



An Ounce of Prevention: Taxpayer Costs Avoided through Preventing Crime

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“An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure.”

Philosopher and Statesman Benjamin Franklin

- **Crime hurts people**

- Physically harmed or killed
- Emotionally or mentally damaged
- Economically impacted - theft, loss of income and tax revenue, taxpayer expenses, or incurring additional costs

- **Chronic, serious and violent crime**

- Murder, assault, rape, robbery, arson or involving a weapon
- Criminal behavior begins at a young age (Fletcher, 1995)
- Career criminality most often lasts until mid-twenties (Bouza, 1993)

Crime As a Societal Problem

- United States Justice System
 - House of Refuge (juvenile offenders), New York City – 1825
 - Hefty price tag to government, businesses and individuals
- More children are experiencing violence, abuse and neglect
 - Child abuse cases increased 176 percent in 1980s (Hyde, 1995)
 - Two of three black youth (15 to 24) deaths are homicides (Deatherage, 1996)
 - 1983 to 1993 – “Epidemic of youth violence” (Surgeon Gen., 2001)

So What Is the Problem and Why Should We Care?

- **Americans are scared and angry** (Anderson, 2002)
 - One murder every 22 minutes
 - One rape every 5 minutes
 - One robbery every 49 seconds
 - One burglary every 10 seconds
- **Violent crime is increasing**
 - Minnesota's violent crime rate increased from 42 per 100,000 residents in 1960 to 269.6 in 2004 (USDOJ, 2006)
 - 47 percent of inmates in state prisons have family members who have also been incarcerated (Butterfield, August 2002)

So What Is the Problem and Why Should We Care?

- Violent crime causes human suffering
 - Individual victims suffer loss of life, mobility or income
 - Family members suffer loss or disabling of a loved one
 - Convicted criminals lose freedom and caring for family
 - Society suffers by feeling less safe in our homes or community and loss of taxpayer dollars expended
- Violent crime costs taxpayers

Criminal Behavior and Its Cost to Society

- Typical career criminal costs society \$1.7 to \$2.3 million (Cohen, 1998)
 - Drug abuse, high school drop out, beginning at age 14
 - Offenses, victim cost of crime, investigation, arrest, adjudication, incarceration, offender's time opportunity cost
- Tangible and intangible costs (McCollister 2004)
 - Murder - \$8,492,905 (\$1,139,922 tangible)
 - Rape/sexual assault - \$200,037 (\$25,954 tangible)

Criminal Behavior and Its Cost to Society

- Annual costs of crime to society
 - \$1.705 trillion including “victimless” crime – Perazzo 2002
 - \$450 billion (1/3 domestic abuse/violence)—Blomberg 1999
 - \$674 billion federal, state and local – Shapiro 1999
 - \$1 trillion (2 million people incarcerated) – Adrienne 2005

Criminal Behavior and Its Cost to Society

- Intergenerational cost of crime
 - 1.6 million U.S. children w/parent(s) incarcerated (Basile 2005)
 - 82% of ACE children-incarcerated parent(s); 58% parents abused drugs (Belton et al, 2003)
 - Rooster Bogle family—migrant worker in Oregon (Butterfield, 2002)
 - 28 members of the Bogle clan – all spent time incarcerated
 - Five members of family cost the State almost \$3 million

High risk families need effective crime prevention help

- Accurate assessment of risk is critical
- Effectiveness includes impact on risk factors, protective factors and juvenile problem behavior (OJJDP 2005)
- Measurable outcomes and ongoing evaluation determine effectiveness

How Effective Are Crime Prevention Programs?

- Research- and evidence-based efforts are demonstrating positive outcomes
- Programs examined with proven results:
 - Multi Systemic Therapy
 - The 8% Solution
 - Functional Family Therapy
 - Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care
 - All Children Excel

Multi Systemic Therapy (MST)

- **Intensive Family- and Community-based program for High Risk youth (12 to 17) and families**
 - Empower families to meet needs
 - Use strengths to make change
 - Promote responsibility
 - Focus on present
 - Target problem behaviors
 - Continuous effort and evaluation

Results

- Fewer arrests, less time in out of home placements, and less substance abuse, aggressive behavior and crimes

The 8% Solution

- **High risk juveniles 15 or younger - 8% who commit up to 70% of adolescent crime**
 - Focus on family
 - On-site services – probation staff, substance abuse counselor, educational opportunities and tutoring, transportation to activities, recreation, community services and life skill classes and mental and physical health care

Results

- Significantly reduced offending behavior

Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

- **Targets at risk children 11 to 18**
 - Family focused with 12 home visits per family over a 90-day period
 - Phases include: Engagement, Motivation, Assessment, Behavior change, and Generalization

Results

- Recidivism reduced 25% to 60%; 35% reduction in very severe re-offense rate

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC)

- **Teenagers at risk of incarceration – chronic, severe criminal history**
 - Emphasizes behavior management
 - Frequent case manager contact
 - Goals: reduce antisocial behavior, emotional disturbance and delinquency

Results

- Fewer runaways; 60% fewer days incarcerated and 50% fewer criminal offenses

A Case Study – ACE All Children Excel

- **High risk children under 10 and families**
 - Police or school referral
 - Accurate identification of risk
 - Intervention goals set
 - Coordinated services
 - School and child protection staff collaboration
 - “No drop” policy
 - Ongoing evaluation

A Case Study – ACE All Children Excel

Results

- Re-offense rate of 35% for ACE children versus 57% for control group
- 65% had no further contact with police
- 86% were not charged with another offense over a 4.5 year period
- 60% were no longer disruptive at school, attended school regularly and earned passing grades

Public Taxpayer Costs Analyzed

- **Costs directly related to crime for:**
 - County and municipal prosecution and law enforcement
 - State public defense
 - State, county and federal incarceration and probation
 - State jury and court trials
 - County out of home placement for children in need of protection due to parental criminal activity

One Shot Case Study

- Tool developed to measure tax dollars spent directly related to criminal activity
- Posttest by future researchers on tax dollars spent on crime prevention efforts versus tax dollars spent on criminal activity
 - Quantitative data collection pre-experimental research design – analysis of specific crime related public costs
 - Taxpayer cost data was not random
 - Data collected from counties, municipalities, state, federal sources
 - No pretest or control group

Costs Excluded from the Analysis

- Tangible costs not included:
 - Mental health and chemical dependency treatment
 - Court facilities – Debt service – Crime prevention efforts
 - State Attorney General's Office – State Patrol's Office
 - United States Attorney's Office – U.S. Marshal's Office
 - Medical assistance, food and shelter welfare subsidies
 - Re-entry programs – Special education in schools
 - Victim's medical bills, lost wages, and lost property

Taxpayer Costs Avoided Through Preventing Crime by Activity

- Average prosecution cost-\$570.09
 - County Prosecution adult or juvenile - \$1,011.35
 - Municipal Prosecution adult or juvenile - \$128.82
- Total public defender cost-\$322.02
- Total jury or court trial cost - \$5,565.40
- Total human services out of home placement for child protection due to parental criminal activity cost - \$11,238.39

Taxpayer Costs Avoided Through Preventing Crime by Activity

- Average law enforcement costs - \$4,498.65
 - County sheriff adult or juvenile - \$3,417.60
 - Municipal police adult or juvenile - \$5,579.69
- Average adult incarceration (3 yrs) and probation (1 yr) cost - \$18,641.98
- Average juvenile incarceration (3 yrs) and probation (1 yr) cost - \$21,931.52

Taxpayer Costs Avoided Through Preventing Crime by Government Level

- **Municipal – police and prosecution – \$5,708.51**
- **County – sheriff, prosecution, probation, human services child protection, incarceration**
 - **Adult \$16,677.47**
 - **Juvenile \$14,086.63**
- **State–public defense, courts, probation, incarceration**
 - **Adult \$39,316.04**
 - **Juvenile \$40,092.84**
- **Federal–incarceration, probation/adult–\$21,515.98**

How Much Taxpayer Cost Is Avoided If Crime Is Prevented?

Avoided taxpayer costs if a child is not part of the justice system from age 10 through age 25 - \$976,217.81

- Average annual adult cost (2004) - \$40,865.32
- Average annual juvenile cost (2004)- \$32,887.74

Proven Crime Prevention Programs and Costs Avoided

- First year taxpayer costs avoided per person:
 - ACE: \$9125 cost=\$23,762.74 avoided; \$842,386.12 life
 - MST: \$5250 cost=\$27,637.74 avoided; \$758,339.08 life
 - 8%: \$14,000 cost=\$18,887.74 avoided; \$962,217.81 life
 - FFT: \$2550 cost = \$30,337.74 avoided; \$865,756.51 life
 - MTFC: \$18,837 cost=\$14,050.74 avoided; \$643,134.02

“Why Does the System Only Offer a Pound of Cure, When an Ounce of Prevention Is What We Need?”

Welfare Client, Ramsey County, Minnesota

- Public safety is the primary public policy issue related to crime prevention
- Citizens want to feel safe and secure in their home, workplace and community
- Policymakers want to make the connection between public safety and crime prevention efforts

Is an Ounce of Crime Prevention Worth a Pound of Justice System Cure?

We can “pay now or pay later”, when successful intervention is likely lower and cost is higher

An ounce of effective crime prevention most often costs less than a pound of cure through arrest, prosecution, public defense, probation, and incarceration

Effective juvenile crime prevention programs can save money and will save lives



Questions?