Crime prevention at the crossroads? Overcoming some persistent and emerging challenges

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Limited consensus about the causes of crime problems or appropriate response

Lack of ready-made infrastructure or network to implement crime prevention
What we now know about crime prevention

- It reduces crime
- It’s cost effective
- It has public support
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding the crime prevention landscape in Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project and program evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic reviews of the evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Victims of property crime, rate per 100,000 population

Tension between central and local priorities
Five year trends in recorded criminal incidents in local government areas, by direction of change (%)

- **Decrease**
  - Violent crime: 21
  - Property crime: 37

- **Increase**
  - Violent crime: 5
  - Property crime: 6

- **Stable**
  - Violent crime: 70
  - Property crime: 55

Source: Goh & Ramsey 2016
Countries implementing violence prevention programs on a larger scale (%; n=133)

Gap between evidence and practice

- Life skills/social development programs (YV): 51
- Social and cultural norms change (SV): 50
- Social and cultural norms change (IPV): 49
- Bullying prevention (YV): 47
- Caregiver support programs (EA): 39
- Parenting education (CM): 38
- Child sexual abuse prevention (CM): 37
- Residential care policies (EA): 36
- Home visiting (CM): 35
- After school programs (YV): 35
- Prevention programs for school and college populations: 35
- Improving physical environment (SV): 29
- Professional awareness campaigns (EA): 26
- Public information campaigns (EA): 23
- Mentoring (YV): 23
- Dating violence (IPV): 22
- Microfinance with GE training (IPV): 21

Source: WHO 2014: 28

YV: Youth violence
SV: Sexual violence
IPV: Intimate partner violence
EA: Elder abuse
CM: Child maltreatment
Use of evidence in project grant applications

Academic research (local or international)
- 2008: 43
- 2011: 69

Evidence of outcomes from an evaluation of projects delivered by applicant
- 2008: 19
- 2011: 37

Anecdotal evidence from similar projects only
- 2008: 25
- 2011: 4
Factors influencing Council’s decision to install CCTV
Mean score for importance (1=not at all important & 10=important)

- Reduce property crime: 8.4
- Reduce anti-social behaviour: 8.4
- Reduce personal crime: 8.3
- Help Police identify offenders: 8.1
- Increase perceptions of safety: 7.3
Benefit-Cost Results

Since the 1990s, the Washington State legislature has directed WSIPP to identify “evidence-based” policymakers and budget writers with a list of well-researched public policies that can, with a high degree of confidence, produce outcomes coupled with a more efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Research Approach. WSIPP has developed a three-step process to draw conclusions about what works and what doesn’t work, and the outcomes of legislative interest...

Latest Results. The tables on this webpage present our current findings for a variety of public policies, periodically as new information becomes available. Interested readers can find more information by contacting Stephanie Leg or downloading our technical document.

Benefit-cost methods last updated July 2015

Current estimates replace old estimates. Numbers will change over time as a result of model inputs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime type</th>
<th>Studies reviewed</th>
<th>Desirable impact</th>
<th>Australian studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-domestic violence related assault</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential burglary</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing from retail store</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing from motor vehicles</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malicious (property) damage</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing from person</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Absence of a robust local evidence base
Focus of crime prevention and community safety programs (%)

- **Limits of local government**

Source: Homel and Fuller 2015
Crime prevention as a specific aim or unintended benefit

Embedded or isolated, competing or complementary?

Social or environmental approaches
Where do we go from here?
Develop more sophisticated models of crime prevention
Revisit how local crime prevention is organised
Embrace science
Proportion of recorded assault offences in top 5 locations, by NT Police division, 2012

- Katherine: 24
- Casuarina: 24
- Alice Springs: 22
- Darwin: 20
- Palmerston: 14
Encourage risk taking and promote innovative practice
Re-think our approaches to promoting and doing evaluation
Build support for crime prevention