

The Clinton Administration's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy
Boston, Massachusetts
February 19, 1997
Talking Points

Announcement

- Today President Clinton traveled to Boston, Massachusetts to announce his new Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy. The strategy, which includes comprehensive legislation and new initiatives, would give local communities the resources and support to replicate the tremendous success that Boston has had in reducing youth violence over the last few years.

Background

- Last year, overall serious crime dropped for the fifth year in a row -- the longest decline in more than 25 years. However, until recently, the rate of youth violence has been drastically climbing. Juvenile violent crime arrest rate increased 62% between 1987 and 1993 and between 1984 and 1993, the rate of homicides committed by juveniles skyrocketed 169%.
- We are beginning to make some progress -- last year juvenile violent crime arrest and murder arrest rates decreased for the first time together in seven years. But with a growing youth population on the horizon, we have much more ground to make up.

The Boston Success Story

- Adopting a comprehensive strategy of enforcement, intervention, and prevention, the City of Boston has drastically curtailed its youth violence. From 1990 to 1995, juvenile homicides dropped some 80%, with not a single juvenile killed by gun since July 1995. Between 1993 and 1995, the juvenile violent crime arrest rate for aggravated assault and battery with a firearm decreased 65%.

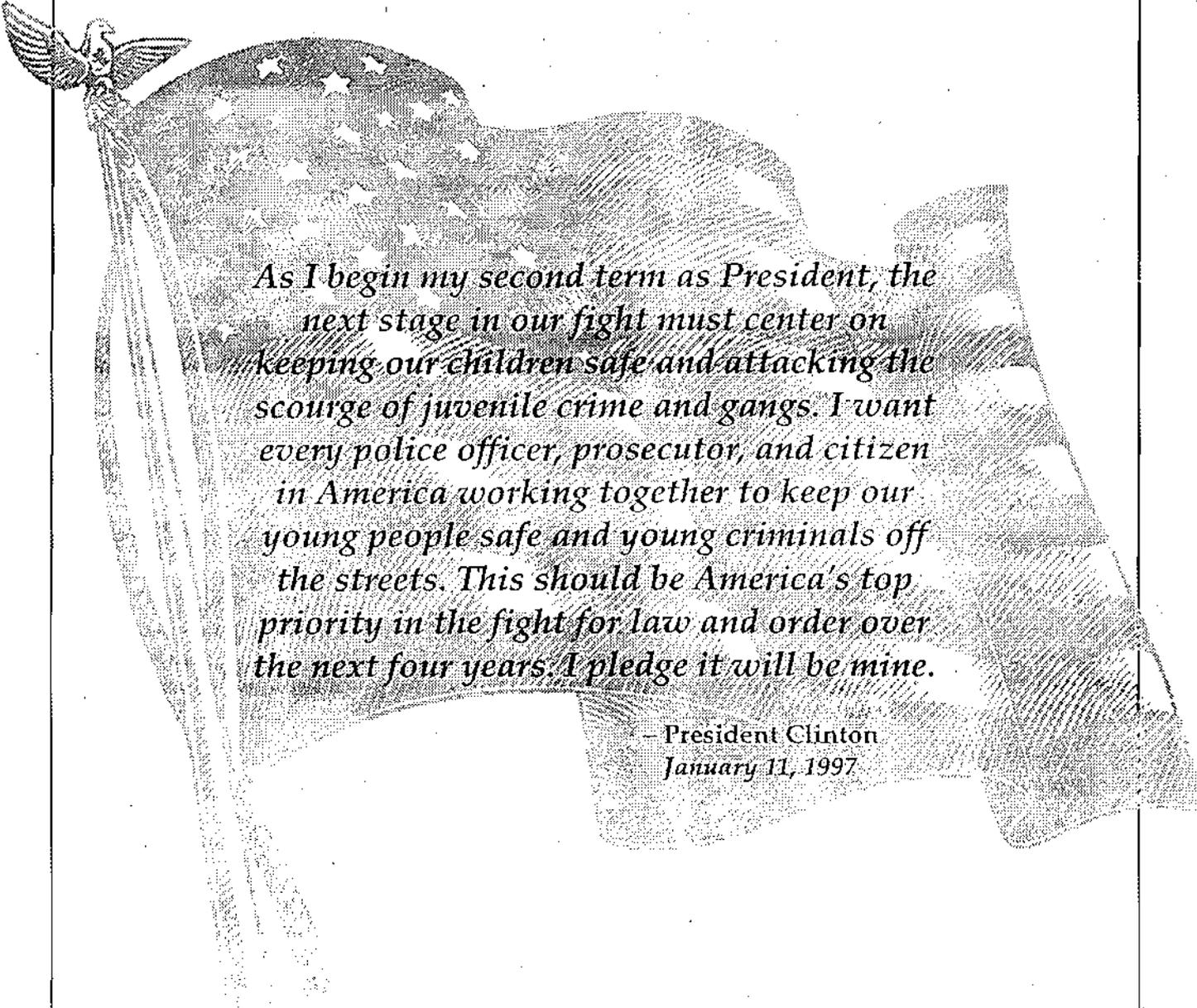
The Clinton Strategy

- Using Boston as one of many models, President Clinton's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy seeks to break the back of violent gangs, reduce youth violence, and provide our kids with positive alternatives to steer them away from gangs, guns, and drugs.

Key Elements:

- *\$200 million for 1,000 new State and local Anti-Gang Prosecution initiatives
- *Funding for 1,000 new after school programs to keep kids off the streets
- *Federal authority to prosecute more juveniles as adults for violent offenses
- *Require Safety locks on handguns reducing accidents and gun theft.
- *New tools for prosecutors to protect witnesses willing to testify against gangs and punish gang members who intimidate witnesses.
- *\$75 million Anti-Truancy, School Violence, and Crime Intervention Initiative
- *Brady handgun checks for individuals with violent juvenile records
- *\$50 Million for Youth Violence Courts and Probation Officer Initiatives.
- *State pilot programs requiring minors be drug tested before receiving a driver's license.
- *Improve and streamline the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice to ensure more efficiency and responsiveness to the needs of state juvenile justice systems

The President's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy

A large, stylized illustration of the American flag, waving and filling the lower half of the page. The stars and stripes are clearly visible, and the flag is attached to a pole with an eagle finial.

As I begin my second term as President, the next stage in our fight must center on keeping our children safe and attacking the scourge of juvenile crime and gangs. I want every police officer, prosecutor, and citizen in America working together to keep our young people safe and young criminals off the streets. This should be America's top priority in the fight for law and order over the next four years. I pledge it will be mine.

- President Clinton
January 11, 1997

To the Congress of the United States

Four years ago my Administration set out to change the country's approach to crime by putting more officers on our streets through community policing, and taking guns out of the hands of criminals. Our plan is making a difference. Today, our neighborhoods are safer, and we are restoring the American's people's confidence that crime can be reduced.

Last year, serious and violent crime dropped for the fifth year in a row in 1996, marking the longest period of decline in 25 years. We must continue to move in the right direction by finishing our work to add 100,000 new community police officers to our streets and rid our schools and streets of gun violence. And we must now redouble our efforts to reduce youth violence and curb violent gangs.

For the first time in seven years, the national juvenile violent crime arrest rate and the juvenile murder arrest rate went down. While these signs are promising, juvenile crime rates are still unacceptably high. Violent gangs are in too many cities, towns and neighborhoods terrorizing our citizens, trafficking guns and drugs to our youth, and escaping prosecution through witness intimidation. My Administration is fully committed to ending their reign of crime and violence.

In my 1997 State of the Union Address, I asked you to join me in mounting a full-scale assault on juvenile crime. This strategy provides a roadmap to break the back of violent gangs, keep our kids gun- and drug-free, provide positive alternatives for our kids, and streamline and reform our juvenile justice systems. It will give communities the tools they need to take back their streets and schools and neighborhoods, to reestablish a sense of security and true freedom in our country, and to restore our people's faith in the power of law and order.

Over the past four years we have show that we can roll back crime and violence. But too much crime still occurs for us to let up now. If we continue to work together, to stand up for what is right, to work with our community police officers, to take responsibility for ourselves and our families and the other children in our neighborhoods who need a guiding hand and an encouraging word, we can keep the crime rate coming down and we can build the future our children deserve.

For the strategy to succeed, each of us must do our part. Law enforcement, state and local officials, teachers, religious organizations, businesses, parents, and our youth all must play a role in reducing youth violence. We ask the Congress to be a bipartisan partner and work with us to pass the legislation that will put this strategy in place. Our shared goal is to give our children the safest and most secure future. Working together, we can make that goal a reality.

William J. Clinton

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The President's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy -- An Overview

And I ask you to mount a full-scale assault on juvenile crime, with legislation that declares war on gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; extends the Brady Bill so violent teen criminals will not be able to buy handguns; requires child safety locks on handguns to prevent unauthorized use; and helps to keep our schools open after hours, on weekends, and in the summer, so our young people will have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

President Clinton
State of the Union Address
February 4, 1997

Gang and Youth Violence -- Background

While overall crime rates are dropping, young people are increasingly the perpetrators and victims of some of society's most violent crimes. Indeed, until recently, the rate of youth violence has been drastically climbing. For example, between 1984 and 1993, the rate of homicides committed by juveniles skyrocketed 169%.

Gangs have become violent street families for too many of our young people. A generation ago, fewer than half of our cities reported gang activity. Now 95 percent of our largest cities and 88 percent of smaller cities suffer gang related crime.

Coupled with these developments, demographic experts predict that given youth population growth projections and trends in juvenile arrests over the past decade juvenile arrests for violent crimes could more than double by the year 2010.

These projections do not have to be our children's destiny. Over the past two years, there has been a decline in both the rates of murders committed by youth and overall youth violence. While the juvenile violent crime arrest rate increased 62% between 1987 and 1993, it decreased 2.9% in 1995, the first decline in seven years. The decrease in the juvenile murder arrest rate is even more significant, declining 15.2% in 1995 -- the largest one year decrease in more than ten years. Since 1993, the juvenile murder arrest rate has dropped an incredible 22.8%.

As juvenile violence has grown, so has our understanding of the problem. This we know:

- * A small percentage of youth are responsible for the bulk of violent juvenile crime;
- * Most violent crimes committed by youth are committed against other juveniles;
- * Many of the crimes involve handguns and/or drug use; and

- * A disproportionate amount of juvenile crime occurs afterschool.

With a clearer understanding of the problem, we can begin to provide appropriate and effective solutions. The challenge we face is to take what is known about youth violence and apply it to reach at-risk youth before they succumb to a life of crime and violence, and to deal firmly and forcefully with those who are already in serious trouble.

The President's strategy combines a balanced approach of tough and fair penalties, prevention so kids keep on the right track, and intervention so kids starting to fall off the track can be caught before it is too late. It builds upon a proven record of initiatives and accomplishments that help our children grow up in a safe environment and provides resources and support to communities to adopt strategies that are already working in cities across the country.

Building Upon a Proven Record

Over the last four years, President Clinton has taken a number of specific steps to provide our children with a safe passage from childhood to adulthood, including:

- * **Curfews.** President Clinton believes that curfews, when they are backed by a community of support and are part of a larger plan to help fight juvenile crime, can play an important role in keeping our children safe. While highlighting a successful New Orleans program, the President encouraged cities nationwide to look at how curfews can help keep their children and their communities safe.
- * **School uniforms.** President Clinton has encouraged schools to adopt school uniform policies, which promote discipline and respect. The Administration has developed a guide for schools to assist them in establishing these policies, which is being distributed to 16,000 school districts.
- * **Truancy.** Truancy prevention initiatives have been shown to keep more children in school and dramatically reduce daytime crime. The President has issued a guidebook to school districts nationwide which outlines the central characteristics of a comprehensive truancy prevention policy and highlights model initiatives in cities and towns across the country.
- * **Working to end teen tobacco use.** President Clinton has proposed restricting youth access to tobacco products, and reducing the advertising and promotional activities that make these products appealing to young people.
- * **Drug testing.** In January of 1995, the Clinton Administration supported high school athlete drug testing in an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court, sending the message to parents and students that drug use will not be tolerated in our schools.

- * **Zero-tolerance on underage drinking.** The Clinton Administration has encouraged states to adopt a "zero tolerance" standard for drivers under the age of 21 who drive while intoxicated.
- * **Safe and Drug-Free Schools.** President Clinton expanded the Drug Free Schools Act into the Safe and Drug Free Schools Act in 1994, making violence prevention a key part of that program. The President consistently fought for full funding of the program, fighting back a \$266 million cut by the U.S. House of Representatives in 1996. Over 97 percent of the school districts in the country use these funds to keep violence and drugs away from students and our schools.
- * **Fewer guns in the hands of our children.** President Clinton signed into law a youth handgun ban in his 1994 Crime Bill. The ban makes it a federal offense, with some exceptions, for an adult to transfer a handgun to a juvenile, or for a juvenile under the age of 18 to knowingly possess a handgun or handgun ammunition.
- * **Tracking illegal sales of guns to kids.** President Clinton initiated a crackdown on gun traffickers -- who peddle their arms to kids -- through a Federal Tracking System and law enforcement task forces. This will cut the supply of those firearms by helping to identify and prosecute traffickers.
- * **Zero tolerance.** In October 1994, President Clinton signed into law the Gun-Free Schools Act, and issued a Presidential Directive later that month to enforce "zero tolerance" in our schools -- you bring a gun to school, you don't come back for a year.

Community Success Stories in Combating Youth Violence

Communities across the country are working together to address youth violence, and searching for examples of what works so that they can apply new and successful strategies in their towns. Three communities, in particular, have implemented a number of effective initiatives designed to reduce youth violence and their efforts can serve as models for other communities.

Boston, Massachusetts

During the late 1980s, Boston was caught in a crossfire of gang violence and murder. In 1990, it recorded the highest number of killings in its history.

To reverse the trends, Boston initiated a comprehensive community-based strategy to reach at-risk youth before they take their first step into crime and to deal with those already in trouble. For example, the City initiated a program called Operation Night Light, which sends police and probation officers on nightly home visits to ensure youth compliance with probation. Working with Federal law enforcement, the City developed the Boston Gun Project to crack

down on the illegal gun market selling to youths through tracing gun serial numbers and severely punishing those who provide gangs and youths access to guns.

Boston's three-pronged strategy of prevention, intervention, and enforcement for youth violence is paying off. Youth homicides have dropped some 80% citywide from 1990 to 1995, and in 1996 not a single youth died in a firearm homicide in the city. Violent crime in public schools has fell more than 20% in the 1995-1996 school year and over 150 drug dens have been closed through joint federal-state-local cooperation.

Jacksonville, Florida

Like many communities across the country, Jacksonville experienced unprecedented increases in juvenile crime in recent years. From 1991 to 1996, more than 80 juveniles died as a result of firearm-related incidents. In 1992 alone, 454 youths were arrested for aggravated assaults.

Florida State Attorney Harry Shorstein used a combination of early intervention for at-risk youth and tough punishment for juvenile criminals to revamp the existing juvenile justice system. His office became actively involved with numerous intervention programs and creating a safe and positive school environment was also made a top priority. School Resource Officers were stationed throughout the schools to create positive bonds with students and increase campus safety. The Truancy Arbitration Program held hearings with parents, teachers, and the State Attorney's office to curb student truancy.

From 1993 to 1996, murders committed by juveniles dropped 72%, the number of vehicle thefts decreased by nearly 60%, and rape and sex offenses were cut in half. An evaluation of Jacksonville's juvenile justice system estimated that over 7,200 robberies, burglaries, and motor vehicle thefts were prevented by incarcerating habitual juvenile offenders as adults during 1992-1995.

Salinas, California

From 1984 to 1994, homicides jumped 200 percent in Salinas. Other crimes such as assault and robbery also increased over the same period. Salinas residents identified gang violence and fear of gangs as the number one problem facing the community. The Salinas Police Department identified between 20 and 25 local gangs, with approximately 1,500 gang members.

In September 1995, the Clinton Administration awarded the Salinas Police Department nearly \$1 million as part of the COPS Youth Firearms Violence Initiative. Salinas used the funding to expand their anti-gang task force into a full-time effort. A Police/Community Advisory Commission was formed to involve the community in crime reduction strategies. The Police Department created a Violence Suppression Unit to take firearms away from youth and gang members and, working closely with the District Attorney, began tracking criminal activity in their area through a computer database.

Salinas experienced a dramatic drop in crime after passage of the 1994 Clinton Crime Bill. Community policing efforts have led to 165 juvenile arrests and 392 adult arrests by the officers between October 1995 and May 1996. Homicides fell by 62%, gang related assaults decreased by 23%, and drive-by shootings dropped by 31%.

The President's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy

President Clinton's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy seeks to break the back of violent gangs, reduce youth violence, and provide our kids with positive alternatives to steer them away from gangs, guns, and drugs. It gives resources to communities across the country to adopt these innovative initiatives to combat youth violence and develop their own strategies.

1. Targeting Gangs and Violent Youth Offenders

The Strategy's message to dangerous gang members and other criminals is clear: your punishment will be swift and certain. That is why it contains 1,000 new local prosecutors and anti-gang initiatives to pursue, prosecute and punish dangerous gang members for their crimes.

Building on the success of the Community Oriented Policing Services Program (COPS), the funds would go directly to state, county and local prosecutors to enable them to develop initiatives such as anti-gang units, anti-gang task forces and equipment to share information about gang member and their activities. The new funds will help many overburdened prosecutors offices to develop effective programs to fight gangs and youth crime.

Under the Clinton Justice Department, Federal prosecutors have mounted an unprecedented crackdown on violent street gangs through the use of federal racketeering laws. Federal prosecutions of violent gangs under the powerful Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) statute have more than doubled.

Building upon that success, the Strategy also increases the Federal government's ability to assist local prosecutors by giving Federal prosecutors the authority to try violent juveniles as adults for adults crimes and provides law enforcement greater access to juvenile records. The Strategy also includes provisions that will prevent witness intimidation, a far too common tactic that gang members employ to avoid prosecution.

2. Keeping Our Kids Gun- and Drug-Free

Since its enactment, the Brady Law has kept over 60,000 fugitives, felons and stalkers from buying a handgun. Unfortunately, current law does not prevent a juvenile convicted of a violent crime from legally purchasing a handgun once the juvenile turns 18 years old. The President's Strategy would close this loophole so convicted violent youths would never be allowed to buy a handgun.

While many firearms deaths result from violent crime, gun accidents regularly claim the lives of America's youth. The statistics paint a terrifying picture: 12 % of fatalities among American children and teens are from guns, and 1 of every 4 deaths of teenagers ages 15 to 19 were by firearms. Firearms have also become the primary method by which young people commit suicide.

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~~Over half~~ of all parents who say they have a gun in their home admit that they do not lock their firearms away from their children.

More must be done to prevent the tragic and needless deaths of our children by firearms. The President's Strategy addresses this problem by requiring gun dealers to sell a locking device with every handgun. Properly used, safety locking devices can dramatically impact the unauthorized use of handguns -- by a child at play or a teen who wants to commit a crime.

President Clinton believes all Americans must accept responsibility for teaching our young people that drugs are illegal, wrong and could kill them. The President signed into a law a tough new "zero tolerance" policy that encourages states to revoke drivers' licenses of young people who are driving under the influence of alcohol. In states where zero tolerance has already been adopted, lives have been saved by a reduction in the number of fatal crashes at night involving young people.

We must be equally tough on young people who drive under the influence of drugs and endanger themselves and others while on the road. States and Federal law already recognize the relation between drugs and driving-- seven states have enacted zero tolerance laws for drugs. Eighteen states suspend the licenses of persons convicted of drug offenses. The Federal government authorizes grants to states that have aggressive laws to detect and punish drugged driving:

To better ensure that all methods are being considered to deter teen drug use and to make our roads safer, President Clinton directed National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey and Transportation Secretary Frederico Pena to develop a strategy to address the problem of young people driving under the influence of illegal drugs. They submitted their report to the President in February 1997 with several recommendations including: state demonstration projects to drug test teens prior to receiving their driver's license; state incentive grants to

promote strong drugged driving laws; enhanced law enforcement, prosecution and research for drugged driving; and expanded prevention, education and treatment for drug use and drugged driving.

3. Keeping Our Kids on the Right Track

Keeping young people in school is an important step toward keeping them out of trouble. Young people who skip school are not only more likely to be involved in crime and drugs during school hours, but truancy is also often the first step in greater involvement in criminal activity.

President Clinton has supported anti-truancy programs to make sure kids are learning from schools and not the streets, school uniform policies to create safer, less disruptive learning atmospheres for students; and curfews to take kids off the streets in the evening when they are more likely to become perpetrators or victims of crime. That is why the Strategy provides \$75 million for anti-truancy, curfews and other intervention initiatives to help keep our kids on the right track and out of trouble.

More than 50 % of the juvenile crime in the country occurs after the school day ends. Once children leave the schoolhouse door, they are often vulnerable to dangerous influences, including drugs and gangs.

A critical component of this Strategy is to give young people something to say "yes" to. Our youth need safe havens where they can continue to learn and grow in a safe and drug-free environment, removed from the violence, drugs and lack of supervision often found in communities across the country.

The Strategy includes 1,000 new afterschool initiatives for schools to stay open after the school day ends, weekends and summers. Turning schools into after hours safe havens can help to prevent violent crime and violent behavior and while boosting our children's academic achievement.

4. Reforming and Streamlining the Juvenile Justice System

The President's Strategy takes critical steps to improve the capacity of the juvenile justice system to respond to juvenile offenders.

Violent juveniles pose significant challenges for juvenile court systems. Most local systems were designed to cope with truancy and delinquency problems, not hardened and repeat juvenile offenders. Moreover, the penalties under many juvenile systems are sometimes inadequate for dealing with today's more violent and dangerous juveniles.

The President's Strategy will provide \$50 million for a Youth Violence Courts initiative. The funding will provide grants to make juvenile courts systems tougher and smarter by giving

them greater flexibility in handling violent juveniles. The grants can be used to expedite dockets for violent juveniles to ensure timely review of cases. Grants can also be used to improve systems for assignment and referral of violent juveniles for adult prosecutions where appropriate.

The President's Strategy creates a new Office of Youth Crime Control and Prevention within the Department of Justice. The new office will administer the \$75 million "At Risk Youth" program and the \$50 million Youth Violence Courts Program. The office will work to ensure that those who receive Federal funds maintain fundamental protections to safeguard juveniles from abuse while they are in custody.

3 Violent Juveniles

1

TARGETING GANGS WITH PROSECUTORS
AND TOUGH LAWS

1,000 NEW ANTI-GANG PROSECUTORS AND INITIATIVES

- A generation ago, fewer than half our cities reported gang activity. Now 95 percent of our largest cities and 88 percent of smaller cities suffer gang-related crime. Cities with emerging gang problem report that up to 90 percent of the gang members are juveniles. With the advent of hard drugs like crack cocaine and the proliferation of assault weapons on our streets, gangs have become violent street families for too many of our young people.
- The Clinton Administration is already hard at work to break the back of gangs across the country. The President's 1994 Crime Bill puts 100,000 police on the beat who are taking gang members and other dangerous offenders off our streets. Federal prosecutors have worked with state and local law enforcement and prosecutors to achieve a number of successful federal gang prosecutions across the country. The Administration has started funding a National Gang Tracking Network to help federal, state and local law enforcement share and exchange gang information.
- It is time to take the next step and give our communities the resources to prosecute these criminals. The President's strategy contains 1,000 new local prosecutors and anti-gang initiatives to pursue, prosecute and punish dangerous gang members for their crimes.
- The plan provides \$200 million over two years to fund the new local prosecutors and initiatives. Building on the success of the Community Oriented Policing Services Program (COPS), the funds would go directly to state, county and local prosecutors to enable them to develop initiatives such as anti-gang units, anti-gang task forces and equipment to share information about gang member and their activities.
- Local prosecutors handle 95 percent of all crime cases in the country. The new funds will help to help many overburdened prosecutors offices to develop effective programs to fight gangs and youth crime. Providing funds at the local level affirms the President's belief that communities are best suited to take care of their own local priorities
- Our message to dangerous gang members and other criminals should be clear: your punishment will be swift and certain.

TOUGH AND FAIR PENALTIES FOR JUVENILE CRIMES

- The President's strategy combines a balanced approach of tough and fair penalties, prevention so kids keep on the right track, and intervention so kids starting to fall off the track can be caught before it is too late.
- While most young people learn from their first minor offense, some don't. The juvenile criminal justice system is based on the idea that kids will learn a lesson from their mistakes. However, some young people act like adults and commit serious violent crimes. Sometimes they do this more than once. When this happens, we need to recognize that it is time to treat the young person like an adult to show them the serious consequences of their crimes.
- Under current law, the decision to charge a juvenile as an adult for certain Federal crimes is made by the court. Only certain dangerous offenses are subject to transfer in adult court for criminal prosecution.
- The President's strategy would allow Federal prosecutors to decide if a juvenile should be tried as an adult for more crimes than currently permitted under law. Such crimes include violent felonies and conspiracies to commit a drug offense.
- Giving Federal prosecutors the discretion to charge juveniles as adults for serious crimes will give prosecutors the power to decide whether an older and more serious offender cannot be adequately punished in the juvenile system and that the adult criminal system would be more appropriate.
- Under the President's plan, access to juvenile records would be expanded where a youth offender committed the equivalent of an adult felony or gun offense. Juvenile records would be sent to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and made available in the same manner as adult defendants.
- Stiffer adult sentences and the possibility of incarceration in adult facilities sends a strong message to youths and gang members considering violent crimes: if you are thinking of committing an adult time, be prepared to serve adult time.

CURBING GANG WITNESS INTIMIDATION

- In just ten years, the number of juvenile murderers has tripled -- with many of these killers belonging to gangs that kill over drugs and turf. In Los Angeles County, it is estimated that more than 40% of all killings are attributed to gangs--more than double the percentage it was ten years ago.
- According to many police investigators and prosecutors, gang murders and violent crimes frequently go unpunished because witnesses are afraid to testify due to retaliation by gang members. 1994 survey of 192 prosecutors found that intimidation of victims and witnesses-- who become victims themselves-- was a major problem for 51 percent of prosecutors in large jurisdictions and 43 percent in smaller jurisdictions.
- We cannot allow the voice of justice to be frightened into silence by the violent threats of gangs. In January, President Clinton released a Department of Justice handbook for investigators, prosecutors and judges to prevent and address the growing problem of witness intimidation by gangs. The report details the problems faced by law enforcement and helps provide a blueprint for them to follow that will significantly help state and local gang investigation and prosecution.
- The President is determined to bring the full force of the law down on criminal gangs. His strategy creates new laws to fight gangs and to protect witnesses
- When a judge finds that there is probable cause to believe that an individual has been involved in criminal gang activity, the President's plan contains a provision to allow the judge to hold the defendant without bail pending trial. This will prevent the situation where a gang member charged with a crime threatens and harasses a witness to prevent their testifying at trial.
- U.S. Attorneys will be given new tools to prosecute gang members. Under the President's plan, conspiracy to intimidate or retaliate against a witness will be punishable with the same penalties for the underlying crime.
- U.S. Attorneys will be able to prosecute any person who travels between states with the intent to retaliate against or intimidate a witness in a Federal or state criminal prosecution.

KEEPING OUR KIDS GUN-
AND DRUG-FREE

EXTENDING THE BRADY LAW TO VIOLENT JUVENILES

- Passage of the Brady Law was a top priority for the Clinton Administration. The Brady Law was included in the 1994 Crime Bill and dealt the first major defeat to the pro-gun lobby. Since its enactment, the Brady Law has kept over 100,000 fugitives, felons and stalkers from buying a handgun.
- We should build on the proven success of Brady and extend the law to include violent juveniles. Under current law, a juvenile convicted of a violent crime could purchase a handgun on his 18th birthday with no restriction.
- The President's strategy would close this loophole and so convicted violent youths would never be allowed to buy a handgun. Violent juveniles should be treated as their adults for their adult crimes-- and stopped from being armed to hurt again.
- Adults who commit felonies, including thefts as low as \$100, may not possess firearms. But under existing law, a 17-year old murderer(?) can buy a gun as soon as he turns 18. The President's strategy would prohibit juveniles who commit murder, rape, robbery and other serious violent crimes-- including serious drug trafficking crimes-- from ever possessing a handgun again.

HANDGUN SAFETY LOCKS: PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

- Every day, American children are killed or hurt by guns. The statistics paint a terrifying picture: 12 percent of fatalities among American children and teens are from guns, and 1 of every 4 deaths of teenagers ages 15 to 19 were by firearms.
- While many firearms deaths result from violent crime, gun accidents regularly claim the lives of America's youth. Firearms are the fourth leading cause of accidental deaths among children ages 5 to 14 years-old. Moreover, firearms have become the primary method by which young people commit suicide.
- And the trend is getting worse. For children between 10 to 14 years-old, the firearm death rate increased by 18 percent from 1985 to 1990. For teens between 15 and 19 years-old during the same period of time, the firearm death rate increased by 77 percent.

● Many young people have to look no further than their own home to get access to a gun. *About 12% of* ~~Over half~~ of all parents who say they have a gun in their home admit that they do not lock their firearms away from their children.

- More must be done to prevent the tragic and needless deaths of our children by firearms. The President's plan addresses this problem by requiring gun dealers to sell a locking device with every handgun. Properly used, safety locking devices can dramatically impact the unauthorized use of handguns-- by a child at play or a teen who wants to commit a crime.
- Trigger locks are inexpensive devices which are designed to secure a gun from unintended use. A 1991 General Accounting Office study found that one-third of the deaths resulting from accidental shootings could be prevented by a firearms safety device such as a trigger lock.
- Last year, in the District of Columbia, a police officer's 3-year old daughter climbed on top of a piece of furniture, pulled down her father's pistol and accidentally shot herself to death. The manufacturer of the handgun, Glock, donated 4,000 safety locks to the D.C. Police Department in response to the accident to prevent a similar occurrence from happening again.
- Learning how to use a locking device should just take a few minutes. With training, many locking devices can be detached within seconds-- allowing the authorized user quick access to their handgun in necessary situations. Locking devices have the added benefit of potentially preventing a gun from being used against its owner.
- American families have a responsibility to keep their handguns out of the hands of children. A child safety lock on a handgun will help families to keep their kids from using the gun to hurt other kids or hurt themselves.

TEEN DRUG USE AND DRIVER'S LICENSES

- President Clinton believes all Americans must accept responsibility for teaching our young people that drugs are illegal, wrong and could kill them.
- The President signed into a law a tough new "zero tolerance" policy that encourages states to revoke drivers' licenses of young people who are driving under the influence of alcohol. In states where zero tolerance has already been adopted, lives have been saved by a reduction in the number of fatal crashes at night involving young people.
- We must be equally tough on young people who drive under the influence of drugs who endanger themselves and others while on the road. States and Federal law already recognize the relation between drugs and driving-- seven states have enacted zero tolerance laws for drugs. Eighteen states suspend the licenses of persons convicted of drug offenses. The Federal Section 410 program authorizes grants to states that have aggressive laws to detect and punish drugged driving.
- To better ensure that all methods are being considered to deter teen drug use and to make our roads safer, President Clinton directed National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey and Transportation Secretary Frederico Pena to develop a strategy to address the problem of young people driving under the influence of illegal drugs.
- Director McCaffrey and Secretary Pena submitted their report in February 1997 to the President with several recommendations:
 - ✓ Drug testing of minors applying for driver's licenses. The report recommends a two to four state demonstration project to drug test teens prior to receiving their driver's license. The President's Budget requests a total of \$16 million through FY 2000 to carry out the demonstrations.
 - ✓ State incentive grants to promote strong drugged driving laws: The report recommends a state incentive grant program to encourage and assist states to improve and enforce their drugged driving laws. The President's Budget provides \$10 million in FY 1999 and 2000 for the new program modeled after the Transportation Department's Section 410 program.
 - ✓ Enhanced law enforcement, prosecution and research for drugged driving: For existing laws to be effective, the system of enforcement, prosecution and adjudication must work well. Violators must be arrested, prosecuted promptly, and sanctioned.
 - ✓ Expand prevention, education and treatment for drug use and drugged driving: Prevention, education and treatment have a crucial role in the systematic approach to reducing youth drug use and drugged driving. An additional \$1.1 million are contained in the President's FY 1998 budget and in the current FY 1997 budget for these efforts.

KEEPING OUR KIDS ON
THE RIGHT TRACK

INTERVENTION: ANTI-TRUANCY AND CURFEWS

- Keeping young people in school is an important step toward keeping them out of trouble. Young people who skip school are not only more likely to be involved in crime and drugs during school hours, but truancy is also often the first step in greater involvement in criminal activity.
- Studies have shown that over half of female and two-thirds of male juveniles arrested while truant tested positive for drug use.
- The Clinton Administration has supported both curfews and anti-truancy initiatives as effective means for communities to work together to reduce juvenile crime by keeping kids off the streets and away from situations in which they might be involved in crimes--either as perpetrators or as victims.
- Last year, the President issued a guidebook on truancy prevention to school districts and a report on anti-truancy policies to help communities interested in enacting or refining their programs.
- The President's strategy provides \$75 million for anti-truancy, curfews and other intervention initiatives to help keep our kids on the right track and out of trouble.
- Comprehensive curfew laws give parents the support of law enforcement, juvenile and family court judges, social service providers, and representatives from the education and religious communities to keep youths out of potentially dangerous situations.
- Of the 200 largest cities in the U.S., the percentage having curfews surged from less than half in 1990 to almost three-quarters by 1995. Curfew hours usually apply to youths under age 16 and often apply from 11:00pm to 6:00am on school days and from midnight to 6:00am on weekends.
- Cities and counties across the country are finding that curfew ordinances can help in curbing youth crime. In New Orleans, Louisiana saw a 27 percent drop in overall juvenile crime during curfew hours after enacting a comprehensive youth crime prevention program in 1994. Law enforcement in Denver, Colorado credit their curfew program with contributing to their 11 percent drop in serious crime in two years.
- Many police departments have found that rising daytime crime can be traced in part to truancy. In Van Nuys, California, a three-week truancy sweep resulted in a 60 percent reduction in shoplifting arrests. In St. Paul, Minnesota, crimes such as purse snatching dropped by almost 50 percent after police began picking up truants and taking them to a new school attendance center.

1,000 NEW AFTER SCHOOL INITIATIVES

- More than 50 percent of the juvenile crime in the country occurs after the school day ends. Once children leave the schoolhouse door, they are often vulnerable to dangerous influences, including drugs and gangs.
- President Clinton has supported anti-truancy programs to make sure kids are in class during school hours and school uniform policies to create safer, less disruptive learning atmospheres for students to learn. The President has also supported youth curfew policies to take kids off the streets in the evenings when they are more likely to become perpetrators or victims of crime.
- A critical component of the President's youth violence anti-gang strategy is to give young people something to say "yes" to. Our youth need safe havens where they can continue to learn and grow in a safe and drug-free environment, removed from the violence, drugs and lack of supervision often found in communities across the country.
- President Clinton's strategy includes 1,000 new after school programs for schools to stay open after the school day ends, weekends and summers. By allowing schools to stay open longer, they can become Community Learning Centers, providing students, parents and communities with access to valuable resources.
- Community schools can bring together home, school, and community to help raise and educate our children. Turning schools into after hours safe havens can help to prevent violent crime and violent behavior and while boosting our children's academic achievement.
- In Madison, Wisconsin, the city operates a Safe Haven after-school program for more than 200 children at three elementary schools with high crime and poverty rates. Program activities include homework assistance, supervised games and physical education, and field trips. In addition, each school incorporates conflict resolution such as peer mediation and the DARE drug prevention program.
- The Lighted School Program in Waco, Texas, keeps middle schools open until 6:30 or 7:00pm to provide activities and services for the approximately 200 students who regularly attend. Nineteen local organizations provide assistance; Baylor University provides 115 student mentors; city recreation department staff take the students on field trips and supervise sporting activities; and the Council on Alcoholism and Drugs holds Straight Talk each week.

REFORMING THE JUVENILE
JUSTICE SYSTEM

YOUTH VIOLENCE COURTS INITIATIVE

- Violent juveniles pose significant challenges for juvenile court systems. Most local systems were designed to cope with truancy and delinquency problems, not hardened and repeat juvenile offenders. Moreover, the penalties under many juvenile systems are sometimes inadequate for dealing with today's more violent and dangerous juveniles.
- The President's strategy will provide \$50 million for a Youth Violence Courts initiative. The funding will provide grants to make juvenile courts systems tougher and smarter by giving them greater flexibility in handling violent juveniles.
- The grants can be used to expedite dockets for violent juveniles to ensure timely review of cases. Grants can also be used to improve systems for assignment and referral of violent juveniles for adult prosecutions where appropriate.
- Juvenile Gun and Drug Courts are already prosecuting youth for a host of gun and drug offenses. By routing some of these cases out of the traditional juvenile court system and into settings specifically created to deal with these offenses, an opportunity exists to intervene at a critical point for youths and create innovative and individualized penalties which benefit both the public and the offender.

STREAMLINING FEDERAL JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

- The President's strategy creates a new Office of youth Crime Control and Prevention within the Department of Justice.
- The new office will administer the \$75 million "Right Track" program and the \$50 million Youth Violence Courts Program.
- The office will work to ensure that those who receive Federal funds maintain fundamental protections to safeguard juveniles from abuse while they are in custody.
- Under the President's plan, for the first time, Federal funds will go directly to tribal governments to support initiatives targeting juvenile crime on Native American lands. This is in keeping with the President's commitment to work on a government-to-government basis with American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.
- We must continue to identify promising practices and successful programs and share the information so lessons learned can benefit communities around the country. To this end, ten percent of grant program funds will be dedicated to research activities such as program evaluations, data collection and studies to identify successful youth violence prevention strategies.
- Research activities will be conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the National Institute of Justice.

SUCCESS STORIES

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Problem:

- During the late 1980s, Boston was a city that was in a crossfire of gang violence and murder. In 1990, the City recorded the highest number of killings in its history.

Solutions:

- To reverse the trends, Boston initiated a comprehensive community-based strategy to reach at-risk youth before they take their first step into crime and to deal with those already in trouble. The City created the Youth Violence Strike Force ("Strike Force"), a coordinated multi-agency task force of 45 full-time Police Officers and 15 officers from outside agencies. Membership in the Strike Force includes the ATF, the Massachusetts State Police and juvenile corrections officers. The Strike Force is one of the primary enforcement strategies employed by Boston to combat youth violence and break up criminal street gangs.
- Operation Night Light sends police and probation officers on nightly home visits to ensure youth compliance with probation. This ground breaking partnership has fostered better relationships and interactions between police and probation officers, parents, and youths.
- Operation Cease Fire represents Boston's zero-tolerance policy for crime and gang activity. Boston police meet with gang members to make clear that there will be zero tolerance for their violence-- and graffiti, truancy, and noise statutes are vigorously enforced to halt gang activity.
- Boston worked closely with the BATF, U.S. Attorney's Office and the Suffolk District Attorney's Office to develop the Boston Gun Project. The Project has cracked down on the illegal gun market who sell to youths through tracing gun serial numbers and severely punishing those who provide gangs and youths access to guns.
- Prevention efforts are also part of the Boston model. The Summer of Opportunity partnership with businesses engages at-risk youth in activities geared to benefit their academic and professional aspirations, and places some of the youth in part-time jobs. The Department of Health and Human Services funds community schools so children can have safe havens from the dangers of the streets.

Results:

- Boston's three-pronged strategy of prevention, intervention, and enforcement for youth violence is paying off. Youth homicides have dropped some 80% citywide from 1990 to 1995, and in 1996 not a single youth died in a firearm homicides in the city. Violent crime in public schools has fell more than 20% in the 1995-1996 school year and over

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

Problem:

- Like many communities across the country, Jacksonville experienced unprecedented increases in juvenile crime. From 1991 to 1996, more than 80 juveniles died as a result of firearm related incidents. In 1992 alone, 454 youths were arrested for aggravated assaults.

Solutions:

- Florida State Attorney Harry Shorstein used a combination of early intervention for at-risk youth and tough punishment for juvenile criminals to revamp the existing juvenile justice system.
- The State Attorney's Office became actively involved with numerous intervention programs, including School Liaison Programs, the School Conflict Resolution Program, and Impact Panels.
- Creating a safe and positive school environment was made a top priority. School Resource Officers were stationed throughout the schools to create positive bonds with students and increase campus safety. The Truancy Arbitration Program held hearings with parents, teachers, and the State Attorney's office to curb student truancy. A program for at-risk students with serious discipline problems was instituted where the students attend weekly delinquency hearings in juvenile courts.
- The restructured juvenile justice system in Duval County, Florida includes a strong diversionary program called the Youth Offender Program. The program takes appropriate non-violent youth offenders out of the congested court system and puts them into diversionary programs. It is estimated that about 70 percent of the diverted youths do not re-offend.
- The Jacksonville program also prosecutes habitual juvenile offenders as adults. This serves the dual purpose of protecting the public and providing a strong incentive for at-risk youth to abide by the law.

Results:

- From 1993 to 1996, murder committed by juveniles dropped 72%, the number of vehicle thefts decreased by nearly 60%, and rape and sex offenses were cut in half.
- An evaluation of Jacksonville's juvenile justice system estimated that over 7,200 robberies, burglaries, and motor vehicle thefts were prevented by incarcerating habitual juvenile offenders as adults during 1992-1995.

SALINAS, CALIFORNIA

Problem:

- From 1984 to 1994, homicides jumped 200 percent in Salinas. Other crimes such as assault and robbery also increased over the same period. Salinas residents identified gang violence and fear of gangs as the number one problem facing the community. The Salinas Police Department identified between 20 and 25 local gangs, with approximately 1,500 gang members.

Solutions:

- In September 1995, the Clinton Administration awarded the Salinas Police Department nearly \$1 million as part of the COPS Youth Firearms Violence Initiative. Salinas used the funding to expand their anti-gang task force into a full-time effort. A Police/Community Advisory Commission was formed to involve the community in crime reduction strategies.
- The Salinas Police Department created a Violence Suppression Unit (VSU) to take firearms away from youth and gang members. Working closely with the District Attorney's Office, the Unit's 17 officers used the Geographic Information system database to enhance tracking of criminal activity in their area.
- Salinas established a Violent Injury Prevention Program to reduce and prevent violent acts by youth.
- The city also introduced "Peace Builders", a violence intervention program encouraging non-violent behavior amongst elementary school-aged children. Additionally, 20 neighborhood block clean-up programs were formed to clear garbage from the streets.

Results:

- Salinas experienced a dramatic drop in crime after passage of the 1994 Clinton Crime Bill. Community policing efforts have led to 165 juvenile arrests and 392 adult arrests by the VSU officers between October 1995 and May 1996. Homicides fell by 62%, gang related assaults decreased by 23%, and drive-by shootings dropped by 31%. Residents are more active in crime prevention and community officers serve as mentors for Salinas youth.

NEWSPAPER CLIPS/ATTACHMENTS

The New York Times

In Boston, Nothing Is Something

No Youths Slain by Guns in 16 Months; New Tactics Get Credit

By FOX BUTTERFIELD

BOSTON, Nov. 20 — At a time when experts are trying to understand why homicide rates in many cities are dropping, Boston has one of the most impressive statistics of all: not a single juvenile under 17 has been killed by gunfire since July 1995.

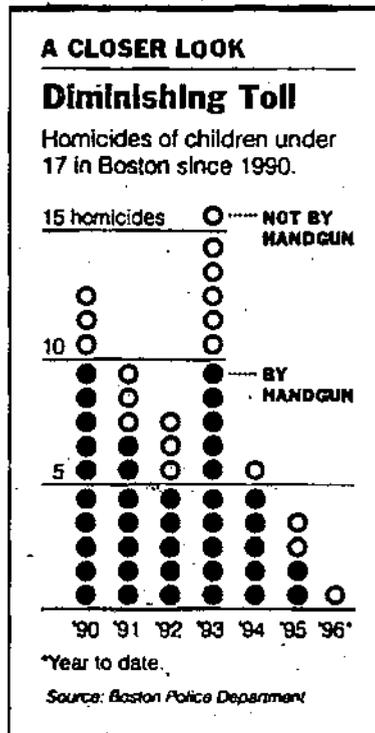
Given the complexity of the crime problem, no one can say definitively why so few young people have been killed here, and one or two years is too short a time to pronounce success. But the police, public officials and criminal justice experts point to an innovative and inexpensive set of strategies that Boston has adopted in the last few years.

First, the city gave a small number of probation officers enhanced power to make arrests by putting them in patrol cars with police officers. More recently, city officials have also intensified their focus on controlling gangs and guns after computer-aided research from Harvard found that three-quarters of juvenile killers and their victims had been involved with gangs and that firearms dealers who were illegally selling significant numbers of guns to young people could be identified.

The number of juveniles killed by firearms in Boston has never been large — the figure was 5 in 1994, and the highest number recorded in recent years was 10. But the drop to zero surprises analysts nonetheless; the only juveniles killed by any means in Boston since July 1995 have been three young children beaten to death by adult relatives.

Moreover, the figures for people 24 and younger are showing the same trend: since the city put all the components of its new plan into place in May, the homicide rate for that age group has dropped 71 percent, police statistics show, to just 8 homicides, from the 28 committed in the same five-month period the previous year. For the entire year of 1995, there were 46 people age 24 and younger murdered in Boston.

While other cities have experienced drops in crime, the decline in Boston among young people appears to be the most dramatic. In New



The New York Times

York City, for example, the number of people age 24 and younger killed by guns dropped to 382 in 1994, the latest year for which figures are available by age group, from 463 in 1990. But in Baltimore, a city close to Boston in size, the number killed by guns actually rose to 101 in 1994 from 89 in 1990.

Police chiefs and politicians in a number of cities have been quick to attribute drops in crime to their pet projects even when other cities without similar programs have also seen crime rates fall. But it is hard to find critics of Boston's approach, either in the city or across the country.

Jeremy Travis, the director of the National Institute of Justice, the research arm of the Justice Department, said of the Boston program, "This is just a smarter approach to the problem of juvenile violence, and it is showing results."

David Kennedy, a senior researcher at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard who helped provide ideas for Boston's program,

said he understood the skepticism that some police officers and criminal justice scholars might have about Boston's results. But the drop in the death toll "is so big, there is nothing else that can account for it" except the city's strategies, he said.

The core idea behind Boston's plan sprang from a casual conversation in a courtroom between a probation officer, Bill Stewart, and a city detective, Robert Fratalla.

They proposed a simple but revolutionary step: letting a probation officer ride in a police car so he would be able to arrest young people he saw violating the terms of their probation, like being out of their homes after a court-imposed 8 P.M. curfew. Though in theory Boston probation officers have the legal right to take someone back to court to have the person's probation revoked, they are unarmed and in practice have seldom arrested anyone.

Mr. Stewart was sickened by the failures of the juvenile justice system: 68 of the youths on his caseload were shot to death from 1990 to 1994.

His idea was radical because traditionally probation officers have been an arm of the juvenile court, intended to be sympathetic social workers, while the police were part of the criminal justice system and contemptuous of anything to do with probation.

But a growing number of probation officers now graduate from college with degrees in criminal justice, and — like police officers — they have been frustrated by what they see as a revolving door that lets dangerous criminals go free.

Jerome Miller, the president of the National Center on Institutions and Alternatives, said he was not troubled by putting probation officers in cars with the police.

"This sounds like a very good program to me," said Mr. Miller, who has long argued that children's rights have not been adequately protected by the juvenile justice system. "I have never doubted that if you target kids in a very focused way, you can get a good impact."

In fact, on the first night Mr. Stewart and Detective Fratalla drove together in 1992, they had not gone half

CONTINUED →

CONTINUATION

a block before they heard on their radio that a boy had been shot nearby. The boy was one of Mr. Stewart's cases, and as he looked around the shooting scene, Mr. Stewart saw 35 other people he recognized as being on probation who should not have been out that late.

"They were amazed to see me out there at night with the cops," Mr. Stewart recalled. "They tried to cover their faces. They were really afraid. They knew that, unlike the cops, I could recognize them."

Many of these young people, he had come to learn, hate probation more than prison because they believe it interferes with their lives more.

Detective Frataglia was also amazed. Where normally bystanders at a crime scene claim to have seen nothing, Mr. Stewart was able to elicit information about the shooting from young people who faced having their probations revoked and going to jail, or — just as bad — spending more time on probation.

Since Boston began the joint patrols in 1992, the number of young people picked up for violating probation has tripled and rates of compliance with court-ordered conditions of probation have risen to 70 percent from 15 percent, said Paul F. Evans, Boston's Police Commissioner.

The Boston program has also drawn on a finding by researchers at Harvard that homicide among youths in the city is largely a gang problem involving repeat offenders. Using a data base of all Boston homicide victims younger than 21 who were killed by a gun or knife in the previous five years and the youths charged in those killings, the researchers found that both the victims and the killers tended to have long criminal records and were well known to law-enforcement authorities.

In fact, 75 percent of both the victims and the killers had already been arraigned in court at least once,

many of them 10 or more times; almost half had previously been on probation, and one-third had been incarcerated in a juvenile or adult prison, said Mr. Kennedy, who led the team. In addition, almost three-quarters of the killers and their victims were involved with gangs.

"These results were stunning and provided a very powerful and simple strategy," Mr. Kennedy said. "It meant that any time a gang does violence, you can punish them" — because the criminal records of the gang members make them very vulnerable.

The gang members are recognizable to probation officers, and since they are probably on probation or

From a casual courtroom talk, a strategy was born.

parole they can be picked up and incarcerated without a new trial if they are in violation of the terms of their release, Mr. Kennedy said. Unlike the police, probation officers do not need probable cause to stop young people on the street, or to enter a youth's house or talk with his parents.

Armed with this new insight, the Boston police earlier this year proclaimed a "zero tolerance" attitude toward gangs and guns and began calling gang members in for meetings where they were issued warnings. To make the meetings more dramatic, they were also attended by representatives of the United States Attorney, the county District Attorney, the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the state Department of Probation and Division of Youth Services, as well as by

city employees who work with gangs and school police.

In a field where it had often taken a summit meeting for the Police Commissioner just to talk to the District Attorney, such cooperation was highly unusual, Boston police admit.

In August, after the Intervale gang, one of Boston's oldest and largest gangs, did not heed these warnings and continued a series of shootings, the law-enforcement agencies struck in a joint operation. A total of 23 members, including all the gang's leaders, were arrested, most on Federal drug charges.

To demonstrate the city's new determination, the police even called in the National Guard to bulldoze a vacant lot that the gang used as its headquarters, knocking down an oak tree on which gang members had tossed more than 100 pairs of sneakers as a symbol of their suzerainty.

At the same time, Mr. Kennedy's researchers began feeding data on guns seized from young people in Boston into a new computer run by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in Washington. From this, they gathered critical information on some dealers who were illegally selling guns to juveniles in Boston, and another series of arrests began.

Detective Frataglia believes that another critical factor has contributed to the city's success: the crack-down on gangs and guns has provided an honorable way out for many young people who were afraid not to join a gang or have a gun.

"We had one boy who said to his probation officer, 'Thank you for saving my life,'" Detective Frataglia recounted. When the probation officer asked how he had done that, the young man explained that the night before he had been invited to a party by two friends; he had said he could not go because he was expecting the probation officer to check on him at home. His two friends were shot and killed in a gang fight at the party.

The Boston Globe

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Boston's falling murder rate

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 anti-violence 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.

THE NATION

Boston hasn't had a juvenile homicide in '96

City credits police programs with steering teens away from crime

By Gary Fields
 USA TODAY

Boston has gone nearly 10 months into the year without a single juvenile homicide, a startling turnaround in a city that three years ago saw a record 16 killings of children.

Boston's situation far outpaces the national decline in juvenile homicides, which fell 10% from 1993 to 1995.

City officials credit the dramatic decrease to a new police commissioner and a coordinated effort to combat crime among kids under 17.

Before Police Commissioner Paul Evans took over in February 1994, "we were doing it helter skelter," says Boston Mayor Thomas Menino.

One of the first moves that Evans made was to meet with his anti-gang unit,

"I fully expected them to tell me we need more cops, tougher judges and more jail space," says Evans. Instead, they said, "We need more jobs and alternatives for these kids."

The result is an approach that pairs law enforcement with prevention and intervention programs from business, education and private sectors.

"Now we're going into the neighborhoods, meeting with residents and making them feel like they have a part in the crime issue," Menino says.

Among the steps:

► Colleges have adopted elementary school students and set up scholarship programs.

► Members of the Youth Violence Strike Force and other local, state and private groups have raised money to enroll at-risk youths in summer programs such as the Boys & Girls

"We're going into the neighborhoods, meeting with residents and making them feel like they have a part in the crime issue."

— Mayor Thomas Menino

members or teen-agers at risk of joining gangs have participated and gone on to summer jobs and internships.

► Police and probation officers conduct random checks on juveniles on probation and under court-ordered curfews.

Also, the police department has put more officers on beats in troubled communities, where they can solve problems before they result in crimes.

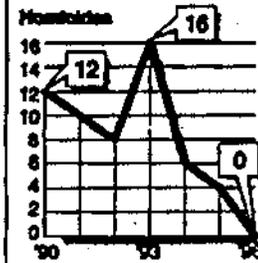
Attorney General Janet Reno points to Boston as a model of what can be done to combat juvenile violence at a time when many experts warn that a surge in the juvenile population over the next decade will be accompanied by a surge in crime.

"When they see kids aren't killing each other over a pair of sneakers or a challenging glance, they see we can make a difference and they stop the self-fulfilling prophecy," says Northeastern University criminologist Jack Levin.

"We could still see this apoc-

Boston youth slayings drop

Boston has had no juvenile homicide victims this year. A juvenile is anyone under 17 in Massachusetts. Juvenile homicides in Boston, by year:



Source: Boston Police Department
 By Julie Sherry, USA TODAY

alyptic vision come to pass but at least we're heading in the right direction," he says.

► Issues Roundtable, 7A



Murders sink to 30-year low

Hub's top cop lauds programs

By ANN E. DONLAN

Boston murders have plunged to a 30-year low, a year-end benchmark that Police Commissioner Paul F. Evans hopes is a signal ushering a new era of safer Hub streets and fewer tragedies.

"It's almost like a Christmas present this year," a jubilant Evans said yesterday. "This is probably the best year we've experienced in 30 years. I expect that we're going to continue to do well through the end of the year."

In a city that averages 98 murders annually, Boston is carrying 59 murders plus two more that resulted from injuries sustained years ago, Evans said. The last time the number of murders was that low was in 1966, when 58 people were murdered.

Guns have not killed a single juvenile this year, compared with 16 juvenile homicides just three years ago. The depart-

Hub's murder rate falls to 30-year low

From Page 1

ment considers juveniles anyone younger than 17.

"At no time in the department's history have we made such an effort in the area of prevention with the youth," Evans said, citing a slew of youth programs under way with school officials and community groups.

During the first 10 months of this year, murders dipped 30 percent below the same period in 1995.

Of the 59 murders that occurred in 1996, 38 people were shot to death, 14 were stabbed and the remaining 7 victims died from blunt trauma.

Even more stunning to Evans is that the number of people shot on Boston streets has dipped dramatically over the last two years.

"Aggravated assaults by firearms — people shot — have gone down 43 percent in the first 10 months of this year, compared with the first 10 months of 1994," Evans said.

Targeting criminals with outstanding warrants, working with youths to shun gang life and turning up the heat on gun traffickers are partly responsible for safer streets, Evans said.

While the majority of violent crime is down across the board, Evans said he is concerned that domestic violence is seemingly at the heart of more and more of the city's worst violence.

Evans stressed that the seriousness of domestic violence has long been recognized, but careful scrutiny of violent crimes — including aggravated assaults, house breaks, stolen cars and larcenies — reveals an angry lover or family member was responsible.

"When (district captains) start dissecting the real motive behind them, a lot of them — more than we anticipated — are coming up directly related to domestic violence," Evans said. "Domestic violence right now is an area where we're striving to do a lot more."

Last week, Evans received word that the city landed a \$233,000 federal Justice Department grant dubbed "No Next Time" to add to its arsenal of state and federal money

devoted to domestic violence.

"No Next Time" will be modeled after the much-lauded "Operation Nightlight" program, which paired police and probation officials for surprise home visits to monitor the probation of high-risk criminals, Evans said. "High-risk" batterers wanted on warrants will be the focus of the new program, he said.

"We're trying to take some of what we've learned — our successes in juvenile violence — and transfer them into the domestic violence area," Evans said.

Sgt. Detective Gladys Aquino-Gaines, who heads the department's Domestic Violence Unit, welcomed the news of the federal grant.

"We've seen a decrease in crime in general, particularly around the youth issue," Aquino-Gaines said. "But we have not seen that significant decrease in domestic violence. There has been a constant increase in the last five to six years."

Aquino-Gaines attributed part of the statistical increase in domestic-related violence to more responsive cops and judges who have made it easier for victims to seek help. And more careful backing of those crimes also has made a difference, she said.

Changes in restraining order laws, which have made it easier for women to obtain protective orders and for cops to arrest batterers, have exerted more control over offenders who have lashed out more destructively, she said.

"It's clear that batterers are going to escalate the manner in which they are going to abuse their victims in response to the perceived loss of control," Aquino-Gaines said.

"We need to be vigilant about better serving victims of domestic violence and better protecting them."

Of all the violent crime categories, reported rapes and attempted rapes logged the only increase — 13 percent so far through October, a number that will increase by year's end.

Last year, 314 rapes and attempted rapes were reported in Boston, compared with 356 through October 1995. "It's the only serious crime that is up," Evans said. "Obviously that's a concern."

Year	Homicide
1964	62
1965	57
1966	58
1967	71
1968	102
1969	91
1970	114
1971	116
1972	104
1973	135
1974	134
1975	119
1976	61
1977	75
1978	71
1979	92
1980	91
1981	100
1982	93
1983	90
1984	82
1985	88
1986	106
1987	76
1988	95
1989	100
1990	152
1991	113
1992	76
1993	98
1994	85
1995	96
1996	61*

* As of yesterday. Homicide count

Turn to Page 6

The Birmingham News EDITORIALS

Wednesday, January 29, 1997

Boston common sense

Birmingham ought to be taking a hard look at the way Boston is handling its youth crime problems

No youth under the age of 17 has died by gunfire in Boston since July of 1995. Last year, the murder rate there among those under 24 years old dropped by 70 percent.

Contrast that to Birmingham, where in 1996 children under 16 committed 28 murders. That's an increase of 133 percent over the year before.

The kind of good news Boston is getting is no accident. That city is doing things right, and Birmingham ought to be finding out what they are.

Boston police say it's not rocket science. What they've done, they told reporter Henry Goldman of Knight-Ridder newspapers, is combine aggressive crime fighting strategies with community help programs.

You start from the bottom up, said Police Commissioner Paul F. Evans. Evans says he first began by asking anti-gang police officers what they needed most.

When the answers came back — jobs and more recreational opportunities — the department spent months working with churches and corporations to set up programs. One important one produces summer jobs paid for through corporation sponsorship and police fund-raising.

Secondly, the department has tried to keep a very close eye on the most dangerous youths, finding that most of those who end up as killers had extensive contact with the juvenile justice system before they killed.

It also uses state-of-the-art ballistics to track down the history of every bullet, shell and gun that falls into its possession.

And finally, it has used a much closer alliance between police and probation officers to help solve crimes and enforce rules. It began when one police officer noticed how much more information could be gotten at a crime scene if a probation officer questioned youths he recognized.

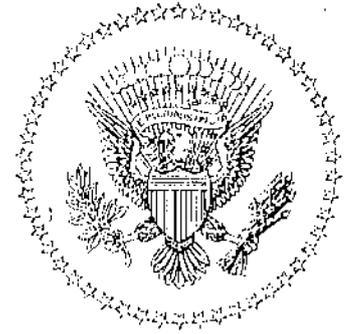
Police and probation officers also work together in Operation Late Night in which both get extra hours to check children on the street and make surprise inspections at homes of youngsters on probation to make sure they are obeying curfews.

Since it began, the number of probation violators jailed has tripled. Probation is no longer considered a joke.

These are not tough things to do. They're not expensive. All it takes is the investment in enough time to find out the details of what Boston is doing that we're not.

What are we waiting for?

The President's Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy



As I begin my second term as President, the next stage in our fight must center on keeping our children safe and attacking the scourge of juvenile crime and gangs. I want every police officer, prosecutor, and citizen in America working together to keep our young people safe and young criminals off the streets. This should be America's top priority in the fight for law and order over the next four years. I pledge it will be mine.

*- President Clinton
January 11, 1997*

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