

National Youth Mentoring Conference August 2009

Our Kids, Our Responsibility, Our Future



"E tū ki te kei o te waka....."

My view of the world...

- A young person's first contact with Police is fundamental:
 - The 'attitude' affects their relationship with police into adulthood
 - A positive one builds a relationship of real benefit to the young person
 - particularly if that young person later becomes a victim, witness or offender of crime.
- This philosophy underpins the mantra of Police's Youth strategy of "Fight Crime: Invest in kids"



Key points of intervention



- With the family and friends
- At school
- The first contact with Police
- The first Family Group Conference
- The first Youth Court appearance



Community Safety through Community Policing

- Fight Crime – Invest in Kids!
- Goals are collective, shared and adopted by all Police staff
 - Participation Prevention Priorities and Partnership
- Leads to an increase in coherence, overall direction and focus
- Ultimately impacts on Police achieving our goals

Community Safety through Community Policing

Crime Triangle



What is Community Policing

- Prevention
- Joint approach – different police staff, working with other agencies, community groups
- Problem solving (SARA)
- Evidence based – information sharing



Are Our Young People Different?

- Are you actually in touch with our Youth?
 - Policy makers?
 - Do the traditional approaches engage
- Young people are almost a different species of human being
 - Are we sophisticated enough to work within the differences or do we want these young NZ'ers to just be like us?
- Recent research shows that frontal lobe development (good judgement etc) is not completed until mid - 20s



What works to reduce offending by children and young people?

- Interventions shown to be effective are those that address risk factors that predispose a young person to offending and build strengths by:
 - assessing and targeting problems related to offending
 - teaching new skills such as anger management
 - strengthening families to be able to better care for and supervise their children
 - providing comprehensive treatment by addressing all or most of the problems impacting on the young person's offending
- Effective programmes for both children and young people are more likely to be delivered in community rather than custodial settings
- Young people diverted from formal youth justice processes such as Youth Court are less likely to re-offend than those subject to these processes, even when their offending is of a similar seriousness

What does not work...

- Taking a punitive or tough approach
 - such as boot camps and “scared straight” programmes, without addressing the causes of offending
- Targeting needs that do not relate to offending
 - like increasing self-esteem and building fitness
- Having vague and unfocused goals
 - such as “helping young people”
- Focusing exclusively on intensive supervision, curfews and incarceration, and not addressing the needs that lead to crime
- Research does not generally support deterrent approaches with children and young people because of their immaturity
- Residential programmes have to work harder to offset negative peer influences
- Custody (or court) on its own does not reduce recidivism amongst young people, and in fact is more likely to increase it

If Prison worked – there wouldn't be any!

(Seen on a billboard on Karo Drive Wellington)

<i>Intervention Type</i>	<i>Change in expected re-offending rate</i>
Prepared for employment	35% decrease
Behaviour contract	25% decrease
Institutional training	15% decrease
Court/Probation	10% decrease
Offender Counselling	8% decrease
Family Counselling	No change
Deterrent Sentencing	25% increase

(From Lipsey,1992)

How to turn a young person into an adult offender in just ten steps!



"E tū ki te kei o te waka....."

Thanks to Judge Andrew Becroft (again) for this...

- **1. Don't sweat the small stuff**
- **2. Treat all young offenders the same**
- **3. Always take a hard line with young offenders – especially their first offence**
- **4. Always bring the young person to Court following arrest**
- **5. Sideline the young person at the FGC**
- **6. Always enter a conviction on the young person's record**
- **7. Make no allowance for youth at sentencing – adult time for adult crime**
- **8. Give convicted young people a short sharp shock**
- **9. Segregate young offenders from their families, communities and victims**
- **10. If we do use “what works”, do it badly**

Effective Youth Mentoring Community Policing Context

- Police as a family
 - Connecting the DOTS in police
- Partners and Community groups
- Understanding where Police resources are likely to be most effective
 - Youth Development Projects and Youth Aid
 - Youth Education Services and Community Policing
 - Family Safety Teams and Child Abuse
- Proactive versus Reactive
 - Balancing the first point of contact