MAKING CITIES SAFER:
ACTION BRIEFS FOR MUNICIPAL STAKEHOLDERS

Number 3 • March 2009

SERIES 1: INVEST SMARTLY IN SAFETY FOR THE CITY

SERIES 2: TACKLE SAFETY SUCCESSFULLY IN THE CITY

THE CHALLENGE

Crime can be reduced and communities made safer by thinking differently — acting smartly with taxpayers' money. Two out of three Canadians favour investments in education and jobs over police, judges and prisoners as the way to lower crime.

On average each year in Canada, for a city of 100,000 population:
- 6,000 adults are assaulted, 1,600 persons are sexually assaulted, and 1,800 thefts occur from or of cars;
- The loss, injury and trauma is equivalent to $150 million;
- Police services will cost $30 million out of local taxes and correctional services will cost $9 million out of federal and provincial taxes.

HARNESSING KNOWLEDGE TO PREVENT CRIME

In 2008, the Big Cities Mayors Caucus of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) called on the Government of Canada to match — dollar for dollar — increased funding for law enforcement with sustained investment in targeted services that prevent crime.

The Action Briefs recommend that a city of 100,000 citizens invest $100,000 a year to guide and mobilize more effective actions to reduce crime and victimization — some cities are already investing more and so enjoying significantly more benefits in terms of community safety.

Institute for the Prevention of Crime
www.ipc.uOttawa.ca

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KEY SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION

Cities looking for assistance to *invest more smartly* and *tackle safety more successfully* can turn to the following cities, government and non-government centres of expertise, and publications. They can also turn to the authors of the Action Briefs (see acknowledgements). Details on ways to access these sources and footnotes for the Action Briefs will be posted on the Institute for the Prevention of Crime's (IPC) website at **www.ipc.uOttawa.ca**

MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL NETWORK

The community safety officials from 14 municipalities in Canada who have collaborated with IPC and now form the Municipal Network are available to share their successes and experience.

Saskatoon SK
Calgary AB
Regina SK
Quebec City QC
Ottawa ON
Winnipeg MB
Toronto ON
Edmonton AB
Halifax NS
St. John NB
Surrey BC
Vancouver BC
Waterloo Region ON
Montreal QC

SELECTED GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT CENTRES OF CRIME PREVENTION EXPERTISE IN CANADA

NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION CENTRE CANADA provides national leadership and funds multi-year programs that support effective and cost-efficient ways to prevent and so reduce crime by addressing known risk-factors in high-risk populations and places.

SAFE COMMUNITIES SECRETARIAT ALBERTA orchestrates collaboration between nine social development and enforcement ministries to reduce crime by developing and funding a major three-pronged strategy of prevention, treatment and enforcement based on evidence about what works.

MINISTÈRE DE LA SÉCURITÉ PUBLIQUE QUÉBEC adopted the first provincial policy on crime prevention in Canada in 2001. This reduces crime through inter-ministerial collaboration, municipal partnerships and planning, research and training, and so on.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRIME provides for international exchange of knowledge and experience between governments and organizations about what works to improve policies and programs that reduce crime and enhance community safety.

INSTITUTE FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRIME develops and brings together scientific knowledge and experience from authoritative sources. It partners with governments and organizations to harness knowledge so that Canadians will enjoy lower rates of crime and victimization.

PUBLICATIONS - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Federation of Canadian Municipalities - National Action to Prevent Crime and Enhance Community Safety (2008) / Policy Statement on Community and Crime Prevention (2008)

United Nations Economic and Social Council – Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime 11th Commission on the Prevention of Crime and Criminal Justice (2002)

World Health Organization – Preventing violence: A guide to implementing the recommendations of the World report on violence and health (2002)
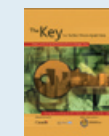
PUBLICATIONS - TOOLKITS

European Forum for Urban Safety – Guidance on Local Safety Audits: A Compendium of International Practice (2007)

Federation of Canadian Municipalities – Primer on Municipal Crime Prevention (2000)

Fondation Docteur Philippe-Pinel and International Centre for the Prevention of Crime – The Key to Safer Municipalities (2004)

PUBLICATIONS – HARNESSING THE PROMISE OF PREVENTION

Institute for the Prevention of Crime – Making Cities Safer: International Strategies and Practices (2007) / Making Cities Safer: Canadian Strategies and Practices (2008)

Institute for the Prevention of Crime – Building a Safer Canada: First Report of the National Working Group on Crime Prevention (2007) / IPC Review Issues 1, 2, 3 (2007-2009)
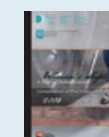
International Centre for the Prevention of Crime – International Compendium of Crime Prevention Practices (2008) / Public Nuisances Related to Drugs and Prostitution: A Practical Guide for Local Action (2007) / Women's Safety: A Shared Global Concern Compendium of Practices and Policies (2008)

Irvin Waller – Less Law, More Order: The Truth about Reducing Crime (2006)

WHY INVEST*

Strategic Overview

Municipalities, who make the shift to invest in sound planning of prevention to tackle crime before it happens, will reduce crime by better allocating their own funds and leveraging funding from other orders of government, the private sector and foundations.

They are the order of government best positioned to orchestrate collaboration between municipal services, local agencies and the public to tackle the places and situations that lead to crime.

Canadian task forces and evidence confirm the ¨promise of prevention¨ — investments in tackling the causes of crime before it happens are effective and cost efficient. Two out of three Canadians agree that investments in education and jobs over police, judges and prisoners are the way to lower crime.

Though most Canadians feel safe in cities, crime and disorder impact negatively on the quality of life of taxpayers. They influence citizens´ decisions to stay in the city and use public space. They influence real estate values and business success. They put pressure to increase police budgets further.

For an average municipality of 100,000 population, the estimated annual costs of crime to victims and the public exceeds $150 million. The costs to taxpayers for policing exceed $30 million from municipal taxes and are growing. Citizens also pay $9 million for corrections from federal and provincial taxes.

So municipalities have much to gain from investing in more effective crime prevention.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Encourage the leadership of Mayors and city councillors to spearhead action to invest in more effective prevention of crime before it happens;

2. Find at least one dollar per citizen to plan how to ¨*invest smartly in safety for the city*¨ and so be able to allocate and leverage additional funds to ¨*tackle safety successfully in the city*¨;

3. Use these Action Briefs and their resources to guide the development of policy and programs that will mobilize key stakeholders and so harness Canadian and international experience and evidence to prevent crime.

* Prepared by Irvin Waller, Institute for the Prevention of Crime

Justification

Crime will be reduced and communities made safer if municipalities, local agencies and citizens act differently to tackle crime before it happens — invest in more pre-crime prevention.

Municipalities that find at least one dollar per person to plan how to ¨*invest smartly in safety for the city*¨ will be able to allocate and leverage additional funds to ¨*tackle safety successfully in the city*¨ and so get better results in reducing crime effectively and cost efficiently.

Good planning means sound sustained investments, some of which may be allocated or leveraged from other orders of government, the private sector and foundations. This will get a better balance between pre-crime prevention and reactive policing and criminal justice. This means fewer crimes, less pressure on municipal taxes for more police, and better quality of life for citizens.

The Canadian public agrees that prevention is better than cure. Two out of three Canadians favour investments in education and jobs over police, judges and prisoners as the way to lower crime.

The Challenge

Most Canadians feel safe in their neighbourhoods but municipalities face a range of crime and disorder problems which undermine the quality of life of their taxpayers and citizens as well as the use of public space and the success of businesses and real estate.

Reports from Statistics Canada show one in four adults to be a victim of a common crime in a year of which 40% are victimized more than once. Statistics Canada showed two out of five school age children had been assaulted in a year — a study in Toronto which likely would be similar or worse in other cities.

These problems affect women differently from men. They are more acute in some areas of cities than others. While the young may be often the victims, the elderly may experience more fear.

For an average municipality of 100,000, the national statistics are equivalent to 6,000 assaults on adults, 1,600 sexual assaults, and 1,800 thefts from or of cars. For that municipality, the costs to victims and the public for common crimes are estimated at $150 million.

In response, citizens are paying $30 million for policing services, and rising, out of local taxes and $9 million for corrections out of federal and provincial taxes. The cost of an additional police officer is estimated at $100,000 and an average prison inmate at $80,000. The amount for community development is significant but not enough is targeted to where it would make a difference.

It does not need to be this way.

Harnessing the Promise of Prevention

Canadian parliamentary committees and task forces as well as reports from international organizations such as the UN and the World Health Organization confirm the promise of prevention — violence and property crime is preventable. Many of the pre-crime interventions are effective within a year or so of their implementation and they are more cost efficient than adding more police, lawyers and prisoners.

A stitch in time saves nine. Studies by the Rand Corporation confirm that a dollar invested now in parent training or stopping youth dropping out of school avoids $7 for increased incarceration. A dollar for enriched child care saves $17 in criminal justice costs.

Over time the costs of investing in pre-crime prevention generate dividends for Canadians who will live better lives. Taxpayers will save notional costs many times over by reducing the need for policing, lawyers and corrections to respond to these crimes.

The Municipal Network

Municipalities are the order of government most able to collaborate with local agencies and neighbourhoods to identify the needs for service and so tackle the multiple causes of crime in their areas most in need. Most countries in Western Europe have realized this — Belgium for instance provides municipalities with $5 per citizen for community safety planning and action.

In 2006, the Institute for the Prevention of Crime (IPC) with financial support from the National Crime Prevention Centre invited the Mayors of 14 municipalities to delegate an official responsible for community safety to join the Municipal Network for Crime Prevention.

For the Network and other municipalities, IPC reviewed the most recent evidence and experience in Europe and North America in *Making Cities Safer: International Strategies and Practices (2007)*.

Then IPC examined the current state of crime prevention in the 14 municipalities and contrasted developments with the leading international developments. In *Making Cities Safer: Canadian Strategies and Practices (2008)*, the Municipal Network called for a stronger role of municipalities in prevention through leadership, more sustained partnerships, and a focus on what works and how to deliver it.

But change needs vision, leadership and knowledge of what actions to take.

Action Briefs for Municipal Stakeholders

The IPC has now developed Action Briefs on effective steps to increase pre-crime prevention in consultation with the 14 municipalities. They provide a snapshot of knowledge and experience for municipal stakeholders, such as Mayors, councillors, police chiefs, and chief administrative officers of cities or school boards.

The Action Briefs show how investment in prevention will get results and cost efficiently — less gang related homicides, less street violence, less violence against women, less violence against Aboriginal peoples and so on.

They are organized around a Series 1: *Invest Smartly in Safety for the City,* which focuses on choosing the right investment, planning and so on. Series 2: *Tackling Safety Successfully in the City* focuses on solving problems common to municipalities, such as street violence, violence against women and property crime.

Series I – Invest Smartly in Safety for the City

1.2 Invest Smartly shows how to use knowledge and experience to target what works and avoid what does not work. It calls for matching increases in expenditures on enforcement with increases in effective and sustained pre-crime prevention. It talks to ways to guide and leverage funding from other orders of government, the private sector and foundations.

1.3 Take Responsibility demonstrates why and how to create or strengthen a responsibility centre — a small secretariat — to develop and foster collaboration between the municipality, school boards, the police service and non-governmental organizations. This can reap dividends in focused pre-crime prevention, including through tri-partite arrangements with other orders of government.

1.4. Plan Strategically shows key steps in developing a strategic plan to identify where current resources and new investments would decrease crime and enhance community safety and where populations, places and neighbourhoods within the municipality have special needs. It provides a basis for priorities, implementation and evaluation.

1.5 Engage the Public discusses how to engage the public in taking actions to reduce crime and enhance community safety as well as identify and enlist existing community groups that can help with crime prevention and solve their neighbourhood's problems. It shows how public engagement can enrich and sustain effective crime prevention actions.

Series 2 – Tackle Safety Successfully in the City

Investing smartly, taking responsibility, planning strategically and engaging the public are essential pillars for effective and cost efficient crime reduction strategies. These must guide and leverage funding for actions that will tackle safety successfully in cities.

2.1 Safe Streets discusses effective ways to reduce youth and young adult violence, including violence around gangs. It highlights successful violence reduction in cities in Canada and abroad. It shows specific ways for municipalities to make streets safer.

2.2 Women's Safety is often overlooked in cities. Municipal action in Canada and abroad has reduced physical and sexual violence against women as well as helped women of all ages feel safer. Municipal stakeholders must make investment decisions for safety that are more sensitive to women.

2.3 Aboriginal Peoples' Safety is a daunting challenge because of the intergenerational and acute nature of the risk factors that lead to violence. These problems cannot be solved by more police and imprisonment. The solutions lie in comprehensive actions identified in the other Action Briefs and engagement of Aboriginal leaders in using promising strategies.

2.4 Property Safety shows effective ways to reduce property crime such as theft from and of automobiles, break and enter and so on. It uses the inspiring example of the auto theft reduction in the province of Manitoba. Cooperative planning using urban design, transportation policy, policing strategy and engaging practitioners are proven ways to succeed.

2.5 Policing for Safety encourages municipalities to use their current police resources more efficiently and effectively to reduce crime. Greater use should be made of best policing practices, identified internationally, including using crime analysis to guide strategies and partnering with social, school and other agencies.

INVEST SMARTLY*

Strategic Overview

Investing taxpayers´ funds in effective crime prevention is smart if it reduces crime by using more of what works and less of what does not.

Municipalities can use the evidence and local planning for prevention to counter balance the costs of reacting to crime after it happens. The issue is how to use the evidence about what works.

There are Canadian municipalities and other stakeholders who have experience in putting what works into practice. They have identified where gaps exist in programs for populations and places known by municipal stakeholders to be criminogenic. They have engaged the public.

So municipalities can harness more of the evidence and experience on what works to get effective and cost efficient crime reduction in several different ways:

- Building on municipal expertise and innovation in policing and in community development and social inclusion;

- Learning from other municipalities from coast to coast who are establishing city wide strategies to tackle crime problems;

- Using the expertise of two unique centres in Canada who bring together evidence on what works and knowledge on how to put it into action;

- Getting support from Federal and Provincial governments who are investing in crime prevention and community safety strategies.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Make decisions on expenditures guided by knowledge of what is — or is not — effective and cost efficient in reducing crime as well as local priorities and plans (see Action Briefs on *Take Responsibility, Plan Strategically* and *Engage the Public*);

2. Follow the 2008 resolution of the Big Cities Mayor Caucus (of FCM) to match increases in spending for policing with increases in sustained investments in effective crime prevention planning and action;

3. Develop key policy makers and practitioners in the city through conferences, coaching and training so that they are knowledgeable on what works and how to harness it — and benefit from the experience of other municipalities, experts and toolkits;

4. Work with all orders of government to recognize the key role of municipalities in pre-crime prevention and establish tripartite arrangements.

Justification

The major challenge is to how to use scarce resources so that crime is reduced beyond what is determined by socio-economic trends and policies. It is a question of balance between pre-crime prevention and post crime reaction. It must be based on evidence as to what works to get effective and cost-efficient crime reduction

Municipal leaders and some members of the general public confuse crime prevention with policing. Keeping crime rates low requires a balanced approach between housing, youth agencies, schools, police and others to tackle known risk factors — often in a concerted way. It is much more than just enforcement. It is much more than broad social policy over which municipalities have little control.

Mayors and city councillors must provide leadership to make the shift to use scarce municipal resources more smartly so that the expenditures reduce crime before it happens — balancing increases in expenditures on pre-crime prevention and on post-crime reaction. It is also about leveraging and focussing funding from other orders of government, the private sector and foundations.

But What Should Leaders Do to Invest in What Works?

One answer is to turn to reports by parliamentary committees, the World Health Organization and the United Nations. The accumulation of evidence about what works and how to deliver it seems daunting but is extensive and used too little.

Canada has two unique centres of expertise who are committed to sharing that knowledge with policy makers and practitioners.

The International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC) provides for international exchange of knowledge and experience between governments and organizations about what works. It has a compendium of national and local crime prevention strategies as well as evidence-based strategies to make cities safer for women. It has ways to cope with disorder such as drug use and prostitution.

The Institute for the Prevention of Crime (IPC) develops and brings together scientific knowledge and experience from authoritative sources so that Canadians will enjoy lower rates of crime and victimization. IPC has garnered the most recent Canadian and international knowledge on what works to reduce crime in a journal published annually and written for Canadian policy makers and practitioners — *IPC Review.* Waller has also written a short book on the Truth about Reducing Crime — *Less Law, More Order* — to provide politicians, concerned citizens and taxpayers with reviews of what does not work, what works, and how to implement what works.

It works with a group of national organizations including the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Canadian Victim Resource Centre, the John Howard Society, the Canadian Council on Social Development and the Caledon Institute on Social Policy to reach a consensus on evidence based ways to get results by *Building a Safer Canada.*

The Action Briefs

The Action Briefs go further. Experts have taken this knowledge and turned it into briefs that identify concrete steps. They have benefitted from the insights and experience of the Municipal Network. They are available to help further. These experts have provided additional references on a longer version of the brief on the IPC website in the Municipal Network section — **www.ipc.uOttawa.ca**

The cover to the Action Briefs provides other suggestions as to where municipal stakeholders can turn for help. They can contact the founding members of the Municipal Network to learn from their successes

and challenges. For additional material on inspiring programs in the 14 municipalities as well as details of contacts see the IPC website.

Important toolkits on tackling safety successfully have been developed in Canada, particularly for municipalities. The best way to access these is by organizing seminars and training courses for executives and practitioners.

The Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments are committed to investing in effective crime prevention. The **National Crime Prevention Centre of Public Safety Canada (NCPC)** provides national leadership and funds multi-year programs that support effective and cost-efficient ways to prevent and so reduce crime by addressing known risk-factors in high-risk populations and places.

Their program was overhauled in 2008 to focus on multi-year programs based on evidence and collaboration that can be evaluated to demonstrate the achievement of results. They can fund multi-million dollar programs over 5 years. Their website provides information that could be useful in adapting and testing proven and promising strategies such as the comprehensive Boston Gang Prevention Strategy, Quantum Opportunities, SNAP, and Youth Inclusion Projects.

Two Provincial governments have become inspiring pioneers of new policies but others are organizing to tackle safety more successfully.

The **Safe Communities Secretariat of the Alberta Government (SafeCom)** orchestrates collaboration between nine social development and enforcement ministries to reduce crime and enhance community safety by developing and funding a major three pronged strategy of prevention, treatment and enforcement based on evidence about what works. Increases in pre-crime prevention matched increases in enforcement.

Ministère de la sécurité publique of the Quebec Government adopted the first provincial policy on crime prevention in Canada in 2001. Their vision is to reduce crime through inter-ministerial collaboration, municipal partnerships and planning, research and training, and so on.

Building on Municipal Expertise in Policing

Some services of police departments do indeed reduce crime and enhance safety but this is much less than is believed because so much of the costs of policing are allocated to responding to 911 calls. Much of current resources are dedicated to emergency response, particularly for priority calls, traffic enforcement that saves lives and injuries, and investigations that take violent and persistent offenders off the street.

Canadian municipalities have a long track record of innovations in policing. Neighbourhood policing models that use problem-solving approaches are among the most effective of those that have been tested. Nevertheless, the standard Canadian approach has seen police costs grow to over $10 billion, of which a rapidly growing proportion is paid by municipalities — 56.6% in 2006. With incentives from the federal and some provincial governments to hire more police officers, the costs to municipalities will grow and so the proportion of local taxes going to policing will increase — thus decreasing what can go to other municipal services. So how police resources are used is critical.

Building on Municipal Expertise in Community Development and Social Inclusion

Consistency of parenting, exclusion of youth from the mainstream, youth dropping out of school, no outreach to youth to involve them, abuse of alcohol and drugs, mental illness and a lack of positive adult role models (mentors) are just some of the risk factors that predispose young persons to crime.

Municipalities play a role in tackling these risk factors through neighbourhood support programs, integrated urban renewal strategies and coordinated service delivery. Social and economic inclusion is the focus of programs targeting children and youth, women, immigrants, Aboriginal peoples and the elderly. Complex issues such as intercultural relations and management of diversity, social housing, food security and homelessness are addressed through comprehensive partnership approaches.

Some Canadian municipalities directly or indirectly tackle risk factors, particularly in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, through programs proven to reduce crime:

- Public health nurses help parents raise their children more consistently;
- Pre-school programs provide positive structure for children;
- Breakfast programs send children to school with basic food and after school programs provide assistance with home work;
- Community centres that provide services such as conflict resolution;
- Preventive strategies to avoid abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Increasing Investment in the Promise of Pre-Crime Prevention

A growing number of Canadian cities are going much further by establishing city wide strategies to tackle the crime problems as in Europe. These strategies bring together municipal services, school boards, citizens and others to prevent crime before it happens. Among these are Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and the Region of Waterloo.

In these cities, the municipality has established a permanent structure to increase investment in services that tackle risk factors. The City of Montreal has an extensive service that organizes programs to reduce vulnerability to break-ins, youth involvement in gangs, violence reduction in high crime neighbourhoods, feelings of safety for women on streets and so on. The annual investment in these services in both Montreal and Waterloo Region exceeds $2 per citizen. Ottawa invests close to $1 per citizen.

These actions:
- Prevent the development of youth gangs;
- Encourage high crime neighbourhoods to take charge of actions to reduce prostitution, drug trafficking and vandalism;
- Reduce violence against women;
- Enable citizens to feel more secure on the streets.

While we cannot prove cause and effect, Montreal and Waterloo Region have invested in crime prevention for more than a decade and enjoy lower rates of crime and violence than most other municipalities.

If Canadian cities are to succeed in reducing crime cost-efficiently through pre-crime prevention, then municipalities must take on this unique role. This will require other orders of government to confirm the mandate and allocate funds as in success stories in Europe. It will require agreements between all three orders of government — tri-partite arrangements — which build on municipalities' ability to know local problems and solutions.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY*

Strategic Overview

Community safety is key to municipal development and quality of life. It is assured by collaboration between many stakeholders and so is considered "everybody's business." It is not just the responsibility of the police or something guaranteed by current social programs and economic trends.

But it can also be "nobody's business". Mayors, municipal councillors, police chiefs and city managers must show leadership and determination to organize to tackle crime before it happens in their city.

They are strategically placed to mobilize all municipal services and key institutional and community stakeholders to face these challenges through efficient and action-oriented partnerships.

The municipality needs to create or strengthen a responsibility centre to increase partnerships, policies and investments that will reduce crime and enhance community safety.

For an average municipality of 100,000 population, the responsibility centre would have a dedicated staff person, some funds for planning, development and public engagement as well as a board or other procedure that would be the focus for collaboration and coordination between the different stakeholders.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Affirm their leadership and commitment to community safety and prevention before crime happens;

2. Assign the responsibility for coordinating crime prevention and community safety to a specific unit within the municipal organization and provide adequate and sustained resources for that purpose;

3. Ensure that the community and key stakeholders develop a shared vision of the challenges related to crime and insecurity, including:

    a. the municipality, school boards, housing, social services, the police service, non-governmental organizations and neighbourhoods;

    b. collaboration across all orders of government (including tripartite agreements);

4. Facilitate the emergence of a strategic plan, action-oriented partnerships and policies to foster collaboration and accountability;

5. Make safety a cross-cutting priority in the city in its strategic plan and service delivery, including setting goals and objectives.

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* Prepared by Claude Vézina, Urban Safety Advisor

Justification

Safety in a community will result from the development of a vision shared by all stakeholders and from an integrated action strategy. This calls for strong leadership by municipal key actors: mayors and councillors, police chiefs and city managers.

Recognizing safety as a priority for the well-being of the community and for its social and economic development is the prime responsibility of local elected officials. The Mayor and councillors play a key role in the sensitization and mobilization of institutional and community stakeholders. In many municipalities, the responsibility for community safety is assigned to a senior member of the Executive Committee and

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Box 1 Mayors' Task Forces and Roundtables

Set up in 2008, the *Edmonton Mayor's Task Force on Community Safety* brings together some 27 members of the community. Its mandate is to seek answers on how to reduce crime and improve safety. It focuses on preventative rather than punitive solutions. An integrated strategy will be proposed by mid-year 2009.

In Surrey, a *Mayor's Task force on Public Safety and Crime Reduction* launched in 2007 led to the adoption of an integrated action focused on four priority areas.

Initiated in 2006, the *Halifax Mayor Roundtable on Violence and Public Safety* proposed a long-term strategy focusing on a wide range of issues. Early in 2009, the Halifax Regional Council decided to set up a Public Safety Office to implement the recommendations of the Roundtable.

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to a Standing Committee of the council. Mayors in some cities across Canada have decided to address this challenge through a comprehensive process by setting up special task forces and roundtables to look at the causes of crime and violence and to recommend concrete targeted actions.

Under the leadership of police chiefs, community policing and problem-solving approaches have been initiated in many Canadian cities. These models put an emphasis on relations with citizens and on partnerships with stakeholders. City managers also have a key contribution to make to community safety with regard to the mobilization of the municipal organization and the effective coordination of

service delivery. In particular, they are responsible for the strategic planning process and for the follow up of policies adopted and decisions made by the city council.

Building Partnerships with Key Stakeholders and the Community

Developing an integrated approach to community safety requires that key stakeholders join forces with municipal leaders. Addressing the multiple causes of delinquency, violence and insecurity entails the participation of many agencies and groups, as well as a fine engineering of their efforts and resources. Different models of partnership structures have been put in place at the municipal level. They aim at:

- Providing a community perspective and creating a forum for discussions;
- Developing a common understanding of issues and a vision of the way forward;
- Identifying the components of a local strategy to address crime problems and their root causes;
- Forging action oriented partnerships;
- Mobilizing and coordinating financial and technical resources;
- Following up and evaluating global strategies and specific programmes;
- Fostering public participation and engagement.

Box 2 Crime Prevention Ottawa

Set up in 2005, *Crime Prevention Ottawa* (CPO) brings together the City of Ottawa, the Ottawa Police Service, the United Way, the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa and four school boards. Its Board of Directors is made up of 12 members and is both representative of the founding institutions and of the community at large.

The mission of CPO is to contribute to crime reduction and enhanced community safety in Ottawa through collaborative, evidence-based crime prevention. It is responsible to develop a community-wide strategic plan in this regard. A Community Forum provides feedback and advice.

Coordination through a Responsibility Centre

Assigning the responsibility of coordinating community safety to a specific unit within the municipal organization is a key element of success. It is essential to be able to follow up and to effectively implement strategic orientations, policies and priorities. These responsibility centres, ideally reporting to senior management, have the mandate to:

- Support the partnership structures in place and build strategic alignments with municipal elected officials, city managers and other stakeholders;
- Be a focal point for sharing strategic information and making the links between programmes and projects;
- Contribute to the analysis of crime and insecurity issues and trends;
- Provide strategic and technical support to the development and implementation of municipal strategic vision, community safety policies, action plans and projects;
- Develop strategies to mobilize financial resources;
- Develop indicators, monitor implementation of action plans and projects, report on the progress made to municipal authorities and other stakeholders;
- Design communication strategies and tools.

Box 3 City of Montreal

The urban safety programme is coordinated by the Social Development Division. It includes Tandem, a crime prevention programme at the borough level initiated in 1982, social mediation and street gangs. This central unit works in close cooperation and provides support and coordination to the boroughs, other municipal services and a wide range of external partners.

16 boroughs are participating in the Tandem programme. Small teams of prevention advisors are in place in each borough. 18 community organizations have been contracted out to implement local crime prevention plans. In 2007, close to 2, 800 activities were undertaken and more than 100, 000 people were reached.

The *Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities* adopted in 2006 includes a whole chapter dedicated to safety. The Montreal Urban Agglomeration Council has also adopted, in 2007, a *Policy for a Peaceful and Safe Environment* with local partnership committees under the leadership of elected officials.

Box 4 Waterloo Regional Municipality

The Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council was established in 1993. It is a division of the Regional Chair's Office and has the goal "to increase community safety by making crime prevention everyone's responsibility". It brings together 39 members representing municipalities, police line agencies, community organizations, citizens, etc. The Council provides connections between the partners and focuses on communication, public education, partnership building and evidence-based problem solving.

The Region provides core funding for the Council, allowing for additional corporate sponsorships. A team of six professionals is in charge of developing, coordinating and implementing the work programme and priorities. Among them, the Executive Director plays a key role in relation to strategic planning, political interface, liaison with stakeholders and resource mobilization.

One of the objectives of the *Waterloo Region Corporate Strategic Plan 2007-2010* is to improve community safety by reducing and preventing the risks that contribute to crime, victimization and public insecurity. The plan is monitored annually by Regional Council.

Anchoring Community Safety in Municipal Government

While planning for the future, municipalities examine trends, opportunities and challenges related to many demographic, social and economic factors. However, community safety is rarely taken into account and examined thoroughly while looking at these future perspectives. In general, there is mention of the wish to maintain a safe environment and to provide good police services but the analysis of the challenges related to crime and insecurity is often limited and the will to achieve greater safety in the coming years is not translated into specific goals.

On a more day-to-day basis, Canadian municipalities put forward multiple responses to reduce and prevent crime. These include community policing, safe urban design, programmes for youth at risk, support for community organizations, urban renewal, mediation and public awareness campaigns. Most of those initiatives call for partnerships with different stakeholders.

The challenge for municipalities is to provide a coherent orientation through an integrated strategy and the coordination of the different municipal services and agencies. One option is the development of municipal policies on community safety, similar to the ones adopted for the family, recreation and community development. These policies put together all the pieces of the municipal vision and intervention and provide a framework for efficient partnership and coordination.

By integrating crime reduction and prevention in their strategic planning and by developing community safety policies, municipalities can:

- Respond pro-actively to the needs of the community with regard to safety;
- Foster a long-term commitment by the municipality and the other stakeholders;
- Mobilize city council and senior management around clear objectives aimed at improving community safety;
- Choose the most relevant preventive actions according to evidence-based criteria;
- Integrate the interventions of the police with those of other municipal services for a more efficient delivery at the neighbourhood level;
- Provide a sound basis for strategic and financial partnerships with the other orders of government.

Box 5 Edmonton Strategic Plan 2009-2018

The Plan includes safety among the relevant factors to consider. Specific three-year priority goals have been set:

- Reduce and prevent crime in transit, downtown and communities;
- Reduce litter, graffiti and vandalism in target areas;
- Improve community engagement.

Box 6 Quebec City Urban Safety Policy

This policy, adopted in 2003 after a large consultation aims to foster public engagement in crime prevention, awareness campaigns and evaluation of the quality of safety. Specific interventions include:

- Work sessions with community groups and local partnerships;
- Citizen-driven programs on urban safety;
- Training of municipal staff on safe urban design.

PLAN STRATEGICALLY*

Strategic Overview

The Action Brief *Why Invest* outlined the social harm caused by crime, drew attention to the ever-increasing proportion of municipal taxes devoted to police services and stressed the opportunity costs to cities of not using the ¨promise of prevention¨. A key element in changing the situation is a permanent strategic planning process that uses data to guide programming.

Most Canadian cities have an overall strategic plan, a transportation plan, a health plan and so on. Few have a detailed plan to reduce crime and to enhance community safety.

The United Nations, the World Health Organization, and other organizations have recommended engaging key stakeholders such as residents, community leaders, police, and housing officials in a strategic planning process to reduce crime and to enhance community safety.

Ottawa, Montreal, and Waterloo Region are among the cities that are successfully pioneering crime prevention planning in Canada. Other cities including Edmonton, Halifax and Winnipeg are now engaged in the planning process.

Planning and implementing successful crime prevention programs will require additional resources. Experience in some Canadian communities has shown that a city will need to invest at least one dollar per citizen to establish and to sustain a process that will ensure scarce resources are effectively used to reduce crime and to enhance community safety. Action programs are over and above this investment.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Establish a strategic planning process involving key stakeholders in four key steps:

   - Analyze the crime problems in the city;
   - Establish priorities and select the best strategies;
   - Implement the programs;
   - Evaluate the process and its outcomes.

2. Manage the process through actions identified in *Take Responsibility* and *Engage the Public* while providing financial support as identified in *Why Invest* to allocate and attract the funds proposed in *Invest Smartly*.

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* Prepared by Rick Linden, University of Manitoba

The Planning Process

Planning is one of the keys to successful crime prevention. This brief will outline some simple steps that you can take to ensure that programs implemented in your community will result in reduced crime and a better quality of life for residents. This brief focuses on long-term strategic planning, but a similar process can be applied to shorter-term local issues that must be resolved quickly.

The first step is to **analyze your community's crime and disorder problems** and to consider the community context of these problems. This information will help you to **set priorities**. You cannot do everything at once, so you need to determine which crimes and which communities should be targeted for prevention programs. This step is like a medical diagnosis — without detailed knowledge of the problem, it is difficult to recommend the proper treatment. Focusing on specific problems also helps determine who needs to be involved in prevention programs. It is much easier to coordinate the work of different agencies if everyone understands the nature of the problems and knows their role in preventing them.

The next step is **bringing community members together** to work on solutions. It is better to involve people at the planning stage rather than to develop programs and then ask for their help and cooperation. Initially, a planning group will have three tasks: to **help set priorities;** to **decide upon the best strategies** to use; and to develop ways of **involving the rest of the community in the implementation** of the selected programs.

Justification

City Crime prevention planning office

1 Safety Diagnosis

2 Business Plan

Joint Planning Board and Secretariat

4 Evaluation

3 Implementation

The final steps are **to implement and to evaluate** your programs.

Experience has shown that this planning process is essential. Crime often reflects deep-seated problems in a community such as poverty, poor housing, and social exclusion. It is not easy to overcome these problems and to build a healthy community, but it can be accomplished if you do a good job of planning and implementation.

STEP 1 – Analyzing Problems and Setting Prevention Priorities
I: AN OVERVIEW OF CRIME IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Your first task is to conduct an initial appraisal of your community's crime problems. This stage sets the context for the rest of your planning.

Key Questions about Crime
1. Which areas have the highest rates of crime?
2. What are the most serious crime problems in the highest crime neighbourhoods?
3. What are the trends in crime — is crime increasing or decreasing? Which communities are most affected by fear of crime?

Key Questions about the Community
1. What are the demographic characteristics of the highest crime neighbourhoods (i.e. age, race, gender, etc.)?

Sources of Data for Crime Prevention Planning

1. Crimes reported to the police – when most Canadians think about crime rates they mean Statistics Canada's reports of crimes recorded by all Canadian police departments. However, many crimes go unreported by victims.
2. Victimization surveys – a national victimization survey is conducted every five years by Statistics Canada. This provides information on crimes not reported to the police and detailed information about victims and risk factors.
3. Self-reported crime surveys – people can be asked about their offending.
4. Mapping studies – mapping studies carried out by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics in several cities show how crime is linked with neighbourhood characteristics.
5. Social indicators – measures of income, social networks, institutional resources, community engagement and other factors.

2. What are the economic trends in the highest crime neighbourhoods? Is there economic activity? Is there high unemployment?
3. What is the level of fear of crime in the neighbourhood?

The information collected at this stage will be used to help you to decide on your priorities.

II: SETTING PRIORITIES: WHICH PROBLEMS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED FIRST?

You will never have enough resources to deal with all your city's crime problems so you must set priorities. This can be difficult. How do you decide that you should put your limited resources into one high-crime neighbourhood rather than another? How do you determine that domestic violence should have a higher priority than armed robbery? While there are criteria that will help you make this decision, ultimately it is a matter of judgment. However, failure to decide upon your priority problems will spread your efforts so thinly that they will have little or no impact.

Some of the criteria you can consider are:
- Which neighbourhoods have the most serious crime problems?
- What crimes have the highest rates?
- Are some crimes increasing and others decreasing?

- Which crimes most concern community members?
- Which crimes might be the easiest to prevent?
- Are some problems already being adequately addressed by the community and the justice system?
- Would resources be more readily available to deal with some crimes rather than others?

III: ANALYZE YOUR TARGET PROBLEMS AND YOUR COMMUNITY

Your earlier analysis was a relatively quick process using readily available information. Once you have identified target crimes in particular neighbourhoods you should conduct a more detailed analysis. In addition to crime statistics, you may also wish to conduct community surveys, interview offenders, talk to key people in the community, and organize community meetings. You should get as much detail as possible at this stage. The more we know about the crime problem and its community context, the better our chances of success.

Problem Analysis – Information about Your Target Problems
- **Victim or target** characteristics
- **Offender** characteristics
- Patterns of the **location** of offenses
- **Times** when offenses are committed
- Involvement of **alcohol and drugs**
- **Opportunity factors** (such as inadequate lighting or inadequate supervision of apartment buildings)
- Distinctive **methods** of committing the crimes

Community Analysis – Information about Your Community
- **Social characteristics** such as age, gender, race and ethnicity, community stability, school issues, and general socio-economic conditions.
- **Physical characteristics** including type and condition of housing, population density, overall neighbourhood condition, transportation patterns, types of businesses and industries.

- **Community assets and strengths** including neighbourhood groups and associations, cultural groups, community leaders, stable institutions such as churches and businesses, recreational facilities, community programs, and funding programs.

STEP 2 – Selecting the Best Strategies

The most important recent development in crime prevention has been the emphasis on **evidence-based** crime prevention. Evidence-based prevention means using programs that have been successful elsewhere and **not** using programs that have been found to be unsuccessful — a lot of time and money has been wasted because programs are adopted despite research demonstrating that they have not worked elsewhere. You can still be innovative and develop new programs, but when doing this you should pay heed to the lessons that have been learned elsewhere.

Another lesson we have learned is that the most successful crime prevention initiatives are **comprehensive**. The causes of crime are very complex and there are no simple solutions. Rather than relying on a single program or strategy, you should use several different programs that are targeted at different aspects of the problem. To help you think of different strategies, consider these categories:

- Social Development – parenting programs, school programs
- Community Action – Neighbourhood Watch, Citizen Patrols
- Police Strategies – offender-oriented policing, location-oriented policing
- Physical Design – target hardening, improved lighting
- Administrative Strategies – zoning regulations, security ordinances

STEP 3 – Implementing Your Program

Your implementation plan will depend upon the specifics of your program and your community. However, all programs will need to consider two factors that are sometimes neglected.

First, there is a **need to involve the community** in your program. You should make special efforts to engage hard-to-reach groups who may be affected by crime.

Second, you need to consider **maintenance strategies,** so your program is sustained over time. Program activities frequently diminish over time as enthusiasm wanes. For example, neighbourhood turnover means that participation in programs such as Neighbourhood Watch will decline steadily over time unless newcomers are enrolled in the program.

STEP 4 – Evaluation

It is necessary to conduct both process and outcome evaluations. **Process evaluation** involves monitoring the implementation of your program. This is necessary to ensure that critical tasks are done on schedule and that each of the steps has been done properly.

Outcome evaluation involves assessing the impact of the program on the community. Outcome measures can include residents' perceived quality of life, levels of crime fear, and levels of crime. Evaluation allows you to assess your program and to make changes that are needed to ensure the program responds to new issues and opportunities. Evaluation is crucial to the development of effective future programs, as it helps planners to learn from successes and failures.

ENGAGE THE PUBLIC*

Strategic Overview

Series 1 *Invest Smartly in Safety for the City* has shown the need for elected officials and their senior managers to buy into the idea of crime prevention. It has highlighted the need for a sound and effective governance model to guide crime reduction and outlined a systematic planning and implementation process that will ensure that a municipality addresses its problems in an effective manner.

One key ingredient remains — that of public and community engagement. Simply put, the success of crime prevention programs depends upon the support and involvement of the community.

This Action Brief considers the question of how a municipality can foster public engagement and community participation in crime prevention initiatives. All too often the community does not get involved in crime prevention initiatives and the programs are unsuccessful.

If the community is engaged in the solution to its problems it will help to empower people by giving them more control over their neighbourhoods and to build the community capacity necessary to maintain a safe community in the future.

What have we learned from the research that has been done on engaging the public in effective crime prevention?

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Communicate effectively with, and listen to, the public by providing the community with information about crime patterns, community issues, and the programs that are operating in the community;

2. Enlist the leadership of community groups who can help with crime prevention and provide them with sustained municipal support, particularly in high crime neighbourhoods where they do not have the resources;

3. Coordinate municipal services at the neighbourhood level and look at each community's assets as well as its needs;

4. Use new internet technologies and community media to foster debate, including social networking tools.

Justification

The success of most crime prevention initiatives depends on the support and involvement of the community. However, this support and involvement does not just happen. Participation in crime prevention initiatives tends to be low, especially in high-crime neighbourhoods. In these communities fear of crime can lead people to keep to themselves and some residents who feel marginalized by race, class, or gender may feel their participation would not be welcomed.

In high-crime communities, the success of crime prevention programs may depend upon the support provided by municipal governments, social agencies, and the business community. Community engagement often requires a partnership between community members and those with access to power and resources, without which community groups have little chance of success.

We have learned that several factors will help to build public engagement. These include: effective communication; the need to listen to the community; the requirement to support community groups; the need to identify community assets as well as needs; the desirability of working with existing community groups where possible; and the need to allocate resources to maintaining established programs.

This brief will discuss how a municipality can foster public engagement and community participation in crime prevention initiatives.

Communication –
Keeping the Public Informed

It will be difficult to get community engagement unless the public has access to timely and relevant information. An effective communications strategy can help develop and sustain support for your program. Communicating citywide and local information about **crime statistics and crime trends** on a regular basis is very important (Box 1). Municipalities can also conduct surveys that measure peoples' **perceptions of safety**, particularly in public spaces such as parks, commercial areas and on mass transit and in relation to daily activities such as walking in the neighbourhood and travelling to work and to school.

> ### *Box 1* Crime Statistics on the Internet
>
> The Winnipeg Police Service provides the public with timely crime statistics on the internet. Statistics on most major crimes are updated daily, and weekly, monthly and yearly trends can be obtained. Computer maps of these crime occurrences are available for each of the city's police districts. Anyone can access these statistics through the CrimeStat icon on the City of Winnipeg website (**www.winnipeg.ca**). Other cities, including Regina and Ottawa, also provide statistics online.

Municipalities can place crime data in a broader perspective. Making links between crime statistics and public health, housing, urban design, and neighbourhood vitality allows for a better understanding of the nature, impact, and causes of crime and disorder.

Municipalities also need to communicate the message that crime prevention can be effective and that everybody has a role to play in it. Surveys in Canada show strong support for a preventive approach to crime. However, crime prevention initiatives receive little media attention compared to punitive policies. Open communication with the public is a good way of motivating people and keeping them involved.

Crime prevention advocates should try to get positive stories to the media. Other methods of publicizing programs include: public service announcements on television and radio; posters in workplaces, schools, housing projects and apartments; and articles in community newspapers. In high-crime neighbourhoods personal contacts can be the best way of getting people involved, so knocking on doors and organizing local meetings are good ways to communicate information about prevention programs. New social networking technologies can also be applied to crime prevention.

Listening and Harnessing Public Engagement

Municipalities need to put into place effective consultative mechanisms to foster public participation. Traditionally, citizens and groups can make representations at city council or standing committee meetings. But establishing a fruitful dialogue on community safety with a broad range of stakeholders requires innovative approaches. Town hall meetings, task forces, working committees, workshops, and outreach campaigns are some of the tools that a municipality can use. Polls and surveys can also provide an opportunity for citizens to express their concerns and suggestions regarding community safety.

Supporting Community Work

If volunteers are going to be involved, someone will have to organize and coordinate volunteer networks. If communities are going to be consulted, someone needs to facilitate and to structure the consultation. Many high-crime communities cannot do these things on their own, at least not initially. Thus municipalities must help out by offering technical and financial support to community organizations and NGOs. Local capacity can also be enhanced by using practical tools such as safety audits (See Box 2) and local safety diagnosis kits and training sessions. These tools empower local stakeholders by giving them the capacity to understand the factors contributing to crime and insecurity in their neighbourhoods.

Municipal government must also ensure that community efforts are coordinated. A wide range of government departments, community groups, NGOs, and private businesses and business associations may be working in the same neighbourhoods, but without coordination their work will likely have limited impact. Crime prevention requires a focused effort — one of the lessons learned from crime prevention evaluations is that puny interventions will not work. Coordination helps to ensure that a critical mass of resources is brought to bear on crime problems (See Box 3).

Box 2　Regina: Using CPTED to Engage the Community

The Regina Police Service and the city's Department of Community Social Development have used Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to increase community engagement with neighbourhood improvement and crime prevention. In two high-crime neighbourhoods, the Regina Police Service has trained the members of two community associations in CPTED. After this training, residents are put into teams with people with CPTED expertise and asked to conduct safety audits in their communities.

CPTED audits are a good way to start mobilizing communities. Residents can easily understand the process and their input into the audits is very important. The audits enable them to learn what is going on in their neighbourhoods and to identify areas of concern. The city can quickly take some initial steps such as improving lighting by cutting away tree branches so the community can see tangible signs of improvement. These actions will involve several municipal departments, so these departments will also become part of the crime reduction effort. CPTED can also lead to other approaches to crime prevention. For example, in one Regina neighbourhood a youth employment group was formed and then hired to do some of the work recommended by the audits.

Try to Involve Existing Groups

Crime prevention practitioners have learned that it is almost always better to work through existing community groups such as neighbourhood associations than to try to build new groups around the issue of crime prevention. Although crime prevention may not be the major focus of existing groups, their structure, their credibility, and their knowledge of the community is invaluable.

If you need to organize new groups, you will need resources. Part of the mandate of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy was to facilitate community participation by holding monthly 'beat meetings' across the city. This did help build linkages between the public and the police, but in some neighbourhoods the police had to hire civilian community organizers to get people involved and to organize local problem-solving activities.

Identifying Community Assets and Community Needs

We often see the problems of high-crime neighbourhoods and miss the fact that these communities also have many strengths. If we think only of needs [unemployment, poor housing, crime, family problems, school failure, poverty] we run the risk of creating 'client neighbourhoods' where residents think of themselves as people who must be helped by outsiders. However, if we also see the community's strengths and assets [local leaders, businesses, churches, residents' associations, cultural groups], we begin to see how the community can help itself. Providing residents with the responsibility and the resources to change their communities is the best way to strengthen local leadership and to build the neighbour-to-neighbour links that are so important to healthy communities.

Sustaining Prevention Programs

Maintenance strategies must be part of any prevention initiative because crime problems are often deep-seated and require sustained intervention. Community members may lose interest or drop out of programs because of competing demands for their time or because they move. Our cities have high rates of residential mobility, particularly in high-crime areas where most people are renters. There is also turnover within organizations and agencies so new people must be convinced that they should continue with the activities initiated by their predecessors.

The best maintenance strategy is a well-planned and carefully-implemented program in which volunteers play a meaningful role. Successful crime prevention initiatives are the most likely to recruit and to retain volunteers. If people know they are making their communities safer for themselves and their families, they will be more likely to continue to participate. One proven strategy is to "organize people around issues that are immediate, concrete and achievable" and use initial successes to motivate people to take on larger issues. Training can motivate volunteers by educating them about the project and by giving them the expertise to make their work more productive and enjoyable. Newsletters, awards dinners, and other types of recognition all help to maintain volunteer support.

Effective Delivery and Coordination of Services

Community engagement is fostered by effective delivery and coordination of municipal services and programmes at the neighbourhood level. Ideally, this will balance traditional police intervention with innovative problem-solving and community participation approaches that utilize different municipal services, social agencies, and business and community organizations. This approach helps to develop local capacity and to adapt programs to the characteristics of each neighbourhood.

Box 3 Delivering Community Safety at the Neighbourhood Level

In Winnipeg **Community Resource Coordinators** are deployed in seven designated areas (one of which is devoted to the Aboriginal community). They help to coordinate actions, do outreach and facilitate partnership opportunities.

In Vancouver, **Neighbourhood Integrated Service Teams** composed of City and other community agency employees work across organizational boundaries to help communities solve problems.

ACTION
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SAFE STREETS*

Strategic Overview

Considerable knowledge and experience exists on successful ways to reduce violence by young men, including in ¨gangs¨.

Most young men live positively even in high crime areas. However, a small group of young men are disproportionately involved in violence. These young men often experience negative life experiences from their parents, in school and so on that differ from young men in those areas who do not engage in repetitive violence.

Programs that mitigate these life experiences have been shown in England and Wales (e.g. Youth Inclusions Projects) and the USA (e.g. Quantum Opportunities) to reduce violence by young men significantly.

Municipalities in the USA have cut rates of violence by young men by as much as 50% within a year or two after leading a collaborative planning process which engages police, social services and parents (e.g. Boston and the ten cities using Strategic Approaches to Community Action).

In Canada, some school boards and some non-governmental groups and others are tackling risk factors known to lead to violence (see Fourth 'R', SNAP, and others). Several municipalities are developing strategies to reduce violence by young men, including what is gang related.

More can be done to reduce violence by coordinating and investing in preventive strategies which strengthen and adapt successful programs to reduce violence.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Closely examine municipal strategies in Canada and abroad that have been successful in reducing the numbers of persons victimized violently by young men;

2. Involve the schools and other stakeholders in teaching young men to resolve conflicts without violence and avoid behaviours likely to lead to violence;

3. Support strategies that reduce child abuse in the short term and foster positive early childhood experiences that reduce violence over the longer term;

4. Target programs and investments to areas in cities that have disproportionately high levels of crime and usually poverty, racial discrimination, transiency, lack of services and so on.

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2.1 SAFE STREETS

Justification

This Action Brief looks at how to stop violence on the street perpetrated by young men.

Most young men live positively and are not involved in persistent offending. But a small group of teenage and young adult men are involved in frequent and persistent violence — some of this associated with loose networks of men labelled as ¨gangs¨.

Murders involving young men with guns have hit the headlines in the media in several Canadian cities. In 2007, Statistics Canada confirmed that ¨gang¨ related homicides continued to increase as they have for more than a decade and accounted for one in five homicides in Canada. Though the headlines tend to come from Toronto and Vancouver, the rates of homicide tend to be highest in cities such as Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg.

Statistics Canada surveys show that 2 million adults annually will be victims of an assault, typically young men fighting other young men without weapons, and many will be victimized more than once. Other Statistics Canada surveys of school-aged youth in Toronto show that two out of five are victims of violence every year. Some of this violence occurs in or near schools.

The peak ages for such violence go from early teens to late twenties. Some of the violence is directed against girls. Some occurs within loose networks of young men often labelled ¨gangs¨, particularly when they are trafficking drugs and fighting over territory.

What Has Reduced Violence by Young Men and Their Gang Related Violence?

Internationally, the best known success stories in reducing violence among young men have been led and coordinated by municipalities.

- The **City of Boston** reduced homicides between young men by 50% within two years of implementing a city wide strategy that involved strategic approaches to the use of current police resources, investment in proven programs to help young men complete school and get jobs, and mobilization of mothers to pressure the young men to abandon violent associates. The implementation phase followed a period of diagnosis and development of collaboration. In 2008, the US Department of Justice reported replications of key elements in this strategy under the banner of Strategic Approaches to Community Action Initiative showing similar successes of up to 50% in ten other US cities — several of similar size to Canadian cities.

- The **City of Bogota** reduced street violence by 50% over a ten year period. They diagnosed the patterns of the violence, then acted on recommendations to tackle those causes, such as curfews, limiting access to alcohol, reducing the availability of firearms and counselling victims to avoid revenge killings.

- The **City of Glasgow** instituted a public health strategy to diagnose ways to reduce knife violence between young men that included programs to help parents provide consistent and caring education, efforts to persuade victims to change their lives to avoid re-victimization, enforcement targeted to persistent offenders, and preventing young men from carrying knives.

Violent street crime between young men in age ranges from 15 to 25 tends to be concentrated geographically in areas of disadvantage, social exclusion and relative poverty. Extensive studies in many different countries have identified the life experiences that predispose some young men in these areas to persistent offending and violence. Those with more negative life experiences such as inconsistent

parenting, identified as acting out in primary school and abandoning secondary school are more likely to be persistent offenders.

In response to these problems, several experimental projects have demonstrated ¨scientifically¨ that it is possible to overcome the negative experiences. For instance, demonstration projects in other countries, and occasionally in Canada, include:

- Programs such as **Quantum Opportunities** that reach young men likely to drop out of school to keep more of them in school and mentor them with the result of reducing violence by those men.

- **Stop Now and Plan (SNAP)** – This helps children and parents to regulate youth aggression. It was developed in Toronto and has been subjected to rigorous evaluation which demonstrated positive outcomes among children under the age of 12.

- **Youth Inclusion Projects** – Programs developed in England and replicated in over 100 disadvantaged housing estates. These reach the most difficult teenagers and significantly reduce their offending and the rate of crime in the area.

What Are Canadian Municipalities Doing Already to Reduce Violence between Young Men?

Municipalities have a police service which reacts to calls for service (911) when assaults are reported. Police services at the municipal level often have a youth section that deals with teenage offenders and school liaison officers. They may also have a specialized unit dealing with gangs and a unit focusing on violations of bail, probation and parole agreements. These enforcement strategies are sometimes guided by crime analysis units so that they focus on the problem but the extent of their impact on reducing violence is not known.

The municipality may pay for recreation, sports, housing and library programs that could have some impact on crime. Little is known about the extent to which these services prevent young men from drifting into violence or gangs or persuade them to avoid violence or leave gangs. However, Edmonton has led the way on social marketing by changing attitudes so that young men avoid violence and citizens act responsibly in bars.

Importantly, some municipalities manage their own programs directly related to the prevention of violence among young men. Many of these are described in the IPC report on Safer Cities and others are coming on line with NCPC funding, including:

- Montreal has invested significant funds in establishing centres to provide services to youth in difficult areas. Local districts have established ways for schools, social services and police to collaborate around solutions to youth crime.

- Crime Prevention Ottawa supports the ¨Ottawa Youth Gang Prevention Initiative¨ which has mobilized more than 30 agencies in the city. It has hired Canadian experts to diagnose the problems, look at what is underway and explore what else might work. It has held two conferences for those working in the area and a public forum.

- Toronto has an advisory panel to the mayor on community safety that provides strategic advice and support for strengthening neighbourhoods through the City's targeted, place-based approach to community safety and neighbourhood investment. Toronto City Council has designated 13 neighbourhoods as priority neighbourhoods for investment supported by collaborative Neighbourhood Action Partnership bodies. These engage the public and coordinate, enhance and increase disadvantaged youth and young adults' access to a variety of services and supports.

Within cities there are other programs that are not the responsibility of the municipality. Hospitals have emergency rooms to respond with medical care to victims of assaults. Victims often go to hospitals more than to police. In Scotland and England and Wales the emergency room provides an opportunity to persuade young men to change their activities to avoid violence. Also epidemiologists such as those working with the Scottish Executive use these data to identify interventions that will prevent violence.

School Boards provide primary and secondary educations for young men growing up in the city. School Boards face the consequences of bullying and youth involved in violence and gangs because some of it occurs on school grounds. Today, some boards have police called ¨School Resource Officers¨ stationed in the schools though the impact on youth violence is not known.

Some school boards have adopted an anti-bullying strategy, such as the proven ¨Olweus¨ program. In some school boards, the curriculum includes the Fourth 'R', developed to prevent youth violence, date rape and abuse of alcohol — a program started in London, Ontario and being tested in a broad range of schools.

The Surrey School Districts are recognized leaders in the Province of British Columbia and have won international awards for their programs to replace school suspension with W.R.A.P. which mobilizes a number of different agencies to tackle the risk factors leading to violence in schools.

How Can Municipalities Better Address the Causes and Gaps in Service?

Many actions want to reduce violence among young men in Canadian municipalities. The challenge is how to do more of the actions that **in fact** reduce youth violence. This brief suggests several strategies that will be successful if built around the planning and coordination steps in Series 1 of the Action Briefs.

WOMEN'S SAFETY*

Strategic Overview

Municipalities strive to ensure the safety and quality of life of all their citizens. So services and resources must be balanced in terms of the needs of both women and men.

The impact of crime and violence on women's and men's lives can be very different. Women are especially vulnerable to sexual harassment and assault, and are more likely than men to express concerns about their ability to move about the city in safety. Women are also much more likely than men to experience serious violence in intimate relationships. Such violence is now widely regarded as a violation of human rights and an issue of gender equality, and as a threat to public health.

Municipalities can have a major impact on the safety of women and girls by developing careful strategic approaches, and investing in programmes and support services.

A number of Canadian cities have implemented specific programmes which take account of the different needs and experiences of women and men and outside Canada there are some excellent municipal programmes which work in partnership with the community. Making cities safer for women helps to make them safer for everyone.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Set up a consultative and central committee within the municipal structure to work with other sectors and local community organizations, to plan and implement strategies on women's safety with health, social, family, environmental, housing, justice services etc;

2. Ensure that data collection looks at both genders separately, so that analysis of patterns, causes, and decisions about how to tackle the problems can be made more accurately and easily;

3. Develop a comprehensive strategy with a range of preventive programmes to reduce insecurity and promote women's safety in public and private;

4. Include programmes that work with boys and men to shape attitudes about the use of male violence against women;

5. Allocate resources on a regular and not a pilot basis.

Justification

Violence against women, or gender-based violence, is now widely recognized as an issue of public concern. It continues to occur, and remains a challenge to all communities across Canada.

It includes sexual harassment and assault, physical violence, stalking, psychological abuse, economic abuse, and the insecurity associated with the threat of violence.

Violence against women occurs in private and intimate relationships, work environments, and public spaces. It is not just about domestic violence, but also about women's safety in the community and the city.

Getting an accurate picture of the extent of such violence in our communities is not easy. Many women are reluctant to report incidents of public or private violence to the police or other authorities. Victimization surveys help to give a more reliable picture of the extent of violence experienced by women and girls, and their levels of insecurity.

- Intimate Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls
  ○ 460,000 women were sexually assaulted in one year — a rate of 3.5% per 100,000 for women over the age of 15.
  ○ Only 8% of these sexual assaults were reported to the police.
  ○ Women are at greater risk of serious spousal assault, stalking and homicide than men.
  ○ 83% of spousal assaults reported to the police involve males assaulting females.
  ○ In 2007, 51 women and 13 men were killed by their current or former spouse.
  ○ Aboriginal women are three times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be victims of spousal assault.

- Safety in Public Space
  ○ 16% of women report feeling unsafe while walking alone in their urban area after dark, and 58% are worried about their safety while waiting for or using public transportation.
  ○ Over 500 women, many of them Aboriginal, have disappeared from towns and communities in Canada in recent years.
  ○ Adolescent girls and young adults are at greatest risk of sexual assault.

Insecurity and fear of violence or harassment can limit the mobility of women and girls, and restrict their work or educational choices.

Violence itself has huge social and economic costs for everyone in the municipality. Estimates of the health and social service costs of violence against women in Canada are **$4.2 billion** a year.

Providing services for victims of intimate violence has rightly been a priority, as well as training local professionals such as the police and service workers to improve responses to incidents.

Less attention has been given to **preventing** intimate violence, and to preventing violence on the streets, at work and in public spaces. Prevention and treatment are both necessary, but prevention is more cost-effective.

Policies on intimate violence are often isolated from other municipal sectors, and from work to improve women's safety in public space. But public and private violence against women are closely linked, so policies need to be linked with other services such as housing, urban planning and transport. And because they both stem from attitudes towards women, prevention policies need to include both genders — men and women.

Municipalities do not always have good data about the extent of violence against women and levels of insecurity, and where they occur. The risk of violence against women includes individual, relationship, community and societal factors. Risks also vary between local neighbourhoods and communities. Women who are very isolated, recent immigrants, Aboriginal women, young women, elderly or disabled women, those working in the sex trade, may all be at risk in different ways.

The Role of Municipalities — A City Strategy

Ensuring women's safety in public or private requires a strategy with a *range of preventive approaches.* It is important to have strong and supportive national and provincial or territorial policies, but violence occurs in local communities so there is a major role for cities and local authorities.

Cities have worked in an integrated manner in partnerships to develop cross-sector initiatives including health services, situational and environmental approaches; public education campaigns to raise awareness about women's safety; protocols; skills training for local employees and professionals; and school curriculum programmes to help change attitudes and behaviour towards violence against women and girls.

Municipal Examples — 'A City which is Safe for Women is Safe for All'

The City of Montreal has had a city-community consultative working group on women's safety since the early 1990's. A range of services and programmes aim to increase feelings of safety for women on the streets, and reduce violence against women. These range from close co-operation with women's groups in the design and redevelopment of public areas such as Metro stations and parks, a guide on urban design for women's safety, the 'Between Two Stops' system which allows women to get off buses close to their destination in the evenings. The organization *Pro-gram inc* works closely with the municipal police to provide front line service to men arrested for domestic violence; *Stella, Maimie's Friend* works closely with Montreal's social and health services to help prevent violence against sex trade workers.

The City of Toronto developed a municipal strategy document on preventing public violence against women in the 1980's and the 1991 *Take Back Toronto* initiative. It has worked closely with organizations such as METRAC, which developed the women's safety audit as a tool to empower women to work with municipalities to make their neighbourhoods safer.

The City of Ottawa, funds the *Women's Initiative for Safer Environments* (WISE), and works with the *City for All Women Initiative* (CAWI). WISE has used women's safety audits in local communities to analyze environments, and works with local government to improve safety; raise awareness about the personal safety of women and girls; and develop community action plans.

The Region of Waterloo established its *Family Violence Project* in 2006, bringing together ten different local partners in one place, including the police and municipal services, to provide better protection, responses and supports in domestic violence situations. There have been some immediate cost savings and improvements in services, public confidence and case resolution.

The City of Edmonton and Edmonton Police Service work in a number of cross-sector teams including *Spousal Violence Intervention and Elder Abuse,* and partner with a Community Initiatives Against Family Violence group. *Safedmonton's Sexual Exploitation* Working Group initiated a project to provide community support to women arrested on the street.

Public Awareness and Changing Attitudes

Community education programmes can be effective in changing attitudes towards violence. The City of Charlottetown *Family Violence Prevention Programme,* is a partnership approach under the strong leadership of the Mayor. The programme began in 2001 and includes a permanent Purple Ribbon on the town hall; training for all city staff, including elected officials, to raise awareness about violence; public advertisements on buses and city fire and utility vehicles; and a series of community events throughout the year. The Father and Sons event is sponsored by the private sector.

London, Ontario's *Mayor's Task Force to End Women Abuse* is implementing the Charlottetown approach. Almost 40 Ontario municipalities use the public awareness campaign *Neighbours, Friends and Family* to alert people to signs of intimate violence, and where they can seek help. The *Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System,* has supported the *Muslim Family Safety Project,* a community-based project working with local agencies to expand awareness and assist women from Muslim communities and backgrounds in domestic violence situations.

School-Based Programmes

Effective programmes to change attitudes through schools include curriculum-based programmes such as the Fourth 'R' in London, Ontario which is now implemented in 350 Ontario schools and six other provinces, the 'Roots of Empathy' implemented in a number of provinces, 'Vers le pacific' in Quebec, and the Saltspring Island, BC 'Education is Prevention' programme, which all aim to build healthy and non-violent gender relationships between girls and boys.

Networks to Share Experience and Tools

Women in Cities International (WICI) is an important resource supporting projects at the local government level. It has worked with women's organizations to build partnerships with municipal governments. A current project is looking at safety issues for Aboriginal women in Regina, elderly women in Gatineau, disabled women in Montreal, and recent immigrant communities in Peel.

Resources: Tools to Support Action

FCM, and the Cities of Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver have all produced guides on gender equality, and some on the use of women's safety audits. WICI maintains a website with a wide range of Canadian and international resources and tools. The *International Centre for the Prevention of Crime* (ICPC) similarly has good practice examples on its website.

2.2 WOMEN'S SAFETY

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ABORIGINAL PEOPLES' SAFETY*

Strategic Overview

The legacy left by residential schools and colonization has left Canada's Aboriginal population suffering many intergenerational problems now reflected in their high rates of both victimization and offending. This poses a daunting challenge to all municipalities across Canada.

Aboriginal people are both perpetrators and victims of violence for the same multiple reasons that explain non-Aboriginal violence. These reasons include poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, homelessness, high transiency, reliance on food banks and shelters, and a lack of a strong institutional social network.

But the problems are more acute. Aboriginal people are more disadvantaged and disproportionately concentrated in high-crime areas (such as inner cities) than non-Aboriginal people. Often, they do not have attachments in urban areas and feel discriminated against.

So it is not surprising that more police, lawyers and prisoners will make little difference to violence.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Invest in activities such as those outlined in other Action Briefs, particularly on *Safe Streets* and *Women's Safety*;

2. Support and work together with Aboriginal leaders in order to address the crime situation specific to each municipality, particularly when developing a strategic plan and public engagement;

3. Sustain funding to culturally relevant social development programs and promising practices that help Canada's Aboriginal youth attain healthy productive futures, including those tackling risk factors, such as Alcohol Abuse Intervention and Aboriginal Perspective Fourth 'R';

4. Encourage more Aboriginal peoples to take up staff positions, particularly in the community safety responsibility centre and in programs servicing Aboriginal people;

5. Encourage programs on reserves to prepare Aboriginal peoples for life in urban areas.

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* Prepared by Lisa Monchalin, Institute for the Prevention of Crime

Justification

Aboriginal people are more likely than non-Aboriginal people to be victimized by virtually all types of violent crime in Canada. They are three times more likely than non-Aboriginal people to experience some form of violent victimization, and are twice as likely to be repeat victims of crime. These violent victimization rates are also high for young Aboriginal females, with the rate of violence being three and a half times higher when compared to non-Aboriginal females.

Levels of violence are also higher in areas highly populated with urban Aboriginal peoples. For example, Winnipeg, the CMA with the most urban Aboriginal people in Canada, is also home to the highest levels of violence in comparison to the other nine CMAs, which, along with Winnipeg, are considered to be among the top ten largest in Canada.

The Aboriginal population is also becoming increasingly urban. Many Aboriginal peoples are moving off reserves to urban areas. In 2006, 54% of Aboriginal people lived in an urban centre, which is an increase from 50% in 1996.

There is a vast amount of research proposing explanations for the overrepresentation in violence. Details of the sources used will be available on a longer version of this paper on the IPC website. This research highlights factors such as:

- The median age of Aboriginal people is 27, compared to the non-Aboriginal population, whose median age is 40.
- Only 4% of the Aboriginal population have a university degree, compared to 16% of the non-Aboriginal population.
- Aboriginal people are almost four times as likely as non-Aboriginal people to live in a crowded dwelling and are three times as likely to live in a dwelling in need of major repairs.
- The unemployment rate for Aboriginal people is almost double the rate for non-Aboriginal people.

- 22.6% of Aboriginal people report being heavy drinkers compared to 16.1% of non-Aboriginal people.

Research has confirmed the correlation between Aboriginal peoples' victimization and offending and factors such as these. Research also confirms for most countries and populations that those — not just Aboriginal peoples — exposed to factors such as childhood disadvantage, deprivation, child abuse, or parental drinking and/or violence will often find their adult lives disproportionately characterized by many of the same ills, leading to later victimization and involvement in the criminal justice system.

However, many urban Aboriginal people are marginalized to a greater extent than non-Aboriginal people, with the marginalization process beginning in early childhood. These are exacerbated by high levels of poverty, non-integration into the conventional job market, involvement in socially unacceptable activities, alcohol and drug abuse, homelessness, reliance on food banks and shelters, and a lack of strong institutional social networks.

This process has its roots in broader social contexts associated with the consequences of racism, colonization on traditional values and culture, as well as with the breakdown of family life resulting from the experiences suffered by many Aboriginal peoples at residential schools. Residential schools stripped away many Aboriginal peoples' language, culture and identity. Numerous Aboriginal children who went to these schools were also physically assaulted, molested and raped. The intergenerational consequences of both colonization and residential schools now weigh heavily on today's Aboriginal generations.

Difficulties of Using Criminal Justice

Currently Canada's principal approach to addressing offending and victimization by and against Aboriginal peoples is through the standard

2.3 ABORIGINAL PEOPLES' SAFETY

approach to criminal justice, that is, the police, courts and correctional services. Some legislative change and use of sentencing circles mitigates the severity of sanctions.

Nevertheless, Aboriginal Peoples are extremely overrepresented. Despite comprising only 4% of Canada's total population, Aboriginal adults in 2005 accounted for 24% of adult admissions to provincial/territorial custody, 19% of admissions to remand, and 18% of admissions to federal custody.

Continuing to rely on police, criminal justice and corrections is not enough to solve the intergenerational problems that lead to crime committed by and against Aboriginal peoples. Not only is it ineffective to continue to arrest, charge and incarcerate Canada's Aboriginal peoples, but it is incredibly expensive as well. This is not to say that such measures should be eliminated, but a more balanced approach which gives equal importance to prevention and treatment must be implemented alongside these standard measures.

Current Involvement of Municipalities

Municipalities are already involved in some prevention services that directly or indirectly tackle some Aboriginal peoples' risk factors (although, many programs do not have sustained funding and/or lack central leadership). Some of these initiatives include:
- Culturally sensitive after-school sports and recreation programs
- Early childhood and parental support programs
- Neighbourhood Revitalization strategies
- Enhanced after-school academic programs
- Safety programs for women

Some municipalities have also created partnerships and/or committees of people that collaborate to address issues that may have some impact on the problem of overrepresentation. Edmonton, for example, has an *Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee* whose purpose is to promote the awareness and development of Aboriginal people in their city; they

work with individuals, groups, agencies, and levels of government who are also addressing concerns regarding Aboriginal people living in urban areas. In addition, the committee advocates on behalf of urban Aboriginal people, and collaborates with the Mayor and City Councillors through meetings, reports, and other projects. They are also involved with other agencies like the *Safe Edmonton Advisory Committee,* which seeks to prevent violence, support vulnerable groups, and design and support safe neighbourhoods.

> ### Box 1 Aboriginal Perspective Fourth 'R' Program
>
> The *Fourth 'R' (Relationship)* program represents a promising example of risk-focused prevention originating in London, Ontario.
>
> This program was originally developed for delivery in a universal setting; however, it has now expanded to include an Aboriginal Perspective Fourth 'R' version. This version keeps the skills-based curriculum of the original program, but situates the program in a cultural identity framework. This framework takes into consideration that Aboriginal people's specific vulnerabilities and risk behaviours are very much a result of their historical circumstances.
>
> Elders and other members from the Aboriginal community are also involved in the program, and are brought into the classroom to assist with the lessons and execution of the program.

Nova Scotia has a successful Tripartite Forum, which enlists the collaborative efforts of federal, provincial and Aboriginal representatives. It has met regularly for the past seventeen years and has altered the landscape for Aboriginal justice throughout the province.

The *International Centre for the Prevention of Crime,* based out of Montreal, has an Aboriginal virtual network and bulletin. Including such countries as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, this agency brings together many individuals who work in the area of Aboriginal crime and its prevention from across the world, its purpose being to share knowledge, facilitate research, and to advance partnerships with Aboriginal communities across the globe.

Key Components of Solutions

Promising initiatives do exist which seek to reduce high levels of urban Aboriginal peoples' victimization and offending. However not enough is being done. There is a great deal of research that reveals the importance of municipalities joining with Aboriginal leaders and organizations to tackle crime problems together. Culturally relevant programs and initiatives that tackle the multiple risk factors associated to urban Aboriginal people must be implemented and sustained with continued funding.

Different programs/initiatives include:

- Providing public health nurses to at-risk mothers, or single parent families
- Enriched pre-schooling for at-risk children
- Providing culturally relevant violence reduction education programs in schools
- Providing youth with job training
- Implementing programs on reserves to prepare Aboriginal peoples for life in urban areas

The Action Briefs in Series 1 *Invest Smartly in Safety for the City* provide the collaboration and planning base for success but Aboriginal people must be integrated into these solutions.

Box 2 **Alcohol Abuse Intervention for Aboriginal Peoples in Nova Scotia**

A relatively recent prevention program has shown some promise in reducing drinking behaviours (a risk factor highly correlated to victimization and offending) amongst Aboriginal youth in Nova Scotia. Researchers Mushquash, Comeau and Stewart developed and pilot-tested an early intervention initiative for alcohol misuse among Aboriginal youth from two Mi'Kmaq communities (4 different schools) in Nova Scotia. Through a culturally-adapted intervention entitled "Nemi'simk, Seeing Oneself," the research revealed that youths who participated in the intervention had fewer alcohol-related problems and were more likely to abstain from alcohol abuse in the future.

PROPERTY SAFETY*

Strategic Overview

Property crime has been declining in Canada, but it is still far too high. In 2007 there were 1.1 million property crimes reported to Canadian police departments and many more went unreported. However, there is strong evidence that if municipalities analyze their community's property crime problems, look at the evidence about works in crime prevention, and implement comprehensive prevention initiatives at a sufficient level of intensity, they can dramatically reduce the rates of these crimes.

Social development programs represent a short and long-term solution to property crime. Providing stronger communities with nurturing families and strong schools will reduce crime. However, these initiatives should be part of a comprehensive prevention strategy that also involves changing the built environment, implementing community programs and encouraging smarter use of police resources.

Municipal governments must be at the centre of property crime prevention initiatives. They are uniquely placed to plan, coordinate, and implement the programs that will bring rates of these offenses down. If these steps are taken, there is ample evidence that property crimes can be reduced.

What specific steps should you take in order to reduce property crime in your municipality?

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Follow the systematic crime prevention planning process described in Series 1 *Invest Smartly in Safety for the City;*

2. Ensure that your prevention strategy is a comprehensive one (law enforcement, designing out crime, social development) and that the specific programs used are based on evidence concerning what works;

3. Stay focused on your specific problems and ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated to your program to ensure that the problem is addressed successfully;

4. Find as many community partners as you can and work hard to ensure that efforts are coordinated across organizations;

5. Provide strong leadership to keep the program on track.

Justification

Property crime has declined in Canada since the early 1990s, but it is still far too high. For some property offenses, including auto theft and break and enter, rates are higher in Canada than in the United States and in many other industrialized countries.

In 2007, almost 1.1 million property crimes were reported to Canadian police departments and many more went unreported. Over half were thefts under $5000, many of which are shoplifting. The most serious common property offenses are break and enter (over 250,000 reported offenses) and motor vehicle theft (nearly 160,000 offenses). These two offenses will be discussed in this brief.

Patterns of Break and Enter

In 2007, over 250,000 break and enters were reported to the police. The majority of break and enters are residential and the most frequently stolen items were audio/video equipment and money, checks or bonds. The recovery rate for burglary is very low (12 percent). Only 16 percent of burglaries are cleared by arrest and young males are overrepresented among those arrested.

In 2004, the average insurance claim for a household burglary was about $3600 and for a business was about $6500. Burglaries also create fear among victims and potential victims. Many victims had trouble sleeping after the victimization and female victims had higher fear levels than males.

Patterns of Motor Vehicle Theft

In 2007, there were about 146,000 motor vehicle thefts. While most stolen vehicles are recovered, there are very few arrests (11 percent). Most of those arrested are young with a peak age of 15-18 years.

Motor vehicle theft does not cause as much fear as burglary but it is very costly. The financial loss is estimated at over $1 billion a year. An average of about 40 people die each year and another 65 people are seriously injured because of vehicle theft.

Preventing Property Crime

One of the keys to successful crime prevention is utilizing different types of strategies. For property crime, some strategies are targeted at specific offenses, while others are directed at property crimes in general because most offenders do not specialize in one offense type, but commit a variety of different crimes.

The different categories of programs described in this Action Brief are: social development programs; Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) programs; and community programs. Other measures can also help reduce property crime — for example, some cities regulate pawn shops to reduce the fencing of stolen property while other jurisdictions have implemented mandatory prepayment systems to prevent drive-offs from self-service gasoline bars. Because addictions are factors in many property crimes, substance abuse programs can also be useful.

Crime Prevention Through Social Development

These strategies are aimed at reducing the pool of potential offenders by altering crime risk factors. These factors are not specific to property crime and include community disorganization, poverty, ineffective parenting, academic failure, and negative peer influences. Many effective programs can ameliorate these factors including parental training, youth employment, preschool programs, home visiting for newborns in high-risk families, recreational programs, and school completion initiatives. Some of these are described in other briefs, but it is important to emphasize that changing peoples' lives is not easy and social development programs must be carefully implemented and provided with enough resources to make a real difference.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED means understanding the relationship between physical design and levels of criminal activity and then manipulating the environment to reduce crime.

Burglary and auto theft are often crimes of opportunity. Even sophisticated offenders who target specific homes, businesses, and vehicles prefer vulnerable targets. Environmental design changes that increase the potential offender's perceived risk of being caught should help to reduce these crimes.

Some CPTED strategies are quite simple. Upgrading locks on doors and windows and taking other 'target hardening' measures can reduce burglaries. Other successful initiatives are far more complex than simply changing door locks. The Bushbury Triangle Project shows the need to consider the needs of the community and also illustrates the crime reduction potential of CPTED-based neighbourhood revitalization.

The Bushbury Triangle Project involved renewal of a public housing project in England. This entailed a modernization programme, home security improvements, and new fencing. During the modernization, planners realized that behaviour was not improving and that that the project needed more consultation with residents so they would develop a sense of ownership of the improvements.

To facilitate this ownership, part of the estate, the Triangle, was designated a separate community, and physical changes were made to encourage pedestrian circulation within this area. Community activities were run by the residents from a newly-designated community house.

Subsequently, crimes reported to the police dropped by one third compared with other parts of the estate which had been modernized, but which lacked the community component. Victim surveys showed substantial reductions in crime, and fear of crime declined by 50 percent.

Box 1 **CPTED in Ottawa**

In Ottawa, CPTED strategies have reduced property crime. The Ottawa Police Service randomly selected 10 existing locations where CPTED audits had been requested by the owners/occupiers and 10 locations that had a CPTED audit during the pre-building planning process. Where recommendations made at the planning stage were implemented, subsequent criminal activity was very low. However, the crime problems predicted by the CPTED analyst have occurred in locations where recommendations were not implemented. Similarly, where the owners of existing locations followed the recommendations of the analyst, crime decreased. If recommendations were not implemented, crime subsequently remained the same or increased.

Community Programs

Programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, Operation Identification, and Citizens on Patrol are carried out by individual community members, though municipalities typically play a central role in organizing and maintaining them.

Neighbourhood Watch

These Action Briefs advocate a problem-solving approach to prevention. A good example of this approach is a project that began with a study of burglary patterns which found that many residents in a public housing project were repeat burglary victims. The probability of a second burglary was four times higher than the probability of a first burglary elsewhere in the project. In response, the municipality improved security in burglarized homes and also established 'cocoon' Neighbourhood Watch programs involving the immediate neighbours of the victimized household. Burglaries declined by 53 percent after the implementation of the program.

This study is one of several positive evaluations of Neighbourhood Watch. However, many other evaluations have not shown positive results, typically because participation rates are too low. Some neighbourhoods will require a significant effort

to involve people in community programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, but without this effort the programs will fail.

Also, the successful project involved several different types of interventions, including improving home security. An evaluation of a multi-city Burglary Reduction Initiative in the United Kingdom found that **using a combination of several types of intervention** is more effective than single interventions. Another study of this Initiative showed that **the intensity of the crime prevention effort** is also crucial to success. Programs involving more intense activities reduced more burglaries than those with less program activity.

The lessons for Canadian municipalities are clear. Burglary reduction initiatives should:
- Be based on research on the nature of your community's problem;
- Involve a combination of prevention strategies; and
- Be intense enough to ensure the problem is addressed.

Preventing Auto Theft: A Comprehensive Prevention Initiative

The lessons learned from burglary prevention also apply to other property crimes. An auto theft prevention program in Winnipeg was based on detailed research into the nature of the problem. Planners developed a comprehensive program integrating policing, environmental design, and social development strategies. It had a strong community partner in Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI); effective leadership from government, police, and MPI; sufficient resources to ensure success; and a commitment to working together across organizations.

For much of this decade, Winnipeg was the auto theft capital of North America with theft rates about 4 times the national average. A program instituted in 2005 has led to dramatic reductions in auto theft. Rates dropped by 42 percent in 2008 and by March, 2009 were down 75 percent from the 2004 peak.

These reductions are the result of a multi-agency program called the Winnipeg Auto Theft Suppression Strategy (WATSS). WATSS is based on the best evidence about what works in reducing auto theft. The main program components are based on strategies that had been effective elsewhere:
- Intensive supervision of chronic auto theft offenders. Curfew checks are done as frequently as every 3 hours;
- Installation of electronic immobilizers in vehicles (mandatory for the most at-risk vehicles). These make it almost impossible to steal the vehicle without the keys; and
- A broad range of programs dealing with the root causes of auto theft.

Other programs which target chronic offenders have also reduced auto theft significantly in Regina and in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

Conclusion

The successful examples of property crime reduction discussed in this Action Brief demonstrate that something can be done about crime. It is up to municipal governments to put this knowledge into action in order to improve the quality of life in our communities.

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POLICING FOR SAFETY*

Strategic Overview

When governments decide to do something about crime, they often hire more police. This is an expensive way to address crime. Canadians spent $10.5 billion on policing in 2007 and each additional officer adds about $100,000 to police budgets.

Does it work? Does an increase in police numbers mean less crime or could the police do more with their existing numbers of officers? These questions are vital to municipalities trying to keep their citizens safe and their costs down.

Fortunately, there has been a good deal of research on what works in policing. This research shows that just adding more officers will not likely have much impact on crime. It also tells us that most efforts at community policing that are not problem-oriented have not made our cities safer. However, there are innovative police strategies that will have an impact on the safety of our communities. Smarter use of police resources should be part of any municipal crime reduction initiative.

The most promising strategies involve problem-oriented policing that focuses on high-crime locations (hot spots) and high-rate offenders as well as partnerships with social services and citizens (e.g. Strategic Actions for Community Safety in *Safe Streets*). These strategies are based on an analysis of the community and its crime problems and on a proactive effort to work with community partners to solve these problems.

Action for Municipal Stakeholders

1. Learn and adopt best policing practices;

2. Implement problem-oriented policing that is results oriented;

3. Utilize technology for crime analysis and for accountability;

4. Develop collaborative partnerships with a variety of community groups, based on mutual understanding, respect and getting results.

* Prepared by Rick Linden, University of Manitoba

Justification

When governments decide to do something about crime, they often choose to hire more police. This is an expensive way to address crime. Canadians spent $10.5 billion on policing in 2007 and each additional officer adds about $100,000 to police budgets.

Thus it is important to ask the question: Does it work? Does increasing police numbers reduce crime? Could the police do more with existing numbers of officers? These questions are important to municipalities trying to keep their citizens safe and their costs down.

Fortunately, there is research on what works in policing. This research shows that just adding more officers will not likely have much impact on crime, but that there are innovative police strategies that will have an impact on the safety of our communities. Smarter policing should be part of any municipal crime reduction initiative.

Increasing Police Numbers

Simply adding more police officers will have only a limited impact on crime unless the increase in numbers is unaffordably large. An expert panel of researchers reviewed a broad range of studies and concluded that **incremental increases in the number of police officers does not, on its own, reduce crime.** It is worth noting that the significant declines in Canadian crime rates during the 1990s occurred as budget cuts were reducing the number of police officers.

Community Policing

Community policing has been widely-adopted. However, there is **little evidence that it has had a significant impact on crime**. Some researchers have concluded that this failure is because community policing has never been properly implemented. In many municipalities community policing involved putting community offices into strip malls or adding some beat officers without integrating their functions into the core activities of the department. Typically, community officers had little specific direction about what they should be doing. Not surprisingly this has not reduced crime and many police departments across Canada have moved away from their community policing initiatives.

Despite this history of failure, it may be too soon to reject community policing. Many of those who helped develop community policing agree that it should have three components:

- Problem solving – a proactive approach to community problems aimed at dealing with the problems underlying crime and disorder by using information to analyze problems and implement solutions.
- Decentralization – a recognition that 'one size fits all' policing cannot meet the needs of our diverse neighbourhoods and communities.
- Community involvement – the police work with the community to solve crime problems.

These three have rarely been put together in a well-managed program (See Box 1 for an important exception) and any attempt to revitalize community policing should begin with this framework.

Box 1 **Successful Community Policing: Edmonton's Neighbourhood Foot Patrol**

This program was based on research showing that some places were crime hot spots. The Edmonton Police Department placed storefront police offices in areas that had the highest number of calls for service. The officers assigned to work from these offices were Neighbourhood Foot Patrol officers. Their duties included foot patrol and working with the community to help solve neighbourhood problems. The program accomplished its goals of reducing repeat calls for service, increasing citizen satisfaction with police services, and increasing the morale of the officers involved with the program. This demonstrates that community policing can work if it is well-planned, carefully-implemented, and managed through accountability mechanisms. Unfortunately, most community policing initiatives have not done these things.

Problem-Oriented Policing

While increasing police numbers is not an effective way to reduce crime and most community policing efforts have failed to make us safer, research shows that problem-oriented policing does work.

Most police work is reactive — citizens call 911 and the police send a car in response. **Problem-oriented policing is proactive.** Rather than waiting for calls, the police **analyze their community's crime problems and try to deal with the underlying conditions** that produce these problems. Problem-oriented policing can focus on **places** or on **offenders**.

Focusing on Places: Hot Spot Policing

Some places have more crime than others. Some police departments have used their knowledge of crime patterns to **focus their crime reduction activities on places that generate or attract crime**. Consider an apartment complex that generates dozens of calls for service each week. Reactive policing would continue to send cars to the complex and deal with each of these incidents. A problem-oriented police service would analyze the factors that are contributing to the high volume of calls and work with community members to deal with these factors. For example, if burglaries are high and analysts found that locks on doors and windows were inadequate, the police could try to encourage the apartment complex managers to install better security hardware.

Hot spot policing is made easier by computer mapping technology that allows police to see where particular types of calls are concentrated. Research supports the effectiveness of hot spot policing. There are concerns that the approach will just displace crime to nearby areas, but this has not been a major problem.

Focusing on People: Offender-Oriented Policing

Policing can also **focus on offenders**. Programs like the Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP) for juveniles are utilized in many communities. These programs identify the most serious offenders, regularly monitor these offenders, and offer a broad range of social services to help move them away from their criminal activities.

In Winnipeg, the most serious young auto theft offenders have been identified and when they are in the community they are monitored by the police Stolen Auto Unit and by a special unit within Probation Services. They are checked as often as every three hours and those who violate release conditions such as curfews are apprehended. Probation officers work with the families and schools of the young offenders to help them move out of the auto theft subculture. This program has been extremely successful in reducing auto theft.

Private Policing

Private security personnel outnumber the public police in Canada. There is also an overlap in functions. The public police do foot patrol in Toronto, while in Toronto Community Housing a private patrol officer does the same thing and in Ottawa RCMP officers guard embassies while the Commissionaires guard federal office buildings. Municipalities should recognize the interdependence of public and private policing and encourage them to work together. For example West Edmonton Mall Security personnel work very closely with the Edmonton Police Service. This relationship enhances mall safety and reduces public police costs because Mall Security does some tasks that would otherwise be done by the Edmonton Police Service.

An Optimistic Picture and a Word of Caution

Smarter policing can reduce crime, particularly when combined with other initiatives. However, many researchers have urged a note of caution. Some new police strategies are proactive and highly focused. Accountability mechanisms such as CompStat have put pressure on police supervisors to reduce crime numbers. In some communities including New York City this has led to accusations that policing is discriminatory and too aggressive. Where the police have gone too far, relationships with the community have become strained.

Guidelines for Effective Policing

Research provides Canadian municipalities with guidelines to improve policing effectiveness. Some of these have been adopted by police departments, but practices vary widely from city to city.

- Police should **adopt evidence-based best practices.**
- Policing should be **problem-oriented**. Resources need to be moved from call response to addressing problems proactively. Crime analysis is an important part of this — the more we know about a problem the easier it is to develop crime reduction strategies.
- **Technology** is an important policing tool. Information technology enables effective crime analysis and crime mapping as well as increased accountability.
- Build **accountability** mechanisms into policing. CompStat has been adopted by many departments and is a vital component of problem-oriented policing.

- **Develop comprehensive strategies.** There is no simple solution to crime and the police cannot stop crime by themselves. However, police play a key role in broader crime reduction strategies.
- **Partnerships** are a key to effective crime reduction. Partnerships are needed at many levels. Different units within police departments must work with each other and with other police departments. It is important to work with other parts of the justice system to ensure a coordinated response to crime problems as well as with the community. One of the most notable gang prevention programs, the Boston Gun Project (discussed in the Action Brief on *Safe Streets*), is a successful example of a collaborative offender-oriented policing project.
- **Community involvement** must be enhanced. The police should **develop partnerships with community groups that are focused on the community's problems.** The police need to go beyond traditional notions of the community to identify agencies, groups and individuals who can help with crime reduction. Consider the innovative strategy of the Toronto police officer who contacted Bill Gates to enlist the support of Microsoft to help police prevent internet child pornography. Manitoba Public Insurance provided funding and staff to help reduce vehicle theft in Manitoba. Ottawa has partnered with property developers in the Crime Free Multi-Housing program that incorporates crime prevention strategies in the design and management of apartment buildings. Edmonton and Waterloo police work closely with social agencies in innovative elder abuse initiatives. These initiatives go far beyond simply setting up a community police office and expecting the public to drop in and help with crime prevention.

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SELECTED EXAMPLES OF THE PROMISE OF PREVENTION

Prevention programs such as those teaching parenting or helping kids at risk to complete school reduce crime for one seventh of the cost of incarceration.

- Greenwood, P.K. et al., 1994; Waller, I., 2006

Results from *The Fourth 'R' Curriculum,* a school-based prevention program developed in Ontario addressing bullying, dating violence and peer violence, shows significant reductions in aggressive behaviour towards peers.

- Wolfe, D.A., Crooks, C.V., Chiodo, D., Hughes, R. and Jaffe, P., 2005

An evaluation of the *Youth Inclusion Program* which operates in 110 of the most deprived and high crime areas in England and Wales reduced youth serious offending and so arrests by 65%, and reduced overall crime in neighbourhoods by up to 27%.

- Youth Justice Board of England and Wales, 2003

The *Winnipeg Auto Theft Suppression Strategy* reduced auto theft by 75% in 4 years by: intensive community supervision of high-rate auto theft offenders; a mandatory vehicle immobilizer program for the most at-risk vehicles; and enhanced social services for offenders and other young people. The investment of $52 million has already saved $59 million and future savings are estimated to be at least $30 million a year.

- Linden, R., 2009

¨Problem solving partnerships¨ in Boston, where mothers mobilized while police and youth service agencies partnered to get young men out of gangs and stop them from carrying guns, demonstrated a 71% reduction in homicides committed by youth within two years.

- Kennedy, D. National Institute of Justice, 2001; Waller, I., 2006

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