

New Jersey
Project Safe Neighborhoods Program
Funded by New Jersey's Division of Criminal Justice

2006 PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS FINAL PROGRESS REPORT

JANUARY – DECEMBER

INTRODUCTION

Camden City has implemented a number of initiatives geared toward crime prevention. Each has the potential of significantly improving crime suppression within the city, and it is imperative that analysis is conducted that gauges the progress of each individual initiative and when looked at together, what their overall impact on crime has been.

Camden's Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) provided ongoing assessment and support to key initiatives designed to lower crime within Camden City including The Camden Safer Cities Initiative (CSCI) and the Camden Curfew Project. In addition, PSN gathered and analyzed Camden City Part I crime data with particular focus on overall trends and aggravate assaults with a gun. Prior to the work of PSN, this data had not been analyzed and presented in a format which made it accessible and valuable for crime prevention entities and the community in general. The information provided in the multiple reports PSN drafted assisted these groups in decision making and planning.

PSN staff worked with a variety of additional crime prevention entities, offender re-integration focused services, youth-serving organizations and groups working on community demographic and health data to increase communication and information sharing among these groups, helping them to better meet their missions.

As planned, PSN provided in depth data analysis for the City's crime suppression initiatives, as well as process evaluations for CSCI and the Curfew Project. This analysis and evaluation contributed to the impact and effectiveness of these initiatives in several key areas.

PSN WORK AND IMPACT SUMMARY

CRIME PREVENTION

- ❖ Assisted various crime prevention entities in meeting their missions by analyzing and providing valuable crime data and through increased sharing of additional community data and information about community resources.

- ❖ Identified quarterly and annual trends in Part I Crime for the years 2000 to 2006, allowing the Camden Police and other crime prevention entities within the city to more effectively focus their efforts and guided a more informed and data-driven discussion of crime.

- ❖ Researched and analyzed Camden City Part I Crime from 1985 to 2006 to provide information about the fluctuations in crime over the past 25 years, as well as how Camden crime compares to national trends.
- ❖ Created a comprehensive comparison of Camden and four other New Jersey cities including Part I Crime, demographic and police force information for the years 2000 to 2005 to assist crime prevention entities in understanding regional and local crime trends.
- ❖ Provided detailed information regarding aggravated assaults with a gun crime in Camden City to assist the criminal justice system in addressing this crime and determining how to more effectively utilizing resources.
- ❖ Provided technical assistance to the Camden City Police Department to help them create a violent crime tracking system, which was used for weekly CompStat meetings.

YOUTH CRIME & GANG PREVENTION:

- ❖ The PSN Principle Investigator provided on-going leadership and project management for the Camden Curfew Project.
- ❖ PSN staff provided a number of administrative functions vital to the day-to-day business of the Camden Curfew Project and staffed curfew events.
- ❖ PSN staff improved data collection and enhanced operations at curfew events by creating effective curfew violator intake forms and volunteer training manuals for the Camden Curfew Project.
- ❖ Increased Curfew Project's ability to identify the needs of violators by providing detailed analysis of data on youth brought to curfew centers and recommendations based on the data.

OFFENDER RE-ENTRY ASSISTANCE:

- ❖ Provided evaluation and continuous quality improvement feedback to the CSCI staff, Steering Committee and various working groups.
- ❖ PSN staff helped CSCI create a number of project improvements including improved case processing, better tracking of offenders via the creation of relational databases and enhanced data collection and analysis.
- ❖ Identified the need for and assisted in increasing service provider participation in CSCI, particularly in the areas of mental health, community outreach, substance abuse and employment and training to assist offenders returning to the community.

PSN CRIME DATA ANALYSIS

Camden City's PSN evaluation team maintained and updated a database of Part I Crime and provided Camden's various crime initiatives with multiple analyses and reports designed to meet the needs of the entities. Initiatives and outcomes from data analysis include:

- Provided information that allowed the Camden Police and other crime prevention entities within the city to more effectively focus their efforts by identifying quarterly and annual trends in Part I Crime for the years 2000 to 2006. PSN also analyzed annual trends in Camden City from 1985 to 2005. Comparing current crime data to historical trends allows for key stakeholders to better understand current issues and anticipate future crime trends.
- Provided information to crime prevention entities to assist them in understanding regional and local crime trends by creating a comparison of Camden and four additional New Jersey cities (Atlantic City, Newark, Trenton and Jersey City) which included demographics, Part I crime information, and police force facts. Identifying both similarities and differences among the cities created a point from which to begin conversations among crime prevention entities throughout the state, as well as look for regional crime issues.
- Provided critical information to key crime prevention initiatives within Camden City by analyzing data on aggravated assaults with a gun. This analysis provided detailed information about commonalities of aggravated assaults such as demographic traits of a typical suspect, time of day that aggravated assaults normally take place, location of assaults, etc. This type of information allows the criminal justice system to more effectively utilize resources.

PSN'S EVALUATION OF CAMDEN'S SAFER CITIES INITIATIVE

The goal of CSCI is to organize the criminal justice community and local leaders from Camden's faith-based, neighborhood, and social service organizations to assist violent offenders re-entering the community in an effort to decrease their likelihood of offending again and, in turn, reduce violent crime in the city. PSN was established in part to determine the impact that CSCI has had, identify the program's best practices, necessary components and areas in need of improvement. CSCI has implemented the following changes/improvements as a result of PSN's continuous quality feedback and evaluations:

- Increased the number of steering committee members and broadened representation to more fully meet the goals and objectives of the initiative.
- Identified the need for and assisted in increasing participation of service providers in several key areas of offender re-entry including, mental health, community outreach, substance abuse and employment and training.

- Increased efficiency of the overall steering committee and all working groups through better structured discussion and more clearly defined goals.
- Improved work of the data working group by assisting with the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding for data sharing across participating agencies and more broadly defining the committee’s work to increase data sharing and dissemination in the larger Camden community.

The following represents the specific activities that led to the above crime data analysis and CSCI program evaluation highlights.

Areas of Evaluation
Data Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entered data for over 900 aggravated assaults. Data is extracted from primary and supplemental reports, which aids in the creation of a unique database that includes over 150 variables. • Updated and maintained database for aggravated assaults with a gun each month as data was received. • Completed an analysis of all Part I Crime data, including an analysis for aggravated assaults with a gun for the years 2000 to 2006 that specifically examines fluctuations and trends in Part I Crime quarterly and annually. The analysis was updated monthly as additional data became available. Refer to attachment 1 for analysis. Emailed to you • Created and delivered detailed presentation of Part I Crime. This is a visual representation of Part I Crime trends and fluctuations for the years of 2000 to 2006. Refer to attachment 2 for presentation. • Created a 25 year analysis of Part I Crime in Camden. The report examines trends from 1985 to 2005 and allowed crime prevention entities to better understand environmental/external factors that impact crime. In addition, it provided an historical perspective that had not been presented before. Refer to attachment 3 for analysis. • Produced a comparison of Camden and four New Jersey cities (Newark, Jersey City, Trenton and Atlantic City) in terms of Part I Crime trends, demographics and police force information, This provided city leaders a better perspective on the impact of their crime initiatives in comparison to other cities. Refer to attachment 4 for report.
Process Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSN evaluation team attended weekly meetings of the CSCI Steering Committee, the Case Processing Working Group and the Community Outreach Working Group and provided evaluations of and recommendations to improve their effectiveness. • Worked with the Data Working Group to assist in improving data collection, analyses and

admission criteria for participating in offender re-entry services. The PSN team also assisted with the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding to improve data sharing.

- PSN evaluation team created a report evaluating the CSCI Notification Events for participating offenders. Recommendations from this report were used to improve subsequent Notification Events.

CURFEW PROJECT

The goal of the Curfew Project is to enhance the safety of young people (under the age of 18) and prevent juvenile crime and gang activity in the City of Camden by reducing curfew violations through a partnership between the community, social services and law enforcement. This collaboration is designed to educate youth and families about curfew laws and social services that are available. As the project is still in the developmental stages, the PSN evaluation team served primarily in a process evaluation role. In addition, the PSN evaluation team built a database of youth brought to the curfew centers and performed analyses. The research and evaluation unit completed the following:

- Helped the project better serve youth by providing detailed demographic information and specific curfew violation information about youth brought to centers, as well as recommendations based on this analysis.
- Assisted the Steering Committee in planning and implementation of the curfew project by creating a comprehensive analysis of other curfew initiatives around the nation to use as a guide in terms of staffing, structure, data sharing, and the like.
- Enhanced operations at curfew events by providing and continually refining intake and follow-up forms, as well as training guides for volunteers.
- Improved data collection through updated intake forms and volunteer training. This ensured more reliable responses for valuable data analysis.
- Assisted in creation of subcommittees to focus on program guidelines, youth recruitment, program evaluation, social service outreach and volunteer outreach.

The following represents the specific activities that have led to the above data analysis and program evaluation highlights.

Areas of Evaluation
Data Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and maintained database and entered data for 241 curfew violators. Variables include demographic and other information such as age, address, gender, number of violators dropped off at each curfew event, and reasons for violating curfew; • Completed an analysis of data collected on youth brought to the curfew center and drafted report including analysis and recommendations for the Steering Committee. Refer to attachment 5 for the report; • Created report that allows the project to identify youth who have been brought to centers multiple times so they can be dealt with differently (increased consequences and/or links to services) as well as potential familial relationships (siblings, for example) so families can receive appropriate services.

Process Evaluation

- Attended 14 Steering Committee meetings and provided feedback;
- Created intake, follow-up and volunteer observational forms. Please see attachments 6 - 8.
- Developed volunteer training guides for intake and follow-up forms. See attachments 9 and 10.
- Developed progress report on discussion topics, strategies, and processes addressed by the Steering Committee to improve the progress of the project.
- Created a report on other curfew projects nationwide. Refer to attachment 11.