

2001 HERMAN GOLDSTEIN AWARD

POP 2001

SUMMARY:

The City of Monrovia's **Safe City Safe Campus Steering Committee (SCSCSC)**. This committee is a partnership between city and schools to ensure the safety and education of Monrovia's students. Monrovia's SCSCSC identifies problems or potential problems and implements strategies, directs resources and creates effective plans to resolve problems impacting students and the community. Since the inception of SCSCSC a Daytime curfew/Loitering Ordinance was developed (first of its kind in the nation) combat truancy. Parent education workshop programs, parent volunteers on campus to help maintain order, a school security inspection program developed to inspect schools and identify areas which breed crime, are among a few highlights. Numerous other programs were developed and implemented, all to better the schools, community and safety of the students. In 1996 Vice President Al Gore presented Monrovia the 1996 Public Employees Roundtable Public Service Excellence Award in the city category for our Community Activist Policing Program (CAP). Because of all our efforts, President Bill Clinton visited Monrovia in July of 1996 and called our community a "National Model" for the CAP Program and Daytime Loitering Ordinance. In this same year the Monrovia Unified School District received the Golden Bell Award from the California School Board Association for the Safe City Safe Campus Steering Committee Program. In 1998 Monrovia was the recipient of the Weber Seavey Award for our Daytime Curfew Ordinance.

I. The City of Monrovia developed the Safe City Safe Campus Steering Committee (SCSCSC) as part of the Police Department's Community Activist Policing (a problem oriented policing program) strategy to deal with problems which mutually affected law enforcement, the school district, parents and our children. The committee discusses issues of mutual concern, identifies strategies and resources, and creates effective plans to resolve problems impacting students and the community, for the ultimate goal of student success.

2. Monrovia is a city of approximately 42,000 people, encompassing approximately 13 square miles of Los Angeles County. Monrovia schools experience many of the urban ills of our nation, including gang violence, drug abuse, truancy, illiteracy, and fear. The School District is comprised of 10 schools with an average daily attendance of over six thousand students. We realized that many of our future challenges would come from our future adults - the youth of today. There were also plenty of signs suggesting that we needed a new approach to ensure student safety and success. Some of those signs were an increase in truancy, gang members, gang attire, weapons and violence on campus.

In June of 1994, the City and School District began to notice some disturbing trends. The annual truancy rate was nearly 5.5%. Many of these truants were suspected of contributing to an increase in daytime criminal activity. In a ninety-day period, guns were discovered three times on various campuses. One incident almost led to a fatality. Local gangs had begun to hang around the schools to recruit and pressure students. Student attire had become hard to discern from that of hard core gang members. The possibility of injury or death due to the wrong apparel became very real. Police responses to school campuses were increasing weekly. As a result of the partnership between public agencies and the school district, several programs were created for student safety.

3. The decision to accept SCSCSC in 1994 as a part of the Community Policing Strategy was based on the understanding that what affects the students in and around school affects the community as a whole. Our students do not simply attend school for 8 hours and disappear. They are a part of the community in and out of school, and the committee developed and implemented programs, laws, and procedures to provide a safe learning environment.

The Committee is made up of representatives from various agencies to determine if problem incidents were related. For instance, is crime becoming a problem because of a certain gang or individual student, or where and by what means are the influences of drugs and gangs originating. What is their relationship to other schools and neighborhoods. From that analysis, solutions are identified that draw on a wide variety of city, community and school resources, instead of relying solely on a lone patrol officer to respond to an individual call for service. *SCSCSC becomes an activist for social change by coordinating resources and dealing with problems that plague our schools and eventually our community.*

The committee consists of the following city representatives: Community Development, Community Services, City Manager, Police Department, Chief of Police, Youth Services Officers, Crime Prevention Officers, the Community Policing Supervisor, County Probation Officers, Gang Alternative Probation Officers, School District Administrators, School District Superintendent, Teachers and Principals from elementary, middle and high schools.

4. The committee was able to draw from local resources to accomplish common goals established by the police department and school district, safety and student success being the main priorities. The committee developed and implemented programs and procedures to eliminate or reduce violence on school grounds, as well as, violence outside the schools. The committee addressed issues surrounding gang attire, truancy, school security and establishing a communication link with the schools and the police when problems arose. The committee also developed and implemented various other programs to address the youth who were most at risk for anti-social behavior.

5. The committee had to examine the problems faced by the community's youth both in and out of school. Students have become more independent because of single parent families, economic barriers and influences created by media and television. The committee had to express to youth that they cared about their education, safety and the prevention of violence. Violence has become somewhat of a trend on school campuses across the country in recent years. Unfortunately there have been shootings at all grade levels.

The committee believed that increased law enforcement contacts and the school drop out rates of juveniles were related to truancy. Truants generally loitered about businesses, in malls, at homes where parents were not present, and were often disruptive to schools and other students. Habitual truants encouraged other students to indulge in negligent and irresponsible behavior. Because of this, opportunities increase for experimentation in drugs, promiscuity, gang involvement, lack of respect, and ultimately increased student criminal involvement and the drop out rate. In the past, truants were contacted by officers and simply returned to school. Officers did not have the authority to detain or channel youths into the judicial system. The system of dealing with truancy was without risk to the offender and their parents, and encourages poor school attendance. The juvenile criminal justice system had become unable to effectively address this type of pre-delinquent behavior because of restricted Superior Court availability, and an over-burdened judicial filing system which makes District Attorneys reluctant to file relatively minor criminal cases. The school district applied their administrative disciplinary measures, but unfortunately, the school district's disciplinary measures resulted in no real solutions to the growing truancy problem. Truant student deplete police resources, as well as the school district's resources.

The type of clothing worn by students in school was another issue of concern to the committee. The community and schools were faced with students wearing clothing that could be associated with gang attire or be mistaken as appearing to have gang association. The committee understood the tendency gang members had of looking for

students who appeared to be gang members and target them for potential violence. It was understood that not all youths wearing these types of clothing were involved in gangs, but the clothing still posed a potential problem. Thus, the junior high and elementary school students in Monrovia are required to wear school uniforms.

As a result of the partnership between the police, school district and other agencies, several programs have been created. The programs listed below will illustrate how the committee addressed mutual concern to the police department, school district, community and parents.

Daytime Curfew Ordinance

First, the committee with assistance from the Juvenile Courts developed and implemented the "Daytime Loitering Curfew Ordinance". This ordinance was the first of its kind in the nation and was designed to keep school aged students in school, and to hold them accountable should they chose to be truant. The ordinance was written to state, "it is unlawful for any minor, under age eighteen, who is subject to compulsory education or compulsory continuation education to loiter, idle, wander, in or upon the public street, highways, roads, alleys, parks, playground, or other public grounds, public places, public buildings, places of amusement, eating places, vacant lots, or any unsupervised place during the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on days when schools in session".

Now, juveniles who are found to be truant from school by police officer can be cited into the Juvenile Traffic Court with their parents and given the choice of a fine of \$135.00 or community service work for 27 hours. This new ordinance was designed to address the pre-delinquent youth, cut down on daytime crimes typically committed by juveniles and give students every opportunity to be successful and reach their true potential. After enforcing the daytime curfew ordinance for several years, there was a substantial decrease in daytime crime among juveniles. "Officers literally cleaned up the streets of juveniles who decided to loiter". They were issued citations and transported back to school immediately. Also, if the school reported the student had been truant, officers responded to the school and issued the student a citation, without the student actually being caught. The Monrovia Police Department dealt with truants swiftly and expeditiously.

Parent Education Workshop Program

The Monrovia Police Department implemented a program which provides a 12-hour parenting workshop that is held at the police department. The workshop consists of a two- hour meeting weekly for six weeks. A specially trained officer facilitates the meetings, which addresses such topics as effective communication, drug abuse prevention, peer pressure, discipline, building self esteem, listening skills, risk factors, media messages, reasons for drug use, conflict resolution, violence prevention

strategies, and resources and referrals. The class also discusses harmful affects of gang attire or clothing resembling gang members. The class is free and open to any parent or guardian residing in Monrovia. Referrals come from the court system (both voluntary and mandatory) and parents seeking assistance. Free child-care is also provided by the police department, and facilitated by police explorers, chaplains, and citizen volunteers. The child-care is structured along the same lines as the parenting program so as to offer education for the children rather than just entertainment. Their program consist of bicycle safety, citizenship, latch key child safety, stranger danger, anti smoking education and age appropriate drug awareness.

School Attendance Review Board (S.A.R.B.)

S.A.R.B. is made up of representatives of various youth serving agencies who help a truant or insubordinate student and the student's parent(s)guardian solve problems by using community resources. Representatives from the Police Department, School District, Probation, District Attorney's Office, Child Psychologist, members of the school board and other community leaders participate on the SARB panel. If SARB determines available community services cannot correct attendance or behavior problems, SARB promotes public and private community services to meet the needs of problem students and divert them from the juvenile justice system. The process guarantees students with truancy or behavior problems a SARB hearing and review. This provides the school and community resources, before the student is referred to juvenile court. The meetings are held monthly at the police department. The student and parents presence is required.

Expanded D.A.R.E. Program

The need for drug and violence prevention continues to be an important issue with our task force. In 1991 D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) was implemented in the City of Monrovia and taught in all 5th grade classes. In 1994, the D.A.R.E. program was expanded to include 7th and 9th grades as a way of providing remedial and ongoing education in this area. A second D.A.R.E. officer's position was created to work with these additional age groups. Since 1991, thousands of students enrolled in the Monrovia School District have graduated from the DARE program. As one would imagine, this position does not come without significant cost, a cost the police department or school district was not able to afford. In the true spirit of cooperation the city and school district used block grant funds, DUI vehicle impound fees, and a federal crime bill grant to pay for the new position.

Parents on Campus Program

This program consists of parent/guardian volunteers who help maintain a safe and friendly environment for students and teachers. The parents participate daily in maintaining order and discipline on campus, before, during and after school. They improve moral by being visible and demonstrating they believe student education is important, and violence not acceptable Parents and students of different cultures are brought together and achieve a better understanding of each other's needs and ideals.

Student Art Program

Self-esteem is one of the most important traits a juvenile can possess. In order to recognize our students' success; enhance feelings of self worth and their support of the police, the Police Department displays various types of student art throughout the police station. The art is replaced every six months with new student art work. The students are given certificates of appreciation by the Police Department for their participation and the art exhibit is broadcast on the local cable TV channel.

School Uniform Policy

SCSCSC recommended the adoption of a School Uniform Policy as another means of maintaining a safe and friendly environment on school campuses. The uniform policy was implemented to eliminate gang attire and reduce the likelihood of gang violence, reduce social-economic barriers, and assist police and school officials in recognizing students who belong to the Monrovia schools. Parents supported the uniform policy with 75% to 85% in favor. After several meetings at each school, parents and students selected the colors and type of uniforms that were affordable, stylish, and avoid them from being mistaken as gang attire. Low-income families were assisted in purchasing the uniforms by the school district. This policy was implemented at the elementary and middle school level.

Emergency Community System

The committee established an emergency communication system in the event of gang activity, civil disorder, natural disaster, protest, or police emergency that may impact the school. Officials quickly establish communication between the police and school

district through telephone or radio. The police department and school district would frequently exchange radios to further have communication in case the phones were rendered inoperable. The police department and schools also worked together to diffuse problems and eliminate misinformation and rumors. The school superintendent and police chief have each other's home telephone numbers and encourage each other to call any time of the day or night on issues of mutual concern.

SchoolSecurity Inspection Program

All of the schools in the district have received inspections by the Police Department with recommendations on how to improve security, with the school district acting upon the recommendations. Lighting conditions on campuses have improved along with fences built, locks replaced and cameras and alarms installed. A notification list was established in case the school needed to be notified regarding an incident. Graffiti has been reduced drastically. The Police Department expanded its inspections to include private school upon their requests.

Project C.A.R.Y.

Cooperation for At Risk Youth is a unique team concept designed to improve the conduct of students who are "at risk" of failure because of anti-social behavior, drug involvement, gang activity, and/or parental neglect. A three member team from the Police Department, Santa Anita Family Services Center,(a local family counseling center). The school district also jointly identifies educates and offer "customized" individual treatment to young people who are demonstrating delinquent behavior or need. Teachers, parents, police or the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), which meets monthly at the police station, can make referrals to this team.

H.E.L.P. Program

Helmet Education & Law Program. (H.E.L.P.) conceived by the Monrovia Police Department is designed to promote habits in young bicycle riders by encouraging them to wear their approved bicycle helmets in accordance with the helmet law that went into effect January 1, 1994. Police departments typically issue citations for violators, but now we also give "Good Tickets" (coupons) to kids who are being safe and wearing their required bicycle helmets. The tickets are bright yellow and are redeemable for free

food, toys, movie passes, ice cream etc. These coupons are all donated by local merchants dedicated to the betterment of our community. The Monrovia Police Department traffic division provides free bicycle helmets to children whose families are less fortunate and cannot afford to purchase helmets on their own.

THE IMPACT OF SAFE CITY SAFE CAMPUS STEERING COMMITTEE.

Residential Burglary	Down 32%
Vehicle Burglary	Down 59%
Petty Theft	Down 16%
Bicycle Theft	Down 94%
Disturbances	Down 30%
Grand Theft Auto	Down 46%
Shoplifting	Down 75%

The overall daytime crime rate has decreased which means there were fewer victims each year. The committee developed the program and procedures to effectively resolve problems of mutual concern and to allow our students to fully benefit from our education system without distractions from outside influences. This strategy is a routine part of daily activity. **Safe City Safe Campus Steering Committee works because everyone is working together.**

CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

To accomplish the goals and objectives of the Safe City Safe School Steering Committee, it takes a team effort throughout the entire Monrovia Police Department. Officers at the patrol level coordinated with the schools and juvenile court system, in an effort to eliminate truancy in the city of Monrovia. Officers were assigned specific areas of the city as their CAP area (community activist policing). Officers were able to monitor juvenile crime trends in their beats and report activity to the community policing staff, within the Monrovia Police Department community policing bureau. This allowed patrol officers and community policing personnel to target problem areas that juvenile's frequent, thus decreasing juvenile crime and truancy.

PROJECT CONTACT PERSON, OFFICER RON SLACK

MONROVIA POLICE DEPARTMENT
140 E. LIME, MONROVIA CA, 91016
(626)256-8000, FAX (626)256-8025