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WINNING OUTCOME YOUTH PROGRAMS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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ON THE RIGHT PATH

RCMP



Ideally, when a young person first comes into contact with a police officer, the experience is a positive one that jump-starts a relationship of trust. This isn't always the case but, more and more, police are seeking ways to engage with youth at an earlier age and intervene before criminal activity becomes more serious or a life-long pattern.

In this issue on youth and young offenders, we look at the ways in which the RCMP, other police agencies and community partners get involved in the lives of young people to reduce the number of situations requiring enforcement and get youth the support they need as quickly as possible.

For our cover story, Deidre Seiden speaks to RCMP officers and their community partners in three provinces about youth programs designed to identify and engage young people who may be headed down the wrong path. She also interviews a former gang member from British Columbia, Jordan Buna, about his new life speaking to school kids about making the right choices. And when he speaks, they listen.

Also in our cover section, Sigrid Forberg talks to police and health partners in New Brunswick about ACCESS, a research project that strives to identify youth with mental health problems and make sure they don't slip through the cracks. Sigrid also writes about the RCMP's Terrorism Prevention Program, a tool that trains police to better identify those at risk of radicalization to violence — often youth and young adults — and provide support to divert them away from violent ideologies.

In Winnipeg, Man., Dr. Carolyn Snider runs a pilot program reaching out to youth who come into the emergency department with injuries due to violence, and connects them with

social workers. Snider says the program, which also involves the Winnipeg Police Service, aims to break the cycle of violence. And so far, the results are very encouraging.

Natasha Boojihawon in Greater Manchester, U.K., describes the Girls in Gangs project, a resource aimed at young people, teachers and youth workers to raise awareness about gangs. Students work with local police and a media arts company to develop their own drama piece and produce a documentary about the risks of gang involvement and violence against girls.

In Chicago, Ill., police who are trained in crisis intervention can now take a course specific to youth in crisis. The training makes officers aware of mental illness among young people and gives them de-escalation tools.

And the City of Gatineau in collaboration with Gatineau Police has developed a three-pronged program to discourage youth-driven graffiti across the city. The program involves graffiti prevention, cleanup and painting only on sanctioned walls. Importantly, the number of complaints about graffiti has been cut in half since the program was launched.

Finally, we encourage you to read our panel discussion in which participants share their thoughts about the biggest social problems facing youth in their own communities. Their responses are honest and thought provoking.

We hope this issue provides some good ideas about being involved in youth prevention and diversion programs as early as possible, and about getting the targeted training and awareness that police need to deal with challenging situations involving young people. ■

— Katherine Aldred
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ON THE COVER:

After completing the six-week Difference Maker program, RCMP officers and students have fun playing each other in a friendly game of basketball. Photo: Cst. Dave Winberg, RCMP Forensic Identification Section



"SKIPPY" TAKES A HIT IN CRASH COLLISION COURSE

By Deidre Seiden

As Cst. Les Brauner plowed into Skippy with the white pick-up truck, what surprised him the most was how loud the impact was.

"It was unmistakable," says Brauner, from the Saskatoon Police Service. "Now, if I was ever asked in a court about a hit-and-run investigation where the person said they didn't know they hit the person, I can say from experience, it's highly unlikely they wouldn't know."

Skippy — a dummy — was hit repeatedly by police during a pedestrian/bicycle investigation course hosted by the Saskatoon Police Service.

The Saskatoon Police Service recognized a need for collision analysts to have extra training in this area. Car-pedestrian and car-bicycle crashes are unique and require specialized training to help collision analysts investigate them.

Brauner put a call out to other police agencies in Saskatchewan to see if there was interest.

The RCMP and police from Moose Jaw, Regina and Prince Albert joined the Saskatoon police and trainers from the Institute of Police Technology and Management based in Florida, for a 40-hour course in Saskatoon.

It began in the classroom with practical testing where participants learned the formulas to prove Newton's three laws of motion. Then they headed out to the parking lot with a pick-up truck and Skippy to prove the formulas work.

"We struck Skippy several times and the speeds were coming in close to our actual radar speeds so that confirmed to every candidate that what was taught and applied was correct," says Cpl. Doug Green, a Forensic Collision Reconstructionist with RCMP Traffic Services in Saskatoon.

According to Saskatoon Police, last year alone, in Saskatoon, there were 53 serious or fatal crashes involving cyclists and 106 crashes involving pedestrians.

"One of the biggest reasons for what we



Saskatoon Police Service

Police in Saskatchewan take a specialized course on pedestrian and bicycle investigations.

do and why we do it is to provide answers to the family of those involved in the crash," says Brauner. "From this training, we're able to determine the speed of the vehicle at impact, the speed of the vehicle prior to the impact, how the body came into contact with the vehicle, all to be able to figure out what happened and provide that answer to the family." ■

CODE BLUE TEACHES FITNESS, DISCIPLINE

By Sigrid Forberg

A few years ago, Cst. Troy Derrick, the First Nations policing officer for the Semiahmoo First Nation in Surrey, B.C., wanted to do something to get kids in the community active.

He started informally working out with a few kids from Semiahmoo in the mornings before school, eventually expanding to include other First Nations students at the school gym. And when other students then spotted them there, they asked to join too.

So Derrick decided to open it up to all students and came up with a formal structure to the program, along with a formal name — Code Blue.

Derrick, with the help of the Surrey RCMP Youth Section and several fellow members, special constables and auxiliary constables, holds weekly sessions for high school students in the area. Each week, participants undertake fitness challenges, similar to what cadets go through at the RCMP training facility, that push their limits and foster team-building. Derrick says while everyone joins for different reasons,

the benefits are universal.

"Some of them want to be police officers, some want to make friends, some just want to get fit," says Derrick. "We'd get all these meek kids who wouldn't even talk in the beginning and are now joking and bugging other people. It's really cool to see that from a Grade 8."

John Carreon had heard about Code Blue through his school when he was in Grade 11. The police training program intrigued Carreon, who aspires one day to become a police officer. After graduating last year, Carreon asked the Code Blue facilitators if he could come back and volunteer with the program. He says it's something he looks forward to every Friday.

"I just wanted to be continually a part of it," says Carreon. "I really liked the competition you have against yourself and against your fitness levels and mental ability."

Getting the kids active was important for Derrick, but it's the lessons they learn in the process that he's seen as the greatest benefit to Code Blue.

"We didn't expect it to turn into this,"



At Cst. Allison Voith, RCMP

Students from Surrey, B.C., participate in a group exercise as part of the Code Blue program.

says Derrick. "It's created an understanding that no one's better than anyone else; we have all walks of life participating, but that doesn't matter, and they get that because everyone sheds the same blood, sweat and tears by the end." ■



PARTNERSHIP IN PROACTIVE POLICING

By Deidre Seiden

Every day, RCMP Cst. Carl Garlinski and Cst. Ryan Camping of the Transit Police hit the pavement around Surrey Central, a main transportation hub and shopping district in Surrey, B.C.

“We get out of our police car and we get out on foot,” says Camping. “It allows us to interact as much as we can, so we do a lot of walking.”

They walk the beat around the businesses talking to the local merchants, commuters and patrons, but they’re always listening and looking out for issues in the area.

“We’re also listening to patrol because if there’s a call coming our way, whether it be a robbery suspect, anything, we’re there to help,” says Camping.

This is part of a new Joint Force Operation project, which started in January, to ensure a visible police presence at the city’s main transit hub.

Surrey Central has a SkyTrain station, bus loop, mall, university, recreation centre and library. Much like any high traffic area with many amenities, there’s a propensity for crime and disruption.

“Our goal is to deter violence, raise public confidence and perception, reduce calls for service and ensure the livability of Surrey,”

says Garlinski. “We just identify issues and tackle them and get a lot of feedback from the community.”

The team enforces disorder and disruption, but also focuses on proactive policing and community engagement.

Based on feedback from clients, which Garlinski and Camping collect and document, they create initiatives to target the issues identified. These include open liquor offences, loitering, drug use and dealing, transit fare evasion and shoplifting.

“We find those smaller things tend to negatively affect the perception of Surrey or the state of the neighbourhood,” says Garlinski.

While the Transit Police would police around the transit stations in Surrey and the RCMP would police all of Surrey, the joint force helps create more seamless communication between the two departments as they focus on the transit corridor throughout Surrey.

And they don’t do it alone. When they started, Garlinski and Camping solicited the help of several partners in the area, including municipal bylaw services and the Surrey Crime Prevention and Outreach Society, to patrol with them on specific initiatives.

“If it was all on our shoulders it would be next to impossible,” says Camping. “There



S/Cst. Joshua Walkman, RCMP

Constables Ryan Camping (left) and Carl Garlinski patrol the Surrey Central area.

are a lot of different agencies that we need help from to make this thing fly and we’re all working well together.”

And based on the positive feedback they collect on patrol, people feel safer with them in the area, which is a win for Garlinski and Camping.

“People are happy to see us there,” says Garlinski. “So if they do have a problem, they can walk up to us, they can call us and we’re already there. It’s reduced our response time to public complaints.” ■

TRAUMA DOG HAS FIRST DAY IN COURT

By Deidre Seiden

After almost five years as a member of the Delta Police Victim Services team in British Columbia (B.C.) and helping more than 750 clients get through traumatic events, Caber the trauma dog has also taken on the new role of courthouse dog at the Surrey Provincial Court.

It started about two years ago as a pilot project with the Surrey Crown counsel, where Caber would bring his stable, calm energy to support clients during pre-trial interviews in the Crown counsel office at the courthouse.

“They’re revisiting their victimization and talking about what happened to them, which can be very traumatic,” says Caber’s handler Kim Gramlich, co-ordinator of Delta Police Victim Services. “We have

Caber present and we see the same outcomes — he calms people down.”

With his first trial last May, Caber can now assist vulnerable witnesses and victims, especially children, in the courtroom when they’re giving testimony.

Caber underwent two years of training through Pacific Assistance Dogs Society to become the first fully certified trauma canine in Canada to do this type of work in victim services. And he is one of only a handful of dogs in Canada and the only one in B.C. that can assist in the courtroom.

“The intention behind it is the same,” says Gramlich. “It’s to calm victims and witnesses of crime down, lower their blood pressure, lower their heart rate and make them more comfortable so they can effectively communicate their testimony.” ■



Kim Gramlich, Delta Police Victim Services

After years of comforting victims of crime and trauma with the Delta Police Victim Services in B.C., Caber is doing the same for victims and witnesses of crime as a courthouse dog.



As part of the Difference Maker program, students learn that it feels good to do something positive in their community.

VACCINATING KIDS AGAINST CRIME

YOUTH PROGRAMS FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS

By Deidre Seiden

When he was a general duty police officer, RCMP Cpl. Kevin Krygier got tired of being seen as the “bad news police,” only showing up when there was a problem. And he saw the negative effect this had on youth.

He also saw the issues that police and communities were dealing with every day — kids getting involved in drugs, gangs and bullying.

“It’s just anti-social, assaultive, counter-productive-type behaviours,” says Krygier.

With children of his own and witnessing the struggles first-hand as a police officer, he wanted to connect with youth in a more positive way.

Krygier started the School Sports Program, where he and a team of RCMP officers from Richmond, B.C., visited schools in the area and challenged students to play them in a game of basketball. He noticed a change for the better.

“Now we go to the schools and the kids are high fiving us,” says Krygier. “They can relate to

us a little better and that’s the whole idea.”

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

But it didn’t stop there. Krygier, who’s now in charge of crime prevention in Richmond, partnered with the Rick Hansen Foundation School Program, which fosters social responsibility and teaches youth about courage and determination.

“A difference maker is an ordinary person who does extraordinary things to help others,” says Ewa Holender with the Rick Hansen School Program.

Together, they developed a pilot program called Difference Maker, and brought it to four schools in Richmond — two elementary and two secondary. The program engages and empowers students to make a positive difference in their community and to prevent youth involvement in crime. The secondary students mentor the elementary students.

While officers work directly with the

students, the program also uses ambassadors, including former Olympic snowboarder Alexa Loo.

“The goal of the whole program is to get students to find their cause — the thing that they are passionate about and do something about it,” says Holender. “From that, they learn the basic rule that doing good things feels good and hopefully it will encourage them to a lifetime of doing good things and making a positive difference.”

The first school, Mitchell Elementary, chose to do a random-acts-of-kindness project in the community. The random acts included cleaning up a local park and storming a city bus to hand out gift certificates to unsuspecting riders.

Krygier says there are many layers to the program. It helps students develop leadership skills, have a positive connection to their community and have a stronger relationship with the police, to name a few. And it helps police



because not only is it therapeutic for them, it also gives officers a way to engage young people and prevent negative interactions with students in the years to come.

“By doing this and creating this positive change now, we’re hoping we’ll be able to defer them from becoming involved in criminal activity and make them more inclined to become involved in positive things,” says Krygier. “If we can do that, maybe we can change the course of how this particular generation turns out.”

Programs like Difference Maker are an alternative to enforcement and require a change in mindset.

“We’re so wrapped up in our lives and enforcement that we’ve lost sight of the fact that prevention is really the key,” says Krygier.

Krygier knows that it’s not going to work 100 per cent of the time, but he says even if it works 60 per cent of the time, that’s a significant improvement.

“It’s like getting vaccination to prevent disease,” says Krygier. “This is like getting vaccinated against crime.”

And prevention and intervention programs are proving to be effective in com-

munities across the country.

THE HUB MODEL

In 2011, police in Prince Albert, Sask., the third largest city in that province, were facing high crime rates. They quickly realized they couldn’t arrest their way out the problem.

“It’s expensive and it doesn’t really help,” says Cst. Matthew Gray of the Prince Albert Police Service. “We need to make the distinction between who is a bad person and who is in unfortunate circumstances because there is a huge distinction to be made there. You can’t lump an angry kid in with a bad kid.”

They looked for a sustainable solution and came up with the Prince Albert Community Mobilization model, or the Hub, to build safer and healthier communities, and reduce crime and victimization.

The Hub is an early intervention process that brings together police, social services, schools, public health and other community service agencies that take an integrated approach to connect individuals and families to services they need within 24 to 48 hours.

“The Hub model is risk driven and evidence based, so certain behaviours, certain

types of things that happen in school, show that a particular youth might be on a path to what we call acutely elevated risk,” says Gray.

While the Hub is not specifically for youth, a large percentage of their clients are young people and families. And by all the agencies coming together to work collaboratively, they can see the full picture.

If police keep re-arresting someone and don’t know what else to do, they bring them to the Hub. Here, they might learn the person also has addiction issues and problems at home whereas working alone, police may never know this. Getting youth the help they need can prevent more problems down the road.

“That’s the whole point of early intervention,” says Gray. “Put the time and effort into early intervention so you don’t have to spend a whole lot of time and effort downstream. And that’s very large scope, but that’s essentially what it is, the whole notion of spending a dime to save a dollar.”

With the help and support of Building Partnerships to Reduce Crime (BPRC), a provincial program, the Hub model has spread from Prince Albert to 12 communities in Saskatchewan, and there are versions popping up in Ontario and the United States.

“A lot of communities started to recognize the work that happened in Prince Albert and were excited about the initiative,” says Anna Robinson, a consultant with BPRC. “A model like this is key because it’s an opportunity to intervene in those critical moments when there is risk and respond right away by connecting somebody to services, to make sure it doesn’t get to a point where suppression is needed.”

Sgt. Craig Nyirfa and Cst. Jody Culbert from the Saskatoon Police Service are part of the Hub in Saskatoon, Sask., which has been in place for a more than a year.

Nyirfa says the Hub allows police to achieve better outcomes by collaborating with people within the community.

“It’s doing business in a different way,” says Nyirfa. “To resolve some of these issues, you have to understand first that they cross many different disciplines. The solution is through suppression and enforcement, but also through prevention and intervention.”

They’re already seeing results. “We’re seeing families that aren’t involved with agencies anymore because they have the connections to different programs they need to be successful,” says Culbert. “We’re seeing kids who were once getting in

The Richmond RCMP School Sports program helps develop a positive relationship between police and students.



Cst. Dave Winberg, RCMP Forensic Identification Section

YOUTH AND YOUNG OFFENDERS
COVER



Carmen Klassen, with Child and Family Services (left) and Cst. Jody Culbert, Hub Constable, Saskatoon Police Service, work together to help at-risk youth in Saskatoon.

trouble with the police because they weren't in school, who are now going to school."

THE WHOLE PUZZLE

The multi-agency approach is also seeing success in Selkirk, Man., with the Selkirk Team for At-Risk Youths (START) program.

"The youth are our future and they're struggling," says START co-ordinator Tammy Thompson. "They deal with a lot of different issues. There's a lot of availability of drugs, information that is out there. Families are struggling and they need help."

START has been helping at-risk youths between the ages of 11 and 18 since 2002.

For years, Thompson has seen what can happen when different agencies such as the RCMP, schools, child and family services, mental health, addictions and public health work together with youth and their families on what they call case-conferencing — when they all sit down at the table together to discuss the situation.

Youth who were once struggling with addictions, mental health problems and getting in trouble with the law now graduate high school and have better relationships with their families.

"Each agency has a piece of the puzzle, but we don't know what the whole picture is until we put the puzzle together," says Thompson. "Once we have all the pieces of the puzzle, then we can start to make some effective change."

Andrea Pietracci, 24, was referred to START as a teenager after being arrested for drug use. She was bullied and turned to drugs to cope. Her anger affected her grades at school, her relationships at home and eventu-

ally turned into violence against her mother.

START changed her life. "Once I started getting more involved with START, and I got to know Tammy more, I felt like a person," says Pietracci. "I felt more important and I didn't feel like I was just another case number."

At START, the behaviour is never the

issue — the behaviour is a symptom of the bigger issue.

"I don't know any kid who wants to be in the youth centre or criminally involved," says Thompson. "Every kid wants to be successful. Every parent I work with, regardless of skill level, loves their kids. So it's just a matter of determining what interventions are required to get the family and youth back on track."

The START team continues to help no matter how long it takes. They check in with the youth every month to see what they need and find out how things are going.

"We're here for the long haul," says Thompson. "When you have kids who are really at risk, it's not something that's going to turn around the next day."

For Pietracci, as a mother of two herself now, she doesn't like to think about where she'd be today without the program's intervention. "I'd probably still be using and I probably wouldn't have as good of a relationship as I do with my family," says Pietracci. "I'm just really happy with my life and where it is now and I owe a lot of that to the START program." ■

YOUTH CONVENTION CONNECTS KIDS TO COMMUNITY

For more than 15 years, the RCMP's Drugs and Organized Crime Awareness Service (DOCAS) in British Columbia has been doing prevention work with students of all ages with a strategy called Community Prevention Education Continuum.

But instead of implementing the framework of the continuum inside schools, DOCAS is taking it out of the classroom and into the community as part of a new pilot in prevention — a youth convention.

DOCAS brought the East Kootenay community together with students in Grades 8 and 10 in Cranbrook, B.C.

"We're trying to connect the kids back to their culture, their community, the law, to the province, to the government, to Canada," says S/Sgt. Anthony Choy, the non-commissioned officer in charge of DOCAS.

The first convention theme, "Journal of Happiness," was chosen by the community. "We called it that because we're trying to say to the kids there is no destination that's happy; it's being happy with where

you're at," says convention organizer, Cpl. Alan Nutini.

Students registered for two of six different workshops in advance and attended a keynote address and a wrap-up session. Each session focused on issues affecting the students today, like being connected and relating to the opposite sex, among others.

With seven schools and approximately 1,600 students in attendance, the convention allowed the RCMP to reach more kids in less time. And with 20 community organizations set up at conference booths and food vendors, the students were exposed to different organizations in the community, which Nutini says shows they're valued.

"Engaging the community is something we needed to do a better job of in our prevention," says Nutini. "I'm not a believer that you just lock something in and say we're going to do this and just stick with it. You need to change; you need to challenge yourself to be better."

— Deidre Seiden



"SOME COMMON SENSE AND SOME HUMANITY"

PROJECT TO TRANSFORM MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR YOUTH

By Sigrid Forberg

Nearly 75 per cent of Canadians experiencing mental health issues are under the age of 25 — yet only 30 per cent of them ever seek treatment.

Mental health awareness has come a long way in recent years, but the people who need access to intervention and treatment most, for whatever reason, are still largely not getting help.

That's where ACCESS, a five-year research project involving clinicians, youth, families, community service providers and the RCMP, comes in.

BUILDING AN APPROACH

Two years ago, the Graham Boeckh Foundation and the Canadian Institute for Health Research launched a national competition to find the best idea for transforming youth mental health services. ACCESS was chosen as the winner.

Dr. Ashok Malla, a professor with McGill University and the Douglas Institute for Mental Health, is the lead applicant for the project.

Of 55 groups that submitted proposals, 17 were invited to Montreal, Que., to discuss their ideas. Malla attended, and that's where he met Insp. Rick Shaw, from the RCMP in

New Brunswick.

Shaw helped develop and ran the province's youth intervention diversion model, which redirects youth aged 12 to 17 into community programs and services and away from the criminal justice system.

"If you look at that model, what we were actually doing was using evidence-based screening tools to help those kids," says Shaw. "We were screening them for risk factors related to their criminal activity, and some of the underlying causes were mental health issues."

Shaw had been seeking opportunities to increase access to services for young people experiencing mental health issues, which led to an important partnership with the New Brunswick Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

"We knew from our experience that by working with police, in an integrated approach with educators, social and health services, we could connect more youth with care and not courts," says Christian Whalen, from the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

And so Shaw and Whelan teamed up with Malla and several other proposals to form ACCESS.

INCREASING ACCESS TO CARE

ACCESS has four goals. It strives to increase the number of identified youth with mental health problems and provide them with quick and easy access to care within 72 hours. It also aims to provide continued access to services beyond the usual cut-off of 18 years old and ensure youth connect with the right kind of specialist or primary care service for their individual needs.

"It's kind of bringing some common sense and some humanity into the way we provide care," says Malla. "We're basically saying, 'Come through any door and you're welcome, we'll make sure any door is good for you.'"

Shaw says an important aspect of ensuring the project's success has been working with all the stakeholders, from partner agencies to youth and their parents. In New Brunswick, ACCESS is planning to open nine clinics that will be safe spaces for youth to seek quick and easy treatment when they need it.

And by making it a safe environment for youth, they hope to address that reluctance many young people have when it comes to seeking help.

"Making these safe spaces available also builds awareness around this issue," says Shaw. "Once that awareness is built, I think we'll start seeing police officers doing more referrals, family members doing referrals, friends helping get people in the door. We're talking about a cultural change."

Malla adds that the impact of intervening early and treating mental health issues as soon as symptoms arise can actually prevent the early stages of many mental illnesses from becoming more serious.

And not treating youth early has both direct and indirect impacts on society. After accidents, suicide is the second-leading cause of death in young people. Malla says each suicide of a 22- or 23-year-old is a loss to society as a whole.

"I think all of us got together because we feel it's important and we like to have a bigger vision," says Malla. "It's not a dream, it's really a vision. And if we don't try, we're not going to be able to change anything." ■

The ACCESS program works to complement the work the RCMP in New Brunswick already does with youth.



RCMP



AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

NATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM FOCUSES ON EARLY INTERVENTION

By Sigrid Forberg

In the last few years, as more and more young Canadians have been involved in terrorist attacks on home soil, or travelled abroad to join foreign fighters, it's become increasingly clear that violent extremism is a growing concern.

And as the national police force, the RCMP has a role to play in not just fighting terrorism, but preventing it.

NEED FOR INFORMATION

Supt. Shirley Cuillierrier, the Director General for Partnerships and External Relations of the RCMP's Federal Policing section, says they began that preventative work last year with a national conference for 125 front-line and middle management police officers.

"The message we received was loud and clear — police officers need to understand what radicalization to violence is, how to recognize it when they see it and what to do about it if they get a call from a family member or friend concerned about their loved one," says Cuillierrier.

National security investigations are the responsibility of the Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams (INSETs). But front-line officers from local police forces aren't always aware of key behavioural indicators that a person may be becoming radicalized to violence.

Cuillierrier says officers at the conference were starving for information, so she and her team developed several tools for police.

One of those tools is the Terrorism Prevention Program (TPP). The program's goal is to help prevent radicalization to violence by training front-line police to better identify at-risk individuals and provide communities with guidance and support to intervene and divert a person away from violent ideologies.

"We've found that all these young people we've heard about were vulnerable," says Cuillierrier. "If you happen to be in a vulnerable place in your life, it's easy to be captured by this kind of sense of a higher calling in life."

To find and disengage individuals who haven't yet committed a crime, the RCMP



Steve Denny, RCMP

The RCMP's Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET)'s public outreach units attend events and build relationships in their communities to prevent radicalization to violence.

needs to work with its communities and partners. That's where the outreach teams come in.

CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES

The INSET team's community outreach units are the face of the TPP for the public.

Sgt. Derek McDonald, the Community Outreach/Counter Terrorism Information Officer for one of Ontario's two INSET teams, says his work is essentially community policing, but within a national security context.

"I've been on the job 28 years now and I remember my trainer telling me when I started, 'The police don't solve crimes, people tell them who did it,'" says McDonald. "When it comes to terrorism, we need all Canadians, not just law enforcement, to be on the lookout and providing assistance."

Sgt. Hakim Bellal, McDonald's counterpart in Quebec, agrees.

He says the key to success with prevention is getting the community engaged. Community outreach officers attend local community events, slowly introducing information about national security concerns.

"When you have trust built, people put faith in your ideas, they listen to you and they give you a chance," says Bellal.

For the Quebec INSET, prevention is

a priority. They now have a policy that for every enforcement file they open, they must also look for complementary intervention opportunities.

"Most of these youth have parents, brothers, sisters and friends — they're victims, too," he says. "And they might be taking the same path — instead of losing one, we might lose others, too. We have to focus on helping them."

Cuillierrier says once you earn the community's trust, amazing things can happen. In the few short years since public outreach has become a priority, both Bellal and McDonald have noticed a huge change in their interactions with the communities they work with.

And while with prevention it's hard to measure effectiveness in quantifiable numbers, just the fact that INSET members are now getting calls from parents and friends about concerning behaviour — something unheard of until recently — is a good sign they're headed in the right direction.

"Certainly it's a case where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," says McDonald. "Youth are often tricky to make a connection with. But if they've spent some time with an officer in any setting, they might be more comfortable and trusting. They might reach out." ■



WHAT'S THE BIGGEST SOCIAL ISSUE FACING YOUTH IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

THE PANELLISTS

- Mary Kathleen Hickox, RCMP National Youth Advisory Committee, Charlottetown, P.E.I
- Chris Rider, executive director, BYTE – Youth Empowerment, Whitehorse, Yukon
- Cst. Gail Starr, Upper Fraser Valley Regional Detachment, First Nations Policing Unit, RCMP

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MARY KATHLEEN HICKOX

Bully. What does this word mean to you? Does it conjure the image of a burly boy shoving that lanky kid into a locker? Is it *Mean Girls'* Regina George — the rich, all-American girl picking on others because she can? Or maybe it's the big "sketchy" guy who steals lunch money because his parents are poor. These perceptions of bullies are more than inaccurate; they're fictitious.

Here in Charlottetown, P.E.I, the biggest issue facing my fellow youth is cyberbullying. Not only have I been affected by such crimes, most of my friends and peers have as well.

In a world where everything evolves and is fluid, our perceptions of bullying must change as well. Bullying is no longer something that can be observed in the school cafeteria; it's invisible. It's on your phone, Facebook, Twitter, computer — it's

everywhere and there's often no escape. As a youth from the millennial generation, I can tell you that bullying isn't only common, it's a crisis.

Technology provides the unique opportunity to share information while assuming a new identity, a sanctuary in which you are unmonitored and free to say whatever you want. You can become a cyberbully.

This is one of the factors that makes bullying so difficult to eliminate. Today, bullies are often individuals who hide under their mask of anonymity. As an outsider, you could never guess that the quiet speed skater is actually sending abusive texts to his teammate or that the "sweet" library monitor assumes the identity of "MidnightCrocodile123" when she harasses her peers.

Of course, the anonymity of the Internet places another level of complexity on the situation. It's possible that a victim of bully-

ing doesn't even know who the perpetrator is. This adds even more anxiety.

As the phrase "social media" implies, it's social. This is another variable that dramatically increases the prevalence and hurtfulness of bullying. Bullies have access to an enormous audience with whom they can share, re-tweet, re-post — and re-abuse their victims. Instead of being between a few individuals, bullying can become a "community" activity.

Too often, the crime committed becomes the responsibility of the victim. It's unfair that the person being victimized has to act on his or her own behalf as the investigator, authority and the counsellor. Furthermore, this individual is often blamed for the crime. People will ask, "What did you do to cause this?" This question implies that the victim is at fault and that he or she somehow deserves the abuse. It can result in the victim losing trust and self-confidence.



The most powerful role in this situation is that of the bystander. The bystander has the potential to help alleviate the situation or to worsen it. Sadly, many teens often choose the easier route and submit to the peer pressure. We need to empower students from a young age to stand up. Not simply by wearing a pink shirt on Feb. 25th, but by reporting bullies and supporting victims.

If we don't end the misconception that "bullying is a normal part of growing up," bullying has the potential to become an accepted social norm.

CHRIS RIDER

My organization, BYTE – Youth Empowerment, travels across the Yukon to run experiential workshop programming for youth aged 13 to 18. The topics we talk about include bullying, mental health, leadership and healthy relationships. This work has given us many opportunities to talk with both youth and adults about the issues they're facing.

Some of the issues that youth face — such as bullying and changing technology — are the same across Canada, and some stem from the remoteness of the communities. From my experience, though, the biggest issue facing northern youth is substance abuse.

I've spoken to many people across the territory about why this is such a big issue, and the one thing that keeps coming back is the inter-generational trauma resulting from Indian residential schooling. It's difficult for me to do justice to something that's had such a profound impact on so many people, but it's critical to acknowledge when talking about substance abuse in Yukon communities.

Residential schools operated in the Yukon from 1891 to 1968, but many Yukon First Nations people were also sent to Indian Residential Schools in northern B.C. (Lower Post) and Northwest Territories (Aklavik), where the last school didn't close until 1996. Residential schooling was a program operated by the federal government that took First Nations children away from their families to forcibly assimilate them into what was considered to be "white culture."

In our territory, there are still elders who remember having their young children taken away from them. If they didn't comply, they were sent to prison. They talk about the impact this had on them and their community. When their children were taken, many

of the remaining adults turned to substance abuse as a way to cope with the loss.

By the time the students returned home, substance abuse had become an issue in their communities. Former students reported that they no longer knew where they belonged and, having lived through a terrible trauma, the cycle of substance abuse continued.

The impacts of trauma and substance abuse have led to the situation we are in today. Although the residential schools have all now closed, many young people in northern communities are still growing up surrounded by the problems the residential schools created. Good people, many of whom are uncles, aunts and parents, drink to numb their pain. For many youth, particularly those growing up in small remote communities, substance abuse is normalized.

It's not uncommon for young people growing up in the Yukon today to see their role models abusing substances. As anywhere, young people seek to emulate their parents, elders and older peers, and the cycle of substance abuse continues. It's something that the communities and organizations like BYTE – Youth Empowerment are working hard to reverse.

I have a wonderful team of youth outreach co-ordinators and facilitators who work hard to run programming that helps to promote positive mental health and confidence in young people. We hope that our programming is helping to repair the damage for young people growing up today. And the positive news is that there are signs that things are changing.

As communities have time to heal and many First Nations youth rediscover pride in their traditional culture, we hope it will lead to a reduction in substance abuse.

CST. GAIL STARR

My traditional name is Kwelaxtelotiya, my English name is Gail Starr. Being born and raised in a First Nations community and also having the opportunities to work away from the reservation has opened my eyes to see the whole picture of social issues facing youth today.

My community is Skwawakul, the Seabird Island Band. It is one of 23 bands that compose Sto:lo Nation, which covers a large area from Langley, B.C. east to Boston Bar on both sides of the Fraser River. The word Sto:lo in my Halq'eme'ylem language means "People on the River." We are connected to

the salmon and the water.

The elders teach that for thousands of years we have been connected, physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally to all life along the Fraser River. The mountains are where there is a resource of food and shelter. The same mountains are where our sacred songs came from. The cedar tree supplies our families with shelter, transportation and clothing. We also gather berries, medicine plants and herbs that grow in different traditional regions up the mountain valleys and in the lower flatlands. It is during those times spent together as family that the teachings are passed down. Our teachings were never written down, but rather passed on orally and physically demonstrated in art form (rock stories, paintings, carvings).

Our teachings and directions in life are circular, as everything is connected. The Canadian government legislated our children be taken from families and forced into the residential schools. This orchestrated breakdown of the family unit was an effort to destroy the "Indian in the child" by imposing western religion and foreign ways of processing thoughts (linear versus circular). This was executed in a captive forum, away from our traditional communities. Language, songs, art and gatherings were against the law. The last residential school closed down in 1996. The healing will take generations.

Today, the youth in our communities are affected and challenged by this history. The challenge is to find that balance between traditional and modern ways of living. There has been some recovery as our youth become educated and realize that their Aboriginal rights and title have never been extinguished, and the language can be learned and not lost. There can be a traditional balance living in the 21st century.

When I teach and speak with the youth in our community schools, I am honoured to witness how these children are connected to all living things and are able to apply traditional teachings to address social issues in their lives.

I am proud to open my submission using my traditional name. I share with young people that our language is alive and well — it is the pulse of who we are — and there are many opportunities to be Sto:lo and confident in differentiating between historical and modern community issues. There can be a traditional balance and modern-day harmony when faced with any community issue. ■



Girls in Gangs



Media students from the Girls in Gangs project interviewed social workers, civil servants and young people for a documentary they created on girls' involvement in gangs.

GIRLS IN GANGS

STUDENTS EXPLORE GANG RISKS THROUGH MEDIA ARTS

By Natasha Boojihawon, Girls in Gangs project manager and managing director, Union Street Media Arts, Manchester, United Kingdom

In September 2011, Union Street Media Arts, a social enterprise based in Manchester, England, embarked on a two-year project and campaign to explore girls' involvement in gangs. The project involved Cedar Mount Academy and Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to support 30 students to raise awareness about the risks of gangs through film, social media and performance.

Cedar Mount Academy initially recognized the need to look into the gang experience by consulting with girls and boys at the school through drama workshops and sessions facilitated by the police. At the same time, GMP had seen an increase in violence and sexual assaults by young men against girls so their engagement and prevention work in schools was becoming a larger focus.

One main theme that girls voiced was the need to be respected and taught to respect themselves and not get labelled as a 'slag' or 'sket' (derogatory terms for a girl or woman perceived as being promiscuous).

With the Home Office tapped into what was happening locally, it developed a gang and youth-violence strategy focusing on supporting local partnerships. To respond effectively to local gang issues, the strategy targeted three force areas: London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands (Birmingham). Through Communities Against Guns, Gangs and Knives Fund, the Home Office funded organizations in those areas working with young people at risk of involvement in gangs. Union Street Media Arts received £20,000 for the Girls in Gangs project.

MISSING PIECES

There were only a few key pieces of research available to us in early 2011. Each identified a lack of research in the United Kingdom looking at the experiences of girls' involvement in gangs. Researchers felt the key was to use education to explore not only the experiences of girls as gang members but also as peers, girlfriends, siblings and parents. They further

talked about the broader characteristics of girls' involvement and ways into gangs, and pointed to a greater diversity of experience, 'gang culture' and motivation for becoming involved than was previously understood.

To build upon that knowledge and do something that was unique, the project creatively explored the experiences of girls who unwillingly or unknowingly became associated with gang members. This exploration was done through drama and film in an effort to understand what and how their experiences unfolded. This became such an insightful and empowering process for the students that, by the end, many of them were not only no longer at risk themselves, but wanted to change the way other young people could understand this reality.

The project used creative and innovative processes to involve the young participants as much as possible. The idea was to support the boys and girls to explore the issues in a way that they could relate to and not force them

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to highlight stereotypical issues and ideas because that is how they appear in the media. This also involved supporting the participants to identify the role of the media in the development of gang culture and peer pressure.

The project focused on trying to get young people to think critically about a largely normalized issue — ‘this is the way it is.’

Empowering youth was at the heart of the project because we know that to really have an impact on their lives and make a sustainable change, they had to be guided in the right way.

CREATIVE EXPLORATION

In the first year, drama and media students explored the critical issues, ideas and experiences that girls have around gangs, how girls in gangs are perceived, the reasons why girls get involved, the risks, how gangs came about and what influences gangs.

The drama students created a performance that they devised with guidance from facilitators. They chose the themes, topics, characters and developed the dialogue around Jo, a girl who unwillingly gets involved in a gang. The students identified the key points they wanted the audience to take away from the performance.

The media students created a documentary, supported by a professional crew. They developed the film’s objectives, researched the content, devised interview questions and carried out the interviews, and designed the lighting and camera set-up. The documentary looked at the issues in more depth, explored roles and situations, and brought in professionals and academics to contribute to the debate and talk about initiatives.

The documentary explored all the key themes and issues related to girls’ involvement

in gangs including first-hand information from social workers, civil servants and young people, giving a unique insight into the topic.

The second year involved bringing the performance and documentary to a wider audience. Through more workshops, the performance was developed in relation to audience feedback from the first performance. It portrayed what happens to the people around Jo as well as key relationships, exploring thoughts, motivations, choices and emotion.

The media pupils developed a website for other youth groups, schools, universities, public bodies, social services and the public to use, and designed a social media campaign to spread the message.

The resources include session plans and activities, articles, books, films and links to useful websites and resources that help explore critical issues, ideas and experiences that girls have around gangs, how girls are perceived in or seen in roles, reasons why girls get involved and the risks.

The trust built between students and facilitators was an important factor in its success. The positive environment gave the students the confidence to be open because they had a safe space to explore and respond. The students’ perspectives were good because they were involved in getting feedback and discussing ideas with each other, and working to make their creative pieces relate more to the audience.

At one of the drama performances, surveys were conducted with the audience before and after the show to assess any change in ideas and attitudes. Comparing the before and after identified several changes in the audience’s views:

- There was a decline in stereotypical

perceptions of what a gang is.

- There was an increase in awareness of why girls may join gangs.
- There was an increase in the understanding that girls’ and boys’ roles in a gang may be different.
- The identified risks of getting involved with gangs were much more accurate following the performance.
- The audience clearly understood the messages the pupils were trying to portray.

The campaign designed with the young people became much bigger than anticipated. The project toured around schools, universities and community centres spreading the message and methods. Those involved were invited to do lectures and speak on the radio as well as present our work at the Houses of Parliament. The project was endorsed by national child protection organizations, politicians and social workers. The documentary has been aired on British TV four times and our online channel has received more than 12,500 views.

The website now provides a resource for thousands of people around the globe every year. Requests and comments come from individuals, professionals and students all over the world about the relevance and usefulness of it. This is indeed a global phenomenon, and understanding the real experiences of girls and women is desperately needed.

From start to finish, the progression of the students’ work showed tremendous thematic development. They understood the issues well and their views changed significantly. They took leadership and ownership, and saw the importance of their new role in society. Their work created a buzz in the school, which in turn has a positive effect on the other pupils.

While these young participants were deemed to have challenging behaviour and attitudes, the project seemed to have a great positive impact on them. Their confidence increased, as did their awareness, leading to positive life choices being more available to them. ■

The media students created a documentary, which explored key issues related to girls’ involvement in gangs.



Girls in Gangs

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE VISIT:
WWW.GIRLSINGANGS.ORG





In collaboration with the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Chicago, the Chicago Police Department developed a curriculum to instruct officers how to identify the characteristics of mental health crisis situations involving youth.

YOUTH AND MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING POLICE TO IDENTIFY THOSE IN CRISIS

By Rebecca R. Skorek, research analyst, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

Youth face significant delays — on average about 10 years — between the onset of signs and symptoms of mental disorders and actual intervention. Delaying access to needed mental health services can adversely affect the important developmental years of a young person’s life, while linking youth to initial treatment is likely to reduce justice system involvement and school failure.

Research studies suggest that nearly 70 per cent of the two million youth arrested each year in the United States are touched by mental illnesses. The findings show that when young people with mental illnesses become involved in the juvenile justice system for minor, non-violent offences, they’re often formally processed due to unmet mental health needs.

Arrest rates are particularly high among young people who drop out of high school and have unmet or undiagnosed mental health needs. Studies have shown that almost 75 per cent are arrested within five years of dropping out. With a disproportionate number

of justice-involved youth meeting diagnostic criteria for mental disorders (70 per cent compared to 20 per cent among the general population), there’s a great opportunity for intervention at the time when police officers respond to service calls involving youth.

In 2013, nearly 22,000 youth arrests occurred throughout the City of Chicago, Ill. Law enforcement officers play a critical role as first responders to mental health crises by diverting individuals with mental illnesses from the criminal justice system to community-based treatment providers.

To better prepare its officers to respond to this population’s needs, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) implemented the Crisis Intervention Team for Youth (CIT-Y) training. In collaboration with the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Chicago, CPD developed a curriculum to instruct officers about the ways to identify the characteristics of crisis situations involving youth and assess risk of harm to self and others while applying corresponding de-escalation techniques.

CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAMS

Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) use trained first responders of police-based crisis intervention alongside community, health care and advocacy partnerships. The adult CIT model originated in Memphis, Tenn., in 1988 and today there are approximately 2,500 CITs in the United States.

CPD began adult CIT training in 2004. In 2010, CPD sparked national interest by implementing the country’s first 40-hour, five-day course that addresses the youth population: CIT for Youth training. CIT-Y was designed as an advanced course for officers who had already completed the adult CIT training. With a federal grant, the program held 16 CIT-Y training sessions from 2011 to 2014. More than 600 officers completed the course.

The CIT-Y model consists of a dynamic collaboration between law enforcement, school personnel, parents and community-based health providers. CIT-Y training and techniques are upheld through two depart-



ment directives including one that established the CIT program and another that outlined the procedures for operation.

The CIT-Y training aims to do the following:

- Divert youth in crisis from the juvenile justice system to community-based treatment services.
- Advance officer knowledge of the signs and symptoms of youth mental illnesses.
- Increase the likelihood of safe interactions between police and the public during youth crises.
- Enhance the officer's ability to assess youth risk of harm to self and others, and apply corresponding crisis de-escalation techniques.
- Improve officer awareness of department directives that outline appropriate responses to crises.

To achieve the training objectives, CIT-Y staff developed 18 training modules. According to CIT-Y officers, the most helpful training modules were *Community resource panel* and *Risk assessment and crisis de-escalation*, while the least helpful module was *Psychotropic medications*, due to it being overly technical.

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority conducted two evaluations of CIT-Y training in 2011 and 2012. This was done through a course evaluation survey, a curriculum test and focus groups held six months after the training.

The course evaluation survey gauged officer satisfaction with the training curriculum, the curriculum test measured officer's knowledge of youth mental health and appropriate responses to youth crisis calls, and the focus groups reported officer application of CIT-Y techniques in the field.

The year two evaluation surveyed non-CIT officers so that knowledge of youth mental health and appropriate responses to youth crises could be compared to the group of participants who received CIT-Y training. Evaluators identified the strengths of the program as well as the difficulties faced by officers when implementing CIT-Y techniques.

IMPLEMENTATION

The evaluation found that officers were very satisfied with the CIT-Y curriculum, rating it as very relevant and informative. CIT-Y

training significantly improved officer knowledge of risk assessment, crisis de-escalation techniques and department protocols to use when responding to youth in crisis.

Additionally, CIT-Y officers reported that the training helped them identify the signs and symptoms of youth mental illnesses, and that youth presenting with such behaviours were less likely to be formally processed when handled by a trained officer.

One participant said, "I've been able to refer some parents to [a community hospital] instead of making it a criminal issue." Focus group participants reported using CIT-Y techniques almost daily.

The focus group interviews with CIT-Y officers also highlighted the challenges encountered when applying these techniques in the field. Officers noted that implementing CIT-Y techniques was difficult due to a lack of department support. Similarly, participants noted conflicting response styles between CIT-Y trained officers and untrained officers.

One participant reported, "My biggest problem is other officers who are not CIT-trained. We had a 14-year-old [with] a knife to the grandmother. [I] was able to talk him down, but officers want[ed] to Taser the kid and take him down. Other officers think he's a bad kid [with] a behaviour problem, but he was off his meds."

One barrier to implementing these techniques was a lack of department and public awareness and, as a result, emergency calls weren't properly connected to CIT-Y officers. Officers reported that dispatch didn't always assign crisis calls to trained officers, nor do citizens know the availability of officers trained in CIT-Y. In addition, officers stated that they experienced a lack of co-operation from school administrators, teachers and security officers. Officers stated that school personnel often challenged and disagreed with CIT-Y intervention techniques.

FUTURE EVALUATION

The recommendations to improve officer application of CIT-Y techniques included increasing officer knowledge of signs and symptoms of youth mental illnesses and department support. Strategies to refresh trained officers about CIT-Y techniques and to develop rollcall training for district personnel were also recommended.

Evaluating CIT-Y continues with a

focus on identifying the characteristics of crisis calls, assessing the prevalence of such calls, measuring the extent to which trained officers are linked to crisis calls, and exploring CPD responses to these calls and the impact of training.

The report, *Evaluation of Chicago Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team for Youth training: Year 1*, can be found at <http://www.icjia.state.il.us/public/>.

Publication of the report *Evaluation of Chicago Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team for Youth training: Year 2*, is anticipated in summer 2015 and will be made available online at ICJIA's website. ■

CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM - YOUTH

CIT-Y staff developed 18 training modules to help CPD officers better respond to youth in crisis:

- Introduction, child and adolescent overview
- Child and adolescent brain development
- Signs and symptoms of youth mental illnesses
- Medical and developmental disabilities
- Psychotropic medications
- Violence and urban trauma
- Adolescents and gangs
- Risk assessment and crisis de-escalation
- Parents and teachers as allies
- Self-injurious disorders
- Substance abuse and co-occurring disorders
- Family perspectives
- Seamless integration with schools
- Department procedures for special circumstances
- Department procedures for mental health crises
- School violence and school shooters
- Community resource panel
- Q&A — Mental health scenarios



STOPPING THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

ER PROJECT REACHES OUT TO YOUNG VICTIMS

By Heather Tiede, research co-ordinator, Youth Violence Research Program, Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba

It's 1:57 a.m. on a warm Saturday night in Winnipeg. Dr. Carolyn Snider is barely two hours into her shift as an emergency room physician at the Health Sciences Centre, Manitoba's primary trauma hospital, but has already treated and released two 16-year-old teenagers with lacerations resulting from a violent disagreement at a house party.

Her current patients, a 19-year-old man and 22-year-old woman, are waiting for treatment in adjoining rooms. The young man will need 14 stitches from being hit over the head with an empty liquor bottle after refusing the 22-year-old's request for a cigarette. His alleged attacker suffered a broken arm and fractured cheek bone when the victim's friends jumped in to retaliate. The two had just met that night in a downtown bar.

Although the above scenario is hypothetical, it's unfortunately all too representative of a typical summer night in emergency departments (EDs) across Canada. According to Snider, who has worked in EDs in Toronto and Winnipeg, injuries due to intentional assaults are the number one reason that youth aged 12 to 24 years visit an ED. They're also the leading cause of hospitalization among men aged 20 to 24.

"Injury is a chronic, recurring condition," says Snider. "Not only does it affect mostly young people, but right now the standard of care in many hospitals is to stitch them up and send them on their way without attempting to treat the root causes."

Unsatisfied with the status quo, Snider turned to her colleagues in the U.S. to see how a hospital-based violence intervention program might work in Canada. After extensive community consultation with clinicians, nurses, social workers, community youth workers and former gang members, the Emergency Department Violence Intervention Program (EDVIP) was created as a pilot research project to address some of the underlying reasons young people get caught up in a cycle of injury and violence.

Funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, EDVIP is the only randomized control study of its kind in North America that is designed to directly assess the

effectiveness of reducing repeat intentional injury among youth injured by violence by providing care both in the hospital and in the community for approximately one year starting at the time of the initial injury.

Heather Woodward is the organization's social worker and leads the EDVIP intervention team. She explains how the program works.

"Wraparound care involves meeting the youth at their bedside at the time of the injury and providing them the opportunity to work with a support worker to address any areas in their life that the youth identifies as putting them at risk of future violence," she says.

Woodward goes on to explain that there are a number of key components that make this intervention program successful. The first is that the support workers are people with whom the youth feel comfortable and can identify. The EDVIP intervention team currently has five support workers (three men and two women) who either have experience with violence or extensive experience working with youth affected by violence.

Second, it's important that the youth are met right at the bedside in the ED to take advantage of the 'teachable moment.'

"Research has shown that youth who have been injured by violence are often in a reflective and receptive state of mind," says Snider, who now serves as medical director and principal investigator for the program. "This makes the hospital emergency department the ideal setting for initiating an intervention."

The third key component is that the youth themselves are the ones who decide what may have been the contributing factors that put them at risk of violent injury.

"It's not the support worker's job to 'fix' the youth, but rather to walk with them on their journey of healing," says Woodward. Among the more commonly cited risk factors are problems with addictions, a lack of safe housing, and involvement with the criminal justice system.

Snider remembers clearly the moment that she realized not enough was being done

to treat the root causes of youth violence. A young man who she treated months prior for a laceration was back in her trauma room at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto. She remembers wondering if there was something she could have done at his initial visit that might have helped prevent his return.

Snider went on to learn that this young man's situation was not an isolated incident; in fact, approximately 20 per cent of youth who are injured by violence will return to the emergency department with another injury within the next year.

Rick Linden, professor of Criminology at the University of Manitoba and member of the EDVIP Advisory Board, is an internationally renowned expert on young offenders. He explains that the same circumstances that often give rise to young peoples' involvement in criminal activity also leave them susceptible to becoming victims of assault.

"There is a very strong relationship between being a violent offender and serious victimization among young offenders," says Linden. "These youth come from similar backgrounds. Typically they are marginalized youth from poor families. They frequently share common lifestyles that put them at risk of victimization, and they are often involved in gangs. Whether an individual becomes a victim or an offender at any given time may be a matter of timing, luck or strength and these circumstances may change the next time around."

In fact, over the past decade in Canada, about one quarter of homicide victims and almost half of those accused were youth between the ages of 14 and 24. In Manitoba, the province with one of the highest homicide rates, more than one third of homicides in the past six years involved youth.

Snider recently completed her own analysis of youth who were injured or killed by violence in Manitoba spanning 2004 to 2011. She discovered that youth are more than four times more likely to be the victim of a serious injury or homicide if they had previously been charged with a criminal offence — even after controlling for other



As part of the EDVIP project, support worker Roxanne Ballantyne and Dr. Carolyn Snider reach out to young victims of violence in an effort to prevent their return to the emergency department.

factors such as gender, income, education, involvement with Child and Family Services and prior visits to the ED for assault injuries.

“It quickly became clear during the pilot stage of our study that we needed support and input from the justice and law enforcement sectors,” Dr. Snider explains. As a result, a new partnership with the Winnipeg Police Service was formed.

S/Sgt. Bob Christmas of the Winnipeg Police Service serves as a liaison between the police and the EDVIP team. He explains how programs such as EDVIP are part of “the new economics of policing.”

“EDVIP is an excellent example of this type of proactive, intervention-based approach. The Winnipeg Police Service has adopted crime prevention through social de-

velopment as its crime prevention approach, and therefore has fully embraced the EDVIP as a partner and supports it as a great example of social innovation and collaboration.”

Christmas says the program and its team are having a positive impact.

“I have been moved by the team’s compassion and dedication to community and to the individual clients; their devotion is clearly behind their outstanding successes after the first year. They are truly changing the lives of violence-affected youth. I believe this model will be adopted by emergency departments in hospitals across Canada.”

Although the program is still in its pilot stage and won’t have any concrete results to report for another year, Snider says the program’s participants have made great strides.

“Many [youth] are back in school or have full-time jobs. Some are volunteering their time at ceremonies and helping to deliver furniture and household items in the community. Most of our youth are now safely housed. A lot of the youth who are Aboriginal have been introduced — or re-introduced — to their culture and ceremony and are participating in and learning about sweat lodges, sun dances and pow wows. Most importantly, we clearly see a number of our youth developing independence and taking responsibility for their own lives.”

As the many community partners that work closely with EDVIP know, even small achievements can make huge differences in the lives of the young people served by this program. ■



City of Gatineau



From left to right, Gatineau artists Marin Mitrasinovic, Patrick Moss and Lukasz Bober pose in front of their mural, *Gatineau, in movement*.

GRAFFITI IN GATINEAU PROGRAM ENCOURAGES ARTFUL EXPRESSION

By Marie-Noële St-Pierre, program officer, and Josiane Cossette, youth commission, City of Gatineau

In many large cities, graffiti vandalism and tagging are a big problem. Gatineau, Que., is no exception, where close to 100 new tags crop up every year. Yet as the fourth largest city in Quebec and with close to 300,000 residents, things could be a lot worse.

Fifteen years ago, the former municipalities that now make up the City of Gatineau received more than 200 graffiti and tagging complaints each year. But the introduction of an innovative program mobilizing local youth has cut that number in half, as it has in other cities facing the same challenge.

At the heart of the Graffiti and Tagging Prevention and Support Program, created in 2001, is the Gatineau Youth Commission. Through the commission, local teens are able to make youth-specific recommendations to city council. A multidisciplinary team made up of representatives from the Gatineau Police Service; Public Works; Recreation, Sports and Community Development Services and *L'Alternative Outaouais*, a local youth organization, recommended that the city recognize graffiti as a form of urban art instead of punishing graffiti artists.

Over the next 10 years, the Gatineau Youth Commission made improvements to and spearheaded the program. Now administered by Recreation, Sports and

Community Development Services, the program has three components: prevention, cleanup and by-laws. Specific objectives are set and achieved through the implementation of concrete measures.

The goal of the prevention component is to help people better understand tags and graffiti and foster the respectful use of graffiti on public and private property. The focus is on informing, raising awareness and promoting graffiti as urban art.

City officials understand that kids yearn to express themselves, through graffiti or otherwise. They decided to entrust the city's youth with more than 40 walls located in various parks and three tunnels, where they can paint graffiti legally and safely as they learn the importance of respecting private and public property.

In partnership with local agencies, the city organizes youth awareness workshops, where young graffiti artists are able to showcase their talent and at the same time teach their peers how to practise their art lawfully in designated areas.

The city also sponsors an annual graffiti competition, which authorizes the creation of frescoes. Frescoes are in line with other objectives, such as embellishing neighbourhoods, reinforcing the sense of belonging

and feeling of safety of citizens and reducing the number of illegal tags and graffiti based on respect for one's surroundings.

Local agencies, including the Gatineau Police Service and Recreation, Sports and Community Development Services, are firm believers in prevention. They meet with young offenders to tell them about the program, explain cleanup-related costs and consequences, and give them the chance to make a positive contribution.

In terms of cleanup and by-laws, it's a shared responsibility and collective effort aimed at limiting the proliferation of illegal tags and graffiti, and deterring offenders.

The City of Gatineau has also developed counter-vandalism strategies and encourages its partners to quickly remove illegal markings. The focus is on supporting property owners by providing them with tips and advice and setting up an illegal graffiti cleanup project in partnership with a youth organization.

Engaging with young street artists and the public is the best way to demystify graffiti as a dark form of self-expression. City officials are confident that a proactive, collaborative approach involving youth, graffiti artists and residents will ensure the ongoing success of the program. ■

YOUTH AND YOUNG OFFENDERS

COVER

ON THE RIGHT PATH

EX-GANG MEMBER SHARES HIS PAST TO HELP YOUTH

After spending his late teens and early 20s in a gang dealing drugs and getting into trouble, Jordan Buna turned his life around. Today, Buna volunteers with police to speak to youth about his experience. Gazette writer Deidre Seiden spoke to him about how he hopes his story helps young people make better choices.

WHY DID YOU JOIN A GANG?

I did it because I was a bored, stupid kid. I enjoyed it. It was scary. It was exciting. People from high school feared you and it seemed like they respected you. But that really started to lose its lustre after a while because the police get to have an idea of who you are and start harassing you. You start racking up criminal charges and making enemies. By 24, I was in all kinds of trouble — I was going to jail.

WHAT MADE YOU GET OUT?

I think the bad experiences I had helped me mature. One of the deciding factors for me was when I got sentenced to a year in jail for possession of a handgun. While I was in there, I looked around me and I was stuck with these people 24/7 and I was just like, ‘This is the bracket of society that I chose to put myself in and I don’t feel like I belong here.’

WHAT’S YOUR ROLE TALKING TO YOUTH?

One of the things I do is with Sgt. Lindsey Houghton from the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit in B.C. We go and speak at schools. I talk about the choices I made in my life that led me down the path of gang involvement and gang membership.

My message is to get students to stop and think when they’re in a moment where they’re with friends and there is potential for trouble, it’s not all fun and games. I try to show them that the choices they make in their day-to-day life can have serious consequences that will resonate through today and beyond by taking them through my story. That’s one thing that a lot of young people don’t understand.

WHAT’S THE RESPONSE LIKE?

The kids pay very close attention. We can hear a pin drop for the duration of the presentation because it’s pretty hard-hitting

material. I use the presentation as a story. Kids don’t want to listen to facts and figures for an hour. By the time the presentation is finished, they’re pretty invested in the story. And we’ve had nothing but kids coming up to us after and asking us questions.

WHAT DO THEY ASK?

I get asked is if I’m scared if someone is going to come back after me. It’s such an easy question to answer. I’m not scared. I’ve been out of it now for several years now. Everyone that was involved when I was involved is either dead or doing life in prison. There’s not a long life expectancy when you’re in a gang.

WHY DO YOU SHARE YOUR STORY?

To be able to go out and take all the experiences I’ve had and maybe spin them into a positive by helping other people. Maybe a few kids will decide that that’s not what they

want to do with their life and that’s not the direction they want their life to go in.

DOES THE MESSAGE CARRY MORE POWER COMING FROM YOU THAN, SAY, THE POLICE?

I think the kids can relate to a lot of my stories because I start talking about my life from about Grade 6 to the present. I purposefully spend more time on the school years of my life than the gang years because then these kids realize that they’re having a lot of the same experiences that I did. By listening to the story they can see my life get progressively worse as I make my choices.

The one great thing about doing this with Lindsey is the fact that he goes first and does the police perspective on gangs and then I go. And I put a personal touch on the police knowledge of gangs. So I think that both of us together are really effective. ■

Jordan Buna, an ex-gang member, speaks to youth about how the choices he made as a young man still follow him to this day.



Sgt. Lindsey Houghton

PEOPLE SMUGGLING

People smuggling is the low-risk, high-profit business of illegally moving people from one country to another often in their desperate attempts to escape poverty, a natural disaster, conflict or political instability. Thousands of illegal immigrants die each year in transit to their destinations as a result of the indifferent or deliberate actions of smugglers. As these facts show, it's an increasingly organized and deadly business.

People smuggling is distinct from human trafficking. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), smuggling involves the procurement for financial or other material benefit of illegal entry of a person into a state of which that person isn't a national or resident whereas human trafficking is the acquisition of people by improper means such as force, fraud or deception.

According to the 2009 UNDP Human Development Report, there are an estimated 50 million irregular international migrants in the world, a significant number of whom paid for assistance to illegally cross borders.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that in the first nine months of 2014, at least 4,077 migrants died while being smuggled abroad. This is 70 per cent higher than the recorded deaths for the whole of 2013.

The IOM reports these figures still fail to capture the true number of fatalities, due to disappearances and the difficulty of reporting and confirming deaths.

In 2014, 75 per cent of migrant deaths occurred in the Mediterranean region. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says at least 207,000 people crossed this region in the beginning of that year.

According to a January 2015 article in *The Guardian*, more than 45,000 migrants risked their lives crossing the Mediterranean to reach Italy and Malta in 2013, and

700 died doing so. The number of dead more than quadrupled in 2014 to 3,224.

People smuggling can occur by air, sea or land, says UNODC. The majority of smuggling deaths occur at sea, although deaths also occur while crossing deserts, while stranded in transit and from the malicious and abusive treatment of the smugglers.

Based on figures provided by the UN Refugee Agency, the world's four deadliest sea crossings in 2014 were the Mediterranean Sea with 3,419 deaths, the Bay of Bengal with 540 deaths, the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea with 242 deaths, and the Caribbean Sea with 71 deaths.

According to INTERPOL, people smuggling takes place on all scales. However, the international dimension of this crime makes it especially attractive and lucrative to organized networks.

The UNODC website reports that two smuggling routes — East, North and West Africa to Europe, and South America to North America — generate around \$6.75 billion a year for criminals operating in these regions.

There are an estimated three million illegal entries into the United States each year, according to UNODC.

The fees charged for smuggling migrants can vary widely depending on the point of origin, says a UNODC factsheet. Migrants smuggled across the border between Mexico and the United States pay about \$2,000, while migrants from beyond Mexico could pay as much as \$10,000.

According to INTERPOL, people smuggling networks often change their routes and methods in response to legislative and law enforcement activities. The routes used by people smugglers can be simple and direct, or circuitous. The time between departure and arrival may vary from a few days to several months or even years.

Canada has experienced incidents of large non-commercial vessels of several hundred passengers arranged by smugglers, reports UNODC. One case was the *Sun Sea*, a vessel that was intercepted off the coast of British Columbia on Aug. 12, 2010 carrying 492 Sri Lankan passengers.

In 2010, there were 6,550 irregular maritime arrivals in Australia with most migrants by sea arriving at or brought to offshore territories, says the same UNODC report.

— Compiled by Katherine Aldred



PUTTING A NAME TO A FACE

CALGARY POLICE GETS NEW FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

By Deidre Seiden

A teenager was communicating online with an unknown man. She only had a first name, and the Calgary Police Service (CPC) detective wasn't even sure if that name was real or fake.

In fact, Det. David Palmer had no leads and had nowhere left to turn in the child abuse investigation — until he got a profile picture that the offender had used online.

“I remembered we had access to new facial recognition software and thought, ‘Why don't we submit it and see?’” says Palmer.

QUICK MATCH

CPS is the first police agency in Canada to get the technology to help solve crimes.

“We've really been keeping our eye on facial recognition technology for some time,” says Jan Gregory, a supervisor with the CPS Criminal Identification Unit. “We were waiting for the technology to mature enough to a point where it began to be useful in investigations.”

The process has always been manual at CPS. Photo lineup clerks would go through a mug-shot database of images of those charged with criminal offences in Calgary and manually try to identify suspects or victims that way.

Afzal Baig, a project manager in CPS's Information, Communication and Technology Section, says the new technology is far more efficient.

“Sometimes you have an incident where you can see a face, but you can't put a name to the face,” says Baig. “In the past, someone would look for a male with brown hair of a certain age and height and then they would take one picture at a time and go through it. Now, the system takes less than 30 seconds to do a probe and you're done.”

The technology is similar to a fingerprint matching process. It takes an image of a face, applies a matching algorithm — plotting landmark features like the eyes, nose and mouth — and establishes a series of measurements that describe that face in mathematical terms.

It then analyzes incoming images and compares those facial features to eliminate non-matches and bring back the best pos-



This side-by-side photo comparison of Boston bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev illustrates how facial recognition technology uses an image to find a match.

sible matches.

Palmer thought it was a shot in the dark because the software only searches the CPS mug-shot database of approximately 300,000 images. If the offender wasn't previously arrested in Calgary, it wouldn't turn up a match.

“But I had no other options at that point, so I sent it in and then we got this hit back. He was charged exactly a year earlier for doing exactly the same thing,” says Palmer. “It was perfect and the match is unbelievable.”

ADDED VALUE

The software isn't a positive means of identification, says Gregory. CPS is using it to further investigations.

“We provide that information to an investigator and then the investigator has to use that and take further investigative steps to determine whether or not that's a solid suspect for their case,” says Gregory.

Several investigators have used the new technology, and several matches have been

made, but they can't say what crimes have been solved at this point because most are still in the follow-up stages.

But Gregory says, as with any biometric or fingerprint system, there really is no way to quantify the value of any one particular match, but it will increase their efficiency going forward.

“I've been a part of the fingerprint world for 25 years and my most exciting moments were getting latent fingerprints from the crime scenes and identifying someone,” says Gregory. “To be able to do that using another piece of technology is always exciting. You feel like you're contributing to a new world out there.”

And while Palmer was originally skeptical that the technology would turn up a match, he now knows its value.

“I'm thinking this technology is something that's going to be more accepted in the future, but this was certainly successful,” says Palmer. “It was the break in the case that I needed and everything fell into place.” ■



HOPE ON THE HORIZON

NEW DNA TOOLS TO SUPPORT MISSING PERSONS CASES

By Justin Ducette, senior research analyst, RCMP

“Not knowing what has happened to a loved one is an overwhelming burden for Canadian families, a burden which is often accompanied by the unrelenting feeling that more could be done to try to locate their loved one,” said Sue O’Sullivan, Federal Ombudsman for the Victims of Crime at the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Every year, more than 60,000 people are reported missing in Canada. While about 85 per cent are found within a week, anywhere from 300 to 400 cases remain unresolved annually.

Currently, there are more than 6,000 cases in Canada that have been open for at least one year and remain unresolved despite the best efforts of investigators. For each of the thousands of missing persons in Canada, there is someone desperately searching, whose pain of the loss of a loved one is compounded by the burden of unanswered questions.

Over the past decade, there has been considerable support from the Canadian public, law enforcement, victims groups, parliamentarians and various levels of government for the creation of a national DNA-based program to support the investigations of missing persons. By the spring of 2017, the RCMP will establish new DNA-based tools to support the investigations of missing persons and unidentified remains, and further strengthen the support to criminal investigations across Canada provided by the RCMP’s National DNA Data Bank (NDDB).

In December 2014, Parliament passed an amendment to the *DNA Identification Act* to expand the national use of DNA analysis, including supporting investigations of missing persons. Once this amendment comes into force, it will allow five new indices to be created within the NDDB.

CRITICAL TOOL

Since the creation of the NDDB in 2000, the use of DNA has changed the way that criminal investigations are conducted and it has become one of the most important tools available to police and prosecutors. As of March 31, 2015, DNA analysis has assisted in 34,495 investigations, including 2,368

murders and 4,157 sexual assaults.

Currently, the NDDB is composed of two indices:

- the Convicted Offenders Index, which contains more than 300,000 DNA profiles of offenders convicted of a designated offence
- the Crime Scene Index, which contains more than 100,000 unknown DNA profiles derived from biological materials found at crime scenes

By comparing these two indices and identifying DNA profile ‘matches,’ the NDDB assists police in criminal investigations by linking crimes where there are no suspects; helping to identify suspects; eliminating suspects where there is no DNA match; and helping to determine if a serial offender is involved.

Despite its demonstrated success in assisting criminal investigations, the *DNA Identification Act* did not permit the national use of DNA to support the investigations of missing persons and unidentified remains, although some provinces and territories have made limited use of DNA analysis within their own jurisdictions.

MISSING PERSONS

In 2010, the RCMP established the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (NCMPUR) to provide specialized investigative support services and enhanced comparative analysis across jurisdictions and agencies. With the passing of the amendments to the *DNA Identification Act*, NCMPUR will be able to facilitate access to the NDDB to provide new DNA tools to support police, coroners and medical examiners.

Once the legislation comes into force, a new humanitarian application will be created in the NDDB consisting of three new indices: the Missing Persons Index, the Relatives of Missing Persons Index, and the Human Remains Index.

The Missing Persons Index (MPI) will contain DNA profiles derived from the personal effects of missing persons, such as

bodily substances, toothbrushes or clothing.

The Relatives of Missing Persons Index (RMI) will contain the DNA profiles of close relatives of missing persons to identify missing persons by kinship analysis using family reference samples. DNA from family members is critical to supporting the humanitarian application of the NDDB.

Family member DNA profiles will help to confirm that the DNA collected from personal effects actually belongs to the missing person and, in those circumstances where investigators are not able to obtain a DNA profile from a personal effect of the missing, kinship analysis can be used to help identify human remains.

The Human Remains Index (HRI) will contain DNA profiles from found human remains, whether partial or complete. DNA profiles in this index will be used to help link cases of found remains and to establish when found remains are from a missing person.

DNA profiles submitted by police, coroners and medical examiners will be compared within these new indices and to the Convicted Offenders and Crime Scene Indices to help identify remains and resolve missing persons investigations. The key exception to this is the Relatives of Missing Persons Index, which can only be compared to the Missing Persons Index and the Human Remains Index.

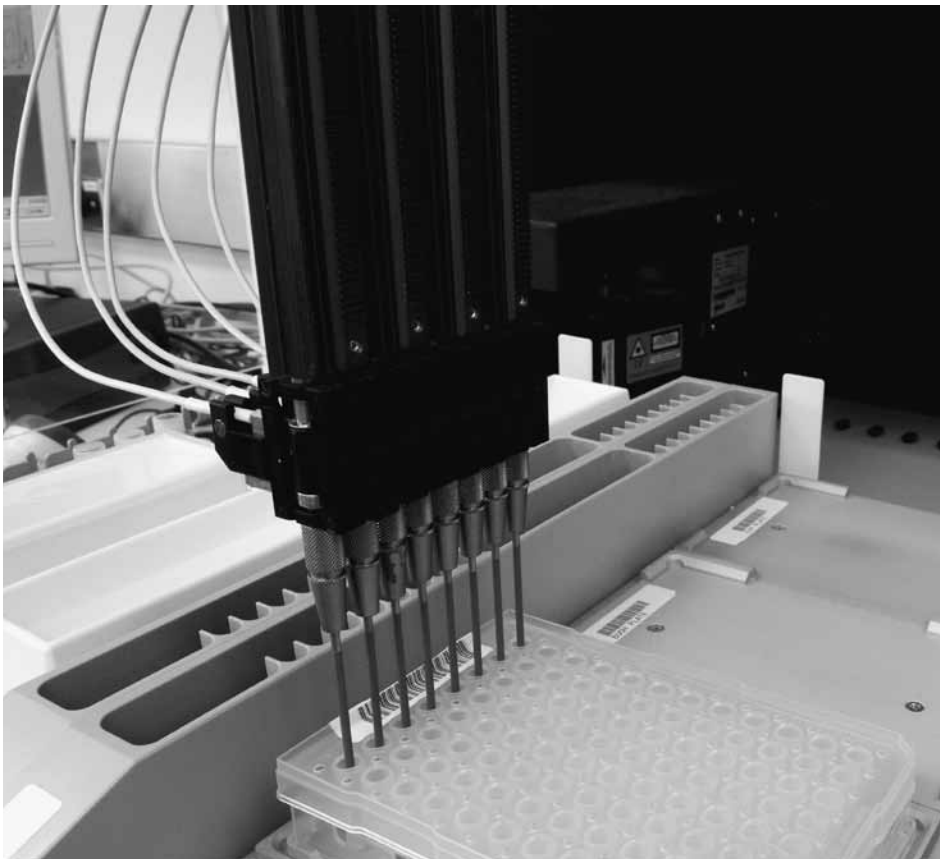
Comparing the new MPI and HRI to the approximately 400,000 DNA profiles in the Convicted Offenders and Crime Scene Indices could potentially open up new avenues in missing persons or criminal investigations. A match could serve to identify a found human remain or place a missing person at a crime scene, thereby establishing an approximate location of the missing person. This would provide valuable assistance to investigators to either resolve a case or provide new information that might not otherwise have been available.

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

The amended legislation also strengthens the support the NDDB provides to criminal investigations by creating two other indices. The first is the Victims Index, which will



NDDB



contain the DNA profiles of the victims of crime relevant to criminal investigations.

During the course of violent crimes, such as sexual assaults, it's common that a victim's DNA is left on the offender and later found at other locations or crime scenes. By comparing a victim's DNA against DNA found at crime scenes, police could be able to rapidly identify serial offenders, link cases and provide investigative leads. Whenever possible, victims of crime must consent to the collection and use of their DNA.

The second index is the Voluntary Donors Index, which will assist both the criminal and humanitarian applications of the NDDB. It will contain DNA profiles submitted voluntarily by persons to assist in a criminal or missing persons investigation by rapidly excluding individuals not relevant to investigations. DNA is a very discriminatory forensic tool that only requires minute traces of biological material to be used. It is therefore easy to transfer DNA from one point to another. A voluntary index would serve to eliminate the DNA of a person from a mixed DNA profile, a contaminated crime scene profile or a missing persons profile, such as a first responder at a crime scene or a roommate of the missing person.

ACCESSING THE NEW INDICES

While the RCMP has used DNA analysis in the past to assist in unique humanitarian initiatives, the creation of an ongoing, national DNA program to support missing persons investigations is new for the RCMP and requires the development of a number of policies and procedures to support police, coroners and medical examiners.

Adding to the challenge of developing this new humanitarian program will be engaging with the private sector. The RCMP will not conduct DNA analysis for the new humanitarian indices, but will work to identify and authorize private sector laboratories to submit DNA profiles to the NDDB to populate the MPI, RMI and HRI. It will be the responsibility of police services, coroners and medical examiners to engage the private laboratories and have DNA profiles developed from the collected exhibits or remains.

DNA technologies have advanced significantly over the past decades. New methods and analysis have advanced the assistance that DNA can provide to missing persons and unidentified remains cases. By closely mirroring the technologies and best practices used by jurisdictions with

established DNA-based missing persons programs, most notably in the United States, the RCMP will accept and compare DNA profiles from all types of forensic DNA identifications, including the current standard 'nuclear' DNA, mitochondrial DNA and y-STR DNA profiles. NCMPUR will work closely with investigators, coroners and medical examiners to identify the samples and processes that best suit the unique circumstances of each case.

To access the Victims and Voluntary Donor indices to support a criminal investigation, police services will engage their public forensic laboratory, consistent with established practices. As this is also a new program for the NDDB and the public forensic laboratories, the policies and procedures for submitting casework for the Victims and Voluntary Donors indices still to be worked out.

Over the next 18 months, the RCMP will work to implement this new program, including:

- developing the policies and procedures to allow investigators to access these new tools
- developing best practices to support investigators in the identification and collection of appropriate samples and exhibits
- working with various stakeholders to develop regulations around consent and privacy protections
- hiring and training new personnel with the specialized scientific skills set to facilitate the comparisons of humanitarian DNA profiles
- engaging with the private sector laboratories and undertaking technical audits to allow for the submission of DNA profiles to the NDDB
- engaging with the public forensic laboratories to support their use of the new criminal indices

DNA identification has repeatedly demonstrated its value to criminal investigations. Once these new indices are established, police, coroners and medical examiners will be able to benefit from the national use of DNA as a new tool to investigate missing persons and unidentified remains.

For the families, friends and loved ones of the missing, these tools may offer a new hope that their questions may be answered. ■



CONVERSATIONS OVER CONFESSIONS

INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWS FOCUS ON INFORMATION

By Sigrid Forberg

Walking into an investigative interview with a suspect, it's up to the police officer to set the tone.

There are a vast number of interviewing techniques, with varying combinations of accusatory and non-accusatory components. But for the RCMP, until recently, the national standard leaned towards the accusatory.

The trouble with that, says Sgt. Darren Carr, is it didn't leave interviewers the option to be flexible. Carr, who is with the RCMP's interview team in British Columbia, is also the chair of the working group that has authored the RCMP's new interviewing standard, the RCMP Phased Interview Model for Suspects.

"We just thought that we could do better for our membership in giving them the skills to be successful," says Carr.

"GOOD BLUEPRINT"

What the working group, which consists of subject matter experts within the RCMP, came up with is based on their collective experiences in the field and is tailored to Canadian law.

S/Sgt. Peter Tewfik, former chair of the working group, says the new model allows

police officers to go into the interview with a simple goal of gathering information.

The model has six phases: review, preparation and planning; introduction and legal obligations; dialogue; version challenge; accusation and persuasion; and post-interview. Some or all of the phases may be used during the course of an interview.

"There's an emphasis on engaging in dialogue and conversation," says Tewfik. "One of the big criticisms of our former model was that it's guilt presumptive. So we've taken that away, it's about gathering information to advance the investigation, whatever that is."

With a focus on getting to the truth, the model offers members more flexibility to respond to dynamic situations or evolving evidence during an interview.

And getting away from the focus on obtaining a confession ensures police officers keep their minds wide open.

"This is a good blueprint for the next generation of members coming through to do the right thing and to be effective in getting to the truth," says Insp. Scott McLeod, the officer in charge of the Truth Verification

Section at RCMP National Headquarters.

ADAPTIVE APPROACH

The model is now being rolled out at the Pacific Region Training Centre (PRTC) in British Columbia.

The PRTC's Sgt. Bruce Pitt-Payne says the training is structured to provide members with ongoing development opportunities and techniques throughout their career rather than one course early in their service.

And with the working group, made up of subject matter experts from across the country, it addresses an issue they'd never been able to resolve before.

"We didn't always have consistency as a national force," says Pitt-Payne. "With the working group, everyone had their say in the development and implementation of this so we can now ensure every province follows the same course training standard."

Pitt-Payne adds not only is the approach adaptable, so is the model. The working group is prepared to make changes to reflect changes that might impact how police gather information.

The PRTC will offer a five-day course on the new technique, in addition to an online component. Pitt-Payne says the members who've already participated have said they now feel less pressure walking into an interview room.

"You're liberating them from the solid structures they felt were imposed before," says Pitt-Payne. "It's going to get more people in the room, they'll practise and they won't have that fear of failure in obtaining a confession."

When it comes to the basic tools of policing, interview techniques are one of the most important — it's something police officers use daily. Carr says giving members the techniques they need to conduct better interviews and gather more information will only help to advance more cases.

"We've got to think much more broadly than just going after a confession," says Carr. "It's about getting evidence and giving the person the opportunity to say what they want to say." ■

Cpl. Kevin Jeffery leads an interview scenario while training RCMP officers on the RCMP Phased Interview Model for Suspects at the Pacific Region Training Centre.



Leann Parker, PRTC Learning Technology Unit, RCMP



NEW TOOL AVAILABLE FOR POLICE RESEARCH

By Irwin Cohen and Len Garis

As budgets grow leaner and public expectations continue to rise, decision-makers in the public service are increasingly seeking data and evidence of best practices to make sound and justifiable decisions.

This trend towards evidence-based decision-making is turning administrators into researchers. Those delving into topics such as police, drugs, fire and public safety may now access an extensive database of information through a new search portal created by the Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) in British Columbia.

Available on the centre's website, the portal provides access to the titles of thousands of reports, articles, books, legislation and other data from Canada and around the world.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The concept for the project was born at a meeting of Defence Research and Development Canada's Centre for Security Science (CSS) about two years ago. At that time, Canadian public safety experts and administrators identified a lack of access to public safety data needed to support evidence-based decision-making.

The UFV's Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research took on the challenge of developing the database and portal, which went live in August 2014.

The project aligns with the centre's commitment of increasing the knowledge of those working in public safety and to openly share best practices and research. The centre regularly provides its research and consulting expertise to criminal justice agencies, governments, police agencies and community organizations on issues related to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public safety operations, proposed initiatives, and evaluations of programs and policies.

THE NEED FOR DATA

According to Maxim, Garis, Plecas and Davies, the authors of *The Right Decision: Evidence-based Decision Making for Police Professionals*, it's worth the effort to collect the information needed for sound decisions, particularly difficult ones that may need to be justified with the public or superiors.



A new information portal developed by the Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research at the University of the Fraser Valley provides independent, verifiable evidence on which to base decisions related to public safety.

This book, which is available from the centre's website, argues that evidence-based decision-making is one of the more effective tools one can use to rationalize why a particular approach or program option was chosen.

The authors note that policing is one of the major budget items for most cities and municipalities and, "while understanding the invaluable role of police services, both the public and municipal leaders are asking that significant decisions be based on hard evidence. Questions such as what are police forces' underlying strategic value and what are the associated costs and benefits are commonly raised."

Similarly, in a recent publication by Cohen, Plecas, McCormick and Peters entitled *Eliminating Crime: The 7 Essential Principles of Police-Based Crime Reduction*, also available from the website, the authors argue that effective crime reduction requires police to have access to and integrate much more data, that all police activity must be evidence-based and that police agencies should develop policies, strategies and tactics based exclusively on data and rigorous analysis.

With this in mind, the new information portal is an essential tool for decision-makers seeking independent, verifiable evidence on which to base decisions related to public safety.

Basic searches of the database can be conducted by keyword, title or author, or by using advanced options. For example, a basic keyword search for marijuana finds 932 entries. From there, an advanced search can be conducted using various search terms or phrases,

or by limiting the results by publication date, author, language, availability and peer review.

LOOKING AHEAD

The database will continue to grow over time as new research becomes available. In addition to using the portal, visitors can peruse and download dozens of research reports that have been produced by the Centre on a wide range of police, drugs, fire and public safety topics.

Recent reports have addressed issues such as police-based crime reduction and the nature and extent of marijuana possession in British Columbia. ■

Dr. Irwin M. Cohen is an associate professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of the Fraser Valley, where he holds the RCMP Senior Research Chair in Crime Reduction. He is also the director of the Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research.

Len Garis is the fire chief for the City of Surrey, B.C. and past president of the Fire Chiefs' Association of British Columbia. He is an adjunct professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of the Fraser Valley.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE VISIT:
[HTTP://CJR.UFV.CA](http://CJR.UFV.CA)





LATEST RESEARCH IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

The following are excerpts from recent research related to justice and law enforcement and reflect the views and opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the organizations for which they work.

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING STRESS AMONG POLICE DETAINEES

Jason Payne, Sarah Macgregor and Hayley McDonald

It's generally accepted that a person's living situation, in particular their experience of homelessness and housing stress, can have both long-lasting and wide-ranging consequences.

This paper provides a much-needed examination of homelessness and housing stress among Australia's criminal justice population. Using data from the Australian Institute of Criminology's (AIC) Drug Use Monitoring (DUMA) program, this study examines the prevalence and nature of homelessness among a sample of police detainees.

Homelessness has long been recognized as an important factor influencing participation in crime. However, in Australia, there's comparatively little literature that estimates the prevalence of homelessness among the criminal justice population and importantly, its links to other risk factors. Since 1999, the AIC's DUMA program has consistently reported that around one in 10 detainees were 'sleeping rough,' either on the street or in emergency accommodation for most of the time preceding their arrest.

However, recently DUMA has expanded its survey to capture both secondary and

tertiary homelessness, and by doing so yielded a much higher prevalence (22 per cent) of housing stress among the detainee population. Further, the study also estimates that more than one in 10 police detainees remain uncertain about their housing and accommodation situation and are not confident of having somewhere to live when they are released.

Having arrived at a more accurate picture of the prevalence of homelessness, attention was drawn to the somewhat difficult circumstances faced by those involved in the criminal justice system. It found that family/relationship problems were the most frequently cited reason for needing to live on the street or in a temporary location, with financial problems, property eviction and drug problems also frequently cited. Perhaps the most important finding was the diversity of reasons given by detainees, suggesting that efforts to address housing stress require a more individualized response.

Finally, comparative analysis across a range of demographics, prior offending and drug-use indicators confirmed the complexity of homelessness and its links to a range of other challenging life circumstances and risk factors. In particular, homeless detainees reported comparatively high rates of illicit drug and alcohol use, along with a more recent history of contact with the police and the criminal justice system. Taken together, these results suggest that responding to crime and repeat offending requires an adequate and planned response to both substance use and housing stress in tandem.

For corrective services agencies, these data not only confirm a relatively high prevalence of homelessness among the police detainee popu-

lation, but also the links between homelessness and prior criminal justice system contact. Further, these data highlight the extent to which detainees are uncertain about their future housing prospects, adding support for current approaches that identify safe and secure housing as a significant priority for successful post-release reintegration.

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THE START OF A CRIMINAL CAREER: DOES THE TYPE OF DEBUT OFFENCE PREDICT FUTURE OFFENDING?

Natalie Owen and Christine Cooper

The primary aim of this study was to examine the relationship between an offender's debut offence and their future offending. A debut offence was defined as the offence for which an offender received their first caution or conviction.

The study specifically looked at whether the type of debut offence committed predicted future chronic or serious offending careers, and whether the type of debut offence and subsequent re-offending had changed over time.

Identifying and targeting offenders who are most likely to become one of the small group of chronic offenders responsible for a disproportionate amount of crime, at an early stage of their criminal career, is a promising approach to crime prevention.

METHODOLOGY

The Police National Computer (PNC) contains information on all recordable proven offences that have taken place in England and Wales.

We obtained information on all first-time entrants to the criminal justice system for 2001, 2005 and 2009. Data from 2001 allowed a maximum follow-up period of nine years, to year end 2010, while the 2005 cohort enabled us to examine the profile of chronic offenders and, alongside the 2009 cohort, trends in the proportion and volume of different debut offence types.





There were three primary questions of interest.

Does the type of debut offence predict chronic re-offending over time? Does the type of debut offence predict serious re-offending over time? Has the volume and type of debut offences changed over time?

RESULTS

- There were 218,537 individuals on the PNC who had committed their first proven offence in 2001. Around three-quarters of the cohort were male and over one-third were aged 10 to 17 years at the time of their first offence.
- About one-third of these debut offences were acquisitive, one-fifth were violence and one-tenth were categorized as serious crimes. Just under half of the 2001 cohort committed a further proven offence during the nine-year follow-up period. However, five per cent of the cohort became chronic offenders (committing 15 or more offences) over the follow-up period.
- Those offenders who had committed robbery, burglary or vehicle theft as their debut offence were almost three times more likely to be chronic offenders compared with the cohort overall.
- The type of debut offence committed was a significant predictor of chronic offending status, taking into consideration gender and age at debut offence. For example, one in five young men aged 10 to 17 years at their first caution/conviction for robbery went on to be a chronic offender; three in five re-offended while only one in five did not commit a further proven offence. The results for burglary and vehicle theft were similar.

CONCLUSIONS

This study adds to the evidence base, showing that offenders who committed robbery, burglary or vehicle theft as their debut offence in 2001 were most likely to become chronic offenders. This small group of chronic offenders were responsible for almost half of all the further proven offences committed by this cohort.

This gives support to the proposition that preventing some kinds of offending may be promising as a way of reducing overall levels of crime. However, the analysis does not explain why offenders of these three acquisitive crimes are more likely to become chronic offenders,

or whether, with fewer people committing burglary and vehicle crime as a debut offence, other crime types will take their place as predictors of chronic offending.

The findings suggest that providing programs to prevent and reduce robbery offences along with programs to turn around the lives of young male offenders committing key debut offences will be important in reducing crime in the future.

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LINKING REFUGEE YOUTH AND FAMILIES TO POSITIVE SOCIAL SUPPORTS

LINKing Refugee Youth and Families to Positive Social Supports (LINK) is an innovative Canadian program designed to prevent the involvement of refugee youth in criminal and gang-related activity.

LINK was implemented by the Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services Inc. and has assisted 229 youth.

PARTICIPANTS

Youth referred to the program underwent an assessment of risk and those who participated in the program were between 12 and 18 years and were deemed at risk of involvement in gang activity due to factors such as:

- Past experiences of trauma and violence
- Interaction with delinquent peers causing “street socialization”
- Poor parental supervision
- Educational frustration and low attachment to school

All the participants had Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) status, 47 per cent had prior exposure to trauma and violence and, according to self-reports, none of them had a prior record of offending. The LINK program engaged with 119 female and 110 male clients in the pilot project. Thirty-five of the participants fell in the highest risk category.

KEY ELEMENTS

The LINK program has six components provided over one year. All participants received

the first four components while those assessed at the highest risk received all the components and had their families involved.

Education on Canadian society — each client participated in 60 hours of workshops designed to provide information on Canada and to help reduce isolation and increase success at school, home and with peers.

Mentorship — participants received 72 hours of one-on-one or group-based mentoring designed to introduce them to community resources, provide social and emotional support and supervision, and provide positive adult role models for youth.

Educational support — to increase chances of success in school, activities included LINK staff liaison with teachers and administrative school staff, and in-school visits to provide support.

Recreational activities — designed to decrease isolation and loneliness and increase the development of positive peer relationships.

Family mentorship — designed to provide opportunities to strengthen parent-child bonds and reduce the risk of developing intergenerational cultural conflict. LINK matched families of higher risk participants with Canadian families.

Referrals — Many of the refugee families participating in LINK had experienced severe trauma before arrival in Canada. Referrals to counselling and mental health services, cultural associations, housing, employment and education supports were important aspects of the LINK project.

FINDINGS

- The program reached 95 per cent of the total number it hoped to serve, and was successful in reaching those high-risk refugee youth and families it targeted.
- The program had a retention rate of 98 per cent, with the majority of youth and families staying active in the project for the full year of their involvement.
- A total of 436 school visits were conducted, with an average of 12 visits per month.
- 26 recreational family gatherings were implemented, while 12 were originally anticipated. ■

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SEARCHING FOR CLOSURE

RIVER RESEARCH STUDY TO FURTHER MISSING PERSONS' CASES

By Sigrid Forberg

When a person is missing and presumed dead, neither family nor investigators can have closure until his or her body is recovered.

With that in mind, the RCMP's Historical Case Unit in Saskatchewan conducts an annual river search for missing persons.

But Dr. Ernest Walker, a forensic anthropologist with the Major Crimes Unit in Saskatchewan, says the team noticed that sometimes bodies go into the river system and are never found. So they suggested putting something in the water to see where it goes.

"What we're looking for is a predictive model because we know bodies can travel a long way," says Walker. "We have to get a grip on all the factors like what time of year it is, where a body goes in, how they go in, the temperature and the flow rate."

TRACKING IN THE RIVER

In September 2013, Walker and his team implanted a tracking device on a pig carcass and released it into the North Saskatchewan River near the small city of North Battleford.

"We've pulled cadavers out of the river in various locations and noticed they've sometimes travelled several kilometres before being discovered," says Cpl. Tyler Hadland of the Historical Cases Unit.

As soon as they put the pig into the river, it immediately started to float away. But it didn't get very far before it got stuck on a sandbar. When the team went back to

collect the pig a few days later, they couldn't find the animal or the transponder. Hadland says they believe it went to rest close to the shore and animals devoured it, dragging it to a different location.

"I think the moral of the story is that just because a body goes into the water, it doesn't necessarily mean it stays in the water," says Walker. "And that's something we hadn't contemplated."

They tried again in February 2014 in the South Saskatchewan River in Saskatoon. Because of the temperature of the water, the pig carcass sank right to the bottom of the river and stayed there until the water warmed up in the spring.

The body then floated down the river and eventually came to rest on a riverbank. But by the time they arrived to pick it up, only the tracking device was left.

GATHERING DATA

The Historical Case Unit's Sgt. Kenneth Palen says that while this type of hands-on research isn't typically the work of investigative units, it gathers information to potentially solve current or cold cases. And it could help police in future cases narrow down search areas when a person goes into a body of water.

Hadland adds that having police officers participate in this research is an advantage because they're typically involved in a case from the beginning and may have

access to information independent researchers wouldn't.

Early on, the team also got the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency involved.

Iain Phillips, a researcher with the provincial body, provides support in tracking the pigs. Once they recover a carcass, he plans to study the aquatic insects it attracts. His research will help develop forensic tools for future investigations.

"By studying the life stages of insects that have colonized the body, we can determine how long it's been since the body was submerged," says Phillips. "A lot of times we'll already know where a missing person originated from. But if we don't, this could provide us that evidence."

In the future, the team plans to launch a few pigs at once — increasing the likelihood of recovering a carcass they can actually study — to test whether two bodies launched under the same circumstances would take the same paths. Palen adds the ultimate goal of all this research is to find closure for those who need it.

"We know it's such a hard thing for the family not knowing where their loved ones are. They know they went into the water, but why can't they be found, why aren't the police doing anything?" says Palen. "But with this and the river searches, we can send updates to the family to show them that their case is still open and that we're looking for their loved ones." ■

The Historical Case Unit searches for its pig carcass in the river, using a transponder they surgically implanted in the pig.



Eilidh Thain