



# Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing:

## The 1999 Herman Goldstein Award Winners



Police Executive Research Forum



National Institute of Justice



Office of Community Oriented Policing Services



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# The 2000 Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) Conference

- Winners of the 2000 Herman Goldstein Award for excellence in POP will present their acclaimed projects at the 11th International Conference on Problem-Oriented Policing, held December 2-5, 2000, in San Diego, California
- The conference brings together more than 1,000 practitioners and researchers presenting new and innovative information and strategies that contend effectively with crime and disorder
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# The 2001 Herman Goldstein Award

- Nominations for the competition will be accepted until early spring 2001
- Submissions should be limited to 4,000 words of text (approximately 15 pages, double-spaced)
- Include a 300-400 word summary of the project and relevant charts, tables, graphs, and supporting documents
- Submissions must address all four phases of the SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment)
- Entries are judged particularly on well-presented data, especially at the Analysis and Assessment stages
- Complete submission requirements and forms can be found:

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# Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing

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Winners of the 1999 Herman  
Goldstein Award for Excellence in  
Problem-Oriented Policing

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August 2000

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# INTRODUCTION

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This report celebrates the excellence in problem-oriented policing (POP) demonstrated by the winner and six finalists of the Police Executive Research Forum's (PERF) 1999 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing. This award recognizes outstanding police officers and police agencies—both in the United States and around the world—that engage in innovative and effective problem-solving efforts and achieve measurable success in reducing specific crime, disorder, and public safety problems.

PERF assembled a panel of seven judges, made up of six researchers and one practitioner, who selected the winner and six finalists from among 76 award submissions from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. The judges considered a number of factors in their selection, including the depth of problem analysis, the development of clear and realistic response goals, the use of relevant measures of effectiveness, and the involvement of citizens and other community resources in problem resolution.

Police agencies whose projects successfully resolve any type of recurring community problem that results in crime or disorder are eligible to compete for the award. Examples of problems addressed by past applicants include drug dealing, gang activity, disorder and crime in an apartment complex, prostitution along a major thoroughfare, drunk driving throughout a large metropolitan region, trespassing on high school grounds, and 911 hang-up calls. Though many previous winning projects have focused on a problem in a specific neighborhood, PERF encourages applicants to consider problems that are much larger in scope and impact.

The PERF award honors Herman Goldstein, professor emeritus at the

University of Wisconsin Law School in Madison, who first articulated and later elaborated on the concept of problem solving in two seminal publications—the first in 1979, “Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach” (*Crime and Delinquency* 25: 236–258); the second in 1990, *Problem-Oriented Policing* (New York: McGraw Hill). Goldstein has continued to advance POP and to inspire police officers around the world to identify the problems that trouble communities, to analyze a wide range of information, and to craft and implement responses uniquely suited to each particular problem. Goldstein has urged police to expand their repertoire beyond arrest-oriented practices to encompass a variety of possible responses to problems.

Importantly, Goldstein has encouraged police to evaluate the impact of their responses to determine the effectiveness of their problem-solving efforts. As articulated by Goldstein, police problem-solving efforts should focus on the underlying conditions that give rise to crime and disorder. By doing so, police can address the problem rather than simply ameliorate the symptoms. The results of such a problem-solving focus should be more effective and long-lasting. Indeed, improving police effectiveness is at the center of POP.

The concept of problem solving is best illustrated by an example. Suppose police find themselves responding several times a day to calls from one particular apartment complex to disperse disorderly youths and stop acts of vandalism. But this common approach—dispatching an officer to the scene—may do little to resolve the long-term problems of disorder and vandalism. If, instead, police were to incorporate problem-solving techniques into their approach, they would examine the conditions underlying the

youthful disorder and vandalism. This would likely include collecting additional information—perhaps by surveying residents, analyzing the time of day when incidents occur, examining school bus routes, assessing the availability of afterschool activities, and evaluating characteristics of environmental design and other elements of the problem. Once examined, the findings would be used to inform a response uniquely developed to reduce or eliminate the problem behaviors. While enforcement might be a component of the response, it is unlikely to be the sole response. Recurrent enforcement has often been used by police, but it does not resolve long-standing problems. For this reason, police adopting the problem-solving approach are encouraged to develop innovative responses to the public safety issues in their community.

## THE EVOLUTION OF POP

Beginning in the late 1970's, researchers and policymakers became increasingly interested in how to improve the effectiveness of policing. Research during this period pointed out the limitations of random patrol, rapid response, and follow-up criminal investigations—practices that had been the foundation of policing for many years. These findings laid the groundwork for the development of POP. The first test of problem solving took place in the Newport News (Virginia) Police Department in the mid-1980's in a PERF research study that was conceptualized as a crime analysis study. Indeed, using analysis to inform police remains a key tenet of problem solving today.

Early work on POP yielded important insights:<sup>1</sup>

- Police deal with a range of community problems, many of which are not strictly criminal in nature.
- Arrest and prosecution alone—the traditional functions of the criminal justice system—are not always sufficient for effectively resolving problems.

- Officers have great insight into the problems plaguing a community, and giving them the discretion to create solutions is extremely valuable to the problem-solving approach.
- A wide variety of methods can be used by police to redress recurrent problems.
- The community values police involvement in noncriminal problems and recognizes the contribution they can make to solving them.

As POP has evolved over the last two decades, researchers and practitioners have focused on the evaluation of problems, the importance of solid analysis, the need for pragmatism in developing responses, and the need to tap other resources—including members of the community. Indeed, the role of the community continues to be a subject of discussion in POP, and problem solving is a key element in many community-policing initiatives.

**The SARA Model.** The preeminent conceptual model of problem solving, known as SARA, grew out of the POP project in Newport News. The acronym SARA stands for scanning, analysis, response, and assessment. This model has become the basis for many police agencies' training curricula and problem-solving efforts. Each step in the process is summarized below:

### Scanning:

- Identify recurring problems of concern to the public and the police.
- Prioritize problems.
- Develop broad goals.
- Confirm that the problems exist.
- Select one problem for examination.

### Analysis:

- Try to identify and understand the events and conditions that precede and accompany the problem.
- Identify the consequences of the problem for the community.

- Determine how frequently the problem occurs, why it occurs, and how long it has been occurring.
- Identify the conditions that give rise to the problem.
- Narrow the scope of the problem as specifically as possible.
- Identify resources that may be of assistance in developing a deeper understanding of the problem.

#### Response:

- Search for what others with similar problems have done.
- Brainstorm interventions.
- Choose among the alternative solutions.
- Outline the response plan and identify responsible parties.
- State the specific goals for the response plan.
- Identify relevant data to be collected.
- Carry out the planned activities.

#### Assessment:

- Determine whether or not the plan was implemented.
- Determine whether the goals were attained and collect qualitative and quantitative data (pre- and postresponse).
- Identify any new strategies needed to augment the original plan.
- Conduct ongoing assessment to ensure continued effectiveness.

## THE 1999 WINNER AND FINALISTS

The judges selected the Green Bay (Wisconsin) Police Department as the winner of the 1999 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing. Officers Bill Bongle and Steve Scully initiated a strategy to revive the Broadway business district in Green Bay—a high-crime area of the city troubled by people who were often intoxicated and disorderly and living on the street and by litter and broken bottles. The officers gave taverns a “no-serve list” of people who were

habitually drunk and disorderly or in trouble, motivated community members to pressure city liquor license regulators to increase their oversight and enforcement, modified the environment, targeted enforcement to specific locations, and worked with the community and the media to educate the public about the initiative. The result was a reduction in calls-for-service and an improved quality of life in the neighborhood.

The judges also recognized the following finalists:

- The Baltimore Police Department, which reduced chronic truancy by working closely with school department officials and the courts. By engaging parents in the effort, the department reduced truancy without resorting to traditional legal remedies.
- The Fresno (California) Police Department, which faced a large number of child custody violation calls. The department focused its problem-solving efforts on increasing awareness and utilization of an existing family court-ordered program that provides a safe place for parents to exchange custody of their children. In addition, the department led a countywide effort to coordinate and improve prosecution of child custody violations.
- The Minneapolis Police Department, which partnered with the community to revitalize the Hawthorne neighborhood. Hawthorne was affected by narcotics trafficking and quality-of-life offenses. The “Hawthorne Huddle” began as a series of community meetings and evolved into a key problem-solving forum for both the police department and the Hawthorne community. The department combined a traditional response of increased enforcement with the POP approach of cultivating community involvement. The department’s participation in the community meetings ensured that the department was actively involved in facilitating communication and assisting residents.

- The Racine (Wisconsin) Police Department, which revitalized neighborhoods by partnering with the community, other government agencies, and non-profit organizations. One of the department's key strategies was to purchase and restore run-down single-family homes in troubled neighborhoods for use as temporary community policing substations. The police presence served as a catalyst for positive change. When order was restored to the neighborhoods, the homes were sold to low-income homebuyers.
- The San Diego Police Department, which dramatically reduced school absenteeism among the most chronic truants. Police officers conducted an innovative needs assessment with truants and arranged for needed services. To ensure long-term success, the officers helped to create a mentoring program for at-risk youth.
- The Vancouver Police Department, which addressed a decline in the quality of life in its community by restoring order at a busy urban intersection. The department relied on the community to assist in both problem identification and resolution. The project achieved lasting success by altering the physical environment, making it less conducive for criminal activity such as panhandling and queequeing car windows.

Each of these police agencies applied the SARA model and other lessons learned from policing research to address substantial problems in their communities. By working closely with other government agencies, nonprofit groups, and residents, the police were able to develop effective solutions to long-standing problems. Each site included enforcement in its POP strategies. Each project also clearly demonstrated an important principle articulated by Goldstein—rank-and-file officers have a lot of information, and given the freedom and support to create solutions, they can be very successful problem solvers.

## THEMES AMONG PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES

This year's winner and finalists faced somewhat similar problems in their communities and developed somewhat similar strategies in their problem-solving approach. Some of these similarities, or recurring themes, are highlighted below.

### **Habitual Offenders Create Disorder.**

Green Bay, Minneapolis, Racine, and Vancouver all tackled complex problems that involved habitual offenders performing the same illegal or troubling behaviors in the same places over and over again. Over time, disorder and fear permeated the affected neighborhoods. Police officers in each site developed solutions that took advantage of the unique strengths and resources in their communities. Minneapolis and Racine, struggling with these issues in residential communities, accessed much-needed social services for neighborhood residents. Green Bay and Vancouver worked closely with the businesses in their commercial neighborhoods to make physical changes to the environment.

**Reliance on the Community.** The key role of the community in identifying and solving problems is well illustrated by the seven projects. Although the departments were independently able to identify many of the problems, it was the input of community members that helped them understand many of the underlying causes and citizens' priorities for interventions. Officers who led these projects spent many fruitful hours gathering information and opinions from members of the community. Along the way, the officers formed relationships that contributed to lasting community involvement and empowerment.

**Value of the Line Officer's Experience.** All of the sites demonstrated the importance of using the knowledge and skills of rank-and-file officers. In each of the sites, the impetus to begin the POP project came from line

officers. The officers recognized offense and disorder patterns during the course of their regular duties. The officers then conducted research, analyzed crime and social indicator data, reached out to the community and mobilized its members, and crafted creative, lasting solutions to complex problems.

**Identification of the Underlying Causes of Problems.** Through their analyses, the officers were able to identify and focus on the underlying causes of crime, disorder, and fear. Both Baltimore and San Diego, which addressed truancy, examined the causes of students' school avoidance, not just its consequences. Officers in each site worked closely with school district officials to address the needs of truant students and their families. The Green Bay officers identified lax liquor licensing and enforcement as an underlying cause of problems in the Broadway area of their city. Officers in Vancouver gained important insights into the underlying causes of their problems when they considered "ownership" of public space in their target intersection. In that context, solutions to the aggressive "squeegee" person problem became much easier to identify.

**Leveraging Resources.** In each site, the ultimate success of the project depended on the officers' ability to leverage the resources of other government agencies and private-sector resources. The Racine community-policing houses became vital to the community when public services were offered in the houses. The houses offered neighborhood-based services in previously underserved locations. The provision of services increased the community's acceptance of a police presence in the neighborhood.

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

All of the police agencies did an exceptional job of applying the SARA model, and it is worthwhile to highlight some of the ways in which they incorporated each of the steps into their problem-solving process.

**Scanning:** Prior to analyzing the problem, the teams in both Green Bay and Vancouver conducted a thorough and systematic assessment to identify all relevant problems. In the process, they identified numerous non-criminal problems that contributed to the disorder in their target areas.

**Analysis:** Officers working on truancy in San Diego analyzed the problem from the perspective of the truants themselves. By conducting surveys of and risk-assessment interviews with individual truants, officers were able to determine what factors contributed to this complex problem. Officers involved in the Hawthorne Huddle carefully examined potential stakeholders and identified a number of nontraditional partners for their problem-solving effort. Officers in Green Bay analyzed data from a variety of sources. Officers in Fresno looked at the problem of child custody disputes from the perspective of several different agencies.

**Response:** In Green Bay, officers mobilized the community to pressure the city's Protection and Welfare Committee, which regulates liquor licenses, to be more accountable. Racine and Vancouver identified previously untapped community resources. The Baltimore police built a relationship with the media and used the coercive power of the court to help make their project a success.

**Assessment:** Officers in all of the sites were committed to assessing or evaluating the impact of their responses through quantitative measures. Using data gathered by the school district in conjunction with their own data, the Baltimore police documented the success of their truancy program. Officers in Fresno, armed with outcome data demonstrating the effectiveness of their approach, led the formation of a countywide task force to address child custody issues. The Vancouver Police Department collected data that illustrate the lasting impact that changes in the physical environment can have on public safety.

## EVIDENCE OF POP'S EFFECTIVENESS

Although the projects described in this report have not been rigorously evaluated, numerous indicators point to the positive impact they are having. The Green Bay officers began targeting problems in the Broadway district in 1995. Data collected in Green Bay show a 65-percent reduction in total police calls from 1993 to 1999 in the target area and a 91-percent decrease in the demand for rescue squad services. From 1995 to February 2000, the Broadway business district has gained more than \$8.4 million in new public and private investment, 410 new jobs, and 33 new businesses.

Baltimore data show a 5-fold reduction in citations for truancy violations in the target area. Incidents of daytime crime and delinquency decreased by 26 percent, and school attendance rates are the highest ever. Fresno estimates that the new child custody procedures implemented by the police department save more than 3,000 officer hours annually. In the Hawthorne neighborhood in Minneapolis, there were dramatic decreases in narcotics violations, vandalism, and home burglaries. The Racine target neighborhoods witnessed similar declines in crime after the department initiated problem-solving efforts in 1992. Violent crime fell 70 percent from 1991 to 1998, and the number of calls-for-service fell 35 percent from 1991 to 1998. The San Diego police department documented a 20-percent reduction in Mid-City crime and a 31-percent decrease in daytime crime in the area, compared with a 6-percent reduction in rates for the same crimes citywide. Data from Vancouver show a decline in calls-for-service and a reduction in public fear in the vicinity of the target intersection.<sup>2, 3</sup>

The following seven chapters describe how each of the police agencies and their officers

used POP and the SARA model to address problems in their communities. Appendix C lists resources that will be helpful to other police agencies that seek additional problem-solving tools.

With the widespread adoption of community policing across the Nation, police agencies are increasingly employing problem-solving strategies to address the concerns of the public. Indeed, problem solving is a core component of most community policing curricula.

The practice of problem solving continues to evolve. Police increasingly have access to technology, such as mapping and sophisticated crime analysis techniques, that can aid in carrying out meaningful problem analysis. Technology also provides a tool for police to learn and exchange information—including elements of effective responses—about problems that are quite similar. Police are building their capacity to collaborate by identifying and working with other stakeholders who share responsibility for many community problems.

## NOTES

1. Goldstein, Herman, *Problem-Oriented Policing*, New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1990.
2. Brodner, Jean-Paul, ed., *How to Recognize Good Policing: Problems and Issues*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., and Police Executive Research Forum, 1998.
3. Sampson, Rana, and Michael S. Scott, *Tackling Crime and Other Public-Safety Problems: Case Studies in Problem Solving*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2000.

# STREET SWEEPING, BROADWAY STYLE



## REVITALIZING A BUSINESS DISTRICT FROM THE INSIDE OUT

GREEN BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT, WISCONSIN, FORT HOWARD DISTRICT

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**THE PROBLEM:** An inner-city business district had become a high-crime area marked by litter, broken liquor bottles, and people living on the street who were often drunk and disorderly.

**ANALYSIS:** Officers discovered a high concentration of crime compared to the rest of the city and a disproportionate demand for police and rescue services. Analysis of police records indicated that approximately 20 people were involved in most of the neighborhood complaints. Furthermore, neighborhood residents and business leaders had lost faith in the police to respond to disorder in the area.

**RESPONSE:** Police spearheaded a community effort to strongly enforce public ordinances on open intoxicants, evictions from city parks, trespassing in city parks, and lewd and lascivious behavior. They also worked to increase liquor license regulation, mobilize citizens to attend city council meetings, modify the environmental design, use the court system to link alcoholics with treatment resources, and gain the cooperation of liquor store and tavern owners in denying alcohol to habitually intoxicated people.

**ASSESSMENT:** After a problem-solving initiative began in 1995, Broadway Street was transformed into a booming business district. From 1993, when there were no community police officers in place, to 1999, after police officers had been in place for 4 years, the area experienced a 65-percent reduction in total police calls and a 91-percent decrease in the demand for rescue squad services to handle injuries resulting from assaults. From 1995 to February 2000, the Broadway business district gained more than \$8.4 million in new public and private investment, 410 new jobs, and 33 new businesses.

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## SCANNING

In the city of Green Bay, Wisconsin, Broadway Street had a seedy reputation. People lived on the street, were often drunk and disorderly, and slept on park benches outside of neglected, decaying buildings. Liquor bottles littered the streets. For 4 decades, taverns known for the frequent

disorderly behavior of their patrons were not held accountable.

In fact, 16 to 18 taverns—the scene of multiple shootings, stabbings, and other violent crimes—operated in Broadway's 3-block business district. Broadway became

known as the “Wild West,” and law-abiding citizens avoided the area and most area businesses suffered financially.

Residents and business owners in the area viewed Broadway as isolated. They felt abandoned by city government. Before 1995, there was little growth in the Broadway business district.

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

In 1995, the Green Bay Police Department adopted the concept of community policing. Two officers were assigned to the Fort Howard district, which includes the Broadway business district. Green Bay’s community-policing officers (CPO’s) focus on long-term problem solving and typically are not dispatched to calls-for-service.

The newly stationed CPO’s, Bill Bongle and Steve Scully, met face-to-face with neighborhood residents, schoolteachers, children, and business people. Within a short time, the officers learned firsthand about the problems plaguing the Broadway area:

- A disproportionate demand for police and rescue services compared to the rest of the city.
- An unusually high concentration of crimes, including battery, disorderly conduct, retail theft, property damage, public urination, prostitution, and drug activity.
- Visibly intoxicated people in city parks and in close proximity to the nearby elementary school engaging in inappropriate behavior (sleeping on benches, vomiting, urinating, and defecating outdoors).

### People Living on the Streets and in the Taverns

An analysis of police offense reports revealed that approximately 20 individuals, mostly habitually intoxicated people who lived on the streets and people who had mental

illnesses, were responsible for most of the neighborhood complaints. The homeless shelter had referred many of these individuals to the Brown County Mental Health Center’s Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse outpatient counseling. Many of the people living on the street did not use or access these services and remained on the street, though they would have been permitted to stay at the shelter if they had become sober.

Analysis of police data showed that most victims of serious crimes in the area, such as stabbings, shootings, and assaults, were patrons of the problem taverns. Several high-profile incidents, involving violent behavior, drug activity, and prostitution, took place at the Broadway taverns. In 1993, two men were shot; in 1996, detectives uncovered a child prostitution ring; in 1997, there was a violent attack with pool sticks; in 1998, five people were stabbed in a bar fight; and in 1999, a bar manager was arrested for selling cocaine from a Broadway bar. Repeat calls were made to the same licensed liquor establishments for fights and other alcohol-related problems. Victimization rates were very low for citizens in the area who did not patronize the taverns.

### Loosely Regulated Liquor Licenses

Wisconsin State law provides a judicial process for local governments to regulate liquor licenses. Unfortunately, the Green Bay city government rarely exercised its authority to revoke or suspend the licenses of poorly-operated taverns. In fact, the city’s Protection and Welfare Committee, which regulates liquor licenses, often approved and renewed licenses in the area without question. In some cases, convicted drug dealers were granted bartender licenses.

The progression of disciplinary action against an owner of a problem tavern amounted to a series of warning letters issued by the Committee. Before 1995,

no liquor license had been revoked since the late 1970's. The Committee declined to take action against a problem bar unless the police issued the bar owner a citation. But under existing city ordinances, police officers could not issue a citation to a bar owner if the owner was absent at the time an incident occurred. As a result, bar management practices and absentee owners contributed to an environment that fostered disorderly and illegal conduct. Under the existing licensing system, it was difficult to hold owners accountable for activities that occurred in their bar.

### Police Enforcement Lacking

The police response to alcohol-related complaints in the Broadway business district rarely included arrests, partly due to jail policy. In the early 1990's, the local jail refused to accept prisoners who had blood alcohol content levels higher than .30 percent, unless they had received medical clearances. This eliminated what was known as the "drunk tank" and left no other practical alternative for street patrol officers.

As a consequence of the policy, police spent their time transporting intoxicated people who had been arrested for offenses such as disorderly conduct to a hospital emergency room to receive medical clearance. Police would then transport them to the Brown County Jail or the Brown County Mental Health Center, which provided detoxification. These facilities often released people to the community after 24 hours, where police officers would find them in the same condition soon after their release. Patrol officers viewed the 2 hours spent transporting arrestees from place to place as a waste of time and taxpayer dollars.<sup>1</sup>

During their analysis, the CPO's learned that the neighborhood lacked faith in the police. At meetings sponsored by the Fort Howard-Jefferson Family Neighborhood Resource Center, a bilingual, multicultural, grassroots organization with a commitment

to strengthen the Broadway neighborhood, CPO's listened to area business leaders and neighborhood residents. Community members said Broadway was viewed as a dumping ground by the rest of the city, including the police, and its business community had long ago lost faith in the police department's response. Citizens no longer called to report nonemergency problems to the police.

The Green Bay Police Department's analysis showed that the police department had not reached out to other government agencies—such as the revenue department, park department, city attorney's office, building and health inspection departments, and mental health services—that were available to help them address problems in the neighborhood.

Officers also had not been aware of the different roles that municipal and circuit courts could play in resolving disorder problems. Officers in Green Bay can divert offenders to circuit court, but they are encouraged to send minor offenses to municipal court to generate fines. However, the circuit court can order offenders into treatment while the municipal court cannot. The officers met with the Brown County District Attorney, who agreed that people who were habitually intoxicated should be diverted to circuit court, which has broad sentencing authority, including alcohol treatment and probation.

### Environmental Design Flaws

A review of building design in the Broadway area highlighted numerous deficiencies. Several taverns had dark alcoves and doorways facing alleys, permitting criminals discrete, easy access to the taverns. Drug users and sellers could quickly duck into taverns and get lost in the crowd, making it difficult for patrol officers to make arrests. Poorly designed landscaping created hiding places for people who were intoxicated and living on the street. Dense undergrowth made detection of transients during routine surveillance difficult.

## Resources That Helped Broadway Succeed

### Funding

The Green Bay Police Department has been assisted by funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. A grant enables the department to pay salaries for four community-policing officers for 3 years. Two of these officers are assigned to the Fort Howard district.

### Training

The department developed its own problem-solving training by organizing meetings with other similarly assigned police officers from across the State. Herman Goldstein's book, *Problem-Oriented Policing* (McGraw Hill, 1990), helped the department develop problem-solving strategies.

### Donations

Community members donated office space and equipment for their community-policing officers. Office space was provided free of charge in a housing complex for the elderly. Area businesses donated a computer, a cellular telephone, police bicycles, and office furniture.

The Fort Howard neighborhood and area businesses conducted a fundraising campaign in 1998 to send the two community-policing officers to the Police Executive Research Forum's Problem-Oriented Policing conference in San Diego, California.

most of the problems in the area. Officers Bongle and Scully provided liquor store and tavern owners with a list of people who were habitually intoxicated, accompanied by a letter from the police department requesting that licensees deny service to them. The police department placed persons on the list if they met the following criteria:

- Had three or more arrests in a 3-month period in which intoxication was a factor.
- Had been incapacitated by alcohol, requiring detoxification three or more times in a 3-month period.
- Were involved in some type of behavior in the Broadway business district that generated a complaint to the police.

The police department's letter was approved through the city attorney's office. To gain compliance with the no-serve list, police educated liquor retailers and

tavern owners on their responsibility to decline service to intoxicated people. The letter defined intoxication by physical characteristics.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) sent a letter of complaint to the police department, expressing concern over distribution of the no-serve list. The ACLU argued that "Targeting some individuals to be denied legal goods and services causes a tangible change in the legal and social status of the affected individuals." The ACLU requested that the police department retrieve the lists from bar owners and issue a directive to prohibit the practice in the future. However, the Green Bay City Attorney reviewed the ACLU's complaint and advised the police department that the no-serve list was supported by Wisconsin statute 125.12(2)3, which prohibits distribution of alcohol to "known habitual drunkards." The police department

## RESPONSE

The Green Bay Police Department developed a response strategy designed to achieve the following goals:

- Eliminate illegal activity from the neighborhood.
- Reduce calls for police and rescue services.
- Bring business to the neighborhood by improving the public's perception of the Broadway business district.
- Restore faith in the police department by building a cooperative working relationship with the community.

To achieve these goals, the officers implemented the following five initiatives.

### No-Serve List

The police identified and targeted a core group of individuals who accounted for

continued the practice, which turned out to be one of the most successful initiatives implemented by the Fort Howard district's CPO's. People who at one time generated three to four calls per day to the police now rarely have police contact.

The officers also targeted specific bars that had a history of a high volume of calls-for-service. In some cases, bars in the area had generated more than 200 calls to the police in a 1-year period, compared with 11 calls from other bars in the area. Bar owners argued, however, that targeting bars with high call volumes would punish bar owners and employees who made legitimate calls for help. To alleviate the concerns of bar and liquor store owners who might become reluctant to call police when there was a disturbance, the police and business owners agreed that calls for assistance would not be used against the businesses.

### Operation "Hot Seat"

For this element of their response strategy, Officers Bongle and Scully stepped up enforcement of ordinance violations in the neighborhood. Police issued citations and arrests for activities that would have resulted in warnings in the past. For an offense such as disorderly conduct, the officers used their discretion to send offenders to circuit court, which has the authority to order alcohol treatment. Several offenders were placed on probation, and Officers Bongle and Scully worked closely with probation officers to enforce probation conditions. These included such restrictions as no alcohol consumption and no visits to taverns or liquor stores. If the officers observed a probationer violating these restrictions, they would report the violation to probation officers, who would have the probationer incarcerated.

### Modifying Environmental Design

During analysis, it became clear that no attention had been paid to environmental design in the areas experiencing problems. For this element of the strategy, the police

department and other city agencies made the following changes:

- Trimmed overgrown shrubs that concealed illegal activity.
- Modified the Broadway district's park benches to prevent people from lying down.
- Eliminated access to an unsecured apartment building that people who lived on the street used as a hiding place.
- Maintained the Broadway district's park grounds, eliminating buildup of litter and bedding generated by people who lived on the streets.
- Improved lighting in dark alcoves behind taverns and modified rear doors to permit exit only.

### Operation "Spotlight"

The police department sought media coverage for its problem-solving efforts. Police believed the media would present a positive story if they were approached early.

The police department explained that arrests, liquor license hearings, and crack-downs were part of the revitalization and improvement of the neighborhood. The department pointed out that many crimes, such as muggings, were rare. A strong relationship was built with the media, who became an asset to the police department by covering the positive change the department was making as well as the trouble businesses and individuals. The press was a useful tool for the department to use against businesses and individuals who did not want to be identified to the public as problems.

### Increased Regulation of Liquor Licenses

Police felt that many citizens were unaware of the licensing regulations governing liquor establishments. Therefore, the community-police response included educating citizens about how they could influence the actions of the Protection and Welfare Committee, which had the power to issue and rescind

licenses. Officers Bogle and Scully provided citizens with dates and times of Protection and Welfare Committee meetings, the names and telephone numbers of council members who sat on the Committee, and the proper procedure for addressing the Committee.

Meetings once conducted in a small room in city hall had to be moved to city council chambers in 1996 to accommodate the increased number of citizens attending. The neighborhood's interest in the Committee's actions increased Committee members' accountability to the public.

The police department worked with the city attorney's office to enforce new city ordinances. Police officers now can cite bar owners even if they are not present when offenses are committed. The city attorney's office developed a system in which points are assessed against the liquor license upon conviction of an alcohol-related offense. Now, the municipal court can automatically suspend a license and close a tavern for a designated period of time after 12 points have been accumulated.

## ASSESSMENT

During the past 4 years, the health of the Broadway business district has steadily improved. Five taverns rife with criminal activity were closed because of the joint efforts of community-policing officers and citizens. By pressuring council members to take action, citizens played a key role in driving out the taverns. Community-policing efforts drove out other troublesome businesses, including one where illicit drugs were sold.

### Improved Public Perception

Since 1995, the Broadway business district has experienced substantial growth in new businesses and jobs. When 'On Broadway,' a private, nonprofit organization that promotes investment in the Broadway business

district, analyzed changes in the neighborhood from 1995–99, it discovered the following:

- \$8.4 million had been invested by both public and private interests.
- 410 new jobs had been created.
- 33 new businesses had been formed.
- A \$1.8 million day care center was under construction.
- \$3.1 million had been devoted to streetscape, sidewalk, and lighting improvements by the city government.

### Reduced Need for Police and Emergency Services

Computer-aided dispatch system statistics show a significant decrease in the demand for police resources, including:

- A 65-percent reduction in total police calls from 1993 to 1999.
- A 91-percent decrease in calls for rescue squad services from 1993 to 1999.
- An 86-percent reduction in disorderly conduct calls from 1993 to 1998.
- A 70-percent decrease in disturbance-unwanted person type calls from 1993 to 1998.

This reduction in the demand for police resources frees police officers to assist in other areas of the city.

### Restored Public Faith in the Police

To educate and mobilize neighborhood residents, the Green Bay Police Department built a close, cooperative working relationship with the Fort Howard-Jefferson Family Neighborhood Resource Center, which sponsored neighborhood meetings and handled mass notification of city hearings. This relationship helped the Green Bay Police Department to restore the public's faith in its ability to solve problems in the Broadway district. Cleaning up the area of drunks, taverns, and alleys and bushes played a part in restoring faith, as well.

Dale Smith, owner of Dale's Millennium Motors, a Broadway district business, notes, "Our neighborhood is easily 100 percent better because of the beat cops and their extra efforts." Tom Perry, associate editor of the *Green Bay Press Gazette*, wrote, "Forget the negative images, the news from Broadway is mostly positive and upbeat."

Broadway has become not a part of town that needs to be avoided, but rather "a great place to shop," according to Larry and Ben Frye, owners of the Broadway district's String Instrument Workshop.

### Did Crime Relocate?

Although some taverns chose to relocate to other areas of the city, the taverns ceased to pose a problem because they were no longer in the same neighborhood with their problem patrons. However, the habitually intoxicated people did move to areas of the city where enforcement was less stringent. As a consequence, these neighborhoods have asked for and received community-policing teams assigned to their districts.

The Broadway business district now is a thriving part of downtown Green Bay. The Green Bay police had responded to the same calls in the Broadway business district for decades with no change. Only when the police employed a problem-

solving approach and sought the assistance of the community did long-lasting changes take place.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Green Bay Police Department's efforts, contact Officers Bill Bongle and Steve Scully at the Fort Howard District, Green Bay Police Department, 307 Adams Street, Green Bay, WI 54301; phone: 920-448-3332; fax: 920-448-3333; e-mail: Bill Bongle: [beatcop@msn.com](mailto:beatcop@msn.com), Steve Scully: [sscully@execpc.com](mailto:sscully@execpc.com).

### NOTES

1. One individual, who had been placed at the mental health center more than 80 times for intoxication, is estimated to have cost the city some \$96,000, as follows: The Brown County Health Center estimates the cost of an admission for detoxification at \$400 per day, with an average stay of 2 days; St. Vincent's Hospital estimates hospital emergency room costs to average \$300 to \$400 for this type of visit; and the police department's business manager estimates the cost of each call to average between \$50 and \$100, depending on the number of personnel hours required.

# CANTON MIDDLE SCHOOL TRUANCY ABATEMENT PROGRAM

## REDUCING CHRONIC TRUANCY AND DAYTIME DELINQUENCY

BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT, MARYLAND, SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT

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- THE PROBLEM:** Chronic truancy in an inner-city middle school led to incidents of daytime crime and delinquency in the nearby neighborhood.
- ANALYSIS:** Police determined that no sanctions were taken against truant juveniles or their parents and guardians, even though students are legally required to be present in school. Furthermore, the Baltimore criminal justice system did not view truancy as a high priority.
- RESPONSE:** Police worked with school officials to implement a strategy to reduce chronic truancy and juvenile crime.
- ASSESSMENT:** Incidents of daytime crime and delinquency decreased by 26 percent, and school attendance rose to its highest point ever, topping 90 percent. The targeted school achieved the highest attendance rate in the Baltimore public school system.

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## SCANNING

In 1998, business and community leaders and police managers in Baltimore, Maryland, identified juvenile crime and delinquent acts as a major cause of social disorder in the Southeastern police district. At the same time, the Baltimore public school system was struggling with epidemic truancy, and the Southeastern district community's Canton Middle School was petitioning social institutions for assistance in addressing the suspected causes of dwindling attendance rates.

Three out of 10 students were absent each day at Canton. Both quantitative and anecdotal data indicated that juveniles experi-

enced victimization at rates disproportionate to their numbers and that they committed a large number of the quality-of-life offenses in the district. Many of these offenses occurred during school hours. Typical offenses included graffiti, loitering in public places, petty theft, joy-riding, and daytime burglary. The police department identified truant juveniles as significant contributors to these problems. The correlation between truancy (specifically chronic truancy) and crime and disorder in Baltimore's Southeastern district could not be ignored.

The problem of unsupervised, chronic truants demanded a response from district

police officers. Searching for truants had become a daily game of “cat and mouse.” Officers expended time identifying and taking custody of truants.

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

Baltimore City requires juveniles under the age of 16 years to be in class each school day between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Parents are required by law to assure that their children are supervised and in school during these hours. Police department analysis showed that when truant juveniles were taken into custody, they were released to a parent or guardian with no subsequent institutional sanctions applied to either the student or parent. Repeated infractions were common among a chronic population. Baltimore’s justice and education systems did not accord truancy a high priority.

Southeastern district police took 2,244 juveniles into custody for “daytime curfew violations” in 1998. During this same period, district officers arrested 1,202 juveniles for myriad offenses. These arrests represented approximately 16 percent of all arrests made in the district. Many juveniles arrested were younger than 16 and were classified as truants. Many of them lived in the Southeastern district, were students at Canton Middle School, and were well-known problem students among school personnel.

### Canton Middle School Selected for Intervention

Canton Middle School was selected for the police department’s model intervention strategy for several reasons. First, its administrators were willing participants in this experiment and actively petitioned the Southeastern district to intervene on its behalf. Second, a middle-school population (grades six through eight) seemed ideal for early intervention in the truancy cycle because research indicates that children make formative life decisions at the middle-school stage, as opposed to during later

high-school years.<sup>1</sup> The police department and middle school hoped that an intervention targeting a middle-school population would have a better chance for long-term success than targeting a high-school population. Finally, the community surrounding Canton Middle School was growing more concerned about the area’s increasing rates of delinquency and teen drug use.

Canton Middle School is an urban school with a racially mixed population of 746 students. Most students at Canton historically have come from working-class families, many of whom have been adversely affected during the last generation by economic and technological changes in the workplace. Eight of every 10 students at Canton qualify for the federally funded, free lunch program. Most of the students live in single-parent homes. Canton students come to school with a wide range of emotional, social, medical, and economic needs, all of which must be addressed for them to achieve academic success.

Craig E. Spilman, Canton’s principal, identified poor attendance as a primary barrier to student achievement. The year-end attendance rate for Canton’s 1996–97 academic year was 87 percent. Chronically absent students (defined as absent 30 days or more per school year) represented 36 percent of the total student body.

## RESPONSE

In spring 1998, Canton Middle School and the Southeastern police district forged a unique working partnership to: (1) increase school attendance rates, (2) reduce chronic truancy, and (3) reduce juvenile-related crime and delinquency in the area around Canton Middle School. The partners developed a strategy of progressive interventions that they would deliver through police contacts with families. School and police officials would address chronic truancy in the Southeastern district with all the resources available through the school system, social services, and the juvenile

## The Role of Media Attention

To communicate to the public that the police department and school were addressing chronic truancy in a meaningful and comprehensive manner, the partners issued press releases about their efforts. As a result, local and national media began covering the effort, from the first meeting to the later court hearings. In fact, reporters were so interested in the program that the partners had to limit media access to protect the families of chronic truants from exploitation.

On one occasion, the partners felt that some members of the media were beginning to target individual families for media coverage. The partners' decision to limit media access maintained their credibility with the families and communicated that their goal was not to grandstand, but to assist the families. And the partners learned that by communicating to the media that they were on a "life-saving mission" to assist chronic truants and their families, media coverage was forthcoming and generally respectful of the partners' efforts not to disturb or humiliate the families involved.

and adult justice systems. The partners' goal was to hold parents legally responsible for their children's school attendance.

### Gathering Support

School officials from Canton Middle School and Lieutenant Carmine R. Baratta, Jr., from the Southeastern police district, met with officials from Baltimore's State's Attorney's Office and District Administrative Court to garner support for the chronic truancy abatement program. The State's Attorney for Baltimore, Patricia C. Jessamy, and District Administrative Court Judge Mary Ellen Rinehardt committed to assisting with the effort. In April 1998, Judge Charlotte M. Cooksey and Assistant State's Attorney Laura Mullally agreed to help with the project. The team was taking shape.

### THE INTERVENTION BEGINS

Because the 1997–98 school year was in its last semester, the team decided to target at-risk sixth and seventh graders who would be returning to school the following year. The school prepared a rank-ordered list of the 50 most truant children based on attendance records.

### Phase I: Police Serve Notice and Families Meet With Project Partners

The project partners prepared a letter on police department letterhead notifying parents of the 50 truant children of a mandatory meeting with police and school officials to discuss their children's attendance. A uniformed outreach officer delivered these letters to each target family. One of the main purposes of the meeting, which was held toward the end of the 1997–98 school year, was to start the next school year with a chronic truancy abatement program in place.

Parents, police officials, school administrators, and social service representatives attended the meeting. The police department gave parents notice that their children were considered chronic truants and that they were responsible for their children's attendance at school. The partners presented the program as a life-saving mission for their children and advised parents that now was the time to request any assistance needed from the partners in ensuring that their children were in school. The partners also notified parents that if they could not fulfill their obligations, they would be required to appear in court. Forty-five of the 50 targeted families attended the meeting, as did the local print and broadcast media.

### Phase II: Parents Appear in Court, Police Conduct "Knock & Talk" Visits With Targeted Families

By mid-October 1998, an analysis of attendance rates showed that 28 of the 50 targeted students had dramatically improved their attendance at school. This time, the partners summoned the remaining 22 families to a meeting in Judge Cooksey's courtroom. Parents, police, school officials, and social service providers attended the meeting.

Judge Cooksey admonished the parents, giving them notice that this was their last chance to seek assistance in improving their children's school attendance. The judge advised parents that they would be charged as defendants if their children did not attend school. This meeting also received media attention.

Officer Sam Hood, the Southeastern district-designated truancy abatement officer, visited the targeted at-risk students at their homes to ensure that they were attending school and to let them know that the police department was monitoring them for delinquent behavior. Officer Hood photographed targeted students with a digital camera. These students were profiled in the district database for future reference. This procedure was meant to deter juveniles' attempts to remain anonymous.

### Phase III: Formal Criminal Court Hearings

Of the 22 families attending Judge Cooksey's first meeting, 10 families' children still remained truant. Officer Hood and Assistant State's Attorney Mullally targeted these families for prosecution and served charging documents against the families. Criminal hearings were set before Judge Cooksey. In early April 1999, the partners held the first of several court appearances for truancy. All 10 families eventually were found guilty of "Failing to Send Child to School." One parent was incarcerated for a weekend; nine others received sentences combining probation and community service. The hearings received local and national media attention.

### ASSESSMENT

This program is focusing on its fourth group of at-risk students. The partners con-

**Table 1: Attendance Data—  
Canton Middle School**

**Preliminary Results (as of April 1999)  
650 students**

	1997-98	1998-99
<i>Overall rate</i>	87%	92%
<i>Students absent less than 5 days</i>	18	38
<i>Students absent more than 20 days</i>	36	12

tinue to assess school attendance records and police data, and the results are promising.

### Attendance Tops 90 Percent

For the first time in Canton Middle School history, the attendance rate is more than 90 percent. As of May 1998, the overall attendance rate was 92 percent. Canton Middle School has the highest attendance rate of any school in Baltimore. Chronic truancy has been redefined from 30 days absent to 20 days absent; 12 percent of the student population fits this new profile. The number of students absent fewer than 5 days doubled during the 1998 school year.

### Daytime Crime Drops

Police department data show that no longer are truants in the area around Canton Middle School. From January through October 1999, 440 children were cited with truancy violations in the Southeastern district—a 5-fold reduction. In addition, research indicates that since the beginning of the intervention, overall daytime crime in the neighborhood of Canton Middle School decreased 26 percent. Specifically, larcenies dropped 26 percent and auto thefts decreased by 30 percent. Total UCR (Uniform Crime Report) Index crime during daytime hours dropped 20 percent. This compares with an overall 13-percent decrease in daytime crime districtwide.

## Minimal Resources, Big Payoff

Police and school officials have developed a working relationship with a commitment of minimal resources. A police sector commander and an officer work part-time with school officials on the project. The results are encouraging, and the possibilities for replicating this project are great.

In tandem with this project, 230 Canton Middle School students participated in a children's bicycle rodeo organized by the Southeastern district officers during the summer of 1998 to foster bicycle safety. The police department also developed a mentor program that is part of the ongoing relationship between the school and the police.

The effects of a well-publicized truancy abatement program are quite evident in this Southeastern Canton neighborhood. Residual effects also may be at work in other Southeastern Canton communities. Recent ride-alongs with Sector Commander Baratta and Principal Spilman revealed that loitering in and around these neighborhoods was virtually nonexistent. Where once during school hours teens would congregate on corners and loiter in front of businesses,

sidewalks now are clear. The message was out: Children belong in school—not only for their own benefit, but also for that of the entire community.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the partnership between the Baltimore Police Department and the Baltimore City Public Schools, contact Lieutenant Carmine R. Baratta, Jr., Sector Commander, Southeastern District, 601 East Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21202; phone: 410-396-2422; fax: 410-396-2172; e-mail: CRBARATTA@aol.com.

## NOTES

1. Humphrey, K.R., and P.R. Baker, "G.R.E.A.T. Program: Gang Resistance Education and Training," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* 63(9), September 1994, 1-4.

# A MULTIAGENCY APPROACH TO A COUNTYWIDE PROBLEM STEMMING CALLS-FOR-SERVICE RELATED TO CHILD CUSTODY

FRESNO POLICE DEPARTMENT, CALIFORNIA

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**THE PROBLEM:** The Fresno Police Department was overwhelmed by telephone calls-for-service from parents requesting assistance with child custody disputes and exchanges. The resulting charges, in turn, overwhelmed the Fresno County District Attorney's Office, which could only prosecute the most serious violations.

**ANALYSIS:** Project coordinators learned that most of the law enforcement agencies in Fresno County had different procedures for reporting child custody and court order violations. Also, attorneys and investigators felt most of the reports they received were for minor violations.

**RESPONSE:** Communication among the affected agencies was enhanced, uniform policies and procedures were implemented, and a self-reporting system was developed to encourage people to avoid calling the police with their custody dispute and exchange problems. A standing order was applied to all family court orders requiring parents with recurring custody exchange problems to work through the Child Custody Program, a private agency that provides supervised child custody exchanges.

**ASSESSMENT:** Calls-for-service for child custody violations were reduced by 65 percent, and the District Attorney's Office increased the number of dispute cases prosecuted. The police department placed more responsibility on parents for managing their personal lives, and the department estimates that the reduction in calls-for-services saved 776 officer hours per quarter.

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## SCANNING

In June 1998, Fresno police officers of the Northeast POP team gathered for a team briefing. Officers learned that one single-family residence in the area had generated 19 calls-for-service during the month of May. Each service response had taken about 1 hour, and all were for child custody-related

problems. This information stunned the officers. How could one family draw so many police resources? And if one family was generating this many calls in the Northeast district, what was happening in the rest of the city?

Northeast district POP officers Ken Dodd, Shannon Hodson, and Sergeant Tom Laband were charged with coordinating a project to investigate the extent of the problem and to develop a solution. They discovered that the Fresno, California, Police Department responded to more than 2,300 calls-for-service from July 1997 to June 1998 for violations of child custody court orders and for assistance with child custody exchanges. The department's telephone unit was overwhelmed. And of the 1,400 police reports filed with the District Attorney's Office, fewer than 10 percent of the reports were prosecuted.

The project coordinators set about answering the following questions: How did these types of calls affect other agencies in Fresno County? Why were prosecution rates so low? What could be done to reduce this type of call-for-service? Was any responsibility being placed on parents to deal with their own problems?

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

Project coordinators began their analysis by determining which other county agencies were affected by these issues. After contacting the supervisor of the Fresno County Family Court division, the coordinators were surprised to learn that, effective July 1, 1998, a new section had been added to all family court orders that directly related to use of the police:

In the event that law enforcement officers are called to stand by to assist with the exchange of the child(ren) pursuant to an existing order governing custody and visitation on two (2) or more occasions, the law enforcement agency shall refer the matter of visitation exchange to the Child Custody Program (CCP) or any other agreed-upon agency which provides supervised exchange services.... The cost of CCP shall be shared equally between the parents unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties. The court shall reserve jurisdiction to later appor-

tion the cost according to proof. The visitation exchanges shall be under the direction of CCP, including appointment dates, times, and conditions of visitation exchanges.<sup>1</sup>

According to the modified section of court orders, upon parents' second request to a police agency for child custody exchange assistance, the agency would no longer be required to respond and could refer parents to the supervised exchange services offered by CCP. (See "The Child Custody Program.") Police agencies had not been notified of this modification, however.

What about court orders issued before July 1998? How would other police agencies in Fresno County comply with the new court order? No one knew the answers to these questions. The lack of coordinated effort among law enforcement agencies became painfully evident.

## Why Were Prosecution Rates So Low?

Officers Dodd and Hodson and Sergeant Laband met with assistant district attorneys and district attorney investigators assigned to the child abduction unit of the Fresno County District Attorney's Office. The attorneys' and investigators' responsibilities included reviewing all violations of child custody court orders and determining which cases were to be prosecuted.

The project coordinators learned that most of the police agencies in Fresno County put different information on their offense reports for child custody and court order violations. The information contained in these reports was not always sufficient or consistent. The attorneys and investigators agreed that if the reports had sufficient information and were standardized throughout the county, attorneys would be much more effective in prosecuting cases.

Attorneys and investigators felt most of the reports they received were for minor

violations or were petty in nature. Many reports were made because children had been returned late, dirty, or sick, and many appeared to be made to spite the other party. The child abduction unit was overwhelmed, and attorneys were able to prosecute only the most serious violations.

It appeared that family law attorneys had instructed their clients to make police reports for the smallest court order violations related to child custody issues and that parents were calling the police for the most minor disagreements. The already overburdened system was bursting at the seams.

## RESPONDING

The team determined that lack of coordination among city and county police agencies, the courts, and family law attorneys contributed to the problem. To improve coordination, they created a central coordinating mechanism called the Law Enforcement Information Exchange. All the actors in the criminal justice process were involved: the police, the presiding family court judge, family court commissioners, family law attorneys, assistant district attorneys and investigators, and representatives from the probation department.

The Exchange organized meetings, held in the chambers of the family court judge, to determine ways to reduce the number of calls-for-service for child custody violations and to place responsibility back on parents. The group sought solutions to effectively address court orders issued before July 1998 and to incorporate referrals to CCP.

### Standing Order Issued

The project coordinators asked the presiding judge of the Fresno County Superior Court to issue a standing order that would apply

## The Child Custody Program

The Child Custody Program (CCP) in Fresno, California, is a privately owned and operated program that provides a safe, peaceful environment for the custody exchange process. Its emphasis is on the welfare of children who are involved in custody exchanges.

The CCP facility was designed using CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles. CPTED stresses controlled access to buildings and grounds and increased security through reduced opportunity for criminal activity. Parents use separate entrances and are never in contact with one another. The children's waiting room is fully equipped with toys suitable for all ages.

The setting is neutral and is well-monitored by private security guards. The facility has never experienced a situation in which staff needed to call the police.

There is a one-time \$25 registration fee and a \$5 charge for pick-ups and drop-offs. The program receives considerable financial support from corporations and foundations.

to all family court orders regardless of when they had been issued. With a standing order, requests for service (beyond the first request) related to court orders issued before July 1998 also would be subject to the family court order modification. This modification permitted referral of calls-for-service for child custody transfer complaints to CCP.

To maximize the effectiveness of the standing order, project coordinators developed a procedure and an Invocation of Standing Order on Custody Exchange form that could be used countywide. The procedure is as follows:

1. When communications personnel receive a call-for-service requesting an officer to stand by and assist in the exchange of children, they access a database for the requesting party's name. This database contains the names of people who have already been served with the Invocation of Standing Order on Custody Exchange.

## Resources That Helped Fresno Succeed

Fresno Police Department Officers Ken Dodd and Shannon Hodson, along with their supervisor, Sergeant Tom Laband, coordinated, developed, and implemented this countywide project.

### Funding

Implementing this project required approximately 100 hours of personnel time. The project did not exceed the existing department budget.

### Training

Project coordinators attended PERF's International Problem-Oriented Policing Conference held in San Diego in November 1997. They followed the SARA model to identify their department's problem and find a solution.

make their own reports. If the violation is for an event in progress, the department dispatches officers.

### Getting the Word Out

Family law attorneys in the Law Enforcement Information Exchange also held seats on the Family Law Association's board of directors. The board influenced the association to train its members first to encourage their clients to document alleged violations through the self-reports and then to assure their clients that the self-reports would be as credible in court as standard police reports.

2. If the requesting party's name has already been entered into this database, the communications personnel advise them that officers will not be responding and that, if they cannot resolve matters on their own, they must use CCP.
3. If the party's name is not in the database, officers respond to the call, assist with the exchange of the children, and then serve both parties with the Invocation of Standing Order on Custody Exchange. Both parties receive a copy of the order, which contains instructions on using CCP and a map to the center.

### Self-Reporting System

With assistance from the District Attorney's Office and other members of the Law Enforcement Information Exchange, the team developed a self-reporting system for violations of court orders to further relieve the police department and place more responsibility on the reporting parties. When a parent wants to report a violation of a court order (excluding those relating to domestic violence) and the report is for an event that has already taken place, the police department advises the parent to come to the nearest police station and file a report. The department no longer takes reports for violations over the phone; instead, a self-reporting package is available for parents to

Implementing this program required project coordinators to educate department personnel. Program coordinators attended patrol, communications, detective, and records staff briefings to explain how the new procedures work and how to serve people with the Invocation of Standing Order on Custody Exchange.

### ASSESSMENT

The Fresno Police Department received approximately 594 calls-for-service related to child custody transfer complaints and court order violations from January 1 to March 30, 1998, the third quarter of fiscal year 1997-98. Police implemented this project in early January 1999. The police department's statistics indicate that from January 1 to March 31, 1999, the department received 206 calls-for-service for child custody complaints and court order violations, representing a 65-percent reduction. The decline in the number of calls-for-service has continued. From April 1 to June 30, 1999, the department responded to 241 calls, compared to 671 during the same period the previous year—a 64-percent reduction. The most recent data, for July 1 to September 30, 1999, indicate there has been a 44-percent reduction from the number of calls during the same period in 1998. For the entire year, the department has

experienced a 56-percent reduction in calls-for-service for child custody disputes.

Project coordinators invested approximately 100 hours in coordination and implementation of the program. This investment of time has resulted in a savings of an estimated 776 officer hours for the quarter, or 3,104 officer hours over a year's time.

With fewer reports to handle, the District Attorney's Office has been able to increase its filing rate and its rate of successful prosecution of court order violations. The police department's telephone unit has been relieved of the heavy burden of calls related to child custody. Last, but not least, responsibility has been placed back on parents for managing their personal lives, giving patrol officers more time for other activities.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Fresno Police Department's efforts, contact Officer Ken Dodd, Officer Shannon Hodson, and Sergeant Tom Laband at the Fresno Police Department, 2323 Mariposa Mall, Fresno, CA 93721; fax: 559-228-6783. Officer Dodd can be reached at 559-498-4517, Officer Hodson can be reached at 559-498-4614, and Sergeant Laband can be reached at 559-498-4634.

## NOTES

1. "Invocation of Standing Order on Custody Exchange," Fresno County Courts, CC-255 (12/98).

# THE HAWTHORNE HUDDLE

## MOTIVATING RESIDENTS TO RECLAIM A NEIGHBORHOOD

MINNEAPOLIS POLICE DEPARTMENT, MINNESOTA

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- THE PROBLEM:** The Hawthorne neighborhood in North Minneapolis was devastated by a high incidence of crime, including narcotics trafficking, vandalism, and burglary; streets covered by litter; poor rental property management; and a declining housing stock.
- ANALYSIS:** The Minneapolis Police Department and its Community Crime Prevention/Safety for Everyone unit of the Community Service Bureau analyzed crime data from the neighborhood in 1996. Using police reports and crime maps, the department identified the number, types, and location of apparent criminal activity. The statistics confirmed the concerns residents expressed. A rise in the number of rental properties, a decline in housing conditions, and poor screening of tenants added to the crime problem.
- RESPONSE:** A large group of people—including residents; the faith community; the police; city, county, and Federal agencies; nonprofit organizations; and a corporate foundation—worked together to develop a strategy to combat crime and improve neighborhood conditions.
- ASSESSMENT:** The number of executed narcotics warrants dropped from 108 in 1997 to 51 in 1998; vandalism incidents dropped from 366 in 1997 to 198 in 1998; and burglary decreased from 240 in 1997 to 181 in 1998.

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## SCANNING

Minneapolis' Hawthorne neighborhood, a 77-square-block neighborhood in North Minneapolis, is home to approximately 7,000 residents, one-third of whom are younger than 17. Juvenile Probation Office data indicate that the number of juveniles on probation in the Hawthorne area is the highest in the city. In addition, seventy-five percent of the housing stock is rental, and almost half of the residents receive some form of Hennepin County Economic Assistance.

In 1996, drug trafficking and vandalism had been problems for at least 5 years in the Hawthorne neighborhood, and there was no sign that the problems would end soon. Past problem-solving efforts had been hit-or-miss, and there was little cooperation or sense of community among residents. Residents had no political clout with city or county government and showed little, if any, commitment to resolving neighborhood problems. They also expressed feelings of abandonment by city and county services, and residents believed that city officials had

made a conscious decision to ignore the criminal element plaguing their neighborhood.

## Drug Dealing and Other Crime

A major interstate highway that flowed along the eastern edge of the neighborhood provided easy access to customers from the perimeters of Hawthorne. During one community meeting, two city officials observed more than 40 cars and a steady stream of pedestrian traffic at a drug house over a 2-hour period. The neighborhood was plagued by an increasing number of aggravated assaults, and random gunshots and drive-by shootings were common.

## Civil Disorder

The narcotics trade in the area spawned a variety of quality-of-life problems, such as litter, poor housing, vandalism, loud all-night parties, music blaring from cars and homes, and unleashed dogs barking loudly. Everywhere one looked, streets, yards, and sidewalks were strewn with waste paper, broken glass, discarded plastic bags of clothes, and miscellaneous pieces of furniture. The market value of houses fell, and some homeowners could not afford to leave: Their mortgage balances were higher than the market value of their homes. A Neighborhood Business Association analysis indicated that there was no economic viability or corporate investment in the Hawthorne area.

Residents confirmed that crime and disorder were major problems in a 1996 survey of 150 Hawthorne households conducted by the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP)—a neighborhood-based planning and implementation program that supports initiatives to address housing, economic development, crime and safety, and other neighborhood-identified concerns. NRP and the police department also conducted focus groups to learn about residents' concerns. According to residents, the top concerns in the neighborhood were litter and crime, including drug-

related crime, vehicle theft, vandalism, and burglary.

Police patrolling Hawthorne were discouraged by the magnitude of its social disorder. An overall sense of despair prevailed among residents and government agency staff facing the area's problems.

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

The Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) and its Community Crime Prevention/Safety for Everyone (CCP/SAFE) unit of the Community Service Bureau analyzed crime data from the neighborhood in 1996. Using police reports and crime maps, the department identified the number, types, and location of apparent criminal activity. The statistics confirmed the concerns residents expressed in the NRP survey.

## Narcotics Trafficking

MPD's analysis of 911 calls and citizen complaints showed that most drug activity occurred during the time that the department's Community Response Team (CRT), which deals with low-level street narcotics, prostitution, and other livability issues, was not present in the neighborhood. CRT worked a fixed schedule, usually during the work week. Most neighborhood drug dealers were aware of the schedule, and their busiest day of the week was Sunday. Most customers came from the immediate or nearby neighborhoods. The neighborhood was divided into four quadrants, and narcotics warrants issued in 1996 were equally distributed among the four.

The consequences for drug trafficking were not serious. A U.S. Attorney's Office study of 40 executed search warrants showed that of the 55 individuals arrested and charged with some level of felony narcotic behavior, 22 had 5 or more previous arrests for a variety of offenses. Of these 22, 3 were juveniles; of the remaining 19 individuals, each had been arrested 13 or more times.

## Resources That Helped the Hawthorne Neighborhood Succeed

Organizations contributing funding and/or staff time to this effort included:

### City of Minneapolis

- Housing Inspections
- Minneapolis Lead Program
- Minneapolis Police Department
- Minneapolis Public Schools
- Solid Waste and Recycling
- Water Department

### Hennepin County

- Children and Family Services
- County Attorney's Office
- Juvenile Probation
- Sentence to Serve
- Training and Employment Services
- Welfare Fraud

### Federal Government

- U.S. Attorney's Office

### Nonprofit Agencies

- Accessibility
- Hawthorne Area Community Council
- Legal Aid
- Loaves and Fishes
- North Memorial Hospital

### Churches

- Berean Baptist Church
- Faith Tabernacle Church
- On-Fire Ministry
- St. Phillip's Catholic Church
- Zion Lutheran Church

### Major Corporate Sponsor

- In 1994, the General Mills Foundation granted \$3 million over 5 years for new and rehabilitated housing in the Hawthorne neighborhood. In addition, the Foundation gave \$200,000 for block club initiatives.

### Training

In 1997, the entire Minneapolis Police Department received 8 hours of POP training, which was supported by a Federal grant. Also, all new officers in the Minneapolis Police Department receive 8 hours of community-oriented policing training during their academy experience. To gain an appreciation for the problems of urban youth, recruits work a full week (40 hours) in an inner-city youth organization through the Police-Community Training Partnership program.

Some of these individuals had been arrested between 38 and 41 times, and some of their violations were for repeat narcotic felonies. Of this group, not one received active jail time. The only risks for offenders were financial loss or the slight chance of criminal justice system response.

### Poor Property Management

According to city housing inspections data, as drug activity increased and homeowners moved from the neighborhood, the number of rental properties grew. Rental property owners became increasingly part of the problem, allowing properties to decline while continuing to collect voucher-paid rents from Hennepin County Economic Assistance. Approximately 10 percent of homes had been sold to neglectful landlords, and another 30 percent were managed by owners with little, if any, experience. Many owners did not screen tenants and showed no interest in improving their management skills. The Minneapolis Community Development Agency refused to build any new housing or to reinvest in existing housing stock because of the ongoing drug trafficking and other problems.

### Lack of Coordination Among Government Services

The Hennepin County Department of Children and Family Services conducted an analysis of government agency service delivery in the area and found that agencies had overlapping clients and that there was little coordination among the agencies to address the families' problems. It often was the case, for

example, that a family actively involved in drug dealing was receiving county economic assistance, on juvenile probation, receiving housing inspections complaints, and under supervision from a county Children and Family Services case worker. However, none of these services were coordinated.

## RESPONSE

To organize the community, the MPD's CCP/SAFE unit sponsored a variety of neighborhood meetings and encouraged residents to participate in block clubs. A crime prevention specialist, Hillary Freeman, a civilian member of the MPD, attended these meetings and became actively involved in facilitating communication among community organizations and assisting residents and others in the neighborhood to solve Hawthorne's problems. Freeman trained block club members on how to use the ordinances and other tools available to the community for reducing crime. Residents used the block club meetings to record problem addresses and to identify next steps for action by both residents and police. Updates were provided at the next block club meeting, allowing residents to see the fruits of their labor.

### Residents and Community Leaders Organize

As block clubs began to form, residents increasingly worked together to define neighborhood problems and to take ownership for resolving neighborhood issues. Residents became highly motivated to reclaim their neighborhood and regain a sense of control over their daily lives. They began actively to observe and record suspected criminal activity on their blocks and to report their observations to the MPD 4th precinct CRT. Approximately 200 residents became actively involved in the 14 block clubs formed in the Hawthorne neighborhood.

The MPD's Freeman met with leaders of faith organizations to solicit their assistance in problem solving. As a result, clergy from each of the neighborhood churches created a ministerial group that continues to meet monthly to address common concerns and to work with neighborhood residents.

Community members also continue to meet monthly at 7:30 a.m. in what is called the "Hawthorne Huddle." The General Mills Foundation originally organized the meetings in 1997 as a way to solicit feedback about projects it had funded in the neighborhood. Over time, the meetings expanded to address wide-ranging neighborhood concerns and now operate as a think-tank on policy issues that affect livability in the neighborhood. Participants include block club leaders, members of the clergy, police and other government staff, representatives of nonprofit organizations, and elected city and county public officials.

### The Neighborhood Strategy

The MPD worked with other government agencies and the community to develop the following strategy to reduce crime in the Hawthorne neighborhood:

- Increase enforcement of existing laws, including the State nuisance law, property license laws, and weapons ownership laws.
- Establish partnerships among community residents and organizations and other city and county agencies.
- Establish a sense of community by adopting shared community standards and by working with corporate partners who could influence policymaking and provide funding and volunteers for community initiatives.

The MPD's goal was to reduce the number of criminal narcotic arrests executed at specific addresses, the number of vandalism incidents, and the number of residential burglaries.

Neighborhood residents and the faith community developed standards of conduct for the community. The General Mills Foundation provided funding for a community dinner, at which block club members, faith community leaders, the MPD, and other government agencies met to agree upon the standards and to commit resources in support of them.

## Government Agency Coordination

City and county agencies began to communicate with one another and developed a more holistic approach to service delivery to the community. They formed the Project Empowerment Team, whose participants included city and county agencies, Minneapolis Legal Aid, the North Memorial Family Practice Clinic, the Training and Employment Assistance Program, and other interested community partners. The team's purpose was to address family issues from an early intervention/prevention perspective and to match needy families with appropriate resources.

## Strategy Implementation

**Increased Enforcement.** The police did the following to increase enforcement in the Hawthorne neighborhood:

- Used the Computer-Optimized Deployment Focus on Results, or CODEFOR, system to focus enforcement efforts on problem locations.
- Strengthened enforcement of the Conduct on Premise ordinance, a city housing inspection ordinance that addresses nuisance behavior—such as loud music and parties, narcotics and weapons possession, and prostitution—on rental property.
- Encouraged stronger enforcement of the State Nuisance Law, which is enforced by the County Attorney's office civil division and addresses such nuisance behavior as narcotics and weapons possession and prostitution in or

on homeowner-occupied property, businesses, shelters, and bars.

Aggressive enforcement of the State Nuisance Law and Conduct on Premise ordinance began January 1, 1997. As a result, enforcement action was taken against 17 properties that had accounted for 875 police calls-for-service within 1 year.

**Government Agency Coordination.** The Project Empowerment Team offered community resources to 55 families demonstrating problem behaviors. Of those 55 families, only 5 were unwilling to use the resources.

**Resident Initiatives.** In response to residents' community standards for the neighborhood, Minneapolis Solid Waste and Recycling issued 300 "dirty collection" tags. The department placed dirty collection point tags at properties where residents did not place their garbage in proper containers and allowed it to scatter around the yard. This enforcement had two direct results: First, commitment to enforce the community standards was demonstrated, and second, a clean neighborhood did help to deter crime.

To provide young people with positive activities in their community and to steer them away from vandalism, residents and area churches created the Clean and Green Program, an antilitter project that offered youth a stipend for their work on Saturday mornings to clean up their neighborhood. The community also established a Safe House where children could be involved in positive, supervised activities and receive assistance with school work. Support for these initiatives also came from NRP, General Mills, grants to block clubs, and churches.

**Rental Property Improvement Initiative.** Through NRP funding, rental property owners received rental property management training and funds to increase and improve their security initiatives. NRP set

aside \$20,000, which was matched by the rental property owners, to install fences, locks, and lighting.

## ASSESSMENT

The results of efforts to improve the Hawthorne neighborhood were measured through the MPD's crime statistics, a second NRP survey, and focus groups conducted with block clubs and other stakeholders. The MPD evaluated crime statistics weekly, and twice a year, the MDP and NRP requested feedback from residents.

The reduction of crime in Hawthorne has been significant:

- Narcotics violation warrants declined 50 percent, from 108 in 1997 to 51 in 1998.
- Vandalism incidents showed a similar reduction: from 366 in 1997 to 198 in 1998.
- Home burglaries decreased from 240 in 1997 to 181 in 1998.

Home burglaries declined primarily because of education: Block club members were taught how to reduce burglaries by increasing the security of their homes and by reducing the opportunity for becoming a victim of crime. Also, as neighbors got to know one another, they became an extra pair of eyes, watching one another's houses.

Initial indicators for 1999 show a decreasing trend in narcotics arrests, vandalism, and burglary of dwellings.

## Hawthorne Area Crime Statistics 1996-98

	1996	1997	1998
<i>Narcotics (Search warrants executed)</i>	103	108	51
<i>Auto theft/theft from auto</i>	186	176	262
<i>Vandalism</i>	286	366	198
<i>Burglary of dwelling</i>	196	240	181

NRP conducted a survey of residents attending block club meetings in late 1998, and respondents indicated that they felt safer in their community and that crime was decreasing. Community feedback sessions showed that the goals of reducing crime and social disorder and organizing the community had been successfully accomplished.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Hawthorne Huddle, contact the Minneapolis Police, Downtown Command, 29 S. 5th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55402; phone: 612-673-3198; fax: 612-673-3940.

# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

## REVITALIZING NEIGHBORHOODS THROUGH COMMUNITY POLICING HOUSES

RACINE POLICE DEPARTMENT, WISCONSIN

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- THE PROBLEM:** Neighborhoods troubled by crime and disorder suffered as enforcement alone proved ineffective.
- ANALYSIS:** A survey conducted by the University of Wisconsin–Parkside found that residents were dissatisfied with their neighborhood because of crime, litter, and rundown properties; 76 percent of the residents questioned the police department’s ability to control crime in the neighborhood.
- RESPONSE:** Joint police-community partnerships developed a variety of problem-solving approaches that involved cracking down both on gang and drug activity and on landlords who violated the building codes. The police department also developed a unique partnership with local business leaders to purchase houses located near the center of criminal activity and renovate them for use as community-policing offices.
- ASSESSMENT:** Statistics show that in two neighborhoods where community-policing houses were established, crime diminished and business owners and residents reinvested in the communities. Other areas of Racine are successfully replicating these two initial models.

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### SCANNING

The West 6th Street neighborhood in Racine, Wisconsin, is an older, residential area encompassing approximately 32 square blocks in the heart of the city. The area has little commercial activity and consists almost completely of wood-frame, single- and multifamily residences on standard city lots.

Residents of Racine considered the West 6th Street neighborhood the worst in town. Crime wasn’t the only problem. Rundown and boarded-up homes, abandoned cars,

litter, and debris plagued this deteriorating, low- to moderate-income area. Through both surveys and meetings, neighborhood residents revealed the community’s sense of frustration with these conditions and with government agencies’ lack of commitment to address them.

Crime statistics showed that, although the area is not geographically large, the incidence of violent and property crime was out of proportion to its population. The West

6th Street area represented 3 percent of the city's population, but accounted for 21 percent of the city's violent crime. Open drug dealing and gang activity fueled both violent and property crime, and area residents frequently were the victims. A number of large, unruly crowd incidents turned into confrontations with the police. Rock throwing, property damage, and injuries to citizens and officers were common during these disturbances.

Absentee landlords, who cared little about their tenant's quality of life or the condition of their properties, owned a substantial portion of the area's rental property. Building and health code violations were common. A 37-unit apartment complex in the middle of the neighborhood became a haven for drug dealers and addicts. Property values were declining. People were selling their homes and moving. Nonowners occupied 71 percent of the homes in the area.

The police department arrested dealers and raided drug houses, but once the arrests were made and the police left, the drug dealers returned. The police department's failure to effectively deal with the neighborhood eroded residents' trust in and cooperation with police officers. Arrests alone were no match for the West 6th Street area's wide variety of problems.

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

In 1992, Chief Richard Polzin chose to implement community policing and to analyze and resolve the myriad issues facing the West 6th Street area. To develop lines of communication between the police department and the community, the police department initiated meetings with residents. At first, only a few people attended. During the early meetings, residents recounted instances of indifference by government officials; it was apparent that they felt government services were beyond their reach—no government representative had ever taken a leadership role in addressing the neighborhood's problems.

## University of Wisconsin–Parkside Study

At the request of the police department, the University of Wisconsin–Parkside conducted a baseline study of residents' attitudes, perceptions, and concerns. Although approximately 80 percent of respondents thought the police were respectful, helpful, and fair in their dealings with them, 76 percent expressed concern about the police department's ability to control crime. The study revealed that residents were very dissatisfied with their neighborhood because of the crime, litter, and rundown properties.

## RESPONSE

The West 6th Street Community Policing Project's goals were to organize neighborhood residents, maximize its own resources and those of other city and county agencies, reduce violent and property crime, improve residents' quality of life, and promote neighborhood reinvestment. The problem-solving strategy consisted of:

- Developing a joint police-community problem-solving action group, made up of community-policing officers and neighborhood residents, to organize other area residents and direct community policing and other neighborhood improvement efforts.
- Developing working partnerships with other city and county agencies to maximize resources and address specific crime and quality-of-life issues. In the past, there had been very little cooperation between different agencies of city government and no followup on citizen complaints.
- Gathering intelligence on area drug dealers and gang members; establishing a highly visible police presence in the neighborhood by assigning officers to foot patrol, bike patrol, and mounted patrol; and targeting the primary neighborhood crime problems of gang activity and drug dealing through a focused

## Replicating Efforts at Mead Street

A year after efforts began in the West 6th Street neighborhood, the police department introduced community policing to Racine's Mead Street area. This area suffered from problems similar to those that plagued West 6th Street. The community is similar to West 6th Street in size, population density, housing stock, and economic standing. It had more business activity than the West 6th Street area, but the neighborhood was composed mostly of single- and multifamily residences.

The department followed the West 6th Street area model, using the same tools to evaluate the area and a similar problem-solving approach. The police and community partnered together in the 2nd District Coalition, an organization that became a powerful influence in neighborhood affairs.

The police chose to build a house for community-policing efforts on a vacant city lot directly across the street from a park that was at the heart of the community's problems. Gangs had taken over the park, and drug deals were conducted out in the open. Residents regularly dove for cover from gunfire between rival gang members.

A three-bedroom ranch house cost approximately \$55,000. Chief Polzin made fundraising presentations at every possible community function and to private foundations. In the end, the Racine Community Foundation provided \$35,000; the department obtained the remaining funds from a variety of other sources. The Outpost again managed the funds.

In early 1996, the new community-policing house became a reality. The Mead Street house, like West 6th Street, became a combined police station, neighborhood gathering center, and outreach location for many of the same agencies that used the West 6th Street office.

### Mead Street Assessment

The following patterns are emerging in the Mead Street area:

- Violent crime (homicides, sexual assaults, robbery, and aggravated assaults) fell 53 percent from 1991 to 1998.
- Property crime (burglary, theft, auto theft, and arson) fell 48 percent from 1991 to 1998.
- Part 2 offenses (crimes not listed above) decreased 4.5 percent from 1991 to 1998.
- Calls-for-service dropped 15 percent from 1991 to 1998.

Neighborhood pride is becoming more evident as housing improvements are made. Reinvestment already has begun, as owners have reopened and renovated previously boarded-up buildings. The park is now the site of Boy Scout campouts and other child-related activities, rather than a gathering place for gangs and drug dealers. The Mead Street community-policing house will some day be sold to a low-to-moderate income family, and the proceeds used to build another community-policing house elsewhere.

assault on these activities. To demonstrate the police department's commitment to solving the neighborhood's problems, captains and lieutenants began walking a beat twice a month in the targeted area.

- Targeting landlords and homeowners who refused to comply with health and building codes, organizing area residents to clean up public open areas, assisting residents in accessing government services, and developing strategies to promote neighborhood reinvestment.

### A Community Mobilizes

The department opened the first community-policing office in the West 6th Street neighborhood in 1993. Although the police department did not have the resources to lease an office, a neighborhood landlord with an empty apartment provided the unit rent-free. Officers and citizens donated furniture and other items. Chief Polzin sought officers who were interested in community policing to volunteer for the full-time assignment of operating the office. That officer became an advocate for the neighborhood and set about orchestrating the delivery of government services to address crime and other quality-of-life issues.

Area residents began to attend meetings and, reluctantly at first, began to volunteer. The partnership evolved into the West 6th Street Association, which has become a cohesive voice for change in the neighborhood and the strongest neighborhood advocacy organization in the city.

This joint effort has attracted both the interest of the business

community and the attention of the media. S.C. Johnson & Son, a major Racine-based corporation, provided a \$28,500 grant to help community policing in the West 6th Street neighborhood and a similar initiative in the 18th and Mead Street neighborhood. In the West 6th Street neighborhood, the funds were used to renovate and establish the community-policing office and purchase furniture and office supplies.

## Operation Crackdown

Armed with information from neighborhood residents and surveillance activities, officers identified and targeted drug dealers and gang members. A joint effort of the Racine Police Department and the Wisconsin Department of Justice Narcotics Enforcement Division, known as Operation Crackdown, became the largest focused assault on drug activity in Wisconsin history. At its conclusion, 92 felony arrests were made and the principal West 6th Street drug dealers were sent to prison. The effort broke the backs of the drug rings and gangs that had plagued the neighborhood.

## First Community Policing House

One Halloween, James Dickert, a local realtor, donated \$500 to the police department so it could purchase Halloween candy to pass out to area children. But city regulations required the department to appear before three different committees and to solicit bids before it could purchase the candy. Dickert became discouraged when he realized the length of time and amount of resources involved before the police department could put his donation to use. He approached Chief Polzin about his frustration. When Chief Polzin discussed with him the department's community-policing efforts, Dickert offered to help. He organized a group of community business leaders to form a nonprofit organization known as the Racine Community Outpost that would provide direct financial assistance to the department for its community-policing efforts.

During the course of Operation Crackdown, the owner of the house next door to the neighborhood's primary drug house put the house up for sale. Working with Chief Polzin, Dickert and the Racine Community Outpost began raising money for the police department to purchase the house and renovate it for police use. Another community group, the Racine Community Foundation, provided an \$8,000 grant; S.C. Johnson & Son donated another \$25,000. The department also received grants from the State of Wisconsin.

When city attorneys balked at the unprecedented idea of a police department owning a house, the Racine Community Outpost stepped in, bought the house, and leased it back to the police department. The city attorneys accepted this plan. The city forgave the back taxes due on the house, and the community-policing officers moved in next door to the area's major drug dealers. This strategy had the desired effect: members of the drug-dealing family who were not arrested and sentenced to prison soon moved out of the neighborhood.

## Cleaning Up the Neighborhood

Following the first year of increased police presence in the neighborhood, the violent crime rate dropped 60 percent. Once the major crime problems had diminished, the police and the community began to focus on the homes in various states of disrepair, the unkempt yards, abandoned cars, and accumulation of junk. This effort required city agencies to cooperate. Officers organized a neighborhood cleanup, during which officers and residents walked the public areas and vacant lots cleaning up garbage and debris. The Department of Public Works provided dump trucks and drivers to haul trash away. With the rest of the neighborhood cleaning up, residents with collections of junk felt pressure to clean up their yards. Abandoned and junk cars were removed from neighborhood streets and private property. This effort encouraged neighbors to meet and converse with one

another, furthering a sense of community in the neighborhood. In an area where police were once greeted with rocks and bottles, officers could now be found sitting on porches talking to people during foot patrol.

### Combating Exterior Building Code and Health Violations

Many absentee landlords who owned property in the area responded to police and resident requests to repair their properties and bring them up to code. But others either ignored the requests or refused to comply. City officials cited and fined those who refused. This action brought more landlords into compliance, but others still held out.

Finally, the department compiled a list of the 25 worst properties in the neighborhood, presented it to the Public Safety and Buildings Committee, and encouraged the city to respond to building code violations. The minutes of the committee are public record and the local newspaper printed the list of properties with the owners' names. The list stirred controversy among landlords, who said that the police were targeting them unfairly and that they were not in violation of building codes. As a result, the mayor dispatched building and health inspectors and said that if they did not find violations, the police would be required to apologize publicly to the landlords.

When the inspectors returned, they told the mayor there were no violations. The police responded by recording violations in the neighborhood on videotape. When this information was presented to a meeting of the mayor and building and health inspectors, police learned that the inspectors had conducted their inspections by driving down each neighborhood block at 35 miles per hour because they were afraid to leave their cars. As a result, inspectors teamed up with community-policing officers to conduct inspections and issue citations. As the number of citations increased and the fines mounted, some of the landlords gave up and sold their properties.

### Encouraging Neighborhood Reinvestment

Another project goal was to encourage neighborhood reinvestment and home ownership. The police department and the Racine Community Outpost wanted to accelerate this process. After the Outpost refurbished the former drug house next to the community-policing house, the organization sold the house to a low-income homeowner who agreed to occupy the residence. Since then, the Outpost has purchased several more houses, refurbished them, and sold them to low-income families who also agreed to occupy the houses. The Outpost uses the money earned from the sale of each house to purchase a new house to refurbish.

Additional properties put up for sale by the troublesome landlords are being purchased by organizations that cooperate with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and various city and State programs to offer low-cost loans and promote home ownership in the neighborhood. The sale and renovation of the properties have led to visible improvements in the condition of neighborhood housing stock.

One major problem remained. Though the police had driven the drug dealers and addicts from the 37-unit apartment complex in the heart of the neighborhood, the building remained a rundown eyesore. After a local newspaper ran a story about the once-elegant building, several developers inquired about renovating it. Chief Polzin reassured developers that community policing was a long-term effort in the West 6th Street area. Developers purchased and renovated the apartment complex at a cost of nearly \$2 million. Today, there is a waiting list for apartments in the building.

### Empowering Residents

The West 6th Street Association's focus turned to improving residents' accessibility to government services. The police depart-

ment offered space in its community-policing house to a number of social service agencies. The response was enthusiastic. Among the organizations that used the facilities at the West 6th Street community-policing house were:

- Children and Family Resources, a child health and social services program that became so widely relied upon it eventually moved into its own house two doors away.
- Racine County Human Services Department.
- Racine Health Department.
- Lutheran Social Services.
- Probation and Parole Division of the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. Probation and parole officers used the house to meet with clients during the day, before afterschool programs began.
- Reading tutoring services for children and adults during afterschool and evening hours.

The service organizations encouraged neighborhood residents to drop in, and the house eventually became an unofficial community center, helping to further solidify the neighborhood.

Once area residents and the police department are satisfied with the progress and stability of the area, neighborhood reinvestment plans include selling the West 6th Street community-policing house to a low-income owner-occupant. Proceeds from the sale will be used to establish another community-policing house in another area of the city.

## ASSESSMENT

How well did community policing work as a catalyst for change in the West 6th Street community?

- Violent crime (homicides, sexual assaults, robbery, and aggravated

## Successes Build More Support

The number of requests for a community policing presence in other city neighborhoods has exceeded available resources. Chief Polzin approached the Racine City Council, requesting that a surcharge be added to city ordinance fines to help pay for community policing activities. The city granted the request and also gave the police department part of an \$810,000 settlement paid by a local company to use for Weed and Seed efforts.

### Geneva Street Area

The police department selected the Geneva Street area, on Racine's north side, for its third community-policing house. For many years, the only new structure that had been built in this neighborhood had been a prison. With a combination of funding sources, the effort proceeded much the same way the Mead Street project did. A local community group adopted the project, providing all the labor to landscape the yard. The Geneva Street community-policing house opened its doors in 1998, providing a variety of services to area residents. Crime rates are down after the first full year of operation, and other neighborhood improvement efforts are progressing.

Stapp Builders, the company that built the Geneva Street house, decided that the successes associated with the Racine Police Department's approach to community policing deserved support. Stapp representatives championed the community-policing effort at a meeting of Racine and Kenosha, Wisconsin, builders. To date, that group has donated more than \$100,000 in labor and materials toward building more community-policing houses.

assaults) fell 70 percent from 1991 to 1998.

- Property crime (burglary, theft, auto theft, and arson) fell 59 percent from 1991 to 1998.
- Part 2 offenses (crimes not listed above) fell 32 percent from 1991 to 1998.
- Calls-for-service dropped 35 percent from 1991 to 1998.

In the same time period in the city as a whole, violent crime dropped 28 percent, property crime dropped 28 percent, and calls-for-service dropped 19 percent.

The number of owner-occupied homes in the West 6th Street area has increased. Additional reinvestment in the neighbor-

hood, similar to the \$2-million apartment house renovation, has occurred. The physical appearance of many neighborhood properties has improved.

### Follow-Up Study

The United Way conducted a survey in 1996 and asked 250 West 6th Street residents to name the leaders in their neighborhood and the organizations that had been most helpful to themselves or to their families. Many respondents listed police officers as valued leaders (second only to Family Resource and Health Department home visitors). The community-policing house and the Racine Police Department, combined, were listed as the leading resource organization in the neighborhood.

The police department has established three additional community-policing houses in

the Racine neighborhoods of Mead Street, Geneva Street, and 10th Street, the latter of which opened its doors on December 1, 1999. (See “Replicating Efforts at Mead Street” and “Successes Build More Support.”) Racine’s experiences show that over time, continued attention will be needed to sustain positive results in these once-struggling communities. The residents of these communities are unwilling to lose what they have fought so hard to gain.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Racine Police Department’s problem-solving efforts, contact Chief Richard Polzin, Chief of Police, Safety Building—730 Center Street, Racine, WI 53403; phone: 414-635-7704; fax: 414-636-9332.

# TRUANCY CONTROL PROJECT

## REMOVING ATTENDANCE BARRIERS LESSENS DAYTIME CRIME

SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT, CALIFORNIA, MID-CITY DIVISION

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**THE PROBLEM:** High rates of daytime juvenile crime focused attention on chronic truancy in the Mid-City Division of the San Diego Police Department.

**ANALYSIS:** A survey of 25 truant juveniles showed that 73 percent committed crimes other than truancy while not at school, and 87 percent reported being victimized while they were truant. Sixty percent of the students also responded that stricter enforcement would deter truancy, and the majority of the juveniles agreed that more personal attention would increase their attendance at school.

**RESPONSE:** Police officers formed strong relationships with school attendance officers and identified the most chronic truants; they then targeted these students with personal attention and actively helped them and their families remove barriers to school attendance.

**ASSESSMENT:** Before implementing the project, chronically truant students were absent for an average of 43 percent of the school days. After implementation, these students (excluding the most serious offenders, who required court intervention) were absent for 11 percent of the school days. Initial assessments of crime statistics show a 20-percent reduction in Mid-City crime since project implementation, with a 31-percent reduction in daytime crime during the fall 1998 semester. During the same period, the average reduction in rates for those same crimes citywide was 6 percent.

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## SCANNING

Every day, Shane Lynn sat in Mira Mesa High School listening to kids openly discuss ditching classes to buy, sell, and use illegal drugs. Lynn, too, cut classes to buy drugs. The difference between Lynn and the other students was that he was an undercover San Diego police officer investigating illegal drug sales. Officer Lynn became convinced that rampant truancy was contributing to the drug problem at Mira Mesa. Most drug transactions occurred during the time students were truant.

When Lynn's assignment was over, he debriefed school administrators and police managers, who agreed that truancy was an overwhelming problem. Lynn and his beat patrol partner, Scott Barnes, decided they would examine the problem of truancy in their patrol area and, with the permission of their sergeant, William Nemeck, devise a strategy to combat it.

Lynn and Barnes began a process of problem verification by speaking with more than

40 education administrators, justice system representatives, and social service providers. Each stakeholder verified the problem's severity, and some said it was even worse than it appeared because the linkage of funding to school attendance rates gave school administrators a disincentive to document the problem accurately.

Although juvenile service providers were concerned about the truancy problem, most felt overwhelmed by the volume of truancy cases and the difficulty of tracking down families whose addresses frequently changed. All of these service providers—the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), which reviews truancy cases; the Community Assessment Team; Child Protective Services; Juvenile Probation; the Juvenile District Attorney; and Juvenile Court—realized the significance of the problem, but their efforts to address it were not coordinated. Disciplinary responses to individual truants were not timely or consistent. As a result, truants did not expect repercussions for their behavior.

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

Guided by Sergeant Andrew Mills, Officers Lynn and Barnes examined juvenile crime statistics in Mid-City and found the following:

- 60 percent of the thefts, 43 percent of the burglaries, and 29 percent of the robberies in Mid-City in which juveniles were the suspects occurred during school hours.
- 59 percent of juvenile victimization (excluding child molestation) occurred during school hours.

Officers Lynn and Barnes also learned that biweekly juvenile truancy sweeps netted an average of 40 students—mostly high-school students—per sweep in the Mid-City police jurisdiction.

## Truants Survey

To gain an understanding of the nature of truancy and its link to juvenile crime in their jurisdiction, the officers conducted a survey of 25 juveniles who had been apprehended for truancy. The officers learned the following:

- 73 percent of the juveniles surveyed admitted to committing crimes other than truancy, such as using drugs (53 percent), buying drugs (33 percent), stealing from a store (33 percent), vandalizing property (33 percent), and committing robbery (27 percent) and burglary (27 percent).
- 87 percent said they had been victimized.
- 53 percent said they skipped school with friends, although 100 percent of survey respondents had been apprehended with friends.
- Motivations for skipping school included being tired, bored, too far behind, and disliking their teachers. None of the students surveyed said they skipped school because they feared other students at school.
- The most frequently cited times for skipping school were the beginning of the day, lunchtime, or the last period.
- 53 percent of the students said they hung out in their neighborhood, 33 percent went to stores, and 14 percent stayed on the school campus.
- 60 percent of the surveyed truants said tighter controls, including police enforcement and juvenile hall, would deter them from skipping school.
- Most of the truants said personal attention was an important element in resolving their barriers to attending school.

Officer Lynn's original interpretation of the problem was that truancy and drug sales and use were closely linked and that to reduce drug activity among students, it was necessary to reduce truancy. However, through their analysis, Lynn and Barnes discovered that the problem was much

broader and that truancy was a gateway both to criminal behavior and to victimization. Based on students' responses, the officers concluded that each child had a personal reason for skipping school, that many lacked clear direction and experienced negative influences that were steering them in the wrong direction, and that students knew they would not be held accountable for being truant. The officers developed a response strategy based on these findings.

## RESPONSE

With support from Sergeant Mills, Barnes and Lynn started a pilot program called the Juvenile Enforcement Team (JET) in six schools and devised the following short-term strategy to combat truancy:

- Establish strong working relationships with school attendance officers and administrators.
- Compile a list of the 65 most chronic truants and target these students for strict enforcement.
- Identify primary barriers to each child's attendance by meeting with the families of students who do not respond to initial enforcement efforts and assess whether there are problems that create barriers to school attendance. Where appropriate, facilitate access to social services to help the family address these problems.

The officers' long-term goals were to create a new process of holding students and their families accountable for attending school, use existing laws to enforce school attendance, and create a new law to tighten truancy enforcement. The officers also hoped to offer alternative, positive influences to students through a mentoring program.

### Building Relationships, Removing Barriers to Attendance

Barnes and Lynn, the two JET officers, met with attendance officers at each school. Most were receptive and cooperative. Barnes and Lynn arranged to call the schools each

day at 8:30 a.m. to learn which of the 65 most chronic students were absent. The officers followed up with as many of these students as possible. Strong communication and cooperation between school attendance personnel and the JET officers were critical. The most cooperative schools phoned officers immediately to let them know which students on the JET list were absent.

Before long, the officers learned which students might benefit from intervention and which probably would not. Each day, an hour before school started, officers visited an average of five students they felt needed special attention. In some cases, parents lacked sufficient control over their children to get them to school. Officers obtained written consent from some of these frustrated parents to come into the house to encourage these children out of bed.

Barnes and Lynn met with each of the 65 students and their families in their homes and administered a risk-factor questionnaire to assess possible barriers to each child's school attendance. They learned that many chronically truant children wanted to attend school but were not permitted to due to medical conditions such as lice. They also learned that some parents did not understand correspondence regarding their children's school absences and had difficulty accessing the services they needed to help get their children back in school. (In the six schools with which the JET officers worked, students live in a large immigrant community where 40 different languages are spoken.) Another significant barrier was lack of parental concern about students missing school. Whatever the barrier, the officers contacted the appropriate community resource and, when necessary, requested assistance from translators to address the problem.

In one case, a mother and her boyfriend were both parolees on the run who were addicted to rock cocaine. The mother had been arrested for prostitution, drug possession, and burglary. She abandoned her four

children, ages 3 through 12, for fear of police intervention and was roaming the streets. The children avoided the police out of fear and hid anytime an officer came to see why they weren't in school. Officers Lynn and Barnes finally forced entry into the home and found the children living in squalor, supervised by the 12-year-old. Officers tracked down the children's legal guardian, a grandmother in Utah, and received permission to send them to her. Officers networked with a nonprofit organization, which provided money for the children's airline fare to Utah.

Another case involved two brothers, the older of whom was chronically truant, a runaway, and a gang member. When the younger brother began following in his older brother's footsteps of truancy, Lynn and Barnes intervened. They learned that the younger brother had been sent home from school because he had lice. After the officers helped the child's parents access services to address the lice problem, the younger brother began attending school regularly. The older brother, however, did not respond to the officers and served jail time on a probation violation.

When the officers' initial efforts to remove a barrier failed to increase students' attendance, they sought the help of the Health and Human Services Department to enforce a newly enacted California law that requires welfare monies to be withheld from parents whose children are chronically truant. This typically motivated parents to address their problems and get their children back in school.

### Holding Hard-Core Truants Accountable

The JET officers singled out truly recalcitrant truants for enforcement actions. In these cases, officers were assigned to monitor and follow up with individual students. Officers visited these students' homes daily during their before-school rounds to check for compliance. If students complied for

a 1-month period, they were placed on a monitoring status. Noncompliant students were referred to SARB, the District Attorney's Office, or the Probation Department. For a variety of reasons, the JET officers had limited success with these noncompliant students.

### A New Municipal Code

The officers discovered a legal gap between the chronic truancy State statute and the municipal ordinance for daytime loitering. Daytime loiterers were cited to traffic court, while chronic truants were under the jurisdiction of SARB, whose backlog of cases was so large that it could take 6 months for the board to address a student's case. Once a student was referred to the board, he or she was unlikely to be subject to timely or serious disciplinary action: During the 1997 school year, of the 560 chronic truants referred to SARB, only 9 received a subpoena to appear in court. Officers Lynn and Barnes drafted a new municipal code to address this gap. The City Attorney is reviewing the draft.

### Mentoring Program

After the JET officers discovered that not all of the children's needs were being met, they worked with Bill Arnsperger, a retired NFL football coach, to establish a volunteer mentoring program. The program coordinates volunteers to work with children the officers identified as willing to improve, but needing special assistance and direction. Arnsperger modeled the program after the Washington, D.C., mentoring program described in the book, "Triumphs of Joseph."<sup>1</sup> At the time of this writing, it was too early to assess the success of the mentoring program in increasing school attendance.

### ASSESSMENT

Officers Lynn and Barnes have assessed the impact of their efforts on baseline juvenile crime, on the truancy rates of chronic offenders, and on individual students.

From August to December 1998, statistics indicate a 20-percent reduction in crime in Mid-City, with a 31-percent reduction in daytime crime. Citywide rates for those same crimes dropped an average of 6 percent.

School attendance data show that before the team began enforcing truancy violations, the average student on the target list was absent for 43 percent of the school days. This rate dropped to 18 percent in the school semester following increased enforcement. When the officers excluded offenders requiring court intervention, the rate for time absent for students on this list dropped to 11 percent of the school days.

Several children who were on the JET list now not only attend school, but also excel academically. Others are at least beginning to catch up to their peers. A few have required juvenile justice system intervention. Anecdotal evidence suggests the JET officers' enforcement and intervention worked. Mike George, Dean of Students at Monroe Clark Middle School, says, "I wish I had a hundred of these officers. This program works."<sup>2</sup>

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the San Diego Police Department's efforts to reduce truancy, contact Captain John Madigan and Sergeant Andrew Mills of the San Diego Police Department's Mid-City Division, 4310 Landis Street, San Diego, CA 92105; phone: 619-516-3000; fax: 619-516-3058.

## NOTES

1. Woodson, Robert. *The Triumphs of Joseph*, New York: Free Press, 1997.
2. Officers Lynn and Barnes returned to their original beat in January 1999. The program is now managed by officers involved in the department's Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) efforts. At the time of this writing, it was too early to assess whether the program is having the same impact as it had under the JET officers.

# INTERSECTING SOLUTIONS

## RESTORING ORDER TO AN URBAN INTERSECTION

VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT,  
GRANDVIEW WOODLAND COMMUNITY POLICING CENTRE

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- THE PROBLEM:** Public drunkenness, panhandlers, “squeegee people,” litter, and graffiti in an urban intersection caused a steep decline in the quality of life.
- ANALYSIS:** A community survey showed increasing dissatisfaction with neighborhood problems. Students from Simon Fraser University examined the neighborhood’s environmental design and identified structures and foliage that were facilitating disorderly behavior. An analysis of 911 calls showed that patrol officers were frequently called to one intersection to deal with aggressive panhandlers, squeegee activity, and public drunkenness.
- RESPONSE:** Police implemented the Intersection Project, a community-policing initiative that focused on community partnerships, consistent police enforcement, and improved environmental design.
- ASSESSMENT:** Calls to 911 and to the Grandview Woodland Community Policing Centre (GWPC) declined as the need for emergency services to the area lessened. Graffiti and litter have been removed, and the quality of life has improved.

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## SCANNING

The intersection at 1st Avenue and Commercial Drive in Vancouver’s Grandview Woodland community was a focal point of complaints to Vancouver’s 911 system. The area was plagued by aggressive panhandlers, people who solicited money to wash car windows at traffic lights (known by the community as “squeegee people”), and habitually intoxicated people who lived on the streets. Littered streets and graffiti-covered public property contributed to a depressed environment, and structures in the area facilitated nuisance activity.

The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) partnered with the Grandview Woodland

Community Policing Centre (GWPC) to resolve problems in the community. VPD Constable Jean Prince is assigned to this unique, community-managed office, which responds to the problems reported by citizens. (See “The GWPC.”)

Reports to the GWPC indicated that a variety of disorder issues at the central intersection of 1st Avenue and Commercial Drive were causing a decline in the quality of life for residents and neighboring businesses and their employees. Citizens were afraid to use bank machines, to shop in the area, and to walk or drive through the intersection. Business owners complained of

reduced business, and employees were concerned about their safety when arriving to or leaving from work.

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

Preliminary attempts to identify specific problems at the intersection of 1st Avenue and Commercial Drive, begun in the summer of 1997, included:

- A community survey.
- Dissemination of GWPCPC posters for business owners to display.
- An analysis of 911 calls and GWPCPC calls-for-service.
- An assessment of the environmental design of the neighborhood.

During the summer of 1997, GWPCPC conducted an extensive survey to determine the limits of citizens' tolerance for nuisance behaviors and to examine community standards for maintaining property in the area. Researchers tried to include in the survey all members of the community, including car window washers, or "squeegee people," panhandlers, intoxicated people, local business owners, employees, residents, and visitors. Interviewers found that, although respondents generally tolerated the "street people," the cumulative effect of the disorderly behavior, the litter, and the graffiti was becoming unacceptable.

In September 1997, GWPCPC conducted a public awareness campaign by disseminating posters to area businesses for display in their windows. The posters, which listed Constable Prince as a contact and the Centre's phone number, elevated visibility and public use of GWPCPC. This project resulted in a 150-percent increase in the number of citizen calls to GWPCPC. The poster project was inspired by a similar

## The GWPCPC

The Grandview Woodland Community Policing Centre (GWPCPC) is unique in that the impetus for opening the office came directly from the community. A group of residents perceived the need for this type of police service and approached the police department with an implementation plan. Community members have entered into an equal partnership with the police department, and this active collaboration is implicit in every project GWPCPC undertakes.

In 1995, GWPCPC opened in Vancouver's Grandview Woodland neighborhood in direct response to the community's request to partner with VPD. The Centre is housed inside the neighborhood's Britannia Community Centre.

GWPCPC acts as a resource for both the community and the police department. Its board of directors consists of local residents, business owners, and people who work in the area. GWPCPC receives funding from the city of Vancouver and the British Columbia Attorney General's Office. VPD assigns a constable, provides two phone lines, and a computer linkup to the VPD systems. The Britannia Community Centre provides free space.

A paid civilian coordinator staffs the office and manages a variety of programs. A constable assigned to GWPCPC acts as liaison between VPD and the community. The constable's primary function is to collaborate with various community and government agencies and with the GWPCPC's board and staff to develop and implement problem-oriented projects targeting issues or concerns identified by the community.

GWPCPC identifies community problems through reports from concerned citizens. Most complaints involve ongoing, repetitive problems that cannot be solved through arrests only. In response to citizen reports, GWPCPC gathers information, proposes a comprehensive solution, reviews and implements the solution, and assesses the results. This process has resulted in many successful projects.

project developed by the New York City Police Department.

An analysis of 911 calls showed that patrol officers frequently were called to one intersection to deal with aggressive panhandlers, squeegee activity, and public drunkenness. In fact, 18 of 32 calls concerned those three specific problems in May 1998, before the Intersection Project was implemented.

During the summer and fall semesters of 1997, 20 Simon Fraser University (SFU) criminology students, under the supervision of Professor Patricia Brantingham, examined how the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) could be implemented in the area.<sup>1</sup> The students identified various structures and foliage that facilitated criminal activities. The students' observations were particularly valuable to GWPCPC because only two of them lived in the neighborhood. The students' perspective was, therefore, considered more objective than that of residents, many of whom had become desensitized to neighborhood conditions. The students brought to light the cumulative effects of the disorderly behavior, combined with the graffiti and litter, on the area.

### Territorial Conflict

By spring 1998, a territorial conflict began to develop between the people who lived on the street and the business owners, employees, motorists, and visitors who used the intersection. An increase in the number of people who lived on the street and worked the intersection resulted in:

- A proliferation of territorial graffiti.
- Growing occupation of public property, such as public benches, by inebriated people.
- Claims to street space by squeegee people and aggressive panhandlers.
- An increase in litter, including used syringes.

Other areas of the community began complaining about the spillover effects from problems at the 1st Avenue and Commercial Drive intersection. People were sleeping in building alcoves within a one-block radius and urinating and defecating in the back alley staircases of surrounding buildings. Squeegee people populated Grandview Park, located four blocks away, and were drinking, sleeping, making excessive noise at night, and visibly using drugs in the park.

Tension between the street group and local residents intensified, as did the volume of calls to GWPCPC. The community was beginning to lose confidence in the police, whom they perceived as not addressing the problems at the intersection.

### RESPONSE

Together, GWPCPC staff member Valerie Spicer (who has since become a VPD constable), volunteers (including SFU students, local residents, and business owners), area VPD patrol officers, and staff from community agencies and the Neighborhood Integrated Services Team (NIST) cooperated to examine area problems from a variety of angles.<sup>2</sup> By the early summer of 1998, the community, NIST, and GWPCPC had mobilized and committed itself to:

- Restore a better quality of life to the area.
- Increase public confidence in the police.
- Reduce calls to 911 and GWPCPC.
- Reduce criminal activity.
- Eliminate repercussions for other areas of the neighborhood.
- Encourage community pride and ownership.

### Stepped-Up Enforcement

Constable Prince developed a list of repeat squeegee offenders and a list of Motor Vehicle Act and city bylaw charging sections, which were distributed to patrol officers. Aggressive panhandlers were asked to move on, and criminal code charges were made when appropriate. Public drunkenness was no longer tolerated, and offenders were taken to a detoxification center.

Patrol officers, who often only responded to 911 calls, were asked to respond to problem behavior whenever they saw it, preventing the common perception among people who lived on the street that officers who drove by them were condoning their behavior.

Area gas station owners, from whom squeegee people stole windshield-washing

equipment, engraved their windshield squeegees so that people who were discovered with them could be charged with stealing. Constable Prince developed a Squeegee Impact Statement that was submitted with reports to Crown Counsel, the prosecutor. This outlined the costs incurred by the gas stations and the effects on the community. The impact statement resulted in a 7-day jail sentence for people found in possession of a stolen squeegee. This type of sentence usually is resolved through probation or community service hours.

## The Community Modifies the Environment

The community began modifying the environment to help control area problems. SFU students established that a bench on the northeast side of 1st Avenue and Commercial Drive was the site of disputes between various groups of drinkers. Intoxicated people almost always occupied the bench, which was adjacent to a bank machine, and patrol officers frequently were dispatched to the site. Drinkers and squeegee people used newspaper boxes behind the bench to hide their bottles and squeegees. Panhandlers also used this spot as a resting place.

In response, GWPC and NIST had the bench removed and the newspaper boxes relocated to the edge of the curb. Public drunkenness calls decreased from 24 in 4 months in 1997 to 5 in the same 4-month period of 1998.

The Royal Bank altered alcoves that provided shelter to panhandlers on the southwest corner of the intersection. By installing a slanted structure in the alcoves, the bank made it impossible for panhandlers to sit down. By installing a glass window, the bank eliminated a hiding place on a ledge near the entrance of the bank where squeegee people hid squeegees. Finally, the bank removed a large bush and paved the

## Enabling Problem-Oriented Policing

Constable Jean Prince, the Vancouver Police Department liaison officer assigned to GWPC, undertook the intersection cleanup initiative. At the time of the project, Valerie Spicer was the paid civilian staff member of GWPC. VPD has since hired Spicer as a constable.

GWPC contributed a significant number of resources to this project, including:

- 63 staff hours and 350 volunteer hours in 1997 and 1998 for the poster project.
- \$850 in printed and display materials.
- 15 staff hours and 15 volunteer hours during 1997 and 1998 for mural painting. Paint and antigraffiti coating were donated.

area to eliminate another spot people used for cover when police drove by. The manager of the Royal Bank informed the police that when the bank removed the bush, workers found 60 discarded needles.

Vancity Credit Union, located on the northwest corner of the intersection, gated an alcove closest to the corner and its ATM machine. Prior to installation of the gate, two to five squeegee people at any given time could be found hiding in this alcove while they waited for the next red light, and intoxicated people and panhandlers used the alcove as a shelter from the rain.

## Area Beautification

The final component of the Intersection Project was beautification. The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, which shared the intersection with Vancity Credit Union and Royal Bank, became actively involved, hiring a company to remove graffiti within 24 hours of its application. Vancity already had a graffiti removal program, where its maintenance staff removed graffiti immediately and regularly cleaned the area around its exterior.

The Royal Bank, however, did not have a consistent policy to deal with graffiti and was approached by GWPC. Following a

# Police Time Costs Determined from 911 Calls

Figure 1: 1997 and 1998 Calls-for-Service Comparison

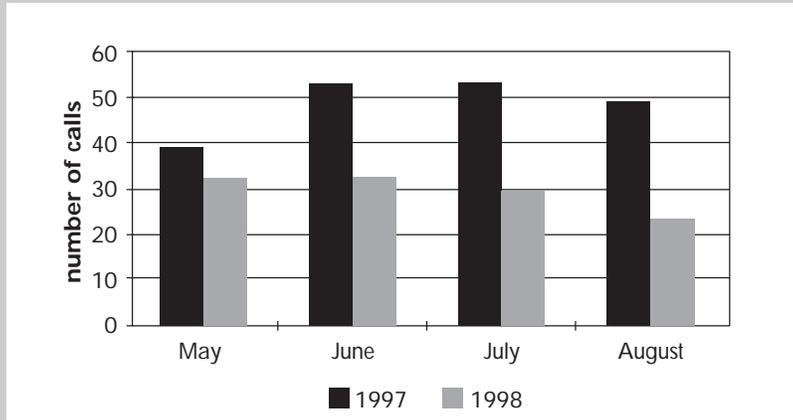
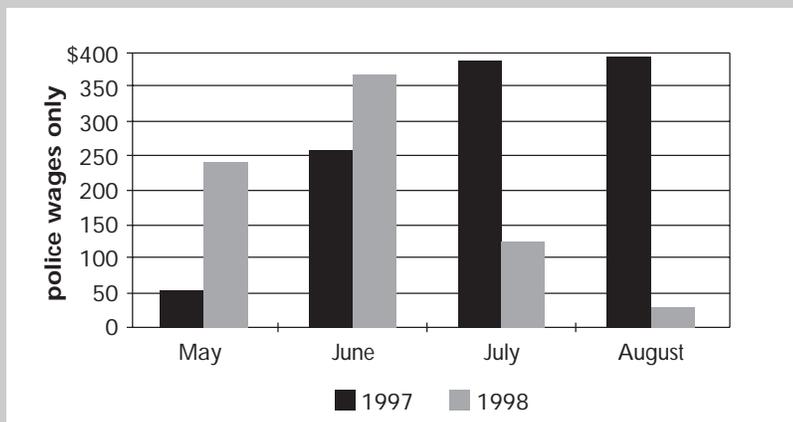


Figure 2: 1997 and 1998 Cost Comparison



collaborative effort involving the GWPCPC coordinator, the assigned constable, and volunteers, the Royal Bank instituted a graffiti removal program. GWPCPC had a 'Welcome to Commercial Drive' mural painted on the retaining wall and coated it with an antigraffiti coating donated by Goodbye Graffiti. This mural has since only been "tagged" three times by graffiti, which the bank quickly cleaned.

GWPCPC also approached the owner of a building on the southeast corner with a mural proposal. Community volunteers painted the mural using a local artist's original design and covered it with antigraffiti

coating. The mural, which is maintained by a GWPCPC volunteer, has only been tagged three times in 1 year, and each tag was quickly removed. Both murals were inspired by the community survey, which indicated that respondents felt murals would improve Commercial Drive's ambience.

Finally, GWPCPC, through NIST, approached city hall to obtain more garbage receptacles and more frequent litter removal.

## ASSESSMENT

To determine whether the Intersection Project has been successful, GWPCPC has analyzed the 911 call load and police resource costs, visually assessed the environment, and monitored the types of calls it receives about the intersection.

### 911 Call Analysis

The 911 call-load analysis showed that the three primary problem behaviors—public drunkenness, squeegee activity, and aggressive panhandling—dramatically decreased after the project was initiated (see figure 1).

During May 1998, 18 of 32 calls were for these three behaviors, compared to 4 of 22 in August 1998, representing a 38-percent drop. A 54-percent reduction occurred during the months of June to August 1997 when compared with the same months in 1998—calls during those time periods for these behaviors dropped from 153 to 83.

### Police Resources

The GWPCPC constable and coordinator estimated the costs of police time spent addressing problems at the intersection based on analysis of 911 calls. These costs

are based only on police wages and do not include other associated costs, such as equipment, dispatching, ambulance services, volunteer detoxification transportation, or the costs to businesses and individual citizens. The cost analysis indicates that an initial investment of time during June 1998, when the project was first implemented, resulted in a significant cost reduction (see figure 2).

GWPCPC anticipates that the call analysis for May to August 1999 also will show the project's success. The initial time investment during June 1998 will not have to be repeated. GWPCPC anticipates minimal enforcement for these behaviors during the summer of 1999. A new sense of community ownership of the intersection has been created and the environment is no longer conducive to nuisance behavior.

### Visual Assessment and Calls to GWPCPC

Regular patrols by Constable Prince allow visual assessment and monitoring of the intersection. Calls to GWPCPC corroborate the constable's observations. Since implementing the project, GWPCPC has not received any calls complaining about the intersection. In a conversation with Constable Prince, a squeegee person stated that he no longer feels comfortable "squeegeeing" at 1st Avenue and Commercial Drive.

Territorial behavior by squeegee people in Grandview Park was addressed through a separate project focusing on problems specific to the park. The problem of people sleeping in building alcoves within a one-block radius of the intersection also was addressed through a collaborative effort of GWPCPC, the community, and city enforcement agencies. The goal is to help neighboring buildings make CPTED improvements that will reduce problematic behaviors.

### Success Elements

Active enforcement and community involvement have been the keys to success for this project. If the "broken windows" theory of neighborhood decline is correct, this intersection and the surrounding area, left unattended, would have deteriorated even further.<sup>3</sup> Instead, business owners and community members have taken ownership, continuing to maintain the intersection and to carry out antigraffiti programs. Overall, service calls to 911 about the intersection have declined significantly, community fear has been reduced, and confidence in the police has been restored.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Vancouver Police Department's activities, contact Constables Jean Prince and Valerie Spicer at 312 Main Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 2T2, Canada; phone: 604-717-3349, extension 1676 for Cst. Prince or extension 1905 for Cst. Spicer; e-mail: [jean\\_prince@city.vancouver.bc.ca](mailto:jean_prince@city.vancouver.bc.ca) or [valerie\\_spicer@city.vancouver.bc.ca](mailto:valerie_spicer@city.vancouver.bc.ca).

### NOTES

1. The basic principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) include target hardening (controlling access to neighborhoods and buildings and conducting surveillance on specific areas to reduce opportunities for crime to occur) and territorial reinforcement (increasing the sense of security in settings where people live and work through activities that encourage informal control of the environment). CPTED directly supports community policing because of its emphasis on the systematic analysis of crime in a particular location and on crime prevention strategies tailored to solve specific problems. Wherever the principles of CPTED are applied to the design and management of the physical environment of buildings, residential neighbor-

hoods, and business areas, public safety is increased and the fear of crime is reduced.

2. Every neighborhood in Vancouver has a NIST, which is a group of city enforcement agencies (fire, police, permits and licenses, social services, environmental health, and Parks Board) that meets monthly to discuss and work on community problems.

3. Kelling, George L., and Catherine M. Coles, *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities*, New York: Free Press, 1996.

# APPENDIXES

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## APPENDIX A: SITE CONTACTS

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## APPENDIX B: JUDGES

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## APPENDIX C: RESOURCES

In recent years, numerous books and reports have become available about problem solving and community policing. Many are available from the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and from the U.S. Department of Justice through its National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Listed below are selected materials available from PERF and NCJRS.

■ **Visit PERF** at <http://www.policeforum.org>, 1120 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 930, Washington, DC 20036, 202-466-7820. PERF documents can be ordered online.

■ **Visit NCJRS** at <http://www.ncjrs.org>, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000, 1-800-851-3420.

■ **Visit NIJ** at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>, 810 7th Street NW., Washington, DC 20531, 202-307-2942.

■ **Visit the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)** at <http://www.usdoj.gov/cops>, 1100 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20531, 202-514-2058.

### Publications Available From PERF

*Citizen Involvement: How Community Factors Affect Progressive Policy*, Correia, Mark, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 124 pages, 2000 (Product Number 842).

*Crime Mapping Case Studies: Successes in the Field (Volume 1)*, LaVigne, Nancy, and Julie Wartell, eds., Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 144 pages, 1998 (Product Number 834) (NCJ 178051).

*Crime Mapping Case Studies: Successes in the Field (Volume 2)*, LaVigne, Nancy, and Julie Wartell, eds., Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 140 pages, 2000 (Product Number 841).

*Crime in the Schools: Reducing Fear and Disorder With Student Problem Solving*, Kenney, Dennis J., and T. Steuart Watson, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 236 pages, 1998 (Product Number 830) (NCJ 174193).

*Dispute Resolution and Policing: A Collaborative Approach Toward Effective Problem Solving*, Glensor, Ron, and Alissa Stern, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 16 pages, 1995 (Product Number 007) (NCJ 155237).

*How to Recognize Good Policing: Problems and Issues*, Brodeur, Jean-Paul, ed., Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 272 pages, 1998 (Product Number 833).

*Information Management and Crime Analysis: Practitioners' Recipes for Success*, Reuland, Melissa Miller, ed., Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 152 pages, 1997 (Product Number 819) (NCJ 165619).

*Managing Innovation in Policing: The Untapped Potential of the Middle Manager*, Geller, William A., and Guy Swanger, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 204 pages, 1995 (Product Number 803) (NCJ 158518).

*Problem-Oriented Policing*, Goldstein, Herman, New York: McGraw-Hill, 180 pages, 1990 (Product Number 181) (NCJ 122899).

*Problem-Oriented Policing: Crime-Specific Problems, Critical Issues and Making POP Work, Volume 1*, Shelley, Tara O'Conner, and Anne C. Grant, eds., Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 442 pages, 1998 (Product Number 831) (NCJ 176142).

*Problem-Oriented Policing: Crime-Specific Problems, Critical Issues and Making POP Work, Volume 2*, Brito, Corina Solé, and Tracy Allan, eds., Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 412 pages, 1999 (Product Number 840).

*Problem Solving: Problem-Oriented Policing in Newport News*, Eck, John E., William Spelman et al., Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 150 pages, 1987 (Product Number 085) (NCJ 111964).

*Themes and Variations in Community Policing: Case Studies in Community Policing*, Police Executive Research Forum, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 92 pages, 1996 (Product Number 809) (NCJ 161284).

*Using Research: A Primer for Law Enforcement Managers*, Eck, John E., and Nancy LaVigne, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 180 pages, 1994 (Product Number 045) (NCJ 155291).

*Why Police Organizations Change: A Study of Community-Oriented Policing*, Zhao, Jihong, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 140 pages, 1996 (Product Number 811) (NCJ 161231).

#### **Publications Available From NCJRS**

*Addressing Community Gang Problems: A Model for Problem Solving*, Police Executive Research Forum, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 53 pages, 1997 (NCJ 156059).

*Broken Windows and Police Discretion*, Kelling, George L., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 62 pages, 1999 (NCJ 178259).

*Community Policing, Community Justice, and Restorative Justice: Exploring the Links for the Delivery of a Balanced Approach to Public Safety*, Nicholl, Caroline G., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 216 pages, 2000 (NCJ 181245).

*Crime Prevention and Community Policing: A Vital Partnership*, Monograph, National Crime Prevention Council, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 27 pages, September 1997 (NCJ 166819).

*Looking at Crime From the Street Level: Plenary Papers of the 1999 Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation; Enhancing Policy and Practice Through Research, Volume 1*, Venkatesh, Sudhir, Richard Curtis, and Charles H. Ramsey, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 36 pages, November 1999 (NCJ 178260).

*Mapping Crime: Principle and Practice Research Report*, Harries, Keith, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 206 pages, December 1999 (NCJ 178919).

*Measuring What Matters, Part One: Measures of Crime, Fear, and Disorder*, Brady, T.V., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 16 pages, December 1996 (NCJ 162205).

*Measuring What Matters, Part Two: Developing Measures of What the Police Do*, Brady, T.V., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 16 pages, 1997 (NCJ 167255).

*One Hundred Promising Crime Prevention Programs From Across the World*, Gauthier, Lily-Ann, David Hicks, Daniel Sansfacon, and Leanne Salel, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 167 pages, 1999 (NCJ 179025).

*Problem-Oriented Policing in Public Housing: Final Report of the Jersey City Project*, Mazerolle, Lorraine G., Justin Ready, Bill Terrill, and Frank Gajewski, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 83 pages, 1998 (NCJ 179985).

*Tackling Crime and Other Public-Safety Problems: Case Studies in Problem-Solving*, Sampson, Rana, and Michael S. Scott, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 187 pages, 2000 (NCJ 181243).

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