

Community Outreach

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Developing and Enhancing Relationships With Communities Through Outreach

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I. Introduction

For many years, United States Attorneys' offices (USAOs) have developed and fostered relationships with law enforcement through task forces, working groups, and other collaborations, often via prosecutors and the Law Enforcement Coordinator (LEC). Similarly, many USAOs have been involved in some type of community outreach with non-law enforcement entities such as non-governmental agencies, educators, residents, community groups, city and state governments, and vulnerable populations.

II. Importance of community outreach

In recent years, USAOs across the nation have come to understand more clearly the importance of developing and enhancing relationships with communities. It has become more common for USAOs to engage in outreach with communities through focused programs, public speaking engagements, and a variety of other forums. Beyond the obvious responsibilities as public servants, the federal prosecutor's office can be a valuable resource enabling communities to enhance their prevention and intervention strategies. Additionally, the relationships formed with non-law enforcement can be a great benefit to the USAOs by keeping them focused on the needs and the issues of the community, further enhancing the district's ability to carry out its mission.

Research suggests that relationships can affect behavior, positively or negatively. USAOs generally maintain a prosecution-focused mission. However, as public servants and community members, an overarching responsibility—even an incentive—exists to contribute to the larger picture of healthier, crime-free communities. Community-based strategies formed through strong collaborations with law enforcement can lead to decreases in crime. This fact has been demonstrated by many of the Department's Weed and Seed sites and other community policing projects across the nation. Conversely, dysfunctional relationships between law enforcement and the community can inhibit a neighborhood's ability to make progress, as evidenced by struggling Weed and Seed sites. Having a staff member within the USAOs, such as a Community Outreach Coordinator, to take the pulse of the community, understand the needs, and maneuver through the internal politics can be a useful tool and a powerful mechanism for enhanced prosecutions, better prevention strategies, and more comprehensive intervention programs.

III. Challenges with developing relationships

As many in the USAO community know, no matter the size or demographics of a district, challenges are always presented with conducting community outreach. Some districts find that the better they understand the particular challenges, the more effective they can be in overcoming them. Some districts may have multiple neighborhoods with different views and longstanding histories in a condensed geographical area. Understanding the dynamics and even the differences and disagreements between surrounding communities can be a challenge and sometimes requires delicate handling. In other districts whose territory is more widely distributed, outreach is an issue even in terms of getting from point A to point B in a timely manner.

In times of limited resources, time management is also a factor as some staff may have to perform multiple collateral duties, particularly in smaller districts, with little opportunity to leave the office to foster trust and build relationships. In addition to resource issues, ethical restrictions make outreach slightly more complicated. Vetting the organization and finding appropriate strategies for responding to resulting complications can add to the challenges, making districts even more reluctant to engage with communities.

IV. Method of delivery

Regardless of the challenges, it goes without saying that community outreach has a place in all USAOs. The manner in which outreach is incorporated varies from district to district and depends on resources, priorities, strategy, and community factors. From one end of a district to the other, the demographic, economic, and criminogenic differences are often strikingly different. For example, while one community suffers from a high incidence of gang and gun-related crime involving youthful offenders, another may be more prone to alcohol related offenses committed by middle-aged individuals.

Outreach can be carried out in a variety of ways by a number of different people. Some districts accomplish outreach solely through public speaking engagements while others have incorporated community-based tasks into the district's strategic plan. Some districts have even developed and administered specific prevention and intervention programs. Community Outreach Coordinators have been designated in some districts to focus solely on fostering relationships with the community. In others, this position does not exist, and the LEC is primarily responsible for both law enforcement and community engagement. In some districts, outreach responsibilities are divided between multiple staff members as either a collateral or an assigned duty according to the focus area (youth violence, victim/witness, civil rights, national security, child exploitation). Line prosecutors are also known to be involved in community outreach, depending on their interest and subject matter expertise.

V. Highlighted community outreach activities

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to community outreach. However, several types of outreach activities are available and are important to highlight as potential options.

A. Public speaking engagements

In many districts, the United States Attorney assumes the primary responsibility for raising awareness about the multi-faceted role of the USAO. Some districts have developed canned presentations that can be modified and delivered by the United States Attorney or other staff on short notice. Engaging in this activity not only promotes the public's awareness of what the USAO does but is also intended to demonstrate to the community that the USAO understands the value of working with local organizations

in the areas of prevention, education, and intervention. In the District of Massachusetts, like in many other districts, the United States Attorney's calendar is full of speaking engagements with diverse communities.

B. Community meetings

Attending and presenting information at public meetings can be a valuable tool for enhancing relationships with community members, especially when the members have diverse perceptions of the problems in their own neighborhood. These differing viewpoints can create discord and mistrust of law enforcement that may ultimately prevent law enforcement from gathering intelligence within the community. Some districts have found it beneficial to act as a liaison through community meetings to reduce the discord and build trust. Communities typically welcome USAO involvement in their regularly-scheduled meetings. It is important to note that community meetings should not be viewed or used as opportunities to gather intelligence about a crime.

Some district representatives actively attend neighborhood watch meetings, while others attend broader community meetings with various residents and members of law enforcement, government, and businesses. Although Weed and Seed is no longer a Department of Justice (DOJ)-funded program, some communities continue to keep their steering committees in place to address quality of life issues and to coordinate events in their communities. USAO participation at steering committee meetings and events not only helps to promote more in-depth understanding of the issues facing the community but also offers exposure to organizations and individuals who might not otherwise come into contact with the USAO.

Meetings between USAO staff and civil rights advocacy groups and Human Rights Commissions are also widely conducted around the nation. In the last year, the District of Massachusetts developed a civil rights outreach strategy focusing specifically on meeting and building relationships with advocacy groups. The increased efforts have led directly to an increase in civil-civil rights enforcement actions.

C. Working groups and leadership teams

Engaging the community on a particular topic through working groups or leadership teams is another meaningful approach to outreach. Meetings with these groups can be conducted in person through roundtable-style discussions and even via teleconference. DOJ's Weed and Seed program was modeled after a similar concept, using a collaborative decision-making body to carry out a unified mission. Other DOJ-funded initiatives, such as the Child Sexual Predator Program and Defending Childhood Initiative, maintain a similar focus. In districts where these programs exist, USAO staff have found value in being part of a team of stakeholders—educators, non-profit service providers, parents, advocacy groups, and state/local/federal law enforcement, among others—to develop comprehensive enforcement, prevention, and intervention strategies. Through these group efforts, resources can be leveraged, gaps in services can be addressed, and duplication of efforts can be avoided.

In addition to working groups and leadership teams, roundtable discussions have been an effective tool for many districts, particularly for the District of Massachusetts, which is involved in DOJ's initiative to enhance relationships with the Arab, Muslim, and Sikh communities. The Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council Community Outreach Coordinator and an Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) work closely with the community on a regular basis to foster trust and discuss strategies to engage and provide a voice for the community.

D. Youth engagement

Many districts are actively engaged in outreach with schools and universities through mock trials and career events. In the Southern District of Texas, AUSAs participate as classroom speakers at Law Day at the High School for Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice in Houston. They provide insight on legal careers and on the functions of the USAO. Also in that district, AUSAs participate with other members of the community in an annual college and career night at a middle school.

In some districts, USAO staff engage young people in focused discussions at schools, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Big Brothers Big Sisters in order to dispel myths, to answer questions, and to assist young people in making healthy choices. Some districts, like the Southern District of Texas, are involved in coordinating mentors for Drug Education for Youth Camps and year-round activities. In the District of Massachusetts, the USAO, in partnership with law enforcement and educators, has developed a variety of youth engagement activities for middle school students in a city experiencing a surge in gang violence. The project, “Your Future, Your Decision,” focuses on responsible decision-making skills and includes a resource fair and a variety of focused presentations. This project originated from the vision of an AUSA who had been involved in the prosecution of dozens of federal and state gang members within that particular city. Through his interactions with the defendants, the AUSA recognized how a poor support system, the lack of family support, and unhealthy role models affected the students’ ability to make responsible decisions.

Some Districts also host an annual “youth day” event that provides children with a positive experience and exposes them to all aspects of law enforcement, such as vehicles, helicopters, fast boats, SWAT units, K-9s, and EOD robots. This exposure can be a valuable opportunity to diminish the negative perceptions of law enforcement that some children have developed by growing up in a violent or an unhealthy household.

E. Prevention and intervention programs

Some USAOs have created successful prevention and intervention programs. Some of these programs were done independently and some were developed in collaboration with other law enforcement and community stakeholders. The District of Massachusetts has created a number of these programs through its Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Program. In partnership with a local non-profit and United States Probation Office (USPO), the district produced a realistic educational video titled, “Mandatory Sentence” to demonstrate the consequences of a young person with a criminal history choosing to carry a firearm. The video received the PSN National Award for Outstanding Outreach Project and has been distributed nationally. “Mandatory Sentence” is used by the USAO in partnership with local district courts in juvenile offender meetings, by the Department of Youth Services in presentations to at-risk and court-involved youth, by the USPO in its youth outreach programs, and by many local school and community organizations, with an eye toward raising awareness of the consequences of bad choices.

Also in the District of Massachusetts, work is underway with several local organizations to provide a method of giving a voice to those who are affected by violence. While this area clearly applies to victims, it is well-established that significant numbers of community members who suffer the effects of violence do not fall into the category of either victim or witness. Residents of all ages who live in high-risk areas are affected in indirect but profound ways. The USAO is involved in several projects to address this under-served group of individuals. Specifically, the local CBS television affiliate is working with the USAO to develop a program for young people to submit a 12-minute screenplay to depict how violence affects them and their community. Two screenplays will be selected to be aired on television

and the selected screen writers will be featured on a local community-events television program. The district's PSN Program is also partnering with a popular Boston hip-hop radio station to host "Peace Parties" where young people will compete for the best original song with an anti-violence theme. Finally, the USAO is in the process of working with Artists for Humanity, a nonprofit organization whose mission is providing under-served youth with the keys to self-sufficiency through paid employment in the arts. Additional collaborators will be brought into this partnership as it develops. The goal is to create an ongoing campaign to give young people a means of expressing the ways that community violence impacts them.

Some districts have partnered with their local or state prosecutors to develop and administer anti-bullying and Internet safety programs. In the Southern District of Texas, the staff received the 2011 award for Outstanding Community Outreach Effort at the 2011 Internet Crimes Against Children National Conference for the program "Internet Safety—It's Not Just the Computer Anymore." This program, first developed by an AUSA, was expanded throughout the district by the Community Relations Coordinator. Two other AUSAs customized the program for individual audiences that have included sessions of future teachers and a large international conference of students and parents. Not only has the program been expanded, it has been administered in both English and Spanish to teachers, school administrators, parents, and youth.

Many districts are involved in local and national anti-gang and anti-drug related prevention activities. In the Southern District of Texas, the USAO holds its annual Enrique "Kiki" Camarena Red Ribbon Rally with partners at DEA, ATF, United States Marshals Service, ICE, the Houston Mayor's Office, Federal Protective Service, and others. Hundreds of young people from across the region are invited to participate in a day of anti-drug activities commemorating the sacrifice of DEA Special Agent Enrique Camarena. This year, the rally also honored recently-slain ICE HSI Special Agent Jaime Zapata, whose parents attended the rally. Both agents were murdered in Mexico by drug cartels.

F. Workshops

Workshops can be an effective way of collaborating with the community to target a specific community issue and subject matter. Some districts have developed and/or administered Internet safety and cyber-bullying workshops with educators, parents, and students. With the rapid increase in technology and social media, these workshops will continue to be in high demand in the years to come. Districts can share program material and learn effective strategies for dealing with school administration challenges, parental guidance concerns, and child developmental issues.

Other workshops include those geared toward helping stakeholders take action to improve the quality of life within communities that are beset with gang violence and other criminal activity. Workshop participants include local residents, business owners, law enforcement officials, service providers, educators, residents, faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and local government representatives. The USAO assists by helping the community assess its needs, by co-developing the content of the workshop, by obtaining speakers on appropriate topics, and sometimes by securing training and technical assistance.

Several districts have also been involved in coordinating grant education workshops that can provide the community with a basic understanding of the grant process. Districts have found these workshops to be a helpful community resource to educate organizations on the difference between a formula (block) grant and a discretionary (competitive) grant, the function of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the roles of various agencies and programs in the funding stream. It is important to note

that these workshops must be open to any and all applicants so as not to appear to be giving an advantage to one agency.

The Western District of Virginia has been very involved with these workshops. Not only have representatives coordinated workshops and presented at conferences, the Community Outreach Coordinator and LEC recently produced a Grants 101 training video at the National Advocacy Center. The video covers topics including: What is a grant? What are the different kinds of grants? What organizations are successful in getting grants? Who should or should not apply? What is the role and the statutory restrictions of the USAO? The training stresses the need for collaboration with multiple partners, the need for evidence and data or a research mechanism to prove that the grant works by showing the outcomes versus the outputs, and the importance of grant management.

G. Public service announcements and public awareness campaigns

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and public awareness campaigns can be a unique way of working and communicating with the community. The Eastern District of Pennsylvania coordinated a series of PSAs called “Voices of Youth” that can be found on its Web site. The project was a 12-week curriculum-based program that engaged 32 students from four schools. The students worked with Philadelphia’s Village of Arts and Humanities and Well Productions. Similarly, through the District of Massachusetts’ PSN program, radio PSAs were produced to encourage young people to “put the guns down” and to point out the effect that arrest and conviction have on other family members. A separate group of PSAs was created specifically to address the spike in violence during the summer months. Be advised that there are some restrictions regarding this type of outreach and Public Information Officers should be consulted for guidance.

The Southern District of Texas took on a similar public awareness project with its law enforcement partners. Instead of PSAs, a Web site called StopHoustonGangs.org was created to provide information for kids and parents about gangs and to permit anonymous online reporting of suspected gang activity to law enforcement personnel. In addition to prosecutions, the USAO’s role as a partner in the site includes distributing information to the public.

H. Diversion and re-entry

Diversion and re-entry programs require a special mention because this type of work often involves collaboration of community stakeholders to ensure greater success. In the Western District of Virginia, Roanoke is home to the country’s third Veterans’ Court. Supervised by a United States magistrate and championed by a United States district court judge, the court offers pretrial diversion assessment, counseling, and advocacy, to address the core issues of substance abuse and the psychological needs of local veterans. Several participants have already graduated from the program. In Abingdon, the court, working with USPO and parole officers, offers reduced supervision through a special Re-entry Court, which meets monthly, to offenders suffering from drug and alcohol addiction. Through community service and drug and alcohol testing, the support of their peers and representatives of the USAO, the United States Public Defender’s Office, and drug and job counselors, defendants are given access to the skills and services that they need to treat addiction.

Similarly, the District of Massachusetts has both a diversion and re-entry program that have received national PSN recognition. Specifically, the Salvation Army’s Bridging the Gap (BTG) program, founded in Springfield, Massachusetts, is a 12-week diversion program for first-time offenders between the ages of 12 and 17. The program has accomplished an overwhelming 87 percent success rate (graduation from high school coupled with no further contacts with law enforcement). More recently,

BTG has expanded its program into Boston, and the USAO, along with the local prosecutor's office, has begun providing presentations as a regular component in the program's curriculum.

The other nationally recognized program in the District of Massachusetts is the Boston Re-entry Initiative (BRI) that has been replicated in many areas nationwide. The objectives of the BRI model are to: (1) identify "impact players" or individuals who will have the greatest impact on violence in their communities upon release; (2) prioritize these impact players for restorative services; and (3) fully educate them about the consequences of choosing not to take advantage of those services. About a dozen selected inmates participate in the program each month. BRI evaluations indicate a substantial success rate for individuals who complete this program. The success is no doubt due in large part to the strong collaborative efforts between law enforcement, case managers, and program mentors.

I. Volunteerism

Perhaps one of the most common ways that USAOs engage with the community is through the volunteerism of staff members. Some staff volunteer through Habitat for Humanity while others participate in annual drives to collect toys, clothing, school supplies, and food for children and families in need. In the Southern District of Texas, the office's "Feds Feed Families" Food Drive was a successful first effort of a national voluntary project originated by the Office of Personnel Management. Staff members in every division office voluntarily donated over two tons of food to food banks and pantries serving all of the 43 counties in the district. The July project was specifically targeted to assist those families with school-age children who may have difficulty during the summer when meals at school are usually unavailable. There are, however, some restrictions to consider when sponsoring district donation projects. An Ethics Officer should be consulted for guidance.

VI. Conclusion

Despite the challenges, USAOs across the country are fulfilling their community outreach responsibilities in diverse and innovative ways. Although federal funding resources have been vastly reduced (and in some cases completely eliminated), USAOs have nonetheless found effective methods of developing and enhancing relationships with the community. Many districts are considering the value of not only dedicating staff to community outreach but expanding the responsibilities to legal and non-legal staff who have an interest in this important function of the office. Acknowledging the unique needs of each community and helping stakeholders to take ownership of crime-reduction activities are critical factors that contribute to the success of the USAOs' programs geared toward raising the level of public safety and security.❖

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Expanding the Violence Prevention Role of the Department of Justice

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I. Introduction

In 1940, then-Attorney General Robert H. Jackson spoke to United States Attorneys who had assembled from around the country in the Great Hall of the Department of Justice. He spoke to them about the role of the federal prosecutor:

The qualities of a good prosecutor are as elusive and as impossible to define as those which mark a gentleman. And those who need to be told would not understand it anyway. A sensitiveness to fair play and sportsmanship is perhaps the best protection against the abuse of power, and the citizen's safety lies in the prosecutor who tempers zeal with human kindness, who seeks truth and not victims, who serves the law and not factional purposes, and who approaches his task with humility.

Robert H. Jackson, Attorney General, Second Annual Conference of United States Attorneys, The Federal Prosecutor (Apr. 1, 1940).

In *Berger v. United States*, 295 U.S. 78, 88 (1935), Justice George Sutherland stated a similar theme in what has become a maxim for federal prosecutors:

The United States Attorney is the representative not of an ordinary party to a controversy, but of a sovereignty whose obligation to govern impartially is as compelling as its obligation to govern at all; and whose interest, therefore, in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall win a case, but that justice shall be done.

With “fairness,” “kindness,” and “justice” as limits on the substantial power and responsibility of United States Attorneys, federal prosecutors are expected to carry out the traditional role of investigating and prosecuting individuals, groups, and business organizations that have violated federal law. The public expects that federal prosecutors and agents will assemble a solid case that results in both conviction and substantial punishment, particularly for the commission of violent crimes and serious narcotics offenses. As part of that process, at most sentencing hearings in these cases, Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) routinely hear defense counsel describing the challenging life of the defendant, whether it be poverty, an unstable family, victimization, lack of education, or mental illness, to engender the sympathy of the court in the hope of getting a reduced sentence. In response, the AUSA often argues that despite these challenges, the defendant made the choice to commit the crime and should be punished accordingly; that the crime had a significant impact on the victim and community; and that substantial punishment is necessary to deter others. Frequently, the result is that the defendant is sentenced to a substantial prison term.

Over time, the role of the Department of Justice and of federal prosecutors has expanded beyond investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences. As members of the Department of Justice, our responsibility to be fair, kind, just, and humble now encompasses the realization that our work must also

extend to facilitating efforts to reduce and prevent violence in the communities we serve by participating in violence prevention and reentry efforts.

When we read the Presentence Report or meet with defendants who choose to cooperate, we get a glimpse of some of the issues that they face. What we may come to realize is that the challenges faced by a number of defendants may in fact have contributed to their making the terrible decision to commit a violent crime. It has also become apparent that the challenges faced by the people we prosecute are similar to the challenges faced by many others in our society who are not in the criminal justice system. Violence prevention efforts seek to identify the people who are most at risk for being a victim or a perpetrator of violence; to identify the challenges they face; and to bring together people, programs, and resources to assist this “at risk” population in order to reduce the probability that they will commit an act of violence or be victims of violence.

II. The ongoing tragedy of violence in the United States

Statistics kept by the Department of Justice prove that prosecutors and agents have done an extraordinary job over many years in convicting high percentages of defendants in all categories of cases and especially for the commission of violent crimes and narcotics offenses. We can take satisfaction that for almost two decades, overall violent crime has gone down. *See* BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, U.S. DEP’T OF JUSTICE, NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMIZATION SURVEY 2010 (Sept. 2011).

Despite the decreasing overall violence nationally, violence still accounts for approximately 51,000 deaths annually. *See* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/index.html>. In 2010 the FBI reported that there were 14,748 homicide victims in the United States and 1,246,248 violent crimes nationwide. The impact of violence continues to have an enormous economic impact. According to a 2007 study published by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the medical and productivity-related costs of violence in the United States were estimated to exceed \$70 billion each year. *Id.* The statistics leave no doubt that the substantial decrease in violence over the past two decades should not be misinterpreted to mean that violent crime is anywhere close to acceptable levels or that an answer to violence has been discovered. In fact, the statistics show that for many Americans, especially in urban areas, an epidemic of violence still exists. For example, in 2011, in Philadelphia, the nation’s fifth most populous city with approximately 1,558,000 people, there were 324 murders and 1,563 shooting victims; in 2010, in Detroit, with a population of approximately 899,000, there were 310 murders; and in Baltimore, with a population of approximately 623,000, there were 223 murders. *See* THE FBI, <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr>.

These numbers fail to reflect the toll that violent crime is having on youth, the 16 to 24-year-old population, and minorities in the inner-city, particularly the African-American community. According to the CDC, youth violence continues to be the second major cause of death for those between the ages of 10 and 24. In 2007, 5,764 people between these ages were murdered, resulting in an average of 16 deaths each day. These murders are highest among non-Hispanic African-American males. The CDC further reports that 84 percent were killed with a firearm. The Pennsylvania homicide rate for blacks is nearly six times the national homicide rate. *Multipronged effort needed to cut murders*, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, Feb. 5, 2012, at 38. In 2010 in Philadelphia, 83.5 percent of the murder victims were African-American. PHILADELPHIA POLICE DEPARTMENT, <http://phillypolice.com/>.

In addition, according to the National Center for Children Exposed to Violence (NCCEV), it has been estimated that as many as 10 million children per year may witness or be victims of violence in their homes and that children in communities across the United States are witness to violence at alarming high rates. *See* NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE, <http://www.nccev.org/>. To the

extent that children are witnessing violence, either as perpetrators or as victims, it is not surprising that children often suffer both emotionally and physically. *Id.*

III. DOJ sponsored anti-violence programs

The Department of Justice has embarked on a number of violence prevention efforts over the past 20 years. Beginning in 1991, the Weed and Seed program was initiated and was designed to “ ‘weed[] out’ violent criminals and drug abusers, and . . . to ‘seed’ much-needed human services, including prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration programs.” *THE WEED & SEED STRATEGY*, <http://www.weedandseed.info/docs/strategy.htm>. This effort consisted of federal and state prosecutors and law enforcement officials focusing on the “weeding” effort and public agencies and community organizations focusing on the “seeding” effort. *Id.*

Since 2001, as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), United States Attorneys’ offices (USAOs) have been asked to partner with their state and local counterparts to implement strategies to reduce the illegal possession and use of firearms. As part of this strategy, USAOs have participated in community outreach and public awareness “to increase awareness of PSN, promote community involvement, and develop a gun crime reduction strategy.” *PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS: OUTREACH*, <http://www.psn.gov/outreach/index.html>.

In 2006, with the initiation of the Attorney General’s Anti-Gang Strategy, a number of USAOs around the country participated in a three-pronged approach to reduce gang violence: (1) law enforcement; (2) prevention; and (3) reentry. This effort recognized that simply transferring criminal gang members from the streets to federal prison was not enough. Prevention efforts were initiated to educate, train, and assist others in the community to make better decisions so that they would not follow in the footsteps of those who were prosecuted. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales stated:

To have enduring success against gangs, we must address the personal, family, and community factors that cause young people to choose gangs over better, more productive alternatives. The more success we have in this area, the fewer people we’ll have to prosecute for violent activity down the road.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Six Sites Meet for Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative Conference*, NEWS @ a GLANCE (Nov./Dec. 2006).

IV. A focus on violence prevention

Despite the extraordinary efforts of federal law enforcement officials to assist their state and local counterparts in successfully reducing violence since the early 1990s, much needs to be done. For this reason, the Department of Justice has come to recognize that “the aggressive enforcement of federal criminal statutes alone will not solve the violent crime problem in the long-term.” Speaking on behalf of Attorney General Eric Holder, the Attorney General’s Advisory Committee (AGAC) stated that “we cannot arrest our way out of this problem” and emphasized that the Department’s “support for crime prevention has never been greater.” *ATTORNEY GENERAL’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AGAC MEMORANDUM: ANTI-VIOLENCE STRATEGY* (Nov. 16, 2010). The AGAC further explained the vision of Attorney General Holder and directed USAOs to expand their commitment to violence prevention to augment its enforcement efforts:

Although essential as a near-term approach, the aggressive enforcement of federal criminal statutes alone will not solve the violent crime problem in the long-term. In addition to targeting the most violent criminals with apprehension and incarceration, we must support organizations

working to empower communities in order to reduce or eliminate the forces, influences, catalysts, and causes which feed violent behavior. This strategy contemplates the pursuit of both front and back end solutions, often pursued simultaneously in the communities which suffer from persistent levels of violent crime. The Department's support for crime prevention has never been greater. While some programs have lost funding, new programs have emerged and continue to provide substantial resources to communities involved in violence prevention Prevention efforts should not, however, exist separately from enforcement activity. Communities which are targeted for increased gun and gang enforcement will also need an enhanced focus on prevention if they are to achieve any measure of lasting success. The important work of treatment, education, diversion, and prevention should not be done independently of enforcement efforts. These different approaches should rather be interlocking components of an integrated, comprehensive strategy coordinated by United States Attorneys. In short, our prevention strategy must build on the best thinking and research about what works.

Id.

V. Violence prevention: how to begin

Many USAOs have implemented violence prevention programs and have been involved in violence prevention efforts for years. You can learn about these programs simply by checking out the DOJNet. For example, in Chicago, the Ceasefire program has become a model of violence prevention and intervention. Ceasefire is "a unique, interdisciplinary, public health approach to violence prevention" that maintains that "violence is a learned behavior that can be prevented using disease control methods." CEASEFIRE, <http://ceasefirechicago.org/how-it-works>. The program uses proven public health techniques through a three-prong approach: (1) identification and detection; (2) interruption, intervention, and risk reduction; and (3) changing behavior and norms. *Id.*

Recently, as part of the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention, six cities, including Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Memphis, Tennessee, and Salinas and San Jose California, "developed comprehensive plans to prevent youth and gang violence in their city, using multi-disciplinary partnerships, balanced approaches and data-driven strategies." OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE, PRESIDENT OBAMA'S NATIONAL FORUM DEVELOPS STRATEGIES TO HELP YOUTH SUCCEED (2011). A press release issued by the Department of Justice further explained this concerted effort:

These plans focus on strategies to reduce violence, improve opportunities for youth, and encourage innovation at the local and federal levels. The strategy is already at work in each city, enabling these teams to establish diverse partnerships, leverage limited resources, and raise awareness of the problem and solutions as well as support for young people.

Id. To view these programs, visit the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention Web site at http://find.youthinfo.gov/topic_preventingViolence_nationalForum.shtml.

Whether USAOs have implemented programs in the past or not, the current challenge remains how to implement a program or initiative without funds or at most with very limited funds. Of course, it is unrealistic to expect members of an office to create violence prevention programs from scratch. Academics and organizations have spent decades thinking about, writing, and implementing programs directed at violence prevention. It follows that the first steps in moving forward with a violence prevention effort are to identify organizations and institutions that are committed to violence prevention and then to meet with them. Often the Department of Justice can augment a violence prevention message

by, at the very least, speaking about the consequences of violence. Generally speaking, most organizations will be more than happy to partner with the Department of Justice.

VI. Some suggestions

Beginning in 2004, the USAO for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (USAO EDPA) partnered with the Institute for the Advancement of African-American Youth (IDAAY) in the Don't Fall Down in the Hood (DFDH) program. This program is an intensive, community-based initiative designed to empower adjudicated and/or non-adjudicated juvenile offenders between the ages of 14 and 18 who have been arrested for assault, narcotics, and gun offenses. IDAAY's strategy is to improve youth competencies, build community accountability incentives, increase community safety, and create meaningful community service opportunities with the aim of reducing the youth's delinquent behavior. It aims to teach them how to take full advantage of available opportunities to improve their life chances and to help them realize their full potential. These goals are addressed by improving academic performance and by teaching youth how to become part of the solution in their communities. Representatives of the USAO EDPA meet every three months with a class of youth in DFDH to talk about gun violence and the cost in lost lives and decimated bodies caused by such violence. Unlike the "scared straight" approach, this effort is intended to show the youths that we, the government, are interested in their success and want to assist them in following their dreams, while educating them about the consequences of continuing their delinquent behavior.

The following discussion includes additional programs the USAO EDPA partnered in, initiated, or implemented.

A. "Voices of Youth" video production program

The USAO initiated this after-school program to engage 32 high school students from four Northwest Philadelphia high schools in a dialogue about the impact violence has had on the students, their families, friends, and community. As part of this 12-week after-school program, film producers taught the students the art of video production. The students created videos exploring, in their own words, the impact of violence on their lives. As part of this program, the students also spent a day at the USAO and in federal court meetings with prosecutors, federal agents, defense attorneys, and federal judges and observed court proceedings in order to learn about the federal criminal justice system.

This program was not designed simply to engage selected students in a video-making program. Rather, it was part of an ongoing effort to engage the larger community in Northwest Philadelphia in a long-term initiative to enhance the relationships between the community and law enforcement. The culmination of the program occurred in June 2011. On June 7th, the students presented their videos at a film festival before approximately 1,000 people at Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church located in Northwest Philadelphia. The following day, the students appeared at the National Constitution Center before an audience of approximately 150 people to participate in a Town Hall meeting to discuss issues that were raised by the students in the videos.

Because of the success of the "Voices of Youth" program, we are using PSN funds to conduct a similar 16-week after-school program to educate a new group of 20 high school-age youth and allow them to participate in a video production program focusing on drugs and violence. In this program, we have reached out to Philadelphia Juvenile Probation and the juvenile courts to partner in this effort by identifying youth who are in the juvenile justice system as well as others in the Philadelphia schools.

B. The expanded “Voices of Youth” program

On May 26, 2011, the first of a two-part violence prevention program was held at Martin Luther King High School in Northwest Philadelphia. Michael Vick, the quarterback for the Philadelphia Eagles, spoke to an audience of about 100 high school students regarding his experience in prison, his choices that resulted in a sentence of federal imprisonment, and the steps young people need to take to avoid similar mistakes. United States Attorney Zane David Memeger also spoke to the students. On June 2, 2011, six Assistant United States Attorneys returned to Martin Luther King High School to discuss some of the issues that were raised during the Michael Vick presentation and to talk about the students’ concerns about violence.

Working with the Philadelphia Eagles Youth Partnership initiative, we plan to implement an anti-bullying/anti-violence prevention program in Germantown High School in the early spring. This program will include multiple assemblies of the entire student body, as well as an assembly for their parents, to discuss the issues of bullying and violence in and outside of school. We are also working with City Year, a group of AmeriCorps volunteers assigned to the school, to assist in providing additional training and technical assistance so that its members are able to implement a bullying and violence prevention curriculum we are designing to follow up on the assemblies. As part of this program, speakers from law enforcement agencies will participate in classes in an effort to bridge the gap of misunderstanding between youth and law enforcement. We also plan to provide a similar program to other schools in Philadelphia this spring.

C. Juvenile Justice/Criminal Justice Curriculum

The Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office created a curriculum, including both written materials and videos, designed to teach sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students about the juvenile and criminal justice systems and the consequences that flow from delinquent and criminal conduct. The curriculum also covers victim awareness issues including gun violence, the fiscal impact of crimes such as auto theft on society, the impact of drug and alcohol use, and the consequences of selling drugs. The sessions were made available for showing to any interested class through the Philadelphia School District’s cable system. Working with the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office, the USAO contributed to the existing curriculum and is in the process of modifying and adding some new videos to the curriculum including, for example, straw purchasing, Internet safety, the federal criminal justice system, and the impact of violence on both the victim and the victimizer. Through this curriculum, students will be given an opportunity to explore, among other things, the impact that violence, crime, victimization, bullying, harassment, and the legal system have on their own lives. Integrating these topics into the curriculum supports the program’s effort to encourage students to consider ways that they can avoid involvement in the criminal justice system.

D. Youth Courts

Several schools in our district have implemented Youth Courts. These courts serve as an alternative to punitive zero-tolerance school discipline policies. They seek to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by preventing students who commit minor offenses from being suspended. Instead, these students have the option of appearing before a student-run Youth Court. For the last year, our office has assisted Youth Court programs in the region. The students running the Youth Court receive legal training as part of their Social Studies classes or in an after-school program, and then hold hearings. At the hearings, students perform the roles of judge, juror, bailiff, jury foreman, and clerk. At the conclusion of each hearing, the jury determines the appropriate disposition (sentence) that may include an apology,

anger-management classes, or a number of hours to be served on a Youth Court jury. The hearings use the power of positive peer pressure to shape respondent behavior, give students a voice to express their own ideas about justice, and provide students with a platform on which to build their public-speaking, creative problem-solving, and deliberation skills. The program trains students to ask probing questions, to form a consensus, and to reach a fair decision. In other words, the program is a platform for youth development and provides an understanding of the justice system. In addition, youth courts have been shown to be effective in reducing recidivism among respondents, in both school and community justice settings, and in reducing delinquency among the youth court members operating the court.

E. The Need in Deed Program “My Voice”

In 2011 members of the USAO spoke to classes at a number of Philadelphia schools as part of the Need in Deed “My Voice” program. It calls on students to use their gifts to speak out on behalf of others and encourages active, hands-on learning and reflection about real-world problems. In response to student requests, Assistant United States Attorneys spoke about gun violence and Internet safety.

F. Advancing Civics Education (A.C.E.)

A.C.E. is a program launched by the Philadelphia Bar Association in partnership with public schools in Philadelphia to provide supplemental civics education to public school students. Areas that were covered included fundamental principles of citizenship, democracy, and dispute resolution. The program initially focused on 9th grade students but has now expanded through the 12th grade. Members of the USAO have been involved in writing, coordinating, and teaching the curriculum for a number of years. This academic year, 18 Assistant United States Attorneys volunteered to teach in three different public schools—Constitution High School, Parkway Center City, and Lincoln High School. The teams of attorneys visit schools once a month during most of the school year and will participate in a culminating activity with the students at the end of the year at the National Constitution Center. The teams teach civics topics and concepts, including the role of law in society, the rule of law, jury service, legal decision making, American history, and current events, in order to foster a more complete understanding of law and the individual citizen’s role in maintaining it.

G. Philadelphia’s Mock Trial competition

The USAO has a long tradition of supporting the John S. Bradway High School mock trial competition, a joint project of the Philadelphia Bar Association and Temple Law School. This competition brings together more than 40 teams from Philadelphia public, private, and parochial schools to compete in a tournament that sends two teams to the Pennsylvania state championships. Students master public speaking and performance skills and are taught the key elements of civil and criminal law, courtroom procedure, and the rules of evidence. Last February, more than 400 students participated in this competition. Members of the USAO have participated in every aspect of this competition from authoring the case study to coaching teams to judging trials.

H. Character education

Although we are not educators, we continue to review many programs and initiatives that may reduce violence, both in schools and in the community. Over the past year, we have looked at character education programs as one strategy. Character education focuses on discussing a number of critical values including responsibility, respect, honesty, caring, perseverance, self-discipline, courage, fairness, and citizenship. See CHARACTER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP, <http://www.character.org/>. We have seen

that some school districts that have incorporated character education into their curricula have reduced negative behaviors within their schools while enhancing positive characteristics, such as caring for others, belief in equity and social justice, and acting with integrity towards others. We understand that school districts have many competing demands. Nevertheless, given the serious issues that impact students on a daily basis in school systems throughout the region, we have met with educators to discuss the inclusion of a character education curriculum in several of the larger school districts in the Eastern District.

I. USAO EDPA in-office programs for students

Philadelphia Reads is one such program. Now in our 14th year, the USAO has partnered with elementary schools to read to first, second, and third grade students once a week in our office. This program provides these students with an opportunity to spend time with law enforcement professionals outside of the school setting. During this period, members of our office have read with more than 270 students from elementary schools in Philadelphia.

Another program is Big Brothers Big Sisters: Beyond School Walls. Beginning in fall 2010, members of the USAO began to mentor fourth and fifth grade students from the Ethel B. Allen School as part of the Beyond School Walls program. Beginning in the spring semester of 2011, 25 students from the Ethel B. Allen School met with their “Bigs” bimonthly in our office. This academic year, 30 students have been mentored by members of our office and by members of the DEA, FBI, and the U.S. Marshals Service.

J. Outreach to specific groups

Speaking to groups impacted by violence or the fear of violence is a critical part of the USAO’s role and can have a substantial impact on reducing fear in the community. On a regular basis, representatives of the USAO meet with members of communities in the region to discuss issues of concern that often involve violence in the community, the prevalence of firearms, and narcotics. For example, members of our office have attended meetings with Hispanic groups, such as Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha, Inc., and with African-American clergy from around the city to discuss issues of concern in their communities. We have partnered with law enforcement agencies and community groups to respond to specific issues, as well. Our outreach to specific groups is also manifested in three particular ways.

Asian-Pacific-American community: One specific outreach aims to engage the Asian-Pacific-American community. From 2008 to 2011 in the Philadelphia area, a number of small business owners in the Asian community were targeted by armed robbers who followed the owners from their businesses to their homes and robbed them of their store proceeds at gunpoint. The Asian business owners were targeted because the robbers believed that the owners carried their business proceeds home and did not report crimes to the police. As a result of these home invasion robberies, the FBI, local police departments, district attorneys’ offices, and the USAO joined forces to investigate these offenses and to prosecute them in federal court using the Hobbs Act and federal firearms statutes. At the same time, federal and local prosecutors and law enforcement officials held a number of town hall meetings across the region to inform members of the Asian community of the intensive law enforcement response and to provide tips on how to prevent becoming a victim of these robberies. The meetings have created a better understanding by the Asian-Pacific-American community of the enormous effort that law enforcement has taken to protect them and underscores the message that working with police is essential to prevent the continuation of these robberies.

Arab, Muslim, and Sikh communities: Another specific outreach is directed at the Arab, Muslim, and Sikh communities. The USAO has also partnered with the FBI to bring together members of these communities to discuss issues of concern. Specifically, because of the “war on terrorism,” members of these communities report ongoing discrimination and alleged violations of their civil rights based on their national or religious affiliation. We have established communications with these communities by holding town hall meetings and other smaller meetings to provide members of these communities an opportunity to express their concerns and to hear directly from federal, state, and local officials about steps that they can take to address these concerns.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning community: Over the past year, the USAO has partnered with Widener University to initiate a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) violence prevention program in Delaware County. As a part of this initiative, we have held three round table discussions that included law enforcement, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, school officials, LGBTQ youth groups, LGBTQ youth, and professors from Widener to identify the issues facing youth and to discuss possible solutions.

K. Health care partners and violence prevention

The Philadelphia region has a number of outstanding medical centers that have developed programs to address violence and its impact on the community. The USAO has reached out to many of these institutions to initiate violence prevention partnerships. One such program is Healing Hurt People (HHP), a community-focused, hospital-based program designed to reduce re-injury and retaliation among youth between the ages of 8 and 30 years old. HHP works with clients who are seen in the emergency room for intentional injuries such as gunshot, stab, or assault wounds. The program is designed to:

address the needs—physical, emotional, and social—that victims of violence face after being released from the emergency department. Often, individuals who have been violently injured have reported that while in the emergency department, their thoughts are to either change their way of life or to retaliate. Most often these youth return, without any supports, to the hostile environment in which they were injured. Healing Hurt People uses a trauma-informed approach to capitalize on this potentially life-changing moment and address the needs of these youth by providing connection to resources

CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE & SOCIAL JUSTICE,
<http://www.nonviolenceandsocialjustice.org/Healing-Hurt-People/29/>. Some of these resources include medical follow-up, emotional support for post-traumatic stress, mentoring, working with schools to help students affected by school violence, housing, substance abuse treatment, recreation, legal services, after-school program referral, job training and placement, and parenting education and support. *See Id.*

VII. Conclusion

In an era of ever-diminishing resources, the public we serve expects that we will continue to work to reduce violence in our communities. Our ongoing commitment to aggressively investigate and prosecute the most violent criminals and drug dealers and their organizations to reduce the violence that they inflict on the community is what we, as federal prosecutors, do best. However, we also know that no magic bullet exists to end or even dramatically reduce violence using law enforcement alone. We must use our influence as members of the Department of Justice to facilitate the collaboration of public and private organizations committed to reducing and preventing violence. We may not be able to fund any programs in the short term, but we can bring organizations into our offices to discuss the causes and

possible solutions to prevent violence in the communities that we serve. If we do just that, we will provide inspiration, support, and momentum to existing violence prevention efforts.

To embark on a successful violence prevention program, we face enormous challenges because when many of us came to the Department we were not trained or even focused on violence prevention. For this reason, we must be willing to think “outside the box,” to be open to new ideas, and to engage other agencies and organizations as partners because they have far more experience and expertise in this area. One such discussion has emerged among public health officials. In his book, Wrong Place Wrong Time, Dr. John A. Rich, the chair and a professor in the Department of Health Care Management and Policy at Drexel University School of Public Health, writes that we need to consider the impact of trauma on people in communities most affected by violence.

[T]here is a wealth of evidence that . . . early life traumas are a powerful predictor of future life difficulties. That some young men turn to drugs or to the streets after their violent injuries is understandable. It is even more understandable given the troubles that have scarred their lives. The expectation that these young people can and will just “deal with it” is naive. . . . In the often hostile environments in which these young men live, trauma looms even larger. It drives their reactions and decisions and disrupts the normal supportive relationships that all of us depend on. . . .

As providers, our job is not so much to fix the cycle as to understand it and to recognize it as an underlying cause of the seemingly bad decisions that our young patients make. Some of those decisions, while incomprehensible to us, make abundant sense on the streets, where any show of weakness can lead to victimization. . . . [B]y understanding the cycle of violence for the purposes of explaining it, we can, I believe, understand the larger roles that we can play as members of the same community.

JOHN A. RICH, WRONG PLACE WRONG TIME, 198-199 (The Johns Hopkins University Press 2009).

The Department of Justice’s embrace of violence prevention provides an exciting opportunity to bring the world of law enforcement together with others to understand violence as well as the victims and the victimizers and to create effective strategies to reduce it. ❖

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Valuing and Evaluating Reentry

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I. Introduction

Consider a hypothetical defendant convicted at age 20 of a federal drug offense that carries a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence. Imagine the day he walks out of federal prison after serving 10 years. At this point he has, according to our societal mores, paid his debt to society for the crime he has committed. How different the world must look, 10 years later. How prepared is this person to really become a productive member of society? What are the odds that this person will be a net contributor, rather than a net cost, to society going forward? Asked in a more personal way, has this person turned his life around in prison? If not, can he do so now upon his release?

Statistics show that, nationwide, two-thirds of released inmates, including state offenders, will be arrested again in 3 years after their release and that there is a 40 percent chance that this person will be back in prison within 3 years. THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS, *State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons 2* (Apr. 2011). Multiply that by the more than 700,000 state and federal prisoners that have been released each year for the past several years, and the scope of the problem becomes apparent. In 2010, of the 708,677 offenders that were released, 47,873 were federal offenders and 105,552 were federal offenders on supervised release at the end of that year. BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, *CORRECTIONAL POPULATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES 2010*, 8 (2011). Altogether, 1.6 million people were in state, local, or federal prison in 2010. Ninety-five percent of those will be released someday. More broadly, there were 7.1 million people—one in every 33 people—under some form of state or federal correctional supervision. *Id.*

Thus, the opportunities for failure, or success, are numerous. Even a small reduction in the recidivism rate has an enormous impact both on public safety and in reducing government spending. The Bureau of Justice Statistics now estimates that more than \$68 billion is spent on state and federal corrections annually.

This article provides an overview of reentry issues, paying primary attention to reentry courts. It looks first at how certain structural changes to sentencing over the past several decades have brought reentry issues to the fore. It describes what reentry courts are and how they work and addresses how reentry courts evolved from drug courts and other specialized “problem solving courts” that developed in the state system. It examines how drug courts and reentry courts have been studied and evaluated and discusses the success of reentry courts thus far.

Finally, the article offers an opinion on why engaging in reentry efforts is valuable to United States Attorneys’ offices (USAOs), even if the definitive study on federal reentry courts has yet to be completed. The concept of “procedural justice” supports the USAOs’ participation in reentry efforts generally—that is, USAO participation in reentry efforts, including both reentry courts and reentry outreach, is symbolically important and procedurally fair because it shows the community that federal prosecutors care about more than simply notching convictions. It demonstrates that federal prosecutors are engaged in a long-term, preventive process of enhancing public safety. Such perceptions bolster

confidence in the USAOs, thereby serving to support the USAOs' primary work of prosecuting and litigating cases.

II. How we got here: determinate sentencing and the demise of parole

It is worth taking a brief look at the structural changes that have taken place over the past three decades that have shifted the framework of prisoner release and reentry. In the 1980s, in response to increasing crime rates and a growing drug problem, both federal and state governments moved toward determinate sentencing schemes and away from the concept of discretionary parole. The Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984, 18 U.S.C. §§ 3141–3742 (2012), not only created mandatory minimum penalties for federal drug offenses, but Title II of that Act, otherwise known as the Sentencing Reform Act (SRA), created supervised release as a possible sentence, thereby ending parole for offenders committing federal crimes after November 1, 1987. 18 U.S.C. § 3583(a) (2012).

Previously, the U.S. Parole Commission, in its discretion, determined the amount of an imposed sentence that a federal inmate would actually serve. Policy makers grew wary of that discretion and federal sentencing was considered both confusing and deceptive. With the SRA, Congress sought honesty in sentencing. U.S. SENTENCING GUIDELINES MANUAL at 2 (2000). Congress also believed that determinate sentences posed a greater deterrent because offenders would know how much prison time was associated with a given crime.

Many states adopted similar systems. California and other states passed “truth in sentencing” legislation. Joan Petersilia, *When Prisoners Return to the Community: Political, Economic, and Social Consequences*, 9 SENTENCING & CORRECTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY 1, 2 (Nov. 2000) (discussing the challenges and consequences of offenders being released back into the community). The country in general was tired of ever-rising crime, particularly drug crimes, and no longer viewed flexible, indeterminate sentences as a good idea. State legislation often created fixed, lengthier sentences, particularly for drug offenses. Richard P. Seiter and Karen R. Kadela, *Prisoner Reentry: What Works, What Does Not, and What is Promising*, 49 CRIME & DELINQUENCY 360, 363, 364 (2003) (discussing factors surrounding the release of prisoners and their reentry into the community). Indeed, since the beginning of the movement toward determinate sentences in the late 1980s, the national prison population has expanded every year, up until 2010. (The 2010 figure for total United States prison population of 1.6 million, noted above, was a 0.6 percent drop from 2009, and represents the first drop in total United States prison population in 40 years.) BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, CORRECTIONAL POPULATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES 2010, 1 (2011).

In 1984, Congress also determined, as part of the SRA, that prisons were not meant to rehabilitate offenders. The Senate Judiciary Committee report accompanying the SRA stated that “imprisonment is not an appropriate means of promoting correction and rehabilitation.” S. REP. NO. 98-225, at 76 (1984), *reprinted in* 1984 U.S.C.C.A.N. 3182, 3259 (internal quotations omitted). Thus, for federal offenders sentenced after 1987, the incentive to rehabilitate while in prison, with the hope that the Parole Commission would set an early release date, disappeared. Rather, supervised release, handled by the court through the U.S. Office of Probation and Pretrial Services (Probation), would be the structure through which rehabilitation and final preparation for release would occur. During this same general time, many states also abolished their parole boards. Seiter, *supra* at 364.

The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has nevertheless long offered, and continues to expand upon, a variety of employment, educational, and substance abuse treatment programs for inmates. Indeed, BOP costs are high. The annual cost to incarcerate a federal inmate, averaged across all BOP facilities, was \$28,893 in fiscal year 2011. Moreover, although the overall United States prison population declined in

2010 the federal prison population has continued to rise. In 2010 it rose 0.8 percent to 209,771. BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, CORRECTIONAL POPULATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES 2010, 8 (2011). Given the rising numbers of inmates and the high costs that are associated with those inmates, the BOP is incentivized to move inmates to supervised release.

This incentive creates a growing need to coordinate with another branch of government. The demise of parole under the SRA and the development of the concept of supervised release created a “two-party system” where the executive branch incarcerates the offender and the judicial branch supervises him after his release. Effective reentry in the federal system thus requires coordination between two branches of government. States do not have such a split system.

Federal offenders are incarcerated at facilities across the country without regard to what proximity they may have to the offender’s home community. To prepare for release, offenders are sent to serve the last several months of their sentence at a residential reentry center (RRC), contract facilities that are closer to the offender’s sentencing district where he will be released and supervised. Prior to release, BOP prepares an inmate skills development plan that assesses the offender in a number of categories, including academic, vocational, physical and mental health, and interpersonal skills. Probation assigns a probation officer who reviews the offender’s information from BOP and who also undertakes his own risk assessment, using either the Risk Prediction Indicator (RPI) or, more recently, the Post Conviction Risk Assessment.

Ideally, preparation for reentry should begin in prison, long before the offender is released. Once the offender leaves the RRC and is living in his community, that is where “the rubber meets the road” in his reentry experience. At that point, the offender is eligible to enter either regular supervision or a reentry court. Both forms of supervision involve significant challenges.

III. Reentry courts: a current snapshot

Federal reentry courts are a relatively recent phenomenon. The District of Oregon, the Southern District of Mississippi, and the Western District of Michigan initiated reentry courts in 2005. Two more courts were added by the end of 2006. In December 2010, a survey by the Federal Judicial Center (FJC) found that 45 reentry courts existed in 41 districts. Currently, approximately 50 reentry courts are in operation in almost 45 districts.

What are federal reentry courts? In short, they are a form of heightened supervised release that combines significantly increased judicial oversight and in-court hearings with the collaborative efforts of the Probation Office, the USAO, the Federal Defender’s Office, and contract treatment/service providers. Reentry courts enhance the existing offender supervision framework by channeling individualized services and support to offenders.

There are numerous variations among federal reentry courts, including the degree of judicial involvement, the length of the program, the triggers for program termination, the frequency and type of hearings that are held, and the roles for USAOs, defense counsel, and treatment providers. Moreover, different reentry courts select different types of offenders. The selection decision is typically led by Probation with the USAO having veto power or other input.

Reentry courts in Boston, Los Angeles, Oregon, and Cleveland, as well as others, focus on offenders who have a documented history of substance abuse. Other reentry courts, including those in Philadelphia and Toledo, focus on any offender who has been deemed a high (or medium to high) risk to recidivate based on Probation’s RPI score. The reentry court in Salt Lake City, Utah focuses on offenders with mental health issues, while the court in Roanoke, Virginia focuses on veterans issues. Other reentry

courts, such as the one in Benton Harbor, Michigan, base selection on offenders who will return to a specific community.

Even while some reentry courts select offenders based on a unique set of characteristics and provide services specifically directed to those issues, reentry courts also seek to address the entire panoply of issues that offenders face as they transition back to society. Typically, participation in the program is voluntary. The offender often signs a contract with Probation whereby the offender agrees to increased supervision, more frequent court hearings, and cooperation with treatment and services.

Programs are typically small, handling perhaps 10 to 25 offenders at a time, and each offender must successfully complete 1 year or perhaps 18 months in the program. Probation and treatment providers will outline an individualized program of treatment and services along with certain benchmarks for each participant to meet. The program is usually divided into several phases with gradually decreasing in-court hearings as participants progress to the later stages.

Participant successes and failures are determined at the court hearings, which are the centerpiece of the program. These hearings are usually held in open court with either a magistrate judge or the district judge (or in some cases two or more judges) presiding. In some reentry formats, hearings are held in conference rooms and the judges do not wear robes. Regardless of the format, the hearings are designed to support, not punish, the offender. Thus, they are fundamentally different than other court proceedings that the offender has likely experienced.

Typically, but not always, the hearing is preceded by a meeting among the reentry team that consists of the judge, Probation, the Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA), the public defender, and a treatment provider. The group discusses the progress that each participant has made and usually forms a consensus on where each participant is in terms of services, treatment, and meeting individual goals.

At the hearing, someone from the team will provide an update to the judge in open court on the offender's progress. The offender also must address the court himself. This is typically done in front of not only the reentry team, but all the other participants in the program as well. Having all offenders present in court during the discussion of each one of them instills both consistency in judicial response and a dynamic of support that cannot otherwise be found. The judge will either reward or sanction each participant based on his conduct since the last hearing. In some programs, the remaining period of supervised release is dismissed at graduation.

Graduation requirements differ among various programs, but they typically include being crime free and drug free for some specified period of time, and having housing and employment or some reasonable employment substitute, such as school. Often an in-court graduation ceremony is held and is attended by participants and their family, complete with graduation certificates and speeches. For those offenders who have in fact turned their life around, it is indeed a big day.

Although reentry courts occur after incarceration, the term is sometimes generically used to refer to pre-conviction diversion programs also. Such programs, which might better be called "preentry courts," seek to address addiction and other issues at a very different phase in the offender's life, namely, prior to conviction or sentencing. In the diversionary model, the prosecutor will likely control the decision-making authority over who enters the program because it is the prosecutor's decision whether or not to charge the defendant or offer diversion. A great example of such a program is in the Central District of Illinois, which has had a successful diversionary program for almost 10 years.

A. Precursors to reentry courts: “drug courts” and creativity in the state system

Federal reentry courts came into being more than 15 years after the states first began experimenting with “drug courts,” alternative judicial processes designed to deal with the growing problem of recidivism for drug offenders. Indeed, the state system has been a cauldron of creativity from which much has been learned.

The first drug court was started in 1989 in Miami, Florida. In the mid 1980s, Miami was experiencing a huge growth in cocaine arrests and convictions and was considered by some to be the cocaine capital of the world. Between 1985 and 1989, drug possession arrests increased by 93 percent in Miami-Dade County and 73 percent of felony-charged defendants in Dade County tested positive for cocaine. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS, *America’s Problem-Solving Courts: The Criminal Cost of Treatment and the Case for Reform* 16 (Matt Ehinger Sept. 2009). As a result, local courts were overwhelmed by convicted, sentenced defendants who were returning over and over with new drug arrests. Thus, the impetus for that first drug court was not benevolence, but costly overcrowding in the local prison system. *Id.* This same factor, of course, continues to apply today.

Miami’s first drug court was essentially a diversion program that sought to leverage both the court’s authority and the services of treatment providers to attack the root causes of drug addiction. It was revolutionary at the time because it offered treatment for drug addiction within the otherwise coercive parameters of the court system. The radically new intent was not to punish or deter, but rather to change the defendant’s behavior through treatment.

The spread of drug courts across the country was not immediate. In 1994, 5 years after the first drug court in Miami, there were by some counts only 11 drug courts nationwide. Laurie Robinson, Assistant Attorney General, Address at the Int’l Conference of Cmty. Courts (Jan. 31, 2012). However, 5 years later, in 1999, the number had jumped to 472. Ten years after that, in 2009, the number had skyrocketed to 2,459. C. West Huddleston, II et al., Bureau of Justice Assistance, *Painting the Current Picture: A National Report on Drug Courts and Other Problem-Solving Court Programs in the United States*, 2 NATIONAL DRUG COURT INSTITUTE 6 (July 2011).

Initially, most drug courts followed the pre-conviction, diversionary model set by the first drug court in Miami. In this format, the selected participants undergo the treatment program with the understanding that their charges will be dismissed after successful completion of the program. The type of defendant to whom this program is offered, of course, is typically a non-violent offender who has, in addition to substantial addiction problems, either little or no prior criminal history. Cary Heck, *Local Drug Court Research: Navigating Performance Measures and Process Evaluations* 3, 4, 7, NAT’L DRUG INST. (2006). Research shows that drug courts are less effective when such offenders are mixed in with others who have a significant criminal history or who have committed acts of violence. *Id.*

However, additional research also made it clear that drug courts could be effectively adapted to accommodate defendants with higher recidivism risk levels—that is, greater criminal histories, if the program was specifically designed for that type of offender. Douglas B. Marlowe et al., *Adapting Judicial Supervision to the Risk Level of Drug Offenders: Discharge and 6-month Outcomes From a Prospective Matching Study*, 88 DRUG AND ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE 4, 12 (2007). Moreover, the practical realities were that with ever-increasing numbers of defendants being incarcerated, greater numbers of offenders who had prior criminal histories were subsequently being released. It was simply not feasible to limit the potential recidivism benefits of drug court to the relatively small group of first time drug offenders.

As a result, drug courts since the mid-1990s began to incorporate greater judicial coercion into the process. Huddleston, at 24. In a growing number of drug courts, the defendants were pleading guilty and then entering drug treatment prior to sentencing. For some defendants in some state systems, the plea could be held in abeyance and later dismissed if the drug program was successfully completed. In many other state systems, the conviction remains, but successful completion of the program is reflected in a non-incarceration sentence. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CRIMINAL DEFENSE LAWYERS, at 17. At the end of 2009, only 12 percent of state drug courts followed the diversionary model, while 58 percent were in the post-plea model. Huddleston, at 25.

In addition to evolving from a diversionary format to a post-plea format, the drug court concept of providing treatment that is specifically focused on a unique subset of defendants with particularized problems has generated new types of “problem solving” courts. Many states now have specialized courts that focus on issues unique to, for example, veterans, defendants with mental health issues, drug offenders on college campuses, juvenile drug offenders, drug offenders with child welfare cases, repeat drunk driving defendants, and tribal law offenders.

Why have drug courts exploded across the country? How have they been measured or evaluated, and are those measures valid for reentry courts as well?

B. Evaluating success and the role of science

Practitioners and scholars are expected to use social science research to design criminal processes that can help lower recidivism. “Evidence-based practice” (EBP) is the term used to describe the utilization of scientific research and proven methodologies in the field of corrections and in other fields. The idea is to use the result of social science and objectively verifiable data, rather than ideology, to improve criminal processes and corrections practices. EBP is all about “what works.” The Attorney General made it clear that the Department should adopt this methodology and be “smart on crime,” and that advances in criminal justice should be data-driven. Eric Holder, Attorney General, Address at the Justice Department’s Great Hall (Apr. 25, 2011). This is no doubt the best course, but it is easier said than done.

Recidivism studies typically have certain limitations. First, most are not truly “experimental” in nature. A truly experimental study isolates the phenomenon being studied. Heck, at 7. Thus, for example, to fairly assess the impact of a reentry court on an offender, one should compare a random assignment of offenders to the reentry court versus those offenders who are sent to regular supervision (or parole in the state system). Otherwise, how is it possible to discount the possibility that those who participate in reentry courts are already the most motivated to better themselves and thus skew the results because they would do well in regular supervision anyway had there been no specialized court to attend?

As a practical matter, social scientists cannot typically alter the intake processes in specialized drug or reentry courts to make selection a totally randomized process, particularly after the court has started its operations. To compensate for that, most studies utilize a “quasi-experimental” design that compares two similarly situated groups of offenders, one that went through the specialized court and one that did not. In the better studies, evaluators try to match key features among the two groups such as criminal history, type of crime committed, age, educational background, and other criteria. Differences in recidivism are then compared between the two similarly situated groups and complex mathematical models are constructed to assess the impact of the variables on the outcomes.

Other study limitations include the often small sample size being evaluated, since reentry courts typically only handle a small number of offenders at one time. There are also definitional limitations as

to basic terms, such as what constitutes recidivism. Some studies define recidivism as an arrest, other studies require a conviction. Heck, at 3. Likewise, in undertaking cost-benefit analyses, studies often break down a person's interaction with public agencies as a series of transactions, each of which is assigned a cost based on input from multiple institutions and organizations. Shannon M. Carey, et al., *Exploring the Key Components of Drug Courts: A Comparative Study of 18 Adult Drug Courts on Practices, Outcomes and Costs*, 2 NPC RESEARCH (Mar. 2008). But the assumptions that go into the cost for each transaction make an enormous difference to the result, and can be debated at length.

Nevertheless, hundreds of drug court studies have been undertaken. The sheer volume of studies itself tends to overcome the small sample size in any one of them. It is now clear that an indisputable consensus has emerged that drug courts do indeed reduce recidivism. For example, in 2011 the National Institute of Justice funded a study that compared 23 drug courts with 6 traditional probation supervision sites and found that 40 percent of the drug court participants committed a new crime within 18 months, while 53 percent of those in standard supervision committed a new crime in that same time frame. Also, re-arrests within 24 months were found to be lower for drug court participants—52 percent—than for the others—62 percent. Shelli B. Rossman, et al., *The Multi-Site Adult Drug Court Evaluation 5* (Urban Institute June 2011).

Similarly, in December 2011 the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reviewed more than 260 separate studies of drug court effectiveness. GAO picked 44 studies that had the best methodological rigor and reviewed those for overall trends. GAO concluded that these studies showed that drug courts did reduce recidivism when compared to similarly situated individuals under regular supervision. GAO noted that re-arrest rates were found to be anywhere from 6 to 26 percent lower than comparable offenders in regular supervision. In addition, the GAO review noted that most, though not all, of their studies showed that drug courts produced net cost benefits—that is, they not only lowered recidivism, but were cost effective in doing so. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE, *Adult Drug Courts: Studies Show Courts Reduce Recidivism, but DOJ Could Enhance Future Performance Measure Revision Efforts* 19, 26 (Dec. 2011).

C. Reentry courts under the microscope

Scientific studies of reentry courts, as opposed to drug courts, have been relatively limited. As recently as 2010, one study noted that “little is known about the effectiveness of reentry courts.” Zachary Hamilton, *Do Reentry Courts Reduce Recidivism? Results From the Harlem Parole Reentry Court* 13 (Center for Court Innovation 2010). Reentry courts would appear to have more to grapple with than drug courts because they seek to address a much wider array of problems at a much later stage. Those reentry courts that focus on high risk offenders can expect to see the full panoply of problems that newly released inmates face. The list is long: lack of employment skills and little or no prior record of employment; no stable housing; ongoing substance abuse or addiction; lack of education; and serious mental and physical health problems. For instance, rates of inmate infection for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), hepatitis C, and tuberculosis are five to ten times greater than the general United States population. Jeremy Travis, et al., *From Prison to Home: The Dimensions and Consequences of Prisoner Reentry* 12 (Urban Institute June 2001). Thus, the challenges are significant.

In February 2000, fledgling reentry court efforts at the state level got a boost when the Department's Office of Justice Programs launched a Reentry Court Initiative (RCI). The impetus for the RCI was to take the recognized success of the drug court model—using judicial authority to apply sanctions and rewards and to marshal resources to support offenders—and apply it to the broader area of

reentry generally. C.H. Lindquist, et al., *The Reentry Court Initiative: Court-Based Strategies For Managing Released Prisoners*, 6 JUSTICE RESEARCH AND POLICY 1, 95 (Spring 2004) (discussing the growing need to effectively manage the large numbers of released prisoners returning into the community). Nine pilot sites were identified and encouraged to implement some form of reentry court. Technical assistance, but no funding, was provided. A non-scientific review of the project was undertaken in 2002 and found that only seven of the original nine sites were operational just two years later. *Id.* at 99.

However, one of the original sites, the Harlem Parole Reentry Court, has grown and thrived. In the Harlem model, released offenders meet with an administrative law judge and a collaborative team including prosecutors, defense counsel, parole officers, and treatment providers. This arrangement is similar to most federal reentry courts. Selected offenders include those with serious felonies such as weapons violations.

In 2010 the Harlem Reentry Court was scientifically reviewed in what appears to be the most thorough study of reentry courts to date. The study tracked 951 offenders over 8 years. Significant efforts were made to match similarly situated offenders between the reentry court group and those under regular supervision. The study found a major reduction in the rate of reconviction. Three years after their release, the reentry court group was reconvicted at a rate of 43 percent, while the control group was reconvicted at a 52 percent rate. The study determined that this result was “statistically significant,” meaning that the likelihood of the same result happening due to chance and in the absence of the phenomenon being studied is less than five percent. Hamilton, *supra* at 20.

The study also found, however, that the reentry court group had their parole revoked, particularly for misdemeanors, at a higher rate than those on regular supervision. After 3 years, the difference was 56 percent to 38 percent for the reentry court group and the control group, respectively. *Id.* The higher revocation rates were believed to be due to what is known as the “supervision effect.” That theory posits that because the reentry court participants were subject to a higher degree of supervision, they were more likely to get caught for things that the control group was also doing but without being caught.

The Harlem study did not undertake a cost-benefit analysis. One can imagine that significant savings were realized by the lower reconviction rate. Yet, one may wonder what portion of those savings were offset by the higher revocation rate. Thus, more data and analysis are still needed.

Since the initial RCI in 2000, the Department has supported numerous reentry programs at the state level through a variety of grant programs. Under the Second Chance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 17501–17555 (2012), the Office of Justice Programs has provided numerous grants for reentry courts. The Department now requires each of these grant recipients to rigorously report on a variety of performance measures. There are thus no doubt more studies of state reentry court programs currently in the works.

There have been relatively few comparative studies of the effectiveness of federal reentry courts. Those that exist generally show a reduction in recidivism, but each has examined only a very small number of participants, limiting their reliability. In 2009 a study was undertaken of the Court Assisted Recovery Effort (CARE) reentry court in Massachusetts. The CARE program, which started in 2006, is a reentry court that selects offenders with a documented drug or alcohol addiction. The study found that CARE program graduates were, up to almost two years later, less likely to be re-arrested than the control group. The 46 CARE graduates studied were re-arrested at a 43 percent rate, while the 68 comparison offenders were re-arrested at a 63 percent rate. The study also found that although CARE graduates were more likely to have positive drug tests during supervision, they also had better overall outcomes as to employment and sobriety than the comparison group. Amy Farrell, *Evaluation of the Court Assisted*

Recovery Effort (CARE) Program, Prepared for the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts (2009).

Another study was undertaken in 2010 of two reentry court programs in the Western District of Michigan. Those programs accept offenders with a high risk to recidivate, based on Probation's Risk Prediction Index. This study found, among other things, that 12 months after initiating the reentry court program, 25 percent of the 36 reentry court participants studied had been re-arrested, while 50 percent of the similarly-sized, matched comparison group had been re-arrested. C.T. Lowenkamp and K. Bechtel, *An Evaluation of the Accelerated Community Entry (ACE) Court Program* 11 (Sept. 27, 2010). Again, because the numbers are so small, general conclusions should be avoided.

Finally, in 2011 a comparative study was completed of the Supervision to Aid Reentry (STAR) reentry court in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. The first 60 STAR participants in that program were tracked for 18 months from the start of their participation in the program. They were compared to a rigorously selected group of 60 similarly situated offenders in regular supervision. The evaluation found that although STAR participants and the control group were equally likely to be re-arrested during the study period, only 10 percent of STAR *graduates* were re-arrested as compared to 31 percent of the control group, a significant difference. Caitlin J. Taylor, *Supervision to Aid Reentry (STAR) Program Evaluation* 3 (2011). In addition, during the study period, only 8 percent of all STAR program participants had their supervision revoked while 25 percent of the control group had their supervision revoked. This finding, which differed from the finding in the Harlem study, was based on a graduated sanctions approach to revocation taken by the reentry team in the STAR program. *Id.* at 13.

Each of these studies of federal reentry courts shows generally favorable outcomes for offenders. Other non-comparative studies, such as the program assessment of the reentry court in the District of Oregon, also provide generally positive outcomes for offenders. Daniel C. Close et al., *The District of Oregon Reentry Court: Evaluation, Policy Recommendations, and Replication Strategies* (2009), available at http://usanetsp.usa.doj.gov/staffs/otd/Documents/Oregon_study.pdf. However, conclusions from any of these studies cannot be characterized too broadly due to the small data sets upon which they rest. More information is still needed, particularly given the many differences among reentry courts. We still need to know what works best, why, and for whom. Unlike the numerous drug court studies, there have been no rigorous, scientific cost-benefit analyses of either state or federal reentry courts. Thus, broad-based, general conclusions about the efficacy of federal reentry courts must await a larger, more comprehensive study.

In response to the dearth of information, the FJC, at the request of the Criminal Law Committee of the Judicial Conference, initiated a study that will comprehensively examine the question of federal reentry court effectiveness on recidivism. Since fall 2011, the FJC has been studying reentry court programs at the Central District of California, the Middle District of Florida, the Southern District of Iowa, the Southern District of New York, and the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

The great value of the FJC study is that it is designed to be truly experimental. That is, the study is integrated into the operating process of these reentry programs. Thus, offenders who meet the applicable selection criteria are randomly assigned to either the reentry program or the control group. As noted above, random assignment eliminates a key limitation found in virtually all other drug or reentry court studies, namely, the belief that those offenders who find their way into a reentry court or other specialized problem solving court are the most motivated to succeed under any circumstance, thus skewing the results.

The FJC study further breaks down reentry court participants into two groups. One group is randomly assigned to a typical collaborative team, comprised of the judge, an AUSA, a federal defender,

Probation Officers, and treatment providers. The other group is randomly assigned to a similar team, except the judge is removed from the process. This second group only meets with the collaborative team and does not attend court hearings led by the judge. Thus, the study can isolate the role of the judge as part of its findings.

The study will review offenders' re-arrest for a new criminal offense within 6, 12, 24, and 36 months after release from prison. It will also review the number of days that offenders are arrest-free after release. The study will assess an offender's overall adjustment to supervision, substance abuse and/or mental health outcomes, and the change in educational, employment, and financial status. It will also assess the degree of fidelity that each reentry program had to its program elements.

Thus, the study is expected to be a critically important review of federal reentry courts and will produce not only valuable information about the effect of reentry courts on recidivism rates but will also provide a wide range of other helpful information. Moreover, as an adjunct to that study, the FJC will also produce a process-descriptive assessment of a number of already-established federal reentry courts. Once completed, these FJC studies will definitively shape the face of federal reentry courts thereafter.

IV. The value of reentry to USAOs

Should USAOS wait to get involved in reentry until the FJC experimental study is finally completed in 2014 or 2015? Or, is there sufficient value in participating in reentry that justifies getting or staying involved now, before the scientific evidence is in?

As an initial matter, reentry is important to USAOs because Department leadership says that it is. It is clear that reentry is an important priority not only for the Department of Justice generally, but for United States Attorneys specifically. The Attorney General has stated that, "[i]n . . . driving a renewed focus on enforcement, prevention and reentry, no one is better equipped than our U.S. Attorneys." Eric Holder, Attorney General, Speech at the Project Safe Neighborhoods Annual Conference (July 13, 2010). In January 2011 the Deputy Attorney General issued a memorandum that encouraged USAOs to participate in reentry courts and provided guidance on how to do so. Reentry also forms an integral part of the USAO community's Anti-Violence Strategy that was articulated in November 2010. This three-pronged strategy is built on enforcement, prevention, and reentry.

An informal EOUSA survey found that almost two-thirds of all districts were at least marginally involved in either a reentry court or some form of reentry outreach effort in fiscal year 2011. Reentry outreach can be defined as participating in or hosting a meeting, event, or other program with outside partners that is designed to help offenders—often state and local offenders—reenter the community.

Nevertheless, the number of AUSAs who are actively engaged in reentry court work or reentry outreach is relatively small. A certain percentage of prosecutors, including supervisory AUSAs, remain indifferent to, uninformed about, or flat out opposed to reentry. They argue that the USAO is not a social service agency and that while providing treatment for offenders is fine, other agencies are better suited to do so. Some offices have found it hard to devote any personnel to work on reentry issues. And it is true that, although the overall number of AUSAs who work on reentry is small, devoting AUSA time to reentry efforts does impose a cost on any office because it takes away AUSA time from prosecuting cases.

Certainly the primary mission of the USAOs is to prosecute and litigate criminal and civil cases. Reentry efforts are obviously secondary to that mission. But, reentry efforts fit easily into the wider public safety role and expanding community presence that USAOs have assumed over the last two decades. Participating in reentry activities can generate public support for the belief that USAOs are part

of a fair and impartial legal system and that they are concerned with the broader process of public safety, apart from the outcome of individual criminal cases.

The notion that perceptions of fair process matter and, more particularly, that the fairness of the process matters as much or more than the outcome in a particular case, has been called “procedural justice.” Steven L. Blader and Tom R. Tyler, *A Four-Component Model of Procedural Justice: Defining the Meaning of “Fair” Process*, 29 PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY BULLETIN 747, 747-49 (2003). When the concept of procedural justice was first articulated by social scientists in 1975, it was considered counter-intuitive that disputants would care as much or more about the process as they did about the outcome. Since then, a great deal of research has been conducted that confirms the value of a positive public perception of fair processes, whether the process is legal, workplace, or political. Such perceptions generally promote compliance with the rules. In terms of public safety, those who believe the law and the legal process are fair are more likely to adhere to it.

Participation in reentry, both reentry courts and reentry outreach, can contribute to an overall belief that the USAO is engaged in a fair system of justice. Certainly this is so for reentry participants. Offenders have said over and over that it means a great deal to them that the organization that prosecuted them years earlier is now at the table seeking to find a way to help them. Similarly, the growing positive press on reentry attests to the fact that the wider community often sees USAO involvement in reentry as an indication that the USAO cares about the process and individuals, not just winning cases.

USAOs have for decades engaged the community in broader issues of public safety, beyond prosecuting cases. Indeed, many of the reentry outreach initiatives that offices participate in are rooted in long-standing ties that USAOs have with community partners as a result of Project Safe Neighborhoods or earlier programs such as Weed and Seed. Reentry is a natural extension of these efforts.

V. Conclusion

Reentry courts are descended from the state drug courts of the 1990s. Those drug courts combined individualized services and treatment with the coercive power of the court. Today’s reentry courts have expanded on that model and taken on a bigger task, attempting to reduce recidivism not just for non-violent drug offenders but for a wide variety of high risk criminals. While expectations are generally high for reentry courts, there is certainly still a need for more data.

Apart from the social science data, however, engaging in reentry efforts is important for USAOs because it can bolster a reputation for fairness and impartiality. These perceptions, in turn, support the USAOs’ primary mission of prosecuting and litigating cases. Federal prosecutors have always known that fair process is the cornerstone of both their own reputation and that of the Department as a whole. Indeed, the oft-quoted phrase from *Berger v. United States* makes the same basic point—that fair process trumps individual results.

The United States Attorney is the representative not of an ordinary party to a controversy, but of a sovereignty whose obligation to govern impartially is as compelling as its obligation to govern at all; and whose interest, therefore, in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall win a case, but that justice shall be done.

Berger v. United States, 295 U.S. 78, 88 (1935).

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Grants: Managing Expectations and Cultivating Community Relationships

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As personnel in United States Attorneys' offices (USAOs) undertake the responsibilities of engaging the public for purposes of community outreach, crime prevention, awareness, and communications, they doubtless encounter a much different set of rules and expectations than their colleagues who spend their days in the courtroom. The purpose and focus of many of the initial conversations with various community leaders and groups center on an inquiry about federal grant programs and other federal funding. Federal funding opportunities, whether real or perceived, lead many community organizations to reach out to us. Managing these contacts, and hopefully the resulting relationships and/or partnerships, are crucial to the impact that USAOs have on these organizations and, more broadly, in the communities that they serve. While great diversity exists within and among the various districts, many of the dynamics between our offices and the communities are similar. This article provides a list of suggested ideas and guidelines to keep in mind while working on these relationships.

I. Setting expectations

The organizations and communities that you are dealing with may have different levels of sophistication, particularly when it comes to applying for grants. However, no matter where an organization or a community falls in that range, it is important to be forthright about the manner in which we can help. Be honest and direct about potential funding and what financial limitations exist. It is also important to respond politely, clearly, and encouragingly, particularly when your news is disappointing (especially in light of the current federal budgetary constraints). Many people are well-meaning but will not understand our constraints. Pointing them in the right direction is critically important. These moments of assistance with grant applications are opportunities for us to help organizations realize that a relationship with the USAO is not always or solely about funding. Let them know that you would be happy to be a resource person for them regardless of the availability of grants.

II. Be a resource person

Whether you are dealing with potential grantees in the form of grass roots community members, national non-profits with a professional staff, or a group in between, each new relationship has the potential to be valuable and mutually beneficial. Try to evaluate every new group and think about possible opportunities for them to become involved in and invite them to training or awareness campaigns that you may be conducting or sponsoring. Make sure to learn what they are already doing on their own or what programs or events they have planned. Reach out to key groups and keep in touch with them on a somewhat regular basis to maintain a relationship and to update your information on the group and their activities. Focus on where assets and opportunities may lie.

III. Community networking

One of the greatest assets we have in the USAO is our ability to build networks. If you are effectively becoming a resource person and learning about the communities in your district, a natural extension is to help promote “win-win” relationships between groups that might be mutually beneficial to each of them and to your office. Identify the types of people that seem to “know everyone” in a community and seek their help in making connections. When a group receives federal funding from the Department of Justice, there may be a condition of the grant for some level of involvement with the USAO. However, in cases where you are trying to reach out to a group where no funding relationship exists, you will notice that the traditional boundaries with these stakeholders have changed. Instead, you must focus on influencing and guiding the group. Share stories of successes and failures that you have seen in other groups and help promote programs that they are engaged in that are consistent with your office’s goals and priorities. Understand that their group is aligned around a common problem, vision, or story, and appreciate how that motivates them.

IV. Be patient

Expect progress to be slow. Relationship building, especially when funding is not involved, can take time as it is necessary to build trust. Often representatives of our offices are met with defensiveness, misunderstanding, fear of a potential investigation, or, in some communities, negative feelings toward the federal government itself. Quite frankly, some communities may have reason, real or perceived, to feel that they have been let down by federal institutions in the past. Perhaps they have seen federal programs that have come and gone, or worse, simply never came to fruition. When you first attend a community meeting you may be seen as a faceless and nameless representative of the monolithic federal government rather than as a dedicated public servant who is interested in working to improve the quality of life in the community. Knowing that you may face these challenges ahead of time gives you an opportunity to prepare. Model the behavior you are looking to encourage. Be patient. Show that you want to stay in contact and be a resource. Regardless of their funding status, you can begin to build a positive and mutually beneficial relationship.❖

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Project Safe Neighborhoods: Sustaining Community Outreach With Limited Funding

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Office of Justice Programs*

I. Introduction

Since May 2001 Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) has served as the Department of Justice's primary initiative that focuses on the reduction of firearm crime and gang-related violence. The current PSN model was structured on the evaluation work of earlier Clinton-era programs. The model includes Boston Ceasefire, Project Exile, Compstat ("hot-spot crime analysis"), and the 10-city Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative that is supported by the National Institute of Justice. In addition, the expansion and development of PSN was informed by a 2004 National Academies of Sciences review, *Fairness & Effectiveness in Policing*. The review found that law enforcement efforts are more effective when they rely on focused strategies that are targeted and tailored to the needs of a particular community. The current PSN strategy has also undergone local and national evaluations and currently focuses on both the eradication of illegal firearms and the interdiction of violent gang activity.

From its inception, the PSN strategy has relied on five core components: (1) strategic planning, (2) partnerships, (3) training, (4) outreach, and (5) accountability. PSN is designed to increase partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies through the formation of local gun and gang crime enforcement task forces. Outreach partnerships are also established with local governments, social service providers, schools, and community groups to increase resources for prevention efforts and to enhance the legitimacy of law enforcement interventions. These law enforcement and outreach partnerships are an essential part of the strategic planning process that is necessary to tailor a model to a community's needs.

The national evaluation of PSN by the Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice found that the three components of an effective PSN initiative are (1) a high level of commitment from the United States Attorney's Office, (2) widespread community support from community stakeholders, and (3) flexibility to adapt the PSN strategy to the needs of the local jurisdiction. Michigan State University researchers also found a 13.1 percent decrease in violent crime in PSN target cities with high levels of federal prosecution and with a broad-based implementation of all core components of the PSN strategy. At the same time, by contrast, the researchers found a 7.8 percent increase in violent crime in non-target cities, where PSN was not implemented intensively across the law enforcement and community spectrum.

Another testimony to the success of PSN is the impact that it has had on violent crime rates, especially on firearms-related offenses. For example, in the period FY2008-FY2011, nearly 44,000 defendants were convicted of federal firearms offenses, and the majority received lengthy prison terms. In many communities, violent crime has reached a 30-year low, due in part to the evidence-based, strategic prosecution strategy of PSN.

PSN has also enhanced the quality of federal, state, and local law enforcement by supporting extensive training and technical assistance for PSN Task Forces. PSN funding appropriations have enabled districts to craft effective, evidenced-based strategies that are designed to reduce violent crime and to foster dynamic community relationships. These relationships are intended to build on community strengths and fill existing gaps in community services in order to improve the social conditions of fragile communities. Moreover, adaptability is one of the major strengths of PSN because the PSN philosophy has always stressed creating strategies to address the individualized needs of specific neighborhoods. Therefore, PSN outreach strategies vary dramatically from community to community. The flexibility of PSN has allowed for creative and wide-ranging approaches across the PSN-United States Attorney community.

Parallel studies of policing and community outreach have found that residents of a particular community, working in tandem with law enforcement, can produce order in their community. For example, a 2008 study by Nadine M. Connell in *Police Quarterly* found that a targeted community policing strategy, similar to the PSN model, had a significant impact on violent and property crime. See Nadine M. Connell et al., *Can a Community Policing Initiative Reduce Serious Crime?: A Local Evaluation*, 11 *POLICE QUARTERLY* 127, 139-46 (2008) (discussing the impact of community policing initiatives on the reduction of violent and property crime). Furthermore, a study by Stephen A. Anderson in *Police Quarterly* evaluated programs where police worked collaboratively in programs with youth in fragile communities. See Stephen A. Anderson et al., *Community Police and Youth Programs as a Context for Positive Youth Development*, 10 *POLICE QUARTERLY* 23, 30-35 (2007) (discussing the positive impact of community police and youth development programs on youth in the community). The findings suggest that young people, who entered these programs with low levels of psycho-social functioning, demonstrated a significant improvement in their ability for self-assertion, efficacy, and empathy with others. *Id.* at 23. These studies also demonstrate that when law enforcement and local community members begin to work together on community problems, they can have a larger, positive impact beyond reducing crime.

Unfortunately, PSN funding for community outreach has been significantly reduced in recent years. Nevertheless, PSN Coordinators, in conjunction with the PSN Task Forces, have developed creative strategies to continue the vital work of restoring and sustaining communities. This article will feature several United States Attorneys' offices (USAOs) that have recently enhanced their community partnerships notwithstanding extremely limited financial resources. Approaches may vary, but several recurring themes emerge from conversations with PSN, Community Outreach, and Law Enforcement Coordinators. Each of the USAOs described in this article has focused on pre-existing partnerships, initiatives, and resources as the foundation for enhanced collaboration. Each of the Coordinators was able to identify individuals and institutions outside of the traditional law enforcement community to implement the strategy. In each situation, representatives of the USAOs exercised personal initiative and creativity to forge bonds and relationships that will enhance the safety and security of their communities.

II. PSN Cleveland: The Nook Project

PSN Outreach is tailored to the needs of each community and can be as diverse and varied as the communities that adopt the strategy. An excellent example is the experience in Cleveland, a cosmopolitan city currently undergoing an urban renaissance. During its colorful and varied history as a commercial, industrial, and arts center, Cleveland has seen the best of times and the worst of times. In 1950 it was America's seventh largest city. By 2000 its population of 430,000 was less than half of what it had been in Cleveland's heyday. Violent crime has also been a deadly part of the Cleveland story. Annual homicide counts remained in the triple digits during the 1970s and 1980s and continued into the first half of the 1990s.

A genuine spirit of urban revitalization, combined with a systematic and concerted approach to violent crime, have dramatically transformed the Cleveland landscape. In 2010, for example, Cleveland experienced its lowest homicide rate in 50 years. Despite an uptick in 2011, the homicide rate has remained in the double—as opposed to the triple—digits. With that reduction in homicides has come a renewed interest in one of America's truly great urban centers.

As violence has decreased, community attention focused on preventing violence has increased. For youth in Cleveland, as in other communities, the school is a primary venue for learning, social interaction, and personal development. Enhancing academic and personal development can help prevent young people from becoming involved in delinquency or joining gangs. The development of positive community ties and healthy personal relationships inoculate young people to the attraction of gang culture and criminal behavior. A study by David May in *Youth & Society* found that youth who lacked familial and parental social bonds or who associated with deviant groups were more likely to carry firearms to school. See David May, *Scared Kids, Unattached Kids, or Peer Pressure: Why Do Students Carry Firearms to School?*, 31 *YOUTH & SOCIETY* 100, 110-16 (1999). In another study, Robert Sampson and John Laub argue that critical transitions or events can alter trajectories toward or away from crime. See Robert Sampson & John Laub, *Turning Points in the Life Course: Why Change Matters to the Study of Crime*, 31 *CRIMINOLOGY* 301 (1993) (examining conceptual issues relating to continuity and change in crime over the course of life). In their study, these events included marriage, employment, or military service. However, such a trajectory could be altered at an earlier stage in a young person's life. Academic success and an appreciation for learning help develop the self-esteem and resiliency necessary for a successful adulthood.

Ensuring a quality education for all of its students has been a major challenge in Cleveland. On average, only 40 percent of Cleveland students will graduate from high school in four years. Equally sobering is the fact that between 91 and 93 percent of Cleveland high school freshmen will not graduate from college.

High school dropouts represent a serious public safety threat because they are more likely to become involved in criminal activity than their peers who have obtained degrees. Thus, part of Cleveland's PSN initiative includes a focus on improving the education experience of Cleveland's students. For Assistant United States Attorney and PSN Coordinator Duane Deskins, improving the education experience means improving the tools that make education possible, beginning with the textbooks. In his work in the community, Deskins became aware of the fact that many Cleveland area students carried textbooks older than the students themselves. Not only were the textbooks worn and outdated, they were all too frequently restricted to the school building and not available for use outside of class. Therefore, students could not avail themselves of the necessary tools to conduct research and complete homework assignments away from school.

From this difficult situation emerged The Bookshelf Project that began in middle schools and a high school in the Slavic Villages community. The United States Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Third Federal Foundation, Case Western Reserve University, Houghton Mifflin Hartcourt, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, and Barnes & Noble, created a pilot project designed to replace outdated printed textbooks with approximately 400, seven-inch color Nooks. The Wi-Fi enabled Nooks provide students with digital content, current textbook content, online video tutorials, book assignments, and the ability to create electronic notes. These devices offer a 24/7 school day and annually save the school district millions of dollars.

Replacing out-dated hardbound textbooks with Nooks provides many advantages for students, particularly students in challenged communities. Learning tools can be adapted to individualized needs and updated continuously. Furthermore, digital technology enables teachers to personalize the learning materials and meet the needs of every student at every level. Students who are energized and excited about their school experience are less likely to drop out of school and engage in criminal activity. Deskins stated in an interview that "[t]he Bookshelf Project seeks to reach students where they are." CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT, <http://www.cmsdnet.net/News/Featured%20Stories/11%2001%2011%20Nooks%20replace%20outdated%20textbooks%20with%20e-book%20technology.aspx>. He explained that "[t]his model recognizes that modern students, and most especially minority students—four times more than others—relentlessly consume great quantities of information through technology." *Id.* By closing the achievement and technology gap, these students will become globally competitive readers and achievers. As a result, the school district is looking to expand the project to all middle and high school students next school year.

The Bookshelf Project is only one example of the collaborative spirit of the Cleveland PSN program. Duane Deskins believes that the success of PSN outreach is grounded in the long-term partnerships between federal, state, and local law enforcement; the USAO; representatives from the federal courts and United States Probation; city officials; the local courts system; and community partners. Outreach meetings are held monthly and include a presentation or program from a community stakeholder. Initiatives are described; potential funding streams are identified; available resources are highlighted; and other successful programs across the country are discussed. "Research has been the bedrock of our strategy," says Deskins. "Research helps inform the process." Deskins telephone interview with Shappert, Feb. 3, 2012.

Another key component of the outreach strategy has been the co-location of resources for convicted felons within the federal courthouse. Probationers and individuals on supervised release can apply for a commercial driver's license or obtain a GED within the confines of the very same building where they routinely meet with their probation officers or participate in the District's re-entry court. Deskins emphasizes that co-location has many advantages including easier access, familiarity, and the opportunity to create trust. "We want to create a spirit of partnership with individuals who are confronting a difficult world," says Deskins. *Id.*

III. PSN East Texas: Inspire, Encourage, Achieve

Prosecutors and agents in the Eastern District of Texas know from experience that strong partnerships are the foundation of success. Operation Time Machine, the District's highly acclaimed take-down of violent criminal offenders in Port Arthur, is an oft-cited example of an effective federal-state law enforcement operation. "But we want to do more," says Assistant United States Attorney and PSN Coordinator John Ross. "We have made the Attorney General's Anti-Violence Strategy the foundation of our PSN program, and we are shifting our focus from inputs to outputs, from counting only

the number of gun cases we are prosecuting to quantifying the output, the net benefit of our efforts to our communities.” Ross telephone interview with Shappert, Feb. 10, 2012.

Ross acknowledges that the availability of fewer dollars for PSN outreach has motivated his District’s PSN Task Force to focus on resources and relationships that are already available. “Partnerships developed during our successful Time Machine prosecutions have led to more complex enforcement and more aggressive outreach,” he explained. “In our outreach, we have actively sought partnerships with existing community initiatives to maximize our mutual effectiveness.” *Id.*

Ross points with enthusiasm to PSN and the USAO affiliation with Inspire, Encourage, Achieve (IEA). IEA is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1997 with a mission to provide support services for young people involved in the juvenile court system in eastern Texas. The IEA mentoring and youth services program is an intervention option used by the Jefferson County Juvenile Probation Department. The program focuses on mentoring and educational services for at-risk youth. Services include individual and group counseling, literacy instruction, art therapy, and service coordination between IEA, the court, attorneys, probation officers, and the schools. Each year, more than 300 juveniles benefit from IEA services.

Ross notes that PSN and the USAO, together with Lamar University’s School of Business and members of the faith community, are exploring opportunities to expand IEA’s outreach to include employment training and job placement for young people who have been prosecuted in the criminal justice system. “We want to help re-integrate these juveniles back into community life,” says Ross. “Through PSN, we can serve as facilitators.” *Id.*

Ross and members of the PSN Task Force in the Eastern District of Texas continually look for opportunities to create new partnerships. A major focus of those efforts is the challenge of returning adult offenders who have been released from custody and who must assume responsibilities after lengthy periods of incarceration. “As a community, we must deal with the challenges of people coming out of prison,” he says. “What happens when they are released?” *Id.* To that end, the PSN Task Force in the Eastern District of Texas is actively exploring partnerships with individuals and community groups that are already addressing re-entry issues. “As I see it, PSN is the facilitator, the convener,” he adds. “At the end of the day, it comes down to networking and partnering.” *Id.*

IV. PSN Holyoke: The South Holyoke Safe Neighborhood Initiative

Research has shown is that even in the most challenged communities, pre-existing strengths, social networks, resources, and programs are available that one can build upon. For example, in their 2006 study in *Social Forces*, Mario Small and Monica McDermott found that many low income neighborhoods actually had more significant organizational resources than middle class neighborhoods. These resources include child care centers, grocery stores, and pharmacies. *See* Mario Small and Monica Dermott, *The Presence of Organizational Resources in Poor Urban Neighborhoods: An Analysis of Average and Contextual Effects*, 83 *SOCIAL FORCES* 1967 (2006) (discussing how organizational resources in poor urban communities are available as tools for growth and development). In addition, Sudhir Venkatesh, author of *Off The Books: The Underground Economy of the Urban Poor*, found that even in low income communities, there are informal economies and businesses in which residents routinely engage. *See* SUDHIR VENKATESH, *OFF THE BOOKS: THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY OF THE URBAN POOR*, 139-140 (Harvard University Press 2006). In both of these studies, the authors were able to identify pre-existing resources and social networks that may serve as a foundation for further development and growth. The PSN outreach strategy seeks to build on the community networks that are already in place.

“Successful community outreach begins at the grassroots level. I start with someone in the community I know and trust. And my first question is: ‘Who in this community is an organizer? Who can start things rolling?’” Wyatt telephone interview with Shappert, Feb. 10, 2012. Martha Wyatt, the Community Outreach Coordinator for the District of Massachusetts, knows what she is talking about. After 18 months as a legal assistant in the USAO, she became the PSN Assistant and then the PSN Specialist, assignments she held for a total of five-and-a-half years. Now, as the District’s first Community Outreach Coordinator, she continues to promote PSN and the community partnerships that are vital to PSN’s success.

Wyatt points to the South Holyoke Safe Neighborhood Initiative (SHSNI) as an excellent example of what can be accomplished when citizens come together to address shared concerns. Holyoke is a city of approximately 40,000 residents and is just north of Springfield, Massachusetts. Located on the Connecticut River, Holyoke was one of the first planned industrial cities in 19th century America. In recent years, street gangs have emerged as a serious and growing problem. It was the emergence of local gangs that brought the community of South Holyoke together. As its Mission Statement provides, SHSNI was formed “to create a safe, healthy and economically viable neighborhood through information sharing, identifying at-risk youth, referrals and community efforts . . .” SOUTH HOLYOKE SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE, <http://shsni.org/about-us/mission-statement>. SHSNI convenes bi-weekly to discuss outreach initiatives and to hear presentations from different groups in the area. Each meeting typically draws 35 to 40 people. Minutes are taken and shared on the group’s Web page. A community calendar is also maintained that features upcoming events, such as Family Fun Night.

In January 2012 SHSNI hosted “A Community Enhancement and Nonviolence Workshop” with participation and support from the USAO. Guest speaker, Teny Gross, shared nonviolent strategies for inner-city communities. Gross, who is nationally recognized as an expert in addressing community responses to violence, expressed his appreciation for the wide number of agencies that participated in the event and for the audience of approximately 300 citizens. In fact, Gross graciously waived his usual speaking fee because the Workshop was a PSN-sponsored event. Wyatt, who helped organize and coordinate with SHSNI, emphasized how little actual funding was required to support this event. To minimize expenses, the Workshop was held at a local community college that provided the space at no cost because of the pre-existing community partnerships; the print shop at the county jail produced the programs for the Workshop because the County Sheriff’s Office is a major community partner; community members sold advertising space in the brochure to local businesses to defray costs for meals; a local fast food restaurant provided breakfasts and lunches; and money raised for the Workshop was distributed to the Boys & Girls Club, another major community partner. Wyatt also stressed the breadth of Workshop participants and topics covered, including the C3 Policing Model, Western Mass, Sheriff’s Information Network, Gang Awareness and Prevention, community law enforcement, and, of course, the USAO.

Wyatt, who is continuously working to create new, collaborative partnerships between her office and the PSN communities, said it best when she stated, “It’s all about the personal relationships. That’s how we expand outreach and get the job done.” *Id.*

V. PSN Salinas: Community Alliance for Safety and Peace

The disruption and dismantlement of violent gang-related crime is, of course, a primary focus of PSN. Academic research has consistently demonstrated that young people who join or affiliate with gangs are more likely to commit violent crimes than young people who avoid gang involvement. For example, the 1998 Rochester Youth Study, supported by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency

Prevention, found that young people in gangs were seven times more likely to commit violent offenses than their peers who refrained from gang involvement. One of the most dynamic examples of a community-based anti-gang strategy is still unfolding in Salinas, a relatively small northern California city of 150,000 that is located in Monterey County. Salinas has experienced gang-related violence for over 50 years. Local law enforcement estimates that there are approximately 5,000 actual or affiliated gang members in the county, with approximately 3,500 living in Salinas, including Norteno and Sureno gang members. Seventy-one different gangs have been identified by law enforcement countywide, including 16 youth gangs and 2 prison gangs. In 2005 and 2006, Salinas suffered seven homicides each year. In 2007 the number had doubled to 14. In 2008 the homicide rate nearly doubled again to 25. In 2009 Salinas recorded 29 homicides, all described as gang-related.

In 2009 the Mayor of Salinas met with the United States Attorney for the Northern District of California to discuss burgeoning gang-related violence and the rising homicide rate in his community. In September 2009, the United States Attorney convened a two-day Gang Crime Summit, attended by government, law enforcement, education, and community leaders, who agreed to work collaboratively to address violent crime. Salinas leadership, the Community Alliance for Safety and Peace (CASP), and local, state, and federal law enforcement began working closely to strategically address the situation. For example, Operation Knockout that began in 2009, has been a highly successful federal and state investigation focused on disrupting and dismantling criminal street gangs in Salinas.

Efforts in Salinas to address gang-related crime received an additional impetus when Salinas was one of six cities selected to participate in the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention in May of 2010. Along with Salinas, Detroit, Boston, Chicago, Memphis, and San Jose were selected to send teams of community leaders to Washington for a working session in October of 2010. The teams met with experts from the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, and other governmental agencies. As one of the six cities, the team from Salinas created a comprehensive plan to reduce violence and enhance opportunities for young people in their community. The Salinas Comprehensive Strategy for Community-Wide Violence Reduction was presented at the Summit on Preventing Youth Violence in Washington, D.C. on April 4-5, 2010. The Salinas Strategy contains four components: (1) a single operational structure that manages action and progress; (2) a data-driven, performance based strategy, including data sharing between community partners; (3) a clearly defined focus on youth violence and the young people most likely to be the victims or perpetrators of violence; and (4) deep and meaningful community engagement that allows for direct community input and fosters a sense of community ownership of the process.

Annemarie Conroy, an Assistant United States Attorney and the Law Enforcement Coordinator for the USAO, has been deeply involved in the Salinas initiative since the Gang Crime Summit in 2009. Conroy, who has extensive experience in local government and community outreach, says of the Salinas experience, "The right pieces were in place. Salinas experienced a convergence of political leadership, law enforcement receptiveness to change, and wide-spread community frustration with the violence. An intense desire to take back the community created the synergy necessary to make things happen." Conroy telephone interview with Shappert, Feb.10, 2012. Conroy also noted that even without direct funding, the USAO and PSN have exercised leadership roles in support of the Salinas Strategy. "It's the power of the U.S. Attorney who can act as a convener," said Conroy. *Id.* In addition to hosting the 2009 Gang Summit and prosecuting violent offenders as part of Operation Knockout and similar initiatives, the USAO participated with Salinas leadership in the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention and has worked closely with community leaders to make certain that Salinas is applying for available federal grants to continue their efforts.

Conroy is especially impressed by the energy and dedication of Salinas community leaders. CASP, for example, holds monthly breakfast meetings to exchange information and plan future initiatives. CASP also maintains a Web page and Facebook page to highlight its contributions. The Salinas Strategy is still a work in progress but Conroy emphasizes that recent crime statistics from Salinas show a dramatic reduction in homicides and assaults.

VI. Conclusion

The outreach strategies of PSN are demonstrably effective approaches to crime reduction, community cohesiveness, and an improved quality of life for many fragile communities. The combination of strong leadership from the USAO, direct community input from neighborhood leaders, and reliance on pre-existing community resources and relationships, has enabled PSN to facilitate and support a spirit of genuine renewal in neighborhoods that have been ravaged by gun-related violence and gangs. The experience of PSN teaches that traditional law enforcement, without more, is insufficient to generate sustained community transformation. In order to facilitate meaningful change, the latent strengths in a community must be identified, encouraged, and fostered. It is easier, of course, when funding opportunities are abundant and available. However, the ingenuity and persistence of PSN coordinators in Cleveland, Jefferson County, South Holyoke, and Salinas underscore the fact that PSN's success rests on creating partnerships in the context of community. With those partnerships in place, communities will continue to renew and to grow.❖

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Community Outreach in the Western District of Virginia

Timothy J. Heaphy
United States Attorney
Western District of Virginia



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy J. Heaphy".

I. Introduction

In July 2010, our office began a pilot community outreach effort to promote “front end” solutions to criminal justice problems: crime prevention. Immediately, Gwen Mason, our Community Outreach Coordinator, began identifying successful, evidence-based crime prevention efforts in the 52 counties that make up the Western District of Virginia. We are also connecting the work of outstanding service providers in fields like gang prevention, substance abuse education and treatment, and bullying awareness, more closely with law enforcement. We are matching these programs to training and grants resources provided by the Federal Government for a more holistic approach to public safety.

Based in part on the success of community outreach in Western Virginia, other United States Attorney’s offices throughout the country are adopting the model and hiring community outreach professionals. It is our hope that Community Engagement Officers become the norm in every United States Attorney’s office.

In the Western District of Virginia, we are hopeful that our outreach effort pays real dividends. We are engaged in several communities across the district, and early results are encouraging. This article discusses some early highlights.

II. Progressive policing

The Roanoke Police Department is broadening its reach into Roanoke's communities. Chief Chris Perkins and his officers sponsor Cinco de Mayo picnics for Roanoke's burgeoning Latino neighborhoods. Working with Roanoke's Local Colors, officers introduce law enforcement to communities that may not traditionally feel comfortable with them. Chief Perkins recently implemented a Drug Market Intervention (DMI), a nationwide, cutting-edge crime reduction technique, in Roanoke's troubled Hurt Park neighborhood. Second tier drug dealers were offered education and work as alternatives to incarceration. Though early in the process, it appears the DMI program is already helping improve the quality of life in Hurt Park.

III. Community programs

In cities across the Western District, concerned citizens and law enforcement are working together to counter the ill effects of drugs and violence. In Danville, the grass roots Coalition for a Safe Danville meets monthly to develop strategies to keep the city safe. The Staunton/Augusta/Waynesboro Coalition is implementing an anti-gang protocol with its research partner, Mary Baldwin College. Martinsville and Galax have new anti-gang coalitions working to provide alternatives to life in the streets. Charlottesville is working to bring the issue of gang threats to the forefront of their community dialogue. These are just a few examples of collaboration and partnerships between law enforcement and crime prevention underway each day in our part of the Commonwealth.

IV. Department of Justice grants

In 2009 the Department of Justice (DOJ) awarded approximately 5,000 grants totaling \$2.3 billion to help communities keep their citizens safe. Two important Roanoke area institutions received funding. The Jefferson College of Health Sciences was awarded additional DOJ funding for campus security measures, such as emergency telephones and lights to brighten walkways near their downtown campus. The Roanoke Regional Jail is implementing job training, including a computer installation training program that will allow select inmates to return to society as productive citizens. This collaborative reentry work is being done in conjunction with TAP and Virginia Cares. Solid investments like these by the DOJ improve public safety and government efficiency for every citizen of Roanoke.

V. Federal courts

The Western District of Virginia is home to the country's third federal Veterans' Treatment Court, which provides enhanced services to court-involved veterans with substance abuse and mental health issues. Supervised by United States Magistrate Robert Ballou, the court offers pretrial diversion assessment, counseling, and advocacy to address the core issues of substance abuse and the psychological needs of our local vets. Several participants have already graduated from the program. In Abingdon, Judge James Jones, working with United States Probation and Parole, operates a more traditional reentry court which offers reduced supervision to offenders suffering from drug and alcohol addiction. Through community service, drug and alcohol testing, and the support of their peers and representatives of the United States Attorney's office, the Federal Public Defender's office, and drug and job counselors, defendants are given access to the skills and services needed to treat addiction.

VI. Moving forward

Part of the challenge of effective community outreach is the identification of effective crime prevention programs. Gwen Mason and I have traveled to virtually every corner of our expansive district learning about drug courts, anti-bullying programs, the great work being done by mentors across our area, and the positive activities offered to young people by the Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and other after school programs. I am eager to hear more about positive crime prevention programs throughout the district. We are hopeful for continued success in our outreach program.❖



Tim Heaphy and members of his office enjoy National Night Out with the Northwest Neighborhood Environmental Organization.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

□ **Timothy J. Heaphy** is the United States Attorney for the Western District of Virginia. Since taking office in October, 2009, he has managed the prosecution of federal crimes and defense of claims against the United States in this diverse district. He has supervised and personally handled a broad array of criminal cases and ensured the recovery of millions of dollars in civil fines and penalties. Mr. Heaphy has also pioneered a novel program of community outreach within the Western District, through which he has enhanced the Department of Justice's support of crime prevention and prisoner reentry programs.

Prior to being appointed United States Attorney, Mr. Heaphy's career included 12 years of service (1994-2005) as an Assistant United States Attorney with both the Western District of Virginia and the District of Columbia. During his time as an AUSA, Mr. Heaphy prosecuted a broad spectrum of criminal matters including, narcotics, weapons offenses, homicides, sexual offenses, white collar fraud cases, and racketeering.❖

Defending Childhood: Addressing Children's Exposure to Violence

Leslie A. Hagen

National Indian Country Training Coordinator

Department of Justice

A quick read of local newspaper headings yields the daily litany of violence that we unfortunately have come to expect: three children watch their mother gunned down by a former boyfriend; a teenager opens fire in the cafeteria at a suburban Cleveland high school; a court hears a case involving hate crimes where a college student used a Webcam to spy on his roommate during a sexual encounter; and the discovery of a 12-year-old boy weighing only 40 pounds after having been locked in a cage by his father and stepmother, to name just a few. These stories are often told in terms of defendant and victim and may remain newsworthy during the pendency of the criminal trial. But, what happens long-term to these children and other minors who are bystanders to this violence? What becomes of the children who witness violence? And, what obligation and opportunities do federal prosecutors, as community stakeholders and law enforcement leaders, have to get involved in this issue?

Every year, millions of children and adolescents are exposed to violence, both as victims and witnesses, in their homes, schools, and communities. Children who are exposed to violence respond in many different ways. Some children show remarkable resilience. Frequently, however, children who are exposed to violence demonstrate lasting physical, mental, and emotional harm. These children “suffer from difficulties with attachment, regressive behavior, anxiety and depression, and aggression and conduct problems. They may be more prone to dating violence, delinquency, further victimization, and involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.” Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency, United States Dep't of Justice, *Children's Exposure to Violence: A Comprehensive National Survey*, JUVENILE JUSTICE BULLETIN 1, 2 (Oct. 2009) (hereinafter *Children's Exposure*), available at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/227744.pdf>. Research shows that early identification, intervention, and continued follow-up are ideal strategies for preventing or decreasing the impact of exposure to violence.

United States Attorneys' offices (USAOs) are increasingly involved in cases of reactive crime that include child victims, many whom have suffered terrible abuses. For example, Project Safe Childhood, Project Safe Neighborhood, and Indian Country cases put law enforcement and USAO personnel in daily contact with children who, as a result of their victimization or having witnessed violence to others, may have suffered tremendous physical, emotional, or mental harm. The Department of Justice has the need and responsibility to respond to these children in a way that decreases or prevents the harms associated with exposure to violence.

During the Clinton administration, Eric Holder, then Deputy Attorney General, led an interagency effort to focus on the issue of children exposed to violence. In June 1999, Mr. Holder convened the National Summit on Children Exposed to Violence. The summit brought together over 150 practitioners and policy makers. Information shared at this summit was distilled into a strategy document for federal, state, and local stakeholders that was titled, “Safe From the Start: Taking Action on Children Exposed to Violence.” This plan focused on multi-disciplinary strategies of prevention, intervention, and accountability. It identified eight operating principals to address children's exposure to violence: (1)

work together, (2) begin earlier, (3) think developmentally, (4) make mothers safe to keep children safe, (5) enforce the law, (6) provide adequate resources, (7) work from a sound knowledge base, and (8) create a culture of nonviolence. At this summit, the Department of Justice announced and launched the Safe Start Initiative. Over the past decade, the Safe Start Initiative, led by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), laid the groundwork for other important efforts such as the Children and Youth Exposed to Violence Grant Program administered by the Office on Violence Against Women.

The Safe Start Initiative also led to the first national survey data on children who are exposed to violence. Based on this research, we now know that in America children are more likely to be exposed to violence and crime than are adults. *Children's Exposure at 2* (discussing how understanding the nature and extent of children's exposure to violence is essential to combating its effects). The National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV) is the most comprehensive nationwide survey of the incidence and prevalence of children's exposure to violence. The study was sponsored by the OJJDP and supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This national telephone survey involved a target sample of 4,549 children and youth and was conducted between January and May 2008. (Note that the percentage of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) representation in the survey sample was too small to make an independent comparison of rates for the AI/AN population. Email from David Finkelhor to author (Jan. 29, 2010)).

NatSCEV participants included youth ages 10 to 17, who were interviewed about their own experiences. For children under nine, parents or a primary caregiver were interviewed. The survey "measured the past-year and lifetime exposure to violence for children aged 17 and younger across several major categories: conventional crime, child maltreatment, victimization by peers and siblings, sexual victimization, witnessing and indirect victimization (including exposure to community violence and family violence), school violence and threats, and Internet victimization." *Children's Exposure at 1*. The survey also represented the first comprehensive attempt to measure children's exposure to violence in the home, school, and community across all age groups from 1 month to 17 years old, and the first attempt to measure the cumulative exposure to violence over the child's lifetime. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency, United States Dep't of Justice, *Polyvictimization: Children's Exposure to Multiple Types of Violence, Crime, and Abuse*, JUVENILE JUSTICE BULLETIN 1, 2 (Oct. 2011) (hereinafter *Polyvictimization*), available at <https://www.nejrs.gov/ojjdp/235504.pdf>. The survey not only asked about the incidents of violence that children suffered from and witnessed, but it also covered "other related crime and threat exposures, such as theft or burglary from a child's household, being in a school that was the target of a credible bomb threat, and being in a war zone or an area where ethnic violence occurred." *Id.* The NatSCEV research team also asked follow-up questions about specific events, such as "where the exposure to violence occurred, whether injury resulted, how often the child was exposed to a specific type of violence, and the child's relationship to the perpetrator and (when the child witnessed violence) the victim." *Id.*

According to the NatSCEV survey, "more than 60 percent of the children surveyed had been exposed to violence in the past year and more than 1 in 10 reported 5 or more exposures." *Children's Exposure at 4*. Boys and girls of all ages experienced and/or witnessed violence. However, younger children, ages six to nine, typically were exposed to less serious violence, like assaults without a weapon or without injury, assaults by a juvenile sibling, or bullying and teasing. *Id.* Moreover, "older adolescents ages 14 to 17 were the most likely to experience more serious forms of violence, including assaults with injury, gang assaults, sexual victimizations, and physical and emotional abuse, and to witness violence in the community." *Id.* Specific findings were as follows:

- Physical assault: 46.3 percent were physically assaulted within the previous year and 56.7 percent were assaulted during their lifetime.
- Bullying: 13.2 percent were physically bullied within the past year and 21.6 percent were physically bullied during their lifetime.
- Sexual abuse: 6.1 percent of all children surveyed reported sexual victimization in the past year and 9.8 percent reported it over their lifetime. The numbers for adolescents were higher with 16.3 percent reporting being sexually victimized in the past year and 27.3 percent being sexually victimized during their lifetime. Common forms of sexual victimization included exposure offenses, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.
- Child maltreatment: 10.2 percent suffered some form of maltreatment, including physical abuse (other than sexual assault), psychological or emotional abuse, child neglect, and custodial interference during the past year and 18.6 percent suffered maltreatment during their lifetime.
- Witnessing: 25.3 percent witnessed violence in their homes, schools, and communities during the past year and 37.8 percent witnessed violence against another person during their lifetime. Past year incidence of witnessing assaults in the community rose from 5.8 percent among 2 to 5-year-olds to 42.2 percent among 14 to 17-year-olds. Nine percent of 2 to 5-year-olds reported a lifetime incidence of witnessing assault, but this number increased to 64.2 percent of the 14 to 17-year-olds.

A surprisingly large number of children are exposed to very serious violence. The NatSCEV study found that “in the year prior to being interviewed, 1 in 20 children witnessed someone being shot, 1 in 200 witnessed a murder, and 1 in 50 was sexually abused.” *Id.* at 8. The numbers were even larger in the 14 to 17-year-old age group, with 1 in 10 witnessing a shooting, 1 in 75 witnessing a murder, and 1 in 20 experiencing a sexual assault. *Id.* The NatSCEV survey demonstrates how exposure to one form of violence may make a child more vulnerable to other forms of violence. Nearly 20 percent of children surveyed were exposed to 2 or more types of violence in the past year and more than 10 percent of children were exposed to 5 or more different types of violence in that year. *Id.* Violence and abuse have serious medical consequences that last long after the trauma-inducing event. Theresa Dolezal et al., *Hidden Costs in Health Care: The Economic Impact of Violence and Abuse* 3, ACADEMY ON VIOLENCE AND ABUSE (2009). These children are at higher risk for school failure, substance abuse, additional victimization, juvenile delinquency, and criminal behavior during adulthood.

In October 2009, the Department of Justice took steps to launch a new initiative on the issue of children’s exposure to violence. The initiative, called “Defending Childhood,” is multifaceted. The heart of the initiative is a grant-funded comprehensive effort in a number of jurisdictions. This initiative is intended to demonstrate the impact of a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach incorporating prevention, intervention, treatment, and response strategies, and to provide a continuum of care to children from the time of exposure to violence through successful treatment. Defending Childhood addresses the needs of children who experience violence in the home, school, and/or community, from the time they are born to 18 years of age. The goals of the initiative are to (1) reduce the severity of violence, (2) reduce the frequency of violence, (3) reduce the short and long-term traumatic impact of violence, (4) increase community safety and accountability, and (5) improve the safety and well-being of children.

In 2010 the Department of Justice awarded grants to eight sites in cities and tribal communities to develop strategic plans for comprehensive community-based efforts that will further promote the goals

of the initiative. Funded sites were selected through a competitive application process during which the importance of adequate preparation was stressed. Selected sites had to demonstrate existing or potential capacity to build and sustain a comprehensive program. The sites receiving initial Defending Childhood funding are the following:

- Grand Forks, North Dakota
- Cuyahoga County, Ohio
- Boston, Massachusetts
- Shelby County, Tennessee
- Chippewa Cree Tribe, Montana
- Rosebud Sioux Tribe, South Dakota
- Portland, Maine
- Multnomah County, Oregon

United States Attorneys serving in districts with funded Defending Childhood sites have demonstrated leadership and Justice Department commitment to the issue through their active involvement in the local projects. Resource documents developed in these funded sites and evaluations of the projects will provide valuable information for other jurisdictions launching their own efforts to focus on children who are exposed to violence.

A second facet of the Defending Childhood Initiative is the Attorney General's Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence. This task force was announced on October 13, 2011. The Task Force is comprised of 13 leading experts that include practitioners, child and family advocates, academic experts, and licensed clinicians. The Task Force is co-chaired by Joe Torre, founder of the Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation, and Robert Listenbee, Jr., Chief of the Juvenile Unit of the Defender Association of Philadelphia. The Task Force is conducting four public hearings in Baltimore, Albuquerque, Miami, and Detroit, and will provide a final report to the Attorney General in late 2012. The report is to include the Task Force's findings and comprehensive policy recommendations. It is intended to serve as a blueprint for preventing children's exposure to violence and for reducing the negative effects that are experienced by children who are exposed to violence in this country. United States Attorneys serving the jurisdictions where hearings are held have been provided the opportunity to address the Task Force.

Third, the Defending Childhood initiative also involves the Justice Department committing additional funding for research, evaluation, public awareness, and training, for criminal justice and social service professionals who work with children exposed to violence. A toolkit is currently under development. This toolkit will be available to USAOs and will provide information on how to create and support a Defending Childhood initiative in their own community. In part, this toolkit will focus on law enforcement's response to children and will address appropriate actions that law enforcement can take when working cases where children have been victims of crime or have been witnesses to violence.

In addition to the Attorney General's leadership on this issue, it is hoped that district and community-level focus on this issue will be reinforced by the United States Attorneys and their staffs. United States Attorneys are in the perfect position to convene community leaders and stakeholders in their districts to address children's exposure to violence and develop community-level Defending Childhood initiatives. Through local summits, meetings, and training sessions, United States Attorneys will be able to gather information about obstacles, barriers, and challenges in the district, and help

coordinate and advance efforts in this area. Technical assistance, consisting of subject matter experts, will be available to assist USAOs and local communities as they address the exposure to violence issue.

The Defending Childhood initiative fits well with other Department efforts that are focusing on children. For example, in May 2010, then Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Gary Grindler announced the formation of the Drug Endangered Children Interagency Task Force (DEC Task Force). The DEC Task Force was created in response to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) document, titled “2010 National Drug Control Strategy,” that called on the Department of Justice to lead an interagency task force with participation from ONDCP and the Departments of Health and Human Services. The DAG’s memorandum announcing formation of the DEC Task Force states that:

an important part of the [2010 National Drug Control] Strategy is helping to protect our Nation’s youth that are harmed by the use, trafficking, and manufacture of illicit drugs. These children are too often subjected to neglect and violence, as well as physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Not surprisingly, studies indicate that this problem becomes cyclical in that these children are substantially more likely to be involved in crime and develop drug addictions themselves.

DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE, 2010 NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY (2010). The goals of the DEC Task Force include (1) the establishment of an infrastructure to support coordinated efforts at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels; (2) the identification of the drug endangered children population, model protocols, and promising practices, in order to provide federal government assistance; (3) and the development of a national training program to help better serve drug endangered children. *Id.*

One segment of the United States population experiences issues of exposure to violence and substance abuse at rates exceeding many communities. Tribal youth experience as much or more violence and exposure to substance abuse issues than do youth in other communities. In addition, on many reservations, the majority of the population may be under the age of 25. Therefore, a focus of both the Defending Childhood initiative and the DEC Task Force is AI/AN children. This emphasis is part of the Department’s larger law enforcement initiative in Indian Country. In June 2009, Attorney General Eric Holder launched a Department-wide initiative to enhance public safety in Indian Country. In January 2010, then Deputy Attorney General David Ogden sent a memorandum to all United States Attorneys with Indian Country responsibility, instructing them that “public safety in tribal communities is a top priority for the Department of Justice.” DAVID OGDEN, MEMORANDUM FOR UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS WITH DISTRICTS CONTAINING INDIAN COUNTRY 1 (2010), *available at* <http://www.justice.gov/dag/dag-memo-indian-country.pdf>. This same memo states that “addressing violence against women and children in Indian Country is a Department of Justice priority. The Department, through the USAOs, has a duty to investigate and prosecute serious crimes in Indian Country, including crimes against women and children.” *Id.* at 4.

All 46 USAOs with Indian Country responsibility have engaged in government-to-government consultation with tribal leaders and law enforcement partners in their districts and have created a district-specific Indian Country Operational Plan. The plight of children in Indian Country is a recurring theme at many tribal consultations. Operational Plans address USAO support of multidisciplinary teams comprised of tribal and federal prosecutors, law enforcement, child protective services workers, and medical providers. Multidisciplinary teams and the USAOs are focused on the harm done to children and the creation of a system response that mitigates the damage to children.

The Department of Justice and the USAO community recognize and embrace that children truly do represent the future of our communities and our country. Child victims of violence and children who are exposed to violence are at risk of suffering long-term physical, psychological, and emotional harm.

Over the long run, community members suffering the effects of violence negatively impact our economy, our schools, and our criminal justice system. The Department of Justice, the Attorney General, and United States Attorneys are all committed to creating effective strategies to prevent and reduce the violence. Efforts focused on children who are exposed to violence may be the greatest public service that a community prosecutor can perform.❖

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

❑ **Leslie A. Hagen** serves as the Department of Justice’s first National Indian Country Training Coordinator. In this position, she is responsible for planning, developing, and coordinating training in a broad range of matters relating to the administration of justice in Indian Country. Ms. Hagen is also a liaison and technical assistance provider to Justice Department components and the Attorney General’s Advisory Committee on Native American Issues. Previously, Ms. Hagen served as the Native American Issues Coordinator in the Executive Office for United States Attorneys. She started with the Department of Justice as an Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) in the Western District of Michigan (WDMI). As an AUSA, she was assigned to Violent Crime in Indian Country handling federal prosecutions and training on issues of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse affecting the 11 federally-recognized tribes in the WDMI.☞

❑ This year OLE has added a variety of new resources for USAOs on Community Outreach. In addition to the six new programs listed below that are now available on Video On Demand, OLE also has created a Community Outreach SharePoint site, available to most DOJ users, at <https://portal.doj.gov/eousa/CCBlog/default.aspx>. For full access to the site, enter your DOJ email address and the password you use to login to your computer. Click the link above to view the site.

Community Outreach Shows on Video on Demand:

Community Outreach 101

Reentry Outreach: Five Success Stories

United States Attorneys’ School-Based Violence Prevention

Victim Witness Community Outreach: S.A.L.T. (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together)

Victim Witness Community Outreach: Fearless Justice

Your USAO and Grants