

AZ Education: Truancy Enforcement

Issue:

Poor school attendance often a precursor to a life of crime. Studies indicated that truancy is often an early warning sign of a troubled youth. Children who show a propensity for violence, dropping out of school and other nonconformist behavior are often truant for most of their school career.

Solution:

Truancy Enforcement; Prevention Effort program established in Peoria, AZ. Program includes early detection of unexcused absences of youths aged 6-16, mandatory notification of absences to the parents after 3 unexcused absences, follow-up notification to the parent from the City Attorney's Office after 5 unexcused absences, and swift filing of a criminal complaint against the parent and/or juvenile on the excused absence. Program offers a deferred prosecution option for minors, parents and legal guardians as an alternative to formal criminal proceedings. As part of this program, parents must successfully complete parenting skills course and the minor must attend group counselling and education programs.

Results:

A recent study by the American Psychological Association Commission on Youth and Violence proved that counselling interrupts the cycle of unacceptable behavior by minors and their parents. Family interaction improved for up to 18 months after the counselling and recidivism rates declined. While the City of Peoria is currently collecting data to confirm these findings, City officials have observed that minors are not recidivating and that the minor's relationships among family members has been enhanced as a direct result of the program.

Contact:

Ken C. Forgia
City of Peoria, AZ

[From the Massachusetts section of the "Government On Line" Website (www.gol.org)]

MA Public Safety: Ten Most Wanted Program

Issue:

Target the ten most heavily infested drug houses in a City, close them down and then, if needed, renovate the buildings.

Solution:

Create the Ten Most Wanted Drug Dens Program which operates with the cooperation of federal, state, county and city officials. Task force of U.S. Attorney's Office, Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, Boston Police Dept., Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services combat drug infested neighborhoods. These government offices use forfeiture laws, housing code regulations, ownership and banking law to oust drug dealers.

108 drug buildings have been closed as of December, 1994.
26 buildings have been rehabbed.

Public awareness of drug activity which involves police officers who visit schools to promote program that crime doesn't pay.

Contact:

Mary Knasas
Public Facility Department
15 Beacon Street
City of Boston, MA 02108
617) 635-0326 Fax: (617) 635-0383

[From the Massachusetts section of the "Government On Line" Website (www.gol.org)]

Public Safety: Bicycle Patrol

"Florida Public Safety"

Issue:

Newly revitalized downtown was being compromised by an increased number of vagrants and juvenile delinquents. City of Orlando saw a rise in commercial and vehicle burglaries, robberies, thefts, vandalism and graffiti, cruising and traffic violations, and underage drinking. Patrol cars kept police officers remote from citizens of area, while beat officers often lacked inability to respond quickly to reported criminal activity.

Solution:

Establish two squads of bicycle patrol officers, who work the area from 7 AM until midnight.

Results:

Noticeable reduction in illegal drug activity, theft crimes and vandalism. Bike patrols have been effective in curtailing minors from gathering along the streets and sidewalks. Citizens who avoided the downtown area are now returning because they feel safe again.

Cost Savings:

A bike costs less than 4% of a typical patrol car. Additionally, an officer on a bike makes far more citizen contacts than an officer on foot or in a patrol car.

Contact:

Thomas Hurlburt
400 South Organ Ave.
City of Orlando, FL 32810
(407) 246-2221 Fax: (407) 246-2842

[From the Florida section of the "Government On Line" Website (www.gol.org)]

OH Environment: BioDiesel

Issue:

Provide better air quality and a cleaner environment by re-evaluating the City's diesel-powered vehicles.

Solution:

Use of a soybean fuel additive called BioDiesel, which burns cleaner than regular diesel fuel. Soybeans are a plentiful and reusable natural resource, and an important crop to the economy of Chillicothe, OH. Ohio ranks third in the U.S. in soybean production.

Results:

In addition to improving the environment and the local economy, BioDiesel boosted fuel mileage by 1.5 miles per gallon. This will reduce the Transportation Department's consumption by over 10,000 gallons per year. Although the additive does increase fuel costs slightly, grants are available for start up of a Biodiesel conversion. The City's 2700 start up grant offsets the small increase in fuel costs. In the long run, the City anticipates recouping these costs by reduced vehicle maintenance costs.

Contact:

Gus Comstock
35 South Paint St.
Chillicothe, OH
(614) 773-1569 Fax: (614) 773-8004 </ADDRESS>

[From the Ohio section of the "Government On Line" Website (www.gol.org)]

KY Public Safety: Fugitive Apprehension Squad and Team (FAST) <

Issue:

Reduce the number violent crimes and drug trafficking offenses during 1995.

Solution:

FAST project which targets suspects wanted for felony warrants. In Louisville, KY, Police officers are paid an overtime premium for work related to the effort. Research indicated that a large majority of crimes are committed by fugitives and suspects wanted for other crimes. Representatives of more than 20 local, state and federal agencies are asked to provide information. Detectives work in teams of 4 - 6, and apply their knowledge and resourcefulness to locating their targets.

Results:

In 2 short months, FAST officers located fugitives in 15 states and 3 foreign countries. During this time, FAST processed 145 out of 224 cases by police. Without this program, 65% of all persons arrested for Criminal Court Bench warrants would still be free. Cooperation between team members and local, state and federal agencies has been excellent.

Contact:

Chief Douglas Hamilton
Louisville Division of Police
632 West Jefferson
Louisville, KY 40202
502) 574-7660 Fax: (502) 574-2450 </ADDRESS>

AZ Education: Youth Crime Coalition

Issue:

Solve the juvenile crime phenomenon facing the City of Peoria, AZ Comprehensive plan needed to 'take back the community' through crime prevention and early intervention initiatives.

Solution:

The Peoria Youth Crime Coalition was formed; group empowered to lobby state legislature, create youth diversion programs including truancy enforcement, implementing a Crime Line to report local criminal activity and a Safe Schools Hotline. Focus of youth crime prevention effort continues to be early intervention and community involvement such as neighborhood bike patrols, use of school district athletic and classroom facilities for recreational activities and a program to initiate a working partnership with a corporation to develop recreational facilities.

Results:

The Safe School Hotline receives numerous anonymous calls each day reporting situations such as weapons on campus. Parenting skills and youth support groups have received approx. 200 participants since August, 1994.

Contact:

Ken C. Forgia, Mayor
City of Peoria

[From the Arizona section of the "Government On Line" Website (www.gol.org)]