, do it!

Sheriff Charles Fuselier
St. Martin Parish, Louisiana

Pictures in this handbook came from the files of the American Association of Retired Persons and private individuals as well as police and sheriff's departments across the country.