



## **City of San Diego Police Department**

Nomination for the  
Herman Goldstein Excellence in  
Problem Solving Award

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**Herman Goldstein award submission**  
**San Diego Police department, Central Division**  
**Proactive Juvenile Services Team**  
**Executive summary**

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**Scanning**

During the last five years crime overall has continued to decrease with the exception of juvenile crime. In the mid 1990's juvenile crime continued to increase causing our Department to re-evaluate the current juvenile policies and operational guidelines. A Juvenile Realignment Task Force was created to develop recommendations that would make our organization more efficient. This task force made forty-two recommendations that formed the new juvenile services team concept. Some of the problems that were discovered through this process are still ongoing. Two of the major issues were, the large increase in the juvenile population, and that a relatively small percentage of juveniles are responsible for the majority of juvenile related crimes.

**Analysis**

The population for juveniles' ages 10-19 is steadily increasing and is anticipated to continue through the year 2015. From the mid 1990's through 2002 the projected increase would be 20% higher than the general population. This increase would naturally equate to an increase in juvenile crime.

Another fact was discovered through a study that was conducted by the Orange County Probation Department, in conjunction with the United States Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This showed that approximately eight percent of juveniles are responsible for over half the crime. The majority of individuals that fall into this high-risk category have mandated court ordered

conditions that theoretically restrict their behavior. Unfortunately the Probation Department has a large caseload and insufficient staff to monitor these juveniles properly.

### **Response**

The Central Division Command staff decided that they would create a pro-active juvenile services team whose primary responsibility would be to identify and monitor these chronic offenders. A partnership was developed with the Probation Department to insure that the conditions set in place by the courts were being strictly enforced by both agencies.

The team made daily school and home visits contacting the juveniles, their teachers and parents to explain the program and all conditions that the individual might have restricting his or her behavior.

### **Assessment**

The crime statistics for the last year show a decrease in juvenile related crime within our command. A survey was completed with input from parents, school officials, and officers from Probation and Central Division. The results indicated that the team had a positive impact on all the people involved with the program. The majority of those surveyed overwhelmingly support our efforts.

## **Scanning**

In November of 1996, Police Chief Jerry Sanders addressed the San Diego City Council to report on crime within the city. He reported that all classes of crime were decreasing with the exception of juvenile crime. Projections from SANDAG indicated a 20% increase in the juvenile population through the year 2002 when compared to the remaining population. This rising population was anticipated to continue to increase through the year 2015. This information made it clear that something would have to be done to combat juvenile crime before it got out of control. Chief Sanders was tasked with creating a comprehensive plan to address this issue.

In an effort to problem solve, a juvenile realignment task force was created to develop recommendations for policy and operational changes that would make the Police Department more effective at reducing juvenile crime. In the end the task force made forty-two recommendations that revamped our thinking and created the juvenile services team concept that is now in place. The Department wanted to encourage each JST officer to work proactively through preventive measures, early intervention and Swift, appropriate enforcement. The present juvenile services team members are responsible for teaching Dare classes and monitoring the activity that takes place on school grounds.

The weakness in the system is that juveniles that leave the school area are seldom monitored and therefore have the opportunity to commit various offenses. Studies have shown that a relatively small percent of juveniles are responsible for the majority of crime. This is known as the 8% problem. It has been proven over and over again that roughly 8% of the juveniles commit over half of the juvenile related crime. The majority of these high-risk juveniles are already in the system and have court conditions in place

to control their behavior. Unfortunately without someone monitoring them at school as well as at home they ignore their probation orders. The problem therefore becomes very clear; we have a small number of high-risk juveniles that are committing the majority of crime because no one is monitoring their behavior and holding them accountable for their actions and the conditions already in place from the courts. The probation department is understaffed and has such an insurmountable caseload that they cannot possibly monitor these kids in an effective manner.

The issue of juvenile crime is so important to our department and the community that although Chief Sanders has retired it still remains a priority. Chief Bejarano has made the reduction of juvenile crime an organizational goal and has asked his command staff to create new ideas and strategies to combat this issue.

### Analysis

The initial data to identify this particular problem came in many forms. First was the SANDAG population report that indicated the rise in the juvenile population. This report stated that the juvenile population would increase 20% more than the general population through the year 2002. The increase would continue but not at such an alarming rate through the year 2015. The second set of statistical data studied was from our crime analysis unit. This information showed the number of juvenile arrest and the number of juvenile victims within the city. The third and probably most important information gathered came from a study published by the Orange County Probation Department entitled the 8% problem. This study was completed with assistance from the

United States Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the National Institute of Corrections (MC).

The results of this study showed that at least 66% of first time juvenile offenders were not rearrested. It went on to show that a small number of juveniles roughly 8% were chronic offenders and responsible for over half the subsequent crime. The San Diego Police Department recognized that this problem was not unique to Orange County, but also existed within our city. The juvenile realignment task force stated, " While well-intentioned, we have consistently failed to effectively address this group who is destined to become chronic, serious and violent offenders". They also go on to say that the present system has us spending equal amounts of time with those who have little risk as is spent with those who have high risk.

The problem with chronic offenders has been going on for years and has taken its toll in many different ways. First since they are responsible for such a large percentage of crime they definitely have an enormous affect on the community. Second they are a burden on the system itself. They take up a substantial amount of time both for the courts and the Police Department. These juveniles are usually also a burden to their parents, school officials and the Probation Department. I believe if these juveniles are not closely monitored they will continue to commit crimes and ultimately enter into the adult system where they will be incarcerated and become a burden to all taxpayers.

In the past we have asked Officers to monitor truancy and curfew violators along with a small group of juveniles which we believed demanded additional attention. This was done primarily by the juvenile services officers along with certain officers who are interested in working with kids. Unfortunately due to rotating shifts the number of

officers was not consistent and the effectiveness of their work was only a short-term fix. By concentrating solely on high-risk or borderline high-risk juveniles we felt we could impact the crime in the area, as well as being a positive change agent to those juveniles we chose to target.

The analysis revealed that we needed a select group of officers to proactively monitor the chosen targets to insure they receive the attention they demand and are abiding by all court ordered conditions.

### **Response**

After thoroughly analyzing the problem Lieutenant Mike Hurley and Sergeant Charles Kindred came up with the idea of creating a new team whose sole responsibility would be to monitor the high-risk juveniles within the Central Division. Captain Mike McCulloch approved this concept and Sergeant Kevin Ammon was selected to be the team leader. Sergeant Ammon was given four officers and the task at hand; from there his team developed the operational guidelines along with all the forms necessary to track their work.

The team decided that several things must occur in order for this unit to be successful. They created specific goals and strategies, which would guide them, step by step through the problem solving effort. Some of these goals were:

1. Identify high-risk juveniles within the command.
2. Market the program to the command and all those affected by the unit.
3. Develop a partnership with Probation, School Officials and the parents.
4. Properly monitor and document all violations of court conditions.

5, Reduce the burden the 8% of high-risk juveniles have on the patrol officers.

6. Reduce juvenile crime within the division.

Creating these goals allowed us to develop a process that we could follow on a daily basis to insure we had a solid base to build upon.

The first task was to create a list of high-risk juveniles that would demand the type of attention this team was developed to handle. This would go hand in hand with marketing the program. The team went to each line-up and explained the program and sought input on possible subjects from the patrol officers. They also went to the daytime Juvenile services team members and asked for input. The team members met with officials *from* the local schools and the probation officers that worked our area. They were also asked for their input on possible offenders.

The program started officially in January 2000, but the first month was spent creating forms and identifying targets along with developing the partnerships that would be necessary for a successful effort. Once the targeted juveniles had been identified the team set out to educate the parents. We met with every parent and explained the program and the conditions set down by the courts regarding their children. Most parents were extremely grateful that we would be assisting them in monitoring their children and were glad to see the program in place.

The team had fifty-two active offenders that we wanted to visit at least once a week if not more often. These visits would take place either at school or at their residences. After a few months it was easy to see that some of the targeted subjects just needed some additional attention and a little help. These kids were given referral to agencies within the city that could assist them with their specific issues. The majority of



the juveniles unfortunately were on probation for good reason and disregarded the conditions of their probation. These individuals quickly learned that they were now being monitored closely and would be held accountable for their actions. Due to the work now being done we had daily contact with the probation officers that work our command and a solid partnership has been formed.

We now have officers calling us on a daily basis to inquire about juveniles that we have on our list along with informing us of crimes they believe one of our targets might be involved with. Through the monitoring of these individuals by my team along with the patrol officers, we write probation violations on a daily basis and on any given month 10-15 of our targets are back in custody for these violations.

By holding these individuals accountable we believe that we have decreased the burden placed on the patrol faction of our division and also reduced juvenile related crime. The partnerships that have been formed with probation, schools and the parents have been the key to this teams success. It would be impossible to measure the amount of important information these groups relay to us that assist us in our endeavors.

In order to insure that the team stays focused on the task at hand I wrote a six-month progress report and re-examined our initial goals. Some goals were completed, and others were added, and all this information was given to the command staff to assess our progress. Recently a one-year report was completed and given to the command staff. This report contained monthly statistical information, which I believe, shows that the program is a success.

## Assessment

The assessment of the program took place on several different levels. First the goals that had been set down by the team were either completed or revamped as time went on. The partnerships that have been formed are solid and very productive. Statistical information shows a decrease in crime within Central division. Looking at the attached statistical data you can see that the division decreased in the amount of arrest for juveniles compared to the rest of the city. This is even more prevalent in the 510 service area where the team spends the majority of its time. The only increase I believe is directly related to the increased attention this team places on curfew violators. This again correlates with the analysis, that the 52 targets we monitor daily would be responsible for more than half the crime within the division. Due to the team's home visits and holding them accountable to court conditions I believe we limited their opportunity and time to commit additional offenses.

During the last year the target list has been re-evaluated on a quarterly basis. Fifteen juveniles have been placed in the in-active status due to no contacts with the police other than my team, reached adult age or are incarcerated for an extended period of time. Although these targets are no longer an issue sixteen other individuals have taken their place and as of this moment we have fifty-three active juvenile offenders.

I have kept daily statistics and turned in monthly reports to my command staff. Due to the shortage of personnel all specialized teams are continually evaluated for their effectiveness. A six-month and then a yearly report have been completed and shared with the Captain and his management team. To this date I have received only positive feedback from my chain of command. Recently Chief Bejarano mentioned this team

specifically, in his crime report to the City Council, as a good example of a problem solving effort with regards to juvenile crime.

Surveys were sent out to Parents, Probation Officers, School Official, and Officers within the command to evaluate our effectiveness. Although the sample was relatively small, approximately fifty surveys, the results were overwhelmingly positive. The present team members are all experts in the area of juvenile enforcement. Although the fifty-three high-risk targets are the priority, the team is asked daily for their assistance on other juvenile related matters. They have truly become an outstanding resource to the division and the community. This in itself cannot be measured but it is felt within the command.

The proactive juvenile services team will continue to progress and as new members come on board, new and creative ideas will be put into place. The team will continually be evaluated and statistical data will monitored.

San Diego  
 Juvenile Statistics  
 0110111999-1213111999 vs. 01/0112000-1213112000  
 Beats 511 - 516

Juvenile Arrests:

	01/01/1999 - 12/31/1999	01/01/2000 - 12/31/2000	% Change
<b>Daytime Hours</b>			
Felony	35	23	-34.3%
Misdemeanor	215	92	-57.2%
Other	4	5	25.0%
<b>Daytime Hours Total</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>-52.8%</b>
<b>After School Hours</b>			
Felony	96	73	-24.0%
Misdemeanor	112	114	1.8%
Other	4	11	175.0%
<b>After School Hours Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>-6.6%</b>
<b>Curfew Hours</b>			
Felony	33	24	-27.3%
Misdemeanor	37	62	67.6%
Other	148	96	-35.1%
<b>Curfew Hours Total</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>-16.5%</b>
<b>ALL HOURS TOTAL</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>-26.9%</b>

Daytime Hours are from 0830 to 1329

After School Hours are from 1330 to 2159

Curfew Hours are from 2200 to 0829

The enhanced curfew enforcement began on June 3, 1994.

Daytime Loitering enforcement began in June 1996.

San Diego  
 Juvenile Statistics  
 0110111999-1213111999 vs. 0110112000-1213112000  
 Beats 511 -537

**Juvenile Arrests:**

	01/01/1999 - 12/31/1999	01/01/2000 - 12/31/2000	% Change
<b>Daytime Hours</b>			
Felony	88	57	-35.2%
Misdemeanor	380	254	-33.2%
Other	22	38	72.7%
<b>Daytime Hours Total</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>-28.8%</b>
<b>After School Hours</b>			
Felony	180	158	-12.2%
Misdemeanor	367	329	-10.4%
Other	28	30	7.1%
<b>After School Hours Total</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>-10.1%</b>
<b>Curfew Hours</b>			
Felony	64	53	-17.2%
Misdemeanor	97	116	19.6%
Other	247	176	-28.7%
<b>Curfew Hours Total</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>-15.4%</b>
<b>ALL HOURS TOTAL</b>	<b>1473</b>	<b>1211</b>	<b>-17.8%</b>

Daytime Hours are from 0830 to 1329  
 After School Hours are from 1330 to 2159  
 Curfew Hours are from 2200 to 0829

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**San Diego  
Juvenile Statistics  
0110111999-1213111999 vs. 01/01/2000-12/31/2000**

**Juvenile Arrests:**

	0110111999 - 12/311999	01101/2000 - 1,213112000	% Change
<b>Daytime Hours</b>			
Felony	746	717	-3.9%
Misdemeanor	3080	3341	8.5%
Other	143	190	32.9%
<b>Daytime Hours Total</b>	<b>3969</b>	<b>4248</b>	<b>7.0%</b>
<b>After School Hours</b>			
Felony	1158	1023	-11.7%
Misdemeanor	2733	2475	-9.4%
Other	149	164	10.1%
<b>After School Hours Total</b>	<b>4040</b>	<b>3662</b>	<b>-9.4%</b>
<b>Curfew Hours</b>			
Felony	524	394	-24.8%
Misdemeanor	944	780	-17.4%
Other	1693	1398	-17.4%
<b>Curfew Hours Total</b>	<b>3161</b>	<b>2572</b>	<b>-18.6%</b>
 <b>ALL HOURS TOTAL</b>	 <b>11170</b>	 <b>10482</b>	 <b>-6.2%</b>

Daytime Hours are from 0830 to 1329  
 After School Hours are from 1330 to 2159  
 Curfew Hours are from 2200 to 0829

The enhanced curfew enforcement began on June 3, 1994.  
 Daytime Loitering enforcement began in June 1996.