

Most motorists told to sit tight on air bag use

By Janet L. Fix Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

WASHINGTON Fearing death or injury by air bags, more than 2,500 people have asked the government for permission to have their bags disconnected by a mechanic.

But only 86 with medical problems have received the go-ahead to have their bags disabled, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The rest are being told to sit tight and buckle up until final rules on deactivation of air bags can be completed. That won't be until after Feb. 5, when the chance for the public to comment on the proposed rules ends.

So far, 50 people, most of them short women or husbands of short women wanting air bags disconnected, have written to the safety agency about the proposed rule changes. Their letters are in addition to the 2,538 people who have written to the agency in recent months asking to have their air bags disconnected.

Air bags have been blamed for the deaths of 54 children and 20 adults, mostly women under 5 feet 4 inches.

Betty Beyer of Saginaw, Mich., in a letter dated Dec. 31, wrote: "I am scared to death to drive my car." She wants her air bag disconnected immediately, and doesn't want to wait.

Shirley Small fears for his own life and his wife's life. "I am 5 feet tall, and my wife is 5-foot-1," the Coral Gables, Fla., resident wrote. He wants his bag deactivated "before it kills either one of us."

Because air bags deploy at speeds up to 200 mph, the safety agency suggests children under 13 should be buckled in rear seats. Women should sit as far back from the steering wheel as possible.

Government tests require air bags to protect a 172-pound crash dummy that is unbuckled.

Automakers and some consumers aren't happy with the standard. Air bags are designed to "protect irresponsible people who don't wear seat belts at the expense of more responsible people who wear their seat belts," wrote Amy Brakeman of Wellesley, Mass.

Generally, the early public comment from individuals is running in favor of rules proposed by the safety agency that would allow automakers to take some of the punch out of air bags, and allow mechanics to disable air bags. Neither the auto companies nor safety groups have submitted formal written comments. Currently, it is illegal for a mechanic to disconnect an air bag or any other safety device. Vehicle owners may disconnect their own bags, but it's not recommended, the safety agency says. Automakers and dealers oppose widespread deactivation, saying air bags have saved about 1,700 lives.

Three public hearings across the nation were held in 1984 before the existing air bags rules became law. No hearings are planned this time, so it is important than the public write with comments, said Diane Steed, a former NHTSA administrator.

"Obviously, no comment from an individual will carry a great deal of weight," Steed said. "But the public's view does and should play a role."

In the early returns, unqualified support for air bags appears to be the exception.

"Leave air bags alone. They work," wrote Robert O'Hara of Newport News, Va. "Make seat belts and car seats mandatory and enforce it."

Some people want air bags to be made optional.

Gail Rongey, a certified public accountant in Seattle, said, "We should rethink the whole air bag concept and go back to the drawing board. ... Not everybody can sit in the back seat."

Some motorists vow to make automakers feel it on the bottom line if they can't come up with safer air bags.

"Go ahead and penalize short people, babies and pregnant women if you must," wrote June Kristapovich. "My good old Olds will have a home in my garage for the next 20 years if necessary. It will never be replaced by a dangerous car with these stupid, evil air bags."

Boston has put a big dent in solving its violent crime problem among youth

By Angie Cannon Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

BOSTON It's another slow night for Sgt. Isaac Thomas, patrolling the streets of notorious Roxbury. Not so long ago, his shift might bring gunshots, sirens and screams. Tonight's big excitement: Some kids ran a stop sign.

After years of funerals for teen-agers, Boston has much to brag about. No one under 17 years of age has been killed by guns since July, 1995. Cities across the country are calling to find out the secrets to Boston's success.

"It's a little John Wayne, a little Clint Eastwood," says Bill Stewart, a 20-year probation officer. "We told the kids: 'You aren't going to do this. You are going along with the program or we are going to take you down.' We went eyeball to eyeball, and they started blinking."

What happened was this: the city banded together and everyone got very serious about stopping kids from killing each other. For the police department, that meant trying to solve problems instead of just reacting to them. The police also ditched an us-versus-them mind set and overcame historic rivalries to form strong partnerships with federal law enforcement, state agencies, businesses and university researchers.

"Boston is one of a number of cities that is having great success in controlling their youth crime problem," says James Alan Fox, dean of Northeastern University's College of Criminal Justice, who is releasing a report on the issue next week.

"Boston has balanced prevention strategies with intervention and enforcement," he says. "It is not a fluke."

There was the day, for instance, Boston police chopped down "The Sneaker Tree," where the vicious Intervale gang had thrown 100 sneakers in the branches to mark its turf.

There was the day a 24-year-old street tough, Freddy Cordoza, was sent to federal prison for nearly 20 years for possession of one bullet.

There was the day that police and probation officers started visiting the homes of youths on probation at night.

As a result, murders of Bostonians 24 and under have dropped 71 percent since 1990, and Police Commissioner Paul Evans says with a shrug of his shoulders: "I've got cops complaining they are bored in our toughest neighborhoods. I say to them: 'You have no one to blame but yourselves.'"

Indeed, Lt. Gary French, head of Boston's 45-person Youth Violence Strike Force, holds up his pager and says with a smile: "I keep checking my beeper to make sure it's working."

What makes Boston's story important is that nationally, juvenile violence has been climbing. For 10 years, murders committed by kids soared nearly 170 percent. Although the national juvenile murder rate has dropped in the last few years, it still is markedly higher than it was in 1986. And the problem is spreading: while city rates are declining, murder arrests in suburban counties are growing.

Some cities still face large numbers of both youthful offenders and victims. In Detroit, 122 juveniles were arrested for murder in 1995. In Philadelphia, 38 were arrested for murder last year.

Criminologists cite Boston's approach as a model for other cities. The city's effort has drawn praise from Attorney General Janet Reno and queries from nearly 40 other cities, including Detroit, Miami, Philadelphia and Tallahassee.

"Boston has involved a wide number of parties from the academic world, the corporate world, the public and private sectors to try to deal with the problem of alienated and underprivileged youth," said Fox, the Northeastern dean.

It wasn't always this quiet in Boston. As crack cocaine and gangs intensified in the late 1980s, Boston experienced a surge in homicides in 1990, 152 people were killed, including 10 under age 17 by guns.

One of the first and most successful steps began after a simple courtroom conversation between police officer Bobby Frataglia and the probation officer, Stewart, who had 68 youths on his probation case load shot to death from 1990 to 1994. Frustrated by what was happening on the streets, they wanted to make probation more meaningful and to keep probationers from committing crimes again.

The youths involved in the killings, either as victims, shooters or witnesses, already had been in trouble with the law. Many were on probation, but didn't take it seriously because the limitations nighttime curfews or boundary restrictions weren't enforced by the cops. Yet the kids saw their probation officer as someone with tremendous power to send them to jail.

One night, Stewart joined Frataglia in his cruiser. That very night, a youth who had just been released from prison someone Stewart knew

was shot and killed. Typically, those hanging around clam up after a

shooting and won't tell the officers what they saw. But the kids who weren't supposed to be there were shocked to see Stewart in their neighborhood at night and not behind his desk in the daytime. They opened up and provided information, fearing they might be sent back to jail for breaking curfew.

"We said you guys should ride with us more often," Fratalia said.

Thus was born "Operation Nightlight" in 1992, which pairs probation and police officers to make unannounced nighttime visits to juveniles' homes to enforce curfews and restrictions imposed by the courts. Police say it has increased probation compliance from 20 percent to 60 percent. Stewart says three youths on his case load have died since 1995.

"It's not perfect, but it's better," Stewart says. "This is a card house, and it could end tomorrow. We have to come back every day and keep working at it."

The project radically changed the nature of probation, which had been viewed as a desk job, by showing youths that probation officers were serious about their mission.

"Before, probation was a 9 to 5 job," Fratalia says. "Kids thought their probation officers went home at 5 p.m."

Later research by Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government showed that strengthening probation was a smart approach: Three-quarters of both youth victims and offenders had been arraigned in court at least once before. One-quarter were on probation when they committed a murder.

Another important part of Boston's success has been a program known as "Operation Ceasefire," under which the Boston police's Youth Violence Strike Force responds quickly and forcefully when gun violence occurs. Besides meeting with community members, police officers met with gang toughs and told them the cops would be in their faces if the violence didn't stop.

"We told them to stop," said David Kennedy, a senior researcher at Harvard University who has been working with the Boston Police Department. "At its root, it was that simple. We said: 'Anybody hurts anybody, and we will stop the gang that did the hurting. Go home and tell your friends this is the way business will get done.'"

It wasn't a bluff: last August, the law enforcement agencies arrested 23 members of the Intervale gang, one of the city's worst groups, on federal charges.

And that is another part of "Operation Ceasefire": threatening young criminals with federal prosecutions for gun trafficking or repeat offenses.

The federal system with no parole and faraway prisons was not part of the world of street hoods. When Cardoza was convicted as a career criminal for brazenly tossing one round of ammunition, he was sentenced to 20 years in a federal prison in Otisville, N.Y. The word spread fast. As one teen put it: "Twenty years for one bullet! People should be scared. That's your whole life!"

The police also started going after the source of guns for Boston teens. With new computer systems, Boston police could feed information on seized guns to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, enabling each gun to be traced to the original seller through serial numbers and records. Guns are marked with a serial number and are sold initially to federally licensed gun dealers. After a gun is traced, law enforcement then can go after the people who illegally sold it to the juveniles.

President Clinton has announced that 15 other cities in addition to Boston and New York will participate in a similar gun-tracing project.

"It puts the gun traffickers out of business," Kennedy said. "It is harder for kids to find guns."

Commissioner Evans and others stress that the department has created strong partnerships with many other state and federal agencies, which historically have been rivals.

In addition, Evans says he has decentralized an elite citywide drug unit to work directly in troubled neighborhoods, making them accountable to district police commanders. Boston also has created a wide array of prevention programs, including basketball camps, youth choirs and mentoring programs. The police department also has adopted "neighborhood policing" the popular practice of making police officers closer to the neighborhoods they patrol.

All that appears to be making a difference.

"It has quieted down a little," said Steve, 22, who lives in Roxbury and asked that his last name not be used because he fears gang reprisals. "In the neighborhood, guys used to be out on the street 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Now, you never see anybody. The police come by all the time. 'People before were so scared to come outside. Now, they feel a lot safer to come out.'"

Airspeed a focus in crash; if wings were iced, plane may have gone too slowly By David Ashenfelter and Beth Krodel Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

DETROIT A pilot who flies Embraer 120s like the one that crashed last week in Monroe County said Wednesday the pilots were flying too slowly if they approached Detroit Metro Airport at 145 knots with ice on their wings.

Gary Overbaugh, chief pilot and director of operations for Utah based Skywest Airlines, said, "145 knots was probably too slow if they had ice accumulation on the plane and without at least some of the landing flaps extended." That speed is about 168 m.p.h.

He made his comments after listening to a summary of flight data from the final moments of Comair Flight 3272, which crashed during a snowstorm in Monroe County on Jan. 9, killing all 29 people aboard.

Overbaugh, whose airline operates nearly 50 of the Brazilian-made commuter planes, said 164 knots the speed of the Comair flight when it leveled off at 4,000 feet, banked to the east to land and slowed to 145 knots should have been more than enough airspeed to keep the plane aloft even with ice on its control surfaces.

"I don't have a problem with 164 knots at all it's not a problem in either case ice or no ice," Overbaugh said, adding that it was more than enough airspeed to complete the turn.

Still unclear is why the pilots allowed the plane to slow to 145 knots during the left bank. The plane apparently stalled at that point. Pilots and aviation experts suggest pilot error might be a factor in the crash.

Other planes in the area reported light to moderate icing conditions at the time.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) released information from the plane's flight data recorder this week indicating that something during the turn caused the plane to roll over and dive to earth.

The NTSB, which has released only a small fraction of the information it gleaned from the flight data recorder, probably won't disseminate more details soon, spokesman Paul Schlaam said Wednesday.

The recorder monitored more than 100 factors equipment settings, instrument readings and other information.

"It's just not our practice here of giving daily releases on this stuff," Schlaam said.

Pilot Mike Pangia said, "It's still too soon to tell what caused the crash, but the question of pilot error is certainly starting to loom."

Pangia, a former Federal Aviation Administration lawyer and Washington attorney who has represented families of victims in major airliner crashes, said that based on information released so far by the NTSB, the pilots may have been confronting several problems.

The pilots, operating deicing equipment, may have encountered a real or perceived problem with the right engine or propeller, investigators surmised from lever and switch settings found in the wreckage.

If the pilots activated the controls, they were feathering the right propeller and shutting down the engine and activating a fire extinguisher. Investigators said there was no evidence the engine was on fire.

The engines and propeller blades were found intact. Two of the four fatal U.S. crashes of Embraer 120s were caused by propeller problems.

It's unclear whether icing played a role in the accident.

The plane's owner and manufacturer declined to speculate Wednesday on possible causes of the crash. They said the NTSB hadn't released enough information from flight data recorders to draw any meaningful conclusions.

"Anyone who is making judgments on the stall speed is engaging in pure speculation," said Michael Gearhart, marketing manager of Embraer Aircraft Corp. of Ft. Lauderdale. "We have an engineer working with the NTSB in Washington trying to establish this very thing. There hasn't been enough info released from NTSB that would identify for us what the actual stall speed should be."

Added Comair spokeswoman Meghan Glynn: "At this point, any theory is pure speculation and we're not commenting on speculation."

Meanwhile, at the crash scene Wednesday, Schlaam said crews had just about finished moving wreckage to an exhibit building at the county fairgrounds where it will be scrutinized.

He declined to comment on reports that the plane was flying too slowly.

Also Wednesday at a hangar at Monroe's Custer Airport, a team of 125 forensics workers and others headed by Monroe County Medical Examiner Dr. David Lieberman completed identifying the 29 crash victims.



U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D.C. 20530

FAX NOTE

TO: RAHM EMANUEL, 456-2530
DENNIS BURKE, 456-7028

FROM: Nicholas M. Gess, Director
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
Department of Justice
(202) 514-3465 (office)
(202) 514-2504 (facsimile)

SUBJECT: Boston - "jobs" materials

PAGES: (including this page)

MESSAGE: Rahm, Yesterday you asked for additional material on what Don Stern is doing in Boston to interdict gangs using a "jobs" strategy. I called Stern and got the attached additional information. Please call if any additional questions. Nick

cc: Dennis Burke

The Boston Jobs Project

The Premise: The Time is Right

A unified law enforcement leadership in Boston, led by U.S. Attorney Donald K. Stern, state Attorney General Scott Harshbarger, District Attorney Ralph Martin, and Police Commissioner Paul Evans, is now uniquely positioned to bring together the law enforcement, business and education sectors to develop a strategy designed to provide jobs for at risk youth in Boston.

--We have credibility. Boston was a national leader this year with its precipitous decline in homicides (35%, the lowest since 1967, with 0 handgun murders of juveniles).

--We have aggressively prosecuted violent criminals by a series of high profile gang member prosecutions, including major federal cases.

--Our success is not a demographic blip, but results from a data-driven, coordinated approach targeted at the small number of youth (2300) in 3 specific police districts responsible for the most violence in the city. As documented by two recent reports (Reno and Harvard), we've proven that focus on a correctly identified, limited number of persons has a substantial, greatly disproportionate impact on crime.

--Other community-based efforts are in place, providing fertile ground to take crime reduction to the next step. For example, the Safe Neighborhood Initiative (led by the AG, DA, and Boston Police), has focused on quality of life crimes and created strong links to community organizations. Other efforts, well documented in Attorney General Reno's booklet on Boston, include a "community-based justice program" linking the schools, social services and law-enforcement, and organized leadership among the black ministers.

--The success of targeting seen on the traditional law enforcement prosecution side can be replicated on the job and job readiness side, with similar disproportionate impacts. Just as we know who the "bad guys" are and can target them with aggressive state/federal prosecutions, we should figure out who has gotten the message and wants to avoid the gang life.

--There is a need for a "second generation" jobs program, built on stronger links between the business and law enforcement communities, if violence reduction is going to be most effectively sustained. As a result of our enforcement success, city streetworkers and others report an enormous rise in youth seeking alternatives to drugs and gun trade. We've gotten their attention and they are looking for assistance finding a way out of gangs and into jobs. We would miss a key opportunity if we

sit silent. Law enforcement has done and will do its part; but for continued, sustained success, a second generation approach is needed. This must include stronger links between the business and law enforcement community.

--Boston's current strong economy enables business to participate now. In the current market, it is in business' interest to cultivate needed employees, and business is capable of making investments in these persons.

--When law enforcement is seen as part of the team helping build a community, rather than just making arrests, we build trust between law enforcement and neighborhoods. This is sorely needed, and reaps enormous dividends, especially in times of crisis.

The Process to Date

In October, U.S. Attorney Stern and his staff began having private, preliminary meetings with a number of those active in this area around the city.

U.S. Attorney Donald K. Stern convened two group meetings:

--in December, 1996, the four law enforcement leaders (Stern, Marshbarger, Martin, and Evans) met and agreed they would explore this idea further.

--on January 24, the four met with selected others, who supported our continued exploration of this: an active, black religious leader, youth streetworkers employed through the Mayor's office, the State Commissioner of DYS (juvenile corrections), the Deputy State Probation Commissioner, several business leaders, a state court judge who chairs a local job training program, the local PIC coordinator, former labor department officials familiar with national efforts, and school committee members.

Initial positive reactions: There was enthusiastic support for the base concept -- using the momentum of successful law enforcement to target job and job readiness efforts to those who are committed to lawful alternatives to gangs. At the same time, it was recognized that we had some more work to do in order to develop a workable, focused program which targeted the right group and offered sufficient confidence to the business community. In the end, we recognize that for the program to be a success, and not be overly dependent on scarce government resources, the business community must see this effort as being squarely in its own long-term best interests.

Possible Plan Components:

During the preliminary discussions, the following possible components of the plan were identified. Each needs more

exploration:

--"Job coach": Under this concept, both youth and employers need someone to serve as a bridge between them. The coach identifies appropriate youth for the program, ensures job readiness, actively solicits employers for jobs, links youth with the right job, and then serves as the accountable contact point for the employer if issues arise with the placement. This model is successfully being used in Boston public high schools as part of a nationally recognized "School to Career" approach, where Private Industry Council "coaches" are located in public high schools.

--Law Enforcement Involvement is key: While using job coaches is not a brand new concept, a primary difference in our strategy would be the continued, active participation by law enforcement: community police officers, probation, DYS, and streetworkers would identify youth who would benefit from program, and follow up. Perhaps full-time job coaches are located in police districts, working side by side with community police officers, or in probation. It is critical that we take advantage of data/intelligence already collected and shared as a result of Boston's highly successful and innovative Operation Ceasefire (guns/Kennedy School project), Operation Nightlight (probation/police link), and Community-Based Justice programs (District Attorney convenes meetings in schools with social services, police, educators re: troubled youth).

--Continuum of jobs: We need entry level jobs, but must hold out hope for youth to progress into jobs which pay a living wage (to compete with drug selling). Perhaps youth first must prove themselves in 6-12 month stint in an entry-level, private sector minimum wage job or community service placement; they then are vouched for and progress to more rewarding private sector positions. It is important that Boston has major business sectors with high potential for such jobs (e.g., financial services, environmental technology).

--Education is needed, too: The job coaches could possibly be located in alternative education sites (attended by youth not in the regular public high school system).

Next Steps: Prior to our next meeting in 3-4 weeks, the U.S. Attorney's office will coordinate additional work in these three specific areas:

- 1) Define possible target populations (age, where live, in or out of school, degree of court involvement, etc.).
- 2) Costs, based on existing programs.
- 3) Compare and contrast the range of programs now existing in Boston.

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Boston's falling murder rate

By Globe Staff, 01/03/97

The great surge of murder that has overwhelmed American cities since the mid-1960s is ebbing. Law enforcement authorities seemed powerless to stop the killing at its worst in the '70s and '80s, but in Boston they have developed an effective strategy that targets the young men most prone to violence and the neighborhoods where murder is most prevalent.

Not all American cities have experienced a decline in murders this year. Las Vegas set a record with 168, up from 134 in 1995. The number in Washington, D.C., rose 9 percent, to 395. However, homicides in Los Angeles were down by 17 percent, to 688 through mid-December. In Chicago, they declined 5 percent, to 787, and in New York, 983, down 15 percent from last year. In Boston, 58 murders were reported, a drop of 35 percent.

Some of the decreases across the nation can be attributed to a decrease in the number of young men ages 19 through 24. Beyond that, some police officers are baffled..

Authorities in Boston attribute their more dramatic decrease to a two-year campaign by law enforcement agencies and community groups to reduce the rate of violent crime among young people in Roxbury and Dorchester, where most murders are committed in the city. This initiative involved the Boston police, of course, but also the Boston office of the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which focused on reducing the number of handguns available for murder, and the state's probation and parole departments to discourage young offenders back on the street from resorting to violence. Youth workers developed lines of communication with the members of street gangs, and the US attorney's office brandished the threat of federal prosecution for repeat offenders. At long last, all the agencies and groups concerned with reducing violence in the city have acted with a common goal and an assured strategy.

The plan is working. Firearms homicides among young people declined 65 percent from 1995 to 1996. And nobody under the age of 16 was killed. Last July, President Clinton singled out the Boston program to reduce the number of pistols on the street as a national model and promised to extend it to 17 other cities.

One program by itself will not guarantee that other communities will repeat Boston's success. Coordination and constant pressure to reduce violence are necessary.

Perhaps the most important moment in the antiviolence campaign came in May, when 15 young gang members from the Bowdoin street area of Dorchester were invited to Dorchester District Court to meet the unified leadership of law enforcement agencies in Boston.

They were told of Eddie Cardoza, a career criminal from Roxbury, who had just received 20 years in a federal

penitentiary for carrying a single bullet in his pocket. Word soon spread of the crackdown, and the gang violence stopped.

Police officers, prosecutors and youth workers may, of course, slacken their effort, or they may be replaced by others not so committed to a coordinated strategy. Young lawbreakers may develop new sources for weapons or lose their fear of becoming another Cardoza. It is premature to declare a victory against crime.

Still, all the people in Boston responsible for the reduction in murders have proved that something can be done about homicide without flooding the streets with police officers, abridging civil liberties or holding meaningless media events. The Boston model, in all its complexity, deserves to be emulated across the country.

This story ran on page a26 of the Boston Globe on 01/03/97.

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National Institute of Justice

Research Preview

November 1996

Juvenile Gun Violence and Gun Markets in Boston

A Summary of a Research Presentation by David M. Kennedy, Harvard University

Like other major cities in the United States, Boston is grappling with the problem of youth violence in certain of its poor minority neighborhoods. Over the past 5 years, the city has experienced 155 youth homicides by gun and knife—most of which were gun victimizations of young black men. Although gun violence began when youths started selling crack cocaine in the 1980s, today youths in Boston's high-risk neighborhoods frequently carry and use guns out of fear and as part of a larger dynamic of gang activity.

Among recent efforts to contain gun violence in Boston, a National Institute of Justice-supported "problem-solving" project was launched to devise and implement strategic interventions and evaluate their effectiveness. Its unique approach has focused on first analyzing the supply and demand for guns and then trying unorthodox methods both to disrupt illicit firearms markets and deter serious youth violence. For more than a year, Harvard researchers have been meeting biweekly with a working group whose members include representatives of the Boston Police Department, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, the Massachusetts Department of Probation, and city-employed gang outreach and mediation specialists known as "street workers."

Boston's illicit gun market

Supply side. From the project's onset, the team recognized the need for disrupting the city's illicit gun market. They were already well aware of a freewheeling illicit firearms market, in spite of strict regulations governing

the sale of firearms in Massachusetts. It had been assumed that all guns ending up in the hands of juveniles were being brought in via the "I-95 pipeline" from Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, and Mississippi. However, analysis determined that one-third of the traceable guns recovered from youths in the past 5 years had been purchased originally in Massachusetts—a discovery in keeping with what is known about the primary source of handguns even in other heavily regulated States, such as California. In Massachusetts, this local market had been almost entirely ignored by law enforcement.

Eighty percent of the guns taken from youths were handguns; of these, slightly more than 50 percent were semiautomatic pistols. Trace analysis revealed that more than 25 percent of the pistols recovered from youths were less than 2 years old, nearly half of these had been recovered within 6 months of initial retail sale, and the serial numbers on 20 percent had been obliterated. Moreover, of the thousands of new gun brands available on the market, five made up 40 percent of the total guns recovered. Together, the characteristics of the handguns taken from youthful offenders—purchased (for the most part) out-of-State, very new, semiautomatic, and obliterated serial numbers—pointed to the existence of a flow of new guns diverted into the illicit market at points very close to first retail sale; this was not the pattern of guns burgled from houses that is typical of adults.

Demand side. The researchers' practitioner partners argued from the beginning of the project that youth homicide in Boston was a problem of gang-involved, serial-offending youths victimizing one another. The project team began looking for clues in the backgrounds

similar and included gang membership and high rates of offending.

Youth homicides are concentrated in neighborhoods that are home to an estimated 61 gangs or "crews," involving approximately 1,300 juveniles; few alliances have been forged, and relationships are primarily hostile. Although gang turfs constitute less than 4 percent of the city, they account for 25 percent of Boston's serious crime (e.g., drug dealing, assault and battery with guns and other weapons, and weapons offenses). The pattern of weapons use is markedly different, moreover, from that in surrounding communities. An analysis tracking youths treated in hospital emergency rooms showed that, compared to adjacent neighborhoods, this high-crime region had more incidents involving the use of every type of weapon. But, whereas knife wounds outnumbered gun wounds in the border areas, gun wounds were far more frequent in the heart of the youth homicide region.

Most youths living in hot spots were well known to the criminal justice system. For example, 75 percent of known homicide victims and offenders had at least been arraigned for some offense, 25 percent had been detained in a juvenile facility, and 55 percent had been on probation; in fact, 25 percent of offenders were on probation at the time they committed murder.

Strategic interventions

The project team reasoned that interventions would need to decrease both the supply of and demand for guns that were central to the "shooting wars" among criminally active gangs. The practitioner partners on the project team—i.e., the police, probation and parole officers, and street workers—have crafted a strategy aimed at curtailing serious youth violence across Boston's high-risk neighborhoods. In one particularly violent gang neighborhood, they delivered a clear message to the effect that, unless the shootings stopped and guns were relinquished, gang members would be subject to an intense level of scrutiny and, for those on probation and parole, severe personal restrictions. Gang members were told that drug markets would shut down, warrants would be served, the streets would swarm with law enforcement officers (including a Federal presence), bedchecks would be performed on probationers, rooms would be searched by parole officers, unregistered cars would be taken away, and disorder offenses such as

found walking down the street with a single bullet possession, he was arrested. Taking into account prior convictions, he was indicted as an armed career criminal and sentenced to nearly 20 years in prison. Stunned gang members soon turned over their handguns, and the neighborhood became quiet.

The project team is seeking the same results in other gang territories. What had been initially a reactive and tactical approach has now become preventive and strategic. Practitioners have let it be known to gangs throughout the city that shooting people, terrorizing their neighborhoods, and possessing or selling guns will not be tolerated. Gun suppliers have been put on notice that ATF is tracing recovered firearms, debriefing arrestees about gun trafficking, and following up on the results.

Gang members in Boston have been presented with a choice: Stop the flow of guns and stop the violence—or face rapid, focused, and comprehensive enforcement and corrections attention. It is too soon to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of this strategy, but its immediate impact has been more than encouraging. Gang members do not read about three-strikes laws or armed career criminal statutes in the *New York Times*; if they are to be reached, enforcement agencies must be forthcoming about the sanctions and consequences that result from criminal behavior and be ready to back those words with action. Youth violence in the city already appears to have been substantially reduced.

This summary is based on David Kennedy's presentation to an audience of researchers and criminal justice practitioners as part of NIJ's Research in Progress Seminar Series. David Kennedy is a senior researcher at the Kennedy School of Government's Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management at Harvard University. A 60-minute VHS videotape of the seminar, *Juvenile Gun Violence and Gun Markets in Boston*, is available for \$19 (\$24 in Canada and other countries). Please ask for NCJ 160766. Use the order form on the next page to obtain this videotape and any of the other tapes now available in the series.

Points of view in this document do not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Good Morning.

My name is Tanya Brooks and I am a probation officer at the Suffolk Superior County Court. I participate in the Operation Night Light Program. It is a program that we are very proud of. It is working and making a difference in so many of our young people's lives.

When I was asked to introduce the President of the United States, I was elated and filled with emotion.

Over the last four years, President Clinton has accomplished so much. And as a law enforcement officer and as a citizen, I believe he will accomplish so much more through his next four years.

Let me tell you a little bit about myself and how I -- and all citizens -- will benefit from President Clinton's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy.

As a probation officer, I wear two hats --- one for intervention and one for law enforcement.

In my law enforcement role, I need to ensure that probationers are obeying the law. But I also use my role to encourage youthful offenders/probationers to get an education, employment, parenting skills, job training, substance abuse treatment and much more.

All of society benefits from productive citizens and positive role models for our youth.

And that is why all sectors of our community need to be involved in crime prevention and enforcement.

Overall crime has decreased here in Boston -- not one youth was

killed by a gun in 1996. Many attribute this success to the Operation Night Light Program. But in fact there are a great number of agencies that are also responsible for our results.

We each play a role.

And we each rely upon one another.

That is what the term "community" is all about. We know that -- here -- in Boston.

However, even with our model programs, not all youthful offenders will be successful.

As an officer, I have an obligation to protect the public by seeking jail time for young offenders that fail despite our best efforts.

That is why I support President's Clinton's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy.

The President's Strategy understands the balance between enforcement and intervention -- something I see in my work every day.

Here in Boston, we have shown that we can make a difference. But we can not let up.

President Clinton, we thank you for coming to our city.

You have worked very hard to make our jobs easier. Making youth violence your top priority will help us in our efforts.

And your support and recognition means so much to each and every one of us.

So it is now my great honor and pleasure to introduce the President of United States -- Bill Clinton.