

Guns -
Accomplishments

PROMOTING SCHOOL SAFETY & PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

--The Clinton-Gore Administration Record --

MAKING OUR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES SAFER AND DRUG-FREE

Hosting the White House Conference on School Safety. Convening experts, parents, principals, students, law enforcement and local community leaders, on October 15, 1998, the President held the first-ever White House Conference on School Safety to provide an opportunity for Americans to learn more about how they can make their own schools and communities safer. The Conference included members of communities affected by school shootings and was linked by satellite to schools and communities across the nation.

Creating a New Federal Response for Violent Deaths in Schools. President Clinton has proposed a \$12 million School Emergency Response to Violence -- or Project SERV -- in his FY 2000 budget to help schools and local communities respond to school-related violent deaths, such as those that occurred last school year in Jonesboro, Arkansas; Paducah, Kentucky; Pearl, Mississippi; and Springfield, Oregon. Developed with input from local officials and educators in these and other communities, Project SERV will enable the federal government to assist local communities in much the same way that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assists in response to natural disasters.

Hiring School Resource Officers, Targeting Assistance to Schools with Serious Crime Problems. To help give schools with crime problems the tools they need to put the security of our children first, at the White House Conference on School Safety, the President announced a new \$65 million initiative to hire up to 2,000 community police and School Resource Officers to work in schools -- and to train police, educators and other members of the community to help recognize the early warning signs of violence.

Forging School-Based Partnerships Between Schools and Law Enforcement. Under the School-Based Partnerships grant program, the Clinton Administration released \$16.4 million in grants to 155 law enforcement agencies in September 1998. The School-Based Partnerships grants will be used by policing agencies to work with schools and community-based organizations to address crime at and around schools. This initiative emphasizes using principles of community policing and problem-solving methods to address the causes of school-related crime. The grants will help forge or strengthen partnerships between local law enforcement and schools to focus on school crime, drug use and discipline problems.

Launching a Community-Wide Response to School Safety and Youth Violence. To help communities throughout the country promote a coordinated, comprehensive response to school safety, the President launched a new Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative designed to help 50 cities develop and implement community-wide school safety plans. In April 1999, the Departments of Justice, Education, and Health and Human Services announced that they will provide over \$180 million this year, and a total of \$380 million over three years through the Initiative for communities

to fund comprehensive school safety plans that include anti-truancy initiatives, mentoring, mental health services, conflict resolution programs, school resource officers, and more -- helping to promote healthy development and to prevent youth violence before it occurs. Communities will have until June 1, 1999 to apply for the funds.

Helping to Make All Schools Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free. In 1994, President Clinton expanded the Drug-Free Schools Act into the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act, making violence prevention a key part of this program. Safe and Drug-Free Schools provides support for violence and drug prevention programs to 97 percent of the nation's school districts. At the White House Conference on School Safety, President Clinton announced his plan for a significant overhaul of the nearly \$600 million Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program. Under the President's proposal, schools will be required to adopt rigorous, comprehensive school safety plans that include: tough, but fair, discipline policies; safe passage to and from schools; effective drug and violence policies and programs; annual school safety and drug use report cards; links to after school programs; efforts to involve parents; and crisis management plans.

Responding to the Early Warning Signs of Troubled Youth. President Clinton directed the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General to develop a guide to help teachers and principals identify and respond to the early warning signs of troubled youth that can lead to school violence. In August 1998, the Departments of Justice and Education released *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools*. This guide provides schools and communities with information on how to identify the early warning signs and take action steps to prevent and respond to school violence. More than 200,000 copies of the guide have been distributed, and additional copies may be obtained through the websites of the Departments of Education and Justice.

Issuing the First Annual Report on School Safety. In December 1997, President Clinton called for an Annual Report on School Safety, which was released on October 15, 1998 and sent to every school in the nation. The report includes: an analysis of all existing national school crime data and an overview of state and local crime reporting; examples of schools and strategies that are successfully reducing school violence, drug use and class disruption; actions that parents can take locally to combat school crime; and resources available to schools and communities to help create safe, disciplined and drug-free schools.

Enforcing Zero Tolerance for Guns and Other Weapons in Schools. In October 1994, President Clinton signed into law the Gun-Free Schools Act, requiring states to have in effect a law requiring local education agencies (LEAs) to expel students who bring guns to school. The President issued a Presidential Directive later that month to enforce "zero tolerance" for guns in schools, a policy requiring the expulsion of students who bring guns to schools. In school year 1996-97, the U.S. Department of Education estimates that, under zero tolerance policies, 6,093 students were expelled from public schools for bringing a firearm to school.

Supporting Civic, Community and Faith-Based Organizations. Recognizing the important role that civic, community and faith-based organizations can play in reducing crime, the Administration launched a new Values-Based Violence Prevention Initiative to make \$2.2 million in grants available to 16 community-based collaboratives, including religiously-affiliated organizations, that target youth

violence, gangs, truancy, and other juvenile problems by promoting common-sense values and responsibility.

Providing Safe After-School Opportunities for More than a Million Children a Year. Last year (FY98), the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program was expanded to \$200 million. This funding is already supporting hundreds of school-based after-school programs in rural and urban schools in 44 states and the District of Columbia, including weekend and summer programs. This year, the President proposed to triple this initiative -- to \$600 million -- to provide safe and educational after-school opportunities for up to 1.1 million school-age children in communities across the country. In addition, the Education Department released a report in June 1998, titled *Safe and Smart: Making the After-School Hours Work for Kid*. This report shows that after-school programs can lower juvenile crime and improve academic performance. *Safe and Smart* was sent to every school district in the country.

Cracking Down on Truancy. Truancy prevention initiatives have been shown to keep more children in school and dramatically reduce daytime crime. The Education Department issued a guidebook to the 15,000 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. Since then, the Education Department has provided grants to local school districts to develop innovative truancy prevention programs of the kind described in the guidebook.

Encouraging Schools to Adopt School Uniform Policies. School uniforms have been found to be a promising strategy to reduce violence while promoting discipline and respect in school. Because of this, the Clinton Administration has encouraged schools to consider adopting school uniform policies by sharing with every school district a school uniforms manual prepared by the Department of Education in consultation with local communities and the Department of Justice. Since the President highlighted school uniforms, a growing number of schools and school districts have adopted these policies including: New York City, Dade County, San Antonio, Houston, Chicago and Boston.

Supporting Curfews at the Local Level. Community curfews are designed to help keep children out of harm's way and enhance community safety. Because of their success, President Clinton has encouraged communities to adopt curfew policies. A 1997 survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors has shown that 276 of 347 cities surveyed -- or 80 percent -- had youth curfew laws, up from 70 percent in 1995.

Developing a Comprehensive Anti-Gang and Youth Violence Strategy. President Clinton has proposed a comprehensive strategy to (1) target gangs and violent youths with tougher punishments and by expanding anti-gang task forces and the use of racketeering statutes (i.e., RICO) for gang-related offenses; (2) crack down on kids and guns by prohibiting violent juveniles from buying guns and increasing penalties for selling handguns to youths; and (3) keep kids off the streets and out of trouble by expanding after-school programs and promoting anti-truancy initiatives and youth curfews.

Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Children. A number of laws and initiatives are keeping guns out of the hands of children and away from criminals. For instance, since the Brady Law's enactment, 250,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers have been denied handguns, and the 1994 Crime

Bill banned 19 of the deadliest assault weapons and their copies -- keeping assault weapons off America's streets. The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative (YCGII) is cracking down on the illegal gun markets that supply firearms to juveniles and criminals in 37 target cities. The ATF has already traced more than 77,000 crime guns in the YCGII cities, which has led to the investigation and arrest of hundreds of illegal gun traffickers supplying guns to juveniles and criminals. The Administration's FY 2000 budget proposal proposes adding ATF agents to new YCGII cities to assist in gun trafficking investigations. In addition to these programs, President Clinton signed a directive to every federal agency, requiring child safety locking devices with every handgun issued to federal law enforcement officers. And, in an historic agreement, eight major gun manufacturers have voluntarily agreed to provide child safety locking devices with all their handguns, helping to protect our children.

Encouraging Conflict Resolution. The Departments of Education and Justice have developed and distributed 40,000 conflict resolution guides to schools and community organizations, providing guidance on how to develop effective conflict resolution programs; Education and Justice are training community officials and educators on these conflict resolution measures.

Targeting Young People with a National Anti-Drug Media Campaign. In July 1998, President Clinton launched the national expansion of the Anti-Drug Media Campaign first proposed in last year's drug strategy and budget. The 5-year, \$2 billion campaign is designed to let teens know -- when they turn on the television, listen to the radio, or surf the Net -- that drugs are dangerous, wrong and can kill you.

Building and Strengthening 14,000 Community Anti-Drug Coalitions. In 1997, President Clinton signed into law the bipartisan Drug-Free Communities Support Program. Over the next five years this program will provide \$143.5 million to help community coalitions rid their streets of drugs -- the coalitions are made up of young people, parents, media, law enforcement, religious and other civic organizations and school officials. Under this program, the President announced in September 1998 Federal assistance to enhance grassroots efforts in 93 communities in 46 states to prevent youth drug abuse. This assistance will fund the work of broad-based community coalitions to target young people's use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.