

Cutting Crime Significantly: Investing in Effective Prevention

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“Many who live with violence day in and day out assume that it is an intrinsic part of the human condition. But this is not so. Violence can be prevented. ... In my own country and around the world, we have shining examples of how violence has been encountered.”

Nelson Mandela, WHO, 2002

The challenge to Victoria is to implement the concepts of evidence based and good governance prevention (e.g. sustained inter-sectoral problem solving) to tackle the multiple causes of crime, so that crime and victimization are reduced, money saved and quality of life improved.

The developments in the last decade demonstrate that crime and victimization can be reduced significantly by prevention that uses the scientific knowledge about what works and policies that follow new norms established by the United Nations. These reductions will avoid billions of dollars in loss to victims and communities and avoid the need to ratchet up expenditures on police, courts and corrections.

We will see in a moment that Victoria is a State with less crime than most other States in Australia, but that Australia has rates of crime per capita towards the upper (worst) end of the band of rates of common crimes in affluent European and North American democracies. Its policing services, courts and corrections are likely as professional as those of the other democracies.

However, comprehensive spending reviews of the impact of police, courts and corrections on crime, such as those listed below, have been unable to show that significant percentage increases or decreases in these services impact positively or negatively on crime levels. Reviews such as those done by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in England suggest that policing will have an impact on crime when it is targeted and in “strategic” partnership with school boards and municipalities.

By the standards of those countries, Crime Prevention Victoria demonstrates a small but tangible step towards a program that would make a difference to crime levels. However, to achieve significant and sustainable reductions in crime rates, it will need the permanency that legislation can provide and the investment of an ounce in prevention – 5% – to do much better than the pound – 100% – spent on enforcement and criminal justice expenditures. The potential pay-offs are nothing less than huge. So the short-term pain for long-term gain is more than justified even if organizationally difficult.

The legislative and core budget funding will need to strengthen its use of what works, engage the State in a transparent and inter-sectoral crime reduction planning exercise, and achieve the training and organization of data to make it effective and accountable. The benefits will be measurable within three years but ultimately – 25% to 50% less – over a 10-year period. If

current unemployment and demographics stay steady, Victoria would move from a high-crime State to a low-crime State by international standards.

The remainder of this text sets out the slides and more detailed arguments that support the above statements. The reader is encouraged to look both at the UN Guidelines as well as the reports prepared by the International Centre for Prevention of Crime (1999a, 1999b) and Waller (2000) which provide more details and references on the arguments. They also provide details on the examples of inspiring programs and projects that are listed in my charts below. These details provide about a page on the crime problem, the program, the results and sources for further information.

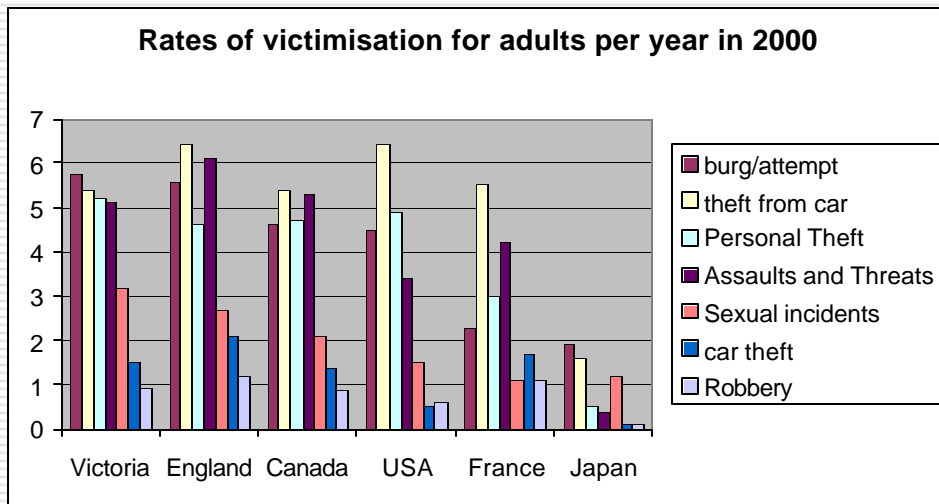
The author is working on a Handbook on the Implementation of the UN Guidelines for Crime Prevention for Canada and consults to ministers across the world on ways to improve the return to taxpayers for their dollars spent on crime control and prevention.

The Challenge of Crime to Victoria

For Western Europe, North America and Australia, one in four citizens aged 15 years and older will be victimized each year by a common interpersonal crime, such as a burglary, car theft or assault (Van Kesteren, 2000). The rates for Australia are marginally higher than those for these other countries.

The following chart shows the estimated rates for Victoria assuming that the victimization rates – like the rates of crime recorded by the police – would be 20% lower than the Australian national rates:

The risk of victimization in Victoria is less than much of Australia but is higher than some affluent democracies.



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Based on rates of crime recorded by the police, the risk of victimization is still more than double the rates of the 1960s.

Politicians talk tough on crime. More police are hired. Judges put more young men behind bars. More prisons are built. More taxes are needed. This cycle repeats itself year in, year out in western democracies, regardless of whether crime is going up or down. They want to “bust” rather than “solve” crime.

In the USA, this cycle of busting crime has amplified so much in the last 20 years, that taxpayers are paying far more for police and prisons than in any other democracy. Here are the facts.

Recurrent expenditure on public security per person per year

	<i>Victoria</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Aust</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>UK</i>	<i>Can.</i>
Police	\$225	\$233	\$226	\$260	\$238	\$240	\$320	\$346	\$286
Courts	\$19	\$33	\$26	\$47	\$38	\$40	\$157	\$52	\$61
Corrections	\$52	\$88	\$92	\$105	\$71	\$81	\$237	\$83	\$98
Total	\$296	\$353	\$344	\$411	\$348	\$361	\$714	\$483	\$444
Police	76%	66%	66%	63%	69%	67%	45%	72%	64%
Courts	4%	7%	6%	6%	7%	6%	22%	11%	14%
Corrections	18%	25%	27%	25%	20%	22%	33%	17%	22%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

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From 1980 to 2000, the number of full-time sworn law enforcement officers at the State and local level in the USA grew by 54% to 708,000, requiring taxpayers to find \$65 billion each year – close to \$90,000 per officer. In the same time period, police numbers in Canada and England and Wales grew by only 6% and 12%.

Just in those two decades, the number of adults incarcerated in Canada and England and Wales grew by 33% and 53%. In the USA, federal, state and local institutions rose by a staggering 290% to two million – one in five of all persons incarcerated across the world. The bill to taxpayers is now over \$50 billion per year – \$25,000 per inmate.

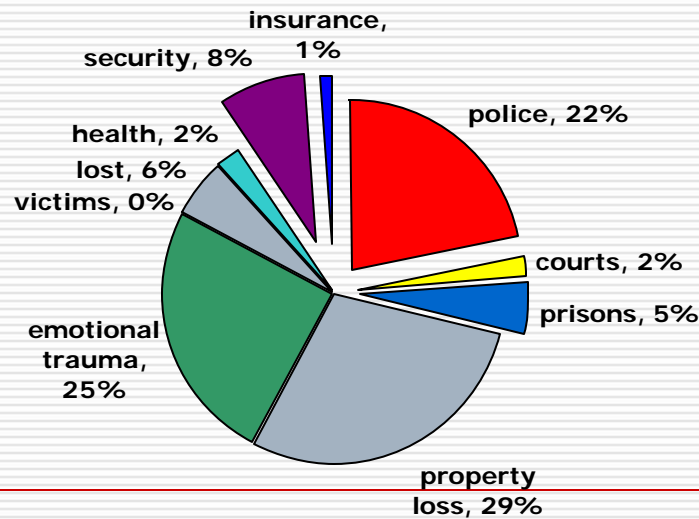
Even this degree of crime busting has achieved little. The rates of violent crime at the end of those decades had not changed and property crime had declined by only 20% – similar to Canada and England and Wales. The evidence suggests that these increases had little additional impact on crime (ICPC, 1999a; Sherman et al, 2002).

Those crime policies were in fact disastrous. Imagine a policy on health, education or industrial development that was associated with worse results for more money. Crime busting may have contributed to the small decreases in property crime, but then so did reductions in unemployment.

But tough on crime was tough on us for two other reasons. Firstly, crime itself costs victims in property losses, medical bills, time off work and so on. The cost of these interpersonal crimes is enormous – \$2,200 per household or \$4 billion for Victoria (ICPC, 1999a; Waller, 2002). This includes the loss, injury and trauma to victims, the costs of precautions such as alarms and private security, and the expenditures on police and prisons.

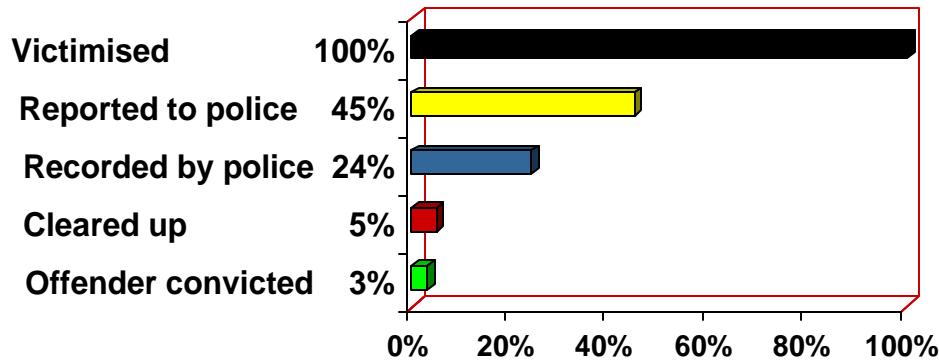
Interpersonal crime costs \$4 billion each year – it might be divided as follows ...

\$1,000 per citizen per year in enforcement, consequences and private security



Secondly, when we become a victim of crime, we not only suffer the loss, trauma and sometimes injury at the hands of offenders, but we will be used by the tough-on-crime system as witnesses. Unfortunately, it is not until after we have called the police that we discover that our call is unlikely to result in any ability to prosecute an offender as so few are identified. The following chart, taken from data published by the British Home Office, shows that only about 3% of victimizations result in a court case. If we consider only persistent offenders, then the percentage caught will be higher but unlikely to exceed 30% in terms of convictions.

Policing and criminal justice are ineffective in reducing crime - do not address causes and because few victimisations reach the courts



None of this is inevitable. Much can be done to cut crime back down to the rates of the 1960s and so avoid much of the trauma and loss to victims. Reducing crime by as little as 25% would save a billion dollars to taxpayers and victims.

Accumulated Proof that Crime Prevention Works and is Cost-effective

Importantly, the last two decades have brought a series of comprehensive spending reviews and prestigious commissions in the USA and elsewhere, which have concluded that crime would be solved by tackling systematically the causes of youth crime and violence. In 2002, the United Nations accepted the declaration of guidelines for crime prevention that starts with the assertion that clear evidence exists:

There is clear evidence that well-planned crime prevention strategies not only prevent crime and victimization, but also promote community safety and contribute to the sustainable development of countries... It has long-term benefits in terms of reducing the costs associated with the formal criminal justice system, as well as other social costs that result from crime.

The basis for the UN directives can be traced to several commissions that have confirmed that projects that tackle risk factors reduce crime significantly, for instance, by:

- Assisting teenagers at risk by mentoring or helping them to complete school;
- Working with families in difficulty to help their children or tackling bullying in schools;
- Assisting victims with information on how to reduce opportunities for crime and limiting accessibility to firearms;
- Taking care of victims, promoting community justice and encouraging reparative sanctions.

In sum, this clear evidence had already been brought together and agreed by no less influential bodies than the:

- ☐ National Report on Violence, 1990 (Australia)
- ☐ Parliament of Canada, 1993 (Canada)
- ☐ Home Office and Treasury, 1997 (UK)
- ☐ International Centre for Prevention of Crime, 1997/1999
- ☐ US Congress, 1997 and revised 2002, (USA)
- ☐ White Paper on Safety and Security, 1997 (South Africa)
- ☐ British Inspectorate of Police, 1998/2001 (UK)
- ☐ National District Attorneys Association 1999 (USA)
- ☐ Surgeon General, 2001 (USA)
- ☐ World Health Organization, (2002)

Full references for these texts is available on www.crime-prevention.ca, which is the Internet site of the Canadian Forum for Crime Prevention. This is a recently formed public interest group established to reduce crime and victimization through evidence-based prevention.

The International Centre for Prevention of Crime (Montreal) brought together 100 descriptions of prevention programs to inspire action and a digest of explanations, successes and strategies (International Centre for Prevention of Crime, 1999a and b). These provide easy access to this extensive government literature for elected and permanent government officials with or without expertise in criminology or crime prevention.

A key concept behind strategic approaches to crime prevention is that crime is concentrated in certain families and neighbourhoods as demonstrated by repeated large-scale surveys undertaken in affluent democracies. The next chart highlights the conclusions.

B. Offending and victimisation is predictable for groups (not individuals)

- ❑ 5% of youth account for 55% of offenses
 - ❑ Longitudinal studies confirm that 5% experience more risk factors such as relative poverty, ineffective parenting and dropping out of school
 - ❑ 4% of victims account for 44% of victimisation
 - ❑ Victimisation studies confirm that 4% lead life routines that increases risk such as not guarding goods, vulnerable to opportunity, close to offenders
 - ❑ Hot spot locations exist for drugs and other offenses
 - ❑ Police statistics confirm that hotspots concentrate offenders and victims geographically
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The next step is that governments and communities must learn to tackle the established causes of these concentrations of crime because when they do, they achieve reductions such as those demonstrated in the next chart for the social causes.

B. Tackling causes of persistent youth offending (5% responsible for 55%) reduces crime by 50% or more

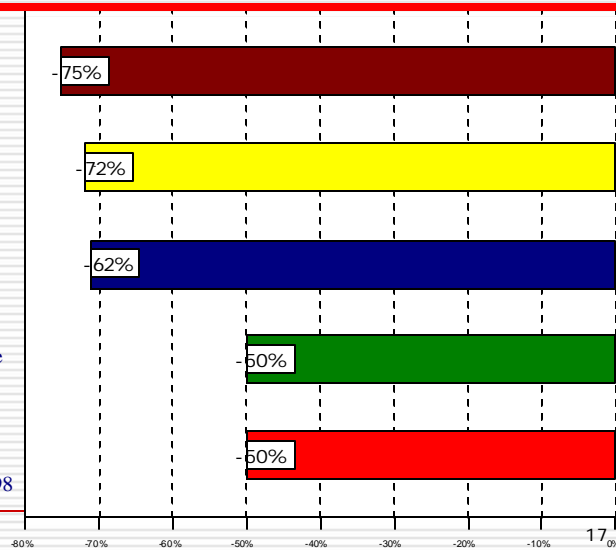
Enriched pre-school and
parental support (USA) p. 71

Responsibilisation and help
(Halt, the Netherlands) p. 139

Incentives to complete
school (Quantum, USA) p. 67

Enhancing parenting through nurse
visitation (Elmira, USA) p. 72, 78

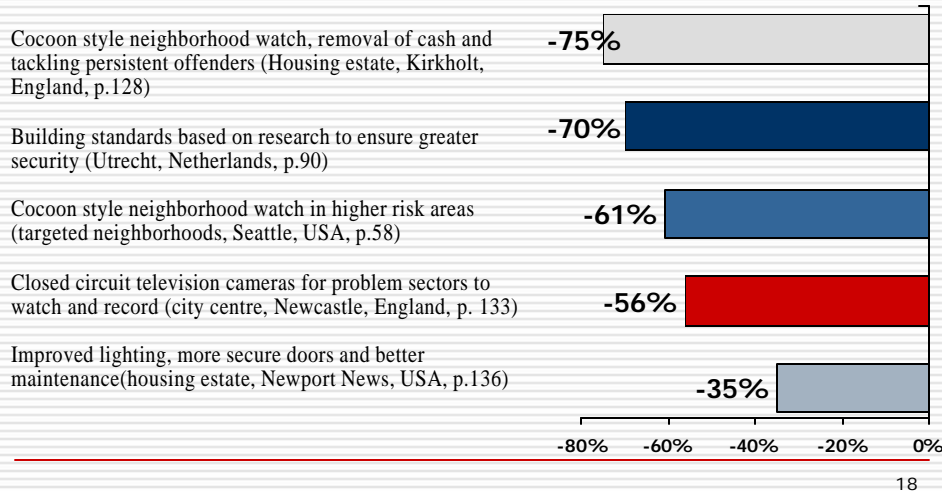
Focussing parents and teachers
vs causes of bullying (Norway) p. 98



The next chart demonstrates the same thing when governments and communities tackle the causes of victimization.

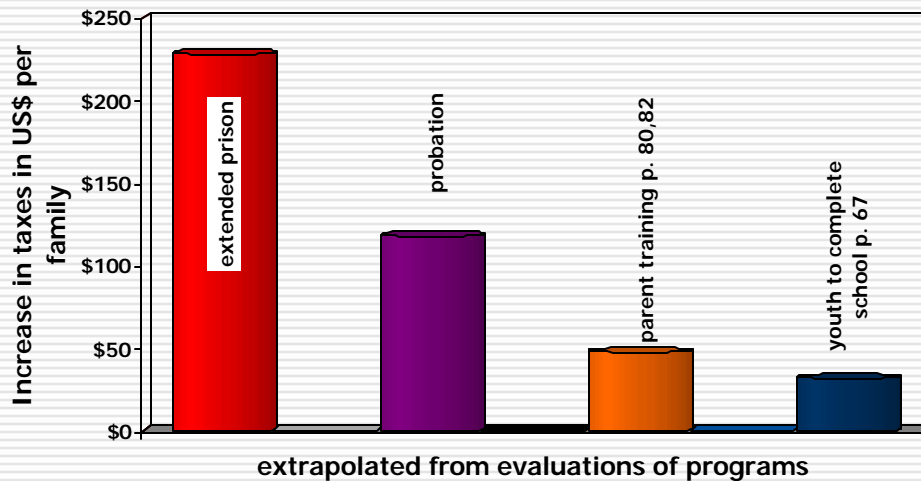
B. Tacking causes of repeat victimisation (4% experiencing 44%) reduces crime by 35% or more

Solutions to increase the risks and reduce the benefits for offenders



Some of these reductions are achieved in ways that save money to victims and the community (as well as provide better citizens). These savings far exceed those from detention. Rand has already shown that for a 10% reduction in crime, taxes would need to be increased by \$250 US per household for incarceration, yet only \$50 US for assistance with school completion, and \$35 US for family training.

Increases in taxes to achieve 10% reduction in crime (ICPC, 1999a)



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One of the reports was prepared by the US Surgeon General on the prevention of youth violence. It is particularly interesting, as it was the reports by the Surgeon General in the health area in the 1960s that eventually revolutionized public policy on smoking in the 1990s through declarations such as the one from Adelaide. Will the report that shows the correlations between youth being violent and such earlier life experiences as inconsistent parenting and failure in school lead one day to investment in youth so that fewer are involved in offending?

The report for the US Congress is interesting because it looks at what does not work. In 1996, the United States Congress required the US Department of Justice to review the results of all evaluations of programs designed to prevent or react to crime (Sherman et al, 1997). Its conclusions were only based on scientific studies that used the powerful scientific method of a randomized trial. This review showed that several popular programs do not work, such as Boot Camps, DARE and Scared Straight. It also questions whether many of the recent trends in community policing achieve reductions in crime.

What are some of the other principles in the UN Guidelines on Crime Prevention?

This symposium and Kit Carson refer to just three principles:

- Evidence-based policy and evaluation.
- Whole of government or joined-up government.
- Community-based approaches.

While I agree generally with these, the issue is not the concepts but how to operationalize them to achieve real reductions in crime, savings and improvements in quality of life. The UN is much more specific and rightly so. They realized that crime has multiple causes, which must be tackled through multi-sectoral approaches that are evidence-based, whole of government and community-based. But they went on to assert the importance of several principles, which I have organized below around 10 key elements.

Part A: Well Planned and Sustained Crime Prevention

® Institutional Framework to Maintain Crime Prevention

Governments must create and maintain institutional and accountable frameworks for their implementation, sustainability and review – bearing the primary responsibility, while working with civil society and communities. The next chart lists some examples.

1. Institutional Framework to Maintain Crime Prevention

- ☐ Crime Prevention Victoria, Australia
 - ☐ National Crime Prevention Board, Sweden
 - ☐ Youth Justice Board, UK
 - ☐ Local government strategies in Crime and Disorder Act, 1998, UK
 - ☐ Waterloo Community Safety Strategy, Canada
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You know about Crime Prevention Victoria. Let me provide you with one example at the city level. The city of Brent is one of 350 communities in the U.K. that provide core funding for crime prevention planning separate from policing. With a population of 250,000, Brent receives \$1,000,000 in core funding allowing them to plan for crime prevention through crime analysis, community mobilization efforts, and project proposals. It receives another \$900,000 in project funds. At the municipal level alone, this is \$7 per resident.

Let me provide you with an overview of another one of these – the Youth Justice Board – which is particularly interesting because it is an arm's length body, established permanently with control over the prevention, intervention and incarceration budget and committed to evidence-based policy development.

In 1996, the British Audit Commission completed a comprehensive spending review of programs to tackle youth offending, concluding that expenditures on policing, courts and prisons were misspending (on) youth (Audit Commission, 1996).

In 1998, the British Government created the Youth Justice Board through its trend-setting Crime and Disorder Act. This permanent public body is independent of police, courts and corrections but has used its power to persuade schools, housing, social services and police to collaborate on preventing youth offending and improving justice for youth.

It is committed to use evidence on effective practice to implement measures that will reduce youth offending and prevent crime victims. It has developed a business plan for the use of its resources that cover the programs for prevention in order to achieve specific targets such as a 10% reduction in youth offending.

Among its evidence-based programs to prevent youth committing crime is the Youth Inclusion Program. The Board funded an independent group called Crime Concern to focus on the 50 most at-risk youth aged 13-16 in each of 70 of the most difficult neighbourhoods. The youth were provided with 10 hours a week of activities, including sports, training in information technology, mentoring and help with literacy and numeracy issues. It also included assistance with handling violence, drugs, gangs and personal health.

The results confirmed by the scientific evaluation of the Youth Inclusion Program included a 65% reduction in youth arrests, a 30% reduction in youth removed from schools, and a 16% reduction in overall crime.

The program cost about \$8,500 per place per year. Coincidentally, this is the average cost of taking a young offender through the youth justice system for one offence. 10% of the program costs provided support to ensure the quality of its implementation. 5% went to the evaluation.

The Youth Justice Board used the results from the evaluation to expand the program to 400 neighbourhoods and start an equivalent program with youth aged 8-13.

© Harnessing International Scientific Results

This calls for the use of the international knowledge base about the multiple causes of crime and promising and proven responses. The next chart gives some examples. The Youth Justice Board above is the best example at this time. The work by the Home Office and Treasury gives a contrasting British example, where the Home Office did not follow the advice from the ICPC that contributed to the legislated independence of the Youth Justice Board. The analysis of the success and failures of the Home Office are the subject of presentations by Ken Pease and Peter Home1.

I have included the ounce of prevention or 5% rule. The Canadian Parliamentary report recommended that the investment in prevention should start at 1% of enforcement and criminal justice expenditures of government. This would be increased by another 1% of the CJS expenditures each year until it reached 5%.

2. Annual budgets of some efforts to harness the accumulated scientific proof

- Parliamentary Report, 1993 (Canada)
 - National Crime Prevention Centre - \$30 million
 - Audit Commission, 1996 (UK)
 - Youth Justice Board - \$500 million (?)
 - Home Office and Treasury, 1997 (UK)
 - Effective crime reduction strategy - \$100 million
 - British Inspectorate of Police, 1998/2001 (UK)
 - Legislation on city-police strategies

 - 5% guideline – spend 5% of CJS expenditures on prevention
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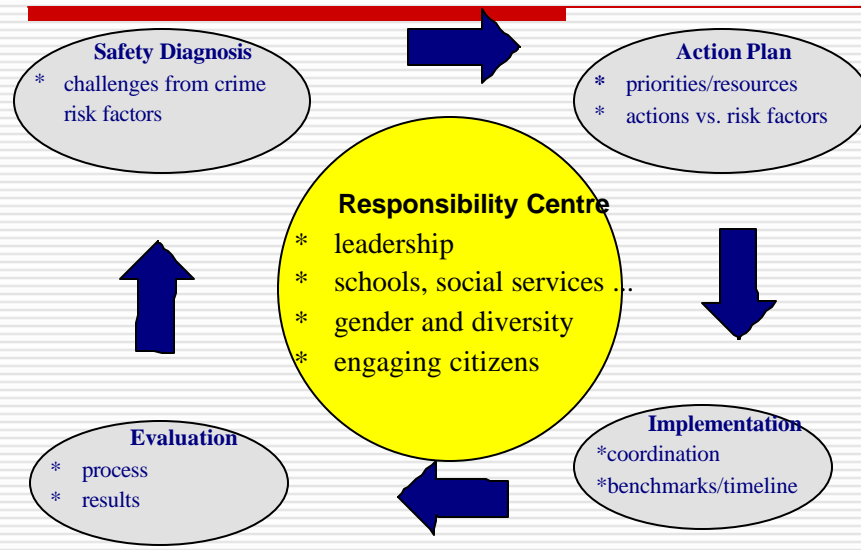
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TM Systematic Analysis, Planning and Interventions

Joined-up government and evidence-based prevention are loose concepts until they are put into practice as planned interventions that mobilize entities that tackle causes around a systematic analysis of the causes of crime, a plan that addresses local contexts, implementation that is effective and sustainable, and monitoring and evaluation;

The next chart shows the key concepts of this process.

3. Crime will be solved through joint work of schools, local government and policing to tackle multiple causes



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This process is now the subject of tool kits in countries such as Canada and South Africa, but importantly it is law in England and Wales, where every local government has to establish a committee to lead the diagnosis and planning process. It has been experimented and implemented in many other jurisdictions. It is, in fact, the process that has led to many of the successes that we discussed earlier. The next chart lists some examples of this process.

3. Crime will be solved through joint work of schools, local government and policing to tackle multiple causes

- ☐ Federation of Canadian Municipalities
 - Primer gives explanation on how to
 - ☐ Crime and Disorder Act, UK
 - requirement of cities and police services to collaborate in inter-agency strategy with schools, social services ...
 - ☐ Neighborhood renewal unit, UK
 - ☐ Bonnemaison Approach in France
 - City crime prevention councils
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Part B: Tackling Multiple Causes Systematically

Σ Integrating Crime Prevention into Social Development

As we have seen earlier, crime prevention must tackle well-established social causes of which you are aware from your own publications from Crime Prevention Victoria. So social programs must modify their actions to reduce crime. This will be important for policies, such as those addressing employment, education, health, urban planning, families, children and social marginalization. The next chart lists some examples.

4. Integrating Crime Prevention into Social Development

- ❑ Interministerial secretariat on the city, France
- ❑ Neighborhood Renewal Units, UK
- ❑ Safer beginnings, safer futures, Canada
- ❑ Nurse visitation programs eg Hawaii, USA

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(Designing out Crime

Crime prevention must address the situational causes of crime and “repeat victimization,” including through environmental design sensitive to public access, surveillance that respects privacy, and consumer goods designed to resist crime. Ken Pease discusses this further in his presentation. The next chart lists some examples.

5. Designing out crime

- ❑ Situational crime prevention – Clarke, USA
- ❑ Kirkholt Experiment, UK
- ❑ Firearm regulations, 1978, Canada
- ❑ Code for new housing, The Netherlands
- ❑ Steering wheel locks, Germany

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| Supporting Public Involvement and Lawfulness

It is important that there is public support for the policies. The examples from England such as the Youth Justice Board and the local government processes all include an important element on public involvement. Indeed, their Internet sites are used to enable citizens to comment on plans and proposals.

It is also important generally to promoting positive conflict resolution and using education and public awareness programs to foster a culture of lawfulness and tolerance. The next chart gives some examples.

6. Promoting public engagement and lawfulness

- ☐ Anti-bullying programs, Norway
 - ☐ Canadian Crime Prevention Network
 - To promote evidence based prevention
 - ☐ Local community safety strategies, UK
 - ☐ Waterloo community safety strategy, Canada
 - ☐ Lawfulness education, Mexico
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(Addressing the Links to Organized Crime

Prevention is not limited to tackling the local social and situational causes of crime. It must also address problems caused by local organized crime such as gangs as well as the links between trans-national organized crime and problems of common crime. The next chart includes the interesting examples of the reductions in murders in three US cities achieved through strategic policing and refers to the need to look at other issues.

7. Addressing links to organized crime

- ❑ Targeting youth gangs 'use of guns
 - Boston
 - Fort Worth
 - New York
- ❑ Reducing demand for illegal drugs, guns and women

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Part C: Implementation Considerations

[Capacity Development

Probably the most significant reason for the partial failure of the Home Office evidence-based crime reduction strategy was the lack of attention to developing the capacity of local government employees, crime prevention practitioners and police officers to be able to implement crime prevention.

The guidelines call for training and capacity building for senior officials, practitioners and others, certification and professional qualifications, and assistance to promote the capacity of communities.

Several entities have significant experience and success in developing the human capacity to succeed. The chart lists some of these. I have given more information on Crime Concern below.

8. Capacity development

- ❑ Crime Concern and NACRO, UK
 - ❑ Bristol University, UK
 - ❑ European Forum on Urban Safety, France
 - ❑ Tool kits, UK
 - ❑ National Crime Prevention Council, USA
 - ❑ Eisenhower Foundation, USA
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The UN Guidelines state that governments (including local) should include prevention as a permanent part of their structure and that successful implementation of effective crime prevention requires training and capacity building.

Crime Concern was launched in 1988 to provide consulting and training services, managing crime prevention programs, developing new approaches to practice and policy. It was created as an independent organization to work in partnership with private and non-profit sectors

Crime Concern has been an active partner with police chiefs, municipal leaders and government in developing proposals for a successful national program to reduce crime and victimization in England and Wales. It has assisted local governments to develop community-wide strategies to reduce crime and victimization and pioneered many successful programs to reduce burglary and prevent youth offending.

In 1998, the UK adopted the landmark legislation on Crime and Disorder, which required every local government to set up crime reduction strategies, which diagnose, plan, implement and evaluate multi-sectoral approaches. This requires the creation of a permanent responsibility centre to bring together the leadership of police services, municipal government, schools and so on.

Crime Concern provides crime reduction advice, support and training to local government, police and youth services to implement this legislation, particularly helping them to:

- work as effective local partners and teams in tackling crime;
- conduct local audits to identify priority crime problems;

- develop crime reduction strategies with set targets for reducing crime;
- adopt measures known to work in reducing crime;
- monitor and evaluate results.

Crime Concern also manages nationally driven programs to prevent crime, such as:

- setting up volunteer mentoring schemes to support and improve the life chances of young offenders or those excluded from school;
- involving groups of young people in schools to help tackle issues of crime, nuisance and anti-social behaviour;
- introducing a mix of proven measures in high-risk neighbourhoods to cut crime by 50% in three years.

Every local government in England and Wales has a centre responsible for developing and implementing its community safety plan. These produce three-year plans for crime reduction in partnership with other agencies and implement many proven projects known to have reduced crime in other jurisdictions.

| Data and Evaluation

For systematic planning and accountability, it is important to have adequate data for management and operation purposes. The next chart lists some examples. Increasingly governments are accepting the norm that 10% of program budgets should be spent on evaluation, which must include comparisons with routine activities.

9. Data and evaluation

- ☐ Crime mapping, UK
 - ☐ Victimization surveys, Argentina
 - ☐ 10% of funds for evaluating crime reduction program, The Netherlands
 - ☐ 10% of funds for evaluating crime reduction program, UK
 - ☐ National longitudinal survey on children and youth, Canada
-

L Respecting Different Perspectives and Other Groups

Ensuring that crime prevention respects the rule of law and internationally recognized norms as well as paying due regard to the different needs of women and men as well as vulnerable members of society.

10. Respecting different perspectives

- ☐ Focus on child abuse and violence against women
- ☐ All female police stations, Brazil
- ☐ Vienna women's groups, Austria
- ☐ Women on urban planning boards, Canada

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Conclusion

Crime Prevention Victoria is an important initiative that must be expanded and strengthened to lead the State of Victoria to a quality of life where rates of crime have been reduced significantly below international norms without any unwarranted increase in taxes and with a better use of present social and criminal justice policy dollars.

This requires legislation to ensure the permanency and sustainability of the lead crime prevention entity as well as investment of the equivalent of 5% of enforcement and criminal justice dollars, so that it can do the diagnosis and planning as well as foster the implementation and evaluation of the measures that are needed.

It will need to use what has been tested and shown to reduce crime in Victoria and elsewhere as well as develop the human capacity, data and so on. The next chart overviews some of the elements discussed above that would form part of the business plan to reduce crime and victimization, avoid considerable annual losses due to crime and improve the quality of life for Victoria.

Business plan for Prevention that will reduce crime and its costs by 50% in next ten years

- ☐ Consolidate national, state and local government centres to
 - Spearhead shift to tackle social and situational risk situations
 - 5% rule
- ☐ Main stream well planned crime prevention into policing, schools and local government and set targets
- ☐ Invest immediately in human capacity to implement well planned crime prevention at State and local level
- ☐ Ensure basic data such as victimisation, longitudinal, offender based and comparative cost-benefit
- ☐ Communicate to public what works and targets will be set
- ☐ Balance efforts to tackle common crime, intra-familial violence and high need communities

- ☐ Results are less crime, less costs and better future for youth

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Further Information

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