Youth Summit on Violence

Dewey G. Cornell, Ph.D.
Virginia Youth Violence Project
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia

434-924-8929
Email: youthvio@virginia.edu
Website: youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu
Summit on Crime Policy
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June 22, 2007
Youth Promise Act

HR 3846

Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education

Endorsed by the American Psychological Association, American Bar Association, Child Welfare League, NAACP, National PTA, and many others
Violent Crime in the Community
Virginian-Pilot Headlines

Police report says 67 street gangs are active in Norfolk

Norfolk homicides almost double in 2007

Virginia Beach community confronts gang violence

Nearly 250 Suffolk students absent following gun rumor

Portsmouth teen's violent death spurs youth forum
Main Points

1. Gangs are a recurrent problem.
2. Beware of simple solutions
3. Prevention works.
1,300 Gangs in Chicago!

Reported by Frederic Thrasher in *The Gang*, 1927.
Most Common Ethnic Gangs in Chicago, 1927

- Polish
- Italian
- Irish

From Thrasher’s *The Gang*, 1927
1,300 Gangs in Chicago!

From Thrasher’s *The Gang*, 1927
Risk Factors for Gang Development

- Poverty and unemployment
- Dysfunctional families
- Social alienation/discrimination
- Frustration, anger, and a desperate desire for respect
Main Points

2. Beware of simple solutions.
For every problem there is a solution that is simple, neat, and wrong.  H.L. Mencken
Stages in Dealing with Gangs

1. Denial: “We don’t have any gangs.”
2. Minimize: “They’re not real gangs, just wannabes.”
3. Weak comparisons: “They’re not as bad as those LA gangs.”
4. Panic: “They’re evil, super-predators on the loose!”
5. Over-reaction: “We have to get tough and build more prisons.”
American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2007

Effects on Violence of Laws and Policies Facilitating the Transfer of Juveniles from the Juvenile Justice System to the Adult Justice System
A Systematic Review

Angela McGowan, JD, MPH, Robert Hahn, PhD, MPH, Akiva Liberman, PhD, Alex Crosby, MD, MPH, Mindy Fullilove, MD, Robert Johnson, MD, Eve Moscicki, ScD, MPH, LeShawndra Price, PhD, Susan Snyder, PhD, Farris Tuma, ScD, Jessica Lowy, MPH, Peter Briss, MD, MPH, Stella Cory, MD, MPH, Glenda Stone, PhD, Task Force on Community Preventive Services

Abstract: The independent, nonfederal Task Force on Community Preventive Services (Task Force), which directs development of the Guide to Community Preventive Services (Community Guide), has conducted a systematic review of published scientific evidence concerning the effectiveness of laws and policies that facilitate the transfer of juveniles to the adult criminal justice system, on either preventing or reducing violence (1) among those youth who experience the adult criminal system or (2) in the juvenile population as a whole.

This review focuses on interpersonal violence. Violence may lead to the juvenile's initial arrest and entry into the justice system and, for those who are arrested, may be committed subsequent to exiting the justice system. Here transfer is defined as the placement of juveniles aged less than 18 years under the jurisdiction of the adult criminal justice system, rather than the juvenile justice system, following arrest. Using the methods developed by the Community Guide to conduct a systematic review of literature and provide recommendations to public health decision makers, the review team found that transferring juveniles to the adult justice system generally increases, rather than decreases, rates of violence among transferred youth. Evidence was insufficient for the Task Force on Community Preventive Services to determine the effect of such laws and policies in reducing violent behavior in the overall juvenile population. Overall, the Task Force recommends against laws or policies facilitating the transfer of juveniles from the juvenile to the adult judicial system for the purpose of reducing violence.


“…transferring juveniles to the adult justice system generally increases, rather than decreases, rates of violence among transferred youth.”
The Expansion of Zero Tolerance

From No Guns to

- No Toy Guns
- No Nail clippers
- No Plastic utensils
- No Finger-pointing
- No Jokes
- No Drawings
- No Rubber band shooting

No Accidental violations
Annual Expulsions from U.S. Schools

Approximately 97,000 expulsions
• 80% involve alternative educational services
• 20% no educational services

Source: Estimates obtained from National Center for Education Statistics,
http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d03/tables/xls/tab147.xls
Cost of Arming Teachers

3.6 Million teachers
X
$664 Smith & Wesson Model 10
$2.4 Billion

Sources:
Smith & Wesson http://www.smith-wesson.com/
Fear-based Reactions to Shootings

Prevention cannot wait until the gunman is at the door.
3. Prevention works!
Is there a national trend of increased violence?

The violent crime rate was 52 per 1,000 persons in 1994 and declined to 22 per 1,000 by 2005.
Most major cities have experienced declining violence

Crime Trends in 61 Largest U.S. Cities

- Encouraging: 42 cities
- Troubling: 12 cities
- Alarming: 7 cities

University of Chicago report presented to the Summit on Crime Policy of the House Judiciary Committee’s Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, June 22, 2007
Juvenile violence is not increasing

Juvenile Arrests for Homicide: 1993 to 2006

FBI Uniform Crime Reports
School violence is not increasing.

Indicators of school crime and safety: 2007
School homicides are not increasing.

Homicides on school grounds during school day

Selected cases from records of the National School Safety Center.
Why the decline in juvenile violence?

- Community-oriented policing
- Employment opportunities
- Prevention programs
  - School-based
  - After-school
  - In-home treatment
  - Residential
249 controlled studies of school-based programs

Behavioral, cognitive, and social skills programs reduced student aggression.
• Staff must be adequately trained to implement programs correctly.

• Many programs are ineffective because they are not properly implemented
Numerous Effective Programs

- Anger management
- Bullying prevention
- Conflict resolution
- Family therapy
- Parenting skills
- Problem-solving
- Social competence
- Substance abuse resistance
- Etc.
Guidelines for Responding to Student Threats of Violence

- Legally defensible procedures for responding to student threats
- Step-by-step guidelines and decision-tree
- Research-based and field-tested
- Covers K-12, regular and special education

Available from sopriswest.com
Why didn’t you tell anyone?

“I didn’t want to be a snitch.”
“I’m no narc.”
“I’m not a tattletale.”
“I didn’t want to get anyone in trouble.”
Crime in Newport News

• "People are not telling us what they see," the city's police chief says.

Quotes from Daily Press
What is snitching?

Snitch

1. *intransitive verb* inform on somebody: to tell somebody in authority about another person's wrongdoing

   *Friends don't snitch on each other.*

Why is snitching so reviled?

**Snitch:** blabbermouth, canary, fink, narc, rat, sneak, squealer, stoolie, stoolpigeon, tattletale, etc.
Seeking help is not snitching

- **Snitching**: informing on someone for personal gain
- **Seeking help**: attempting to prevent violence
Worried residents march for peace

Daily Press, August 15, 2007
Bishop Kendrick Turner of The Faith Deliverance Outreach Ministry leads a prayer during a "Stop The Violence March and Prayer Vigil".