



---

# Project Safe Neighborhoods: Strategic Interventions

---

## Eastern District of Missouri: Case Study 7

*Written by:*

**Scott H. Decker**  
University of Missouri-St. Louis

**Beth M. Huebner**  
University of Missouri-St. Louis

**Adam Watkins**  
University of Missouri-St. Louis

**Lindsey Green**  
University of Missouri-St. Louis

*With:*

**Tim Bynum**  
Michigan State University

**Edmund F. McGarrell**  
Michigan State University

**School of Criminal Justice**  
**Michigan State University**  
560 Baker Hall  
East Lansing, MI 48824

February 2007



**U.S. Department of Justice**  
**Office of Justice Programs**  
810 Seventh Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20531

**Alberto R. Gonzales**  
*Attorney General*  
U.S. Department of Justice

---

This project was supported by Grant #2002-GP-CX-1003 awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. The Project Safe Neighborhoods series has benefited from the support, assistance, and comments of John Irving, Lois Felton Mock, Robyn Thiemann, and members of the Firearms Enforcement Assistance Team (FEAT) of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## Overview

The last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed significant declines in the rate of crime in the United States. This was true for most types of crime, including homicide and serious violent crime.<sup>1</sup> Despite these declines, the level of gun crime in the United States remains higher than that experienced in other western democracies and is a source of untold tragedy for families and communities.<sup>2</sup> Given this context, in 2001 the Bush Administration made the reduction of gun crime one of the top priorities of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), along with combating terrorism and enhancing homeland security.

The vehicle for translating this priority into action is Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). PSN represents a commitment to gun crime reduction through a network of local partnerships coordinated through the nation's 94 U.S. Attorneys' Offices. These local partnerships are supported by a strategy to provide them with the resources that they need to be successful.

The PSN initiative integrates five essential elements from successful gun crime reduction programs, such as Richmond's Project Exile, the Boston Operation Ceasefire Program, and DOJ's Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative. Those elements are: partnerships, strategic planning, training, outreach, and accountability. The partnership element requires that the local U.S. Attorney create workable and sustainable partnerships with other federal, state, and local law enforcement; prosecutors; and the community. Strategic problem-solving involves the use of data and research to isolate the key factors driving gun crime at the local level, suggest intervention strategies, and provide feedback and evaluation to the task force. The outreach component incorporates communication strategies geared at both offenders ("focused deterrence") and the community ("general deterrence"). The training element underscores the importance of ensuring that each person involved in the gun crime reduction effort—from the line police officer to the prosecutor to the community outreach worker—has the skills necessary to be most effective. Finally, the accountability element ensures that the task force regularly receives feedback about the impact of its interventions so that adjustments can be made if necessary.

### Partnerships

The PSN program is intended to increase partnerships between federal, state, and local agencies through the formation of a local PSN task force. Coordinated by the U.S. Attorney's Office, the PSN task force typically includes both federal and local prosecutors, federal law

enforcement agencies, local and state law enforcement agencies, and probation and parole. Nearly all PSN task forces also include local government leaders, social service providers, neighborhood leaders, members of the faith community, business leaders, educators, and health care providers.

### **Strategic Planning**

Recognizing that crime problems, including gun crime, vary from community to community across the United States, that state laws addressing gun crime vary considerably, and that local and state resources vary across the federal judicial districts covered by U.S. Attorneys' Offices, PSN also includes a commitment to strategic planning whereby the PSN program is tailored to local context. Specifically, PSN provides resources for the inclusion of a local research partner who works with the PSN task force to analyze the local gun crime problem and to share the findings with the task force for the development of a proactive plan for gun crime reduction. The research partners assist the task force through analysis of gun crime patterns and trends that can help the task force focus resources on the most serious people, places, and contexts of gun violence. The research partners can also bring evidence-based practice to the task force discussions of gun crime reduction strategies.<sup>3</sup> The inclusion of the research partner was also intended to assist in ongoing assessment in order to provide feedback to the task force.

Although each district creates strategic interventions that make sense in their local context, one strategy shared by all PSN task forces is increased federal prosecution of gun crime. PSN is built on the belief that the increased federal prosecution of gun offenders will reduce gun crime through the incapacitation of gun criminals and the deterrence of potential offenders. This working hypothesis is based on the notion that federal sanctions for gun crime are often more severe than those either available at the state level or likely to be imposed at the state level. Further, federal prosecution may include sanctions unavailable at the local level. The focus on prohibited persons possessing or using a firearm is built on the finding that a significant portion of gun crime involves offenders and victims with significant criminal histories. Thus, by increasing the certainty that a prohibited person in possession will face strong federal sanctions, the goal is to persuade potential offenders not to illegally possess and carry a gun.

The commitment to increased federal prosecution appears to be borne out. Fiscal year 2005 witnessed over 13,000 individuals charged with federal gun crimes, the highest number ever recorded by DOJ. Since PSN's inception, the number of federal firearms prosecutions has increased 73 percent.<sup>4</sup>

## Training

PSN has involved a significant commitment of resources to support training. This program has included training provided to law enforcement agencies on topics including gun crime investigations, gun crime identification and tracing, and related issues. Training on effective prosecution of gun cases has been provided to state and local prosecutors. Additional training has focused on strategic problem-solving and community outreach and engagement. By the end of 2005, DOJ estimates that nearly 18,000 individuals had attended a PSN-related training program sponsored by one of the many national PSN training and technical assistance partners.<sup>5</sup>

## Outreach

The architects of PSN also recognized that increased sanctions would have the most impact if accompanied with a media campaign to communicate the message of the likelihood of federal prosecution for illegal possession and use of a gun. Consequently, resources were provided to all PSN task forces to work with a media partner to devise strategies for communicating this message to both potential offenders and to the community at large. This local outreach effort is also supported at the national level by the creation and distribution of Public Service Announcements and materials (ads, posters). These materials are direct mailed to media outlets and are also available to local PSN task forces.<sup>6</sup>

The outreach component is also intended to support the development of prevention and intervention components. PSN provided grant funding in fiscal years 2003 and 2004 to the local PSN partnerships that could be used to support a variety of initiatives including prevention and intervention. Many initiatives were built on existing programs such as school-based prevention, Weed and Seed, or juvenile court intervention programs.

## Accountability

The leadership of the PSN initiative at DOJ has emphasized that PSN would focus on outcomes—i.e., reduced gun crime—as opposed to a focus on outputs such as arrests and cases prosecuted. That is, PSN's success is measured by the reduction in gun crime. This accountability component was linked to strategic planning whereby PSN task forces, working with their local research partner, are asked to monitor levels of crime over time within targeted problems and/or targeted areas.

## Additional Information

For more information on Project Safe Neighborhoods, visit [www.psn.gov](http://www.psn.gov). If you are interested in supporting your local Project Safe Neighborhoods program, please contact your local U.S. Attorney's Office.

# Contents

Executive Summary . . . . .	1
Eastern District of Missouri . . . . .	3
Development and Initial Implementation . . . . .	4
How Was PSN Started? . . . . .	5
Task Force Structure and Operation . . . . .	7
Integration of Research and PSN Task Forces . . . . .	8
Integration of Federal Law Enforcement . . . . .	9
Task Force Meeting Schedule . . . . .	9
Community Engagement . . . . .	11
A New Way of Doing Business . . . . .	12
Problem Analysis . . . . .	13
Strategic Interventions . . . . .	15
Key Implementation Issues, Challenges, and Successes . . . . .	18
Assessing Impact—Research Design . . . . .	20
Intervention Neighborhoods . . . . .	20
Control Groups . . . . .	20
Analysis . . . . .	22
Outputs . . . . .	22
Incident Patterns . . . . .	23
Community/Offender Awareness of PSN . . . . .	29
Summary . . . . .	33
References . . . . .	37
Endnotes . . . . .	39
Appendixes . . . . .	41
List of Figures	
Figure 1: U.S. District Aggravated Assault and Murder Rates, 2001 . . . . .	3
Figure 2: Summary of the Gun Crime Problem in the Eastern District of Missouri . . . . .	15
Figure 3: Gun Crime Problem and PSN Strategies . . . . .	16
Figure 4: Descriptive Statistics for Intervention, Control, and Contiguous Neighborhoods . . . . .	21

Figure 5: Federal Ceasefire Indictments . . . . . 22

Figure 6: Sentence Length for Federal and State  
Convictions (in Years) . . . . . 23

Figure 7: Comparison of Pre- and Post-Intervention  
Change in Firearm-Involved Aggravated  
Assault Incidents . . . . . 24

Figure 8: Firearm-Involved Aggravated  
Assault Incidents . . . . . 24

Figure 9: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention  
Change in Firearm-Involved Robbery Incidents . . 25

Figure 10: Firearm-Involved Robbery Incidents . . . . . 25

Figure 11: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention  
Change in Homicide Incidents . . . . . 26

Figure 12: Homicides by Neighborhood Group . . . . . 26

Figure 13: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention  
Change in Weapons Incidents . . . . . 27

Figure 14: Shots Fired by Group and Quarter . . . . . 28

Figure 15: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention  
Change in Shots-Fired Reports . . . . . 28

Figure 16: Have You Ever Owned or Possessed  
a Gun? . . . . . 29

Figure 17: What Was the Reason for Getting  
a Gun? . . . . . 29

Figure 18: How Hard Is It To Get a Gun? . . . . . 30

Figure 19: Which System Has Harder Penalties? . . . . . 30

Figure 20: Perceived Chances of Penalty for Illegal  
Firearm Carrying (Over Time) . . . . . 31

Figure 21: Which Is a More Important Consideration  
to You When You Think About Carrying a Gun  
on the Street? . . . . . 32

Figure 22: Have You Heard of PSN? . . . . . 32

Figure 23: Summary of Key Components of  
Eastern District of Missouri’s Successful PSN  
Task Force . . . . . 35

# Executive Summary

## Context

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) in the Eastern District of Missouri is primarily focused on the City of St. Louis, a city that has consistently experienced one of the highest homicide and violent gun crime rates in the United States.

## Task Force

The PSN task force is coordinated in the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) and includes representation from federal, state, and local law enforcement; local and federal prosecutors; and probation and parole. It also includes the juvenile court, Level I trauma center, city neighborhood services, street outreach workers, the media relations partner, and the regional justice information system. The task force built upon prior multi-agency initiatives to reduce violent crime and included a research team from the University of Missouri-St. Louis, who have extensive experience working with the local criminal justice system. The overall PSN task force initially met monthly and now meets quarterly, though several task force committees meet more often. The gun case prosecution team meets biweekly and reviews all cases involving a gun. A meeting is held weekly at the North Patrol Division station to review the activities of the Violent Crime Task Force. Additional task forces have been convened to address specific issues and problems.

## Problem Analysis

The problem analysis revealed very high levels of gun crime in St. Louis, with concentrations in particular neighborhoods. Gun crime typically involved high-rate offenders at risk for both victimization and perpetration of violence. A substantial number of these offenders and homicide victims were under probation and parole supervision. Most gun seizures occurred through traffic and pedestrian stops. The task force also recognized, supported by research, that there were significant gaps in processing gun crime cases and a lack of coordination between local and federal prosecutors in deciding whether gun crime cases should be prosecuted federally or locally.

## Strategies

For the district and City of St. Louis as a whole, the PSN strategy consisted of increased federal prosecution. The task force selected 14 neighborhoods, chosen due to their high level of gun crime, for a comprehensive set of strategies. Included were targeted enforcement in the focus neighborhoods by law enforcement and probation, federal-local gun case prosecution review, a most violent offender program, and probation notification meetings for high-risk probationers. These



comprehensive strategies constituted a “system fix” that sought to prioritize a focus on gun crime among local, state, and federal law enforcement and improve coordination and communication.

### **Outcomes**

Interviews indicate that PSN changed the business of addressing gun crime in St. Louis, significantly increasing information sharing among local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies and consensus among PSN task force members of a shared priority and accountability for gun crime. Federal prosecutions for gun crime increased significantly, and gun crime offenders convicted in both state and federal court received significant sentences. Interviews conducted with arrestees provided evidence that increased federal prosecution had an impact on perceptions of the likelihood of prosecution and incarceration, at least for adult offenders. Violent gun crime declined significantly in St. Louis and targeted neighborhoods following PSN, but it is not clear if PSN generated the decline. That is, the prediction of a PSN intervention effect suggests that the greatest decline would occur in the 14 targeted neighborhoods. Although gun crime declined in these target areas, the decline in arrests was not substantially different than that observed in the control and contiguous neighborhoods. Several explanations appear plausible. The gun crime decline in St. Louis and the target neighborhoods may reflect long-term national trends in the decline in violent crime that may have occurred absent PSN. Alternatively, PSN may have had an impact by creating a credible threat of federal prosecution as opposed to the targeted enforcement in the 14 neighborhoods, thus having an impact throughout the city.

## Eastern District of Missouri

The State of Missouri is served by two federal judicial districts. The Eastern District of Missouri (Eastern District) includes the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area, St. Charles County,<sup>7</sup> Hannibal, and the Cape Girardeau area. The district is comprised of a population of 2,798,229, ranking 38<sup>th</sup> in population among the 90 U.S. judicial districts.<sup>8</sup> The U.S. Attorney's (USA's) main office is in St. Louis, with an additional office in Hannibal.

As indicated in figure 1, the Eastern District ranks higher than the U.S. average in terms of both its murder rate and aggravated assault rate. It also ranks higher when compared to U.S. judicial districts of comparable size.

**Figure 1: U.S. District Aggravated Assault and Murder Rates, 2001**

	Aggravated Assault Rate*	Murder Rate*
U.S. District Average	30.65	0.65
U.S. Districts of Comparable Size**	25.99	0.51
Eastern District of Missouri	35.52	0.73

\*Per 10,000 in population.  
\*\*With populations from 2,100,000 to 3,500,000.

Although the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) prosecutes gun crime cases throughout the district, the primary Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) focus area has been the City of St. Louis, which has many classic rust-belt city characteristics, especially population loss from its peak in 1952 at just over 850,000 residents to fewer than 450,000 in 2000. In addition, much of the population loss occurred in the middle class; the White middle class left the city largely in the 1960s, followed by the African-American middle class in the 1980s. These exoduses were accompanied by losses of jobs in the manufacturing sector that only exacerbated the population loss and general downturn in the city's economy. The result in many neighborhoods has been elevated levels of crime, including violent crimes such as homicide and aggravated assault.

While national violent crime rates have dropped since the early 1990s, St. Louis has consistently ranked among the three to five cities with the highest homicide and aggravated assault rates. Assaults in the

city, moreover, disproportionately involve the use of a firearm.<sup>9</sup> In fact, gun crime is nine and one-half times higher than elsewhere in the United States.

In St. Louis, nearly all of the increase in homicides since the late 1980s was gun-related, and this increase was largely concentrated in the younger age groups. During the early 1990s, the homicide rate among African-American males age 15 to 19 was five times higher than the homicide rate for the city as a whole, a rate exceeded by 20-to-24 year-old African-American males who suffered an astounding 626 murders per 100,000 population. Almost without exception, homicides involving young African-American males in St. Louis involve firearms. Ninety-eight percent of African-American male victims between 15 and 24 years of age were killed with a firearm in the early 1990s, and fully 88 percent of African-American male victims age 10 to 14 also were killed with firearms. By comparison, 74 percent of African-American male victims over the age of 24 were killed with guns.<sup>10</sup>

In light of these statistics, St. Louis is a particularly appropriate site for research on and interventions to stem gun violence. The city is also appropriate for another reason. The correspondence between U.S. and St. Louis homicide rates over the 1960-1990 period is remarkably strong. When converted to standard scores, the correlation between the two data series is nearly .95, suggesting that interventions that change local patterns may have national relevance.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, there is a strong spatial concentration of indicators of violence, particularly the distribution of homicides, firearm recoveries, and shots-fired calls to the 911 (CAD) system. The distribution of these indicators of violence in the city has historically been located within several distinct hot spots. Fifteen of the city's 79 neighborhoods account for the locations of over half of the homicides. In addition, individuals involved in homicide—whether as victims or offenders—have extensive criminal histories. Ninety percent of suspects and 79 percent of victims had a prior felony criminal history, and roughly one-quarter of each group was serving a term of probation or parole. Data from the city's Trauma Department of the Level I Trauma Center indicated that a large proportion of shooting victims (perhaps as many as one-third) have been treated for gunshot wounds in the past, and many gunshot wound victims do not appear in police records.

## **Development and Initial Implementation**

PSN in St. Louis built on a number of prior local-state-federal initiatives designed to address violence. Indeed, there has been a long history of working together, although cooperation has not been as productive as it could have been. An enumeration of the history of cooperation since 1990 is provided below. These efforts include both symbolic and substantive interventions. For example, the 1991 Gun

Buyback Program can be viewed as primarily a symbolic intervention. The federal-local initiatives listed below are primarily cooperative ventures, and include a variety of both federal and local partners.

- 1991—Gun Buyback Program.
- 1992—Assault Crisis Teams.
- 1996—Firearm Suppression Program.
- 1996—Safe Futures Program.
- 1998—Operation Ceasefire.
- 1999—Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI).
- 2001—New mayor, police chief, U.S. Attorney, and prosecutor.
- 2002—Project Safe Neighborhoods.

One of the key features of these interventions is that they involve a variety of partners; the two constants across these interventions was the presence of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department and the research partner (RP) from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. There were several consistent shortcomings across the Assault Crisis Teams, Firearm Suppression Program, and Safe Futures Program. These include the lack of strong leadership, the lack of federal involvement, and the failure to engage the community in each instance. Further, each of these interventions lacked the resources to be fully implemented or sustained. This failure was confronted directly by PSN in the Eastern District. From its origins, there was an emphasis by the Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) assigned to be the PSN Coordinator to fix the system; recognition that agencies did not work together well, share data, or coordinate their efforts. As a consequence of this situation, some cases were lost in the system and offenders avoided sanctions for their crimes. Thus, offenders had no reason to believe that any initiative was going to be different than the myriad prior, largely ineffective initiatives that had preceded PSN.

### **How Was PSN Started?**

PSN in St. Louis built on a Ceasefire Task Force begun in 1996. Ceasefire focused on firearms violence, but without a specific set of interventions or goals. Thus it provided a shell for PSN, but without a firm set of content. In spring 2001, St. Louis elected a new mayor and Circuit Attorney, named a new police chief, and appointed a new U.S. Attorney. An editorial in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* pointed out that these individuals, key to the prevention of and response to violent crime, had never met on a regular basis to discuss strategies to reduce violence in a city with one of the highest rates of violence in the country. Furthermore, these individuals were each new to their office, and as such were not tied to the practices of the past. In that sense, they were free to try new things; after all, as the editorial pointed out doing

“the same old thing” had left St. Louis one of the most violent cities in the United States. These four individuals began a series of monthly meetings to focus specifically on crime, predominantly violent crime.

Another key force behind the St. Louis PSN effort was the leadership of the U.S. Attorney. Early on, having seen the distribution of violent crime across the Eastern District, the USA decided that PSN should focus on where the gun violence problem was the greatest, in a specific part of the city. This decision was made independent of politics, past practice, and what would have been a more expedient decision to spread PSN resources throughout the district. The extremely high concentration of violence in a relatively small number of neighborhoods was a compelling factor. Throughout its implementation in St. Louis, PSN has remained concentrated in a small number of neighborhoods (15). This consistent focus has been one of the hallmarks of the strategy.

Leadership did not end with the U.S. Attorney. The police chief also committed resources and leadership to the effort. Assigning a captain, who retained responsibility for the PSN initiative after his promotion to major, was a key element of the strategy’s focus and success because of his ability to focus efforts on the violence problem, the respect of rank and file, and use of the Internet as a platform for information upon which to base problem solving. In addition, the chief committed overtime resources for an anti-crime task force to work specifically in the targeted neighborhoods, and required most specialized units (Narcotics/Vice, Mobile Reserve, Gang, and Detective) to spend a minimum of 2 hours per night working in the targeted neighborhoods. This occurred when the police department was experiencing a reduction in force, making the commitment of resources even more impressive. The Circuit Attorney (the St. Louis equivalent of a District Attorney or State’s Attorney) also committed prosecutors to concentrate on violent crime. This was facilitated through the PSN resources that were made available through the U.S. Department of Justice’s grants to support local gun prosecutors. However, when those funds expired, the Circuit Attorney maintained her commitment to prosecuting gun cases and the PSN strategy. In addition, Probation and Parole joined the task force 2 years into its development, once a new supervisor was named. Its participation has been important to the change in strategy over time because it has expanded the nature of interventions by targeting probationers for additional supervision.

### **PSN Message**

There is an internal and an external PSN message in St. Louis. The internal message is “system fix,” that is, making sure that gun crime offenders no longer slip through the cracks and presenting a united and consistent message. The external message is that gun crime offenders will be arrested and prosecuted in the venue that will give them

the most time. The goal is to remove the cloak of invisibility that often seems to cover offenders. Many gun offenders had become invisible to the criminal justice system; they knew that they could get away with their crime, and if caught would not receive substantial prison time.

By far, the most important change in the way that the business of criminal justice is done in St. Louis is the focus on system fix. This was a consistent message from the PSN Coordinator, the RP, and most of the partners.

One of the most striking elements of the St. Louis internal message was the medium by which it was communicated. The major placed in charge of the Violent Crime Task Force used e-mail and the electronic communication of material to stress the importance of what was being done, communicate strategic and tactical information, and build group solidarity. When a homicide was committed in the city, an e-mail went out (see appendix 1) that provided some minor descriptive details about the homicide but also placed it into context for the number of homicides by that date for the preceding 3 years. One of the unanticipated consequences was that the homicide “number” became well known and important locally. Individuals in the criminal justice system (prosecutors, police, and probation and parole officers) who previously would not have known the homicide count not only knew it, but became interested. This electronic platform extended to the sharing of information about recent violent events that was collected by different police units (Patrol, Violent Crime Task Force, Narcotics/Vice, Mobile Reserve, and Gangs) that allowed other units to link their information to a broader range of information and engage in more strategic action. In addition, a Violent Crime Case Review (see appendix 2) was created for each violent incident that occurred in the targeted neighborhoods.

### **Task Force Structure and Operation**

PSN built on these prior efforts to coordinate a number of groups in violence reduction strategies; despite the lack of demonstrable outcome measures, it appears that the cooperation and trust generated laid a groundwork from which PSN could build. PSN St. Louis task force partners include:

- U.S. Attorney and several Assistant U.S. Attorneys.
- St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, including leadership from the police chief, a major specifically assigned to oversee the violent crime initiative, and the involvement of several district-level detectives as well as individuals from specific units, such as Gangs, Homicide, Narcotics, Mobile Reserve, and Crimes Against Persons.
- Circuit Attorney and members of her staff.
- Research partner and his team.

- Federal probation office.
- Missouri Probation and Parole.
- Level I Trauma Center.
- Juvenile Court (Project Sentry).
- State police.
- City neighborhood services.
- Street outreach workers.
- Media relations partner.
- REJIS, the Regional Justice Information System.

As PSN evolved, multiple task forces developed. This was consistent with the experience of SACSI, as well as SACSI's predecessor, Ceasefire. Each of these strategies had multiple but horizontally integrated task forces. For example, SACSI had a task force to deal with violent crime that integrated local law enforcement with federal law enforcement, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The existence of horizontally integrated task forces also was reflected in prosecution efforts that produced teamwork between the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Circuit Attorney.

### **Integration of Research and PSN Task Forces**

Under PSN, task forces were developed that focused on research-identified problems. Specifically, acting on research findings, PSN created task forces to address the highly localized nature of violent gun crime in St. Louis; inefficient aspects of the gun case processing system; the backlog of homicide cases, particularly those involving the use of firearms; the small number of high-level gun offenders; and probationers identified as heavily involved in gun violence. It was hardly the case, however, that there was a seamless transition from the identification of an issue (through whatever level of research) to the development of an intervention. It should be noted that in St. Louis, a number of research projects had been underway, and that a variety of partners (especially the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department) also were conducting ongoing analyses. Results would be presented at a Ceasefire meeting, via the Internet, or through a subcommittee meeting. Rarely was it the case that individuals at the meeting immediately acted by forming a task force, initiating a new effort, or proceeding to change the way that business was done. This points to an important issue in implementing change: change happens slowly, takes time to implement, and is not easily integrated into practice. The St. Louis experience confirms these principles.

Despite these challenges, the RP has been engaged both in examining violence in the Eastern District as well as partnering with



neighboring justice agencies for quite some time. The engagement in such practice and research prior to SACSI and PSN funding is often cited as a reason why data could be accessed, partnerships were more easily forged, findings were taken more seriously, and the initiation of PSN progressed so smoothly. Put more succinctly, trust—built over time—can overcome hurdles. The earliest involvement of the RP with both local officials and violence data was the St. Louis Homicide Project, initiated in 1989. This project resulted in a broad data-sharing initiative between the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department and the University of Missouri-St. Louis. In addition, the St. Louis Homicide Project sponsored a series of public events to present the findings from analyses of homicide to the public and solicit their involvement.

### **Integration of Federal Law Enforcement**

The involvement of federal partners was, surprisingly to the St. Louis PSN partners, quite difficult. Two factors may have played a key role in this process. First, there is not a long tradition of cooperation between federal and local enforcement. Second, the September 11, 2001 events caused federal law enforcement to prioritize terrorism. These issues worked against the St. Louis PSN effort in its early stages. Since 1998, U.S. Attorneys in the Eastern District have worked to engage federal law enforcement partners, particularly ATF. Despite the executive and legislative mandate to involve ATF in PSN, the agency was not involved in St. Louis through 2002. However, at that time, the chief of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department entered into discussions with the local ATF office, reminding them of the local police department's commitment to working with ATF. This commitment was exemplified by the deployment of two officers dedicated to the ATF gun tracing effort. Second, the chief entered into discussions with the DEA to involve them in investigations of homicides. This was a very successful effort, as DEA subsequently assigned three officers to homicide investigations. This is particularly important as it represents newly forged cooperation between local and federal law enforcement.

### **Task Force Meeting Schedule**

In its initial phases, the PSN task force in the Eastern District met on a monthly basis. Into its third year, the decision was made to hold meetings on a quarterly basis. This reflects several changes, including the development of an effective electronic platform, overcoming the initial implementation hurdles, and the perception that quarterly meetings would suffice. The meeting is held in a large conference room in the U.S. Attorney's Office, and is convened by the U.S. Attorney. There are reports from each of the partners organized around function (see appendix 3 for a sample), beginning with the RP, moving through law enforcement, prosecution, probation and parole, and, when present, community leaders. The meeting attendance averages between 35 and 45 individuals. A consistent set of individuals regularly attends these



meetings. There is follow-up from meeting to meeting on action items, proposed efforts, and new initiatives. Local police provide extensive data on arrests and crime patterns in the targeted neighborhoods. This provides a measure of accountability for the entire group, and has set a tone for each of the partners. The PSN Coordinator, a veteran AUSA, provides information for the group regarding new federal initiatives, meetings, or goals. Meetings typically last between 75 and 90 minutes. These meetings have been the scene for demonstrations of technology (e.g., ATF gun tracing), federal probation initiatives and workshops, and FBI intelligence on gangs. The level of information presented and discussed is often law enforcement-sensitive. Thus, attendance is restricted to criminal justice employees and the RP.

The various subcommittees and initiatives also hold regular meetings. The gun prosecution team (see Decker et al., 2006) meets biweekly to review all gun arrests. This is attended by representatives from the USAO, the Circuit Attorney's office, ATF, and local law enforcement. A weekly violence review held at the North Patrol Division station reviews the activities of the Violent Crime Task Force. This is attended by many of the police officials who command the specialized and district units involved in the intervention, including Mobile Reserve (the tactical squad), Gang Unit, Vice/Narcotics, Juvenile, and Homicide. Each of these specialized units patrol the target area 2 hours each day. The PSN Coordinator and RP hold *ad hoc* meetings to address emerging issues. The Most Violent Offender Program staff holds regular meetings. In addition, the Probation Notification work group meets prior to a notification.

As noted above, the electronic platform that exists provides significant communication opportunities. An e-mail goes out to the "large" PSN group following every homicide, which identifies the number of homicides year-to-date, provides details about the homicide, and compares the year-to-date homicide total with the prior year and the 3-year average. Specific police district information also is provided. (See appendix 1 for a sample e-mail.) In addition, the electronic platform is used to communicate information about the activities of each of the specialized units engaged in the Violent Crime Task Force. Thus it is possible to receive arrest, gun seizure, and field interrogation information from the Gang, Vice/Narcotics, Mobile Reserve, Homicide, and District detectives each day (see appendix 4 for a sample). Specific information about arrests and violent crime in the targeted area is one of the most frequent and apparently most useful pieces of information. These e-mails provide more detailed information about an individual, including the charge, address, prior record, probation/parole status, weapons, drugs, associates, and arrest status. They have been used on several occasions as the basis for changing the venue for prosecution from state to federal court, where penalties for gun possession and use, particularly by felons, are considerably more severe.

## Community Engagement

Despite what appears to be an impressive array of partners and processes of integrating partners into a process, there were several holes in the partnership organization. The most significant of these was the inability to engage community partners. A number of collaborative interventions (McDevitt, 2002; McGarrell, 2002; McGarrell et al., 2006) report that a key ingredient to their outcome success was their ability to recruit and initiate other partners. Partners may include community, neighborhood, faith-based, social service, and aftercare (specifically probation, parole, and reentry) groups—potential partners that St. Louis PSN struggled to include.

To date, there has not been successful engagement of the faith-based community in the PSN effort in the Eastern District. Three USAs have attempted to engage the faith-based community, including the offer of meetings and specific neighborhood attention. In addition, probation also was not successfully engaged in the PSN effort. Indeed, in the early SACSI effort, probation and parole distanced itself from the intervention. Fortunately, this has changed and probation and parole is among the most engaged and innovative of the partners.

The failure to engage the community may be more consequential than elsewhere. In January 2003, the RP and the PSN Coordinator (the AUSA) recognized that dramatic increases in arrest and prosecution alone<sup>12</sup> would not reduce crime rates. They began to search for city, community, or public sector resources that could help mobilize community characteristics, resources, and services to address these problems. In addition, police officers, neighborhood residents, and other engaged citizens had little access to social service and other non-enforcement resources. During interviews with officers it became evident that there was either a lack of resources or awareness of resources.

Part of the struggle to engage the community stems from the difficulty of defining who or what the community is. All of the neighborhoods in the PSN target area rank in the lowest decile in the country on the “community disadvantage” index identified by Lauritsen (2004), which combines five factors (percent single parent families, vacant houses, percent below the poverty level, unemployment, and percent African-American population). As Lauritsen (2004) and Sampson (2003) demonstrated, this index is related both to levels of victimization and offending in a neighborhood. Thus for St. Louis, the target neighborhoods rank in the worst 10 percent in the country, and many of them rank at the bottom of that group. Finding “community” under such circumstances is not easy, as businesses, individuals, and institutions that could provide resources, mentors, role models, and support for the PSN strategy are often lacking. Several U.S. Attorneys have reached out to religious leaders and advocacy groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Urban League. Sustaining their involvement, however, has proven difficult.

One example from the early Ceasefire efforts illustrates the difficulties of engaging the community and individuals in leadership positions. The U.S. Attorney and his Special Assistant for Special Projects organized a march against violence and gun crime, enlisting support for the community and local leadership, particularly from the faith-based community. When the march took place, more representatives from the U.S. Attorney's Office participated than from the lay community and the faith-based community put together. When asked why he did not participate, one member of the faith-based community remarked that it was too dangerous. During the third phase of the consent-to-search program (Decker and Rosenfeld, 2004), a ministerial group provided follow-up to the parents and youth of residences where illegal firearms were seized. In more than 100 police referrals, no evidence of a follow-up was found.

A more recent example illustrates similar difficulties. In early 2005, a member of the St. Louis faith-based community publicly urged young African-American men to carry weapons to protect themselves from the police; such actions do little to encourage cooperation between law enforcement and the community. An additional example, again from the faith-based community, illustrates some of the dilemmas of engagement: police officers on patrol found two 12-year-olds with a pistol sitting on the steps of a church located in the target area. The officers stopped to question them, and took the gun into custody. Despite the fact that this happened on the steps of a church on a Sunday afternoon, neither the church's leader or its congregants intervened.

The inability to involve the community and its leaders points to potential sustainability problems for the PSN approach in St. Louis—only community members can extend the PSN prosecution and targeted enforcement message out into the community and inculcate the warning about illegal gun use. Absent such involvement, the PSN effort may not succeed.

### **A New Way of Doing Business**

Several features distinguish PSN from other task force experiences in the district. First, the USA's active, engaged leadership has been perhaps PSN's most visible and important advantage. Some of the groundwork for this was laid during Ceasefire, but a succession of USAs has committed time, leadership, and emphasis. Having a new mayor, police chief, Circuit Attorney, and U.S. Attorney take office prior to the kickoff of PSN proved significant to the success. None of these individuals were tied to past interventions and thus the group represented a new start. It was clear that past efforts had not reduced gun violence and thus there was an impetus to try new things. The third distinguishing feature was the additional dollars and commitments leveraged with the PSN seed money, which were not sufficient to sustain the initiative's scope, but were significant in initially engaging partners and

encouraging innovation and commitment. The fourth distinguishing feature is the involvement of federal law enforcement, working in conjunction with local law enforcement. The SACSI effort, in contrast, was unable to successfully engineer sustained joint federal/local initiatives. PSN has been able to do so with initiatives between ATF as well as DEA and local law enforcement. A fifth distinguishing feature has been the enhanced cooperation between the Circuit Attorney and the USAO. Finally, there has been a sense of collaboration among the PSN partnerships that has overcome institutional boundaries and ennui.

The key to all of this has been leadership from the USAO, the Circuit Attorney, and the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. There is leadership from the top of each of these organizations, but also from key management personnel. The PSN Coordinator still carries a substantial prosecution caseload, but has provided leadership in a number of the special efforts, notably the gun case review, probation notification meetings, and Violent Crime Task Force. The major in charge of the Violent Crime Task Force has provided leadership within the police department that has convinced early skeptics and engaged the special units vital to the task force. The Circuit Attorney's Office also has provided leadership from management ranks. Probation and Parole (an integrated state function in Missouri) was not an engaged partner in the Ceasefire and early PSN project. However, change at the top (the administrator for the St. Louis Probation and Parole office) provided solid leadership from within this key office. There also has been a sense of accountability throughout the life of PSN in St. Louis. Though it was not intended to be the manifest goal of the homicide e-mails, they functioned to focus attention on the problem for a large number of individuals. One of the ironies about homicide in St. Louis was that despite its standing as one of the most violent cities in the United States, few people knew how many homicides had occurred or whether that number was ahead of or behind the pace from the previous year. The homicide e-mails changed that. A new e-mail would trigger e-mail among listserv members, often including suggestions about prosecution venues, prior arrests or involvement with the criminal justice system, or knowledge of associates' involvement and locations. It was not uncommon for the USA to open a PSN meeting with the "count" as of that minute. This focus on homicide kept the group motivated.

## **Problem Analysis**

Research was enhanced both by the Ceasefire and SACSI initiatives and the prior involvement of the research partner, who had studied homicide, violent crime, and criminal justice interventions programs locally for over 20 years. This ongoing relationship provided the RP and other PSN components an understanding of violent crime problems and issues built over that period of time, a familiarity with data sources and systems, and trust. These factors allowed the research process to

get a head start as well as to proceed more smoothly than in many other jurisdictions. It is important to note that while the research process described below may appear to have “produced” many of the interventions, the relationship often was less clear. In some cases, the research and the intervention proceeded along parallel tracks. That is, the research question would emerge from a task force discussion, research would proceed at its pace, and the intervention would begin to build steam by adding partners, finding data, and searching for new directions. About the time that the research seemed to be ready to suggest an intervention, a related intervention would be underway. In other cases, the research clearly played the lead role in suggesting where the intervention should go. This is the clearest application of the problem-solving model. In yet other cases, the research lagged considerably behind the intervention activity. This could be the case because of lack of access to data, the pace of research, or the desire on the part of the task force to move ahead. Fortunately, in several instances the RP was able to head off ill-advised interventions such as boot camps or expanded D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) activities by presenting findings from previous research on these interventions.

The research revealed the strong spatial concentration of homicide, gun crime, and violent crime in St. Louis. Although the finding that a relatively small part of the city accounted for most of the violent crime was hardly news (most operational agencies and personnel had long suspected it), the data vividly demonstrated the degree of this spatial concentration—the “top 10” most violent neighborhoods accounted for more than 40 percent of all murders. The second key finding involved the use of firearms in homicide—firearms were the means of inflicting death in 78 percent of all homicides in 2002. Third, research showed that a small number of offenders were arrested for a large number of offenses. An analysis of guns provided the fourth set of findings. While guns were plentiful in St. Louis, there were patterns of use and ownership among offenders as well as patterns in the seizure of illegal firearms. Contrary to common perception, most illegal firearms were seized during traffic or pedestrian stops rather than arrests or search warrants. Interviews with criminal justice personnel, particularly prosecution, moreover, revealed gaps in the system that needed to be addressed. That is, many gun cases slipped through the cracks. Finally, interviews with offenders in custody (typically within 24 hours of arrest) examined their perceptions of the PSN intervention, as well as their patterns of firearms acquisition and use (see outcome section below).

Figure 2 summarizes the gun crime problems identified.

The RP and staff participated in all PSN planning meetings and joined the regular PSN working group, a result facilitated by the long-standing relationship, enhanced by the involvement in the initial PSN Problem-Solving Training conducted by Michigan State University

**Figure 2: Summary of the Gun Crime Problem in the Eastern District of Missouri**

- Extremely high levels of gun crime in St. Louis.
- Spatial concentration of gun crime within particular areas of St. Louis.
- Extremely high levels of firearm use in violent crime.
- Case processing problems and lack of coordination between state and federal prosecution.
- Gun crime concentrated among a small number of high-rate offenders.
- Many victims and offenders of gun crime on probation or parole supervision.
- Most illegal gun seizures are through traffic and pedestrian stops.

(MSU). This training, attended by nine members of the Eastern District task force, allowed the group to better understand the role of research. The PSN Coordinator, the captain (now major) in charge of the initiative, the Circuit Attorney, and each USA have voiced strong support for research, increasing respect for the RP among other PSN partners.

## Strategic Interventions

This section discusses the key PSN interventions in the Eastern District (summarized in figure 3 below), including:

- Gun case prosecution review.
- Targeted enforcement.
- Probation notification.
- Worst of the Worst/Most Violent Offenders Program.

The system fix issues emerged from the interviews done early in the PSN process to better understand case flow. It was clear from these interviews that there was insufficient coordination between prosecutors and local and federal (ATF) law enforcement concerning the most appropriate venue for prosecuting a specific gun case, a lack of information, inadequate coordination between enforcement agencies, and a lack of follow-up on gun cases. In response, the PSN Coordinator, with the assistance of a newly hired AUSA, proposed the gun case prosecution review.<sup>13</sup> The goals of this intervention were to improve the flow of information regarding gun cases, increase ATF



**Figure 3: Gun Crime Problem and PSN Strategies**

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Overall Strategy</b>	<b>Specific Components</b>
Extremely high levels of gun crime in St. Louis	St. Louis selected as primary target of PSN	Leadership team (U.S. Attorney, mayor, police chief, Circuit Attorney) agree on coordinated PSN focus
Spatial concentration of gun crime within particular areas of St. Louis	Strategic interventions and directed patrol focused on highest gun crime neighborhoods	Violent crime task force; resources devoted to targeted neighborhoods; weekly violence review meetings (Fifth District Initiative)
Extremely high levels of firearm use in violent crime	Prioritize gun crime within partnering agencies	Shared accountability for homicide levels among PSN partnering agencies
Case processing problems and lack coordination between state and federal prosecution	Gun case prosecution screening team	Biweekly meetings; enhanced communication; police intern program; U.S. Attorney feedback letters to arresting police officers
Gun crime concentrated among a small number of high-rate offenders	Chronic violent offender program	Worst of the worst (WOW)
Many victims and offenders of gun crime on probation or parole supervision	Probation notification meetings	Probation and parole become active partners in PSN
Most illegal gun seizures are through traffic and pedestrian stops	Directed patrol in targeted neighborhoods	Violent crime task force

participation in the gun prosecution process, and increase federal involvement in the prosecution of gun cases. The team meets weekly to review all gun crime arrests from the previous week and to document progress made on earlier cases. The elements of the crime, prior record, and any advantage to prosecuting at the state or federal level are discussed. A key feature is the rotating 2-month “internship” in the USAO for a sworn local police officer, who is responsible for tracking down information about open cases.

The simplest research finding has probably had the most profound effect on PSN interventions: the very strong spatial concentration of crime, particularly violent crime, has been a consistent finding in St. Louis research conducted over the years.<sup>14</sup> The top 10 neighborhoods accounted for nearly 40 percent of homicides, and more than half of the city’s gun homicides took place in 15 of the city’s 79 neighborhoods. Reducing homicides in those neighborhoods would eliminate most of the city’s homicides, an understanding that led to the creation of the Fifth District Initiative during the SACSI project and to the Violent Crime Task Force during PSN. The key player in each intervention

was the captain (later promoted to major) with area responsibility, who coordinated additional enforcement units from the specialized units (Gang, Mobile Reserve, Narcotics/Vice, and Detective) and district officers. Officers intensified enforcement activities in the targeted area each day and participated in the weekly review meetings and provided weekly statistical accountings of prior week activity and crime levels. These meetings were attended regularly by the police involved in the intervention, as well as the U.S. Attorney and a Circuit Attorney. Specific goals included preventing retaliatory homicides and shootings, clamping down on areas with high levels of violence, and increasing enforcement activity in the targeted areas.

Probation notification, the third PSN intervention in the Eastern District,<sup>15</sup> focuses on the significant proportion of homicide victims and offenders—in some years, as high as one-third of each group—who were on probation at the time of the homicide. In addition, the Violent Crime Task Force made a record of every arrest involving a probationer, which documented the heavy involvement of probationers in violent crime. This intervention emerged following site visits to Kansas City and Indianapolis to view their operations after which Probation and Parole developed a plan to guide the intervention. As a result, a series of probation notification meetings was scheduled. At each meeting, a representative from the U.S. Attorney's Office, Circuit Attorney's Office, Probation and Parole, and local law enforcement spoke about the penalties for gun crime. They were complemented by a drug treatment counselor, a job placement supervisor, and a community representative. Three meetings have been held in St. Louis to date, perhaps the most successful at the St. Louis Agency for Training and Employment (SLATE). At this notification meeting, probationers received résumé preparation training, job referrals, and interviewing skills training. This venue was chosen when an analysis revealed that of nearly 80 probationers who attended the first two meetings, only two had gone to SLATE for job assistance. In a true sense, the probationers were a captive audience for job training.

The fourth PSN intervention, the Most Violent Offender Program (MVOP, renamed Worst of the Worst, or WOW), emerged from two separate sources.<sup>16</sup> First, a graduate student noticed that the same names appeared over and over again in police reports, an observation made during the coding of assault and homicide cases, where a name would appear as a witness in one case, move to a suspect in another, and finally show up as a victim. While the order sometimes varied (i.e., some individuals made an initial appearance as a victim or suspect rather than a witness), the sequence was remarkably common. This led the research team to examine all assaults for a single quarter to determine the frequency of the sequence. They confirmed that roughly one-third of offenders had appeared in an earlier violent event, either as a victim, witness, or offender.



The second source for MVOP was serendipitous. The Rochester SACSI site had employed a program known as NOSE, “Notification of Special Enforcement,” as a tool for communicating a focused deterrence message to high-risk offenders. NOSE became known to the St. Louis PSN team through the MSU strategic problem-solving training. The commander of the Crimes Against Persons Division in the St. Louis Police Department received communication from his counterpart in Kansas City, Missouri, identifying the specific guidelines that were used to implement the program. These guidelines were made available at a meeting of steering committee members, an AUSA, the Law Enforcement Community Coordinator, a prosecutor, the commander of the Crimes Against Persons Division, and the research team.

While the discussions that followed this initial meeting centered on identifying a common method of determining those most deserving of being on such a list, ultimately, the St. Louis PSN initiative chose to emphasize the role of individuals who were targeted for arrest in shootings or homicides, but whose warrants were “taken under advisement.” The group was chosen because of the concern for immediate involvement in violence. The fact that their warrants were refused was an indication of two factors: 1) the individuals were not likely to come forward to testify, and 2) many such cases would be difficult to solve owing to the relationship between the victim and offender. As a consequence, these cases were identified for MVOP consideration because they involved individuals likely to be at risk for further victimization and perpetration. This set of criteria was further modified, and the name changed to WOW. An e-mail platform was developed to keep participants in WOW (police, prosecutors, and federal probation) abreast of developments. An e-mail platform also was used to notify participants of successful WOW prosecutions.

The police department dedicated an individual to manage the WOW list, as well as to provide information regarding these individuals for prosecution.

## **Key Implementation Issues, Challenges, and Successes**

Final reports or case studies often make a process appear seamless, either glossing over hurdles or making it appear as if the hurdles were overcome with ease. Neither of those things was true in the Eastern District; there were hurdles, and not all of them were successfully overcome.

The first obstacle was the failure to engage Probation and Parole in the early stages of the project. This represented a serious impediment to the initiative, owing to the fact that so many individuals arrested for a violent crime were on probation or parole. This obstacle was

resolved as new individuals embracing the partnership and problem-solving model joined the Department of Corrections.

To date, ATF gun trace data is not used effectively in the Eastern District. Although the U.S. Attorney in office when PSN was initiated was able to engage ATF and have them as active participants, this did not extend to sharing of information about gun tracing. This obstacle has caused frustration for both the USAO and the police chief, who despite providing personnel to trace information, cannot get the information back.

Homicide incident reviews<sup>17</sup> were tried early in the problem-solving process on two occasions but deemed a failure, with many members vowing never to try them again. With a concern on the part of the state prosecutor that the issues discussed could be discoverable by defense attorneys, the high level of involvement of both victims and offenders in gun crime at an early age (all 11 victims and perpetrators in the three homicide cases reviewed had a referral to the juvenile court for firearms before their 13th birthday) ultimately led to the creation of a juvenile gun court.

Another obstacle that remains to be addressed is community involvement. One aspect of this is to identify services available for the referral of cases. Several police officers indicated their desire for a reference or asset tool they could use to invoke non-enforcement solutions to situations. St. Louis has no such list, and a community agency contracted with a local university to provide an electronic platform for such a list. To date, this community asset inventory is not available. But the larger issue with the community is the inability to engage a community partner for a sustained period of time. This is viewed as a major impediment to the long-term success and implementation of the problem-solving strategies.

PSN successes were due largely to committed leadership from the police chief, the U.S. Attorney, and the Circuit Attorney. Each committed resources and personnel to PSN. The use of data has increased dramatically on the part of the police department, to the extent that many of the early problem-solving analyses that were completed by the RP are now being done routinely at the police department. Finally, the use of electronic communication platforms to quickly transmit and retrieve data has been one of the lasting keys to successful implementation.

The media partner crafted a message that was built on information from individual interviews conducted in the jail as well as focus groups conducted at the Workhouse, the facility for holding long-term misdemeanants. The messages viewed as salient by members of this target audience included the longer time served for federal gun crimes, the certainty of federal time, and the remoteness of federal prisons. As a consequence, several marketing strategies built on these themes with a series of posters in public places (e.g., police stations, the jail, and bus

stops) as well as a “guerilla” advertising campaign on the walls of abandoned buildings.

## **Assessing Impact—Research Design**

The current evaluation uses multiple methodologies to assess the impact of the Project Safe Neighborhoods intervention in St. Louis. Specifically, a quasi-experimental design was estimated to consider the effect of the PSN intervention on crime rates, compared to similar neighborhoods that did not receive intervention services. The methodology employed to select the original fifth district intervention and control neighborhoods is detailed below.

### **Intervention Neighborhoods**

As noted, 14 St. Louis neighborhoods were the primary focus of the intervention. The city is divided into 79 neighborhoods, and these designations are used for planning and operations purposes. The neighborhoods were originally chosen for the SACSI intervention and continued to receive targeted enforcement during PSN. The neighborhoods together recorded 20 homicides in 2000 and 25 in 2001, a 2-year average of 82 homicides per 100,000, nearly double the city average and 11 times greater than the U.S. average. The high rates of violence in these neighborhoods, coupled with the high concentration of social disadvantage, makes these neighborhoods apt for intervention.

### **Control Groups**

Control neighborhoods chosen had similar crime rates and socio-demographic characteristics to the PSN intervention neighborhoods. In any outcome evaluation, the central concern is how the observed program effects compare to what would have taken place in the absence of the intervention. In addition, contiguous neighborhoods were examined to determine whether there has been either displacement or a diffusion of effects (Braga, et al., 1999).

The first step in the analysis was to collect crime and socio-demographic information for all neighborhoods in St. Louis. In constructing comparison groups, it is important to select neighborhoods as similar as possible to the target neighborhood, except for participation in the program. To separate the effect of the intervention on neighborhood crime, measures of arrest rates prior to the intervention were used as one selection criterion. Data were collected for the following arrest categories: assault, homicide, robbery, and weapons.

Census data also were obtained to provide a description of the socio-demographic character of the neighborhoods. Data from the 2000 Census were analyzed at the neighborhood level to ascertain the level of community disadvantage. The community disadvantage measure is a

five-item summary score based on the percentage of persons living in poverty, percent of female-headed families with children, percent of persons unemployed, percent of households receiving public assistance, and percent of population that is African-American (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, 1997). The summary score provides a general picture of the socio-economic disadvantage of a neighborhood with higher scores indicating greater disadvantage. In addition, research by Lauritsen (2003) suggests that individuals, particularly youth living in neighborhoods with high concentrations of disadvantage, are at greater risk for victimization, further linking the relationship between disadvantage and incidence of personal crime.

Second, treatment neighborhoods were compared to non-treatment neighborhoods on each variable listed above. Neighborhoods that were contiguous to any treatment neighborhood were omitted from selection, and were instead considered separately to control for any displacement effects. Contiguous neighborhoods were defined as any neighborhood that is adjacent, either in whole or part, to any control neighborhood. Control neighborhoods were selected based on their individual congruence, in terms of crime rate and concentrated disadvantage, with an intervention neighborhood. Aggregate agreement between control and intervention neighborhoods also was considered.

As displayed in figure 4, the control and intervention neighborhoods were similar in their patterns of arrest and community disadvantage. None of the arrest measures or the community disadvantage indicator was significantly different; however, it is important to note the differences between groups. Specifically, the total arrest rate and rate of assaults, robbery, and weapons offenses were higher in the intervention neighborhood. A higher rate of crime in the intervention groups is expected because intervention neighborhoods were selected

**Figure 4: Descriptive Statistics for Intervention, Control, and Contiguous Neighborhoods**

	<u>Intervention</u>	<u>Control</u>	<u>Contiguous</u>
Assault Rate 2000 (mean)	96.71	23.86	85.44
Homicide Rate 2000 (mean)	1.21	0.57	1.44
Robbery Rate 2000 (mean)	13.07	4.21	11.04
Weapons Rate 2000 (mean)	15.29	2.93	11.74
Total Arrest Rate 2000 (mean)	126.29	31.57	109.67
Concentrated Disadvantage Factor Score (2000 Census Data)	0.69	0.52	0.22

based on the magnitude of crime and social disadvantage in these areas. In addition, the size of St. Louis precludes exact matches. Despite the caveats noted, the quasi-experimental design is appropriate, although conclusions should be made in light of the differences between groups.

## Analysis

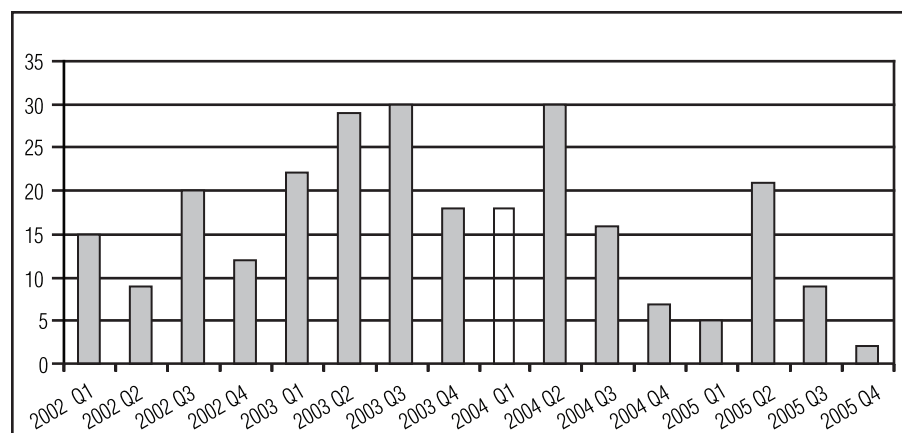
This section assesses the impact of PSN interventions in St. Louis. The strength, or outputs, of the intervention are considered using federal and state prosecution data. Patterns of gun crime pre- and post-intervention also are considered, using arrest measures for homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery. In addition, measures of shots-fired calls-for-service are included.

## Outputs

### Prosecutions

The following section describes changes in prosecution after the implementation of the PSN intervention program. Data were obtained from Ceasefire roundup memos published weekly, and enumerate both state and federal prosecution of gun offenders. Such prosecutions are an important “lever,” or sanction, in this targeted intervention. Overall, 1,381 individuals were indicted for gun crimes by the USAO or the St. Louis Circuit Attorney’s Office between January 2002 and October 2005. The majority of indictments (82 percent) were reported by the USAO. Figure 5 illustrates the number of federal indictments made, by quarter, during the intervention period. In total, the USAO averaged 17.4 indictments per quarter. As displayed, the number of federal indictments peaked in quarters 2 and 3 of 2003 and then again in the second quarter of 2004. Personal communications with the USAO suggest willingness to sustain, and even increase, the number of indictments made by the court. Although the overall number of indictments

**Figure 5. Federal Ceasefire Indictments**



is small in comparison to the magnitude of gun crimes in St. Louis, the USAO indicts a comparable, if not higher, number of cases than do similarly situated USAOs.

Consistent with the program model, nearly all (97.4 percent) of the indictments made in state and federal court were for firearm or weapons (e.g., ammunition, pipe bomb, or armed criminal action) violations. Only 20 defendants were indicted without a firearm charge. However, each of these individuals was indicted on a serious personal charge that involved a weapon (e.g., homicide), and all non-firearm charges were indicted in state courts. Nearly half (48 percent) of the sample was indicted on multiple charges. In total, 23 percent of the indictments involved two charges, 10 percent three, 8 percent four, and 7 percent had five or more charges. Most often, individuals were charged with drug or personal crimes in addition to a firearm offense. Nearly a quarter of defendants (22.8 percent) had a personal charge, with drug offenses close behind (20.4 percent). Only 2.2 percent had property charges, and 3.3 percent had charges not represented by the aforementioned categories.

The majority of individuals indicted were convicted and sentenced. Overall, 70 percent of all Ceasefire roundup cases resulted in conviction; 72 percent of federal cases and 65 percent of state cases ended in conviction. The average sentence was 9.18 years; the mean sentence 6.03 years at the federal level and 19.6 years at the state level (see figure 6). It is important to note that the mean sentence length at the state level was skewed because of the small sample size and the conviction of a number of homicide cases that resulted in lengthy sentences.

**Figure 6: Sentence Length for Federal and State Convictions (in Years)**

	<b>Average Length</b>	<b>Median Length</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
All Convictions	9.18	5.00	12.14
Federal Convictions	6.03	4.17	6.00
State Convictions	19.60	14.50	19.44

Overall, the results suggest that the USAO and the St. Louis Circuit Attorney's Office made a large number of indictments during the intervention period. In addition, the majority of individuals indicted were sentenced to lengthy terms of incarceration.

### **Incident Patterns**

The following section outlines incident (offenses known) rates in the intervention, control, and contiguous neighborhoods. The arrest

data are limited to broad analyses of aggravated assault, robbery, and homicide before and after the intervention in the first quarter of 2003. The following tables detail the magnitude of change before and after the intervention while graphs detail the fluctuations in arrest rates over a 5-year period.

As displayed in figure 7, there were substantial declines in arrest rates for aggravated assault involving a firearm over the analysis period

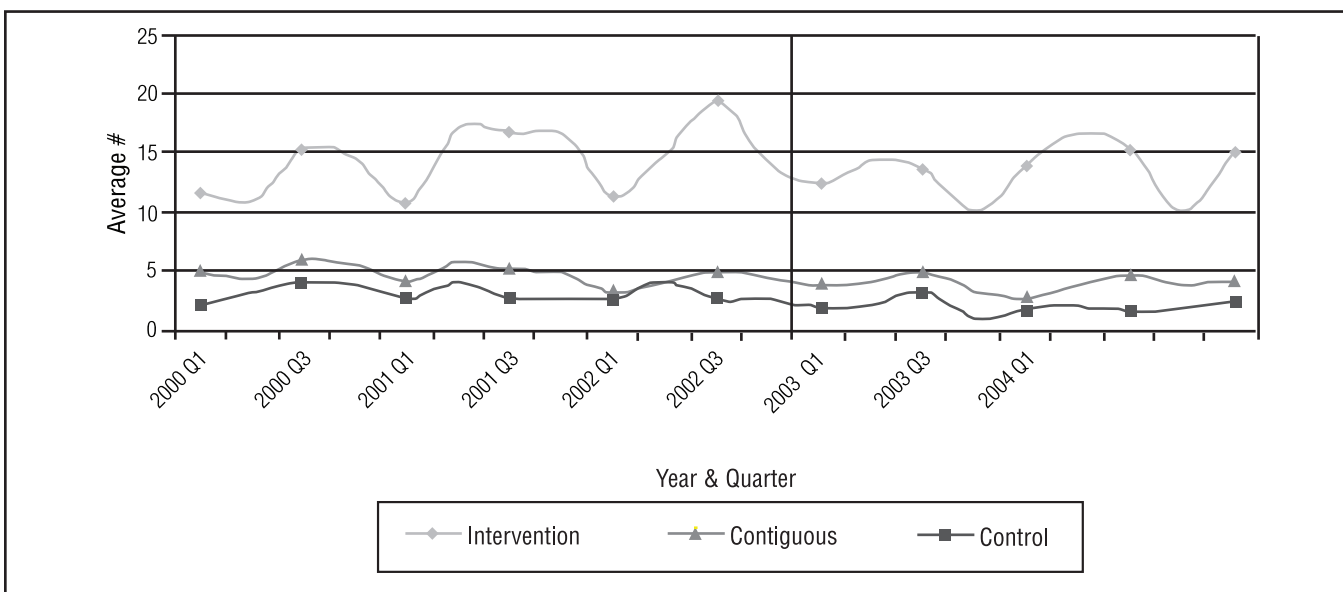
**Figure 7: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention Change in Firearm-Involved Aggravated Assault Incidents**

Neighborhood Group	Pre-Intervention Quarterly Average	Post-Intervention Quarterly Average	Difference	Percent Change
Intervention	14.65	13.72	-0.93	-6.57
Contiguous	4.96	4.12	-0.85	-18.61
Control	3.32	2.24	-1.08	-38.97

and across neighborhood groups. The overall magnitude of change was greatest for the control group (39 percent); however, the intervention neighborhoods experienced a 7 percent decline in aggravated assaults.

Figure 8 further displays the magnitude of decline in aggravated assaults. Although there was a sharp decline in arrests following the

**Figure 8: Firearm-Involved Aggravated Assault Incidents**





intervention, the reductions appear to be a reflection of a larger trend experienced across the city.

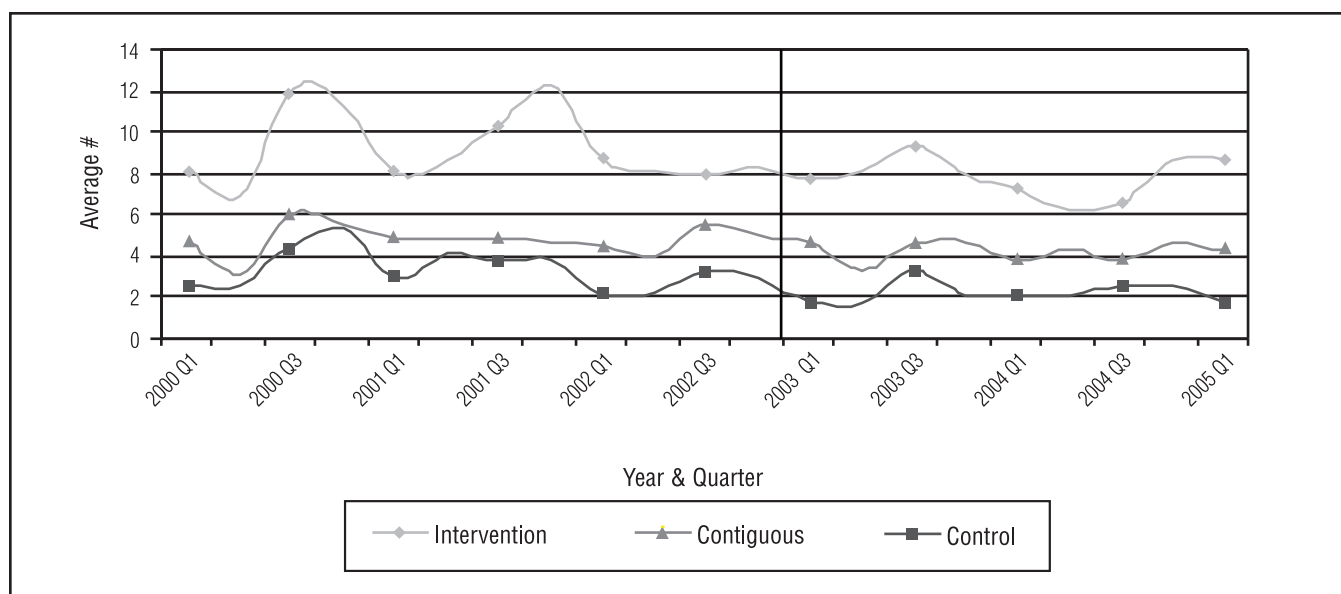
The decline in robberies also was substantial, although again it was apparent across intervention, control, and contiguous neighborhoods (see figure 9). For the intervention group, the rate of robbery declined 16 percent between the pre- and post-intervention periods. The contiguous neighborhoods experienced a similar decline (13 percent), while robbery rates in the control neighborhoods declined 41 percent.

**Figure 9: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention Change in Firearm-Involved Robbery Incidents**

Neighborhood Group	Pre-Intervention Quarterly Average	Post-Intervention Quarterly Average	Difference	Percent Change
Intervention	9.30	7.93	-1.38	-15.96
Contiguous	4.89	4.30	-0.59	-12.80
Control	3.42	2.26	-1.16	-40.84

Apart from an increase in robberies in the intervention neighborhood toward the end of 2004, the rates of robbery declined following the intervention (see figure 10). A similar decline was observed in the contiguous and control neighborhoods, although there was substantial variation observed across the analysis period.

**Figure 10: Firearm-Involved Robbery Incidents**





As with robbery and assault incidents, homicides declined in all neighborhoods (see figure 11). Homicide rates declined 21 percent in the intervention neighborhood, 52 percent in the contiguous neighborhoods, and 40 percent in the control neighborhoods.

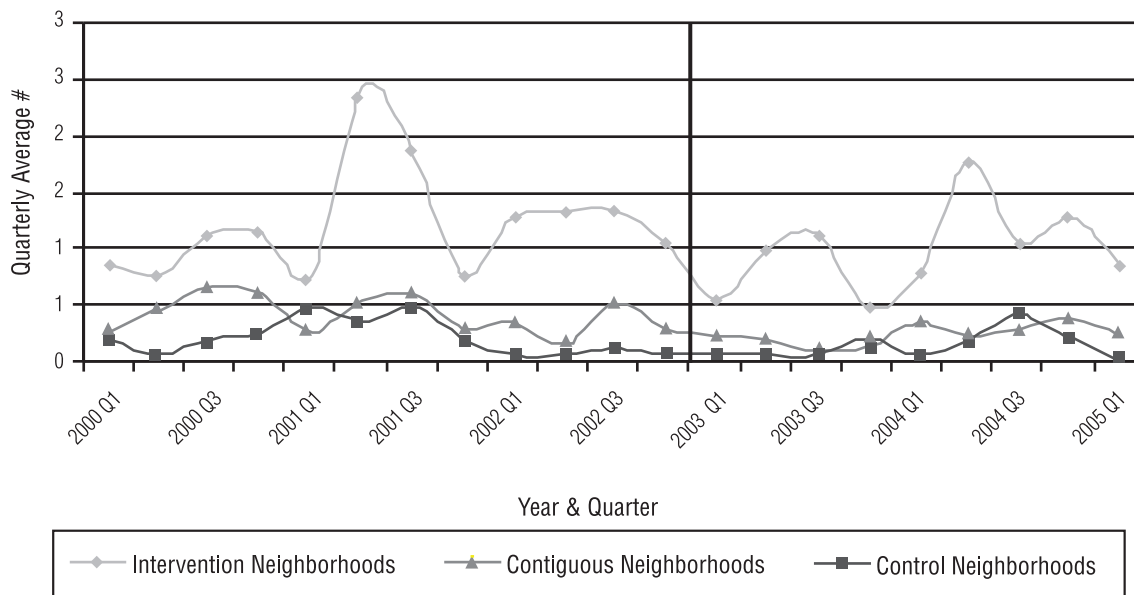
**Figure 11: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention Change in Homicide Incidents**

Neighborhood Group	Pre-Intervention Quarterly Average	Post-Intervention Quarterly Average	Difference	Percent Change
Intervention	1.24	1.00	-0.24	-21.28
Contiguous	0.43	0.25	-0.18	-51.81
Control	0.23	0.15	-0.08	-40.00

Figure 12 further illustrates the variation in homicide rates over the analysis period. Despite the expected variation in homicide rates, the figure illustrates the decline in homicide following the intervention.

The final comparison of incidents across the neighborhoods involved weapons offenses. Consistent declines above 34 percent were

**Figure 12: Homicides by Neighborhood Group**



observed in the intervention, contiguous, and control neighborhoods following the intervention (see figure 13).

**Figure 13: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention Change in Weapons Incidents**

<b>Neighborhood Group</b>	<b>Pre-Intervention Quarterly Average</b>	<b>Post-Intervention Quarterly Average</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Intervention	4.92	3.48	-1.45	-34.44
Contiguous	1.72	1.12	-0.60	-42.01
Control	1.23	0.87	-0.36	-34.54

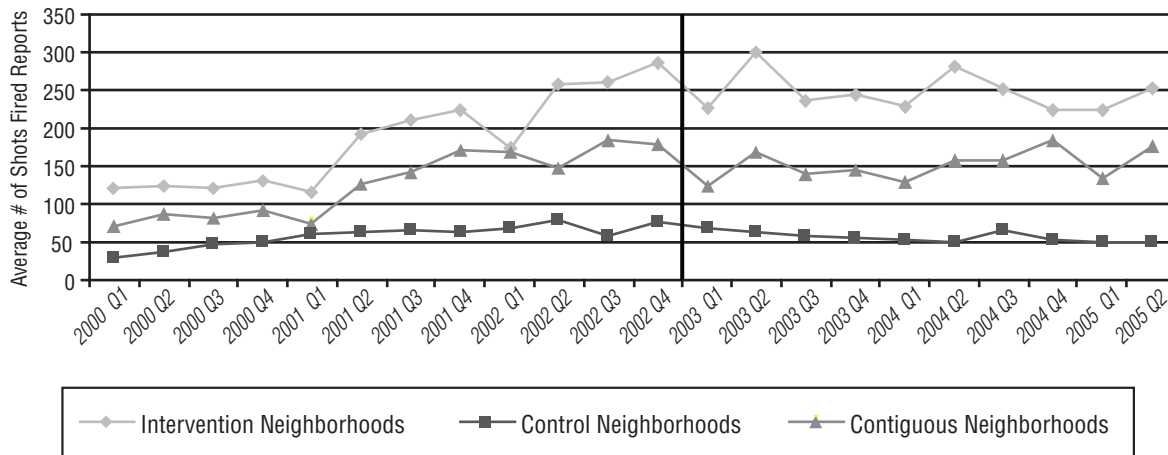
The review of gun assaults, robberies involving a firearm, homicides, and weapons incidents reveals positive news for St. Louis, but confusing news for the evaluation team. Gun assaults, robberies involving a firearm, homicides, and weapons incidents declined in the intervention, control, and contiguous neighborhoods, and the magnitude of the decline was substantial in most case. Thus, St. Louis appears to be a safer community following the implementation of PSN in 2003. But, the fact that the decline was generally smaller in the intervention neighborhoods than in control and contiguous neighborhoods means that it is not clear that PSN caused these declines. In favor of PSN having led to these declines is the fact that many components of PSN (e.g., coordinated problem solving among federal-state-local agencies, federal prosecution, and the communication strategy) were delivered city-wide. Thus, evaluators would anticipate citywide impact. On the other hand, the evaluation model predicted that the greatest impact would be in the intervention neighborhood where focused efforts were concentrated. Thus, a rival hypothesis is that some other factor rather than PSN was producing the declines in gun crime across the city.

### **Shots Fired**

Shots-fired data were analyzed to provide a secondary measure of firearm-related violence in the control, intervention, and contiguous neighborhoods. Shots-fired reports are culled from the St. Louis Police Department CAD system and reflect individual calls made to the police to report shots fired; therefore, the data may reflect multiple calls made to the police department in response to one shots-fired incident. Because these data are citizen-driven, they also reflect citizen willingness to report crime to the police, in addition to the prevalence of gun crime in the neighborhood. Results of the analyses should be considered in this light.

As displayed in figures 14 and 15, the number of shots-fired calls in the intervention and contiguous neighborhoods increased over time. There was little change in the number of shots-fired calls in the control neighborhoods.

**Figure 14: Shots Fired by Group and Quarter**



**Figure 15: Comparison of Pre- to Post-Intervention Change in Shots-Fired Reports**

Neighborhood Group	Pre-Intervention Monthly Average	Post-Intervention Monthly Average	Difference	Percent Change
Intervention	181	244	+ 63	+ 35%
Control	56	55	- 1	- 2%
Contiguous	121	152	+ 31	+ 26%

As noted, substantial increases in shots-fired calls were observed after the intervention, although the upward trend in calls began before the intervention period. While the average shots fired in the control neighborhoods stayed approximately the same, the number of shots-fired calls increased 35 percent in the intervention neighborhoods and 26 percent in the contiguous neighborhood.

Although the shots-fired analyses appear to contradict the declines observed in arrest statistics, it may be that the increased public awareness of gun crime in the area, further increased by publicity provided by the PSN initiative, increased willingness to report crime in the community or awareness of violent crime. The relative stability of shots-fired calls in the control neighborhoods lends credibility to this explanation.

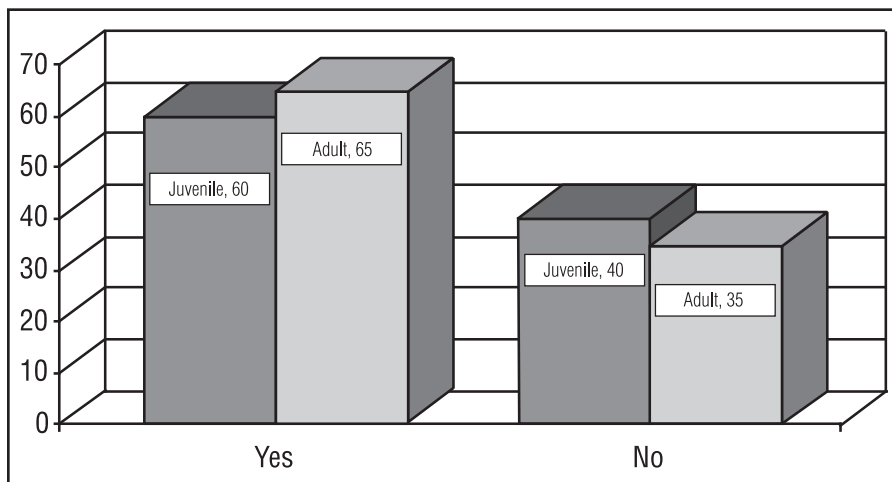
### Community/Offender Awareness of PSN

One key measure of PSN success in the Eastern District is the extent to which the PSN message of increased federal prosecution and deterrence reached its target audience: arrestees. To assess the saturation of the PSN message, the research team conducted regular interviews at the adult holdover and juvenile detention facilities. Interviews were conducted with both adults and juveniles at five time periods between February 2003 and February 2006. On average, 131 individual interviews were conducted each period at the adult facility, and an average of 68 juveniles were interviewed at each interview point.

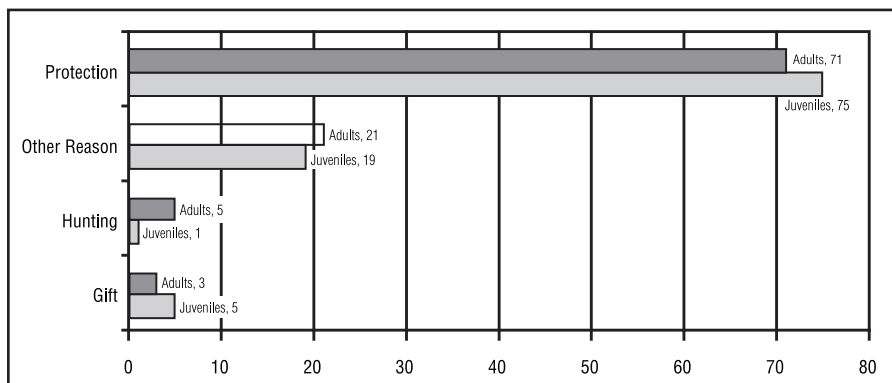
The results from the interviews reflect the proliferation of guns among the arrestee population in St. Louis. The majority of juveniles (60 percent) and adults (65 percent) indicated they had possessed a gun (see figure 16).

In addition, most arrestees noted that they owned a gun for protection (see figure 17 below). Three-quarters of the juvenile population

**Figure 16: Have You Ever Owned or Possessed a Gun?**



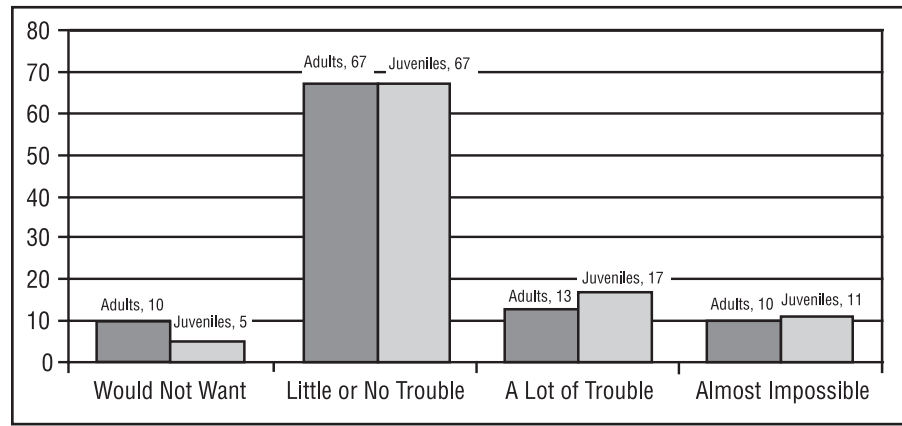
**Figure 17: What Was the Reason for Getting a Gun?**



obtained a gun for protection, while 71 percent of adult arrestees noted protection as their primary reason for procuring a weapon. A very small proportion of the sample owned a gun for hunting purposes (1 percent of juveniles, 5 percent of adults).

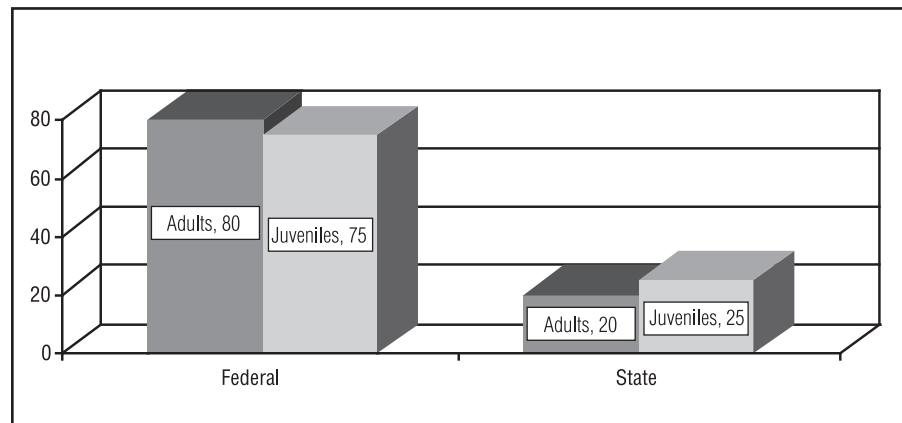
The majority of respondents also indicated that it would be easy to obtain a gun (see figure 18 below). In total, 67 percent of adult and juvenile arrestees indicated that they could procure a weapon with little or no problem. Only 5 percent of juvenile and 10 percent of adult arrestees noted that they would not want a gun.

**Figure 18: How Hard Is It To Get a Gun?**



However, the majority of arrestees understood the difference between federal and state penalties for illegal gun possession and knew that federal penalties were harsher than Missouri penalties (figure 19). Three-quarters of juveniles and 80 percent of adult arrestees indicated that the federal system had harsher penalties for gun crimes.

**Figure 19: Which System Has Harder Penalties?**



It is also important to consider the changes in perceived penalties for gun crimes over the study period. Overall, arrestees perceived the chance of being arrested did not change over time. On average, one-third of juvenile and 35 percent of adult arrestees felt that their chances of an arrest for illegal firearms carrying were great (see figure 20). In contrast, arrestee perceptions of the probability of conviction and imprisonment for illegal firearm carrying did increase over the study period. Over 60 percent of adult and juvenile arrestees indicated that there was a great chance of imprisonment and conviction in 2006. In this sense, the PSN message seems to have reached its target audience.

**Figure 20: Perceived Chances of Penalty for Illegal Firearm Carrying\* (Over Time)**

	Arrested	Convicted	Imprisoned
<b>Juveniles</b>			
2003	30	41	41
2004	38	49	43
2005a	37	59	67
2005b	27	36	35
2006	39	64	62
<b>Adults</b>			
2003	26	37	39
2004	52	48	52
2005a	35	68	58
2005b	29	61	61
2006	35	67	64

\*Note: Percentages are for those that responded that the chances are “great” as opposed to “small” or “medium.”

Finally, arrestees were queried as to which factor they viewed as most salient when determining whether to carry a gun on the street—the penalties for illegal gun carrying or running into an armed person on the street. At its core, this question was designed to determine if arrestees were more afraid of the criminal justice system or the street. For adults, there was a slight overall increase in arrestees’ fear of system penalties over the study period; however, a similar trend was not observed for juveniles (see figure 21 below). In fact, half (51 percent) of juveniles reported penalties as an important consideration, while 57 percent of adult arrestees were most concerned with the penalties of weapons possession.

**Figure 21: Which Is a More Important Consideration to You When You Think About Carrying a Gun on the Street?**

	Penalties	Other Armed Person
<b>Juveniles</b>		
2003	56	44
2004	40	60
2005a	42	58
2005b	58	42
2006	59	41
<b>Adults</b>		
2003	49	51
2004	65	35
2005a	57	43
2005b	54	46
2006	58	42

Because the PSN strategy was marketed more directly to adult offenders, it is likely that juveniles were less affected by the community awareness efforts. However, it could be that the objective risk of being the victim of violence for juveniles (particularly given the presence of street gangs in St. Louis) was perceived to be greater among juveniles than adults. Consistent with these findings, only 27 percent of juveniles were aware of the PSN intervention, while nearly half (48 percent) of adults had heard of Project Safe Neighborhoods (see figure 22).

**Figure 22: Have You Heard of PSN?**

	Yes
<b>Juveniles</b>	
2003	25
2004	25
2005a	34
2005b	27
2006	23
<b>Adults</b>	
2003	36
2004	56
2005a	52
2005b	47
2006	49

## Summary

In a variety of ways, the “business” of gun enforcement is done differently in the Eastern District of Missouri since the inception of Project Safe Neighborhoods. One commentator remarked that the process of changing criminal justice institutions was like “bending granite,” the implication being that many criminal justice institutions are impervious to change or changed only at a glacial pace. Such was not the case in St. Louis under PSN. The hallmarks in St. Louis have been coordination and communication, two changes that are closely interrelated.

Coordination among and within agencies is PSN’s most important contribution, and it shows signs of sustainability. The regular face-to-face meetings and information exchange within the criminal justice system (i.e., between local and federal law enforcement and between local law enforcement and federal prosecution) have become routine in St. Louis. These partnerships are viewed as an essential tool. While this hardly seems profound, it recalls an early comment made concerning a request for information from a federal law enforcement agency. When the request was rebuffed, an Assistant U.S. Attorney remarked, “Aren’t we all on the same side here?” This underscores the difficulty of creating and maintaining partnerships, their limited scope before PSN, and reflects the way that PSN shifted the focus in St. Louis to system change and interagency coordination. After all, as was frequently noted by police, prosecutors, and probation and parole officers, why should offenders believe we are getting tough when they have heard such announcements most of their lives. Making the message credible was the central task of PSN in the Eastern District. This was not easy; but many noted that until the system had its act together, it would be fruitless to argue to offenders that any new initiative could be successful. The frequency of meetings stepped back over time, but that has not meant a reduction in cooperation. The U.S. Attorney’s Office acknowledged the fragile balance of local criminal justice funding and staffing, which are scarce compared to federal resources, and has worked to leverage federal personnel and other resources. A solid example is the deployment of three Drug Enforcement Administration agents to the local police department homicide squad to work on cold cases, recognition on DEA’s part that city resources were inadequate to address these cases and that such unsolved cases could be related to retaliatory violence.

The partnerships appear to extend beyond personalities and are taking an institutionalized form. Since PSN began, there have been three U.S. Attorneys, and each has maintained the strong commitment to PSN shown by the initial USA. The importance of the leadership provided by the USA who introduced PSN to St. Louis can hardly be overstated. In addition, the PSN Coordinator has balanced one of the largest gun case prosecution caseloads with coordination and day-to-day leadership. There has been exceptional leadership from the police



department, notably the major who runs the Violent Crime Task Force. The police chief took the unprecedented step of directing all information in the department regarding violent crime to flow through this individual. The Circuit Attorney has organized prosecution around geographic areas and ensured closer cooperation between prosecutors and the police officers and leadership who serve those areas. Strong, enlightened leadership is emerging in the state Probation and Parole office. These changes are all significant for St. Louis, which has historically been slow to adopt change.

ATF now participates, with important input into the weekly Gun Prosecution Task Force. State Probation and Parole is also an integral part of PSN. Each of these developments is significant in its own right, as these agencies also represent two critical partners that had not been well-integrated into the overall justice system, and also reflect a commitment to problem solving. Today there is an underlying consideration of the best way to solve problems that underlie the call for service, and a more reasoned consideration of the appropriate venue for prosecution.

One lasting change wrought by PSN has been the increased use of electronic platforms to communicate. The rapid notification to PSN team members of homicides and their general circumstances is but one example of how information can be used to galvanize attention on the problem of violent crime. The introduction of PSN in St. Louis corresponded closely with the implementation of a new records management system in the police department, one that facilitates effective electronic information sharing. The nightly activity reports from patrol, detectives, and specialized units in the target area provide solid information with which state and federal prosecutors can proactively seek appropriate venues for prosecuting gun cases, make links between cases, and more actively participate in the law enforcement process. The electronic platform also allows police officers and command staff to see links between cases, identify emerging problem areas or individuals, and become more aware of the interrelationships between offenders, victims, offenses, and locations.

Homicide, robberies involving a firearm, and aggravated assaults involving a firearm declined following the PSN intervention. That said, it is unclear if this decrease can be linked directly to the PSN intervention model, or if the decline simply reflects larger trends observed in St. Louis and the nation. The decline in gun crime incidents in the PSN intervention neighborhoods was less than in control neighborhoods and similar to the decline in contiguous neighborhoods. That noted, the U.S. Attorney's and Circuit Attorney's Offices achieved substantial levels of indictments, convictions, and sentences of firearm-related offenders. This increase is an important component of program success, although the number of indictments still pales in comparison to the level of gun crime in St. Louis. As noted in the arrestee interviews,

many individuals carry guns on a regular basis, few have much trouble in obtaining illegal guns, and a large fraction are more afraid of the armed person on the street than the system.

Arrest and prosecution alone are not likely to sufficiently address violent crime in St. Louis. In a city where nearly two-thirds of the census tracts are at the highest level of community disadvantage in the nation, arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment must be seen as initial steps. PSN partners must look for city, community, or public sector resources to help mobilize the community to address violent crime. Without such activity, enforcement efforts are likely to produce only short-term reductions in gun violence. The failure to engage community partners provides a negative counterbalance to the criminal justice success achieved through PSN.

Figure 23 summarizes the Eastern District of Missouri's successful PSN efforts.

**Figure 23: Summary of Key Components of Eastern District of Missouri's Successful PSN Task Force**

<b>Key Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
Leadership	Active role of U.S. Attorney, mayor, police chief, Circuit Attorney; PSN clear priority; shared accountability for homicide
PSN Task Force Structure	Overall PSN task force coupled with strategy-focused task forces (Violent Crime, Gun Case Screening, WOW, Probation/Parole Notification)
Partnerships	Enhanced partnerships among local and federal law enforcement agencies  Inclusion of research partners as task force members  Rotating police internship program within U.S. Attorney's Office
Regular Meetings	PSN task force initially met monthly, now quarterly; gun prosecution screening team meets biweekly; violent incident review team meets weekly
Enhanced Communication and Coordination	E-mail information sharing; U.S. Attorney feedback to arresting officers
System Responsibility and Accountability	Key agencies involved in PSN and shared responsibility for focus on gun crime

## References

- Blumstein, Alfred and Richard Rosenfeld. 1999. "Explaining Recent Trends in U.S. Homicide Rates." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* LXXXVIII:1175-1216.
- Braga, A.A., et al. 1999. "Problem-Oriented Policing in Violent Crime Places: A Randomized Controlled Experiment." *Criminology* 37(3):541-580.
- Bureau of Justice Assistance. 2004. *Project Safe Neighborhoods: America's Network Against Gun Violence*. (Program Brief). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Bynum, T., et al. 2006. *Project Safe Neighborhoods: Strategic Interventions: Chronic Violent Offender Lists* (Case Study 4). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Decker, Scott H., Richard Rosenfeld, and Carol Kohfeld. 1989. *The St. Louis Homicide Project*. St. Louis, MO: University of Missouri-St. Louis, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice.
- Decker, Scott H. and Richard Rosenfeld. 2004. *Consent to Search: The St. Louis Firearm Suppression Program*. Washington, D.C: National Institute of Justice.
- Decker, S., et al. 2006. *Project Safe Neighborhoods: Strategic Interventions: Gun Prosecution Case Screening* (Case Study 1). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Klofas, J., et al. 2006. *Project Safe Neighborhoods: Strategic Interventions: Crime Incident Reviews* (Case Study 3). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Lauritsen, Janet L. 2004. *Individual and Community Correlates of Victimization*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- McDevitt, Jack, et al. 2002. "Boston's Youth Violence Prevention Program: A Comprehensive Community-Wide Approach." In S. Decker, ed., *Policing Gangs and Youth Violence*. Belmont, CA: Thompson.
- McDevitt, J., et al. 2006. *Project Safe Neighborhoods: Strategic Intervention: Offender Notification Meetings* (Case Study 2). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- McGarrell, E.F., et al. 2006. "Reducing Homicide Through a 'Lever-Pulling' Strategy." *Justice Quarterly* 23(2):214-231.

- McGarrell, Edmund and Steven Chermak. 2002. "Problem Solving to Reduce Gang and Drug-Related Violence in Indianapolis." In S. Decker, ed., *Policing Gangs and Youth Violence*. Belmont, CA: Thompson.
- Rosenfeld, Richard and Scott H. Decker. 1993. "Where Public Health and Law Enforcement Meet." *American Journal of Police* 12:11-57.
- Rosenfeld, Richard and Scott H. Decker. 1996. "Consent to Search and Seize: The St. Louis Firearm Suppression Project." *Law and Contemporary Problems* 59:197-220.
- Sampson, R. S. Raudenbush and F. Earl. 1997. "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy." *Science* 277:918-924.
- Sampson, Robert. 2003. "The Community." In J.Q. Wilson and Joan Petersilia, eds., *Crime*. Oakland, CA: Institute for Contemporary Studies.

## Endnotes

1. Bureau of Justice Statistics: [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjc/cvict\\_c.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjc/cvict_c.htm) (as of 12/28/04).
2. Levels of property crime and violent crime not involving a gun are lower in the United States than many other western democracies, but gun crime remains exceptionally high in the United States. See Zimring and Hawkins, 1999; Bureau of Justice Statistics: [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/ijis.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/ijis.htm) (as of 12/28/04).
3. Reviews of promising gun crime reduction strategies that can assist research partners and task forces include Braga, 2004; National Research Council, 2005; Ludwig and Cook, 2003; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1999. See also Dalton, 2003; Decker, 2003.
4. These data were reported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Executive Office for United States Attorneys (10/05).
5. Data compiled by Professor Joe Trotter and colleagues as part of American University's PSN Technical Assistance Program.
6. Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2004. See also [www.psn.gov](http://www.psn.gov).
7. The fastest growing county in the state and one of the 10 fastest growing in the United States.
8. Population data are from the 2000 U.S. Census. Comparable crime and demographic data are not available for Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Marianas Islands. Thus comparisons are made to the 90 U.S. judicial districts, rather than the 94 PSN districts.
9. In 2000, 3,729 homicides, robberies, or aggravated assaults involved a firearm. This equates to a rate of 1,144 serious firearm crimes per 100,000 residents compared to a national rate of 121/100,000. In 2004, there were 466 violent crimes per 100,000 for the U.S., 26 percent of which were firearm-related. Thus,  $.26 \times 466 = 121$ .
10. There is no question that the youth homicide problem in St. Louis, as in other racially diverse cities, is concentrated disproportionately among African-American youth.
11. Standard scores reflect a statistical technique to make comparable data that are gathered at varying levels of magnitude. For example, to compare city statistics with national statistics.
12. This is not to downplay the significance or difficulty of such efforts.
13. For a fuller description of this process, see Decker et al., 2006.

14. This finding dates to the 1980s (Decker, Rosenfeld and Kohfeld, 1989) and has been a feature of much research since then (Rosenfeld and Decker, 1993; 1996).

15. For a description of offender notification meetings, see McDevitt et al., 2006.

16. For a description of chronic violent offender programs, see Bynum et al., 2006.

17. For a description of incident reviews, see Klofas et al., 2006.

# Appendix 1. Homicide Notification E-Mail (Sample)

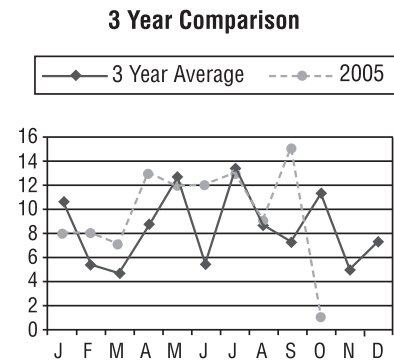
Metropolitan Police Department - City of Saint Louis

## INTRA-DEPARTMENT REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE SHEET

**Date:** October 4, 2005  
**From:** Captain  
 Crimes Against Persons  
**Subject:** Homicide Statistics 2005  
 As of 10/04/2005 11:00 A.M.

**Copies Sent To:** \_\_\_\_\_

MONTH	Year to Date Comparison		2004 Monthly Totals	3 Year Average
	2005	2004		
January	8	10	10	10.67
February	8	3	3	5.33
March	7	6	6	4.67
April	13	13	13	8.67
May	12	15	15	12.67
June	12	8	8	5.33
July	13	14	14	13.33
August	9	10	10	8.67
September	15	5	5	7.33
October	1	0	15	11.33
November			7	5.00
December			9	7.33
<b>Totals*</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>115</b>	
<b>YTD +/-</b>	<b>14</b>			



\* Includes three incidents originally occurring in 2004 (4th, 5th, & 7th), and two in 2002 (5th & 9th)

By District for 2005 (to date)	Total for 2004	Total for 2003	Total for 2002	District 3 Year Average		
First	5	6	7	5	9	7.00
Second	1	2	2	1	3	2.00
Third	5	9	10	9	13	10.67
Fourth	2	3	3	4	5	4.00
Fifth	14	18	23	10	17	16.67
Sixth	26	19	26	10	30	22.00
Seventh	18	13	21	12	17	16.67
Eighth	21	9	13	13	12	12.67
Ninth	6	5	10	9	7	8.67
<b>Totals</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>113</b>	

Distribution:

- Board of Police Commissioners
- Deputy Chiefs
- Majors
- Captains
- Station Executive Officers
- Public Information
- Homicide Supervisors
- Planning & Technology



## Appendix 2. Violent Crime Case Review E-Mail (Sample)

### Violent Crime Case Review

**Date:** 04/29/05 **Time:** 0030 CN 05-032806 — CPD 05/08

**Location:** Cardinal @ Rutger

**Neighborhood:** The Gate District

**Victim #1:** C Pedigree: B/M/26

**Address:** XX Street, Jennings, MO **Occupation:** Unemployed

**Suspect #1:** C Pedigree: B/M/26

**Address:** XX Street, St. Louis, MO **Occupation:** Unemployed

**Suspect #2:** Unknown Pedigree: B/M/ 22 - 26

**Address:** Unknown **Occupation:** Unknown

**Weapon(s) Used:** Revolver

Pump shotgun w/ pistol grip handle

**Motive:** Victim YY and YY know each other from middle school. Apparent motive is Robbery.

**Gang Affiliation:** Victim #1: Grape Street Crips (2600 Hickory)

**Wanted Subject:** YY is not documented.

#### **Summary of Incident: Robbery 1<sup>st</sup> Degree (shooting) & Assault 1<sup>st</sup> Degree**

Victim C reported he was traveling southbound on Cardinal at Rutger, when he was waved down by suspect YY, who he knew from middle school. As C and C were speaking, an unknown African-American male approached the passenger side of the vehicle, pointed a shotgun at the victim and racked the action.

YY exited his vehicle when YY produced a revolver and stated, "We're gonna kill this mother..." YY stated he began struggling with YY over the revolver. During the struggle, two shots were fired. YY was grazed once on the top of the head and once in the side of his neck. He was then struck on top of the head with the butt of the shotgun by the unknown male. Victim YY suffered a laceration on the top of his head, a graze wound on top of his head and a small laceration and burn to the side of his neck.

Following the two gunshots, YY and the unknown African-American male entered YY's vehicle and traveled south on Cardinal until out of sight.

YY ran to 2806 xxxx where he used an unknown subject's phone to call for a taxi. He took the cab to his girlfriend's house, YY, who resides at XX Street. YY conveyed YY to Barnes Hospital and contacted this department while en route, approximately 40 minutes after the incident occurred.

**Note:** There was no ballistic evidence recovered from the scene, nor from the hospital.

#### **Victim #1:**

**Criminal History:** LID# xxxxxx VMCSL - Dist Del Manuf Controlled Substance, Tampering w/ Utility 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, Drug Violation (misdemeanor), Stealing Over \$500.

Felony - 2, Misdemeanor - 3, Local Ordinance - 2 (Convictions - 0)

**Associates:** N/A

## **Appendix 3. Ceasefire Meeting Agenda (Sample)**

### **PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS CEASEFIRE Working Group—Agenda June 22, 2005**

- I. Introductions - United States Attorney
- II. Data Collections/Analysis Update
- III. Updates
  - A. Enforcement
    - 1. DEA Violent Trafficker Task Force
    - 2. St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department
    - 3. St. Louis County Police Department
    - 4. Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
    - 5. United States Marshals Service
  - B. Prosecution
    - 1. United States Attorney
    - 2. St. Louis City Circuit Attorney
    - 3. St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney
  - C. Probation & Parole
    - 1. Juvenile
    - 2. Federal
    - 3. State
  - D. Prevention/Intervention
    - 1. Project Sentry
    - 2. St. Louis Public Schools
    - 3. City of St. Louis
- IV. New Business
- V. Adjourn

## Appendix 4. Violent Neighborhood Initiative E-Mail Update (Sample)

**From:** YY @SLMPD.ORG]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 22, 2005 12:08 PM  
**To:** PSN Distribution List  
**Subject:** SPD Nightly Staff Report  
**Incident:** Assault 1<sup>st</sup> L.E.O.  
**Location:** 2941 XX Street (rear)  
**Complaint Number:** 05-057869  
**Date and Time:** 07/21/05 @ 09:37  
**Supervisor:** Sgt. YY  
**Victim:** Sgt. F/P.O. D/P.O. H/P.O. R/J (arrested subject)  
**Suspect:** Unknown

**Synopsis:** The above Officers & Sgt. had observed J, who is a member of the S.W.A.T. Street Gang and was wanted for Armed Robbery (of xxxx), standing at Chippewa and Pennsylvania. YY fled on foot and was chased to the rear of 2941 YY Street, where he was taken into custody without incident. After XX was placed into the rear of a police vehicle, the officers were standing next to their cars conducting computer checks when approximately five minutes later; someone fired a gunshot at the officers. The officers heard the projectile traveling through nearby foliage and heard it impact a metallic object within close proximity to them. The area was checked thoroughly by District Officers, K-9, the helicopter and Mobile Reserve. A witness to the incident was detained and brought to the S.P.D. for questioning. The suspect was never observed therefore, there is no description. No damage from the gunshot could be located.

**DISTRICT THREE:**

**CN:** 05-xxxxxx  
**Incident:** Assault 1st  
**Location:** 3506 YY Street  
**Neighborhood:** Tower Grove East  
**Precinct/Area Car:** 314/330  
**Supervisor:** 1311 S  
**Officers:** 1328 A and B  
**SPD Detective:**  
**Dates/Times:** 7/21/05 10:55  
**Victim(s):** C. b/m 12/3/69, residing at xxxx Street  
**Suspect(s):** L. b/m 11/25/82, last known address xxx Street 6'0 140 dark complexion, armed with a dark colored 9mm semi-automatic handgun and operating an older model gray with blue vinyl top Buick Regal bearing a Missouri temp tag.  
**Synopsis:** Victim L stated he was involved in an argument with his nephew/ suspect YY over rent money. Suspect C produced a handgun and fired several shots in the direction of the victim. Suspect then fled in the above described vehicle. No injuries to victim, casings recovered. Several witnesses were located at the scene.

**From:** YY@SLMPD.ORG]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 20, 2005 8:50 AM  
**To:** PSN Distribution List  
**Subject:** CPD Bureau Nightly - 5/19/05  
Metropolitan Police Department – City of St. Louis Metropolitan Police  
INTRA-DEPARTMENT REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE SHEET

**Date:** 5-19-2005

**To:** Commander Central Patrol

**From:** Central Patrol Detective Bureau

**Subject:** Nightly

**Copies To:**

Sir:

Central Patrol Detectives moved into the Forest Park Southeast neighborhood due to numerous citizens complaints of drug and gang activity. We focused on the xxxx and xxxx blocks of YY and YY. Over the next few weeks we will continue to focus on this area with a zero tolerance policy for criminal activity.

Detectives xxx and xxx conducted pedestrian checks in the xxxx block of YY and arrested subject XX( Fug. Traffic, xxxx) B/M, DOB: 09/15/78 residing at xxxx St. Fired subjects M, B/M, DOB: xx/xx/xx, SSN: XXX-XX-XXXX and W, B/M, DOB: xx/xx/xx SSN: XXX-XX-XXXX.

Detectives N and S stopped the following three individuals in the 4300 block of YY:

#1 J b/m xx/xx/xx

SID # xxxxxxxxx

Booked on 9 outstanding bench warrants

Currently on Probation

Criminal History:

Drug Violation

Tampering

Robbery 2<sup>nd</sup>

DWI

Probation Violation

Poss. Controlled Subst.

#2 B b/m xx/xx/xx

SID # xxxxxxxxx

Currently on Probation

Criminal History:

Stealing

Fraudulent Use Credit Device

Distribution Contr. Subst.

UUW

Domestic Assault 2<sup>nd</sup>

#3 K

SID # xxxxxxxxx

Currently on Probation

Criminal History:

Tampering

Resisting Arrest

DWI

Distribution Contr. Subst.

Poss. Contr. Subst.

Assault LEO w/ Injury (sentenced to 10 yrs on xx/xx/xx !!!!!)

Stealing M/V

Assault 1<sup>st</sup>