



OPERATION:
SAFE
COMMUNITY

A Strategic Initiative to Reduce Crime
in Memphis & Shelby County



Operation Safe Community is lead by Mayor A C Wharton, Mayor W. W. Herenton, U.S. Attorney David Kustoff, District Attorney General Bill Gibbons, Sheriff Mark Luttrell, and Director Larry Godwin. The Memphis Shelby Crime Commission (President, Mike Heidingsfield) and the University of Memphis, Department of Criminology (Professor Richard Janikowski) have provided the essential research support to ensure the OSC Plan is grounded in the best information available about what works in fighting crime. Memphis Tomorrow has provided strategic support, coordination, and financial backing for the initiative.

Numerous other people have been involved in the planning effort – members of the faith, business and education communities, government and neighborhood leaders, social service agencies and others.

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Introduction

Operation Safe Community is an historic and ambitious crime abatement initiative spearheaded by top government and law enforcement leaders. **Its intention, quite simply, is to make Memphis-Shelby County one of the safest communities of its size in the nation by 2011.**

This document is both a roadmap and a call to action for achieving that goal.

It is a roadmap with 15 research-backed strategies for how law enforcement — both by itself and in specific types of community partnerships — can make a meaningful dent in crime.

It is a call to action — to governments, churches, neighborhoods, schools, business, media and others — to support the OSC roadmap...but also, to go further...

While criminologists agree that effective law enforcement can make a meaningful difference in crime, they note that law enforcement is limited. There are no “silver bullets.”

Meaningful crime reduction requires nurturing our children and their families so that they become positive and productive contributing members of our community. Just as effective law enforcement strategies are within our reach, so are the strategies to prevent crime in the first place.

Those strategies proven to reduce the risk of a child turning to criminal behavior are as follows:

- High quality early care and education
- High quality K-12 education
- Developmentally appropriate after-school and summer programs
- Jobs, internships and other career exploration opportunities
- Active, positive parenting

These strategies, as well as the 15 strategies enumerated in the Operation Safe Community plan, have a significant price tag associated with them. However, it is well-documented that investments made in such strategies pay for themselves many times over both in improved quality of life for all our citizens, and in significant financial returns.

The Costs of Crime

Crime exacts an incalculable toll on our community.

It attacks our quality of life and erodes the fabric of our neighborhoods. Crime damages our ability to recruit jobs and talent, and drives existing residents and businesses out of Shelby County.

In addition, crime consumes significant public and private dollars. In the seminal work *The Monetary Value of Saving a High Risk Youth*, Miller & Cohen calculate that the criminal justice and victim costs of a career criminal — juvenile and adult — range from \$1.3 - \$1.5 million over their lifetime.¹

Different types of crimes have different associated costs. Without extensive economic study, it's impossible to know exactly how much total Part I crimes cost Shelby County. However, the following provides a glimpse into the potential extent of total crime costs.

- Of the 76,364 Part I crimes committed in 2005, only 146 were homicides. However, based on The Center for Disease Control estimate that a homicide costs \$713,000, it follows that a miniscule percentage of the Part I crimes in Shelby County cost a whopping \$104,198,000.
- The TN Economic Council on Women (TECW) article “The Impact of Domestic Violence on The TN Economy” estimates \$174,000,000 in

tangible costs to TN annually — including business community costs, medical and present value of life costs, legal system costs and social service system costs. Based on this data and considering that 25.9% of state-reported domestic violence incidences are reported in Shelby County, the UT College of Preventative Medicine estimates the cost of domestic violence in Shelby County to be approximately \$45,000,000 per year.

Costs of Juvenile and Adult Criminal Careers

| | Cost Category | Present Value (2% Discount Rate) |
|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Juvenile Career | Victim Costs | \$60,000 - \$244,000 |
| | Criminal Justice Costs | \$20,000 - \$82,000 |
| | Sub-Total | \$80,000 - \$325,000 |
| Adult Career | Victim Costs | \$850,000 |
| | Criminal Justice Costs | \$283,000 |
| | Offender Productivity | \$54,000 |
| | Sub-Total | \$1,200,000 |
| Total | | \$1.3 - \$1.5 million |

Source - Cohen, M.A., 1998

Crime in Memphis and Shelby County: A Snapshot

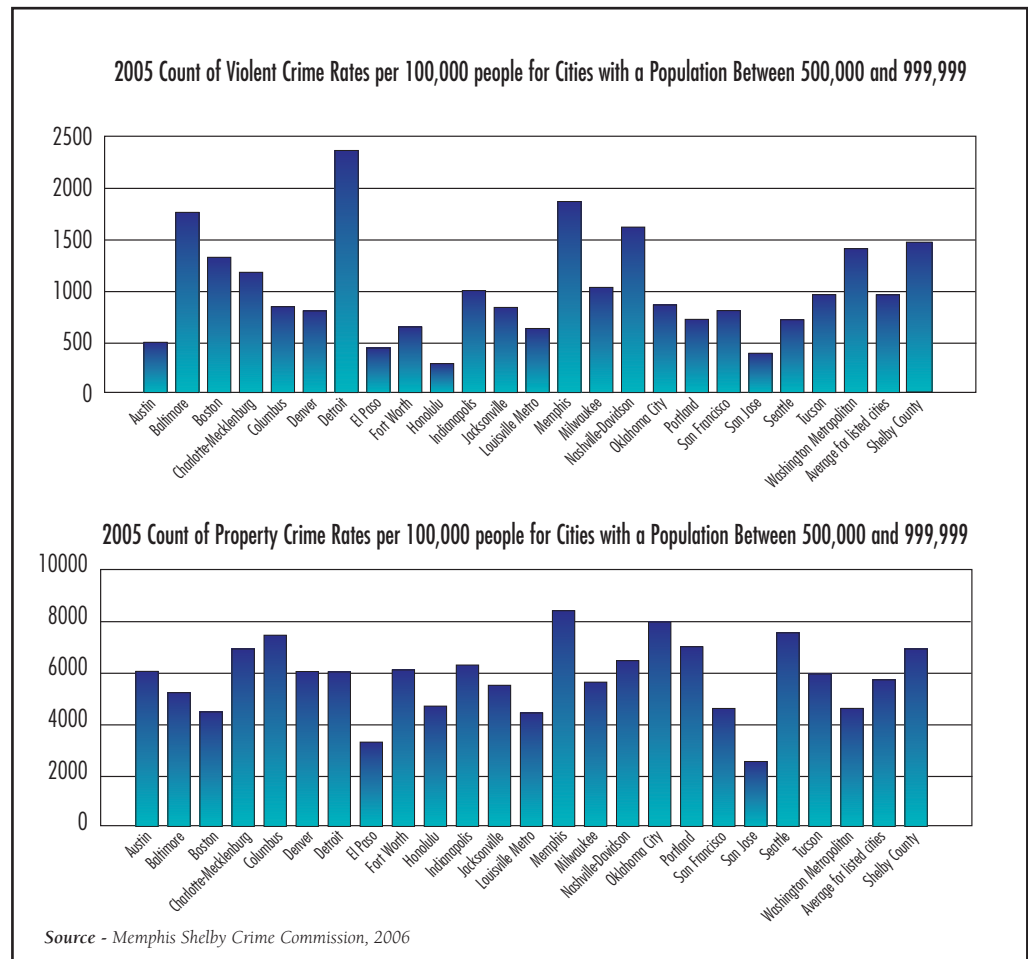
In looking at crime in our community, this document takes two perspectives. First, it looks at how Memphis-Shelby County compares to other communities with populations between 500,000 and 1,000,000 people. Second, it looks at local trends over the past decade for all the law enforcement jurisdictions in Shelby County.

Memphis-Shelby County and the National Rankings

As compared to other communities of its size, Memphis ranks towards the top, whether compared as an MSA, a Memphis/Shelby County area, or as a single city. The charts below indicate Memphis' ranking, according to the FBI's Uniform Crime

Report, among the 23 cities with populations between 500,000 and 1,000,000 that are served by a single police department.

Note that because Operation Safe Community is concerned with Shelby County overall, there is also included a bar that represents the combined total of all law enforcement jurisdictions in the County. As a total community, Memphis-Shelby County also ranks near the top.



Crime in Memphis and Shelby County: A Snapshot

Comparing crime rates between communities is a common way to evaluate crime, although the FBI warns communities against comparing the effectiveness of its law enforcement by looking at national crime rankings. Here are some of the main reasons why*:

- Even if communities use the same reporting system, they may classify and report crimes differently. For example, the data collection for Forcible Rape used by the Illinois State Police does not match the UCR guidelines for that category; therefore Illinois jurisdictions do not report Forcible Rape.
- Changes in reporting practices can and do dramatically change a community's ranking from one year to the next.
- Extraordinary or catastrophic events can also impact crime numbers. For example, after Memphis' "Hurricane Elvis" in July

2003 some crime categories saw increases when a number of businesses were without power for several days (and weeks in some cases). Another example is Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, whereby thousands of people came (temporarily and permanently) to the Houston area to escape the tribulations associated with the hurricane. Some of these people became victims of crime in the area, and it is also assumed that some number of the Gulf Coast residents were also perpetrators of crimes.

- Citizens' inclination to report crime has a significant impact on the accuracy of crime reporting.

That said the Memphis rankings are still sobering.

*For a full explanation of these factors, see *A Primer on Measuring Crime* at www.memphiscrime.org.

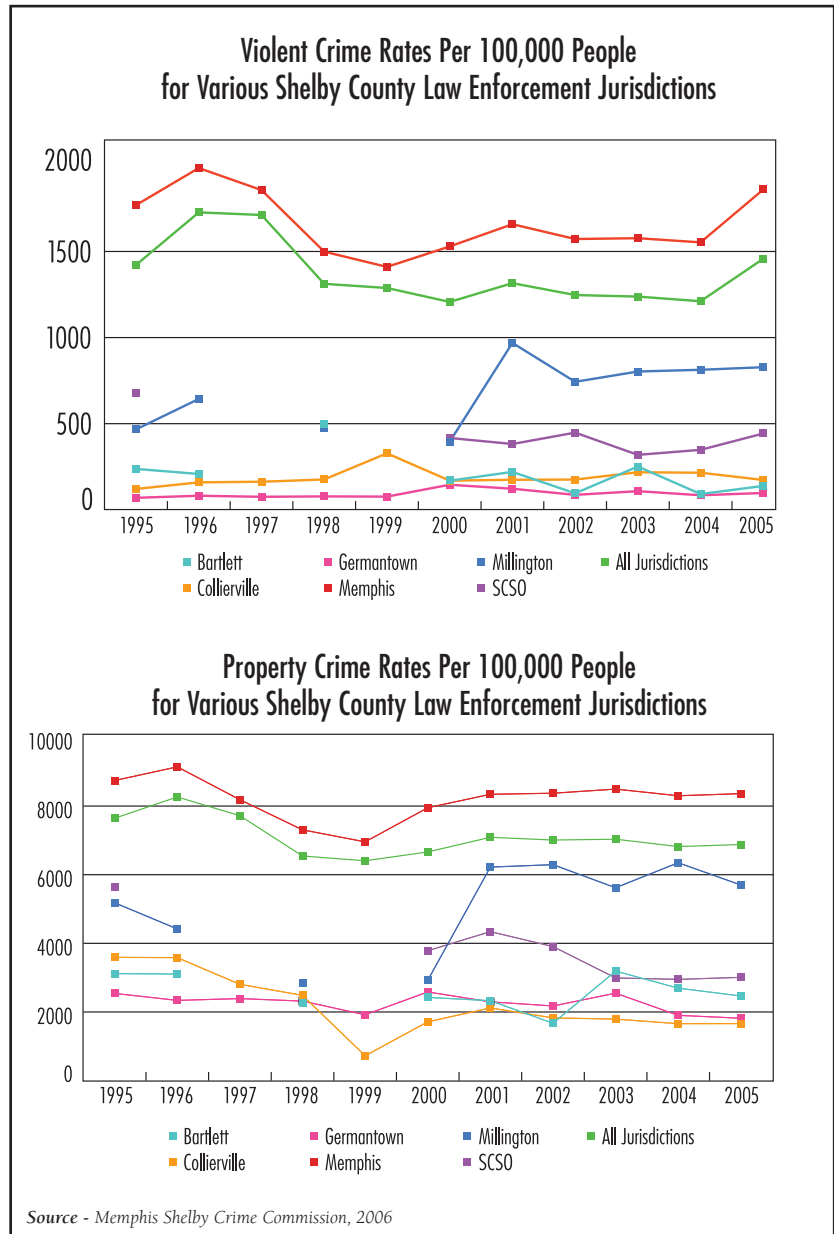
Crime in Memphis and Shelby County: A Snapshot

Local Trends Over Time

Like most of the country, Shelby County saw declining crime rates from 1996 to 2004, but a significant spike in the violent crime rate in 2005.

We are in a battle with violent gang members and drug traffickers who threaten our streets and neighborhoods and prey on the most vulnerable in our community — the very young, the elderly, the poor, and those facing language barriers, such as our growing Hispanic community. Both local and national crime experts note the “rise of the thug ethos,” where crime for sport and over what might be described as “casual disrespect” is becoming more common. Juvenile officials describe a steady increase in “gang wannabes,” and many believe that the widespread glorification of the “gangster culture” is a significant contributor to increased violence among young people.

A look at the 2005 data reflects the seriousness of this battle. Most serious and violent crimes, including gun crime, gang-related crime, and violent juvenile crime, are on the rise.



Crime in Memphis and Shelby County: A Snapshot

Juvenile officials describe a steady increase in “gang wannabes,” and many believe that the widespread glorification of the “gangster culture” is a significant contributor to increased violence among young people.

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Crime Upswing Quickfacts

- The number of reported violent crimes involving three or more suspects (a good indication of gang activity) increased by 38 percent from 2004 to 2005. This was after five straight years of steady decline.
- The number of reported crimes involving firearms in Memphis and Shelby County increased by 18.8 percent from 2004 to 2005.
- The number of juveniles prosecuted for violent crimes against persons increased by 34 percent from 2004-2005.
- The number of juveniles prosecuted for major violent crimes rose 39 percent from 2004-2005. This increase was reflected in the number of juveniles transferred to Criminal Court to be tried as adults — 172 in 2005 compared to 97 in 2004 (a 77 percent increase).²

Critical Challenges To Be Overcome

Shelby County faces many challenges in reducing crime. However, there are a number of promising, research-supported strategies currently underway. Today's opportunity is to coordinate and build on these efforts so that they can have maximum impact on crime. Below is a summary of our local challenges that contribute to our crime problem:

1. Children and youth in Shelby County are at high risk of turning to crime, and lack many resources that are proven protection from such risk.

Living in poverty greatly increases the risk that a child will become involved in criminal behavior in the future, and 44% of children in Memphis-Shelby County are in economically vulnerable families. Local teen and single-mother birth rates and high school drop-out rates — factors which also put children at higher risk for future involvement in crime — are significant. In addition, one out of every five-to-six households in Shelby County is in a neighborhood where social disorder — including public drinking/drug use, loitering, and panhandling/begging — poses special challenges for parents.²

Young people of all incomes and backgrounds in Shelby County also report that they are missing key “assets” that research shows helps

protect against a life of crime. A 2006 survey commissioned by the Memphis/Shelby County Youth Development Collaborative from America's Promise and the Search Institute to middle school students in Memphis City, Shelby County, and Catholic schools paint a sobering picture.

The good news is that 77% of young people say they are optimistic about their personal futures, 70% say they have a family life that provides high levels of love and support, 70% spends one or more hours per week in a religious institution, and 76% are motivated to do well in school.

However, on average young people in Memphis and Shelby County have less than half the assets that increase positive behaviors and decrease risk of future criminal activity. The survey clearly shows that youth with fewer assets were much more likely to use alcohol and marijuana, skip school, and earn lower grades.³

Critical Challenges To Be Overcome

Excerpts of survey results are as follows*

| | % of Young People Who Say They Have Asset |
|---|---|
| Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young persons whereabouts | 46% |
| Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school | 35% |
| Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior | 29% |
| Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community | 49% |
| Young person is actively engaged in learning | 49% |
| Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations | 48% |
| Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently | 29% |

Source - America's Promise and Search Institute, 2006

**For full results, see www.ydcmidsouth.org/*

These issues are far beyond the ability of law enforcement to address.

However, there are strategies proven to protect children and youth from high risk for future crime.

These include:

- Affordable and accessible high quality early care and education
- High quality K-12 education
- Developmentally appropriate after-school and summer programs
- Jobs, internships and other career exploration opportunities
- Active, positive parenting

These strategies are mostly outside the scope of the Operation Safe Community plan. However, they must be addressed by the community to ultimately decrease the need for growing law enforcement and criminal justice resources.

Critical Challenges To Be Overcome

2. In fact, too many young people in Shelby County are already in trouble, with over 12,000 youth charged with unruly or delinquent acts in 2005 and nearly 30,000 suspensions or expulsions from Memphis and Shelby County Schools in that same year.

The vast majority of serious and violent juvenile offenders have many previous violations with both court and schools, with criminal acts progressing in severity until they wind up in the court's custody. Nearly all adult offenders began their criminal careers as juveniles, taking their first steps towards a life of crime at a young age.

Certainly, not all youth that come in contact with the law at a young age go on to a life of crime. However, it is true that most offenders begin their criminal career with a relatively minor offense at a young age. Some local intervention and diversion programs do exist to help youth when they first get in trouble. Unfortunately, most intervention resources are spent once the youth are near the "end of the line," when it's much harder to turn their lives around. More early intervention is needed to engage troubled youth in positive support networks that can help redirect their paths.

Critical Challenges To Be Overcome

3. While Memphis and Shelby County have taken important steps to employ proven effective policing strategies that pinpoint police resources where most needed, this approach must be expanded and sustained.

Early results of the MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ initiative, which uses a full set of proven policing techniques focused on crime "hot spots," are showing significantly reduced crime in targeted areas. With the addition of police officers* this initiative could be greatly enhanced. The Sheriff's office and municipalities have also taken steps towards data-driven policing, but again, not enough resources are yet available to fully exploit this effective approach.

**Note: Mayor Herenton has proposed the addition of 650 new police officers (500 to crime enforcement and 150 to school safety). The proposal also calls for: (a) providing hiring incentives to encourage lateral transfer from other police departments, (b) elimination of the current residency requirement, and (c) re-evaluation of the two year college requirement for commissioning as a police officer. The Mayor has commissioned Berkshire Hathaway to conduct an independent efficiency study for all City of Memphis governmental operations including a review of the needs for additional police manpower. The City Council has commissioned an independent assessment of the Mayor's proposal by the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission. Those assessments will be complete in February 2007, and will provide an important tool for citizens to ascertain any efficiencies that can be gained and what additional investments must be made to ensure adequate police staff.*

4. The State has very weak laws against gun and gun-related gang crime.

The Shelby County District Attorney has implemented a no plea bargaining policy on violent crimes committed with guns and has worked closely with federal prosecutors to try convicted felons illegally possessing guns under much tougher federal laws. However, the state needs tougher laws dealing with gun crimes, gang related violence, and possession of guns by convicted felons to insure significant prison time and deter potential offenders from committing gun crimes.

Critical Challenges To Be Overcome

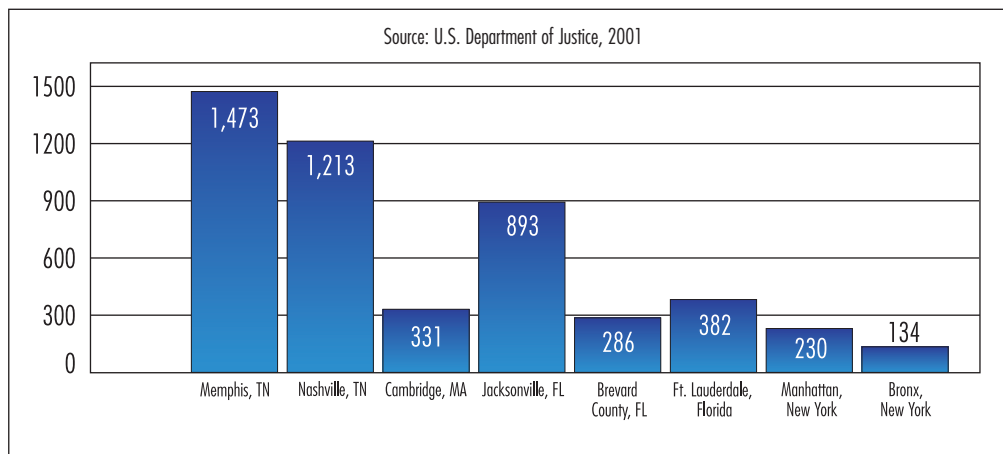
5. The Shelby County District Attorney's Office does not have enough prosecutors to employ the most effective prosecution technique, called "vertical prosecution."

This technique allows cases to be handled from start to finish by a single prosecutor (or team of prosecutors). Vertical prosecution provides more effective prosecution of cases, and additionally affords a higher level of service for victims who only have to deal with one prosecutor throughout the entire process. The chart reflects the high caseload which, in turn, requires a much less effective "assembly line" approach to the vast majority of cases.

Based on the Weighted Caseload Study commissioned by the Tennessee Comptroller's

Office in 1998, the Shelby County D.A.'s office needed one hundred nine (109) prosecutors, eleven (11) more than the current number on staff. Under a more liberal formula used by public defenders across Tennessee to project an adequate number of lawyers to cover their caseloads, the Shelby County D.A.'s office would actually need about 130 additional prosecutors. Based upon its 2005 caseload, in order to have a caseload per prosecutor similar to the Manhattan borough of New York City, the Shelby County D.A.'s office would need over three hundred (300) more prosecutors. While this staff increase may not be feasible, there is no question that the DA's office needs additional manpower to more effectively get and keep criminals off the street.

CASES PER PROSECUTOR



Critical Challenges To Be Overcome

6. Shelby County suffers from very high rates of domestic violence, drug abuse, gang involvement, and neighborhood blight — all of which contribute to serious and violent crime and none of which can be solved by law enforcement alone.

They require specialized law enforcement-community partnerships, encompassing education, treatment, social services, and neighborhood support. While such local partnerships exist at some stage and scope, they must be expanded and strengthened to deal with these critical areas.

7. Both adult and youth prisoners returning to society have a very difficult time turning their lives around, with up to 60% of local youth offenders rearrested within 2 years and 67% of local adult offenders rearrested within 3 years.

A relative few criminals are responsible for committing the majority of crimes, and ex-offenders who cannot successfully reenter society too often simply become chronic offenders.

Former prisoners committed to becoming successful contributors to society face enormous challenges. Both adults and youth more often than not have mental health and/or substance abuse problems and lack education, life skills, housing, job prospects, or a positive support network. They need comprehensive resources to compensate for these challenges. While comprehensive programs for both youth and adults are in the process of development in Shelby County, sustained resources are needed to reach all ex-offenders who are willing to commit to turning their lives around.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

The following 15 research-backed strategies point to how law enforcement — both by itself and in specific types of community partnerships — can make a meaningful dent in crime. These strategies are grouped according to three major categories: (1) **Smart Policing**, using law enforcement resources to best prevent, find and apprehend criminals; (2) **Aggressive Prosecution**, laws, resources, and processes to most effectively deter and prosecute criminals; (3) **Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships**, law enforcement working together with neighborhoods, businesses, faith-based organizations, social service agencies, and others to prevent or reduce crime problems.

Smart Policing

Strategy 1: Expand data-driven police deployment in Shelby County.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: Memphis Police Department; Shelby County Sheriff's Office, Suburban Municipal Police Departments

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in Part I crimes

ACTION PLAN

- Increase the number of Memphis Police Officers and other resources so that operations under the MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ (Crime Reduction Using Statistical History) initiative will be enhanced.
 - Upgrade technology to enhance crime analysis and continue to increase training for analysts.
 - Increase personnel and other resources dedicated to hot-spot policing. Specifically:
 - Continue to incorporate the diversified police units for high visibility patrols, covert surveillance, directed patrols, or other appropriate tactics in identified high crime areas.
 - Continue to address problem-oriented policing which tailors tactics to deal with specific types of crime problems — such as nuisance properties (clubs, drug houses), drug dealing, and code enforcement violations — that cause even more serious crime.
 - Personnel have been added for MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ task forces in every precinct to proactively address violent crime in hot spot locations as the data reveals them. (Example: MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ task forces engaging in proactive policing tactics to suppress crime that has been shown to be prominent during a particular day and time.)

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Smart Policing

Strategy 1: Expand data-driven police deployment in Shelby County.

- MPD notes that these steps require additional manpower to address proactive policing while the current officers continue to respond to and address the day-to-day calls for police service. From January 1, 2006 to October 31, 2006 the MPD has handled 680,061 calls for service. Due to the critical need to address the crime rate the MPD is paying overtime for officers to work proactively in the identified hot spots areas. MPD further notes that with the addition of the 500 officers the department would operate more efficiently by reducing overtime expenditures.
- Maintain increased crime fighting through weekly MPD Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ TRAC (Tracking for Responsibility, Accountability, and Credibility) meeting involving the Command Staff and all Precinct Commanders, Administrative Majors, and Crime Analysts to detect crime hot-spots, identify crime patterns, develop police responses, and assess the effectiveness of the tactics.
- Continue the data-driven Undercover Program that focuses on guns, gangs and drugs.
- Uphold Memphis Police Department participation in the Project Safe Neighborhoods model for inter-agency cooperation in investigation and federal prosecution of targeted repeat robbery offenders.
- Sustain specialized policing (Strike Team) strategies that focus on “quality of life” crimes (such as disorderly conduct, loitering, and illegal vending), enforcement of nuisance laws (e.g., clubs, problem properties) and other specific types of criminal behavior.
- Develop partnerships to financially support a communications plan for informing the media, public, and offenders about the MPD Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ strategy in an effort to deter crime.
- Increase technology and training to enhance crime analysis capacity at the Shelby County Sheriff’s Office (SCSO) to support enhanced hot-spot policing.
- Enhance Automatic Vehicle Locator system at the SCSO to enhance its Computer-Aided Dispatch capacity.
- MPD, SCSO, and suburban municipal police departments to explore feasibility of shared real-time crime analysis system.
- Expand and upgrade the Community Safety Information System, a data-sharing incident and offender mapping system, which houses data from the MPD, SCSO, TN Probation and Parole, and Juvenile Court to provide multi-layered analysis of crime problems.
- Expand and enhance the Safety Geographical Data Repository (PSGDR.) to streamline the response process of the local emergency 9-1-1 system. This system includes law enforcement, fire, emergency management, and others.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Smart Policing

Strategy 1: Expand data-driven police deployment in Shelby County.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

Recent research by the National Academy of Sciences' National Research Council has identified three promising areas in policing strategies. As its 2004 report, *Fairness and Effectiveness in Policing*, states:

*"...studies that focused police resources on crime hotspots provide the strongest collective evidence of police effectiveness that is now available. On the basis of a series of randomized experimental studies, we conclude that the practice described as hot-spots policing is effective in reducing crime and disorder and can achieve these reductions without significant displacement of crime control benefits."*⁴

The most recent Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ focused operations area had a 65% decline in violent crime over a six week period.

Source - Memphis Police Department, 2006

In addition to hot spot policing, the National Research Council recommended police use of problem-oriented approaches to address issues of crime and disorder, including expanded use of strategies beyond traditional law enforcement tactics. Use of selected, focused non-law enforcement tactics can be effective in combination with a tactical philosophy emphasizing tailored police response to particular problems.

Additionally, the report found that investigation effectiveness is enhanced when focused on a relatively few high-rate offenders. Moreover, the use of covert investigations targeting "high risk, previously convicted offenders" produces a "high yield in arrests and incarcerations per officer."⁵

The MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ strategy encompasses all of these recommendations. Evaluation results for the effectiveness of the strategy are being currently compiled. *However, the MPD preliminary evaluation results suggest that this strategy carries great promise for reducing serious crime in Memphis.*

Based on early results, using these three data-driven policing strategies in all Shelby County police agencies can significantly strengthen crime-fighting efforts.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Smart Policing

Strategy 2: Expand the Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) law enforcement partnership model in Shelby County.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: The United States Attorney's Office, the Shelby County District Attorney General's Office, the Memphis Police Department, the Shelby County Sheriff's Office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives, the United States Marshal's Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the University of Memphis Department of Criminology and Community Research.

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in crimes involving firearms

ACTION PLAN

Build on the local implementation of PSN, a federal initiative launched in 2002 to reduce gun crime that charges local law enforcement with developing strategies for (1) partnerships, (2) strategic planning, (3) training, (4) community outreach and public awareness, and (5) accountability. Tactics include:

- Continue conducting joint weekly reviews by prosecutors and law enforcement of every arrest in Shelby County where a firearm and/or ammunition is seized. Detailed review packets are prepared by a dedicated PSN Task Force comprised of two ATF agents, two SCSO Investigators, a Deputy U.S. Marshal, and eleven MPD Investigators supervised by a MPD Lieutenant.
- Further increase officer training regarding identification of armed persons, federal and state firearm laws, report writing, and search and seizure law to increase the quality of gun arrests and raise conviction rates.
- Expand number of select cases that are taken directly into the federal system, thereby exponentially increasing the deterrent effect of higher federal penalties for gun crimes. Continue utilizing a "partner prosecutions" approach to gun prosecutions by making "above-range state offers" on remaining cases to avoid federal prosecution.
- Apply PSN's weekly review procedure and/or "partner prosecutions" approach to other areas of violent crime where there is joint state/federal jurisdiction.
- Enlarge PSN Partnership to include less-traditional law enforcement partnerships.
- Coordinate among PSN Partners to take full advantage of "Operation Safe Surrender," a community based program spearheaded by the U.S. Marshal's Service to motivate self-surrender of fugitives. *(More details regarding this initiative are found on page 43).*

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Smart Policing

Strategy 2: Expand the Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) law enforcement partnership model in Shelby County.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

The results of the local PSN partnership demonstrate its effectiveness for sustaining shared, coordinated efforts to fight gun crime. Shelby County has received national recognition from the federal Department of Justice for its innovative training programs and successful partnerships through PSN. Since its inception in 2002, PSN Partners have reviewed over 7,200 gun arrests, these reviews have resulted in more than 700 federal felony indictments and over 300 guilty pleas in state court to much higher terms of imprisonment than defendant's usually receive on these type offenses.

After significant reductions in firearms-related violent crime in 2004, the PSN Partnership has recently responded to the upwards trend in the violent crime rate as follows:

- In October, 2006, the Safe Streets Task Force was expanded using the PSN model to include joint weekly reviews of all carjackings and business robberies occurring in the City of Memphis. This expansion was made possible by the dedication of significant levels of manpower to the task force by the MPD and the FBI to investigate carjackings and business robberies, while remaining task force members, which include SCSO Deputies, continue to investigate all bank robberies occurring in Shelby County and surrounding counties.
- Sponsored by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) in September, 2006, approximately 75 federal, state and local officers received instruction on PSN targeted topics, included a training block on "Recognizing the Characteristics of Armed Gunmen." ATF will sponsor multiple sessions of this training in spring, 2007.
- Reinstated in 2006, "Ceasefire" is a monthly meeting to deter future crimes. Previously convicted felons get information on educational and work opportunities, as well learn about the stiff penalties under federal law for illegal gun possession and use.
- Beginning in 2006, a new PSN partner, the Shelby County Regional Health Council Anti-Violence Committee, began spreading the PSN gun crime deterrence message through member agencies such as the Shelby County Health Department, Faith-based Health Clinics and School Nurse programs. Through the Operation Safe Community planning process, gun crime deterrence materials have been screened and made available to over 200 individuals and organizations.

The momentum of these recent activities forms a foundation for continued success of the PSN expansion.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Aggressive Prosecution Strategy 3: Toughen state laws for gun crime.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: The District Attorney's Office and the Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in crimes involving firearms

ACTION PLAN

Introduce legislation in the Tennessee General Assembly in 2007 to address the problems of (1) use of guns to commit crimes, (2) gang-related violent crimes — most of which are committed with guns — and (3) illegal possession of guns by those with criminal records. Garner support for the legislation from across the state, including support from newspapers, law enforcement, and advocacy groups such as the NRA.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

Our local experience with the D.A.'s no-plea bargaining policy on the most violent crimes and the joint federal-state-local crackdown on illegal possession of guns tells us that policies and practices designed to hold offenders accountable, coupled with conveying the consequences to potential offenders, can have a significant impact on the crime rate.

The D.A.'s No Deals policy covers most serious crimes committed with guns and uses existing state laws as effectively as possible. Our current state laws dealing with gun crimes and gang violence are too weak, though. We need tougher state laws covering (1) the commission of violent crimes with guns and (2) violent crimes committed by gangs (three or more acting together).

The crackdown on illegal possession of guns by convicted felons has been implemented primarily by using tough federal gun laws. But there aren't enough federal resources to deal with all illegal gun possession cases. We need tough state laws as well to allow the D.A. to effectively go after convicted felons in possession of guns in state court.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Aggressive Prosecution

Strategy 3: Toughen state laws for gun crime.

Experiences elsewhere reflect the benefit of tough laws to deal with violent crime, coupled with communicating the consequences to the street level. Florida and New York are two examples.

- In 1998, criminals in Florida used guns to commit 31,643 reported violent felonies, including 13,937 armed robberies. That year, the mandatory punishment for using a gun to commit a violent felony was only three years in prison.
- The 1999 Florida legislature passed the “10-20-LIFE” bill that provides for enhanced minimum mandatory prison terms for offenders who commit crimes with guns (a mandatory minimum 10-year sentence for crimes committed with a gun, a mandatory 20-year sentence for firing a gun during the commission of a crime, and 25 years to life if the bullet fired causes death or injury).
- A public awareness campaign communicates the tough-on-crime message of the “10-20-LIFE” law. The Department of Corrections provides printed materials, such as bumper stickers, posters in English and Spanish and brochures in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole, to public and private schools, businesses, and other public areas for display.⁶
- New York’s Sentencing Reform Act of 1995 eliminated parole for second-time violent felony offenders. In 1998, New York’s legislature took an additional step by enacting “Jenna’s Act,” which eliminated parole for all violent felony offenders. By 2004, the violent crime rate per 100,000 population in New York had decreased by 53.8 percent compared to 1994.
- In 2005, the violent crime rate (murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) increased slightly from 2004 — by 1.2 percent.⁷ New York legislators responded quickly to the slight one year increase by passing a law that increased the mandatory minimum sentence for illegal possession of a loaded gun to 3-1/2 years.⁸

In only six years, from 1998-2004, Florida’s new, tough “10-20-LIFE” law helped drive down violent gun crime rates by 30 percent. These crimes decreased even as Florida’s population increased over 2.5 million (16.8 percent) between 1998 and 2004.

Source - Florida Department of Corrections, 2005

By passing tougher state laws, we can do a better job of holding those who commit gun violence, or persist in illegally toting guns, accountable. More importantly, we can change behavior by deterring others from making bad choices — the ultimate goal being to change people’s behavior rather than simply sending more people to prison.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Aggressive Prosecution Strategy 4: Reduce the caseload per prosecutor in the D.A.'s office for more effective prosecution.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: Shelby County District Attorney's Office and the Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference.

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Use of vertical prosecution for all serious violent crime cases (defined as first degree murders, second degree murders, especially aggravated robberies, aggravated robberies, aggravated rapes, attempted first degree murders, carjackings, and felony domestic assaults) and serious repeat offender cases (defined as designated by a special point system developed by the criminal court judges) will be prosecuted using a vertical prosecution technique.

ACTION PLAN

Add 24 assistant D.A.s. and support staff to expand the use of a more effective prosecution strategy called "vertical prosecution" to target (1) those charged with serious violent crimes and (2) serious repeat offenders.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

The current process of handling most cases in the D.A.'s Office is called "horizontal" because each case is handed off from one attorney to another as it progresses through the system. Each attorney handles only one step in the process, with as many as six different prosecutors handling each case. An appropriate analogy would be an assembly line in manufacturing. With limited resources, it is the most *efficient* way of handling a large caseload.

The other process is called "vertical" because each case is handled by only one prosecutor who will handle all steps in the system for that case. This means that only one prosecutor would handle any one case. An appropriate analogy would be a handcrafted product. This method gives us the most *effective* way of handling cases, with better law enforcement outcomes and victim service.

There are many advantages to the vertical system:

- More knowledge of facts and circumstances. With only one prosecutor there is no excuse for not knowing what happened at earlier proceedings. The prosecutor will always be familiar with the facts of each case as well as the past history of the case. This results in better-prepared presentations and lessens preparation at each stage.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Aggressive Prosecution

Strategy 4: Reduce the caseload per prosecutor in the D.A.'s office for more effective prosecution.

- One point of accountability for disposition. If there is a problem with the prosecution, there is only one prosecutor (or one team of prosecutors) responsible for the prosecution. It cannot be “someone else’s” problem.
- Encourages realistic charging decisions. The decision to charge and which offense to charge is often difficult and impacts later proceedings. If the person making that decision is the same one who will have to handle the later proceedings, more care is taken in making this important decision.
- Encourages realistic plea offers. While plea-negotiating is sometimes a necessary evil, it is important that the person making the decision whether to make an offer and, if so, what to offer, is fully familiar with the case. Where there is only one prosecutor involved in a case, that prosecutor will bear all responsibility for the disposition of the case. It is much easier to hold someone responsible for a case when he or she is solely responsible.
- Lessens confusion to victim/witnesses. Perhaps one of the most important advantages of vertical prosecution is that the victims and survivors will always know from the beginning exactly who is handling the case. Under the present system, the victims and survivors are constantly communicating with a series of many different prosecutors before talking with the one who will finally try and dispose of their case. Vertical prosecution is better service to the persons most affected by crime.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Aggressive Prosecution

Strategy 4: Reduce the caseload per prosecutor in the D.A.'s office for more effective prosecution.

There are some disadvantages to vertical prosecution involving court scheduling, which can be reduced through internal policies and pre-assigning court dates. However, there is no question that vertical prosecution provides a higher quality of service to the public and more effective prosecution of any one case. As in the case of any job, assembly line procedures may more efficiently handle heavy volume, but at some sacrifice of quality. Vertical prosecution used on priority cases allows the benefits of higher quality prosecutions for those cases without sacrificing the efficiency of horizontal prosecution for volume.

Currently, the Shelby County D.A.'s Office does not have enough prosecutors to widely use vertical prosecution. Primary areas where vertical prosecution is being used currently are cases being handled by the office's (1) Gang and Narcotics Prosecution Unit, (2) White Collar Crime Unit, and (3) Child Protection Investigation Team. The chart below reflects our high local caseload which, in turn, requires a horizontal or assembly line approach to the vast majority of cases.

Numerous national sites that attest to the positive outcomes of vertical prosecution, including Marin County, California and Brooklyn, New York. The Brooklyn D.A.'s counsel describes the benefits of vertical prosecution as follows:

"Staff members have contact with the witnesses from the outset of the case, thus establishing a relationship that promotes greater confidence in the system; weaknesses are addressed early on; the need for additional investigation is recognized at an early state and is undertaken, avoiding duplication of work done by another attorney; cases are better screened by an attorney who knows he or she is keeping the case; and it provides better leverage with plea bargaining when the attorney knows the details of the case from the outset."

Source - Center for Court Innovation, 2006

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Aggressive Prosecution Strategy 4: Reduce the caseload per prosecutor in the D.A.'s office for more effective prosecution.

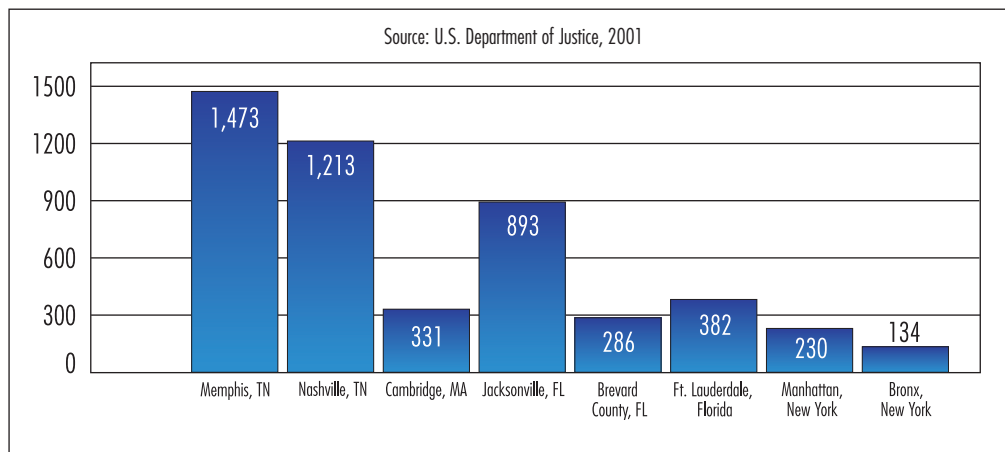
Under the Weighted Caseload Study commissioned by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office in FY 1998, based on a case disposition figure of 113,327 cases, the Shelby County D.A.'s Office needed one hundred nine (109) prosecutors, eleven (11) more than the current number on staff.

Under a more liberal formula used by public defenders across Tennessee to project an adequate number of lawyers to cover their caseloads, based on a 2005 case disposition figure of 83,316 cases, the Shelby County D.A.'s Office would actually need about 130 additional prosecutors. (Under that same formula, the Shelby County Public Defender's Office had six (6) assistant public defenders more than it needed to handle its 2005 caseload.)

Based upon its 2005 caseload, in order to have a caseload per prosecutor similar to the Manhattan borough of New York City, the Shelby County D.A.'s Office would need over three hundred (300) more prosecutors.

Obviously, this is an unrealistic figure to consider given the financial constraints of state and county governments. The D.A.'s Office will place priority on using additional prosecutors to vertically prosecute (1) those charged with serious violent crimes and (2) serious repeat offenders. Based upon current case figures, in order to accomplish this priority, the D.A.'s Office estimates that it would take an additional twenty-four (24) assistant D.A.s, with a support staff of three (3) victim /witness coordinators, two (2) criminal investigators, and four (4) secretaries. (This does not include the need for two (2) additional prosecutors for the office's DUI Task Force and four (4) additional prosecutors to cover screening of all cases at jail intake 24/7.)

CASES PER PROSECUTOR



15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 5: Expand Drug Court program so that it operates consistently and at full capacity.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: Shelby County Drug Court judge, the drug court coordinator, the District Attorney's Office and the Drug Court Foundation

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction of repeat non-violent drug offenses

ACTION PLAN

Secure \$2M per year in public and private funds to double the number of non-violent drug offenders who participate in the Drug Court treatment program as an option to incarceration, from about 220 to 400+:

- Establish a fundraising goal at \$50,000 per year Drug Court Foundation, a private, non-profit entity created to secure donations for the Drug Court treatment program
- Establish annual State of Tennessee appropriation of \$500,000 for residential (inpatient) treatment
- Establish expectation of approximately \$200,000 through court fines earmarked for Drug Court treatment
- Establish expectation of approximately \$250,000 from fees paid by participating defendants
- Secure annual appropriation from Shelby County or grants secured by Shelby County for the remaining amount to reach the \$2.0 million annual need

WHY THIS APPROACH?

Drug addiction is closely correlated to violent crime. While some drug addicts may begin with non-violent crimes to support their habit, many of them move on to a chronic and dangerous criminal career. Drug courts provide non-violent drug offenders with the option of supervised drug treatment instead of jail, which has positive results in reducing repeat offenses and saving costs:

- A University of Memphis study showed significant results, with only 24% of Shelby County Drug Court graduates becoming repeat offenders within three years, compared to over 82% of comparable drug defendants who did not go through Drug Court treatment.
- The Drug Court treatment program is also cost effective. Compare \$8 per day for out-patient treatment, to about \$50 a day at the Shelby County Correctional Center, and almost \$100 a day at the Shelby County jail. Thirty-five program graduates saved the public approximately \$372,000 based upon projected incarceration costs had they not entered treatment.
- These local results align with findings from numerous national studies that show reduced violent crime, repeat offenses, and significant cost savings in public funds.⁹ For example, *every dollar spent on drug court in Dallas, Texas, \$9.43 in tax dollar savings was realized over 40 months.*¹⁰

These positive results demonstrate the benefits of building on Shelby County's successful part-time operations to consistently operate at full capacity.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 6: Design and implement a comprehensive gang intervention strategy.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: U.S. Attorney's Office, Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County, TN & JustCare for Kids

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in gang-related crimes

ACTION PLAN

Use the Gang Prevention Framework Model from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to design a coordinated approach to address the unique characteristics of the youth and adult gang problem in Shelby County.

- Provide street outreach workers, in coordination with the OSC juvenile violence intervention, juvenile re-entry, and adult re-entry strategies, to a) refer youth at risk of joining a gang to appropriate services and programs, b) to assist gang members wanting to leave gangs, c) assist in assessment of the gang problem, and d) assist in identifying gaps in services and programs.
- Establish a staff-supported Steering Committee to design a Comprehensive Gang Prevention and Intervention Strategy including policy leaders from law enforcement, juvenile justice, schools, social services, and other stakeholders
- Complete a research assessment of the nature and characteristics of the gang problem in Memphis and Shelby County

WHY THIS APPROACH?

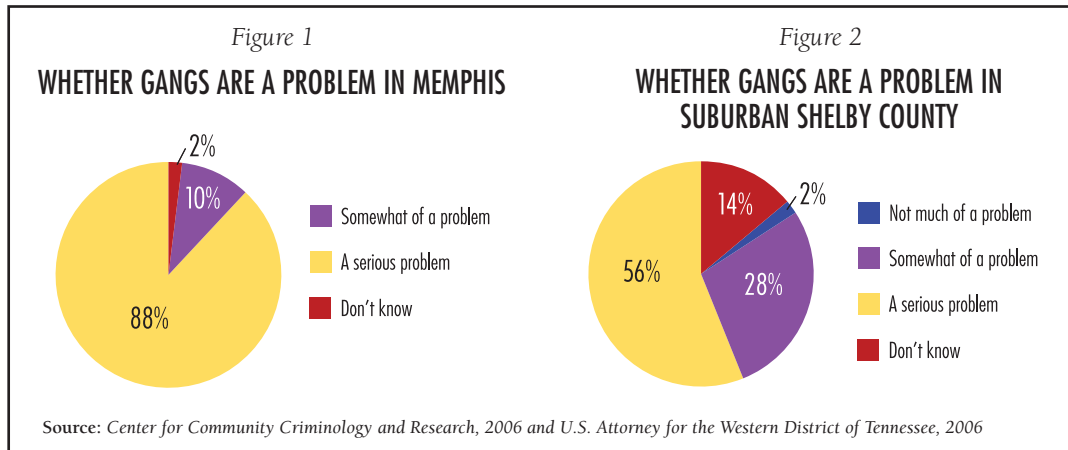
Research has demonstrated that gang members are responsible for a disproportionate share of serious crime in communities.¹¹ Nationally, evidence suggests that gangs are rapidly proliferating to more and more communities.¹² Anecdotal evidence and research being conducted in support of the MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ strategy has revealed substantial increases in gang related activity in recent years.

Moreover, law enforcement estimates, collected by local researchers, suggest that both the number of gangs and gang members has been growing. This is accompanied by gangs expanding the scope of their traditional criminal activity to new types of crime and new geographic areas. This raises serious concern about future trends in youth violence since research has demonstrated that gang members are much more likely to be victims of, and engage in, violence.¹³ In addition, surveys of community residents conducted as part of the Operation Safe Community (OSC) planning process reveal that most community residents believe gangs present a serious problem both in the City of Memphis and in suburban Shelby County (see Figures 1 & 2).

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 6: Design and implement a comprehensive gang intervention strategy.



However, focus group results and prior research reveal that we don't really know the extent of our gang problem. We lack a comprehensive assessment of the nature of gang activity in the community — its prevalence and distribution, its demographic and socio-economic characteristics, and the geographic distribution of gang membership.

Another consistent theme concerns a lack of coordination among a plethora of existing programs. Focus group members regularly raised concerns about the community's failure to (a) assess available community strengths and resources to determine what gaps might exist, (b) develop a data-bank/directory of available services and organizations, and (c) implement a coordinated service referral system for at-risk youth, adults and families. Moreover, respondents decried the lack of coordination among current service providers and the lack of training available on issues critical to gang and violence prevention.

From a law enforcement perspective, gang suppression activities have been launched through the MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ strategy (including the development of the successful Street Crimes Undercover Program) and the Sheriff Office's Gang Unit. Proposed OSC strategies strengthen law enforcement response to gang crime, and a number of law enforcement/community partnership strategies that deliver deterrence, prevention, and intervention of gang violence.

The gang prevention strategy described here focuses other OSC strategies on gangs by providing gang street outreach workers, analyzing the local gang problem, and monitoring local gang activity. These resources, combined with other OSC strategies, provide the complete model suggested by OJJDP's successful Gang Strategy framework. This framework has successfully reduced gang activity in multiple cities across the country, including Boston, Chicago, and Fort Worth.¹⁴

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 7: Sustain and Expand Student Safety Initiatives in Public School Systems.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: Memphis City Schools, Shelby County Schools

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: A positive, safe and respectful environment maintained for all students

ACTION PLAN

Build on existing school safety initiatives to ensure students have a safe and secure environment in which to learn and grow.

Memphis City Schools

MCS currently has a variety of resources and programs targeting school safety. It has identified several immediate strategies to strengthen and expand these efforts. These include:

- *Enact state legislation that allows MCS to employ and commission officers — thereby creating an independent MCS Police Department.* An internal police force will enable MCS's existing security officers to be trained and certified to perform the same policing activities as any commissioned law enforcement officer on designated city school property and encompassing areas. These officers will then be empowered to arrest youth and transport offending youth to juvenile court where necessary and appropriate, as well as issue tickets and make arrests around schools to youth and adult offenders who may prey on school youth.
- *Ensure there is at least one MCS Police Officer in every middle and high school, and ideally in every elementary school.* MCS currently has a total of 59 school resource officers (44 from MPD and 15 school security officers) that rotate among its 185 schools. MCS has recently received a two year grant to hire 23 more security officers, which will enable placement of an officer in every middle and high school, and two in a few high-need schools. However, funding must be identified to sustain this level of security coverage, and to expand the coverage to elementary schools.
- *Extend the hours of alternative schools for students with discipline and other challenges.* MCS currently has 9 specialized schools for students who have been expelled or suspended, or those with academic or behavioral difficulties. These schools provide individualized instructional support, as well as behavior and mental health resources and other special programs designed to improve student behavior. Currently, these schools operate during regular school hours. MCS proposes to extend the hours of these schools until 5 pm so that these students remain supervised during after-school hours.
- *Certify all new teachers in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, and work with universities to incorporate this training into its teacher certification programs.* Nonviolent Crisis Intervention certification, which is a foundation of the Blue Ribbon Initiative designed to reduce discipline and behavior problems, trains teachers in the tools and approaches to de-escalate volatile student situations. Teachers must participate in a specialized training program to receive this certification.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 7: Sustain and Expand Student Safety Initiatives in Public School Systems.

- *Establish school based probation officers to provide closer monitoring and supervision of delinquent juveniles.* In this program, MCS school personnel would be trained to provide probation oversight to delinquent students reentering school. These probation officers would support volunteer Auxiliary Probation Officers appointed by Juvenile Court to supervise youth during the school day.
- *Expand the availability of high-quality after-school and summer activities for students.* While research has demonstrated the positive effect that after-school and summer programs have on reducing juvenile delinquency and arrests, many of Memphis-Shelby County's at-risk students do not have access to such programs. MCS proposes increased community partnerships that would provide such programs to its students.

Beyond these immediate efforts, MCS proposes to develop a comprehensive school safety plan that addresses, among other things, the following research-based strategies to increase student safety:

- Expanding physical security resources (metal detectors, cameras, etc) and building design that supports school safety. An example of building design that suppresses crime is blocking off areas where crime often occurs, such as hallways under stairwells.
- Expanding truancy reduction efforts to potentially include officers to pick up truants during school hours, reinstating Truancy Assessment Centers, increasing the number of attendance teachers, establishing a dedicated truancy docket at Juvenile Court, implementing an electronic student identification system, and working closely with the Shelby County District Attorney's Office on its mentoring initiative.
- Expanding counseling and support services for students and families.
- Improved joint strategies with Juvenile Court to ensure students reentering school from incarceration don't "slip through the cracks."

Shelby County Schools

In 2005, Shelby County Schools was awarded a three-year federal grant to implement a comprehensive school safety initiative. The system formed The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Alliance with nine community partners to provide services for children, adolescents, and families through Project CLASS (Crucial Lessons Addressing School Safety). This initiative provides a full network of effective services, supports, and activities that promote positive mental health and pro-social behavior and that instill a safe, alcohol and drug-free lifestyle.

The following Project CLASS strategies are currently underway:

- Provide advanced training in community policing for School Resource Officers.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 7: Sustain and Expand Student Safety Initiatives in Public School Systems.

- Engage community members in activities conducted at the schools to increase emergency/crisis preparedness.
- Establish The Watchful Eyes program to increase alertness and reduce potentially harmful behavior in the neighborhoods surrounding schools.
- Provide mental health services with three community mental health centers for prevention, treatment and follow-up services on and off school campuses.
- Train staff in multiple prevention and early intervention programs to prevent or reduce rates of substance abuse and violent behavior among youth.
- Train and mentor teachers in grades K-2 to more fully utilize the Second Step Program, an evidence-based program which promotes pro-social behavior in children.
- Implement DARE to Be You, an evidence-based mental and behavioral health program that promotes children's emotional/social development (DARE to Be You) with parents and their children at community childcare sites that send children to SCS.
- Implement juvenile re-entry partnership with Juvenile Court to improve the re-entry transition of youth back into the school/community and reduce recidivism.
- Review school system safety policies to determine if changes are needed.
- Develop sustainability plan with community partners.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

School safety is one of the community's top concerns. A recent survey of middle school students throughout Shelby County revealed that over one-third are concerned about being hurt by someone at school. During the 2004-2005 school year, MCS, with a student population of 125,187, had 25,481 suspensions and expulsions. SCS, with a student population of 47,247, had 3,144. The strategies proposed by both school systems are proven to address these factors by increasing school safety, reduce future crime and promote a positive learning environment for all students.

The immediate strategies proposed by MCS are expected to deliver the following benefits:

- *An independent MCS Police Department:* Today, the MCS contracts for with the MPD for 44 police officers. Creating its own department will allow MCS to provide a regular, consistent police presence that is positively integrated into the school community. Many other schools districts with their own police departments report that being able to focus police officers on protecting students — both on and around the school campus — is a clear advantage. The opportunity to build ongoing, positive relationships with students is enhanced when the commissioned officers are employees of the school system. Finally, this approach is more cost-effective for the MCS, as MCS officers cost the district less than contracting for MPD officers.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 7: Sustain and Expand Student Safety Initiatives in Public School Systems.

- *At least one MCS Police Officer in every middle and high school, and ideally in every elementary school:* The benefits of fully commissioned school based officers described above will be realized for all students.
- *Extended hours for alternative schools:* Juvenile crime increases during after school hours. Based on their previous behaviors, most students in alternative schools are already at higher risk for committing future crimes. Supervising these students after regular school hours reduces this risk. In addition, extended school hours are proven to deliver academic and pro-social benefits to students. Extra time in alternative classrooms help address root causes such as low academic achievement and lack of pro-social skills that place these students at a higher risk for future crime.
- *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Certification:* This certification is a proven method for equipping teachers with skills to de-escalate violent situations and reduce violent behaviors in schools. Certifying new teachers, who often are not equipped to effectively deal with behavior problems in the classroom, will help them head off such problems.
- *School-based Probation Officers:* Most Volunteer Auxiliary Probation Officers appointed by Juvenile Court to supervise delinquent youth are not able to maintain contact with these youth during school hours. School-based Probation Officers will be able to increase monitoring and supervision of delinquent youth during school hours to prevent future criminal acts.
- *Expanded high-quality after-school and summer programs.* Extensive research demonstrates the positive effect that after-school and summer programs have on reducing juvenile delinquency and arrests. However, many of Memphis-Shelby County's at-risk students do not have access to such programs. MCS proposes increased community partnerships that would provide such programs to its students.

In addition to these immediate strategies, a full school safety plan will help MCS expand and coordinate research-based components to increase school safety. Experts agree that “there is no specific formula that outlines everything that a safe school should entail. Rather, it is more appropriate to identify an array of potential areas that should be addressed.”¹⁵ The potential components for a school plan identified by MCS are each proven to effectively address school safety.

The strategy for sustaining SCS Project C.L.A.S.S. is based on the following rationale:

Project C.L.A.S.S. is founded on the research-based framework developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice, called the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 7: Sustain and Expand Student Safety Initiatives in Public School Systems.

This collaborative approach to youth violence prevention draws from best practices in education, justice, social services, and mental health systems to provide integrated and comprehensive resources for prevention programs and pro-social services for youth. Federal funding is used at the local level to implement an enhanced, coordinated, comprehensive plan of activities, programs, and services that focus on promoting healthy childhood development and preventing violence and alcohol and other drug abuse.

Since 1999, this framework has been successfully implemented by 230 communities with every state represented, with an additional 19 awardees for 2006. Every community implementing this approach to violence prevention is held accountable to evidence-based practices.¹⁶

SCS has two remaining years to fine-tune the multi-faceted school safety plan that makes up Project C.L.A.S.S. It must then secure sustainability funds and resources to make this plan a permanent part of its operations.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 8: Implement mentoring-based truancy reduction program.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: The Shelby County District Attorney's Office. Other key organizations are Juvenile Court, the Memphis City Schools, the University of Tennessee, the University of Memphis, and Memphis Athletic Ministries.

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction of habitual truanies (five unexcused absences) at the middle school level

ACTION PLAN

Continue and build on a pilot program lead by the Shelby County D.A.'s Office to offer faith-based mentors as an alternative to court proceedings for habitual truancy (five or more unexplained absences). Youth and family will enter into an agreement in the form of a court order in which the youth agrees to be matched with, and cooperate with, a designated mentor.

A year-long pilot funded by the D.A.'s Office at three Memphis City Schools middle schools is now underway and is targeted to serve 120 – 150 students. The pilot consists of:

- 3 social worker graduate students placed at each of the three schools to immediately flag habitual truants, match youth with mentors, ensure that youth are working with mentors, and serve as case “advocates” to work with the youth and family to identify needs and secure resources
- Recruitment and training of faith-based mentors (90 are currently secured and trained, and over 600 mentors pledged for the pilot and eventual roll-out of the program)
- Memphis Athletic Ministries (MAM) will involve the youth in various after-school team sport activities, providing group mentoring through teams.
- An advisory board will be established composed of representatives of various partners in the effort, including as well as representatives of some key foundations and other potential sources of continued funding.

During the pilot phase, the program will be managed by an assistant D.A. Once the pilot is expanded, program management staff will be hired, as well as additional social workers to provide the services described above.

Note: A more comprehensive approach to addressing truancy will be addressed in *OSC Strategy 7: Comprehensive School Safety* with a plan to build on existing truancy initiatives, including this mentoring approach.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 8: Implement mentoring-based truancy reduction program.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

Juveniles prosecuted for major violent crimes in Shelby County rose by 8 percent in 2004 compared to 2003. Even more serious was the 39 percent increase in 2005 compared to 2004. This is in sharp contrast to the national trend.

Habitual truancy is a significant predictor of juvenile crime and gang involvement. An analysis by the Shelby County District Attorney's Office indicates that, on school days, about 25 percent of all juvenile crimes are committed during school hours and in locations other than schools. These crimes are attributable to truant and suspended students. According to a 1994 report by the National School Safety Center, up to two-thirds of daytime burglaries are attributed to truants.

In 2005, Memphis City Schools sent 9,079 letters notifying parents of an unexcused absence of more than five days, and Shelby County School sent 7,267. The actual number of truanancies are likely higher than these numbers.

Under Tennessee law, schools are required to take action when a child has been absent without excuse for five days.

Under state law, the district attorney has been designated as the person the superintendents are to notify if a student has reached this benchmark. Normally, the D.A.'s Office proceeds only against those students and/or parents who have been identified by the school systems as needing to be handled by the D.A.'s Office and for whom proper documentation (evidence) has been provided.

However, in the case of habitual truants (absent five days without excuse) from the middle schools participating in the special effort, the D.A.'s office will attempt to proactively and promptly identify all students and place them in a mentoring arrangement wherever possible.

The White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth report places priority on recruiting mentors from the faith community and building effective efforts to curb truancy. A landmark study by Public/Private Ventures found that at-risk youth with mentors were:

- 46 percent less likely to begin using illegal drugs,
- 53 percent less likely to skip school, and
- 33 percent less likely to engage in physical fights

The study also found that young people with mentors were more likely to report positive attitudes about themselves and their families and about the prospects for the future.

Sources - White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth, 2003 and Public/Private Ventures, 2004

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships Strategy 9: Launch the JustCare 180° program to “turnaround” youth charged with unruly and delinquent offenses

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: JustCare for Kids, the University of Tennessee School of Social Work and the University of Memphis College of Education

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in repeat unruly and delinquent juvenile offenses

ACTION PLAN

Launch the JustCare 180° Program to work with the approximately 12,500 youth annually who come to Juvenile Court due to unruly or delinquent acts and help them turn their life around — by a full 180 degrees. The goal is not merely to stop kids from further crimes, but to help them become successful in their families, schools, and communities. This program uses OJJDP and SAMHSA model program guidelines and best practice methods to guide the development of local, neighborhood-based support systems. Every youth and their family will receive personalized early intervention services to halt the progression towards more serious crime and support them in positive youth development.

Tactics include:

- Social workers to assess the needs of youth and their families, and to help link them to high quality resources
- Asset inventories of resources for youth and families by local areas in Shelby County
- Technical assistance and resources to help communities build on their assets to deliver sustained support for their own youth and families
- Gang outreach workers provided through the Gang Intervention initiative

WHY THIS APPROACH?

By the time most youth have committed serious or violent offenses, they have come into contact with Juvenile Court numerous times. While many youth are able to turn their behavior around after first contact with the Court, too many more continue down the road to more serious offenses. Most intervention resources are concentrated on youth that have already gone far down that road, rather than earlier in the cycle when it may be easier to change paths.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships Strategy 9: Launch the JustCare 180° program to “turnaround” youth charged with unruly and delinquent offenses

The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has conducted extensive research on what works in reducing juvenile violence. The most effective interventions take a system approach to working with at risk youth in their homes, schools, and communities. Successful models include:

- Collaboration among a wide range of community stakeholders
- Individualized assessment and case management for youth and families
- A range of high-quality interventions that effectively address the social, academic, health and other needs of youth and their families
- Teamwork among many agencies while working with individual youth and families
- Street outreach to youth gang members

In addition, best practice models emphasize not just halting destructive behaviors — but building of youth assets so that healthy youth development occurs. Successful models also emphasize community-wide partnerships paired with local implementations. Local implementations are critical because youth must have adequate, accessible resources within walking distance, or at least easily accessible via public transportation.

Most local neighborhoods already have some resources for high-risk youth. However, today there is no systematic way to assess resources and identify gaps. Furthermore, there is no wide-spread mechanism to assess the needs of individual youth at “high risk” for future crime. And there’s no mechanism for linking the youth, and if necessary families, to resources within their own community. Finally, there is a lack of assistance for community organizations to apply best practices in youth development to build and sustain the delivery of high quality programs for high-risk youth.

The JustCare 180° Program addresses these issues by providing:

- Social workers to assess the needs of youth and their families, and to help link them to high quality resources
- Asset inventories of resources for youth and families by local areas in Shelby County
- Technical assistance and resources to help communities build on their assets to deliver sustained support for their own youth and families
- Gang outreach workers provided through the Gang Intervention initiative

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 9: Launch the JustCare 180° program to “turnaround” youth charged with unruly and delinquent offenses

Numerous implementations based on a similar system approach have achieved success in reducing juvenile crime.

- Boston, widely acknowledged for its systemic approach to youth violence prevention, saw significant reductions in youth crime after implementation of “Operation Cease Fire” in 1996. In fact, gun-related homicides in the age group, 24 and under, decreased from 48 in 1995 to an all time low of 10 in 1997 (a 79% decrease).
- Cincinnati, Ohio’s “Teen Violence Prevention” Program took a local approach, supporting 52 communities in providing an expanded range of localized individual and group services. The program saw a 31% crime reduction within the first 6 months of implementation.
- Wrap-Around Milwaukee provides individualized service plans and a full range of interventions to children and families. The program delivered a 36% crime reduction for participants referred for misdemeanor offenses, from 79% preceding intervention to 43% at 3-years post intervention, and a 23% crime reduction for those participants referred for felonies. Participants also demonstrate a significant improvement in their level of functioning at home, school, and in the community.

Source - Braga, A., Kennedy, D., Piehl, A., Waring, E., 2006; Memphis Shelby Crime Commission, 2005; U.S. Department of Justice, 1999

JustCare’s 180° Program’s overall advantage is the ability to effectively link high risk youth with the specific proven services they need to help them turn their lives around — at the same time helping communities build resources to support their youth over time. The potential benefits in terms of social costs and human capital are incalculable. The public and private cost benefits of saving a youth from a future life of crime are also significant, as described on page 2 of this document.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships Strategy 10: Expand juvenile offender re-entry programs.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: Memphis Shelby County Juvenile Court

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in recidivism of serious and violent juvenile offenders

ACTION PLAN

Build on existing Court programs with increased resources proven to support youth in successful re-entry to the community. Tactics include:

- Twenty additional specialized probation counselors to provide individualized support to all reentering youth and their families
- Increased community-based services and partnerships to establish and improve access to job placement and career counseling, life skills training, mental and behavioral health treatment, educational and recreational resources
- A supervised independent living facility for older youth who are at high risk for re-offending if returned to their previous living situation

Well-implemented programs reduce recidivism:

- An evaluation of the OJJDP project CRAFT reveals a low rate of recidivism of graduates with 26% of participants convicted of new crimes after training completion, release or placement.
- The Florida Environmental Institute (FEI), a juvenile incarceration facility with a continuum of intensive services resulted in a 36% recidivism rate compared to a 47 – 73% recidivism rate of 7 other facilities.²⁵
- Locally, positive results have been seen from the Court's one incarceration program that offers a structured re-entry program – the Youth Habilitation Center. The recidivism rate from this program is close to 30%, compared to an average of 45% from other local facilities that do not have a structured re-entry process.

Source - Resource Development Group, 1999; Weaver, R., 1989; Memphis Shelby County Juvenile Court, 2006

WHY THIS APPROACH?

The vast majority of youth who commit serious and violent crimes have had many previous contacts with Juvenile Court. In 2005, 970 youth were placed in the custody of the Court for serious and violent crime. Many were chronic offenders. Approximately 45% of incarcerated youth offend again in Shelby County.

The Department of Justice and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has identified a number of proven re-entry program models for reducing repeat offenses and preventing youth violence. The Juvenile Court's expanded re-entry program is based on these models.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 11: Expand and coordinate adult offender re-entry programs.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: Shelby County Government

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in recidivism of adult offenders

ACTION PLAN

Build on pilot to deliver an intensive voluntary program that supports prisoners with housing, mental and physical health services, family unification, life skills, and employment. The program is delivered in the following phases:

- Admission until release:
 - *Assessment and classification:* Measuring the offender's risks, needs, and strengths.
 - *Prisoner programming:* Assignments to reduce risk, address need, and build on strengths.
- Transition to re-entry phase approximately six months before the offender's target release date.
 - *Prisoner release preparation:* Working with the parole and probation community to produce a successful transition plan.
 - *Release support services:* Actively working to coordinate the support services required for a successful transition.
- Community and discharge phase begins when the prisoner is released from prison and continues until the prisoner achieves stability in the community, principally defined by work and housing.
 - *Supervision and case management services:* Providing flexible, consistent and firm supervision and case management services.
 - *Support Services:* Working with social services providers to deliver appropriate support services for the ex-offender post release.
 - *Aftercare:* Facilitating community and faith-based linkages for the former prisoners for long-term sustainability.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

The release of serious, high-risk criminals after prison has long been a source of violent crime in the United States. This holds true for both adult and youth criminals. Successful re-entry programs have proven to significantly reduce repeat violent offenses. These types of programs provide a continuum of support, which begins while a criminal is in prison and continues until he or she is a successful member of society.

There are approximately 14,000 people in Shelby County in jail, prison or on probation. About 67% percent are arrested again within three years of their release. In addition to the social costs of recurring crime, these statistics reflect an enormous waste of human capital that, if reversed, can help address growing local workforce development needs.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 11: Expand and coordinate adult offender re-entry programs.

As a long-time proponent for effective re-entry, Mayor A C Wharton in 2006 established successful offender re-entry as a key priority of his administration and is funding a pilot program based on national best practices. These practices have delivered very promising results:

- Participants completing the California's LifeSkills '95 Re-entry Program were twice as likely as non-participants to be employed at 90 days post-release. Non-participants were also twice as likely to have been re-arrested, more frequently abuse alcohol/drugs, and to not possess the skills needed to obtain and maintain employment.¹⁷
- The Boston Re-entry Initiative recently found that 37% of active participants had re-arrests in contrast to 64% to those who dropped out. Further, the offenses committed by the ex-inmates remaining in the program were far less serious than were the offenses of participants who dropped out.¹⁸
- Chicago's "Southside Day Reporting Center Re-entry Program" showed at a three year follow-up for year one participants a 35% recidivism rate versus 52% for non-participants.¹⁹
- Other current and similar re-entry initiatives include the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative with program participants having their parole revoked 38% less than non-participants and California's "Resolve to Stop the Violence Project" demonstrating that participants (participating 4 months or longer) are 80% less likely to be rearrested for a violent crime one year after being released.²⁰

Many communities show significant decreases in recidivism and increase in life success from comprehensive re-entry programs. Cost savings are also realized. For example, the "Southside Day Reporting Center Re-entry Program" of Chicago estimated savings were calculated to be \$3.6 million with program costs of \$11,000 per year per participant versus \$20,000 each year to incarcerate.

Source - Soloman, A., 2004

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 12: Implement proactive, coordinated “problem properties” system.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: City of Memphis Code Enforcement, Suburban Code Enforcement Agencies

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Decreased blight and increased neighborhood restoration

ACTION PLAN

- Build on new community-based code enforcement offices and neighborhood/government partnerships to prevent, identify and enforce code violations
- Strengthen structures for on-going collaboration between all government agencies working on enforcement of anti-blight codes in problem properties
- Ensure resources, legislation, and policies for aggressive redevelopment and restoration of neighborhoods, including tougher local code enforcement ordinances and state legislation to help put properties back on the tax rolls.
- Continue to use state nuisance laws to go after crime-ridden properties, such as clubs or drug houses

WHY THIS APPROACH?

A substantial body of research connects blight with crime.

Abandoned neighborhoods create negative environments that often become “crime generators.” These issues require that code enforcement, neighborhood groups, environmental courts and other stakeholders come together to proactively deal with blight.²¹

In 2004, government leaders recognized the need to strengthen the Memphis Residential Code Enforcement department as the foundation to address “problem properties.” In addition, Mayor Willie W. Herenton and Mayor A C Wharton appointed The Memphis Metropolitan Area Code Enforcement Task Force to increase collaboration among all stakeholders dealing with slum and blight.

Guided by best practice analysis from the University of Memphis under the auspices of the Crime Commission, this Task Force developed a Strategic Plan for a comprehensive Problem Properties System. Other communities have used these types of strategies to successfully combat blight and reduce crime-ridden neighborhoods. The Memphis Municipal Task Force plan is expected to realize the same types of results. The strategies in this plan will ultimately be expanded to encompass partnerships with other municipalities in Shelby County.

In 1998 Richmond, Virginia launched the NiB initiative as part of a coordinated effort in seven neighborhoods to restore livability and improve neighborhood stability, tackling everything from code enforcement to turning around decreasing homeownership rates. In the first three years, the targeted neighborhoods saw a 19 percent reduction in crime, and an 11 percent increase occupied homes and apartments.”

Source - National Vacant Properties Campaign, 2006

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 13: Build communication campaign that promotes tough consequences for crime.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: U.S. Attorney, Shelby County District Attorney, Memphis Police Department, Memphis Shelby Crime Commission

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Decrease in crimes involving firearms and other targeted Part I crimes

ACTION PLAN

Use an integrated set of communication vehicles to deliver on-going saturations of messages, including:

- Television
- Radio
- Billboards
- Bus panels
- Hand-out materials



WHY THIS APPROACH?

Beginning in 1998, an aggressive media campaign was initiated to promote the D.A.'s "No Deals" policy. In 2002, the "gun crime is jail time" message was added to the marketing effort. The campaign, funded primarily by a federal grant but also by private donations and drug forfeiture funds, was a key component of the Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN) Initiative.

Research conducted by the University of Memphis showed that the intensive media campaign helped reduce firearms offenses. A 15% drop in gun crime was measured during intensive media blitzes of messages about tough consequences for gun crime. When the intensity of the campaign decreased, the impact faded.

The same successful communication techniques can be used to promote other tough sanctions to deter other types of crime. For example, the MPD's Blue C.R.U.S.H.™ concept has proven positive results.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 14: Implement coordinated domestic violence initiative.

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: Family Safety Center, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center College of Preventative Medicine, and the Memphis Area Legal Council.

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in domestic violence crimes

ACTION PLAN

Build on existing research-based local domestic violence initiatives to develop a local system to address domestic violence as follows:

- Establish a Family Safety Center as a hub for victims services
- Continue the development of a Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence (CCRDV) comprised of coordinated community resources, research, community education and funding initiatives.
- Establish a Commission to design and implement judicial system reform to encompass law enforcement, prosecution, and courts. This would include considering the viability of a dedicated Integrated Domestic Violence or Family Court.

Domestic violence is a critical issue facing the Memphis Community. In 2005, approximately 56.1% of violent crimes, including over 15% of homicides, was DV related.

Source - Shelby County District Attorney, 2006

WHY THIS APPROACH?

National figures estimate that approximately 21.45% of individuals live in abusive relationships. In Shelby County this figure is significantly higher, with 27.5% currently living in abusive relationships. In 2005 this resulted in over 67,000 domestic violence calls for assistance to 911 and directly to the MPD/Sheriff's office. There were over 4,500 arrests.

Domestic violence also breeds future violent behavior.

An estimated 15.5 million children living in two parent households are exposed to domestic violence yearly. The consequences of this childhood exposure are complex and extend over the lifetime of the child often resulting in dysfunctional and adaptive behaviors.²² It is well documented that children exposed to domestic violence often exhibit similar behaviors as adults with little realization that behaviors are detrimental to themselves or those around them.

A number of communities have successfully reduced domestic violence and increased victim safety by implementing a coordinated community response to domestic violence. Such systems encompass law enforcement, criminal justice, treatment and social service providers, and faith communities.²³ Locally, three domestic violence initiatives are currently underway that form the foundation to build a comprehensive community response to domestic violence.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 14: Implement coordinated domestic violence initiative.

Family Safety Center

Family Safety Center (FSC) is a new movement to combine in one facility all criminal justice, forensic, medical, and social service components related to criminal incidents of family violence. Over the past 12 months, dozens of local stakeholders supported by the Memphis Child Advocacy Center and the Memphis Shelby Crime Commission have developed a business plan for a local FSC. The FSC will provide coordinated management of domestic violence cases, which will serve to monitor, assess and refine the coordination of services in response to domestic violence.

This model is based on a similar, very successful model established in the National Child Advocacy Centers, which have been operating for more than 20 years. The FSC concept is relatively new without a long-term research base — however, early results are extremely promising. The oldest FSC located in San Diego, California, has seen positive results as their operation has matured and established a positive reputation for services.

Coordinated Response to Domestic Violence (CCRDV)

Many communities have developed successful CCRDVs to decrease domestic violence. Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence comes in all shapes and sizes based on the needs of the community and the sponsoring organizations. Each of the following three CCRDV initiatives has been highly successful in their efforts against domestic violence based on their area of emphasis.

- The Duluth CCRDV, which has been in existence for over 16 years, focus on criminal justice interventions.²⁴
- The Colorado Coalition, in existence for over 12 years, focuses on legislative mandates, community education, and technology and assessment.²⁵
- The Wales project focuses on agencies assisting victims more efficiently, primarily through enhanced information sharing.²⁶

The Memphis & Shelby County CCRDV initiative, which began in 2002, originated from an identified need to create a foundation on which to build a comprehensive, inclusive, systematic, and strategic approach to DV through multi-agency collaboration and coordination of existing related entities. The Department of Preventive Medicine has facilitated this initiative in partnership with many organizations, and has delivered numerous research, collaboration building, education and awareness, and public policy/advocacy activities.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships

Strategy 14: Implement coordinated domestic violence initiative.

Court System/System Analysis and Reform

The role of the court in the eradication of domestic violence has been found to be a crucial. Leading author, sociologist and professor at Suffolk University, James Ptacek, emphasized in his book, *Battered Women in the Courtroom*, the importance of the role of the court when adjudicating domestic violence cases.²⁷

Our current local fragmented court structure, as it deals with DV cases, does not adequately meet the needs of victims or families in crisis. To increase victim safety and improve offender accountability, an assessment of the judicial system in Shelby County is needed. The Family Violence Prevention Fund has designed a method for conducting such an assessment.²⁸

Identified improved outcomes using this approach include:²⁹

- Increase in calls to the police and victim service programs
- Increase in arrests
- More cases charged as felonies
- A decrease in DV related homicides

It is recommended that Memphis/Shelby County use this process to establish a Commission to design and oversee appropriate court system reform to gain the same type of benefits.

15 Strategies Towards A Safer Community

Law Enforcement/Community Partnerships Strategy 15: Implement "Operation Safe Surrender."

LEAD ORGANIZATIONS: U.S. Marshal Service.

KEY SUCCESS MEASURE: Reduction in repeat crimes committed by state and local fugitives.

ACTION PLAN

Memphis/Shelby County has been selected by the federal government as a 2007 site for the United States Marshal's Service's (USSM) "Operation Safe Surrender." This program offers state and local fugitives the chance to turn themselves in at courtrooms set up in churches. Social service agencies and resources to assist in employment and other support are also represented. Fugitives do not receive amnesty, but they have the opportunity for a peaceful and non-violent surrender as well as linkages to support services.

WHY THIS APPROACH?

This program was piloted in Ohio where the USSM worked with officials from the state and federal court system, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, public defenders, and others to technologically outfit, staff, and open a community courthouse in a local church sanctuary. More than 70 community volunteers partnered with justice system officials in planning and communicating the event, and then registering over 800 persons who surrendered, including 324 individuals who were wanted for felony crimes.

The majority of the felony fugitives who surrendered were wanted in connection with non-violent crimes; however, a number of individuals charged with rape, felonious assault, burglary and robbery, as well as high-level drug offenses, surrendered as well. Non-violent felons were given bond, new court dates and released directly from the church, while those wanted for violent crimes, or those with violent records, were safely taken into custody.

With over 50,000 outstanding warrants for felony crimes in Shelby County, this program has the promise of significantly increasing arrest rates of fugitives.

Next Steps

In an initiative of this magnitude and with so many diverse strategies, implementing agencies and partners, success requires highly effective coordination, communication, evaluation, and ongoing research and expert guidance. To address these functions, an Operation Safe Community Office will be established at the Memphis-Shelby Crime Commission (MSCC). The MSCC is an independent, objective not-for-profit organization that can be funded privately and will maintain accountability to a broad array of government, law enforcement, business and community stakeholders.

Another consideration for successful implementation is inmate population and jail capacity. At least for the short-term, it is expected that expanded prosecution, tougher gun laws, and more aggressive policing efforts will generate increases in jail population. Certainly over the long-run, jail populations will be reduced as positive effects result from the youth violence intervention, domestic violence initiative, communications campaign, drug court, and others of the community partnership strategies. In the mean time, however, we should evaluate the possible need for additional jail space. And we should consider the many observations from County Commissioners, the Sheriff and others about opportunities for efficiency gains and cost savings that could be captured with the construction of a new jail facility.

In terms of immediate action items, there are a number of Operation Safe Community policy agenda items that must be advanced in the 2007 Tennessee state legislative session. Among them are (1) tougher gun laws, (2) more prose-

cutors, (3) establishing an independent Memphis City Schools Police Department, (4) neighborhood restoration laws to support the problem properties strategy, and (5) funding for drug court and possibly other items in the plan.

In terms of funding, a public-private-partnership-driven funding campaign will be essential for the success of Operation Safe Community. Public monies — from the City, County and State will be necessary — and they must be supplemented by local corporate and philanthropic investments. Additionally, the new Operation Safe Community Office will need to actively apply for federal grants and national foundation grants over the course of the Plan implementation period. To launch the funding campaign, in the first quarter of 2007 members of the Operation Safe Community leadership will have discussions with government leaders, business leaders and philanthropic leaders to establish early financial support.

Most important to making this work, however, is that people from across the community step forward to “Be Part of the Solution.” Citizens, churches, neighborhood leaders, government officials, business leaders, philanthropists, and educators must all pitch in with law enforcement to make this work. There will be opportunities to help in many ways — writing a letter to your legislator to support the policy agenda, volunteering to mentor a child, establishing a high quality after-school program at your church, hiring a young person for a summer job, and providing financial support to the organizations who will be executing the plan! For more information on how you can help, visit www.operationsafecommunity.org

Operation Safe Community Input and Contributions

Introduction

Operation Safe Community was developed and endorsed by a very large and diverse number of citizens and representatives from government, law enforcement, businesses, neighborhood groups, faith-based organizations, schools and universities, social service organizations, and youth development providers. Over 800 attendees came together for town hall meetings, focus groups, work sessions and the final Crime Summit to guide and endorse the *Operation Safe Community Strategic Agenda*, and the voices of 100 youth were heard through the Memphis Shelby County Youth Congress.

In addition, the OSC Strategic Agenda was developed largely by incorporating planned or existing strategies vetted by community experts and/or proven successful through pilot programs. Over 60 different community agencies and other experts have been developing these strategies over the past few years.

Community Input

Five separate community input meetings for business leaders, neighborhood leaders, faith-based leaders and citizens were held in spring and fall, 2006. More than 400 individuals attended these five meetings. In November, 2007, over 400 individuals attended a full day Crime Summit to review the OSC Strategic Agenda and pledge their support for implementation. In addition, inputs from over local 100 youth regarding youth violence submitted as postings on the Youth Congress Electronic Forum, in partnership with the Ghandi Institute for Nonviolence, were reviewed.

Operation Safe Community Partner Organizations

The following organizations served as lead agencies responsible for coordinating the planning of the 15 *Operation Safe Community* strategy teams. Numerous staff and other stakeholders from these organizations participated in intensive work sessions to develop and finalize the OSC Strategic Agenda:

- City of Bartlett
- City of Collierville
- City of Germantown
- City of Memphis
- City of Millington
- JustCare for Kids
- Memphis Area Legal Services
- Memphis Child Advocacy Center
- Memphis City Schools
- Memphis Police Department
- Memphis Shelby County Juvenile Court
- Memphis Shelby Crime Commission
- Shelby County District Attorney's Office
- Shelby County Government
- Shelby County Drug Court
- Shelby County Schools
- Shelby County Sheriff's Office
- University of Memphis Center for Community Criminology and Research
- U.S. Marshal Service
- UT Health Science Center, Dept. of Preventative Medicine

Operation Safe Community Input and Contributions

“Building Blocks”: Community Initiatives incorporated into Operation Safe Community

Most OSC strategies were either in planning or development before the OSC initiative was launched.

These include:

- Project Safe Neighborhood
- Memphis Police Department’s Blue Crush Initiative
- Advocacy for Tougher Gun Laws and More Prosecutors
- Memphis and Shelby County Drug Court
- The District Attorney’s Truancy Mentoring Program
- Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools Safety Initiatives
- Juvenile and Adult Reentry Programs
- JustCare for Kids system of care for youth with behavioral disorders
- Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence
- Domestic Violence Court Reform Initiative
- Family Safety Center

In addition to the OSC partners listed earlier, more than 60 other community organizations were involved in the above initiatives:

- AGAPE Child & Family Services
- Alpha Maxx Health Care
- Associated Catholic Charities
- AYFD/Youth Habilitation Center (YHC)
- Babylove (MMHC)
- Baptist Women’s Hospital
- CAAP, Inc. DV Program
- CASA
- Community Legal Center
- Compass Behavioral Health
- Comprehensive Counseling Network
- Crime Victims Center
- Tennessee Department of Human Services
- Exchange Club Family Center
- Family Services of the Mid-South
- Innovation Counseling & Consulting
- Juvenile Court of Memphis & Shelby County
- Lakeside Behavioral Health
- LeBonheur Center for Children & Parents
- LeBonheur Children’s Medical Hospital
- Memphis & Shelby County Health Department
- Memphis Child Advocacy Center
- Memphis City Schools Mental Health Center, Division of Exceptional Children & Health Services
- Memphis Housing Authority
- Memphis Sexual Assault Resource Center
- Memphis/Shelby County Community Children’s Service Agency
- Mental Health Summit
- Midtown Mental Health Center, Inc.
- MIFA
- New Directions, Inc.
- Parkwood Behavioral Health System
- Partners for the Homeless
- Renewed Hope in Christ Ministries
- Saint Francis Hospital
- Shelby County Community Services Agency
- Shelby County Crime Victims Center
- Shelby County Government Pre-Trial Services
- Shelby County Schools
- Shelby Training Center
- Solid Rock Christian Church
- Sophia’s House
- Southeast Mental Health Center
- Strategic Behavioral Health
- Tennessee Department of Children’s Services
- Tennessee Voices for Children
- The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Urban Youth Initiative
- Victims to Victory
- Whitehaven Southwest Mental Health Center
- Youth Villages
- YWCA Abused Women’s Services

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