
 **Violence**
and
Public Safety 
in the
Halifax Regional Municipality

A Report to the Mayor

Supplemental Report #6:
Authorities and Experts

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SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT # 6: AUTHORITIES AND EXPERTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
Introduction	3
A. Criminal Justice System	5
B. Prevention and Treatment	14
C. Department of Justice Policy Approaches	19
D. Community Engagement Initiatives	23
E. Macro Perspectives	27
Specific Presentations Filed	
Presentation 1 – Catherine J. Woodman, United Way	31
Presentation 2 - Bernie Smith, Spring Garden Road Business Association	36
Presentation 3 - John LeBlanc, IWK	41
Presentation 4 - Tom Payette, Capital Health	50
Presentation 5 - Chief Frank Beazley, HRM Police	59
Presentation 6 – Pat Gorham, Nova Scotia Restorative Justice	64
Presentation 7 - Jack Novack, Dalhousie University	70
Presentation 8 - Inspector Darrell Beaton, RCMP	74
Presentation 9 - Valerie Pottie Bunge, Nova Scotia Department of Justice	80
Presentation 10 – Gaynor Watson Creed and Linda Young, Public Health/Capital Health	91

INTRODUCTION

Here there is a discussion of the invited presentations made at the Roundtable's three day session in November 2007 and, in the case of more than half these presentations, a formal text was submitted and is appended at the end of the file. Initially the Roundtable session itself was envisaged as a public presentation of the findings from the surveys, the focus groups and the Roundtable community meetings, and indeed, there were such presentations, and the three-day Roundtable session was also telecasted on the local cable network. The presentations by the Roundtable's focus group chairs are placed in context and included in Supplemental Report # 5, The Engaged and the views of the councillors and Roundtable community meetings are discussed at length in Supplemental Report # 4. It was decided, however, that there should also be invitations sent to those parties authoritative on the matters being considered so that any proposed recommendations could benefit from their experiences and suggestions. Virtually all parties contacted agreed to make a presentation on the Roundtable theme from their role perspective and to entertain questions from the Roundtable panel.

The invited presentations discussed here are grouped by:

(a) **Criminal Justice System** – presentations by Chief Frank Beazley HRP, Supt Gordon Barnett and Inspector Darrell Beaton, RCMP, Pat Gorham, Coordinator Nova Scotia Restorative Justice, Frank Hoskins, Chief Prosecutor, HRM, Public Prosecution Service, Chief Justice Kennedy, Supreme Court, Nova Scotia, Fred Honsberger, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Corrections, Ben Bishop, Consultant, National Parole Board, and John Robinson, Coordinator, Victim Services

(b) **Prevention and Treatment**, - presentations by Dr. John LeBlanc, Pediatrician and Professor, Dalhousie University, Gaynor Watson-Creed and Linda Young, Public Health and Capital Health (only a written submission), Tom Payette, Director, Addiction Prevention and Treatment Services, Capital Health, James Hartley, IWK Youth Forensic Services, and Stephen Schneider, Criminology Professor, Saint Mary's University

(c) **Nova Scotia Department of Justice: Policy** - presentations by the Honorable Cecil Clarke, Minister of Justice, Robert Wright, Executive Director, Children and Youth Justice Strategy, and Valerie Pottie Bunge, Lead, Crime Prevention Strategy

(d) **Community Engagement Initiatives** - presentations by Catherine Woodman, President and CEO, United Way, Elaine Williams, Executive Director, Mulgrave Park Tenants Association, Bernie Smith, Executive Director, Spring Garden Road Business Association, Rustum Southwell, CEO, Black Business Initiative, and the Halifax Student Alliance, representing some 30,000 post-secondary students in HRM.

(e) **Macro Perspectives** – Jack Novack, Professor, Municipal Affairs, Dalhousie University, Owen Carrigan, Professor Emeritus (History) and former President, Saint Mary's University, and Frank Palermo, Professor, Urban Planning, Dalhousie University. The researcher tried to

faithfully describe the presented views and put them in context. In addition, there is a brief overview at the beginning of each section.

The Roundtable session opened with a presentation by **Marnie Wallace, researcher with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, (CCJS), Statistics Canada**. Ms. Wallace discussed the CCJS's geo-coding of crime in that portion of HRM policed by the HRPS, using census and crime data from 2001. The central thrust of geo-coding is to correlate where instances of crime occurred with other socio-economic data, where the unit is the census tract. The correlates then of high crime census tracts with other census tract features are identified. There were 51 census tracts in the HRPS jurisdiction and the geo-coding had a usable sample of about 21,000 criminal incidents. For good reasons, three types of offenses were excluded, namely impaired driving, administration of justice offenses and harassment calls. The sample's criminal incidents consisted of 77% property, 20% violent and 3% other crime, quite comparable to Canada as a whole though slightly higher for violent crime (20% to 17%). It was noted that Halifax crime rates followed the Canada-wide pattern of decline over the last decade though the rates were above average since 1990s.

Ms. Wallace's chief findings were (1) both violent and property crimes are concentrated in the Downtown Halifax and Dartmouth areas (what we have been calling the urban core of HRM), unlike in other municipal jurisdictions geo-coded by CCJS where the two types of crime were not as bunched together; (2) the two sides of the harbour were somewhat different in their incident patterns presumably because of the different land use (e.g., industrial park in Dartmouth, large entertainment zone in Halifax); (3) the correlates of violent and property crime were the usual factors identified in the literature, namely single parent family (female), unaffordable housing (persons spending more than 30% of income on housing), low household income, low educational achievement and so forth. There was some variation in the correlates between violent and property crimes. In particular for property crimes the census tract correlates were low household income, single parent family, and unaffordable housing while for violent crime they were more males, high residential mobility, more people living alone, single parent (female), low household income, and high unemployment. For both sides of the harbour, the key variable correlated with high rates of violence appeared to be high proportion of single parent (female) families, though the researcher noted that this variable is strongly correlated with most of the other variables such as low income, unaffordable housing and low educational attainment. Ms. Wallace reported that low income was a key factor in violent and property crime in other areas geo-coded by CCJS.

It was quite appropriate to begin the session with the CCJS presentation since many of the invited presenters, whether police, Department of Justice officials or those directly engaged in community / neighbourhood social development, were invited precisely because they had developed interesting initiatives for dealing with violence and crime among at-risk or high-risk neighbourhoods and residents, so their successes and challenges could guide HRM understanding and policy-making. In addition, it was useful to appreciate the congruence between the CCJS geo-coding results and the results of the HRM public surveys and discussion groups.

A. CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The presentations by Criminal Justice officials dealt with all levels of jurisdiction from policing to parole. The top officials of the two HRM police services, the HRP and the RCMP, both indicated that the violent crime problem in HRM has been significant but that certain policing policies and the increased police complement obtained in recent years have been making a significant difference, causing a reduction overall and especially in adult crimes. Both services pointed to strategies such as foot patrol in certain high risk areas, street crime or quick response units, an integrated policing format for certain crimes, and enhanced community response strategies as having made a difference. At the same time, the presenters for both services appreciated the distinction between crime levels and trends and public perceptions and fears, the need for partnerships to get at root causes, and were open to alternative complementary strategies. The presentation on restorative justice in Nova Scotia (NSRJ) described the philosophy, objectives and current thrusts of that program, highlighting the caseload in HRM and the various special projects underway here (e.g., especially in the Black communities). The coordinator of the NSRJ indicated that projects were being considered to improve restorative justice interventions with the small minority of serious, repeat young offenders but that there are no current plans to extend the program to adult offenders.

The presentation from the chief prosecutor (HRM) with the Public Prosecution Service described the role of the crown and discussed some issues on sentencing. He considered that with recent increases the PPS is now well-resourced in HRM. He discussed current initiatives to have a mental health or community court in HRM, something which might impact well on street crime and social disorder since its target would be repeat offenders with problems who commit minor offenses. The Executive Director, Corrections, focused on the YCJA, especially issues of bail and remand and the forthcoming amendments that would bring into greater legal salience the previous conduct of the young offender and the protection of the public. He emphasized too the importance of early intervention and of resiliency support for youth. The Chief Justice of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court discussed the high level of violence and crime in HRM, the sentencing options that judges must take into account when dealing with youth, and the social factors that have spawned much of today's gratuitous violence. He stressed the importance of good parenting and also pointed with approval to current discussions on new justice approaches such as the specialty or problem-solving court. The Coordinator of Victim Services described that program and indicated that its mandate and focus is on the individual victim, not the public fear and worry of victimization which he allowed may be overly influenced by media emphases and not reflect actual rates and trends in violence and crime. The consultant with the National (Atlantic) Parole pointed to the serious limitations in services and opportunities for the ex-inmates and the need for re-integration strategies including adult mentoring, as well as restructuring programs offered in prison (making some compulsory). He discussed some promising Africentric-centered approach with Black ex-inmates who are over-represented in the federal institutions.

Chief Frank Beazley, Halifax Regional Police, made a presentation entitled "Anti-Violence Strategies". He presented data indicating a downward trend in violence in the HRPS jurisdiction since 2005 and reported that the 2007 data will show that the reduction is continuing. Chief Beazley then discussed the central components of the strategy. First, there was addressing the

crime directly through improving the investigative response (following the recommendations of the 2003 Policing Study) and adding to police complement due to special funding from both municipal and provincial governments. A community response model of policing was adopted aimed at targeting the offenders carrying out violent crime as well as reducing the opportunities for crime in high risk neighbourhoods. The community response reinstated 24/7 beat patrol in North Dartmouth and the Downtown, opened new community offices, created community response officers, created in each division a quick response unit formed by the community officers), and instituted “operation breach and warrant” detail to deter prolific offenders (he noted here that in one phase of the latter it was found that 75% of the youths released on bail had breached and a high number had committed new crimes). Chief Beazley called for a holistic approach to the problem of violent crime, with partnerships among police, government, business and non-profit agencies. The Community Response Organization is designed to engage community residents and businesses to address identified issues He noted that police response alone will not fix ongoing problems of crime; it can provide a short-term fix, but should not be the only solution. There are a variety of factors such as poor life chances which will influence crime rates, and if nothing changes in the community, the same issues will persist. In that connection, Chief Beazley referred to The Safer and Stronger Neighbourhoods initiative launched in 2006 and made up senior government officials from Justice, Health, Community Services, Housing and the police; he believed that this body (a major focus of which has been to model a community intervention strategy) had already been successful in reducing violent crime and restoring community faith in policing.

His recommendations were that the municipality support the policing strategy, that all levels of government be brought together to develop enhanced crime prevention strategies, and that attention be focused on causes not just the symptoms of crime and victimization. He also suggested, subsequently in the discussion, opening up the school facilities and also the importance of affordability as well as accessibility. He indicated support for specialty courts and was open to discussion regarding complementary policing strategies such as the community support officer.

There was some discussion about police resources. Chief Beazley said that “there are some small pockets of crime and violence that we cannot address effectively given manpower” (670 officers in HRM). Asked how many police were needed, he mentioned “maybe another 35 officers would enable us to do all we wanted to do”. However, he added that targeted strategies might be more effective than more police. Police should be in a semi-social semi-police role; they have to be able to get ahead of the crime and could effectively do that if they were integrated into the fabric of the community. He appreciated that every time there is a crime problem the response is to throw more police officers at it but allowed that the alternative community actions may be perhaps more effective and there must be caution in spending more money on the police at the expense of these important social programs. However, Chief Beazley noted that it is important to remember that the police need resources to be able to stabilize the high risk areas first so that the community groups and agencies feel safe enough to go in and do their work (perhaps that model applies to the HRPS’ initiative over the past two years in Uniacke Square). There was some discussion about the appropriate complement. In response to a comment that that HRM is about #3 or so in Canada on a police per population ratio, the chief countered that police per population is not the appropriate standard.

Asked about youth crime and restorative justice, Chief Beazley observed that restorative justice can be very effective for single-offence youth, but not for the small percentage of havoc-wreaking kids. Youth, he observed, are still actively involved in violent crime, and the severity of the crime is increasing. In the discussions, Chief Beazley identified the urban core areas of Dartmouth, Central and Downtown Halifax as constituting significant though different policing problems. In the Downtown there were many assaults by strangers where alcohol consumption was a major factor. Overall, though, he suggested that about 75% of arrests involved persons under the influence of alcohol or drugs or with mental issues. Drugs were especially associated with violent crime. Asked about the possible benefits of community courts or specialty courts such as drug treatment courts or mental health courts, Chief Beazley indicated that he supported the concept of such courts and drew attention to domestic violence courts, noting that domestic crime rates are still very high in HRM. Concerning those with mental problems, he decried deinstitutionalization with nothing to replace it, which led to his comment “we criminalize them at three in the morning”. Asked about the possibility of a specialized community support officer role as developed in England to enhance the policing visibility and crime prevention work, Chief Beazley indicated he was open to discussing that option and that that would have to be negotiated through the union but added that the union has gone along with paid reservists so there are possibilities. The role of the police has changed out of necessity, he allowed, and the police force needs assistance in fulfilling the needs of the community. Asked about the adequacy of police technology, the chief suggested that the technology is sufficient at present and he pointed to the new records management system, the integration of databases, the cameras in Downtown Halifax, and the fact that every police car is a mobile unit with laptops.

Superintendent Gordon Barnett and Inspector Darrell Beaton of the RCMP in HRM made a presentation entitled Crime Reduction Strategy. They set out its underlying philosophy of having clear objectives to achieve and sustain reductions in crime and the public fear of crime. The fundamental focus of the strategy, which Inspector Beaton indicated had been successful elsewhere in Canada and abroad, is on chronic crime patterns and prolific offenders; the program features evidence-based approaches and extensive partnerships. In particular the RCMP identifies and responds quickly to ‘Hot Spots’. Inspector Beaton gave several examples, such as the instance of Cole Harbour where upon learning that the parks and pathways had become a hot spot for assaults, theft etc, the RCMP established extensive foot patrols, and, over a one year period in 2006-2007, effected a major reduction in assaults (27% fewer) and robberies (53% fewer). Inspector Beaton indicated that the RCMP also attempts to get at root causes of violence and crime through initiatives such as its week-long youth camp, enhanced school liaison in at-risk districts and even a literacy program launched in collaboration with HRM Library system. He emphasized the importance of alternatives and partnerships, including setting up a skateboard park in Tantallon, developing a personal safety orientation for seniors, and having more integrative policing with the HRPS (e.g., collaboration between the RCMP’s street crime unit and HRPS’s quick response unit). He noted that community engagement is important and, to that end, the RCMP have annual “Community Town hall” meetings (in 2006 the key issue was police visibility in problem areas). He concluded by noting that the RCMP is very open to a proactive, problem-solving approach. In the question and answer phase, the RCMP superintendent noted that the RCMP was enthused about developments in one community where an inadequate community centre, the site of some vandalism and friction, was being expanded and reorganized.

Asked about shortfalls in a particular program in another particular district, the RCMP officer noted that the program was heavily volunteer-dependent.

Pat Gorham, Coordinator, Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program presented on that program. She noted that restorative justice (RJ) defines crime as a violation of people and relationships that creates obligations and liabilities, and RJ processes seek to engage those affected to put right the wrong. The goals of RJ include reducing recidivism, increasing victim satisfaction, strengthening communities and increasing the public confidence in the criminal justice system. Pat Gorham discussed the processes of RJ and the many different role players that are involved, from offenders and victims to community volunteers and local non-profit agencies delivering the RJ program. She indicated that there are four entry points from which referrals might be sent to the agencies, namely the police (pre-charge), the crown prosecutors (post-charge), the judiciary (post-conviction) and correctional staff (post-sentence). In briefly reviewing the program's successes, she cited positive research findings in relation to the objectives set out above. Gorham then discussed the Halifax Community Justice Society which serves HRM. She noted that this agency deals with between six and seven hundred referrals per year, has a team of 80 skilled volunteer justice workers (plus full-time staff) and the program has a high compliance rate. The Halifax agency has also launched a number of interesting initiatives such as collaboration with MISA (serving the immigrant communities in HRM), outreach programs in Mulgrave Park and East Preston, a rites de passage project for early adolescents, and individualized support programs for certain offender clients. She indicated that the agency looks forward to further engagement with the municipal government.

Asked about launching new special projects along the lines of working with adults 18-24 year old or one similar to the apparently successful community justice forums developed for student offenders at ST. Francis Xavier University (a collaboration between the university, the student union and the RCMP), she reported that there is currently a "vision" but no active initiatives to extend the RJ program to non-youth. Asked about whether it should and how the RJ program does deal with repeat offenders, she commented that the RJ program is for offenders of certain types of offences. There is a particular 13% of "high risk", troubled youth for whom the RJ program at present does not work well and, although the 13% is a small percentage, they are mostly repeat offenders and the ones who seem to get the media attention. She noted that the RJ program is developing strategies to deal with this sub-group of referrals. In her view, the RJ program works on the principles of youth engagement. It helps youth deconstruct the crimes that they have committed on a psycho-social level, making them aware of the effects of their actions and behaviour. It requires appropriate caseworkers – trained personnel - and matching is very important to the program's effectiveness. Asked about involving Social Services to get at the roots of the problems, she noted that there is no system in place, between the RJ program and Social Services, of "flagging" repeat offenders, and the RJ program has no authority or mandate to go into offenders' communities and homes. Greater collaboration though is "ahead of us".

Frank Hoskins, chief prosecutor HRM, made a presentation from the vantage point of the Public Prosecution Service (PPS). He noted that the PPS was constituted in 1989. Reviewing its goals and mandate, he emphasized that winning is not everything and that the measure of the prosecution's effectiveness lies in the process (e.g., being fair, timely etc). Beyond this, he

identified several misconceptions of the role of the Crown Attorneys such as (a) that the Crown is the victim's lawyer (the Crown prosecutors represent the province not the individual); (b) that the Crown is the police's lawyer; (c) that the victim has control over the charges. He clarified that the case is not the victim's and that is not well-understood by victims so it disappoints them when things do not go as they think they should. Hoskins pointed out that the Crown represents all the public interests and must operate within legislative boundaries. It is not the role of the Crown Justice to provide a panacea for fixing all the issues associated with violence. Hoskins acknowledged that there is a public perception that the courts are too lenient and that there should be more done on sentencing but he added that the Crown Attorney's Office looks at every accused individual and evaluates on a case by case basis in making its sentencing recommendations to the judge. He said that the PPS agrees that conditional sentences are not appropriate for serious violent crimes (something that has happened on occasion and has inflamed public opinion) and is developing a policy on that issue.

Hoskins acknowledged that the PPS, like the criminal justice system in general, is basically reactive. He then discussed some current PPS initiatives such as specialized sexual prosecution and youth court attorneys. Here he noted that roughly 50% of all the youth prosecutions in the province are in the HRM court and that, while there are three dedicated prosecutors now, there is a need for a second youth court (adding that a new modern courthouse would also be desirable). As for the complement of HRM prosecutors, he held that "we're well-resourced now" (there are 20 prosecutors in Halifax, 13 to 15 in Dartmouth and 7 specials) and, in response to the Mayor's question, noted that delays in court processing have to do largely with the court administration system and the nature of modern law and court practices; for example, "processing a murder case used to average about a week but now it takes 6 or 7 weeks".

He also noted that there is some discussion on-going with a Department of Justice committee about launching specialized courts along the lines of mental health courts, drug treatment courts or community courts (all three exist in Vancouver but there are no such "problem-solving courts in Nova Scotia). In particular, he referred to the possibility of a mental health court which would be along the lines of 'pre-charge' diversion and deal with the repeat offender of minor, social disorder type and other offenses. It may be noted that the HRPS has expressed concern about "arresting and criminalizing those with mental problems unable to access services at three in the morning". The Mental Health Court presumably would be preventative in nature, where the community court keeps contact with at-risk offenders and monitors the delivery of their medication. Hoskins closed by noting that the PPS is mounting new training programs and developing a model for dealing with special circumstances and repeat offenders as well as responding to new issues of justice, such as cyber crime. It may also be noted that the PPS has been operating an "Early Resolution" project in Halifax where upon arraignment (usually) the accused or counsel is provided, as part of disclosure, a letter from the PPS indicating what sentence (presumably a lighter one than the accused could normally expect if convicted) it would be prepared to recommend to the court if the accused makes a timely guilty plea. This initiative if successful could further speed up case processing in court and allow more time to complex cases.

Chief Justice Kennedy of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court gave a presentation and, like other presenters, stayed to answer a number of questions. He pointed out that judges are supposed to

remain aloof essentially to avoid compromising themselves in future trials and decisions by having said something about a policy or program. He added that he was persuaded to present at the Roundtable by Professor Clairmont telling him that the public is blaming the judges. He noted that he reads papers, listens to the news and is well aware of the public-presented views. He observed that it does appear to many people perhaps that judges have a different sense of justice, that they are disconnected from reality and do not understand the full scope of the problem, but the real thing is that judges have a different set of prescriptive rules and norms to operate within and have to be concerned with a wide variety of different principles in their role. He did stress though that he knows crime and he knows Halifax and he agrees that the public has a right to be concerned about crime and public safety in HRM (the Halifax area at least). He added that people have told him about their fears and life style changes to accommodate to the new realities. He noted, too, that he himself found the police foot patrol in the Downtown to be positive and reassuring. In his view, over the past ten or twenty years, the nature of crime has changed significantly – more crack cocaine, more gratuitous violence (especially among the youth) and crime is no longer a male preserve. He described a number of offenders, especially some young ones, as alienated, amoral and adrift, undereducated, unconcerned with consequences, and just wanting to get on to their lives in video games; they are not able to see beyond next week and have nothing to lose.

Kennedy observed that in his court, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, sentencing occupies only about 15% of his time (contrary to media focus on the sentencing role). When it comes to sentencing, judges do not have unlimited discretion but are bound by law and formal sentencing policy. “We have to look at every other possibility before we incarcerate”. Rehabilitation, especially for youth, is paramount. We have a high rate of incarceration he said, second only to the USA, and, there, the evidence is that incarceration does not bring down the violence (he cited here the case of Philadelphia). Age itself effects reduction in criminal behaviour since after the age of 28 the dossier of crime falls off dramatically! He did note that a recent decision by the Nova Scotia appeal court may open the door to more severe penalties. He also noted that the YCJA can and will be amended. There has to be a balance between the safety of the community and what is good for youth but, he added, “we cannot lock up a generation”. Kennedy came back to parenting and to teaching and demanding discipline. Parents blame the YCJA and he said that is “hogwash”, adding, “If you make the effort (as a parent) you can succeed even in the most difficult circumstances... It is not easy to set rules in today’s circumstances of living, but a child that is not disciplined does not stand a chance”. He noted that “many youth are on drugs, on their own and on the streets”, but he also appreciated that a lot of the vulnerable youth are making an effort and should be helped. The Chief Justice called for intervention, social change, and concluded, “Let’s get on with it”. The Chief Justice also emphasized that the problem with violence and youth is not just a problem for Halifax; it is being experienced across the country. Indeed, HRM might look very good to others; here he relayed the comments of many of his peers from outside NS at a recent convention in HRM, namely “Halifax is a jewel”.

In response to questions Kennedy said (1) he thinks the sentences in Nova Scotia are at the median for Canadian provinces. Quebec he said is lower but then they seem to have fewer problems in crime according to crime rates; (2) consequences are important for youth especially, but they have to be soon after the incident or swift (he gave the example that school violations have to see consequences within the school year); (3) delays in swift case processing are not the

result of too few judges as much as because of the modern laws, rights etc (i.e., same position as the chief prosecutor, Frank Hoskins noted above); (4) he considered that conditional sentencing – much maligned by segments of the media and the public - is a good tool / option for judges. It can be cost effective and have good results. “It has developed a reputation in the public consciousness of being ineffective. It is only as good as the situation, and those on conditional sentences need to be monitored closely. It may be flawed in the specifics, but it is still a good tool. When it does work it works well” (wryly, he noted that while some say a conditional sentence is worse than incarceration, everyone in front of him always seems to prefer it); (5) yes, we have a more liberal open society and respect rights but that is Canada, the great country for freedom and rights (6) yes, he thinks that specialty, problem-solving courts such as the mental Health Court and the Drug Treatment Court are good ideas and that he understands the government is looking at them now. Finally, he praised the Roundtable and noted that he has learned from today and from newspaper accounts of it, things he would not otherwise have known. Asked “What would you like to see come out of these Roundtables”, The Chief Justice responded, “relevant information... to acknowledge the problem is a big first step. We need to help the people who are really trying, but who get overwhelmed by society”.

Fred Honsberger, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Corrections made a presentation entitled, “*Thoughts on Improving the Criminal Justice System-Response to Repeat Offenders*”. He emphasized that there is a rather the small number of youths who are real problems and they must be given the message that there are consequences for their behaviour (“They require attention and they require consequences”). Although media reports make it seem as if violence is popping up out of nowhere, these crimes have been carried out by a very small group of repeat young offenders. There are 70,000 Nova Scotia High School youth, of whom 1% are known to the criminal justice system, and 1/10 of that 1% are in Waterville (The Nova Scotia Youth Facility). In particular Mr. Honsberger discussed pre-trial issues produced by the YCJA, especially that “dangerous to public safety” youth are difficult to hold in custody pre-trial because bail under the YCJA is based on the offense charged, not the offender’s record / behaviour or public safety; accordingly, judges find it difficult not to grant bail. The YCJA allowed for increased options in custody arrangement but “if the young person has not committed a violent offence, failed to comply with non-custodial sentences or has a pattern of guilt, then it is practically impossible to detain the young person at the bail hearing stage”. There are currently no consequences for youth being charged, whereas custody should be implemented in some cases. Some youth need to be remanded because that small percentage of repeat young offenders will start to grow if it is not contained. He noted that there are 114 beds in Waterville, and 75 are in use at any given time. There is then custodial capacity though overall, he added, the issue of dealing with crime and violence should not have arguments that are based on the types of custody spaces and the length of time offenders are in it, but rather on the root causes of crime. Honsberger identified the key recommendations from the Nova Scotia Justice Department in dealing with these youth offenders as (a) firm, fair and consistent custody (b) networking with services and programs, and (c) resiliency support for youth. In his view, early intervention is important, even at the pre-natal level, so that cycles of crime, and the reinforcement of negative or anti-social values can be broken and headed off from the beginning. Instilling citizenship values and pro-social attitudes at a young age is important.

In response to a question about police and probation officers teaming up to monitor release undertakings and related conditions among offenders such that their combined authority permits a more in-depth intrusion into the social and familial spheres, Mr. Honsberger noted that there had previously been a program in place called “Operation Shadow” that involved a joint probation check program with both probation and police officers doing curfew checks together; however, for a variety of reasons (e.g., extra training required of the probation officers, need for them to wear protective gear, unclear benefit) it was discontinued. He commented that currently there are police and probation officers alternately checking up on those on probation, with more intelligence sharing and partnering on key initiatives, but the safety of probation officers is an important consideration. He added that there is an electronic monitoring program being discussed with the RCMP, HRPS and the PPS. Asked why the shortfalls of the YCJA, as in the matter of pre-trial custody, have yet to be dealt with by the federal government, he suggested that perhaps those authorities in Ottawa do not fully grasp the context of the situation. Finally, asked about what might be done regarding the situation in group homes for problem youth, where it was suggested that the youth apparently cannot go home and cannot be sent to the Waterville correctional facility but are seen sometimes to be out of control at the group home, Mr. Honsberger noted the complexity of the issues and added that the remedial programs and services that exist now are better in an institutional setting (custody) than in the community setting. He suggested the creation of intermediate options between group homes and correctional custody.

Unfortunately time did not permit a discussion of the intensive supervision program that had been had been developed by Corrections for close proactive monitoring of serious young offenders. The program entailed virtually 24/7 engagement of probation officials with the clients (a small caseload) and reportedly was successful. It apparently has been folded back into normal probation work and may be a good example of introducing a more intensive activity, learning lessons and strategies, and then incorporating these into regular practice. Such a model is suggested in this report in the case of restorative justice programming for serious young offenders referred to that system. Nor was there opportunity to discuss Corrections’ assessment of its Adult Diversion program and whether it might be developed into a restorative justice format for special projects such as the proposed university Downtown project suggested in the Roundtable report.

Ben Bishop, engaged as cultural advisor with the Atlantic Canada Parole Board and member of its CAC (Citizen’s Advisory Committee) made a presentation entitled “*Public Safety and Effective Reintegration of Offenders* “. In the former role, he attends parole hearings for African Canadian offenders seeking day or full parole, analogous to the more longstanding program of elders attending such hearings for aboriginal inmates. In the CAC role, he and other members’ mission is, through voluntary participation in the Canadian federal correction process, to contribute to public safety by actively interacting with the staff of Correctional Services of Canada, the public and the offenders, providing recommendations, and thereby contributing to the quality of the correctional process. The key is to help offenders and prepare them for reintegration into community. They will come back to the community at some point so the question is how they will return – hopefully in better shape than when they went into jail.

Mr. Bishop reviewed the wide range of problems and solutions in achieving positive reintegration of black offenders into the community. These include the lack of corporate and community support for employment of the offenders coming back to the community, the lack of role models for the offenders and challenges of encouraging the offenders to act as positive role models. These shortfalls are enhanced by the absence of compulsory programs in jail that would teach the offenders the skills necessary for positive reintegration to the community. Moreover, negative portrayals of them by the media increase negative stereotype, compounding the reintegration challenge. CAC, according to Bishop, is working to address those problems and referred to recommendations to address each of the problems, namely increased funding for the reintegration programs, making certain programs compulsory in jail, encouragement of mentorship, and dispelling of negative stereotypes. In his view there are some inmates who upon release do try to re-integrate into society and some who do not, so the challenge is to target the former and assist them. The relatively large number of Black inmates in the federal correctional system, their high level of re-offending, and their concentration in HRM, make this challenge important for reducing violence and crime here.

Mr. Bishop noted that a recent survey of Black ex-inmates in the HRM area found that many suggested that an educational and inspirational CD could be helpful, that would bring hope, sense of pride and purpose to the Black offenders, an Africentric approach which offered positive messages for African-Nova Scotians and reflections on life which were culturally rooted in their cultural heritage. In response, the “Circle of life” CD has been produced that incorporates Black proverbs, drumming and culture intended to promote the changes the offenders wish to make to make their life whole again. The CAC provides mentorship to the offenders coming out of jail by sitting down with the men and discussing what got them into crime. Many lacked a sound family situation and that is where extended family – community relationships can help. At the invitation of the Parole Board, he (and CAC members generally) visit jails and query the offenders about what they have done to help themselves re-integrate into society. There are programs available in the federal institutions though virtually none in provincial institutions. In the former there are academic programs, anti-violence and substance abuse programs. Unfortunately, in his view, there are few programs directed specifically at improving employability skills. Mr. Bishop particularly emphasized getting the inmates to transcend their own frustrations by helping others, encouraging the adult offenders coming out of jail to act as positive role models for their children and other youths. He told of many offenders expressing their regrets in having failed to become positive role models for their children, especially in cases where their kids are also going to jail. In his view, there is ample opportunity here for the offenders to have strong, positive impact on youth but there seem to be lack of focus, of interest in this area.

Mr. Bishop’s recommendations followed along the lines suggested above. He noted that mentoring offenders is not just a viable strategy for youth, but can also work for older offenders as the CAC has found out. Provide mentors for the offenders coming out of jail. They have been out of touch from society for several months or years and they need a person whom they can trust and receive encouragement from, as well as recognize their talent and skills. There is a need for increased corporate and community support in the employment sphere. He believed that HRM could collaborate with other government agencies to give more support to various programs such as housing accommodation, employment training opportunities and other after-

care services. Asked how to deal with high risk offenders, many of whom apparently just sit in jail and do nothing until there no choice but to release them back to society with no change, Bishop advanced the idea that some programs should be compulsory (it was not clear whether there were never such compulsory programs or whether CSC backed off from such a policy). The lack of funds and of volunteers limits current programs. One result is “There are more people doing nothing than something in the institutions”. Asked about literacy and GED programs, he commented “It’s there, but it’s not compulsory and it should be”. Asked “When offenders tell you what made them decide to make positive changes to their life, what are some common themes”, he replied that “many had very negative experiences in jail. When community members went to speak to them and helped them realize that they are better than that – the disrespect, repeatedly coming back to jail - it helped them think about where they want to be 2 to 3 years from now and start making positive changes. That seemed to be the catalyst”.

John Robinson, Director of Victim Services Nova Scotia, made a presentation entitled “*Issues from the Victims’ Perspective*” He noted that 75% of the clients are victims of violence and 70% are women and children. He observed, congruent with the earlier remarks of Chief Prosecutor Frank Hoskins, that victims do not control the case and they often do not understand this, getting indignant and frustrated. He talked of a pervasive culture of fear and a fear of crime, suggesting its roots in the events of 9/11, and commented that there may be an irrational element along these lines in HRM. In his view, most victims get their information from the media. Mr. Robinson discussed Victim Services, its organization (home in Court Services, headquarters in Halifax, four regional offices) and its mandate vis-à-vis victims of crime. Asked whether Victim Services has an obligation to respond to the culture of fear and the alleged exaggerations of the mass media, rather than leaving reassurance solely to the police, Mr. Robinson reiterated that his small staff responds to its central mandate, helping victims of violence and crime. Asked whether Victim Services might respond to neighbourhood incidents and collective grieving, he said that it would be prepared to do more here if asked but thus far they apparently have not been nor have they developed this strategy. In response to a question about family violence (HRPS Chief Beazley earlier on had suggested that domestic violence remained a very significant problem), Mr. Robinson noted that the family violence initiative was undercut when there were cutbacks around 2000. He considered that with respect to victimization, HRM could help especially in focusing on crime prevention in the first place.

B. PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

These presentations were directed at how to effect reduction of violence and crime through prevention and treatment. The premises were that it is possible to get at root factors of violence and crime, incrementally within the existing culture and structure of contemporary society, and that the HRM government has a significant role to play in realizing that objective. Previous presenters had noted the need for a long-term approach to get at underlying factors and the presenters discussed in this section provided ideas about implementing such an approach. Watson-Creed and Linda Power of Public Health / Capital Health underlined the violence problem in HRM by noting that Nova Scotia and HRM have hospital treatment rates for violence (e.g., assault, suicide) that are the highest east of Manitoba. They discussed public health issues, especially early child care, the value of increased affordable recreational facilities, and indicated

a keenness to partner anti-violence strategizing with the municipal government. Professor and pediatrician John Leblanc emphasized early intervention of a family-centered type to reduce violent behaviour, and providing as much help as possible to single parents of low income in particular. Other recommendations included focusing on affordability and accessibility in accessing facilities and resources, using evidence-based approaches, and the municipality committing to hiring a full-time violence prevention coordinator.

Tom Payette of Addiction Prevention and Treatment Services, Capital Health dealt with alcohol abuse and the culture of alcohol use which constitutes a major social problem in his view. He urged the municipal government to support the provincial alcohol strategy and the initiatives being discussed regarding specialty courts for addicted offenders. James Hartley of the IWK Youth Forensic Services emphasized the need for action in responding to the social circumstances of troubled youth. He noted that some youth prefer incarceration because it provides better for their survival needs (i.e., food, accommodations) than they have “on the outside”. Like several other presenters at the Roundtable, Hartley recommended more supervised housing for persons exiting from custody. Professor Schneider discussed his PALS project which provides early intervention and sophisticated mentoring (mentoring accompanied by a developed program as well as oversight and evaluation) for at-risk youths between 5 and 12 years of age living in three housing projects. His successes have resulted in the project recently receiving a long-term NCPC grant. He called on the municipal government to exercise leadership in coordinating programs for volunteers and supporting programs such as Big Brothers, Big Sisters in a variety of ways.

The appended presentation, Violence Prevention and Public Health, by **Gaynor Watson-Creed and Linda Power of the Capital District Health Authority** provides a broad perspective on violence and certainly a valuable corrective to the emphasis in this Roundtable Report on crime and the criminal justice system. Family violence, bullying, slurs and suicide, for example, are just as significant as homicide and assault. In this larger context the role of public health is crucial since it directs attention to what many respondents in the Roundtable surveys and many activists in the Roundtable community meetings have referred to as getting at the roots of the violence and crime issues. The authors show that Nova Scotia has proportionally more persons hospitalized for injuries from homicides and assaults than elsewhere in Atlantic Canada, Ontario or Quebec. No figures are provided for HRM alone but it can be presumed that its comparative proportionally would be much higher given the many assaults associated with the Downtown night-time economy, according to all reports received in the Roundtable sessions and from police officials.

The authors discuss the three levels of prevention of violence conceptualized in Public Health, namely primary (reducing its occurrence in the first place), secondary (e.g., quick access to care for injuries) and tertiary (dealing with long-term impacts through strategies such as grief management). They cite successful “prevention of violence” initiatives such as family-based programs for families and individuals at-risk, community-based interventions such as mentoring and school-based programs (e.g., problem-solving). In their view, the various initiatives are quite in keeping with the Nunn Commission’s recommendations and with the recently announced Nova Scotia Strategy for Children and Youth which is part of the provincial government’s response to the latter. The host of preventative strategies aimed at individual, relationships,

community and societal factors that are associated with risks of violence, go well beyond the criminal justice system and challenge the mandate of the municipality as well. The authors cite a number of partnerships that Public Health Capital District has formed within HRM (e.g., Enhanced Home Visiting directed at care for the newborn among families at risk for violence and other poor health outcomes) and some in particular seem to be within the scope of a modestly expansive HRM vision on violence and crime activity and also emphasized by many Roundtable participants. For example, The Physical Activity Strategy which has the premise that “physically active children (and youth generally?) may be less likely to engage in violence”, and the urban redesign efforts currently underway in HRM. The authors urge the municipal government to consider wider partnerships, such as with Public Health, as it continues to explore ways to reduce violence.

Dr. John LeBlanc, Dalhousie professor and IWK pediatrician, made a presentation entitled A Child-Centered Approach to Violence Prevention which is appended here. He discussed the biological and social bases of aggression and the key factors (e.g., disadvantaged families, teenage mothers with less than grade 9 education) that research has identified as major causes of chronic aggression that persists for a small minority of youth into and beyond adolescence. He indicated that aggression is a human trait that is manifested in infancy and in some cases a special early childhood intervention approach is required to ensure a normal developmental process. He discussed some of the successful interventions to counter aggression / violence, highlighting early intervention (especially support for single parent families), the ‘positive youth development’ approach (developing the youths’ assets more than focusing on overcoming the negatives, the approach of earlier decades), and the pink t-shirt, anti-bullying movement in Nova Scotia. It may be noted that all three of these strategies were also advanced by activists in the Roundtable community sessions. Dr. LeBlanc suggested more resources be allocated to pre-school and pre-adolescent interventions and approaches which he held were under-resourced. His approach was more family-centered and social than emphasizing individual therapy He noted that while interventions at the individual level can be effective, even the intensive one-on-one does not work if the individual returns to same toxic environment. He made a number of interesting observations concerning violence and the media (e.g., control over access to violent imagery and media by aggressive children and adolescents may be appropriate).

Dr. LeBlanc made a number of recommendations for HRM’s efforts to reduce violence and crime. He suggested that HRM should partner or work closely with Public Health, citing some of their initiatives (e.g., pre-school) as noted above. He recommended that the police role with children and youth be strengthened since “these ties build trust and get important information to them about predators” and other problems. A third recommendation was that HRM follow the example of cities such as Hamilton Ontario in effecting more substantial partnerships with businesses in creating safe environment (as noted in another section of this Supplemental Report such valuable partnerships have been formed by the Mulgrave Park Tenants Association and the Spring Garden Road Business Association). Dr. LeBlanc recommended that HRM government assist non-profit agencies working with troubled youth (e.g., Phoenix House, Boys and Girls Clubs, L.O.V.E.), whether, directly through funding, or by facilitating their access to funding. He also called for better use of resources, the “affordable, accessible to all” theme so frequently heard in the Roundtable community discussions. He recommended a committee be struck to provide oversight and strategic advice to HRM in the implementation of these kinds of initiatives

and that evaluation be undertaken to keep the issues on the front burner. He concluded with the recommendation that the municipality create a full-time position along the lines of Violence Prevention Coordinator, a position he considered as follows, “an essential component of long-term success is ensuring that the initiatives arising from this round-table are a primary, if not the sole responsibility, of an HRM employee”.

Tom Payette, Director Addiction Prevention and Treatment Services, (APTS) Capital Health, made a presentation entitled Effective Management of Alcohol and Drug Related Violence; it is appended here. The topic had much salience for the Roundtable in light of the alcohol abuse problems that have characterized the Downtown Bar scene and have been a major factor in the large number of assaults that have strained E.R. resources at the hospital. Payette reported that roughly 20% of Nova Scotia drinkers, 15 year of age and older, consume alcohol in a way that negatively impacts on their health and well-being and that the highest rate of drinking is among young adults aged 19 to 24 and 25 to 29 years of age. He provided data showing that the recent annual health, social and economic costs for substance abuse is approximately \$1.25 billion and that the alcohol subtotal is \$419 million whereas the annual costs for illegal drug use is about \$200 million. He argued that while the media and the public focus much on drug abuse, the issues around alcohol are much bigger and should be center-stage.

Payette outlined the Provincial Alcohol Strategy for changing the culture of alcohol in Nova Scotia. Its main themes were normalize help-seeking, and denormalize underage drinking, binge drinking and drinking to intoxication. It would involve awareness and educational resources, focus on prevention and early prevention, and a balanced approach to alcohol policy. Strategies would include an alcohol tax and price strategy, restriction on drinking age, regulating physical availability of alcohol, and policies on advertising and promoting alcohol. He noted that there is a serious shortage of beds for “detox” and that a Drug and Alcohol Court – common in the United States and in the large Canadian Metropolitan areas – could be helpful in ameliorating the problems. His two chief recommendations to the Roundtable were (a) HRM should partner with APTS to implement the Provincial Alcohol Strategy noted above, and (b) HRM should form a task force to review strategy and create an implementation plan.

On behalf of the **Forensic Community Support group of the IWK Youth Justice Services,** **James Hartley** led a presentation entitled Working with Troubled Youth. He observed that the title could well have been Troubled Youth in a Troubled Society since “It is not a question of what we know or do not know concerning root causes of crime; it is a question about what are we doing with what we know”. He discussed the individual and social factors associated with crime and violence such as conduct disorder, school problems, and problematic parenting. The chief point was that poor housing, dysfunctional family situations and poverty are blanket terms that do not do justice to capturing the reality in which some of the citizens in this municipality spend the majority of their time. He held that successful intervention depends very much directly on the care with which programs are planned supported and monitored. Many programs likely fail not because the programming principles are unsound, but because of inadequacies in their delivery. The key problem in the delivery of services relates to a lack of integration of services across systems and that, in turn, this lack of coordination is attributed to political factors, turf protection on the part of different agencies, and the inability of different service providers to

communicate and cooperate with one another. The presenters suggested that there are lots of resources out there but they are not used properly.

Hartley and associates contended that there was no support for youth in the real world, only in the Waterville institution (NSYF), and it is not effective there because of the way it is structured. “Waterville can give some of these kids a break from the worry about survival related issues that they normally face in their day to day life. Their food, shelter, safety, medical, and psychological needs are met there during their sentence”. The need for housing, for safe space, was especially highlighted in their work with youths coming out of the Youth Correctional facility. “There is no stable environment for them”. This absence, according to one presenter, means she has to be telling clients, “Here are some new strategies. They will involve risks and we can’t be sure they will work” but, she added “it’s hard to ask them to make those leaps of faith with me”; still, “people are resilient!” Treatment and housing (supervised housing as stressed by several other presenters at the Roundtable) were seen as the keys to successful intervention. Hartley added, on the treatment front, that, “we have excellent services in mental health but accessibility remains problematic so we don’t respond fast enough for the person’s needs”.

Stephen Schneider, sociologist / criminologist professor at Saint Mary’s University made a presentation on Mentoring. He considered mentoring as the “best hope” in dealing efficiently and effectively with young youth at risk. His approach emphasizes resiliency and social development, enhancing pro-social behaviour. He sees mentoring as a long-term nurturing and caring relationship provided by an adult, in his program, university students. Mentoring supplements other interventions. The focus in his on-going mentoring program in HRM was defined as “the kids in the projects”, that is youths between 5 and 12 years of age living in three low income housing areas in Halifax and at-risk for dropping out of school, joining quasi-gangs and the like. With the assistance of HRM university students these youths are provided a range of services and programs including, academic tutoring, anger management, problem-solving, reading skills and so on. His program has been in operation for several years and because of its success, substantial Public Safety Canada funding was received to allow it to continue for several more years. Professor Schneider allowed that some youths require much more than mentoring. He also acknowledged the kindred mentoring provided by Big Brothers and Big Sisters for which he advocated strongly and urged HRM to support – “It’s important for HRM to support valuable effective and efficient programs such as this one, he said, adding that Big Brother Big Sisters (BBBS) report having a three to four year waiting list, sometimes too late in the critical periods of development (early and adolescent)”. He cited a study from the USA that found that kids who go through BBBS are 47% less likely to do drugs and 27% less likely to drink while underage.

The fit of mentor to youth is very important in the effectiveness of the program, according to Professor Schneider. In his program there is an effort to match gender and race, but sometimes that cannot be done because of the lack of male, especially African-Nova Scotian male volunteers. Sometimes, too, males do better with female mentors so there has to be assessment on a case by case basis. A central theme in his presentation was that there are perhaps 40,000 university and other post-secondary students in HRM and even if only 1% are in a volunteer program that is 400 people. To do more in mobilizing this potentially large pool of volunteers –

through volunteer drives, course credit and many other ways - he held that that a variety of viewpoints and organizations (police, university etc) need to be better integrated and perhaps that coordination could be something that the municipal government could take on. Professor Schneider noted that significant contributions can also be made by police and by private business in providing resources and sponsorship. He commented that most crime prevention can be built on existing programs, and mentoring is one of those programs to build on. Asked about issues of monitoring the volunteers, liability problems, and legal issues in handling information on youth, he allowed that those are indeed salient concerns and that is why there has to be an oversight process. Asked whether there differences in volunteerism considering incentive vs. non-incentive volunteer opportunities, he reported that different studies say different things on this. "Sometimes you have to be cautious with incentive-based opportunity, but, in the end, incentive-based opportunity is a key to the success of mentoring programs".

C. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE POLICY APPROACHES

Valerie Pottie Bunge, of Nova Scotia Department of Justice Crime Prevention and Reduction Strategy discussed the Minister's Task Force that preceded the Roundtable and highlighted its eighteen recommendations. She indicated that the Province has taken up the task of fleshing out the Task Force's findings and recommendations, and is developing an overall crime prevention strategy that will be soon be made public. It was indicated that the focus would be on youth (as was the Task Force) and that the implementation strategies would feature partnerships among the provincial government departments and with municipal governments and other organizations. Robert Wright spoke to the Children and Youth Strategy which he is directing for the Province. He emphasized that while new resources are associated with that strategy, its main role is to identify gaps and develop new strategies for relating to problem youths and families and would not itself deliver services or programs. It was suggested that partnerships with municipalities would be a key feature of the strategy. The honorable Cecil Clarke outline the work being undertaken by the Province, especially the Department of Justice, to deal with violence and crime, work that including lobbying for changes in the YCJA, and federal crime policy in general, to funding for more police officers and developing the Child and Youth Strategy and the Crime Prevention and Reduction Strategy. The Minister acknowledged that HRM has specific issues unique to its jurisdiction and said that he anticipates new forms of partnerships with the municipality on issues of violence and crime. He suggested that municipalities could be allowed to re-allocate and leverage money for crime prevention and that ways could be found to directly link the federal government to the communities.

Valerie Pottie Bunge, Lead, Department of Justice's Crime Prevention and Reduction Strategy discussed the Minister's Task Force's activity and results. In introducing the topic she referred to the high costs of crime, impacting on everything from public confidence in the justice system to higher insurance premiums. She noted that the province-wide task force was announced in the fall of 2006 and submitted its report with 18 recommendations in May 2007. The information from the task force was utilized in the development of a comprehensive crime prevention and reduction strategy. Drugs were a major concern among citizens that participated in the meetings but the focus was the issue of youth, and reported shifts in social values and culture. Citizens in focus groups were also aware of the larger societal conditions that underlie

crime and perpetuate violence, such as poverty and health and psychological factors associated with these and other conditions. Pottie Bunge indicated that three dominant themes emerged from the task force recommendations, namely enhancement of justice partnerships (to increase police resources, ensure appropriate sentencing and improve offender rehabilitation and reintegration), youth and justice strategy partnerships (to increase crime prevention efforts and effect more attachment to school), and other partnerships (support for families, for community mobilization, to reduce racism, and to remove obstacles to the use of school and other community facilities). She discussed the various roles that different levels of government have in the crime prevention and reduction area, noting that at the municipal level (the mandate site for policing and recreation in Nova Scotia) there is best opportunity to identify local crime patterns and causes and to develop salient comprehensive community planning. She indicated that the province is fully engaged in the crime strategy, building upon the Nunn Commission, the Task Force and other initiatives, and having already responded with funding for more police, the establishment of a Youth Attendance Centre, and a rewards program for major unsolved crimes. It was noted that a fleshed out crime prevention strategy would be released in earlier 2008 (it has been and will be discussed elsewhere in this Roundtable report).

Asked how the walls or silos are going to be overcome in the partnerships, Pottie Bunge suggested that there are a variety of models to choose from, but there is no solid action plan yet, more just the recognition that the government is moving in this direction. She mentioned that the crime prevention council model used in Alberta has been the model most followed in the planning thus far. The key priorities were said to be youth crime and fear of crime. Other models might include advisory boards or think tanks. The Mayor asked about next steps in the partnership between the province and the municipality such as loosening of funds that are filtered through province (i.e., the ability of the municipal governments to reallocate law enforcement funds) and legislation to back up the policy. Pottie Bunge was not in a position to discuss these issues. Asked about the Justice Department's strategies to address issues in the larger social environment, Pottie Bunge commented that there is a recognition that there are issues with the family, education and larger cultural issues, however the plan is to still have the respective departments that have always dealt with these different issues, administer the policy and services but all levels and sectors of government will be networked so that there are not problems of ignorance and turf between departments.

Robert Wright presented an address entitled "Dimensions of a Youth Justice Strategy" dealing with on the newly created provincial **Child and Youth Justice Strategy** for which he is Executive Director. The initiative had been one of the Nunn Commission's major recommendations and has been up and running since May 2007. The unit was created to coordinate (a) government services that deal with family related issues that surround crime and disadvantaged youth, (b) youth education programs administered through existing community-based and government sponsored agencies (education, recreation, justice, law enforcement, community services) and (c) to create a "network of support" among all agencies and levels of government. The unit's substantive scope would of course extend from prenatal support to *meaningful* youth engagement at all levels (school, the arts, recreation, community involvement), and an evaluation of the current services in place. There would be more collaboration in terms of resources and information among all departments that respond to the same group of high risk, at risk young people and trying to find new and effective ways to connect with them.

Wright emphasized the issues of coordination and increased resources and indicated that these would be major considerations in that strategy. “We need to work across the silos” he said. He also stressed preventative services, mentoring, evaluating and cost benefit analyses. Other areas of attention he cited were the YCJA, Education and the Administration of Justice. The approach or strategy would seem kindred to what is known as a holistic or “the wrap-around approach” (see also the HRM Youth Advocacy Program referred to elsewhere in the Roundtable report), namely bringing coordinative services to youth and their families. Wright indicated that his office would be charged with analyzing and filling the gaps but added “We would not become another silo or bureaucracy but rather focus on getting the big five (education, community services, justice and law enforcement, health, and recreation) to do things more things or to do them differently”. He also referred to increased coordination among federal, provincial and municipal relationships.

Asked about the structure being proposed, Wright referred to the fact that currently there is a provincial social policy advisory group to think about programs, delivery and coordination. He went on to suggest that “regional specialist from our unit will link up with HRM and yes resources will be there, human and otherwise”. Asked about the challenge of “de-gangng”, Wright suggested that gangs give a sense of belonging so the issue is how else to achieve this. In that regard he discussed mentoring and adult role models. Asked about resources, Wright suggested that it is not necessarily a matter of more of what we have but better utilization of what is available. Asked whether ethics were being neglected, Wright suggested that it was implicit in the emphasis on character. Asked how they propose to intervene in high risk cases, Wright replied by having existing services (community services, the police, and the criminal justice system, education) intervene. Asked about the proposed staff complement for the unit, Wright indicated there would be six with four of them being provincial representatives. He emphasized that a large department was not needed for the unit to fulfill its mandate since “we are going to be “knitting together” existing services, not providing services ourselves” (a think tank on how to effectively streamline and deliver services?).

Cecil Clarke, Minister of Justice made a presentation outlining his Department’s approach and strategy for crime prevention. He said that the Justice Department believes that the best way to ensure a safe and secure community is through collaboration and partnerships. Public forums and focus groups are important since the issue of safety and security affects everyone. “The public has shared both their fears and their passions to help in the various ways that they can”. He reported that the province will be launching a comprehensive crime strategy in the coming weeks and also indicated that there has been positive federal action as a direct result of the Nunn Commission Report and specific things going on in NS. Youth crime is a special concern, especially as while crime rates may be down, there has been a 17% increase in youth crime and a 5% increase in violent youth crime. The Justice Department has accepted all the recommendations that have come from the Nunn Commission report and are in the process of getting the services in place and making the necessary changes. The Department has been working on strategies that address the root causes of crime and act as prevention measures and the Child and Youth Strategy has been developed and implemented in the acknowledgement that young people are in need of support. From the federal government there are changes coming to the YCJA which will deal with the “small groups of out of control youth”. Promises of more

funding and amendments to the act have been being made for a long time but now reforms will be introduced next week (Bill C-2) and there is more federal money coming for more police soon. The Electronic Monitoring Program will be extended to youth on conditional sentences and there will also be Voice Verification procedures as an added measure to ensure offenders are complying with their sentences. The Safer Communities Act and the special police units that have come as a result of it are proving to be effective. Complaints from residents have resulted in the shutting down of known crime houses under the Act. The police are shutting down crime houses and evicting the tenants. In some cases these evictions have led to convictions. On a larger national scale there is a targeting of organized crime with a \$6 billion investment for Intelligence-based policing. Gang related homicides will result in charges of first degree murder. \$65 million has been promised to police for 65 new officers over the next 4 years which is seen to be a strategic investment for law enforcement increasing its capacity to strategically target the types of crime which most impacts personal safety and security.

There has been lots of progress but it is important to continue making the best use of the resources available. There is a need for greater collaboration among all levels of government and community-based agencies. What would the structure of this collaboration look like? Mr. Clarke emphasized that it would allow municipalities to reallocate and leverage money for crime prevention and get community program funding accelerated. The Province wants to break down “Governmental silos” and create cross-governmental strategies between health, education, recreation, justice and community services. There will have to be methods of evaluation to ensure that programs and restructuring is effective. He also indicated that there will be an attempt to link the Federal Government directly to communities. He acknowledged too that there are differences in HRM vis-à-vis the rest of the province in approach and strategy and one size does not fit all with respect to crime prevention.

The Minister held that prevention is not just a “tough on crime” perspective, not simply a matter of throwing money and resources to the police. Opportunities are available and the key is identifying where they are and evaluate what is working and build on that. In that sense he commented that in some urban milieus simple investments such as outdoor lighting can do a lot. Perhaps, too, an increase of community-based policing may be effective. He reminded the Roundtable that there is a difference between actual crime and the fear of crime, and, accordingly, perhaps different strategies may be warranted.

Asked where the provincial government currently is on the Safe Streets Act and Red Light Cameras, the Minister reported that the law and order agenda is at the forefront of coming legislation. While there has been no action on these yet, they will be tabled soon. He added that it is important to remember that things like Red Light Cameras must be used in a balanced way, and not impose on or affect law-abiding citizens. Asked about organized crime in HRM, he commented that organized crime is big business and preys on the young and the weak so the government will be aggressively going after organized crime. The Minister had no comment when asked whether sex solicitation will be targeted. Regarding the alcohol abuse problems in Downtown Halifax, the Minister commented that the Alcohol and Gaming Commission needs to reassess operating procedures and licenses, and start holding the bar industry accountable for the way establishments operate. Asked about the structures and evaluation process that will flesh out

the proposed collaboration among the provincial government and the municipalities, the Minister asked the Roundtable to wait until next week's announcement.

D. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

The presenters in this segment of the Roundtable represented organizations that are making a difference at the vulnerable neighbourhood and at-risk person level so it was crucial to understand how they were doing so and what their recommendations for municipal government actions would be. **Ms Williams of the Mulgrave Park Tenants Association** described the efforts that have accounted for its success in causing a radical reduction in vandalism, police charges and restorative justice referrals in the housing project. She highlighted the funding received, the partnerships established with businesses and other agencies and the considerable fund raising undertaken by the tenants via bingos and the like which underlined the community's ownership of the changes. Her chief recommendation was for more municipal presence and coordination in assisting community groups. **Mr. Southwell of the Black Business Initiative** discussed the work of his organization in providing business skills, funding and actual employment to the Black community. This initiative offers positive alternatives and good role models for many Blacks who may otherwise find themselves marginalized.

Ms Woodman outlined the work of the **United Way**. The United Way plays a very important role with respect to violence and public safety, funding and working, often on a long-term basis, with organizations such as L.O.V.E. which are on the front-line so-to-speak, and having a similar role with respect to at-risk neighbourhoods, the urban core areas and others, highlighted in the Roundtable report. The United Way by a combination of design and default (on the municipal government's part) has been a major quarterback for public engagement in social development. It has a strategic plan, namely an emphasis on community and a characterization of impact areas (developed out of their research / interviews with front-line services and non-profits). It has high standards and feedback assessment and reporting, and it substantially funds much of the voluntary sector in HRM. Were the municipality to take on a more expansive role in directly and indirectly (through social development) dealing with violence, crime, and public safety, there would be much to be learned from in partnering with the United Way.

Bernie Smith's Spring Garden Road Business Association has been pioneering a number of initiatives to respond positively to the problems of the homeless, the mentally ill and addicted, the problems of poverty, housing needs and societal reintegration and so on, for the young adults and others in the central areas of Halifax. He too suggested a more activist vision for the municipal government and argued that, based on his association's experience, there are partnerships among the municipality, the business and the voluntary sectors that can assist in implementing such a vision.

The Halifax Student Alliance discussed student experiences in the Downtown and the concern that university and college students in HRM had about violence and public safety. They reviewed some of their survey findings to date and emphasized the need for greater collaboration between the student organizations and the municipality, and for an improved and more trusting relationship with the local police.

Catherine Woodman, President and CEO, United Way (UW) made a presentation which indicated two essential points (among others) for the Roundtable concerns, namely the tremendous scale of the UW role in funding and working with agencies and other organizations that play a significant role in reducing violence and crime, and the focus of the UW effort on key social development issues, especially at the neighbourhood level. Woodman noted that the UW is the largest investor in HRM's social services and non-profit, non-governmental organizations (NGO) sector apart from the provincial government (the municipality gives nothing directly to the UW but its employees donate many dollars - "hundreds of thousands"- each year to the UW campaign). She indicated that the UW assists 130 programs within 52 agencies/services in HRM, "most of which deal directly with issues relating to crime and poverty in our community". The UW has filled a void in social services left in part by the municipal government sticking to its mandated areas which largely exclude social services. Ms Woodman observed that ten years ago (shortly after amalgamation and the cessation of a major municipal role in social services) the agency "moved away from an umbrella charity model to a more relevant community building organization making a real difference in this community [HRM]".

In the UW view, new partnerships are necessary and even if resources are limited there is much that can be done "as we have shown"; Woodman cited community action projects in Spryfield and now in urban core Dartmouth as examples of that success. In her view, the neighbourhood is the key unit and she identified the lessons they have learned for being more effective there, including support residents, build strength (e.g., hire) from within the neighbourhood, foster local leadership, collaborate across sectors, stay involved for a three to five year minimum, and be creative. The UW has a "Vibrant Community Strategy" that commits us to those neighbourhoods over five years". Another major current UW initiative is institutionalizing the 211 system; unlike the kindred 911 dialing, the 211 system aims at getting a 'live' person 24/7 to help people find existing social and health services. The UW and its collaborators in this endeavour are seeking provincial funding and hope that HRM would support the UW on this project. Overall, her main theme was the need for and value of working together and partnership ("We bring expertise, relationships, reputation and private and public donations to this table"). She urged the municipal government to become a more active player at the neighbourhood or community level, noting "With limited resources you must respect your mandate but we urge you not to be constrained by it".

Mr. Bernie Smith's presentation, The Spring Garden Road Experiences, started with the premise that business affairs in the Spring Garden Road area, and in HRM more generally, have been very negatively affected by violence and social disorder (e.g., vagrancy, aggressive panhandling), especially the public fears and definitions-of-the situation, and that it is in the interest of the stakeholders in the area, as well as reflecting their sense of public duty, to explore initiatives to rectify the situation. He identified a number of key social issues that must be tackled and called for great business-government collaboration to that end. He highlighted the need for an effective street presence (a "navigator" project similar to one in which his association has been involved) to channel people to the social services they need, for an effective assistance in employment (having government take over a successful pilot project of employing street people started by his organization), for the provision of more effective mental health and

addiction treatment services, providing transitional housing and a sheltered work environment (“the next step out from hostel accommodation as provided at Metro Turning Point”), re-thinking current public housing to provide adequate rental housing better integrated throughout the community, and eliminating the “projects” with their concentrations of problems. The Spring Garden Road Business Association has been quite active and Mr. Smith believes that this activity has improved the quality of life and business conditions in the area though changes in public perceptions may be slower to be realized. His priorities for supervised housing, especially for persons coming out of jail or “detox”, for a sheltered workshop for the homeless, and for better mental health and drug treatment (he appreciated the concept of drug treatment courts with their court-supervised rehabilitative treatment component) speak to a growing problem in HRM, for which at present there appears to be no strategy, whether enforcement of a Safe Street Act or social development, by government. His focus, too, transcends the preoccupation with youth. Mr. Smith called for greater coordination, a less “silo-ized” municipal management and an activist vision in the field of public safety. He suggested that an investment of one million dollars could impact up to 80% of the cases of street people and panhandlers in Halifax.

Elaine Williams, Executive Director of the Mulgrave Park Tenants Association. She mentioned that there were 343 units at Mulgrave Park and that she has been engaged in improving the quality of life there, with the tenants association, for five years. She spoke of the many assets that the community now has, including a family resource center, a breakfast program, school linkages, a basketball court, and an on-going beautification program (e.g., plants). She noted that “we have opened up the community; we’re a loving community”. Ms Williams noted that securing funds has always been challenging, especially writing funding proposals. With respect to the latter task she acknowledged assistance from the police and some university-based persons but she noted that there is no specific HRM body to consult with; it is crucial to identify the pockets of money and anything the municipal government can do to assist in that respect would be very helpful. As for the benefits of her association’s work, she indicated that there has been little vandalism of late and that, in addition to the low level of restorative justice referrals, there have been few police charges laid against Mulgrave Park youth.

She pointed out that the Mulgrave Park has recently received three year funding totaling \$244,000 - after having received one year funding earlier – from the National Crime Prevention Centre. Mulgrave Park secured a \$89,000 grant for a playground that they have installed, a project that required a further \$20,000 in fund-raising. The group also has received smaller funds for a basketball court (\$9000), and for beautification (\$10,000). Interestingly, the Association itself, despite the generally low income of the tenants, also raises money all the time via bingos, dances and the like (e.g., “the basketball court costs \$38k so we had to raise funds”). This helps cement a sense of ownership and community empowerment (it also compares favorably with the Lighthouse initiative in Winnipeg where neighbourhoods cost-share with government for maintaining special facilities for area youth to “hang out” in). Ms Williams also pointed to special partnership formed with businesses, such as the Sobey food chain which has contributed to the breakfast program for the past three years. Appropriate to the official recognition that her group has recently received, she conveyed a basic confidence and pride in the Association’s achievements and advanced a strong claim to have effected a positive self-image and to have reduced violence and crime. Ms Williams added that her group does network with similar bodies in other housing projects such as Uniacke Square. Her recommendations were that the

municipality maintain a directory or registry that could help associations such as her own streamline the process of finding funds. Although her own funding efforts have been successful, she was worried about reaching a “wall” in short-term funding, in that some funding agencies might consider that they have contributed enough to Mulgrave Park.

Mr. Rustum Southwell, CEO with the Black Business Initiative (BBI), made a presentation on that initiative. The BBI is a business development organization for the Black community. Its funding comes from the federal government and the provincial Office of Economic Development. The organization has been in operation for 12 years and has interesting programs in the fields of construction, investments and networking. Given the employment problems of many young Black males and the difficulty of Black offenders and ex-inmates of securing employment to facilitate their reintegration into community and society, it was considered important to invite him to present at the Roundtable. Mr. Southwell indicated that the (BBI), among other things, does provide alternatives to illegitimate activity. He noted that the BBI provides an environment for troubled youth to meet positive role models through various programs that have them involved in different activities, and to learn the skills and gather the financial knowledge required for operating a business. In the Black community in general, there is, he suggested, a lack of access to business-relevant information, to markets and to capital. In his view, problems such as poverty and social exclusion lead youth to get in trouble and the BBI programs seeks to address those issues in order to help them realize their dreams for positive futures. He did not make any explicit recommendations, but focused his presentation on several success stories, thus emphasizing the BBI as a program that can achieve positive results.

Mr. Southwell held that the focus should be on rehabilitation not punishment of offenders, especially juvenile offenders. He suggested that there is a poor quality of life in segments of the Black community (boredom, discontent) that are associated with poverty in a broad sense, including lack of opportunity due to false assumptions or stereotypes. This has led to a tendency to encourage male toughness alone which in turn impacts negatively on the youths’ lives. The BBI, he reported, acts as a support agency to address these issues, creating an environment for people who want to do better in society and, in the process, increase their self esteem and secure opportunity to realize themselves through work. The BBI, he claimed, has reached 200 youths across the province. BBI in its 12 years has created 500 jobs through the 150 to 200 companies worked with. Mr. Southwell, then, discussed some of the success stories for BBI, generally highlighting cases of successful Black entrepreneurs: “They utilized the business-plan-making skills learned from the program to materialize their dreams”. Asked how important is it for Black people to go into businesses and institutions and see themselves (i.e., other Black persons), Mr. Southwell commented that “People want to know who their supporters are, and it is important for businesses to realize that. Seeing other Blacks encourages people with good role models and opportunities”. Asked whether the BBI has any programs to facilitate re-entry of Black offenders into society, he indicated that “We have nothing designed specifically for it but we do work with offenders to help them re-integrate into society. There was a separate program called “Center for Entrepreneurship and Second Chance Program” that dealt with re-integrating offenders. We sent our people there to speak with them”.

The Halifax Student Alliance, representing the universities and colleges in HRM, made a presentation on Student Perspectives on Public Safety. The presenters, citing recent

documentation, reported that “Halifax has 81.1 post-secondary students per 1000 population, three times the national average”, that 38% of the university/college enrollment is from out-of-province, if not International, that International students alone bring \$100 million annually to the local economy, and that the HRM universities and colleges account for minimally 2.5% of its economy and 5% of its employment. They also cited a recent ACOA report which indicated that 51% of the International students identified safety as a major reason for their coming to Halifax, slightly more than the 46% who cited ‘costs’. The students went on to describe the survey they completed in collaboration with the Roundtable leader. These results will not be discussed here since a much more detailed account of the data set (actually a significantly larger data set) is provided in Supplemental Report # 3, The Students Survey). The survey, using a slightly modified version of the questionnaire used in the telephone and mail-back surveys discussed in Supplemental Reports # 1 and 2, was administered on the Internet and enjoyed a huge response rate, indicative perhaps of the concern students had about the issue of violence and public safety, especially in the Downtown. The presenters strongly stated that ‘we want more collaboration with the municipality’. It was suggested that students can play an active role in the community, especially with the incentive of academic credit for community involvement.

Asked about how the police should deal with students given that “last spring 350 students were charged by the HRPS”, the student presenters were not enthused about a suggestion that perhaps a University discipline code might be developed for off-campus behaviour. The student representatives believed that such matters should be handled on a case by case basis. They did call for more partnerships and collaboration between students and police, and more bridging of the relationship between the university and the community. Asked about the Antigonish restorative justice program where the university, student council, RCMP and community members deal with minor offenses by students, the representatives expressed interest but knew nothing about that initiative.

E. MACRO PERSPECTIVES

These presentations each involved larger issues that are crucial for the Roundtable, namely the evolution of the Justice system, urban planning, and the mandate of HRM as a municipal government. Dr. Carrigan discussed the evolution of justice policy and practice. In his view the recent changes with respect to the YCJA, conditional sentencing, and restrictions on incarceration have not been effective and it is time for a re-emphasis on law and order and stiffer sentencing practices. In that regard, he held that the Justice system would become more congruent with the views of the general public which has lost confidence in the Justice system. At the same time, Dr. Carrigan emphasized the need for affordable, accessible facilities in the community for youths and adults, especially opening up the schools’ facilities after hours. With respect to the role of the municipality he suggested it stay within its legislated mandate. Professor Palermo, acknowledging the high level of fear and worry about victimization in central HRM, emphasized the importance of quality of life as the goal of HRM planning and the need to plan for community and civility by greater peopling of areas such as the Downtown and indeed by having several Downtowns in the urban core. He held that the crime prevention through environmental design approach could and should be implemented or enhanced throughout HRM. Like several other presenters, he emphasized too the importance of affordable housing. Professor

Jack Novack discussed the role and mandate of municipalities in Nova Scotia, noting that HRM should not be hemmed in by its legal mandate since it also has a broader mandate from the public to direct and coordinate vis-à-vis violence and crime. He acknowledged the difficulties of doing so given the disparate agendas that reflect the structure of the municipal council but suggested that effective leadership coupled with a more sophisticated public management model could produce results.

Owen Carrigan, Professor Emeritus and former President, Saint Mary's University, and historian specializing in crime and justice provided an overview of justice issues. He emphasized that government policies in recent years have resulted in a move away from incarceration but that the restorative justice and house arrests programs offered as alternatives have not been seen as a deterrent by the public. Sometimes, he argued, when we are trying to solve problems we actually make the issues more complex; there are simple solutions to the problems of youth crime and other violence. He suggested, "Look to the "public square" for solutions, which can be common sense solutions". He posited that the objectives of the Criminal Justice System are punishment and deterrence and, in his view, law and order are what is needed in HRM. He held that drugs are a huge problem in HRM and are the key to street crime, so it is important if there is to be a deterrent that those engaged in that criminal activity are not given bail and are given longer sentences upon being found guilty. He also supported the use of cameras as a crime prevention strategy and suggested curfews could be helpful and an aid to parents. With respect to university students responsible for assaults and serious vandalism, and a significant problem for crime in the city, often though not only in conjunction with alcohol abuse, he held that tougher sanctions and a greater police presence around and off-campus are necessary. On the social development side, he advanced the idea of keeping the schools open after hours for non-athletic activities such as arts, dancing, and music, as well as sports; he emphasized the role of schools as community centers. He identified pools of potential volunteers available to supervise and help out at these facilities such as the retirees as well as the university students. Professor Carrigan's general advice with respect to the municipality's role in dealing with violence and public safety was "Concentrate on what might be done with modest resources and leave the rest to other levels of government". Professor Carrigan considered that there might be merit in starting an auxiliary police service to effect greater police presence on the street.

Frank Palermo, Professor Urban Design, Dalhousie University made a presentation entitled "*City Planning, Design and Public Safety*". **Palermo** talked mainly about the Downtown and noted that safe streets refer as much to quality of life as to economic viability. In the type of space we create on the street, safety is paramount. We build a vibrant city when people feel secure in their daily life on the street. The cities that will thrive will be the ones where people want to live. Quality of life is very important; people want to live in an enriching environment, not one of fear. He noted that in the Industrial Revolution people followed jobs whereas now jobs follow people. He urged that HRM create multiple Downtowns - The Central Urban Areas need to be built as a multitude of Downtowns – which itself could be a public safety initiative. He acknowledged that the fear of the Downtown is scary and common among his friends too but Halifax's Downtown is a place of celebration, "a vibrant theatre", and that is important so do not destroy it. He adopted the Jane Jacobs' approach emphasizing the connection between peopling the area and enhancing its civility (i.e., safety in numbers and people looking out for one another). He held that HRM should begin to envisage Halifax as a 24-hour city which never shuts down.

There should be 24 hour public transit. His position was “People are looking for stuff to do in the wee hours of the morning, give them stuff to do and they might not resort to deviant and destructive behaviour. Provide incentives in infrastructure, recreation and on the institutional level”.

He believed that we should not see homeless people in the area as a threat but homelessness is a key issue in the perception and reality of city safety. There is a huge economic cost to homelessness, and there will be saving in the end if homelessness is relieved. Like other presenters, he held that supportive housing is essential and rather than worrying about sorting the people, the position should be “supportive housing first”. He agreed with a questioner who commented that assets such as lanes and parks seem increasingly over the years to have become viewed as liabilities. He advanced the view that “hot spots” such as the Commons, Downtown, alley ways and so on could be improved considerably with respect to public safety with some attention to design factors. In his view, the cost of inaction is more than the cost of action. Halifax is at a tipping point and as a result it is starting to be perceived as a scary and dangerous place. Among his other suggestions were “opening schools as community centers would be helpful, as would an open design that did not create dead ends, small alleys and short go-nowhere side streets” and “the concentration of bars in Downtown core are not necessarily a problem; it’s the distance they are from the people who are coming into the city simply for the sake of partying. There are “ghettos of single use” all over the city. Segregation of uses does not foster a sense of community. We need to be “artful” in land use. It’s about caring for your setting... taking pride in your neighborhood... that’s what being part of a community is all about”.

Jack Novack, Professor, Continuing Education, Dalhousie and expert in municipal affairs gave a presentation on the role of the municipal government with respect to issues such as violence. He discussed, in turn, leadership, new public management, and the integrative nature of policy. Concerning leadership, he observed that there are legal and required areas but also political areas where expectations are the driver. In his view “the municipalities have been complicit in their own demise”. Municipalities are too quick to pass the buck to health and education and justice at the provincial level. Municipalities have the power to act, but they do not. He noted that they pay the province about 25% of their property tax revenue for their educational system and that Nova Scotia and HRM have the highest property tax in the country. A vision is needed to get beyond the legally required or permitted and, to do that, “there will have to be decisions about what to include and what to drop”. This process is difficult in an amorphous municipal council such as HRM where there is no party discipline. Effective persuasion is required. The nature of municipal governance is such that it has a weak executive function, with individual actors all representing individual agendas. The municipalities can exercise power, and they do not need institutionalization or legislation to do so. They could move from the power of law to the power of persuasion. It should never be the minimum amount of effort required by law.

Professor Novack observed that there needs to be a new model of public management, one that has a front end (policy analysis) a back end (program evaluation) and whatever works in between. Over and over the form changes, but the behaviours go unaltered. The scope and skill of the municipal government needs to evolve to include social workers, geographers and policy

analysts. In discussing the integrative nature of policy, he emphasized that 50% of the time, the senior managers of the various municipal departments need to see themselves, and act like, part of a senior management team, not just focus on their own bureaucracy. The challenges he especially identified for HRM in responding to violence and crime would include developing a strategy for determining how the various departments could contribute and how other governments and local organizations might play a role as well. Asked about the Charter being pursued for HRM and apparently agreed to in principle by the provincial government, Novack held that obtaining the Charter would be enabling and would avoid HRM being lumped in with the rest of the province. He noted that in Alberta the bigger urban areas are considered different from the other municipal governments.

**MAYORS ROUNDTABLE ON VIOLENCE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
HALIFAX CITY HALL
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 15, 2007**

**PRESENTATION BY
CATHERINE J. WOODMAN,
PRESIDENT & CEO
UNITED WAY OF HALIFAX REGION**

Presentation to Mayors Roundtable on Violence
Thursday November 15, 2007

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you this afternoon. I am joined here today by United Way Board of Directors, Vice Chair Candace Stevenson.

Leave out Violence (L.O.V.E) is a community based agency United Way funds. The mandate is to reduce violence in youth by building a team of youth who communicate a message of non-violence. These youth have been victims, perpetrators or witnesses to violence.

These are the words of one youth in our community who recently published her thoughts in L.O.V.E's newsletter

I AM SCARED

I am scared of getting beat up
I am scared of my dreams
I am scared of my Dad
I am scared of growing up to be a crack head like my Mom
I am scared of growing up
I am scared to die at such a young age
I am scared of getting tazed again
I am scared of a lot of things
I am scared of rating
I am scared of my family
I am scared to go to jail
I am scared to screw up on my house arrest
I am scared of my friends
I am just scared of a lot of things

If we expect this youth to overcome fears we have to overcome our own. We have to be courageous and we have to take risks to better this community. We're fortunate that we can draw strength from each other and we can attack the issue of violence in this community with hands held together.

Next to the provincial government, United Way is the largest investor in this city's social service and voluntary sector. Our work affords us a spectacular vantage point. We're privileged to have many diverse relationships extending across 1000 private and public workplaces, (through our annual campaign) to a network of community agencies and volunteer associations across this city. We are not only well positioned but we have the will to think big and to think across sectors to unite issues with solutions.

Eighty years ago United Way was created by residents who took responsibility for themselves and for each other. Original and unique at that time, these are the principals we continue to espouse.

Ten years ago, we were inspired through a broad, Halifax citizen based consultation process to redefine our work. We were urged to move away from an umbrella charity model to a more relevant community building organization making a real, lasting difference in this community. We embrace three principals: focus on measures and outcomes; build on strengths; and seek lasting, systemic change. This remains our philosophy. These values permeate our daily work.

Agencies:

Today, we fund more than a hot meal. We enable a warm welcome

We support peer groups who build new skills toward employment, shelters that do more than provide warm beds. Seniors and young children grow food in a community garden, teenagers shine in a music program designed to build confidence and struggling families find the strength to overcome obstacles to realize their goals.

We're funding 130 programs within 52 agencies – most of which deal directly with issues relating to crime and poverty in our community. These include Leave Out Violence, Metro Turning Point, Stepping Stone, Alice Housing, Gay Lesbian Youth Project, Elizabeth Fry Society, Community Justice Society, Saint George's Youth Net, numerous housing associations, Boys and Girls Clubs and community centres. By measuring outcomes, we know these programs provide necessary support to individuals and families living in poverty and attempting to overcome violence.

We're convinced that issues of poverty and violence have to be addressed at the broader community level and not solely at the individual level. They are complex issues that require more than a single response. They require broad, creative and sometimes bold partnerships which may extend beyond the municipal governance mandate but sit well within the hopes and expectations our HRM residents.

We urge you to embrace new and well conceived partnerships across different sectors with individuals and organizations who share a common understanding and desire to make an impactful difference our communities. With limited resources we know you must respect your mandate but we urge you not to be constrained by it.

United Way and our supported agencies have vast experience working with limited resources to achieve our mandates. We have learned to forge new and flexible partnerships to achieve outcomes. We've also learned that community change can only happen when a variety of strategies are focused on an issue. We urge HRM to benefit from this experience.

Secondly, focus on Neighbourhoods:

In step with current community impact research, we've expanded our attention to include **neighbourhoods**. You may have heard of **Action for Neighbourhood Change in Spryfield and now in Dartmouth North**.

Current research will tell you that neighbourhood characteristics have the most impact on juvenile behaviour.... As much or more than family characteristics.

We've been fueling dialogue and constructive exchanges within Spryfield so that residents can identify ways to create positive, lasting change in their space. United Way works with resident leaders to identify specific goals and measures. We also we convene government, institutions and businesses to respond to those goals.

Our learnings tell us that no matter what the challenges: crime, homelessness, hopelessness, the place to start is the same: The neighbourhood. When neighbours know neighbours the neighbourhood is healthier, safer, and a more active place.

Our approach is to engage and mobilize a community by building critical relationships with citizens. Next we work with residents to plan for impact. Together we focus on underlying causes, measurement and evaluation, communication and community level outcomes. Finally, we recruit and engage institutional resources to impact and we work to develop and sustain donor support.

Based on our recent practice coupled by United Way work in Vancouver, Regina, Thunder Bay, and Toronto we have some "best practices" to offer.

- Support residents as they address issues they care most about
- Build the strength (e.g. hire) from within the neighbourhood
- Foster and build internal (resident) leadership
- Build collaboration across the sectors (private, government, social)
- Stay involved (3-5 years minimum)
- Be creative, resourceful, flexible and adjust with changing circumstances

This United Way has a "Vibrant Community Strategy" that commits us to three neighbourhoods over five years. We will renew and extend that if we continue to be successful and to retain HRM support. We bring expertise, relationships, reputation and private and public donations to this table.

Finally, we ask you to support access to services to impact safety and self sufficiency.

To foster systemic change to community conditions United Way is aggressively tackling the fact that it's too hard for people to find the help they need. We've made 211 our cause.

211 is a telephone number that provides centralized access to all community, social and health services. 211 will make it easier to get help and give help. 211 will strengthen not-for profit

and government services by helping us provide better information, better service and better referrals.

And 211 offers something very rare today... the simple humanity of a live person on the other end of the phone 24/7. 211 helps people help themselves...particularly those who are most vulnerable.

This service exists in Toronto, Calgary, and Edmonton. This month it will be available in Ottawa and Quebec City. This United Way is now leading over 170 other community based Nova Scotia organizations within the social sector asking our provincial government to fund this initiative and launch this service across the province.

This kind of coordinated, integrated solution fosters self-reliance, improves local knowledge, makes a measurable difference and reinforces the social safety net giving hope and help through a rapid and humane response to individuals seeking help.

While this should be a provincial service we believe HRM should demonstrate support and leadership. We ask you to augment our discussions with the province by adding your voice.

In summary, we ask you to use a collaborative, "place-based" approach to addressing violence by partnering with United Way and other likeminded organizations that place the residents' objectives above all others and who foster connection between neighbours. We ask that you commit to longer-term solutions with time horizons of greater than three years.

We recommend you recognize the an opportunity for government to engage in a formidable partnership with organizations who are uniquely positioned with long standing relationships across private, public and voluntary sectors and who are equipped, motivated and capable of helping to building an extraordinary community.

And we ask you to join us in gaining provincial government support for 211.

Let's not be "scared" to work together and across silos, despite differing styles and approaches. Let's find and focus on our common purpose and single intent. A safe supportive community is everyone's responsibility.

We thank you for your time.

Bernie Smith

Lessons from Spring Garden

Why would a business association start working with a street population? It is because Halifax and Dartmouth are losing business and suffering financially due to the obvious vagrancy, loitering and untidiness in the central areas. This loss of money is as a result of lost sales (which we estimate as between 8 and 10 millions annually in the Spring Garden Area alone) but costs go beyond this to impact the whole of the Halifax Regional Municipality. That is because the central areas of this municipality are its focus for the HRM community and the Province as a whole. The greater Halifax partnership and the wider business community generally is concerned at the impression that the present situation creates. This is the backdrop for our marketing, tourism and convention business, which combined, have an impact on the whole Province and clearly all of HRM. These situations must be resolved, but beyond immediate matters, we have become aware of a number of fundamentals that we believe must be dealt with.

1) An Effective Presence at Street-Level

We believe that there are people on the street suffering the degradation and inconvenience that these situations entail, simply because they don't know where to go for help. A street-level presence could solve some of these problems and more effectively use those services that we do have available.

2) Assistance with Employment

One of the best programs that we have developed and one which has been proven effective in placing numbers of street people back into employment is one whereby we pay a subsistence support payment of \$12.00 per day during the period of employment start-up. Many poor

which must be broadly dealt with. Spring Garden is showing the way, Government must take this over.

3) Mental Health Services

Mental health services and especially those for children are seriously inadequate. It is hard for a parent to accept that their child is showing behavioral abnormality but it is even harder to be faced with an 18-month wait before reaching treatment. It would be interesting to know how many of the young adults who have contributed to the present safety concerns had previously been identified with early mental health problems. This inadequacy of mental health treatment cannot be allowed to continue. To allow a flow of badly adjusted young persons to imperil our society is a serious and totally unacceptable situation. We must pressure the Provincial Department of health to initiate a restructuring and an enhancement of mental health services for adults but especially for children.

4) Addiction Treatment Services

Much of the petty crime and occasionally very serious crime is committed in order to support addiction. Present addiction treatments are not proving effective for seriously addicted persons. Much of the residential treatment- which is difficult to get in to in the first place, results in a four or five day "drying out". We are aware of examples of addicts having passed through the presently available addiction treatments several times. In fact, one addicted person claims to have been through treatment eight or ten times. The present treatment is clearly not working for this person. Much longer periods of treatment are required for long-term addiction cases, anything less is a waste of money. Even if the duration of addiction treatment courses was extended to the point where the addictions were successfully treated, challenges would still remain that might return the patient to their previous lifestyle. There are further pressures that contribute to the likelihood of return to the previous addicted lifestyle. A person returning to society from jail faces serious challenges in finding housing and employment, breaking away from previous friends and acquaintances presents further challenges. All too readily, persons in this situation, slip back into their old lifestyle (and

probably the same housing arrangement) that lead to their addicted and/ or incarceration in the first place.

5) The Need for Transitional Housing and a Sheltered Work Environment

There is a pressing need for supervised housing and a supervised transitional work environment that will assist in breaking the cycle of addiction and trouble with the law that results from repeated exposure to a previous flawed lifestyle. These same facilities are also needed as a “next step” out from hostel accommodation (Turning Point etc.). At present, there is virtually no next housing stop nor is there sufficient supervised work capacity to provide a route back into society for the disadvantaged.

6) Public Housing

This form of housing has utterly failed in its objectives, yet it appears to be socially and politically unacceptable to discuss this failure. Family Public housing has largely not worked as a means to assist low-income families in advancing up in the social fabric and achieving self-sufficiency. In fact, public housing, by putting people, many with shared problems, into one place, has ghetto-ized and isolated a segment of our society.

Like most generalizations, this is not entirely true. Some people have moved up and out from public housing, but the majority have not, and we have in many instances bred a culture of dependency which continues from one generation to the next. By putting many people with the same social challenges into one place, we restrict the range of role models for the youth of the area. The role model is not the lawyer or doctor who “made it”; he or she has generally moved away, it is instead, the drug dealer with the gun and shiny new Mustang who is, all too frequently, the role model. The very fact that the successful people move out and away upon achieving success virtually guarantees elimination of positive role models. While generally failing to provide the path to better levels of education, housing and employment, this housing continues to be some of the most expensive in the community. This fact appeared not to be an acceptable subject for discussion. Ten years ago, family units of public housing (senior citizen units are generally achieving their goals and are not a part of this discussion) were costing close to \$1000 per unit per month in subsidy. Could it be wrong to

assume that the costs might have risen by 20% in the intervening period? In addition, the average family was paying something between \$250 and \$300 per month in rent. It is not unreasonable to assume a \$300.00 figure at this time. If we add these entirely reasonable assumptions together, we get an average cost per family unit per month of \$1500.00. Surely we could provide adequate rental housing in the community on a more cost effective basis while getting better integration into society as a bonus! I suggest we could do it at 60% of the present cost.

One of the arguments put forward against changing this situation is that “we can’t take away all of those units of housing”. This is a ridiculous argument. Firstly, NO units of housing would be taken away. They should be sold with first refusal to the present tenants, giving some recognition to years of tenancy (for example 10% of all rents paid being returned to become part of the down payment). As a result, the total number of units of housing would remain unchanged while, in fact, numbers of units (carefully sited and distributed throughout the community) could be added if the flow of funds recovered from the sale of units was recycled into new housing in the community. This return of invested capital would be accompanied by a much-reduced requirement for subsidy funds (and therefore a savings of funds).

The reasons for inaction on this issue are open to debate and interpretation. One of the objections that might be a concern is a sudden flood of social housing occupants on to the rental market. This should not be a great problem, since the flow would take place over a reasonably protracted period to accommodate sales to tenants wherever possible.

The most likely reason for continuance of this very unsatisfactory program is simply that funding is provided via a shared Federal/ Provincial program which has become enshrined as a given over the years. The program may not have been subjected to an overall program effectiveness assessment and evaluation. Finding another way by which to provide suitable scattered accommodation to this client group may also present a challenge. Under most circumstances, it would be less expensive and give better results to subsidize rents in the

normal rental market for those in need of housing. The present family Public Housing tenants who do not purchase their public housing units would fall into this category. There would need to be a program subsidy ceiling set establishing the maximum rental to which the housing support program would contribute. An alternative, which could be examined, would be support through the Child Tax Credit Program.

Under almost any set of circumstances, this very expensive and totally counter productive housing should be re-used to better effect. Simply stated, a public housing address on a job application at the present time in this city is almost a guarantee of not being hired and consequently of unemployment. This clearly exacerbates the situation.

These family public housing units represent about 4% of the total housing stock in the HRM urban areas. Recent off-the-record discussions with the Police Dept. established that calls/ responses/ interventions etc. with people living in public housing ***represent more than 50% of all police activity***. Now, if 4% of the dwellings occasion more than 50% of police response doesn't that tell us something?!

Presentation 3 - John LeBlanc, IWK

**Halifax Regional Municipality Mayor's Roundtable on Violence & Public Safety:
17 November 2007**

City Hall

A Child-Centred Approach to Violence Prevention

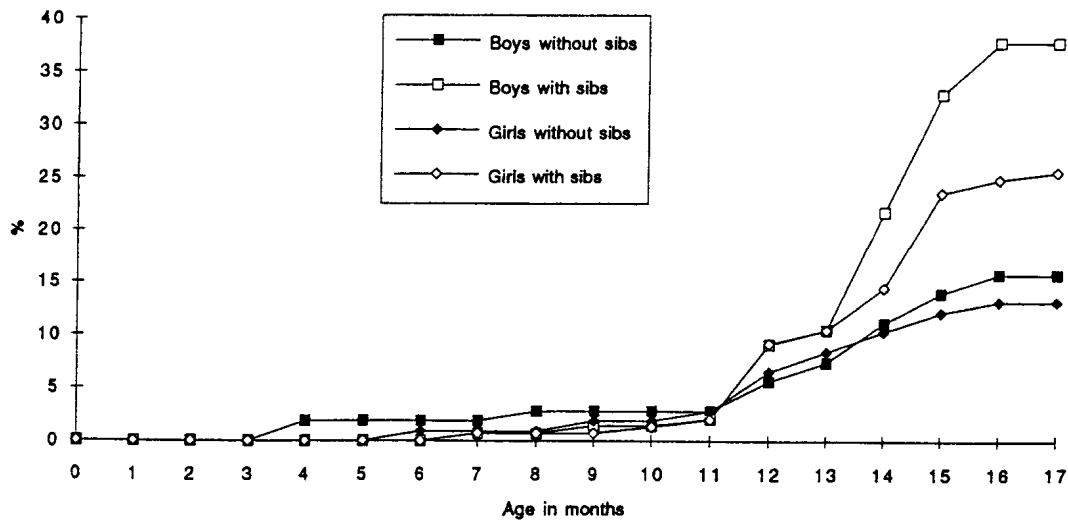
John C. LeBlanc, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Associate Professor,
Departments of Pediatrics and Psychiatry,
Dalhousie University
Pediatrician, IWK Health Centre
16 November 2007

Introduction

First of all, I would like to thank the mayor for initiating and sustaining this Roundtable on violence. The roles that family and community in early and middle childhood raised in the stakeholder meeting I attended and in the presentations this morning to the roundtable panel are critical to its success. I would like to focus on that and review some research that gives us insight into the biological and social aspects of human aggression and violence. These will help us develop even more effective strategies that will help keep Halifax Regional Municipality the healthy flourishing community it is.

Aggression as a human trait

Aggression has roots in infancy. This has been recognized at least back to St. Augustine. As early as A.D. 471, he recognized the innocence of children came not from their intent, (*which, as any parent knows, can be hostile*), but from the weakness of their limbs! Aggression in infants and toddlers has been documented in several studies, and I will provide a simple illustration, the age at which children start to kick.



(Tremblay RE, 1999: 511 maternal reports on 11 physically aggressive behaviours in 17 month-old children. Slightly better-educated and higher income compared to population-based sample. Questions were developed by Tremblay for the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth)

Aggression has both biological and social roots. Let's look at these in turn. The growth of the brain is influenced by the environment. Neurophysiologists have a saying, "neurons that fire together, wire together." Consider as an example, the eye. If a child has a strabismus, also known as a squint or a "crooked eye", the brain has to deal with a different picture from each eye. It therefore suppresses the picture from the eye that can't fix on what the child wants to see. The treatment is to force the brain to use the crooked eye by putting a patch on the good or seeing eye. However, if you don't do that in early childhood, the child's vision will be permanently damaged *even if* the crookedness is fixed in later childhood, for example by surgery. This is because the brain needs normal vision from both eyes during early childhood in order for the parts of the brain that "see" to develop properly. There is an important lesson in this; you have to work with the brain's normal growth pattern at the very time it is growing, in order to make the most effective long lasting changes. This is now recognized for behaviour as well. For example, it has been shown with functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI scan) that the brains of children who are chronically abused are different from those that are not. The irony is that many adults minimize the impact of chronic maltreatment on young children, believing that children are most resilient at a time when they are actually most vulnerable. Unfortunately this has carried over into policy. Most of the research dollars dealing with the impact of trauma has focused on adolescents and adults, not on infants and children (Perry, B., R. Pollard, et al. (1995). "Childhood Trauma, the Neurobiology of Adaptation, and "Use-dependent" Development of the Brain: How "States" Become "Traits"." Infant Mental Health Journal 16:4).

Development of aggression over time

Here are some important observations from research studies on violence:

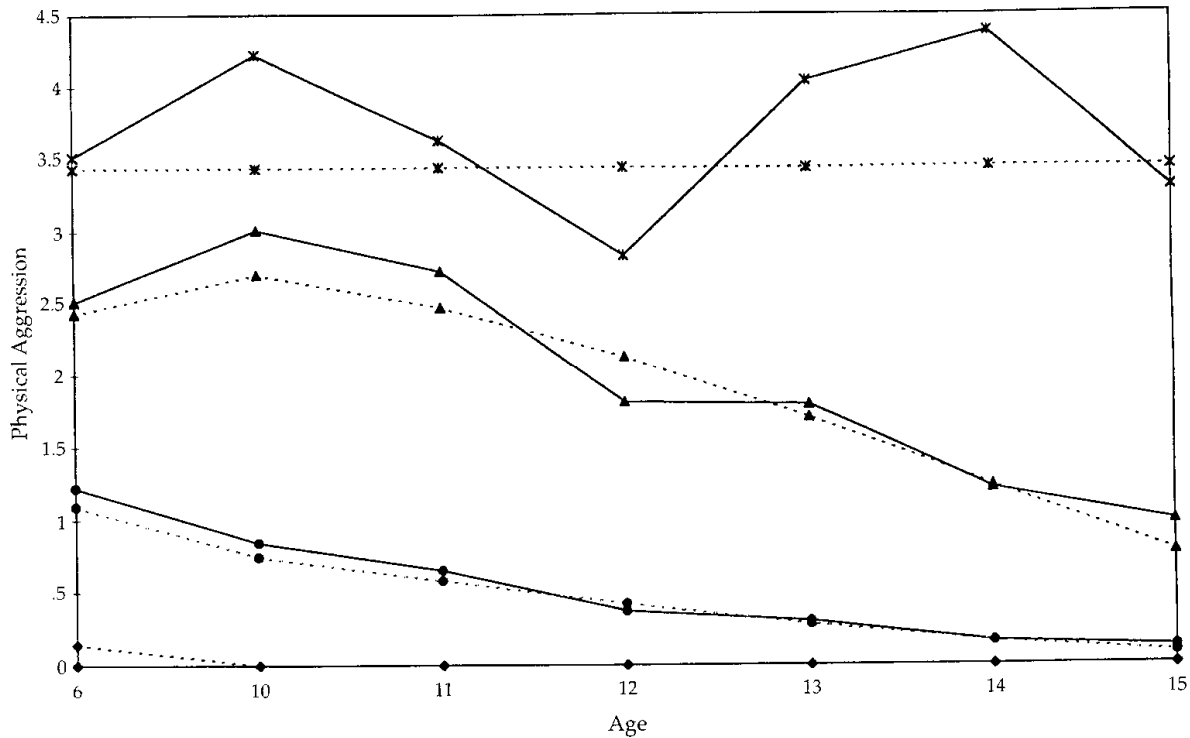
1. Physical aggression peaks in infancy and diminishes significantly in most children
2. Almost all violent youths were aggressive as young children
3. But note that most aggressive young children do not become violent. We must not be pessimistic about aggressive children.
4. There are large differences among children

In informative study, physical aggression in school was tracked in a group of 1,037 boys from 6 to 15 years of age. Four patterns of physical aggression were seen and are shown in the figure below: 1: 5% of boys had aggression that started at age 6 and continued until the last measurement at age 15, 2: another 20-30% were initially aggressive but improved, 3: about 50% showed moderate but also decreasing aggression over time and 4: about 15-25% had no aggression. The researchers also showed that the rate of court-documented juvenile infractions to age 18 was about 100 times higher in the chronic aggression compared to the no aggression group.

What distinguishes boys who persist? None of these psychological characteristics:
NOT IQ,
NOT high opposition,
NOT high hyperactivity.

The only two distinguishing features were age of onset of pregnancy (e.g., teen mothers) and < 9 years of education in the mother. This offers us insights for designing interventions.

(Nagin D, Tremblay RE. Trajectories of boys' physical aggression, opposition, and hyperactivity on the path to physically violent and non-violent juvenile delinquency. *Child Dev* 1999;70(5):1181-1196.)



Interventions: what works

Now let me turn to some studies that shows what helps.

Early Childhood Education

There is a lot of evidence that early childhood interventions for at-risk children have long-term benefits for those children and for society. With these interventions there is a reduction in violence during adolescence and adulthood and higher rates of employment and marriage among the children who received these interventions.

What are these interventions? They include support for families, especially single parents, and provision of nurturing and stimulating environments for children, especially for those who do not have such environments at home.

Both centre-based and home visiting programs have been shown to work and are employed by public health and education agencies though not nearly to the extent that is required in Canada. Nova Scotia Public Health has a screening program that identifies families at risk at birth and offers voluntary home visiting programs for the first few years of life. This provincial program may be a natural partner for HRM.

Canadian municipalities are far behind in providing these services compared to Scandinavian countries. Rates of utilization by Norwegian children aged 1-5 range from 60-75% and most ECD workers have university degrees (Alvestad, M. and I. P. Samuelsson (1999). "A Comparison of the National Preschool Curricula in Norway and Sweden." *Early Childhood Research and Practice* 1:2).

Scandinavian communities have recognized that physically and socially healthy children create healthy communities and have therefore put considerable resources into these programs.

Positive Youth Development

My message here is three fold:

1. "Just Say No! Is Not Enough":
2. Programs that emphasize development of assets work best
3. remember the five C's.

In the 1970s and 80s, most youth development programs focused on specific negative behaviours, e.g., avoidance of drugs, reduction in unintended pregnancy. During the 1990s, many prevention scientists recognized that these approaches had limited impact; youth could not simply be sheltered from all of the negative influences that they would face in their lives and a program that focused on the one or two negative behaviours was not going to carry over to other negative behaviours. In the words of one youth Advocate, Karen Pittman from the Forum for Youth Investment, "A problem-free youth is not a fully prepared youth." Positive Youth Development (PYD) is the general framework for programs that emphasize development of assets rather than correction or prevention of deficiencies.

This has been succinctly summarized as the five C's:

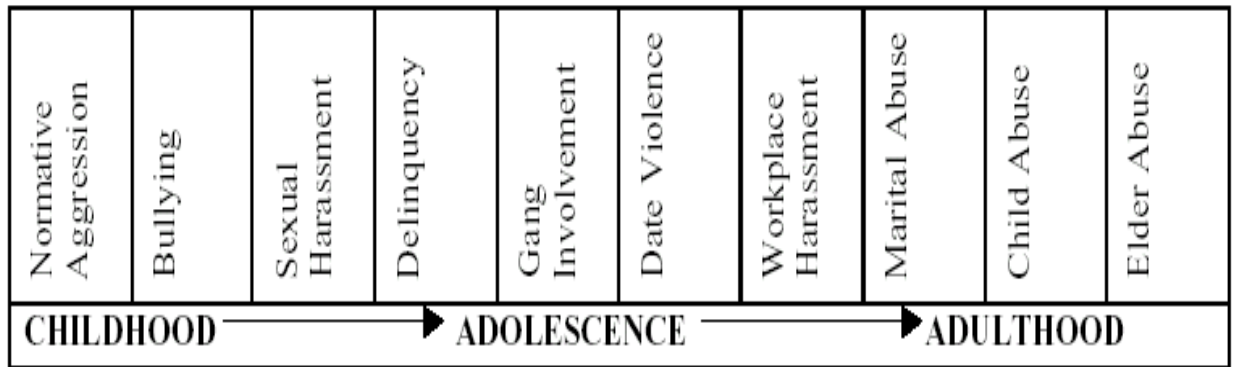
1. competence,
2. confidence,
3. character,
4. connection (to family friends and peers) and
5. compassion/caring.

Youth who develop assets are more civic-minded and engaged in their communities than youth who are not. There have been at least 25 well-done studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of PYD approaches.

Bullying prevention

Next week is Bullying Awareness week. It is therefore timely to raise this issue and it is one in which I am actively engaged as a researcher and as an executive member of a Canadian National Centre of Excellence called PREVNet, or Promoting Relationship and Preventing Violence (www.prevnet.ca). This is dedicated to helping Canadian researchers, policy-makers and front-line workers collaborate on optimizing human development, improving relationships and preventing violence in Canadian society).

Bullying is a serious issue that can result in mental illness, school failure, and rarely, suicide. As illustrated in the figure below, it pervades not only school life but male-female relationships in adolescence and adulthood, the workplace, and settings where we care for our elderly.



(Pepler, D. and W. Craig (2000). Making a Difference in Bullying. Toronto, LaMarsh Centre for Research on Violence and Conflict Resolution, York University)

I would like to talk briefly about some major features of modern evidence-based bullying prevention programs now being used in Australia, North American, and European schools. My message is peers are central. An example of an effective peer-initiated program is the recent pink t-shirt movement in Nova Scotia. I don't believe that this could have succeeded 10 years ago because schools and society were not ready to accept that bullying had serious consequences and was not appropriate behaviour in any setting.

Why are peers important?

First, there will never be enough adults to monitor all areas in which bullying occurs.

Second, peers that witness bullying can either reinforce it or discourage it. They do this by actively joining in the bullying, by being a supporting audience member or, on to good effect, by not being an encouraging witness and ideally, by actually standing up for the victim.

There are also different strategies to deal with specific bullying incidents when they occur. The "no blame approach" eschews trying to find out who did what to whom, an often impossible job, and emphasizes engaging fellow students to help the child who is being victimized.

What can HRM do?

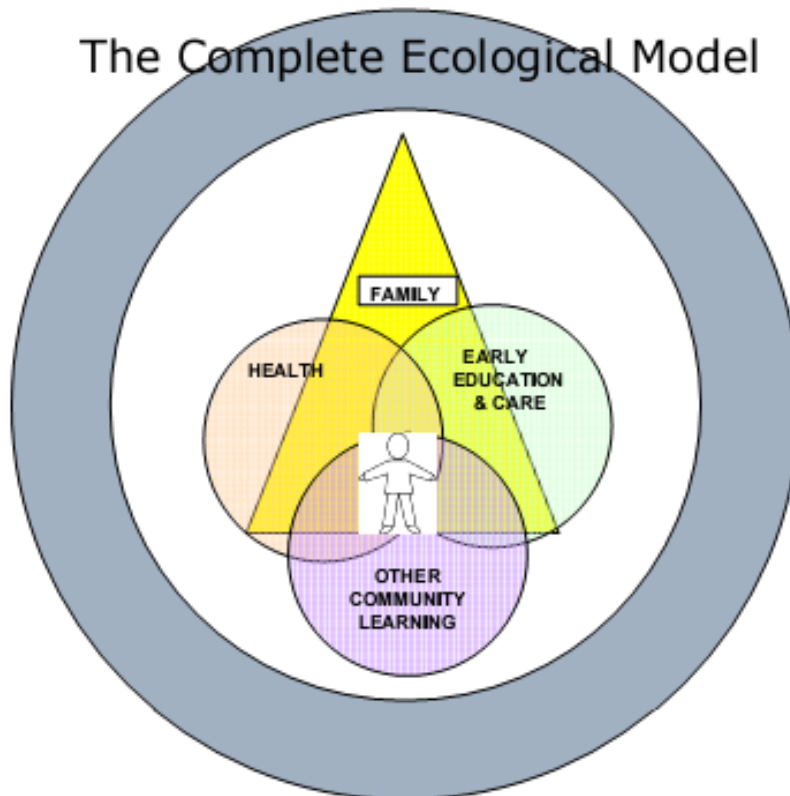
Short-term gains are rewarding and in fact necessary to encourage ongoing commitment but the vision must be long-term change over decades. The biggest bang for the buck has been shown for programs directed to preschool children, traditionally the area where the least money is spent. Of course, we can't ignore older children and youth but we can prioritize where our limited resources should go based on where we think we as a community can have the most impact. Having an appropriate conceptual model and a matrix of activities can help chart a forward course.

The need for a conceptual model

Just as a municipality uses models to plan for future transportation, changes in population, and business development, models for child development and violence prevention will help frame the

various services and programs offered by HRM into a coherent picture. Otherwise, there is a risk of simply assembling a long to-do list that satisfies various stakeholder desires. There may be little long-term impact because of fragmentation and diffusion of efforts into too many directions. Here is a basic and well-known model that often serves as the foundation for devising social strategies. It is called the Bronfenbrenner ecological model of child development. It is child-centred, i.e., focused on developing children into complete and active citizens. An adult-centred model may be more concerned with immediate fears of violence and safety. In the absence of an explicit model, policy-makers and those who devise specific strategies are relying on the beliefs they have developed over the years but may not have discussed with others or tested against what is known.

The Complete Ecological Model



Matrix of action

Putting activities into a matrix such as the following helps ensure that activities are not overly concentrated in one age group or in one area of prevention or control. For example, there is a tendency for violence prevention initiatives to place a lot of emphasis on controlling violence in adolescence and adulthood. Putting the activities in a chart such as the following will help policymakers decide where the priorities are.

Specific Activities for HRM

I would like to add some specific directions that I think are important for HRM to consider in its violence prevention activities.

1. No level of government or sector of society can do this alone, therefore collaboration is key:
 - a) Department Of Health: Work with Public Health to ensure municipally-provided resources are known to and available to families who receive home visits
 - b) Department Of Education: elementary schools are ideal venues to identify children and families at risk. HRM may be able to provide resources, e.g., transportation or municipal social services that can be delivered in schools or in collaboration with school personnel
 - c) HRM Police: police play key roles in prevention, protection and monitoring.
 - i) Programs undertaken by police should emphasize building trust in children and youth and in communicating their special knowledge in areas such as protection against predators (in the community or online).
 - ii) Long-term change in violence will require collaboration with other agencies such as schools and community groups. Changing the culture of violence requires continuous involvement and will not be done by periodic education sessions.
 - iii) Police records are useful indicators of trends over times and, with due attention to confidentiality, should be used to track the progress of HRM crime prevention activities.
2. Public money is limited but it can be leveraged by combining it with community volunteers and business partners. The small and large business communities already engaged in many community building projects. I believe that it would be easy to engage them in work that promotes safer environments for them, their workers, and their clients. We can learn from models such as the Hamilton Ontario Coalition against Poverty (<http://www.hamiltonpoverty.ca/>), in which government community and business stakeholders have made positive changes in their community.
 - a) Identify volunteer agencies that are engaged in promoting youth development in helping troubled youth, e.g., Leave Out Violence or LOVE, Boys and Girls Clubs, Phoenix House.
 - b) Help these agencies by providing space and possibly small amounts of money. Most are struggling and many spend up to 20% of their time looking for money just to keep going.
 - c) Form a committee composed of representatives from the community, volunteer agencies, and municipal and provincial officials who have a stake in child and youth development. This committee can help coordinate existing resources spread throughout the community and overcome the silo effects created by having specialized offices and programs.
 - d) Consider creating a position, e.g., “Child and Youth Advocate” or “Violence Prevention Coordinator”, that will oversee the workings of such a committee and of the Violence Prevention initiative in general. For example, this person could work with such a committee or with stakeholders in the community to bring together prevention and control activities into an integrated framework. An essential component of long-term success is ensuring that the initiatives arising from this round-table are a primary, if not the sole responsibility of an HRM employee.
3. Make better use of existing programs (e.g., recreation and sports programs) and ensure that they are accessible to youth who don't have access to private programs

- a) provide transportation
- b) provide upfront subsidies or waive fees for those who can't pay
- 4. Restrict alcohol, either through raising the drinking age or through making alcohol less accessible.
- 5. Programs should be evidence-based and programs that have been shown to not work, e.g., the Drug Abuse Resistance Education or DARE, should be avoided. People are the most precious resource in HRM and their time must not be squandered in ineffective programs.
- 6. Evaluate! This is critical or we will lose interest, lose steam, and waste precious resources. Much evaluation can be done by looking at trends over time using existing data sources such as justice records, education data such as school failure rates, health data such as pregnancy rates and public health records such as rates of identification of high risk families. Costs can be kept to a minimum by relying on existing data as much as possible but someone will have to be hired to actually analyze the data and relate it to existing and future programs.

Thank you very much for your attention. I'd be very happy to discuss this further.

Dr. John C. LeBlanc

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. LeBlanc". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

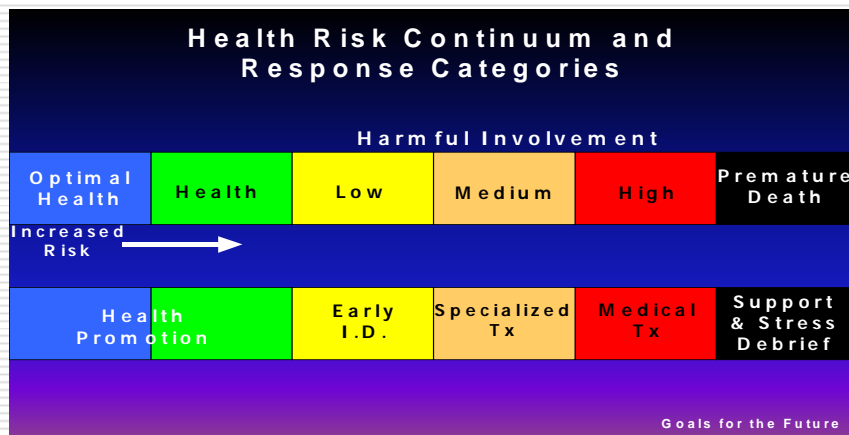
Associate Professor

Effective Management of Alcohol & Drug Related Violence

Mayor's Roundtable on Violence in HRM November 17, 2007



Health Risk Continuum



Why People Pursue Alcohol Treatment – The 5 L's

- Liver
- Lover
- Law
- Livelihood
- Lord (John Monahan)

Reasons to Change

- Research shows that one in five Nova Scotia drinkers (15 years of age and older) consumes alcohol in a way that negatively impacts on their health and well-being.
 - Harmful alcohol use is a major contributor to chronic disease, injury, risky sexual behaviour, crime, violence, and other social problems.
- It is estimated that the annual health, social, and economic cost of harmful alcohol use in this province is \$419 million.

Reasons to Change

(Cont'd)

- ❑ Adults aged 25–29 years had the highest current drinking rates (90.9%–91.1%) followed by young adults aged 19–24 years (89.2%–92.3%).

Canadian Addiction Survey 2004

- ❑ 76% drink
- ❑ Heavy infrequent – 9.6%
- ❑ Heavy frequent – 8.1%
- ❑ 20.8% Monthly Heavy

Canadian Addiction Survey 2004

(Cont'd)

- 23.3% of drinkers exceed drinking low risk drinking guidelines
- Alcohol harm to self 8.7%
- Alcohol harm from others 32.1%

Costs of Substance Abuse in Nova Scotia

- The total cost of substance abuse in Nova Scotia is \$1.24 billion .This represents a cost of \$1317 to each Nova Scotian,higher than the national average (\$1267). HRM = approx. \$55,000,000 a year
- Every year ,tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke kills 1738 Nova Scotians.

Costs of Substance Abuse in Nova Scotia

(Cont'd)

- ❑ Tobacco use costs \$171.3 million in direct health care costs –indirect costs \$625.5 million -50.3% .
- ❑ Alcohol use costs \$419 million which include direct health care costs ,criminal costs ,loss of productivity and indirect costs -33.7%.
- ❑ Illegal drug use costs \$ 200 .2 million -16. %.

Perceived vs Actual Costs of Substance Abuse

- ❑ National level 25% respondents reported alcohol Abuse as a serious problem .
- ❑ National level 39% respondents reported injection drug use as a serious problem.
- ❑ National level 45% respondents reported illicit drug abuse as a serious problem.
- ❑ At the local level the respondents reported alcohol abuse and injection drug use at 15% while the percentage for illicit drug use was 28%.

Provincial Alcohol Strategy

- Community Capacity and Partnership Building
- Communication and Social Marketing
- Strengthening Prevention, Early Intervention and Treatment
- Healthy Public Policy
- Research and Evaluation

Changing the Culture of Alcohol in Nova Scotia

- Normalize help-seeking
- Denormalize underage drinking
- Denormalize binge drinking and drinking to intoxication
- FASD as a community responsibility

Changing the Culture of Alcohol in Nova Scotia

(Cont'd)

- Approaches to awareness & educational resources
- Increase focus on prevention & early intervention
- A balanced approach to alcohol policy

Policy Domains (Single, 2004)

- Alcohol tax and price policy
- Physical availability of alcohol
- Policies related to drinking contexts
- Impaired driving countermeasures
- Advertising and promotion
- Education and persuasion strategies
- Treatment and intervention

Population-Based Strategies (Single, 2004)

1. Alcohol tax & price strategies
2. Drinking age restrictions
3. Advertising & promotion of alcohol
4. Regulating physical availability
5. Abstinence-oriented education & persuasion messages
6. Other population-based measures (LRDG)

Targeted Interventions (Single, 2004)

1. Policies for modifying drinking contexts
2. Impaired driving countermeasures
3. Targeted educational strategies
4. Treatment and early intervention
5. Other?

Summary of Approaches

(Single, 2004)	Population-based approaches	Targeted interventions	Evidence
Focus of intervention	Level of drinking	High-risk patterns of drinking	High impact of drinking patterns on problem indices
Type of problem addresses	Chronic disease and alcohol dependence	Acute consequences	High proportion of alcohol-related mortality & morbidity caused by acute consequences
Impact on moderate drinkers	Considerable and intended	Incidental and unattended	Health benefits of moderate drinking are significant

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt the Provincial Alcohol Strategy
- Addiction Prevention and Treatment Services, Capital Health, will help co-lead with HRM
- Formation of Task Group to review strategy and create implementation plan
- Focus should be on short term gain with long term goals.
- Policy is the greatest behaviour change influence (eg. public intoxication fine increase)
- Together we can change the culture of misuse

Anti-Violence Strategies



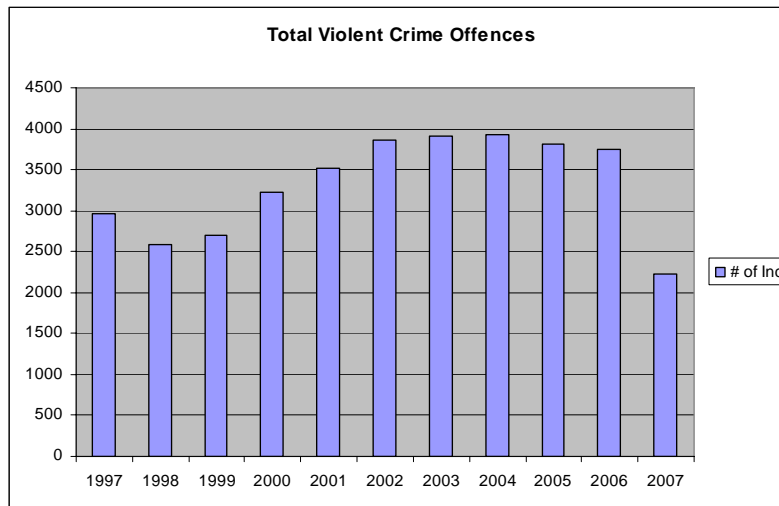
Chief Frank A. Beazley,
Halifax Regional Police

November 16, 2007

Halifax's Violent Crime Rating

- 2000 – 5th
- 2001 – 5th
- 2002 – 1st
- 2003 – 2nd
- 2004 – 1st
- 2005 – 1st
- 2006 – 5th
- 2007 – Violent Crime Trending Downward

HRP Violent Crime Statistics



Addressing Crime in our Community

- Introduced new CAD/RMS
- Implemented recommendations of 2003 Policing Study which enhanced our investigative response to crime
- Hired additional resources due to both municipal and provincial funding
- Developed Policing Strategy – Community Response Model of Policing

Community Response Model

Goals	Objectives	Performance Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce Violence• Increase Safety in the Community• Improve the Quality-of-Life for Members of our Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the number of offenders engaged in violent crime• Reduce the opportunity to commit crime within neighbourhoods identified as at-risk• Reduce victimization by violent crime• Increase the capacity of the community to work independently of the police to reduce crime and improve community safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of violent crimes• Community perception of safety• Community perception of quality-of-life

Community Response in Action

- Introduced Sector Policing
- Created Community Response Officers
- Implemented Operation Breach & Warrant Detail
- Created Individual Quick Response Units for each Division
- Reinstated 24/7 Beat Programs
- Opened New Community Offices

Holistic Approach Required

- Department of Community Services
- Department of Health
- Department of Education
- Department of African Nova Scotia Affairs
- Public Prosecution Service
- Justice Partners
- Corrections
- HRM MLA's
- Members of Parliament for HRM
- Mayor and Regional Council
- HRM Board of Police Commissioners
- Canadian Military
- Halifax Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Halifax Partnership
- Rotary Clubs
- Media
- Mayor's Roundtable on Violent Crime
- Public/Town Hall Meetings
- Business Associations
- Tenants' Associations
- Religious Associations
- Halifax United Way

The Recommendations

- Continue to support a strong, sustainable policing strategy to address crime and disorder
- Bring together all orders of government to develop effective and proven crime prevention strategies

The Recommendations

- Identify and mobilize key partners
 - Political Leaders within all three Orders of Government
 - Social and Government Agencies
 - The Community – both Business and Residential
 - Media
 - Police and Criminal Justice System
 - Private Sector

The Recommendations

- Integrate the Crime Prevention Program into social and economic policies/programs
 - Employment, education, health, housing, urban planning, poverty, social marginalization and exclusion
- Develop local action plans which address the cause of crime and victimization, not just its symptoms

Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program



1

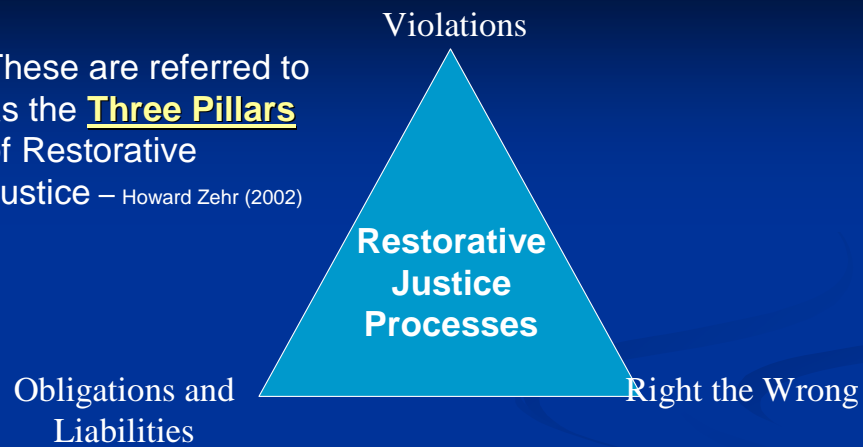
Underlying Assumptions of RJ

- Crime is a violation of people and interpersonal relationships;
- Violations create obligations and liabilities;
- Restorative Justice Processes seek to engage those affected to put right the wrongs

-Zehr and Stutzman, 1998

2

These are referred to as the **Three Pillars** of Restorative Justice — Howard Zehr (2002)

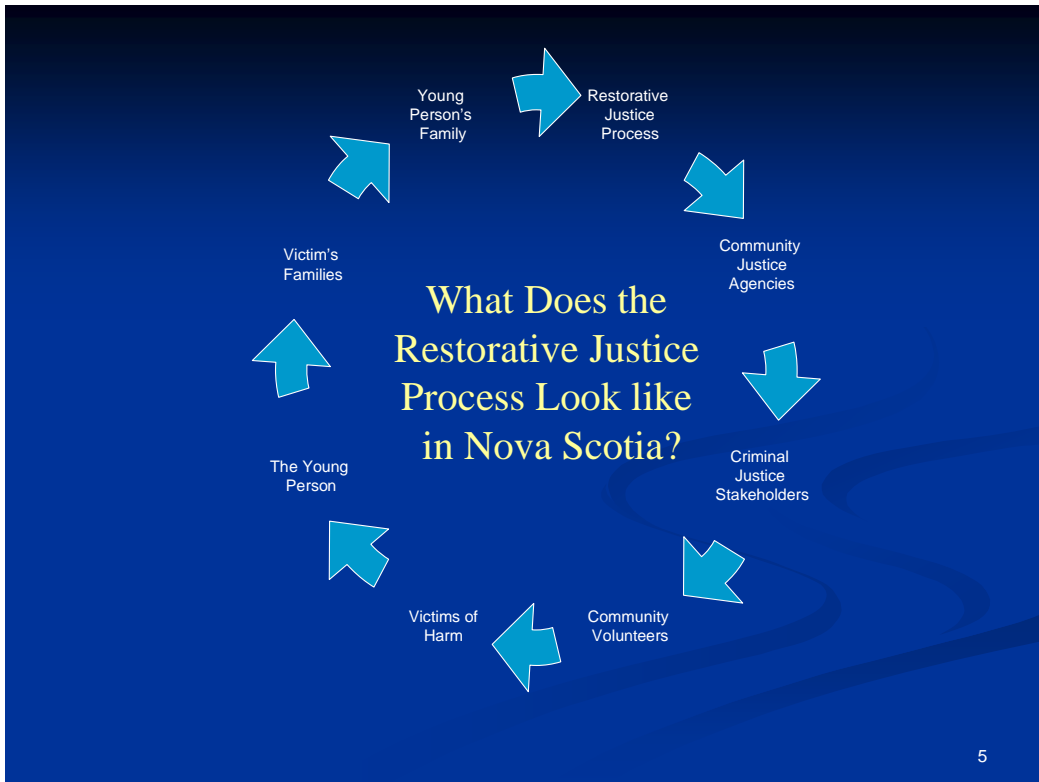


3

NSRJP: Program Goals

- Reduce Recidivism
- Increase Victim Satisfaction
- Strengthen Communities
- Increase public confidence in the Criminal Justice System

4



Key Concepts: Referral Entry Points

■ Referrals can be made at four key entry points in the Criminal Justice process:

- Pre Charge – Police Entry Point
- Post Charge – Crown Entry Point
- Post Finding of Guilt – Court Entry Point
- Post Sentence- Corrections Entry Point

6

Highlights from the Clairmont Four Year Evaluation of RJ in NS

- Victims who have participated in RJ Sessions are very positive;
- Profound difference in satisfaction levels between victims who participated in court and RJ Process;
- Victims feel heard and attended to in the RJ Process;
- Youth, Community Members involved in RJ processes feel positive about the experience;

7



- Among “First Timers” to the justice system, the recidivism rate for YP’s whose first contact was with the NSRJ program is roughly 31 %
- This compares to roughly 54 % for YP’s whose first contact was with the court.

8

The HRM Context: Community Justice Society

- A dynamic partner in crime prevention in HRM
- Receives 600 – 700 referrals a year
- Maintains an 87% compliance rate
- a range of innovative programs to support the RJ intervention
- Engages a community team of 80 skilled volunteer justice workers

9

The HRM Context: Community Justice Society

- Community Development Focus:
 - Community Outreach offices-Mulgrave Park and East Preston
 - Rights of Passage Program
 - Individualized support plans for at-risk youth
 - Specialized partnership program with MISA for New Canadians

10

The HRM Context: Community Justice Society

- **The Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program has a central role in early intervention and crime prevention**
- **Community Justice Society and its volunteers, already making an important contribution to community safety in HRM, will be a critical partner for the Municipality in any action plans following from the Round Table**

MAYOR'S ROUNDTABLE ON VIOLENCE

November 16, 2007

Jack Novack
Dalhousie University



AGENDA

- Municipal Leadership
- New Public Management
- Integrative Nature of Policy

MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP

Legal vs Political Mandates

Legal

- those activities which are required or permitted by law

Political

- those activities which are expected by citizens



MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP

Legal vs Political Mandates

Legal

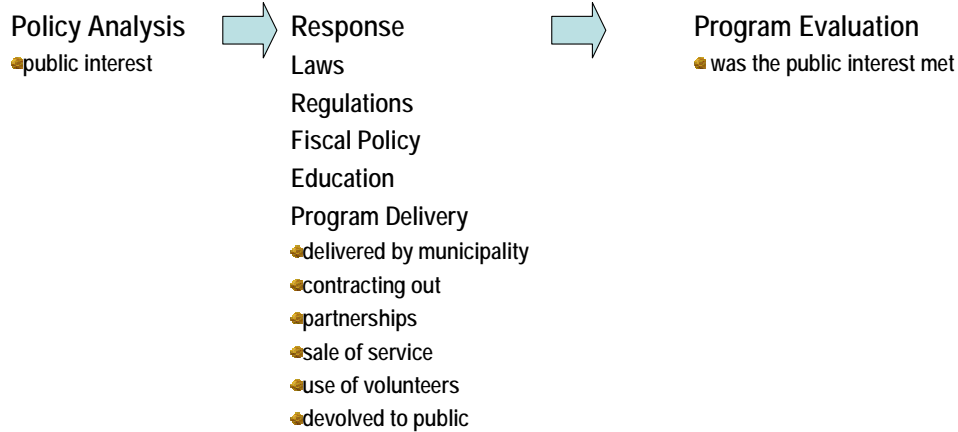
- Formal authority through the power of law

Political

- Informal authority through the power of persuasion



NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT



INTEGRATIVE NATURE OF POLICY

- Municipal Departments are organizational necessities not virtues.
- Unfortunately, the challenges facing our communities do not fit neatly within the purview of a single department/organization.

CHALLENGES

- In thinking about issues facing the community such as of violence ask yourself how many municipal departments could contribute to both defining the issues and developing appropriate responses.....

.....how many other governments, organizations and groups could contribute.



Public Safety Strategies

Presented by
Inspector Darrell Beaton
Operations Officer
RCMP Halifax District



Crime Reduction Strategy Philosophy

Setting clear objectives to achieve and sustain significant reductions in crime and the public's fear of crime.

- *Next phase in policing – enhancement on Community Policing*
- *Proven success in Great Britain and New Zealand*
- *Pilot project in British Columbia*

Crime Reduction Strategy Fundamentals

Focus on chronic crime problems and prolific offenders through evidence-led approaches, integrated partnerships, crime analysis and public engagement.

Our Crime Reduction Strategy Objectives

Community Policing + Crime Prevention + Intelligence Led =

- Reduce crime
- Reduce the fear of crime
- Reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour

Our Crime Reduction Strategy

Focus areas:

Prolific offenders

Hot spots

Root crime causation

Partnerships

Alternative Policing Strategy

Prolific Offenders

- A vast majority of crime is generated by a relatively few number of chronic offenders.

Focused Approach

Prolific Offender: A suspect was identified in committing multiple break and enters into businesses and residences throughout HRM. Police resources including Integrated GIS, General Duty members and the Street Crime Unit focused their efforts on this prolific offender who is now facing multiple charges in relation to these offences.

Hot Spots

- A geographical area of higher than average crime and/or disorder.

Focused Approach

Hot Spot: *The paths and parkways in the Cole Harbour area were becoming a 'hot spot' for thefts, vandalism and assaults. Members of Halifax District took a hands-on, focused approach and conducted over 400 foot patrols from November 2006-October 2007 in the Cole Harbour area.*

Hot Spot: *The Street Crime Unit has identified areas surrounding schools where youth are participating in illegal drug use and drug trafficking. A focused approach to these 'hot spots' has resulted in numerous charges.*

Root Crime

Partnering to address the root causes of crime (poverty, social conditions, education etc.)

Literacy Program: Adopt-a-Library

Our School Liaison officers are connecting with public and school libraries in developing programs that directly impact literacy among children while promoting the concept of literacy and crime prevention.

Youth Camps

Our School Liaison Officers partner with community resources in offering week-long camps to local disadvantaged youth. The camps focus on making positive life choices, building confidence and increasing personal safety.

School Programs

After school sports programs have been implemented in the North Preston and Sheet Harbour communities. Numerous educational programs are offered to students to not only educate, but mentor and provide positive police-youth interaction.

Partnerships

Build and sustain partnerships

Internal Resources

Tantallon Skateboard Park

- Community Liaison Officer, School/ Youth Liaison, Street Crime, Integrated Drug Unit, General Duty members and the HRM Community Response Team working together to combat illegal activity around the park.

Community Partners

Seniors and Youth Police Academies

- Partnering with Capital Health Community Board and other community organizations to offer an educational programs tailored to seniors and youth on aspects on personal safety.

Enforcement Partners

Street Crime Unit partnering with HRP Quick Response Unit, Public Prosecution Service, Correctional Services, HRM Community Response and Provincial Safer Streets and Communities Enforcement Team.

Zone Policing/ Intelligence Driven

- Promoting effective problem solving through community engagement
- Sharing of intelligence related to trends, hot spots and prolific offenders
- Increased communication between resources

(Community Liaison officer+ Site manager+ Zone Officer+ Community Stakeholders)

Community Engagement Annual Community Town Hall Meetings

- Identification of community issues
- Analysis of information to determine deployment of resources
- Joint problem solving (community and police)

Example

2006 Key Issue: Police Visibility

Response: RCMP members increased foot patrols in paths parkways and other potential problem areas. An enhanced model has been implemented to increase officer responsibility for a particular area and work closely with other resources to address specific problems and identify solutions.

Alternative Policing Strategy

- Community Liaison Officers trained and encouraged to interact with community members to better understand and solve local problems in order to reduce crime.
- Disorder in neighborhoods is closely related to crime, fear of crime, and a belief that crime is a problem.
- By targeting disorder, police can reduce crime and fear and improve the quality of life of residents.
- Key ingredients:
 - Forming partnerships with community groups and agencies
 - A pro-active problem-solving approach
 - Solutions developed and implemented with citizen involvement

*Minister's Task Force on
Safer Streets and Communities:*

*Moving towards a Nova Scotia
Crime Prevention Strategy*

Presentation to Mayors Roundtable on Violence
November 2007

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Purpose

- Share Minister's Task Force results
- Discuss partnerships to prevent and reduce crime in Nova Scotia

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Crime impacts us all – *and Nova Scotians see it that way*

- Public safety and public confidence
- Social costs
- Economic costs
- Health costs
- Emotional and psychological costs
- Insurance costs

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Background

- Ministers Task Force on Safer Streets and Communities announced December 2006
- Diverse representation with 25 members from across N.S.
- Consultations February – April 2007
 - 30 communities visited
 - 800 people provided input
 - 21 public meetings
 - 23 focus groups
 - 120 written submissions
 - 50 organizations
 - 2100 visits to Task Force web page

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Task Force Report

- Task Force report released May 2007
- 18 recommendations

Minister's Objective:

Use Task Force report to inform the development of a comprehensive crime prevention and reduction strategy

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

18 Recommendations

Three overarching themes:

1. Justice System Partnerships
2. Youth and Child Strategy Partnerships
3. Other partnerships required

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Justice system partnerships are required to...

- Ensure adequate offender rehabilitation and reintegration
- Increase police resources
- Ensure appropriate sentencing
- Explore specialty court processes for mental health, drugs, domestic violence
- Act on task force recommendations and report to the community
- Listen to youth

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Child and youth strategy partnerships are required to...

- Enhance primary prevention/early intervention for children (0 to 5 yrs)
- Enhance school-based prevention and intervention services (5 to 20 yrs)
- Create conditions that support student attachment to school
- Offer alternative school options, flexible school programming and early access to trades
- Remove barriers to recreation programs for children and youth
- Listen to youth

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Other partnerships are required to:

- Reduce wait times to ensure timely access to services
- Provide support to families
- Provide core funding for non-profit crime prevention organizations
- Support community mobilization
- Reduce impact of racism through promotion of social and economic inclusion
- Remove obstacles to schools and other community facilities
- Reduce impact of illicit drugs on Nova Scotians

Justice


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Spreading the word....

- ✓ Report distributed to all major government departments; citizens of Nova Scotia
- ✓ Website
- ✓ Presentations made to:
 - Child and youth social policy committee
 - Nunn committee
 - Continuum of Care committee
 - Nova Scotia recreation
 - HRM roundtable on violence
 - Service Nova Scotia and municipal relations
 - Departments of:
 - Health, Education, Community Services, Health Promotion and Protection, Community Development, Culture
 - Offices of:
 - Aboriginal Affairs, African Nova Scotian Affairs, Seniors Secretariat, Status of Women and Immigration

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What are our roles?

Justice



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Task Force said....

- **Community role:**
 - Take ownership
 - Join crime prevention groups
 - Report incidents to police
 - Volunteer to work with kids
- **Provincial role:**
 - Leadership
 - Coordination
 - Legislation
 - Engagement
 - Communication
 - Programming and evaluation
 - Research
 - Improving government structures and practices

Justice



NOVA SCOTIA

Role of the municipal government....

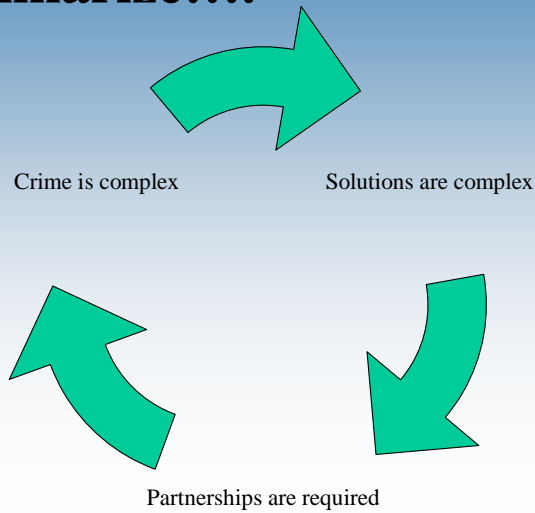
- Policing
- Recreation
- Best able to identify local crime problems and the conditions that contribute to these problems
- The appropriate site for the development of comprehensive community safety planning in partnership with relevant stakeholders to identify and tackle the situations that put youth, families and neighborhoods at risk of crime and victimization

Role of the Federal Government.....

- Criminal Code
- Youth Criminal Justice Act



To summarize....



Justice


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Crime prevention is everybody's business – we all have a role to play....

- **Provincial Government :**
 - Health; Health Promotion and Protection; Community Services; Education; Economic Development; Tourism, Culture and Heritage; Communications Nova Scotia
- **Municipalities**
- **Federal government**
- **Non-profit organizations**
- **Private businesses**
- **Schools and school boards**
- **Offices of:**
 - African Nova Scotia Affairs
 - Aboriginal Affairs
 - Immigration
 - Seniors
 - Status of Women
- **Police; Crown; Judiciary; Probation officers; etc.**
- **Communities**
- **Individual citizens**
- **Academics**
- **Crime Prevention Institute**

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Guiding Principles:

- Focused action on key priorities
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Doing what works best – based on the evidence
- Innovation, inclusivity and flexibility
- Sustainable
- Accountable and responsible

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

A Solid Foundation for Moving Forward....

- Perspectives on Youth Crime in Nova Scotia
– Nunn inquiry paper
- Provincial and regional crime trends
- Ministers Task Force Report
- Building a Safer Canada: National report
- International Conference on Crime Reduction

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Fighting crime in Nova Scotia....

- Minister Task Force on Safer Streets Communities
- Provincial crime prevention strategy
- Nunn commission of Inquiry
- Youth crown attorneys
- Halifax youth attendance centre
- Bail supervision
- Youth Criminal Justice Act
- Reducing youth case processing times
- 250 new police officers
- Safer Communities and Neighborhoods Act
- Electronic monitoring
- Voice verification system
- Criminal Intelligence Service Nova Scotia
- Rewards for Major Unsolved Crimes Program

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Next steps....

- Launch strategy
- Build on new and existing partnerships
- Report back to the community

Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Questions?

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Justice


NOVA SCOTIA

Presentation 10 - Gaynor Watson Creed and Linda Young, Public Health/Capital Health

*Healthier people and communities in the Capital Health District,
Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada, contributing to a healthier world.*



March 3rd, 2008

To: The Honorable Peter J. Kelly, Mayor, Halifax Regional Municipality

cc: Dr. Donald Clairmont, Mayor's Committee and Round Table Facilitator
Dr. Robert Strang, Chief Public Health Officer, Province of Nova Scotia

Re: The Mayor's Round Table on Violence Prevention

Dear Mayor Kelly,

We submit this letter in response to Dr. Clairmont's invitation extended to Dr. Watson-Creed some time ago to provide a verbal presentation to the Steering Committee. Unfortunately, she was unavailable that Saturday, and so we provide this written submission instead. We do hope it is not too late to be of some value to you. We are delighted to have the opportunity to outline public health's interest in this issue.

We have divided the submission into the following four major sections:

Introduction: Public health definitions of violence.

Part 1. Why violence is a public health issue.

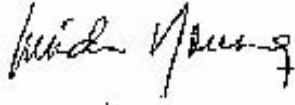
Part 2. Mechanisms for understanding the root causes of violence – public health frameworks for prevention.

Part 3. Partnering to prevent violence – opportunities already in play.

The submission is several pages in length, but we do want to highlight three key points as "take home messages". First, of all, violence can be considered a public health issue, just as smoking, seatbelts, or breastfeeding have been. Secondly, violence can be prevented, and there are several public health frameworks for prevention that have been applied to the issue of violence, worldwide, over many decades now. Some of the key frameworks are outlined in the submission, so that you may begin to understand what prevention of violence could look like in our community. Finally, we submit that public health is a willing partner in efforts to prevent violence, and has already been involved in strategies at the local and provincial level. We look forward to the opportunity for further dialogue and collaboration with Halifax Regional Municipality regarding continued violence prevention initiatives.

Please find the submission attached. Do not hesitate to contact us with further questions.

Sincerely yours,



Gaynor Watson-Creed, MSc, MD, CCFP, FRCP(C) Linda Young, BSc, MPA
Medical Officer of Health Director, Public Health Services
Capital District Health Authority Capital District Health Authority

*Healthier people and communities in the Capital Health District,
Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada, contributing to a healthier world.*

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Violence prevention and public health:

A Submission to the Mayor's Round Table on Violence, Halifax Regional Municipality

March 3, 2008

Table of Contents

Introduction: Public health definitions of violence.	3
Part 1. Why violence is a public health issue.	4
Part 2. Mechanisms for understanding the root causes of violence – public health frameworks for prevention.	5
Part 3. Partnering to prevent violence – opportunities already in play.	9
Works cited or consulted	11
Figures	13

Introduction: public health definitions of violence.

Violence is defined by the World Health Organization in the following way:

“the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.” (1)

The use of the word “intentional” in the definition distinguishes injuries sustained from violent acts from those sustained through motor vehicle collisions, sports mishaps, or other such events. As such, public health organizations frequently use the term “intentional injury” to describe the consequences of violence.

The public health definition and understanding of violence in Canada is best reflected by the position statement of the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA), which states that violence:

“takes many more forms than physical blows or wounds. It includes sexual assault, neglect, verbal attacks, insults, threats, harassment, and other psychological abuses. Violence occurs in homes, workplaces, public institutions, schools, health care facilities and the street...Current violence includes acts that are random and spontaneous as in a lashing out in rage, as well as systematic, planned acts calculated to overpower and control.”(2)

While the profile of violence in HRM recently has taken the shape of violent crimes perpetrated by young people related to alcohol and drug use, violent behaviour in our community occurs under many, many other circumstances, including, but not limited to:

- Family violence, including spousal abuse and child abuse
- Sports related violence
- Gang related violence
- Road rage
- Utterance of slurs (racial, homophobic, etc.)
- Workplace and school bullying
- Suicide

This submission aims to characterize public health’s interest in violence, and to introduce some of the public health frameworks for prevention of violence that may assist Halifax Regional Municipality in its attempts to improve the levels of violence in the city.

Part 1. Why violence is a public health issue.

Violence has long been recognized as a public health issue. In 1979 the US Surgeon General made a compelling argument for violence prevention, and particularly youth violence prevention, as a public health priority in the report “Healthy People” (3). Since then, violence prevention efforts have become embedded in the work of public health agencies around the globe.

Public health interest in violence stems from an understanding of the measurable health impacts of violence in communities. While a detailed review of violence-related health impacts is beyond the scope of this submission, some data is readily available. Although intentional injury rates have stabilized in Nova Scotia since a peak in the mid 1990s (4) Nova Scotia has the highest hospital separation rates for homicide and assault east of Manitoba, meaning that proportionally more persons are hospitalized for injuries sustained from homicide and assault here than in New Brunswick, PEI, Newfoundland, Quebec, or Ontario (see *Figure 1*). This trend is consistent with that seen in the examination of crime statistics for the same time frame (5). Suicides have also been a significant issue in Nova Scotia, with hospital separation rates double that for homicide and assault in 2004 (see *Figure 2*) (5). Further damage to health as a result of violence can be understood by examining the mental health, and family health impacts of violence, which have been well described by others (7-9)). All of these things point to a very real need to understand violence as a public health issue, and to apply public health methodologies for prevention to this problem.

Take-home message 1: Violence is a public health issue. This means that public health methodologies can be applied to understand the roots of violence and to develop strategies for its prevention.

Part 2. Mechanisms for understanding the root causes of violence – public health frameworks for prevention.

Within public health, prevention is defined as having three levels (10). Primary prevention aims to stop the disease, illness, or issue from ever occurring. Primary prevention for violence, then, is about preventing violence from ever occurring. Secondary prevention aims to prevent the immediate harms from the disease, illness or issue, should it occur, and slow its further progression. Secondary preventive measures for violence could include quick access to care for injuries sustained as a result of violence, such as those things provided by hospital emergency rooms. Tertiary prevention in public health aims to deal with the long term impacts of the disease, illness, or issue. In the case of violence, tertiary prevention would include measures to manage the grief associated with loss of a loved one through violence, as well as measures to rehabilitate and re-integrate violent offenders in communities (1). Preventive measures can be applied selectively (i.e. to a subset of violent persons or to those at high risk of violence), or universally (i.e. to all, regardless of risk for violence).

Public health is rooted in preventive measures. In understanding how prevention can be applied to a variety of conditions or issues, public health endeavors to adhere to established scientific method as follows (1, 11) :

- 1) Develop understanding of the issue – define the problem, understand it's many dimensions and impacts, through analysis of data regarding impact, magnitude and scope of the issue
- 2) Identify the causes of the issue – define risk factors for the issue through research, further systematic review of cases
- 3) Develop and test strategies for improving this issue – by application of the information gathered from steps 1 and 2 to the development of the solutions
- 4) Implement the strategy – to garner widespread impact. Further commitment is to monitoring and evaluation of the strategy

This methodology is applied in the context of public health frameworks which establish each of the four steps as occurring in a wider, multisectoral environment. One such framework is the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, which establishes that the fundamental prerequisites to health include:

- peace,
- shelter,
- education,
- food,
- income,
- a stable eco-system,
- sustainable resources,
- social justice, and equity (12).

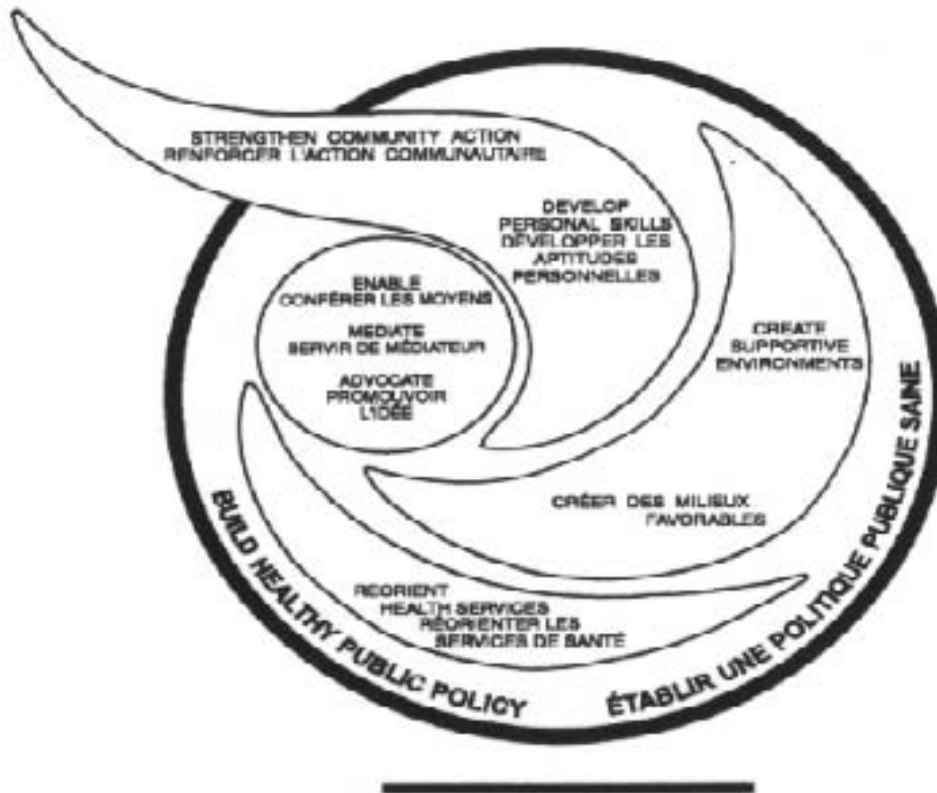
The Ottawa Charter further describes that optimal health is achieved when health promotion efforts (such as those carried out by public health agencies) are aimed at:

Take-home message 2: Public health frameworks applicable to the understanding of the root causes of violence and strategies for its prevention include the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, and the WHO Ecological Model for Violence Prevention. In using these models it becomes evident that violence is a result of a multitude of risk factors outside of those that can be managed by the criminal justice system alone.

- a) building health public policy – policies that help to build, maintain, or create the fundamental prerequisites as mentioned above
- b) creating supportive environments – that allow health to be realized in a variety of settings, including communities, homes, schools, and workplaces
- c) strengthening community action – so that communities can take ownership and control of the issues affecting them, and take concrete actions towards resolving them
- d) developing personal skills – so that individuals have the resources and skills to

improve their health

e) reorienting health care services – towards prevention rather than treatment and cure



Graphic representation of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (12).

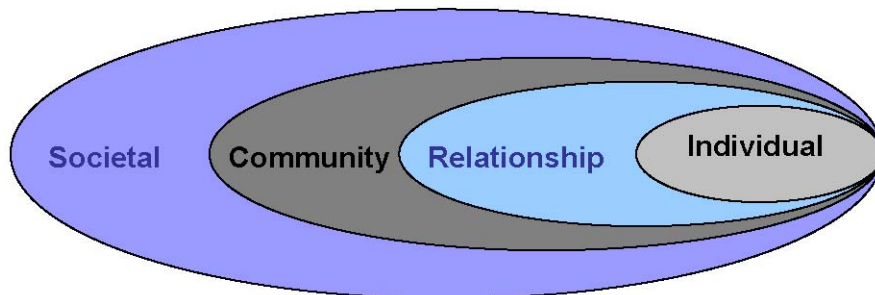
The literature regarding successful prevention of violence points to clear impact of the Ottawa Charter in development of health promotion approaches to violence prevention. A systematic review of successful violence prevention initiatives commissioned by the National Crime Prevention Centre of Public Safety and Preparedness Canada described a number of initiatives, many of which are standard public health programming in Nova Scotia and across Canada, as being effective in preventing crime. These included:

- family-based programs such as home visitation, quality day care and/or preschool, parent training, and multisystemic therapy for children already engaged in antisocial behaviour.
- community-based prevention such as gang member intervention programs that are focused on reducing cohesion among youth gangs and individual gang members, community-based mentoring programs, and after-school recreation programs

- school-based prevention such as school and discipline management, interventions to establish norms or expectations for behavior, self-control or social competency instruction using cognitive-behavioral instruction methods, and
- place-focused prevention (which could be otherwise described as environmental controls) such as nuisance abatement, closed-circuit television surveillance cameras, and Improved street lighting (13).

The findings of the Public Safety Canada report are echoed by findings of the US Task Force on Community Preventive Services, which has recommended family home visiting programs, school-based prevention programs, and therapeutic foster care as violence prevention measures for which the evidence suggests measurable impact (14-16). Furthermore, these approaches are consistent with those recommended by the Government of Nova Scotia in its *Strategy for Children and Youth* (17), which has formed part of the government’s response to the Nunn Commission report on the youth criminal justice system in Nova Scotia (18).

A further framework for dealing with violence comes from the World Health Organization. In 2002, the WHO released the first World Report on Violence and Health (1). Within that report, the WHO presented an “ecological model” for prevention of violence as follows:



Within the framework the WHO outlines that violence stems from complex interactions amongst a multitude of risk factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal level. The risk factors are further described as follows:

- Individual risk factors including a medical history of depression or other psychological disorders, substance abuse, low educational attainment, and poor problem solving skills.
- Relationship risk factors including a history of abusive relationships and/or having witnessed abuse, lack of positive relationships, role models, and peer support.
- Community risk factors including high population density (so urban versus rural areas), poverty, social isolation within communities, and poverty. Community risk factors can also be examined within particular settings (schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods), and

- Societal risk factors include tolerance of violence, presence of violent materials and imagery, and the degree to which some forms of violence (for example, corporal punishment for children) are seen as social norms.

The Ecological Model for Violence Prevention. WHO 2002

Societal

Community

Relationship

Individual

In this context, it becomes evident that in the “environment” of an at risk person one should target interventions at all of the levels of the model to limit the likelihood of future violence.

Although the societal response to violence has traditionally been seen as the responsibility of the criminal justice system, the above frameworks make it clear that violence is a result of a multitude of risk factors outside of those that can be managed by the criminal justice system alone. It is with this in mind that we present the last section of this submission.

Part 3: Partnering to prevent violence – opportunities already in play

Violence can be prevented, and evidence of the success of violence prevention measures has been documented by numerous authors and researchers, including those referenced above. Examples of many of these effective interventions already exist within Halifax Regional Municipality. Public Health Services, Capital District Health Authority, is involved in several violence prevention initiatives, including the Enhanced Home Visiting Initiative (EHVI) of the Healthy Beginnings Program. The EHVI provides family assessments for every newborn child in the city. Those families identified as being at high risk for violence and other poor health outcomes are offered more in depth resources to decrease the likelihood of those outcomes occurring. This program is similar to those for which there is strong evidence of effectiveness in the literature, as cited above. A provincial evaluation of the program is currently underway. Additionally, violence awareness and prevention is a part of the programming for the School Team (public health nurses within the schools) and Youth Health Centre programs of Public

Health, and includes partnerships with the seven Community Health Boards within Capital District. Programs include, but are not limited to:

- Awareness events such as the 14 Days in December/Gentle Ways are best program, by which the theme of peace and living peacefully in community is brought forward through the various activities in the schools. Peace cards are created by students and distributed at libraries.
- Family Discovery Days
- Partnerships with women and youth shelters, and family resource centres
- Partnerships to address food security and low income situations.
- Roots of Empathy – a school-based program designed to teach young children feelings of empathy through interactions with an infant and parent.

This work is supported by much work being done at the provincial and federal levels (19-22). In particular, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection is currently renewing the existing provincial injury prevention strategy, which includes unintentional injury (violence) in its mandate. Public Health Services, Capital District, has been an active participant in this renewal. The renewed strategy will be released in the spring of 2008 and will feature an emphasis on injury prevention through partnership.

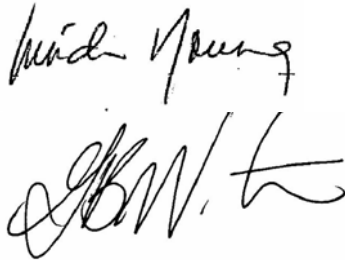
Our partnerships also include initiatives that are currently underway in HRM and that may have an indirect impact on violence in the future. The Physical Activity Strategy being developed by HRM in partnership with the Halifax Regional School Board, the Isaac Walton Killam Children's and Women's Hospital, Capital District and the Heart and Stroke Foundation may serve to improve violence in our city over time, as physically active children may be less likely to engage in violent or disruptive behaviour. Furthermore, decreasing TV time in favour of physical activity may have the added benefit of reducing exposure to violent television programming, thereby impacting on the acceptance of violence as a cultural norm. Similarly, urban redesign efforts underway in the city have the opportunity to reduce crime by improving social capital in our communities, and decreasing stressful elements of our urban design (i.e. traffic problems leading to road rage) [23, 24]. More directly, Public Health and Community Health Boards have been involved in efforts to improve the safety of Nova Scotia communities through the Safe Communities Network. This network provides yet another arena in which the partnership between Halifax Regional Municipality, which was designated a Safe Community in 2003, and Public Health can be strengthened towards the goal of preventing violence.

As you begin to ponder the above list of initiatives, and recognize that many more exist, you can see that in Halifax Regional Municipality interventions to address prevention of violence are occurring at each level of the WHO framework and are based in the principles of the Ottawa Charter.

We therefore submit to you that public health has much to offer the topic of violence prevention. Our efforts can only be enhanced by working in collaboration with others, including Halifax Regional Municipality. We would therefore urge you to consider a wider partnership as you

continue to explore ways in which violence can be prevented in HRM. Please do not to hesitate to call on Public Health Services, Capital District, for further assistance as your efforts progress.

Respectfully yours,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature is 'Linda Young' and the bottom signature is 'Gaynor Watson-Creed'.

Gaynor Watson-Creed, MSc, MD, CCFP, FRCP(C) Linda Young, BSc, MPA
Medical Officer of Health Director, Public Health Services
Capital District Health Authority Capital District Health Authority

Take-home message 3: Public Health Services, Capital District Health Authority, is currently involved in violence prevention work at the local and provincial level. This work requires collaboration with many others. An ongoing relationship between HRM and PHS may serve to strengthen violence prevention efforts.

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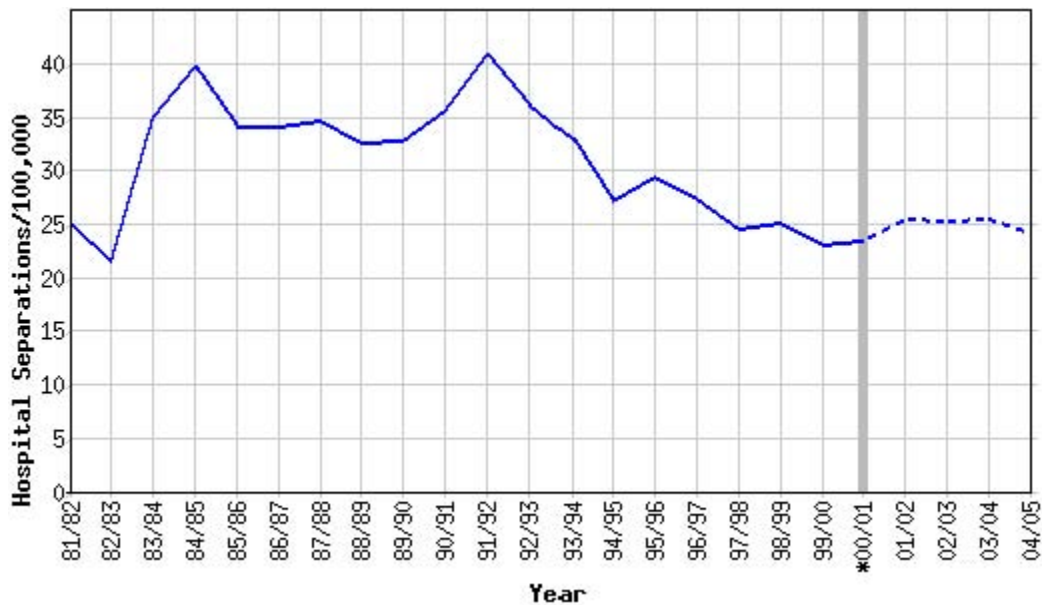
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Figures

Figure 1. Hospital Separations over Time

Homicide/Assault, Both Sexes Combined, All Ages, Nova Scotia, 1981/82 to 2004/05
Standardized Rate per 100,000 (Canada 1991)

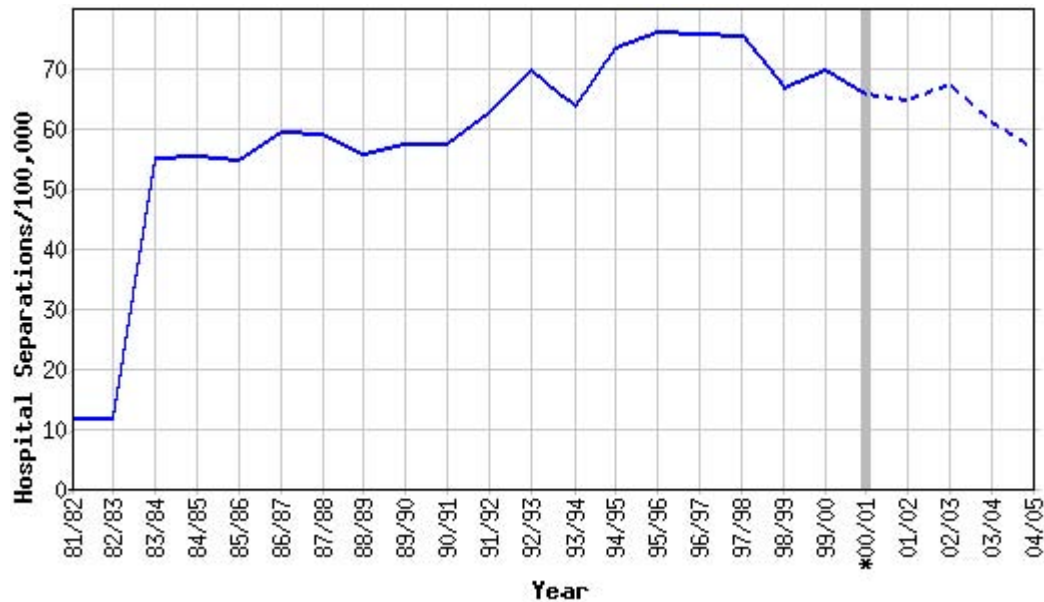


Data for 2004/05:

Province	Hospital Separations/100,000
Newfoundland	17.80
Prince Edward Island	23.80
Nova Scotia	24.24
New Brunswick	22.43
Quebec	15.11
Ontario	17.67
Manitoba	74.04
Saskatchewan	76.55
Alberta	54.03
British Columbia	39.81
Yukon	118.21
NWT and Nunavut	176.11

(from: *Injury Surveillance On-Line, Public Health Agency of Canada. Accessed February 29, 2008 (4)*).

Figure 2. Hospital Separations over Time
Suicide/Self-Inflicted, Both Sexes Combined, All Ages, Nova Scotia, 1981/82 to 2004/05
Standardized Rate per 100,000 (Canada)



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Data for 2004/05 –
Rate of
56.97/100 000

(from: *Injury Surveillance On-Line, Public Health Agency of Canada. Accessed February 29, 2008 (4)*)