
DC Family Policy Seminar

May 22, 1997

Seminar Highlights

Diverting our Children from Crime: Family-Centered, Community-Based Strategies for Prevention

Donna Ruane Morrison, Ph.D., Moderator
Georgetown Public Policy Institute

Violence committed by youth demands a serious and appropriate response, but reducing violence by and against young people requires taking action on multiple fronts, including improved prevention, intervention, and law enforcement efforts.

Introduction

Juvenile crime is a timely issue. We often hear something in the news or read something in the paper or even have personal experiences related to violence and crime in the community. Juvenile crime touches us on an emotional level.

The president's proposed FY '98 budget includes funding that doubles the FY '97 appropriation for the Department of Justice's initiative aimed at youth, and most of this funding is for prosecution and law enforcement. Numerous recent state and local initiatives are underway to get tough on juvenile crime and the District is currently formulating a three-year plan.

The homicide rate for youth is often highlighted in the media, and the District is negatively distinguished by its negative crime rate. One of the goals of this seminar is to increase awareness of the statistics relating to juvenile crime, clarifying the trends and actual facts behind the things we hear in the media. Another goal is to encourage you to become proactive in addressing juvenile crime in terms of prevention and intervention. Part of our purpose in bringing you together is to encourage you to seek solutions to the problems of juvenile crime. Part of what we would like to achieve is to identify what community resources we already have to address this issue, to come up with new approaches to addressing youth crime, and to bring a family-focused perspective to this discussion.

Overview of Topic

Youth violence has soared in recent years. This has generated grave concern in the nation's communities and overwhelmed juvenile courts and detention facilities. To respond to the overcrowding of juvenile courts and to get tough about juvenile crime, many younger defendants are being moved into the adult system.

Violence committed by youth demands a serious and appropriate response, but reducing violence by and against young people requires action on multiple fronts, including improved prevention, intervention, and law enforcement efforts. Available research consistently indicates that juvenile delinquency is associated with several key factors : (1) drug abuse; (2) low verbal skills; (3) ineffective discipline or lack of affection by parents; (4) parental difficulties, such as their own drug abuse, criminality, or depression; (5) influence by peers who are in trouble and influence other youth; (6) low academic achievement, dropping out of school, or a chaotic or ineffective school environment; and (7) a subculture of criminality in the neighborhood. It is important that our approach to juvenile crime address the combination of these factors, rather than one or two of them alone.

Fortunately, the vast majority of juvenile offenders are not dangerous, have not repeatedly committed violent crimes, and can be helped to turn their lives around. Only 9 percent of youth aged 10-17 who are arrested in the United States are arrested for a violent offense. There's reason for optimism.

**Doris Howard, Grants Administrator
DC Board of Parole**

Youth are testing positive for drugs at a higher rate than adults.

Many of you probably saw in the media this past week that First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton appeared at Jefferson Junior High School with a group of young ladies, talking about violence among young women. What was profound about this program was that these young ladies spoke out to us as adults, and these young ladies were seeking help. They were seeking role models, someone to guide them and direct them.

My role is to pull together the three-year plan for the District, and to look at our arrest trends in DC. We in the District of Columbia are not falling in line with national crime trends, which indicate that overall crime and juvenile arrests are up. In 1985, the number of juvenile homicides in DC was 11. Although there have been peaks in juvenile homicides in DC (63 in 1989, 69 in 1990, 55 in 1991, and 62 in 1994), generally the number has been declining. In 1996, the number of juvenile homicides dropped to 22. The numbers are still very high, however, and it concerns us.

The juvenile crime rate for motor vehicle theft also concerns us. In this case, many kids are not fined, sanctioned, or charged. Motor vehicle theft peaked in 1986 and 1987, with incidents reported in thousands. That is now down to 400, but 400 is still a serious number. One thing we looked at was the relationship of motor vehicle thefts to other offenses in the District. A lot of kids were stealing cars for joy riding. We have heard from the police department that gangs and crews from certain neighborhoods participated in a lot of the car thefts. Some of them were doing it just to prove that they were "bad" in their community.

Overall, what we're seeing in the District is a dramatic decrease in arrests. Serious and violent crimes (Part I offenses) decreased 37 percent , and nonserious crimes (Part II offenses) decreased 23 percent. Violent crimes, in general, decreased 5 percent, and the number of homicides decreased 10 percent in recent years. Among youth under age 18, arrests have declined since 1984. In 1994, 28 percent fewer juveniles were arrested than in 1990, and arrests for Part I offenses were the lowest in 10 years. From 1993 to 1994, 13 percent fewer juveniles were arrested for violent crimes. Similarly, juvenile arrests for drug crimes were the lowest in five years, 45 percent fewer than in 1990.

However, drug use by juveniles remains a critical area of concern. Recently, the funding level for drug treatment has dropped. Congress reduced the Substance Abuse Treatment Program's discretionary money by 65 percent. (Discretionary funds support competitive grants for special programs.) In the District, funding for our organization, the Addiction Prevention Recovery Administration, has also diminished. Yet, marijuana use among juveniles in the District, for example, has skyrocketed (The findings that support this claim derive from reports on youth who have been arrested and then drug tested, and do not represent the general population of youth.) The number of youth arrested who tested positive for drug use has been increasing, with 16 percent testing positive in 1990, 43 percent testing positive in 1993, and 55 percent testing positive in 1994—surpassing adults for the first time since testing began in 1986.

With juvenile arrests decreasing, juvenile prosecution cases have also decreased. More than half of all juvenile prosecutions were motor vehicle thefts. Thirty-one percent of Part II offenses were for drug charges. Juvenile guilty dispositions decreased 22 percent from 1990 to 1995, while dismissals were at their highest level in six years.

One of the factors associated with later youth delinquency is child neglect and abuse. We have seen an increase in the number of abuse and neglect cases and have discovered that a lot of those children have been involved in the foster care system. It is important to note that many complaints report abuse of young girls and children under age six, as well as adolescents.

A document released by DC Action for Children in April of this year discusses this issue in detail. To receive this report, please call (202) 234-9404, or write to DC Action for Children, 1616 P Street, NW, Washington DC 20036.

**Lt. Linda Gilmore, Police Director, Metropolitan Boys and Girls Clubs
Delinquency Prevention Grants Lieutenant
Metropolitan Police Department**

I will tell parents to stop telling their children to be afraid of me, because what they are inadvertently telling their children is that when they are afraid, I'm not the person to go to.

There are 12 programs operated by the Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Clubs that aim to divert children who have been arrested for crimes (but not presented to the court system) and enroll them in programs within the Boys and Girls Clubs.

GREAT and DARE Programs

We recently established the GREAT program (Gang Resistance Education and Training) and the DARE program (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) in elementary and junior high schools. The GREAT program is operated in junior high schools for seventh and eighth graders. Six officers administer the GREAT program inside junior high schools. Our goal is to touch every junior high school in the city. GREAT diverts children from joining gangs. The GREAT program has been in existence for approximately four years and seems to be successful. One of GREAT's subsidiary programs is CAP (Control Attitude and Plan).

The DARE program was started by the former Chief of Police in Los Angeles, Daryl Gates. Chief Gates recognized the need for children to participate in resistance training at an early age, and formalized this program, which is currently being taught in all 50 states. It targets fifth and sixth graders and has been taught for the past two years in almost every elementary school in the DC system. Currently two officers are teaching the DARE program in the city.

We have found that some adults tell their children, "You better be good or I'll get the police on you." I can't tell you how this frustrates me. I will tell parents to stop telling their children to be

afraid of me, because what they are inadvertently telling their children is that when they are afraid, I'm not the person to go to. When you are afraid, or you are bothered, or someone is bothering you, I am the first person you should come to. We are trying to educate children that we are not the bad guys. Children develop a relationship with the police through the GREAT and DARE programs so that they will learn not to be afraid of the police.

Boys and Girls Clubs

The Boys and Girls Clubs were established in 1934 by a group of police officers who saw the need to have some type of mentoring relationship with young children. The Early Intervention Program is run through the Youth and Family Services Division. When a juvenile is arrested for a minor incident, he or she is diverted from the justice system into the program. It is a 90-day, mandatory program, where not only the child, but also the parents of the child have to go through the program, which helps determine the needs of both the child and the family. If the problem is that the child is hanging out with the wrong crowd, we have every program you could possibly think of at the Boys and Girls Clubs to intervene. A lot of the clubs are staffed by police officers, who often become surrogate parents to the children. Parents are mandated to attend the program and are taught better parenting skills to handle the child who has been involved in the juvenile justice system. Thereafter, when a child behaves adversely, the parents don't immediately strike out, but apply the tools they are given in the Early Intervention Program.

Residential Summer Camp

The Residential Summer Camp in Scotland, MD, serves 7- to 12-year-olds, and provides a one-week recreational camp where children learn how to fish, make arts and crafts, etc. The police officers who work in the Boys and Girls Clubs also work as counselors and camp directors. It's another example of an environment where the kids are involved with an officer in a nonadversarial atmosphere.

Toys for Tots

Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Clubs serve as distribution sites for the United States Marine Corps Toys for Tots campaign—for collecting and distributing toys to needy children throughout the District.

Bigs-n-Blue

Bigs-n-Blue is a program sponsored by Big Brothers, Big Sisters of the National Capital Area in which police officers become big brothers and big sisters. Kids get a better idea of what a police officer does. Children have an opportunity to interact with officers out of uniform, and to see that we are parents and that we have children, too.

These are the major functions that we perform at the Police Delinquency Branch.

The statements made by the young girls in the program Doris mentioned were extremely innovative. What they talked about most was having adults mentor them, having more programs for them to do after they finish school, giving them responsibility, and being told "you did a good job." They do not get enough of that in their home life. They need to be appreciated and valued as young women. I encourage the officers when they go back to their clubs: "When your group does a good job, tell them."

**Dave Bass, Education Specialist
Center to Prevent Handgun Violence**

Every day 16 children under the age of 19 are killed by firearms...

There are 222 million legal firearms in the possession of U.S. citizens, as far as we know. Every year between 200,000 and 300,000 firearms are reported stolen to the FBI. There are an estimated 1.2 million elementary age latchkey children who have access to guns in their homes—that is, there are children and guns, and no supervision. Every day 16 children under the age of 19 are killed by firearms, and all of those deaths could have been prevented. As of 1995, the estimated cost of direct health care expenditures resulting from firearm-related injuries was \$4 billion.

Gun violence affects everyone. It makes no difference who you are, where you live, what your socioeconomic status is in this world. When the bullet strikes a particular target, you have a life-altering experience. There is no quick fix to this problem, no easy answer. A solution will require effort from a lot of people.

The Center to Prevent Handgun Violence believes that gun violence is a multifaceted issue requiring a multifaceted approach. Established in 1992, the Center to Prevent Hand Gun Violence is a national nonprofit organization. We're actually the education-research-legal action-entertainment-outreach-affiliate of Handgun Control, Inc. Our mission is to reduce the scope of gun death and injury in the United States. We'd like to end gun violence with a comprehensive approach to change—educational, behavioral, social, and legal.

I want to share three programs with you today:

Project Lifeline

Becca Knox, Project Director

Project Lifeline is a nationwide public education program that presents a series of radio PSAs (public service announcements) whose purpose is to unite the health community. It is a partnership that we've embarked on with Physicians for Social Responsibility and the Help Network. Communities or individuals can call local media outlets to see if they are running the PSAs. This proactive strategy is an option for individuals who are looking for solutions to which they can contribute. All that is required is an investment of time.

Steps to Prevent (STOP) Firearm Injury

STOP targets pediatric health professionals. In partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics, member doctors have agreed to disseminate STOP program information in their offices. When parents come in, there are materials in the waiting room for them to read. They can pick up tips they can use if they have a weapon in their home. There is also an audio tape inside the packet that offers role playing, counseling tips, etc.

Straight Talk About Risks (STAR)

STAR is a national, school-based, gun violence prevention program for prekindergarten–12th grade youth and their families. It is based on the premise that all students are at risk. The program is designed to help youth develop victim prevention skills and to rehearse the behaviors needed to manage problems such as conflicts and peer pressure. STAR comes with a six-hour training program. We have been working with the DC schools and administration, primarily offering presentations to principals from middle schools in Wards 7 and 8. We also work with community-based organizations such as Martha's Table, which has an after-school program. We work with their volunteers, most of whom come from Howard University.

The STAR program is a curriculum that others can be trained to implement. Part of my job as a trainer is to show people how they can use the program to supplement what they are already doing. We have trained staff from the DC Parks and Recreation Department to use STAR. In the District, we would like to work more with community-based organizations. At present, we work with the Consortium of Youth Services.

**Brenda Jones, Executive Director
Parklands Community Center**

An idle mind is the devil's workshop.

Parklands Community Center was founded in January 1980 to provide positive, constructive alternatives for children in the Parklands housing community. There was need to provide something for the community's young people, who had no recreation center or youth program. It had to be something in which these young people could get involved.

We started by offering just tabletop games and recreational activities. We expanded our program when I realized the children needed help with their homework. They also needed an avenue to be able to talk about issues of concern to them. This was during the early '80s, when there was no emphasis on programs for children, youth, or families. Children were beginning to confront a lot of issues: guns were being brought into the community, drugs were coming in, outsiders were moving into the community, and there really wasn't a lot of support. We also had a mass exodus heading out of the city. We began having weekly counseling sessions and rap sessions to talk about the issues and what was going on. We later expanded the program to include occupational and life-skill training, cultural awareness programs, and field trips. Some of the children, unfortunately, succumbed to the problems that were out there, but others were able to move forward.

In 1995, the board of directors decided to restructure its program to embrace the entire family, not just children. In the fall of 1995, the Parklands Center launched the Family Strengthening and Support Program. This program is designed to ensure the safety and welfare of children and youth, preserving the family unit whenever possible. The goals are to help parents create a nurturing home that promotes healthy child development, to reduce and prevent child neglect and violence, and to keep children from growing up to become involved in criminal activities.

Family Strengthening and Support Project

We go into the home, assess the living conditions, and talk with the parents. They are a lot more comfortable there, and we can actually see what is happening in their setting. We help them develop a plan of action that has time lines. If there is a substance abuse problem, you have to work with individuals to help them decide if they really want to stop using drugs. We have a good connection in drug treatment, but if a person is not ready to quit, enrolling that person in a treatment program will just be a waste of time. A lot of energy is spent convincing a person to quit. Also, our plan of action can include mental health counseling and helping the person decide whether he or she wants to get a job. Case management includes counseling in the areas of substance abuse, mental health, and family services. Social services assists with housing, clothing, food, resume development, transportation to appointments, etc. We also have life-skills training in communication, motivation, pre-employment, and child rearing. Our child-rearing training is a very important component because we have young parents, grandparents, older parents in our training programs who all see a need to enhance their parenting skills.

We also have partners who serve as referral systems for our families, including the Allen Outreach Center; the Substance Abuse Team; Centers for Mental Health; Rap, Inc.; and other organizations.

Since the fall of 1995, we have serviced 21 families. As you know, each family is different, but there are common threads that destabilize families and threaten their self-sufficiency. These include substance abuse, depression, and lack of motivation or direction. Children need and want basic things from their parents. They want them to be their caretakers; to provide food, shelter and clothing; and, most important, to provide love and attention. In many cases, parents are not providing the nourishing things needed for a stable home environment. Because of that, kids are being disruptive. Schools, recreation centers, even churches cannot fully address these needs without including the whole family.

I long for the day when government and private industry will concentrate on the family as a focal point in resolving many social problems of the community. The numbers of children and youth involved in criminal activity will continue to increase until we all realize that the family should be the focal point. Children and youth programs are popular, but we must include the family.

**Michael Petit, Deputy Director
Child Welfare League**

I think it is important to recognize that many people, particularly law enforcement personnel, would like to see more emphasis on prevention.

H.R. 3 passed the House of Representatives by a large majority two weeks ago. It contains, among other things, \$1.5 billion for the construction of more juvenile prisons. This bill is largely intended to make it a lot easier to try young teenagers as adults, to try them in adult courts, and to place them in adult prisons. There is virtually no prevention or treatment in the measure, and a number of its provisions are supported by the Clinton Administration. Prosecutors and law enforcement agencies largely support this measure, although a growing number now think it is a bad idea. District residents need to take a look at this legislation and ask if it is going to help or make their current situation worse.

There is another bill that does not yet have a number assigned to it. A hearing was held on this bill, purportedly to introduce more prevention and treatment provisions into it. As of now, no appropriation has been attached to it and the funding people are talking about is very low, i.e., \$20 million, \$50 million. In a country this big, that is a very small sum to address the problem. Compared to what is sought for more punitive measures, it is a "drop in the bucket."

At this point, a spirit of cooperation exists among House Chair Frank Riggs, Rep. Matthew Martinez, and Rep. Bobby Scott. They are trying to construct something they can put on the table that supports prevention and treatment. They're talking about mentoring programs, home visitation programs, midnight basketball, after-school programs, etc.

For now, however, only a small minority in Congress will address prevention programs. Among other things in this bill is modification of the core requirements of the original Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, including being able to incarcerate status offenders (e.g., truants) or modifying the sight and sound separations between juveniles and adults in jails. Almost everyone opposes changes to incarcerating status offenders.

A District-based group called Fight Crime, Invest in Kids focuses on home visitation, after-school programs, and intensive family preservation programs. I think it is important to recognize that many people, particularly law enforcement personnel, would like to see more emphasis on prevention.

One of the studies we have been analyzing is based in Minneapolis. It looked at four- to nine-year-old children who were arrested during a one-year period. These were kids that needed immediate intervention because law enforcement couldn't get the children into services in any other way. Judges and prosecutors had no idea what to do with these children, other than refer them to Child Protection Services.

A multidisciplinary study was conducted in Sacramento with representatives from law enforcement, public health, the courts, criminal prosecution, the sheriff's office, probation and parole offices, and others, all focused on children. The study focused on the relationship between child abuse (examining kids who are victimized) and juvenile offense behaviors (examining kids who become victimizers).

The study also found that the younger the child at the time of committing the first offense, the greater the probability that the child will commit another offense. The probability of a child offender committing another offense is 96 percent; and, by age 10, that child is likely to be making a third appearance in court. Thus, a child's previous history of committing an offense is the surest predictor that the child will commit a crime in future.

The Sacramento study showed that in Sacramento County, there are 75,000 nine- to twelve-year-old children. Eleven hundred of those children are known to the Child Protective System (CPS); 73,900 are not. Altogether, there were 132 arrests in that group of 75,000 children. The arrests were evenly divided between the two groups (those known to CPS and those not known to CPS). However, the difference in the arrest rate is 6,700 percent. In other words, in Sacramento, the likelihood of a child's being arrested is 67 times greater if that child is known to the child protective services system. We think there is a subgroup (within the group of 1,100 children) called "frequent flyers"—children with multiple risk factors that make them 200 times more likely to be arrested.

This study shows that overwhelming risk factors prevail in these kids' lives. One especially troubling statistic relates to incarcerated parents. Approximately 2.2 percent of all children in this country have parents who have been incarcerated. Right now, there are about 1.5 million people in jail and prison; 800,000 are parents who have 1.5 million children. If you have been victimized by your parents, who victimized others and ended up in prison, and you are arrested at an early age for delinquent behavior, you are at great risk of ending up in prison yourself.

The Gramm amendment to last year's welfare reform legislation states that if you are convicted of a drug felony, you will be denied welfare benefits for life. This surely will result in more children coming into contact with the child welfare system. Out of \$15 billion the federal government is spending this year on drug-related matters, we estimate that less than one percent is directed to women and children who present substance abuse problems. Most of the money is being spent on interdiction, on enforcement, and on treatment of adults in clinical settings. The Sacramento study estimated the cost of treating a delinquent child into young adulthood, including incarceration, at \$471,858 per child.

Sacramento is pursuing intensive family preservation services as an alternative to incarceration. This brings child welfare, law enforcement, and community-based organizations together to surround the children and families who are at highest risk of becoming serious juvenile or adult offenders. This service is based on research by the Department of Justice and is currently being considered for funding in California. Representative Zoe Lofgren of California has introduced legislation that finances this type of service.

To acquire a copy of testimony presented by Michael Petit to for the Congressional hearing on "The Juvenile Crime Control and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1997", you may contact him at the Child Welfare League at (202) 638-2952.

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Incarcerating Juveniles in Adult Facilities

Mr. Petit, you spoke to the issue of separating juveniles from adults. What is the value of this?

Unknown

Some studies suggest that kids who are dealt with as adults and who are imprisoned in adult jails show higher rates of recidivism than children who are sent to juvenile facilities. There is a strong belief that adult prison is a school that teaches kids to be harder, meaner, more effective criminals.

Michael Petit

A study in Florida shows no correlational deterrent by incarcerating kids in adult systems.

Yohannes Assefa

Child and Family Services, La Shawn General Receivership

Information Sharing

Mr. Petit, do you communicate with other agencies to provide them with the information you are collecting?

Unknown

We communicate with our member agencies and send out notifications about our studies. The problem is that the U.S. Congress operates their own way. In this instance, we only had a three-day notice of the markup, and this is problematic. I think this is where the delegate for the District needs to provide you with an entree into Congress to present this information. Congress is receiving only a very limited perspective.

Michael Petit

For those of you who are not members of the Child Welfare League of America, we encourage you to join. It is a very powerful organization. If you cannot influence leadership, then the leaders make all of these national decisions. I think Brenda Jones sized it up for me when she said that the whole family needs to be involved.

Shirley Pratt, Department of Human Services/Income Maintenance Administration

Substance Abuse

We discussed a fair amount about substance abuse, yet there seemed to be no mention of alcohol. Can you address that issue?

Mark Anderson, Mayor's Services for the Aging

I'm not an expert on substance abuse, but the information given earlier was based on testing children for substances through urine analysis at the time of arrest. I don't know if there would be documentation if a child were inebriated at the time of arrest. We realize that alcohol is a major entity in the community. One of the things that we have been looking at in the community and neighborhoods is the proliferation of liquor stores and advertisements of alcohol. This is what our children see. Alcohol is a serious problem.

Doris Howard

The GREAT program is funded by the federal government through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms unit of the federal justice system. GREAT also teaches resistance to alcohol and drugs. Drunkenness is not necessarily a criminal offense. Possession of an open container of the alcoholic beverage is a criminal offense. A lot of the youth we divert from the juvenile justice system into our program come to us as a result of their possession of an open container of alcohol, and a large number are indeed intoxicated at the time they are arrested.

Once they get into the GREAT program, it is mandatory that both the offender and the parents participate. We're forcing the family to recognize and address the problem. We force the parents to acknowledge that their child has a problem and to understand why the child is drinking. We need to provide children with alternatives and involve the parents.

Lt. Linda Gilmore

Do you conduct regular drug testing of the youth in your program?

Fonda Allen, Capitol Hill Group Ministry

No.

Lt. Linda Gilmore

Parental Skills Training

A critical issue for families is discipline. How does your organization address the issue of discipline in the home? It has been my experience that parents are afraid to discipline a child for fear of being accused of child abuse. So children are often left to do what they want. How do you prepare families for this? Are there alternatives?

Vicky Rayfield, United Planning Organization

One thing we as a community fail to realize is that some people have never been taught how to set limits, or to understand the different levels of child development. We take for granted that people know and understand the limitations of children. We need to get back to Basics 101. I am a proponent of doing more in the school system, such as offering family life or life-skills curricula. Just giving birth doesn't make you a parent. These are the kinds of things we need to emphasize. We can't take for granted that people know how to set limits.

Doris Howard

I want to call your attention to a seminar we did last year on the subject of parenting. We summarized the research on the effects of parenting practices, but more than that, we offered a list of organizations in the city that address parenting. This may be a good resource for you. [For more information on how to obtain copies of this report, please call Antoinette Laudencia, DC Family Policy Seminar, at (703) 524-7802.]

Donna Morrison, Georgetown Public Policy Institute

Civic Participation

Mr. Petit indicated that we had 1.5 million people in prison, and that more than 50 percent of those were African-American males. In the juvenile justice system, over 60 percent are African-American males. In foster care, over 70 percent are African-American children. Now, all three of these systems are moneymakers. How can we expect anyone to be serious about the issues when so many jobs are at risk?

Charles Ballard, Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization

I was struck by Mr. Petit's discussion of the political process. How involved are we individually in that process? One message that needs to be passed on is that people should take responsibility for themselves and for their lives. Part of survival is becoming part of the political process. We know what the concerns are, but it comes down to what anybody is prepared to do individually.

Dave Bass

If we eliminate crime, prevent crime, and do all these things, then we will not need a police force anywhere. Now, unemployment does not strike fear into my heart at this particular moment, and it does not stop me from trying to prevent crime and clear disorder while establishing respect and trust in the community. I believe in what I do and what my colleagues do, and I will faithfully do all I can to prevent crime and the fear of crime, without fear of unemployment.

Lt. Linda Gilmore

Police Supported Programs

I live in the District and I haven't heard of any of these [police] programs in the elementary schools. I regularly attend PTA meetings and am on the board, but I have not heard any of these programs mentioned.

Fonda Allen, Capitol Hill Group Ministry

We currently have seven Boys and Girls Clubs in the District. Unfortunately, six other clubs were closed due to cutbacks in manpower and redeployment measures exercised by the police department. We had to focus on going back to the street. I am told that we may need to close down additional sites because of Chief Soulsby's plan for redeployment of officers to the street. The one that was in your area may have shut down.

Lt. Linda Gilmore

What can be done about reopening some of the Boys and Girls Clubs?

Fonda Allen, Capitol Hill Group Ministry

You have to remember that the organization is called the Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Clubs, but it is entirely a nonprofit organization. It receives 11 percent of its funding from the United Way and the rest from foundation grants and donations from private business. The police department does not allocate any money to the Boys and Girls Clubs, nor does the District government. We simply staff the clubs with patrol officers from the city to contribute to a joint endeavor. However, the personnel that we are allowed to deploy are directed by Chief Soulsby.

Lt. Linda Gilmore

STAR is a school-based program. While we have been able to secure funding for the program, we have never really found a receptive ear for the program within the DC Public Schools. We have a useful resource in the program. What we would like to do is discuss with you how we can implement it.

Dave Bass

Cultural Sensitivity

As the Hispanic population continues to grow, are these programs in the District culturally sensitive?

Nadine Cid, ASPIRA Associated Inc.

I have always coordinated programs with agencies representing different cultures, such as the Latin American Youth Center, Bell Multicultural High School, and other agencies. We have always tried to get people involved from all cultural areas. We face language barriers and cultural differences; when talking to families we find it is very difficult for them to come to this country, acclimate themselves to our policies and procedures, and discern how kids are supposed to behave in the school system. So we are very conscious about these issues in our area and try to allocate funding to address them.

Doris Howard