Integrated Approaches to Crime Reduction and Crime Prevention

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Criminal Justice Reform Secretariat

• Formed in 2006 to develop a comprehensive coordinated and evidence-based approach to transform criminal justice in B.C. and improve public confidence in the justice system

• Promotes integration of justice, health and social services

• Resourced with staff seconded from the partnering agencies
Criminal Justice Reforms

- Promote swift, efficient, cost effective reforms that result in fair resolution of cases
- Focus resources on key priorities
- Develop strategies that draw on communities’ strengths and resources to develop solutions
Justice Reform Projects

- Vancouver’s Downtown Community Court
- Crime reduction strategy
- Crime prevention strategy
- Knowledge transfer
Integrated Crime Prevention Strategy

• Research demonstrates:
  – crime prevention through social development works
  – crime prevention is cost-effective
Cost Effectiveness

- Extended Prison
- Probation
- Parent training
- Youth to complete school

Increases in taxes in US$ per family to achieve a 10% reduction in crime

Source: ICPC Digest 11, 1999
WHO Ecological Model - Risk Factors

Societal
- Gender and economic inequality, norms supportive of violence, policies re: school expulsion, low prosecution of offenders

Community
- Concentrated poverty, unemployment, high crime, high mobility, high density, drug trade, few services for victims

Relationship
- Poor parenting, violence between parents, low income, delinquent peers

Individual
- Personal and psychological characteristics, history of violence, substance abuse

Source: WHO report on Violence and Health, 2002
WHO Ecological Model – Programs to Reduce Risk

Societal:
- Public information
- Strengthen police and judicial systems
- Reduce poverty and inequality
- Educational reform
- Reduce access to means
- Job creation programmes

Community:
- Reducing alcohol availability
- Changing institutional settings
- Identify and refer people at risk for violence
- Improving trauma care and health care access

Relationship:
- Parenting programmes
- Home visitation
- Family therapy
- Mentoring programmes

Individual:
- Social development programs
- Vocational training
- Victim care and support

Source: WHO report on Violence and Health, 2002
Cross-sector Benefits of Prevention

For example:

- **Increased school engagement and reduced substance abuse** → increased graduation; increased employability; reduced demand for income assistance; greater housing stability, reduced demand for health services, less criminal activity; etc.

- **Healthy pregnancy/improved parenting** → fewer FASD births; reduced child abuse; less demand for health services; increased school success; reduced criminal activity, etc.
But typically

- There is never enough money to fully fund all evidence-based programs
- Government tends to divide its available funding among a larger number of deserving programs
- We don’t see the kinds of outcomes reported in the research
Approach

Premise: Concentrating resources on coordinated, targeted prevention → greater outcomes than multiple smaller/independent initiatives.

1. Identify existing crime prevention activities in BC
2. Compare current activities with research on “what works”
3. Develop recommendations for a coordinated, evidence-based approach to crime prevention
4. Cross-sectoral agreement
Community Planning

• Research supports the importance of local coordination:
  – Conduct a local needs assessment before selecting specific programs for implementation
  – Get broad community level support for both implementation and sustainability
  – Coordinated assessment, planning and implementation is essential for identifying what is needed and sustaining the effort once implemented.
Importance of Integration

• Common interest in outcomes
• Program implementation too often at cross purposes
• Need to maximize available resources
Early Solutions, Faster Justice

Justice Reform in British Columbia