

Reducing Fear of Crime in Houston and Newark

A Summary Report

by

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The Police Foundation is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting innovation and improvement in policing. Established in 1970, the foundation has conducted seminal research in police behavior, policy, and procedure, and works to transfer to local agencies the best information about practices for dealing effectively with a range of important police operational and administrative concerns. Motivating all of the foundation's efforts is the goal of efficient, humane policing that operates within the framework of democratic principles and the highest ideals of the nation. The Police Foundation's research findings are published as an information service. Permission to quote is readily granted.

The research described herein was conducted under grant number 83-IJ-CX-0003 by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions contained 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.

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Library of Congress Catalog Number 86-60533

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FOREWORD

Every police executive knows that police officers spend most of their time not chasing or arresting suspects but talking to people. The research summarized in this report indicates that if officers work harder at talking and listening to citizens, they can reduce the fear of crime and, in some cases, even crime itself.

The pervasive fear of crime is a threat to organized society—it makes citizens suspicious of one another, erodes the sense of community upon which a decent neighborhood life depends, and weakens the confidence of the people in their government. Though the level of fear is often way out of proportion to the actual risk of victimization, it should not for this reason be dismissed as groundless or hysterical. Nor can fear be reduced by simply telling people that they have an exaggerated notion of the risks they face. When one quarter of all American households are touched by crime in a typical year, people are going to believe their own experiences or the testimony of their neighbors before they accept the reassurances of public officials, especially if those people live in neighborhoods blighted by physical decay or juvenile rowdiness.

For a long time, many police executives handled fear by either minimizing the amount of reported crime or concentrating their department's efforts on solving crimes and arresting criminals. Some executives worried that telling people too much about crime in their neighborhood would only make matters worse by sharpening anxieties or leading to unreasonable demands for increased police services.

Slowly, those approaches have begun to change. The exclusive reliance on motorized patrol has given way in some cities to a greater use of foot patrol. The rush during the 1950s to centralize police operations in a downtown headquarters has been slowed, and a fresh look has been taken at the possible value of neighborhood or precinct police stations. In response to the urban tensions and riots of the 1960s, cultivating better community relations became more important.

What has been lacking in all this are well-tested ideas about what specific steps will actually reduce the fear of crime and improve police-neighborhood relations. Many of the popular ideas, such as assigning officers to meet monthly with neighborhood organizations, never had much empirical support; they were adopted because somebody had a hunch that they might meet a pressing need.

In cooperation with the police departments in Houston and Newark, and with the active support of the National Institute of Justice, the Police Foundation has put to the test a variety of methods intended to reduce fear, improve the quality of neighborhood life, and increase popular satisfaction with police services. The report that follows summarizes those experiments; fuller, more technical reports are available from the foundation.

Among the concrete lessons of those experiments are these:

- In Houston, where the population is growing rapidly, densities are low, and neighborhoods are new, opening a neighborhood police station, contacting the citizens about their problems, and stimulating the formation of neighborhood organizations where none had existed can help reduce the fear of crime and even reduce the actual level of victimization.
- The value of these organizing and communicating efforts seems to be greatest for white, middle-class homeowners and least for black renters. This suggests that not every strategy works equally well for every group.

- In an older, more disadvantaged city such as Newark, many of the same steps—including opening a storefront police office and directing the police to make contacts with citizens in their homes—also had beneficial effects, especially when they were supplemented with aggressive efforts to enforce the law and maintain order in those neighborhoods.
- Police officers often resist being assigned to making citizen contacts, running a storefront office, or organizing neighborhood meetings (“it’s not real police work”), but in Houston and Newark that initial resistance soon gave way to enthusiasm when the officers realized how receptive the citizens were, how much information the police thereby obtained, and how appreciative most people were for the attention paid to their problems.
- Helping citizens reduce their fear of crime in ways that improve satisfaction with police services requires a proactive strategy—it is not enough to respond to spontaneous requests for information, attend the meetings of group already organized, or wait for citizens to come to headquarters. There must be a positive outreach program designed to create interest, meetings, and inquiries.
- Like all aspects of good police work, the community-contact strategy requires careful planning, training, and supervision and the recruitment of able personnel.
- Learning what works in any city requires a commitment to the experimental method, in which a new tactic is tried in a way that permits a systematic, unbiased evaluation of its outcome.

The Police Foundation welcomes comments on this and its many other reports and stands ready to supply, within the limits of its resources, advice and technical assistance in the evaluation and implementation of new programs.

*James Q. Wilson
Chairman of the Board
Police Foundation*

PREFACE

As a rookie police officer in Oakland, California, I learned a fact of urban life that frequently escapes the attention of Americans who are fortunate to live in areas that are relatively without crime. I learned that the vast majority of citizens in crime-ridden parts of the city are law-abiding and, like their fellow citizens, want to be left to live their lives free of the effects of crime.

But as have other police officers, I learned also that over time the prevalence of crime in a neighborhood blunts its vitality, withers its spirit, and infuses those law-abiding citizens unable to flee the neighborhood with a sense of futility and fear. However proficient the police are in arresting criminals who prey on a neighborhood, there remains in relatively high-crime areas a fear of crime that develops as families and individuals come to believe that they are alone in dealing with the aura of criminal activity and disorder that surrounds them.

As recent research has shown, the rate of actual crime in a neighborhood and the level of fear of crime are not necessarily in tandem. Fear of crime may outstrip in its intensity the reality of actual crime victimization rates. If all the police do, however successfully, is respond to individual criminal incidents, the fear of crime which pervades a neighborhood is seldom assuaged.

Fear of crime has very practical consequences. It tends to imprison citizens within their homes, dry up commercial activity in a neighborhood, isolate residents from each other, and abandon the streets to the very sort of criminal and disorderly behavior which feeds fear of crime initially. In response, the efforts of the nation's police departments to reduce the fear of crime has tended to be sporadic, piece meal, and unevaluated. No one could say for certain what approaches worked and, as important, what strategies did not work and were a waste of time and money.

Indeed, before the study reported here, there had been no attempt to test in a comprehensive way what the police can do, beyond their traditional law enforcement activities, to reduce citizen fear of crime in city neighborhoods. In Houston and Newark, with the support of the National Institute of Justice, Police Foundation researchers set out to evaluate in a systematic way a series of fear-reduction strategies.

The Institute set to important conditions:

- That the strategies would be homegrown, not imported. The police in Houston and Newark would implement fear-reduction strategies which local officers had a hand in devising and which reflected local conditions. And,
- Most important, that the strategies be implemented without Federal subsidies, and without any increase in local police department budgets. The strategies were to be tried within the framework of existing police resources because most police departments today operate under stringent fiscal restraints. If the lessons learned in Houston and Newark were to be relevant for other urban police agencies, their price tag had to fit the realities of current police budgets. At the National Institute of Justice, we believe one of the most important uses for research money is to test what criminal justice agencies can accomplish within the boundaries of their available resources.

The results of evaluations of the Houston and Newark strategies are very encouraging. By one set of measures or another, they show, for example, that in Newark a coordinated community policing effort can reduce fear of personal

victimization and the perception of social disorder and property crime in a neighborhood and increase citizen satisfaction with the area. In Houston, innovations similar to those made in Newark have correspondingly beneficial effects, although the two cities differ markedly in many ways.

The overall lesson of the research in Houston and Newark is that if police departments take the initiative in adapting to local conditions the successful strategies noted in this report, they can have an effect in reducing the fear of crime where it is prevalent. Significantly, they can take this initiative without increasing their budgets. In terms of money outlays, the strategies are cost effective. To work, they require that police administrators and managers decide that their officers will listen to, and work with, law-abiding citizens in efforts to reduce the fear of crime that plagues too many urban neighborhoods.

I am particularly pleased that this project exemplifies the primary mission of the National Institute of Justice: to sponsor research that has particular value for improving the criminal justice system. Houston and Newark are continuing the most successful aspects of the fear reduction program, and we are now beginning to replicate those aspects in other sites. In the meantime, I strongly encourage other jurisdictions to follow the lead of these two departments.

James K. Stewart
Director
National Institute of Justice

A NOTE FOR POLICE ADMINISTRATORS

Houston and Newark, vastly different in many ways, are similar in one respect. Both cities have limited police resources available to meet increasing demands. Houston, spread out over 565 square miles, has been growing at such a rapid pace that police resources are stretched to the limit. In Newark, police resources are diminishing due to a shrinking tax base and agency cutbacks. Like many of the nation's police departments, the departments in Houston and Newark face the troubling equation of increased demands and reduced or limited resources.

This problem has stimulated the adoption of several "cutback management" approaches to conserve police resources. Some of these approaches, including differential response to calls for police service and screening cases to be investigated, are cost effective ways of achieving our goals without sacrificing the services we provide. Other approaches, such as layoffs and reductions in foot patrol and other services, run the risk of isolating the police from large segments of the community.

The findings from this study clearly illustrate the value of having the police contact citizens to involve them in resolving problems associated with crime and the fear of crime in city neighborhoods. But, as every police executive knows, police departments frequently resist attempts to change traditional police practices. Thus, police administrators who want to adopt and adapt the fear-reduction strategies used in Houston and Newark are going to have to persuade participating police officers of their value. We believe the evidence in this report will be very useful in the effort.

Certainly, the results of these experiments suggest several changes in current police practices, principal among them:

- Some of the time of beat officers should be reserved for making contacts with citizens so that officers can become more aware not only of specific problems in the neighborhood, but also of the community's perceptions of crime and disorder.
- Officers selected to become involved in fear-reduction strategies must be screened to ensure that they are community service-oriented, adaptable to changing conditions, and self-motivated. From a management perspective, this means beat personnel may have to be shifted. The goal here should be to increase both the quantity and quality of police-citizen contacts.
- Police-citizen contacts, and follow-through activities leading from them, must be well documented to ensure that officers can execute appropriate responses.
- When appropriate, police executives should consider establishing door-to-door contact, community organizing, and police storefront operations. The study shows that these operations can reduce the physical and psychological distance between police and a neighborhood.

The results of the fear reduction project show that innovative programs can be developed that reduce the levels of fear within the community and raise citizen satisfaction with the police. These are positive, necessary goals to guide the delivery of basic police services. And they are relatively inexpensive and easy to implement. We recommend that police executives in the nation's cities review carefully the findings of this study. We were so impressed by these findings that we have maintained these programs in our departments after the evaluation was completed.

Lee B. Brown
Police Chief
Houston, Texas

Hubert Williams
President, Police Foundation
Former Police Director, Newark, New Jersey

AUTHORS' ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study, funded by the National Institute of Justice, is the product of the efforts of many people whose contributions we gratefully acknowledge. Foremost, this project is attributable to the concern expressed by the director of the National Institute of Justice, James K. (Chips) Stewart, that America's police give increased attention to the general quality of life of the citizens they serve. Only due to his advocacy did this enterprise begin; only thanks to his support was it completed so successfully. For his persistent encouragement, we are grateful.

The cooperation and support provided by the Houston and Newark police departments and their chief executives, Lee P. Brown and Hubert Williams, made this project possible. Their willingness to experiment proved once again that far-sighted police administrators can contribute significantly to the development of new knowledge about policing. We owe a special debt to the staffs of the Houston and Newark police departments who worked on various aspects of the project. Their names are noted at the end of this report.

At various stages in the design and implementation of this project, we shared our ideas and received advice from representatives of the United States Conference of Mayors, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the National Sheriffs' Association, and the Police Executive Research Forum. We gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

We owe special thanks to the following persons who have reviewed drafts of the many reports produced by this project and, in the process, made them much better than they otherwise would have been: Professor Richard Berk, Department of Sociology, University of California at Santa Barbara; Professor Peter Rossi, Social and Demographic Research Institute, University of Massachusetts; and Professor Albert J. Reiss, Department of Sociology, Yale University.

We also appreciate the assistance and advice provided by the following persons during the planning stage of the various programs: Professor David Bayley, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver; George L. Kelling, Research Fellow, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; Professor Paul J. Lavrakas, Center for Urban Affairs, Northwestern University; and Professor Jerome Skolnick, The Center for Study of Law and Society, University of California at Berkeley. Professor Richard McCleary, Department of Sociology, University of New Mexico, provided valuable technical assistance in the time series analyses of recorded crime data.

The following Police Foundation staff members gave unstintingly of their time and talents: Sampson O. Annan, survey research director; Virginia Burke, administrative assistant; Gretchen Eckman, Houston process evaluator; Elizabeth Enright, Newark process evaluator; and Douglas Irr, research assistant.

At the National Institute of Justice, we profited from the encouragement and support of William Saulsbury, the original project monitor, and Larry Bennett who was monitor as it neared completion. Thanks also to Gil Kerlikowske, who assisted Mr. Bennett in this task.

Patrick V. Murphy, the president of the Police Foundation at the time this study began, and Hubert Williams, foundation president as this project was being concluded, gave us direction and reassurance when we needed it most.

As the length of these acknowledgements indicates, to the extent that this enormous project was successful, there are many who deserve the credit. Any errors or omissions are our responsibility, and ours alone.

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INTRODUCTION AND MAJOR FINDINGS

Recent research, much of it funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), shows that fear of crime is a major problem in our society. Other research, however, has shown that the level of fear appears to be far out of proportion to the objective risks of crime. Part of this incongruity seems to result from the fact that fear derives from concern about various “signs of crime” and other sources, as well as from direct or indirect experience with crime. For example, neighborhoods suffering from vandalism, loitering, and public drinking or gambling convey the feeling of having been abandoned. Other factors, including impersonal relationships between citizens and police, and lack of information about crime and crime prevention techniques, may create a sense of powerlessness, leading to higher levels of fear.

Some research has suggested that increased fear produces a “fortress mentality.” This leads law-abiding residents and merchants to relinquish their neighborhoods to those who would prey upon them. Eventually, it has been suggested, this withdrawal process produces an exodus by those who can afford to move to other, apparently safer, areas. If such migration occurs, the fear-afflicted areas then provide abandoned homes and shops that could become breeding grounds for vandalism, drug use, and other forms of disorder. In this scenario, those who choose to remain—or are unable to leave—may begin to view the streets with detachment, responding to the apparent lack of concern revealed by the neglect and unruliness around them. An insidious cycle leading from disorder and powerlessness to fear, to crime, to even more fear, is hypothesized.

Unfortunately, no research provides systematic evidence that such a cycle actually exists or, if it does, what can be done to interrupt the cycle. In 1982, however, NIJ decided to fund empirical research to determine how the police can effectively address the problems of fear, disorder, the quality of police service, neighborhood satisfaction, and, ultimately, crime itself. Through a competitive bidding process, the Police Foundation was awarded a grant to plan and evaluate those experiments.

This report provides an overview of the implementation and evaluation of the several programs tested by that NIJ-funded research.

Houston and Newark were selected as examples of two different types of American cities—similar, however, in that their police departments were able to design and manage complex experimental programs. Houston is a new, growing city with low population density and a developing municipal infrastructure. Newark is a mature city with high population density and declining resources. Task forces were assembled in each city to determine which programs would best address local needs. Although both cities and some programs were different, most programs addressed the same underlying problems.

In both cities, the programs tested included:

- A local police-community newsletter containing crime prevention advice, information about successful efforts to thwart crimes, neighborhood news, and, in some cases, local recorded crime data.
- A police-community, multi-service center, where residents could go to report crimes, hold meetings, and obtain information.
- Contacts made by police officers with neighborhood residents to determine and address what the public considered to be local problems.

In Houston only, the programs included:

- Telephone contacts with victims of crime in an attempt to provide assistance and demonstrate concern.
- An effort by police officers to create a neighborhood organization.

In Newark only, the programs included:

- A program to reduce the “signs of crime”—social disorder and physical deterioration.
- A coordinated effort to provide information, increase the quantity and quality of police-citizen contacts, and reduce the social and physical signs of crime.

The designers of these programs sought to accomplish one or more of the following primary goals:

- 1) Reduce the level of perceived neighborhood crime and disorder.
- 2) Reduce the fear of and concern about crime.
- 3) Improve satisfaction with police service.
- 4) Increase satisfaction with the neighborhood as a place to live.

In addition, although they were not explicit goals, the extent to which the programs had an effect on crime prevention behaviors, perceptions of excessive police aggressiveness, victimization by crime, and recorded crime were examined.

The research summarized here demonstrates that there are strategies, several of them new, some of them used in the past but discarded, that can reduce levels of perceived crime and disorder, reduce fear and concern about crime, improve evaluations of police service, increase satisfaction with neighborhoods, and, in some cases, reduce crime itself. The most successful programs (neighborhood police centers, door-to-door contacts, community organizing by police, and the coordination of several such approaches) had two characteristics in common:

- 1) They provided time for police to have frequent discussions with citizens who were encouraged to express their concerns about their neighborhoods.
- 2) They relied upon the initiative and innovativeness of individual officers to develop and implement programs responsive to the concerns of the public.

All of the successful programs increased the quantity and improved the quality of contacts between citizens and police. By staying in close contact with the neighborhoods they serve, the police were able to identify and, working with the residents, respond to problems at the local level. This technique which Wilson has called the “community service” approach is, by recent standards, a new orientation for police. Today’s police have been forced to hurry from call to call too quickly to be able to identify underlying problems, much less address them. Some of the strategies used in Houston and Newark were new. But the principle underlying these successful community-oriented approaches, upon reflection, simply reaffirms the principle on which policing was founded in London in 1829. That principle is to be “...in tune with the people, understanding the people, belonging to the people, and drawing its strength from the people” (Critchley 1967, 52). The first principle, this research demonstrates, is also an effective one.

The other strategies tested (newsletters, recontacting victims, and reducing the “signs of crime”) did not achieve their desired goals, partly because they were not implemented in the strongest possible manner but also, apparently, because they did not establish the close working relationship between citizens and police that the “community service” programs achieved.

The results from the two cities have multiple and far-reaching implications.

For researchers, it would be useful to study the successful programs in different neighborhoods in different cities to determine if the results can be readily transferred. In addition, some of the programs that did not work should be improved and tested over a longer period of time to see if, under those circumstances, they can be made more effective.

For police, the results suggest that officers should be given every opportunity to establish a dynamic process by which they can learn what the public believes are the biggest problems in their neighborhoods and work with the public to solve those problems. Beat officers involved in these efforts should be given respect, trust, recognition, and a considerable amount of autonomy to determine the nature of the problems they should address and the best ways to do so. In some departments, this would simply involve the dedication of the time when officers are not already occupied to establish better communications with the public. In many departments, however, a declining number of officers are expected to respond to an increasing number of calls for service, giving them little time for anything else. To implement the types of strategies suggested by this research, it would be necessary for departments to provide more time for officers to be able to try them, for example, by instituting a system of alternative modes of responding to calls.

Finally, the most important implication of this research for this nation's cities and its basic social fabric is that there are relatively simple, inexpensive yet effective ways that police, working with citizens, can interrupt the cycle of fear and crime that has been destroying neighborhoods and the economic bases that support them.

Both summary and technical evaluation reports concerning each program are available from the Police Foundation. This overview presents condensed descriptions of the nature of the programs implemented, the relative levels of efforts they required, techniques used to evaluate them, the results of those evaluation efforts, syntheses of the results and implications of the findings for policing. With this information, the authors hope that readers will be better prepared to decide which of the longer, more specific reports merit closer attention.

I. THE TASK FORCE PLANNING PROCESS

In both Houston and Newark, the program planning process faced two constraints. Specifically, programs had to be: (1) carried out within the one-year time limit imposed by the National Institute of Justice, and (2) supported entirely by the departments, since no special funding was available for the programs themselves.

The planning processes differed somewhat in the two cities. In Houston, one patrol officer from each of the four participating police districts was assigned full time for two months to a planning task force headed by a sergeant from the Planning and Research Division. A civilian member of the Planning and Research Division also served on the task force. During this period, task force members examined studies concerning fear of crime, met regularly with Police Foundation staff members to discuss past research related to the project, and visited other cities to examine projects that attempted to reduce fear.

By April of 1983, the task force had formulated a set of strategies which, they believed, could be implemented effectively in Houston. The task force believed that these strategies had the potential to reduce citizen fear and produce other desired effects as well. During April and May, the plan was reviewed and approved by the department's director of Planning and Research and, finally, by the chief of police.

In Newark, the task force included several members of the police department as well as representatives of the mayor's office, the Board of Education, the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts, the Essex County Courts, the Newark Municipal Courts, the Essex County Probation Department, and the Graduate School of Criminal Justice of Rutgers University. The task force met once or twice weekly for a month to discuss the general problem of fear, then divided into several committees to consider specific program possibilities. In April of 1983, the committees submitted lists of approved programs to the task force and the police director for approval.

Finally, the programs proposed by both cities were reviewed and approved by a panel of consultants assembled by the Police Foundation and by the director of the National Institute of Justice.

To assure that the planning process had access to the latest, most useful information, the Police Foundation provided both departments with technical assistance throughout the planning stages of the project. Foundation staff assisted the departments in locating potentially relevant projects operating in other cities, accumulated research on fear and its causes, arranged for members of the task forces to visit other departments, and identified consultants to assist the departments in program planning and implementation.

II. THE PROGRAMS

HOUSTON

The Houston Task Force developed several strategies to foster a sense that Houston police officers are available to the public, and that they care about individuals and neighborhood problems. Some of the strategies were also intended to encourage citizen involvement with the police and to increase participation in community affairs. The strategies included community organizing, contacting of citizens by police officers, a police-community newsletter, recontacts with crime victims, and a police-community storefront office.

Police-Community Newsletter

The Houston newsletter, titled Community Policing Exchange, was designed to test the effects of mailing to households a monthly newsletter produced by the police. One version of the newsletter was also designed to test the effects of providing local recorded crime data as an insert. The basis newsletter contained information about the police department, crime prevention tips, stories about police and citizens working together to prevent crimes, and "good news" stories about crimes that had been prevented or solved in the neighborhood. In addition, the newsletter contained a regular column written by Chief of Police Lee P. Brown. The newsletter was published for five months, from November 1983 through March 1984.

Another version of the newsletter with the same basic material but also containing a printed map of the neighborhood and a list of crimes that had occurred there since the previous newsletter was also published and sent to a different set of residents. The crime information included the type of crime committed, the date of occurrence, the street and block number in which it happened, and whether it occurred during daylight, evening, or nighttime hours.

Community Organizing Response Team

The Community Organizing Response Team (CORT), implemented between October 1983 and May 1984, attempted to create a community organization in a neighborhood where none had existed. The purpose was to create a sense of community in the area, and to identify a group of residents who would work regularly with the police to define and solve neighborhood problems. The strategy began when CORT officers conducted a door-to-door survey in the target neighborhood. They asked approximately 300 residents whether there were problems they felt merited police attention, and whether they, or any area residents they knew, might be willing to host small meetings of neighbors and police in their homes.

Thirteen neighbor-police meetings were held, each attended by 20 to 60 people. From these meetings, the CORT group identified approximately 12 people who offered to meet each month with the district captain to discuss community problems and devise solutions involving both the police and residents. This neighborhood task force began meeting in November. The task force elected officers in January, and by May had assumed full responsibility for organizing the neighbor meetings and conducting their monthly sessions.

Programs included conducting a neighborhood clean-up campaign, identifying "safe houses" where children could go for assistance, holding a drug information seminar, and encouraging the marking of household property.

Citizen Contact Patrol

This strategy was designed to enable patrol officers in one neighborhood to become more familiar with residents of and employees working in that area, to learn about their

perceptions of neighborhood problems, and to devise methods to reduce those problems. Working under a "beat integrity" system, the officer assigned to the neighborhood spent his or her entire shift in only that area. During that time, the officer would respond to the neighborhood calls for service and, in addition, would make proactive contacts at residences and businesses. The officer introduced him or herself, explained the purpose of the contact, and asked the contacted person whether there were any neighborhood problems that the police should know about. The officer then left a business card with his or her name and the station telephone number where the officer could be reached. The problems mentioned, along with information about the contacted person, were recorded on a card, which was filed at the district station. Officers worked individually to solve the identified problems.

Between September 1983 and June 1984, officers made approximately 500 contacts, representing about 14 percent of the population in 37 percent of the occupied housing units.

Police Community Station

The Police Community Station was another strategy designed to reduce the physical and psychological distance between Houston police and residents of one neighborhood. A small police office was established in a five-unit, one-story commercial complex. The office was furnished and physically organized to make it attractive to walk-in traffic from the neighborhood. The rent was paid by a grant from the Criminal Justice Division of the governor's office. Between November 1983 and June 1984, the Police Community Station was open from 10:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. during the week and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

The station was staffed by two patrol officers, on both the day and evening shifts, as well as a civilian coordinator and three police aides. Although freed from the responsibility of responding to calls for service, station officers patrolled the neighborhood frequently and responded to calls while patrolling and when residents called the station directly. The officers' primary responsibility, however, was to design and implement storefront programs and be available when citizens came to the station seeking help or information.

Programs included monthly neighborhood meetings, a school program aimed at reducing truancy, a fingerprinting program to provide for identification of children, a monthly walk-in blood pressure screening program, a program for reducing park vandalism and increasing citizen use of the local park, a ride-along program, and the distribution of a police-produced community newsletter.

Recontacting Victims

This strategy was designed to assist crime victims and demonstrate that the police cared about their plight. In one area of the city, a team of police officers made telephone contact with recent crime victims. The police asked the victims whether they had any problems with which the police might be able to help, and whether they had any more information to give the police about their cases. If the victim mentioned any problems, the officer would, when possible, refer the person to an agency for appropriate assistance. If the victim needed information about the case for insurance purposes, the officer would provide the necessary information. Additionally, victims were mailed a crime prevention information packet if they wished to receive one.

Prior to recontacting the victim, officers studied the case report and entered relevant information about the victim and the crime on a contact form. This form was used later to record information during the conversation. Victims who could not be reached by telephone were sent a letter explaining that the police would like to talk to them about their victimization, and asking them to call the Victim Recontact officers.

Because of repeated delays in the flow of incident reports from the district station to the recontact office, most victims were not contacted soon after the victimization. Eighty-two

percent were contacted within one month of the crime, 45 percent within two weeks, and only 15 percent within one week of the crime. Altogether, 327 victims were contacted by the program from September 1983 through April 1984.

NEWARK

The Newark task force developed strategies to increase the exchange of information as well as the quantity and quality of interactions between police and the public, and to reduce social disorder and physical deterioration. Police strategies included door-to-door visits, a newsletter, and a neighborhood community service center. In addition, a program to reduce the social and physical “signs of crime” was developed.

Police-Community Newsletter

The Newark newsletter, *Act I* (an acronym for “Attack Crime Together”), was designed to test the effects of a monthly newsletter produced by the police and mailed to residents. Another version was also designed to test the effects of publicizing local crime data and sent to another set of residents. Published from October 1983 through March 1984, the newsletter contained a mix of general and specific local items. General items included crime prevention and other safety tips meant to provide readers with a sense that there were precautionary measures that could be employed to increase personal, household, and neighborhood security. In addition, the newsletter contained a regular column titled, “From the Desk of the Police Director,” written by Director Hubert Williams.

Specific items included information about local neighborhood events, and meetings and profiles of officers who worked in the area. As in Houston, information was included about crimes that had been prevented or solved, or other problems that had been successfully resolved because of efforts by the police and citizens. Local area crime statistics were included in one version of the Newark newsletter as a one-page insert. This insert included a map identifying the boundary areas of the target neighborhood; a list of the Part I crimes which had occurred the previous month; dates of the crimes; and their approximate locations.

Reducing the “Signs of Crime”

Two separate but coordinated program elements were developed to reduce social disorder and physical deterioration—“signs of crime”—identified by previous research as being associated with heightened fear. The first effort, consisting of random intensified enforcement and order maintenance operations in the program area, was implemented by the Directed Patrol Task Force. The second effort was a clean-up program aimed at reducing physical deterioration.

Directed Patrol Task Force. Twenty-four patrol officers were selected by precinct commanders as best qualified to conduct the enforcement and order maintenance operations. These officers received three days of training on the legal, tactical, and community relations aspects of such operations. From April through August 1983, several demonstration operations were carried out in areas of the city not involved in the test to refine the techniques required for conducting such activities without disrupting community relations.

To relieve these officers of their regular assignments, a pool of 157 non-patrol officers was established. Each officer was expected to replace a task force officer by spending one eight-hour tour of duty per month in a patrol car.

This task force engaged exclusively in the following operations:

- Foot patrol, to enforce laws and maintain order on sidewalks and street corners;
- Radar checks, to enforce speeding laws on the streets;
- Bus checks, to enforce ordinances and maintain order aboard public buses;

- Enforcement of the state disorderly conduct laws, to reduce the amount of loitering and disruptive behavior on corners and sidewalks; and
- Road checks, to identify drivers without proper licenses or under the influence of alcohol, to detect stolen automobiles, and to apprehend wanted offenders.

These operations were conducted at least three times each week (Monday through Friday), based on a random assignment schedule to minimize predictability. Altogether, the Directed Patrol Task Force spent slightly over 2,500 hours in this program area. During this time they conducted 188 different operations on 82 different days. Over 70 percent of these hours were spent on foot patrol, about 15 percent conducting radar checks, 7.5 percent on bus checks, 4 percent on the enforcement of disorderly conduct laws, and 3 percent on conducting road checks. Brief descriptions of the activities involved in each component are presented below.

Foot Patrol. On a typical evening, eight pairs of two officers walked through the program area for one to four hours. During that time, the officers engaged in a wide variety of activities, including casual conversations with area residents and merchants, dispersing unruly crowds, ticketing illegally parked cars, and responding to calls for assistance. The sergeant in charge continuously drove through the area, observing the officers on foot, stopping to discuss developments, and providing instructions.

Radar Checks. These operations were conducted on major streets by two officers sitting in a marked patrol vehicle equipped with a radar device. When a vehicle was found to be exceeding the legal speed limit, the police vehicle, with lights flashing, would quickly pursue the violator and require it to pull to the side of the road. The officers would then approach the vehicle, request the driver's license and vehicle registration and, if no acceptable excuse for the excessive speed was provided, issue a ticket to the violator. In addition to issuing summonses to violators of speed laws, the officers checked the credentials of the drivers and determined whether the driver had been driving while under the influence of alcohol and whether the car had been reported stolen.

Bus Checks. As a result of repeated complaints from citizens, the Directed Patrol Task Force initiated a program to reduce disorderly behavior on public buses. On a typical operation, two officers would signal a bus driver to pull to the side of the road. One officer would enter the bus by the rear exit, the other through the front door. The officer at the front would then announce that they were there to remind passengers that state laws prohibit smoking, drinking, gambling, and playing loud music while riding a bus. Passengers violating an ordinance were advised to stop immediately. Otherwise, they were evicted from the bus.

After the message was delivered and offenders evicted, the officers answered questions from passengers and requested the bus driver to sign a form indicating the time and place of the inspection. These forms were submitted to the supervisor of the Directed Patrol Task Force to document the unit's activities.

Disorderly Conduct Enforcement. The disorderly conduct enforcement component was designed to reduce street disorder by rigorous enforcement of the state disorderly conduct laws. This operation was carried out in three stages. First, any group of four or more persons which "congregated to create a public hazard" (in the words of the State statute) was notified by officers in a marked police car that the group was in violation of the law and required to disperse. Second, a few minutes after this notice was given, officers in a police van appeared and, assisted by as many other officers as necessary, took to the local precinct all persons who failed to heed the request to disperse. Finally, those detained were processed, screened for existing warrants, and charged. It was expected that continual enforcement of this law would eventually lead to a reduction in the number of disorderly groups lingering in public places.

Road Checks. Road checks were established to identify drivers without licenses or under the influence of alcohol, to determine if automobiles had been stolen, and to ascertain if

there were any outstanding arrest warrants for those stopped. In accordance with legal precedents, it was decided that, as a general rule, every fifth vehicle would be stopped. If traffic was sparse, the sampling interval was reduced; if the flow was heaving, the interval was increased.

The motorist would first become aware of the operation by the presence of a sign indicating, "Newark Police Road Check in Effect" and a police vehicle with flashing lights on its roof. Reflective cones or, at night, flares would designate the paths through which traffic would flow. To document compliance with the selection procedure, an officer recorded the license number of every vehicle passing through the checkpoint, designated which ones were to be stopped and, in certain instances, notified the inspecting officers of suspicious behavior by the occupants of particular cars. At this point, selected drivers were requested to pull off the road; all others were allowed to proceed.

The selected motorists were then approached by two officers who asked for their driver's license, vehicle registration certificate, and insurance card. If all was in order, the driver was allowed to drive on. In most instances, the delay required three to five minutes. In cases in which licenses had expired, registration or insurance certificates were not in order, or drivers acted suspiciously or appeared to be under the influence of alcohol, further inquiries were made. If record checks and further discussions with the driver could resolve all questions, the vehicle was allowed to pass through the checkpoint, requiring a total delay of perhaps ten minutes. In those cases where violations were found, summonses were issued or arrests made.

Clean Up. The second effort, directed at reducing signs of physical deterioration, had two components: an intensification of city services, and a revision of the juvenile judicial sentencing process to allow youths to perform community service work by cleaning up the program area.

Intensification of City Services. The city government committed itself to intensifying its efforts to demolish previously abandoned and condemned buildings; clean up lots designated to have high priority by the police department; and repair streets, improve lighting, and maintain garbage collection in the area. The personnel necessary for this effort were to be from either existing city agencies or private contractors hired by the city to accomplish the tasks.

Juvenile Judicial Sentencing. The second component of the clean-up program involved creating a legal mechanism to assign juveniles arrested for minor acts of delinquency or other minor offenses to appear before a Juvenile Conference Committee (JCC). Here, they were given the option of performing community service activities or appearing before a juvenile court judge for disposition of their case. The committee consisted of 15 representatives of the business community, the clergy, educational institutions, and area residents. Members were selected by the police and probation departments and approved by the presiding judge of the Domestic Relations Court.

At a typical meeting of the Juvenile Conference Committee, the accused youths, aged 13 to 18, were given an opportunity to respond to the charges against them. Most cases involved relatively minor crimes such as possession of marijuana or receiving stolen property, although some dealt with charges of simple assault, shoplifting, and burglary. In the company of at least one of their parents, each youth was given a chance to explain the circumstances of his/her arrest. If the youth accepted culpability and was willing, he/she was considered for inclusion in the community work service program. Depending on the seriousness of the offense, the JCC would assign the youth to serve a designated number of hours of such service.

On the first day of such service, youths were given a physical examination, received training, and were organized into work teams. These teams cut grass, removed trash and debris, and performed other tasks under the supervision of a police officer.

A total of 16 of the 20 locations identified as requiring attention were cleaned up. Of these 16, the city cleaned up eight, youths cleaned up five, and adult residents cleaned up three.

Coordinated Community Policing

The Coordinated Community Policing program was designed to address several major causes of fear—lack of information; sense of distance between ordinary citizens and the police; social disorder; and physical deterioration. This, in fact, tested the effectiveness of implementing, in an integrated fashion, *all* Newark programs in one area. The following five program components were developed to address these problems:

- A neighborhood community police center.
- A directed police-citizen contact program.
- A neighborhood police newsletter.
- Intensified law enforcement and order maintenance.
- Neighborhood clean up.

Police Community Service Center. Task force members believed that a local police community service center (a “storefront” office) within an area would provide an important mechanism for reducing the distance between police and citizens. After visiting such centers in other cities and consulting with scholars and practitioners familiar with their operations, the task force established a “storefront” in vacant office space (rented at \$325 per month) on the program area’s major thoroughfare.

The center was to provide the following services:

- Walk-in reporting of crimes.
- Reporting of less serious crimes by telephone.
- Distribution of crime prevention and Operation I.D. information.
- Referral of problems to other city and community agencies.
- Dissemination of newsletters.
- Recruitment for and holding of meetings of block watch and other community organizations.
- Coordination for door-to-door activities.
- Provision of space for police officers to meet, fill out reports, and consume meals.

The center was officially opened on September 1, 1983. Hours of operation were from 12 noon until 10 p.m., Monday through Saturday. In November 1983, the center hours were expanded to 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays. Staffing consisted of one sergeant, two police officers, and, when available, members of the auxiliary police (civilians with an interest in providing assistance to the police). Organizationally, the center was a subunit of the district within which it was located. As a result, the sergeant in charge of the center reported to the commander of the West District.

On a typical day, officers at the storefront office would be visited by neighborhood residents who would come with information about local events, questions about police-related matters, or simply to talk. Occasionally, a citizen would report a crime directly to the storefront officers. Children would often stop by just to visit. The storefront sergeant frequently met with officers who had conducted door-to-door

interviews with area residents to determine the types of problems being mentioned most often and to develop strategies to deal with them. One or two evenings per week, local groups—ranging from block club organizations to a Boy Scout troop organized by the storefront officers—held meetings on the storefront premises.

Directed Police-Citizen Contacts. To provide a mechanism for creating positive contacts between police officers and citizens, the sergeant in charge of the service center assigned police officers to visit program area residents. Such visits, in addition to establishing communications with citizens, were designed to:

- Elicit information about the nature and basis of citizens' fears and possible means of combating them.
- Provide follow-up assistance, information, and referral advice.
- Encourage citizens to become involved in block watch and other neighborhood groups.
- Distribute crime prevention information.
- Distribution the neighborhood police newsletter.
- Alert residents to the existence of the local Police Community Service Center.

Officer training was provided by a representative from the Baltimore County, MD, Police Department who had supervised a similar program. Visits to homes were made primarily by officers normally assigned to the program area, assisted by officers specifically assigned by the precinct commander. Contacts were made between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., excluding the 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. dinner hour.

At each home, the visiting officers, using an open-ended questionnaire, asked one representative of the household the following questions:

- What are the biggest problems in the neighborhood?
- Which are the three most serious problems?
- For each of those three,
 - (a) how has it affected the household?
 - (b) what are the causes?
 - (c) what should be done to solve it?

Answers to each of these questions were written on the questionnaire along with any comments or recommendations the officer(s) might have. The typical interview lasted seven to ten minutes. Citizens were often puzzled at first about why the police had initiated contact without a complaint being filed. This confusion and wariness usually disappeared quickly, however. Many citizens eventually offered coffee to the officers and invited them to sit down, frequently seeking to talk at greater length.

The completed form was then submitted to the service center sergeant. After reviewing several forms from the same area to identify patterns, the sergeant conferred with the officers filing the reports to determine appropriate responses. In this capacity, the sergeant coordinated several program components. If the identified problem concerned matters that could be addressed by existing police units, the sergeant enlisted the assistance of those units in resolving the problem. If the response required involvement by the Directed Patrol Task Force, the sergeant contacted the task force commander. If the problems concerned other city agencies, the sergeant would notify those agencies either directly or with the assistance of the program's assistant

coordinator. The sergeant was then responsible for ensuring that effective steps were taken to address the problem(s), and that the citizen involved was informed of the action(s) taken.

Initial contacts began on September 1, 1983, and continued until June 30, 1984. Each household in the program area was listed, given a unique identification number, and entered in a master log. Using this log, the sergeant assigned addresses to individual officers. The status of each assignment was recorded both in the master log and on a detailed map of the area posted on the wall of the service center.

From September 1983 through June 1984, 790 interviews were completed, representing about 52 percent of the area's occupied units. The frequently mentioned problems were juveniles (22.3 percent), burglary (13.4 percent), auto theft or damage (11.1 percent) and personal crime (5.6 percent).

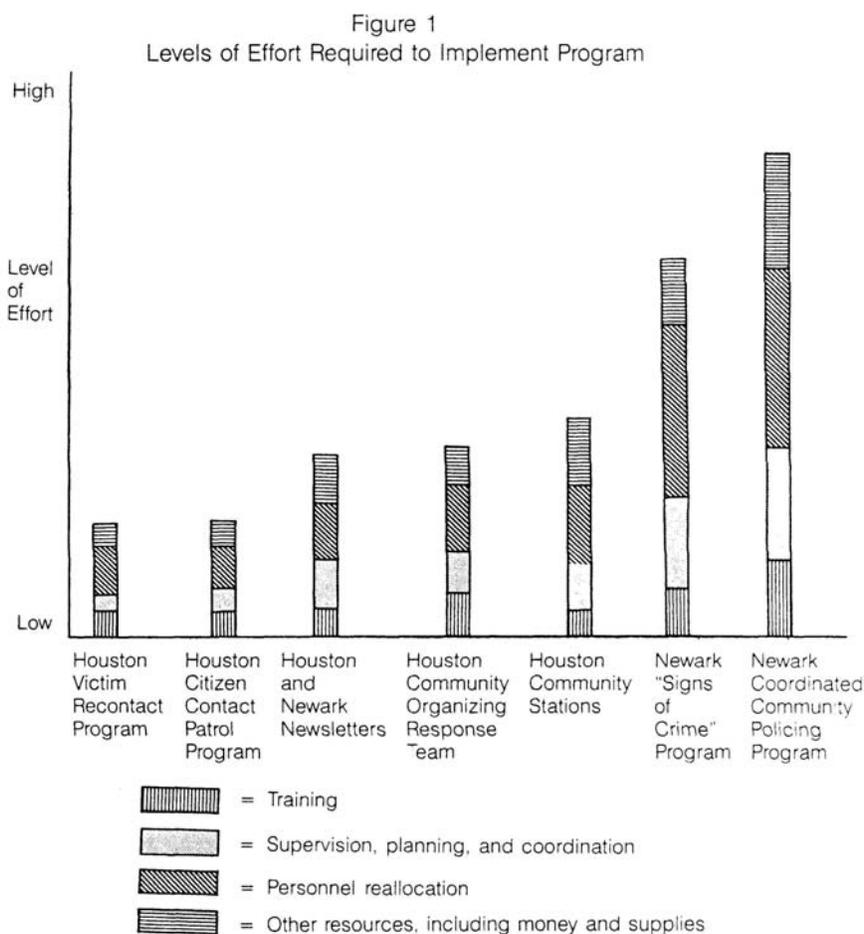
Neighborhood Police Newsletter. The newsletter distributed by this program was similar to that described earlier, except that no local crime inserts were included. The first newsletter was distributed in mid-October of 1983, and thereafter mid-month in November and December of 1983, and January, February, and March of 1984. Between 1,000 and 1,500 copies were distributed each month to block and tenant associations, retail stores, apartment buildings, banks, grocery stores, and other locations. Distribution was carried out by members of the community service center staff, officers conducting directed police-citizen contacts, auxiliary police, and neighborhood volunteers. Copies were also available at the center itself.

Intensified Law Enforcement and Order Maintenance. The activities described under the "Signs of Crime" program were also carried out by the same Directed Patrol Task Force as part of the Coordinated Community Policing program. Altogether, task force members spent slightly over 2,400 officer hours in this program area, during which time they conducted 182 different operations on 73 different days. About 59 percent of these hours were spent on foot patrol, about 16 percent were spent conducting radar checks, 12 percent were spent on bus checks, 11 percent on road checks, and 2 percent on the enforcement of disorderly behavior laws.

Neighborhood Clean Up. The same clean-up activities described above were conducted under the auspices of this program. Through the efforts of both components of the clean-up program, three of the six locations requiring clean up actually received it during the ten-month implementation period.

III. LEVELS OF EFFORT REQUIRED

Figure 1 presents a schematic representation of the various levels of effort required to implement the seven programs. "Other resources" noted in the figure includes contributions from all outside funding sources. These figures represent general estimates not precise dollar amounts, and are based on available records and observations by full-time observers and other Police Foundation staff. As Figure 1 indicates, Houston programs generally required less effort than did Newark programs. The least demanding program was the Houston Citizen Contact Patrol effort. The Newark Coordinating Community Police program, on the other hand, required by far the greatest level of effort.



IV. EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Site Selection

Within each city, neighborhoods were selected as program areas so as to be as similar to each other as possible. In addition, one area in each city matched to the others on several criteria, was selected as the comparison area in which no new police programs were to be implemented. Site selection was based on data from the 1980 Census, recorded crime data, observations of numerous potential sites, and extensive discussions with police crime analysts and local district commanders. In each city, areas were selected which appeared to have problems of disorder, fear, and crime sufficient to justify special attention but not so great as to be unable to be significantly affected within one year.

In both cities, four program areas and one comparison area were selected. In Newark, each area contained approximately 4,500 residents, most of whom were black, low- to middle-income levels. Each area consisted of about 18 square blocks and contained about 1,500 units. In Houston, the areas were racially mixed, low- to middle-income, containing an average of about 5,000 persons living in approximately 2,300 units. Each Houston area was approximately one square mile in size.

Data Collection

In all cases, primary measures of program impact were provided by interviews of residents in the program and comparison conditions. (For some programs, small numbers of interviews with representatives of non-residential establishments were also conducted. The results of those interviews, although not discussed here, are available in the summary and technical reports for each program.) The surveys provided measures of each of the following:

- Recalled Program Exposure
- Perceived Area Social Disorder Problems
- Perceived Area Physical Deterioration Problems
- Fear of Personal Victimization in Area
- Worry About Property Crime Victimization in Area
- Perceived Area Property Crime Problems
- Perceived Area Personal Crime Problems
- Victimization
- Evaluations of Police Service and Aggressiveness
- Defensive Behaviors to Avoid Personal Crime
- Household Crime Prevention Efforts
- Satisfaction with Area

In Newark, recorded crime data for Part I crimes were also collected for program and comparison areas, by month, from January 1980 through September 1984.

Evaluation Designs

Each strategy tested in Houston and Newark was to be evaluated as rigorously as possible. Three basic evaluation designs were used to measure the effects of the various programs.

Victim Recontact Evaluation Design. To test the effects of the Houston victim recontact program on victims' fear of crime, their assessment of police performance, and other potential program consequences, an experimental design was used in which crime victims were selected on a random basis to be called by a police officer or assigned to a noncontacted control group.

Randomization into treatment and control categories helped equate these groups of victims on such theoretically important factors as sex, race, and type of victimization.

Victims assigned to each of the two experimental conditions were screened to exclude (1) those who were not Houston residents; (2) those who were under the age of 13; and (3) those who were victims of rape, fraud, or commercial crimes. This screening procedure yielded 235 victims who were recontacted and 250 who were not. Of these 485, evaluation staff interviewed 175 and 176 respectively.

Police Community Newsletter Evaluation Design. Testing the police-community newsletters involved a more complicated approach. The evaluation was designed to measure the effect of distributing two types of police-community newsletters to selected households and, after this distribution had continued for approximately six months, interviewing one representative from each household sent newsletters, as well as from households not sent newsletters.

This does not, therefore, represent a test of the effects of the newsletters themselves, since not all persons interviewed could be expected to have read the newsletters sent to their homes. Such a test could only be possible under conditions where the newsletter was given directly to persons who would be closely monitored. A test of that type, however, would not simulate the “real world” conditions under which printed materials are actually distributed.

The strength of this test, then, is that it evaluates a delivery mechanism that, if found effective, could be adopted easily and inexpensively. In both Houston and Newark, one neighborhood area was designated as the experimental field test site. In each area, two versions of the newsletter were tested. One version was the newsletter with an insert showing local crime statistics for the past month. The second version did not contain a local crime statistics insert.

In each program area, households were randomly assigned to one of three experimental categories: the two treatment conditions (represented by each version of the newsletter) and the control condition represented by households that were not mailed the newsletter.

Two different samples were used to measure the effects of distributing the newsletters. In one, a panel sample of approximately 130 people was to be interviewed both before and about six months after distribution began. By examining the same people over time, the effects of extraneous factors not associated with the experiment can be minimized, increasing the design’s internal validity. This strength can be further enhanced by using pre-distribution scores as statistical controls when analyzing post-distribution scores. However, some panel members are not reinterviewed during the post-distribution surveys. This panel attrition makes it inappropriate to generalize the results to the program area’s entire population. In addition, it is possible that interviewing persons before newsletter distribution begins may sensitize those respondents to the experimental treatment they are about to receive.

In the second design, about 180 persons were to be interviewed only approximately six months after newsletter distribution began. This post-test-only sample avoids the potential sensitization that the initial interview may create. In addition, it does not have the attrition problem inherent in the panel design. The disadvantage of a post-test-only design, however, is that it is not possible to use the pre-distribution scores as controls for analyzing post-distribution scores.

Area-Wide Evaluation Designs. Quasi-experimental designs were used to evaluate area-wide strategies. In each case, these designs involved comparing a treatment area to a comparison area. The fundamental analysis involved the comparison of attitudinal measures collected before (Wave 1) and several months after the introduction of the program (Wave 2).

To determine program consequences on residents, Wave 1 and Wave 2 survey data were analyzed from two different types of samples. The first was a cross-sectional sample, which

included all respondents in the pre- and post-intervention surveys. The number of respondents in each area ranged from approximately 360 to 760 per wave, depending on the programs involved. The average number in any area at one wave was slightly less than 460. Because respondents involved in the cross-sectional sample were selected at both Wave 1 and Wave 2 by a carefully randomized process, these data can be analyzed to provide the best estimate of the effects of the program on the neighborhood as a whole. But because the results of the first and second waves of the survey are derived from interviewing two different sets of people, any changes between the two waves may be attributable to the differences between those sets, not to the fact that the same people changed over time.

The second type of sample was a panel, which was composed of a subset of all respondents in the Wave 1 survey who could be reinterviewed at Wave 2. The number of respondents in each area in these panel samples ranged from 183 to 315, with an average of 250 per area. Analyzing the data in this way allows inferences to be made about the effects of the programs on the same persons over time. Such analyses allow pre-intervention scores to be used as statistical controls in the analysis of outcome measures, a technique that is not possible for the analysis of the cross-sectional samples. Inevitably, however, certain people will not be reinterviewed successfully. To the degree that the persons interviewed at both times differ notably from the general population, the panel results are not representative of the area as a whole.

Analysis

Various types of analyses were conducted:

1. Recalled program awareness and contact in both the program and comparison areas were examined to determine the extent to which respondents recalled different program components. In addition, differences in awareness across population subgroups were investigated.
2. To provide an indication of the general levels and changes demonstrated by the various survey measures in both the program and comparison areas, simple comparisons between certain means, percentages, and distributions at Waves 1 and 2 were examined.
3. To provide indicators of the possible program impact on residential respondents, two different types of regression analysis¹ were conducted.
 - a. An analysis of the pooled cross-sectional data to measure program impact at the area level. In this analysis, eighteen different demographic characteristics of the respondents were statistically controlled, allowing for tests of the differences between the two types of areas.
 - b. An analysis of the panel data in which, in addition to demographic characteristics, Wave 1 outcome measures were also controlled.
4. Among members of the panel sample in the program area, comparisons of outcome measures were made between those who recalled being exposed to the program and those who did not.
5. To test for possible subgroup-specific program effects, the responses of members of the panel samples were subjected to treatment-covariate interaction analysis.²
6. In Newark, recorded crime data were subjected to interrupted time series analysis to determine whether trends or levels were affected by program implementation.³

¹ Regression analysis is a statistical technique that predicts one outcome (or dependent) measure by a “best-fitting” linear combination of several predictor (or independent) measures.

² Treatment-covariate interaction analysis is a statistical technique that tests whether certain effects are different in size or direction across members of different subgroups.

Details of evaluation designs, survey methodology, and data analysis are available in the technical reports for each strategy and also in a methodology report for the entire project.

³ Such analyses were not possible for data gathered from Houston because of recent changes in the department's recording procedures.

V. EFFECTS

The results of the regression analysis of the cross-sectional and panel data are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. The various programs are listed along the left side of both tables; the major goals sought are arranged along the top.⁴ Those goals achieved at a level of statistical significance of .05 or less are indicated with an “x”.⁵ Those not achieved are indicated by a blank.

In general, although the newsletter, victim recontact, and “signs of crime” programs achieved none of the measured goals, the other programs were found to be successful in a number of different ways. Although many similar effects were found in both types of analyses, certain effects were significant in one type and not in the other. These differences may derive from a number of sources, including the fact the forms of analysis used for the two data sets were not identical, that there may have been differential receptivity to the program on the part of respondents in the two types of samples, or that panel respondents may have been affected by being interviewed both before and during implementation of the programs.

Summaries of the results of the various types of analyses of each program are presented below

⁴ Certain goals, such as altering perceptions of police aggressiveness, defensive behaviors against crime, and victimization, were peripheral to these programs and are excluded from the tables, although they are discussed in the text.

⁵ In standard research practice, only those findings with a statistical significance of .05 or less, that is, those that could not have been expected to occur more than five percent of the time by chance, are considered convincing enough to present as conclusive. We have followed that practice here.

Table 1
Effects of Fear Reduction Programs
(Cross-Sectional Results)
PRIMARY GOALS

Programs	Reduce Perceived Area Physical Deterioration	Reduce Perceived Area Social Disorder	Reduce Fear of Personal Victimization	Reduce Worry About Property Crime	Reduce Perceived Area Personal Crime	Reduce Perceived Area Property Crime	Improve Evaluation of Police	Increase Satisfaction with Area
Houston Newsletters with and without Statistics	n.a.	n.a.						
Newark Newsletters with and without Statistics	n.a.	n.a.						
Houston Victim Recontact Program	n.a.	n.a.						
Houston Police Community Station	n.a.	x	x		x	x		
Houston Citizen Contact Patrol	n.a.	x	x		x	x		x
Houston Community Organizing Response Team	n.a.	x					x	
Newark "Signs of Crime" Program								
Newark Coordinated Community Policing		x		x		x	x	

x = Desired goal achieved; significant at .05 level

n.a. = Not applicable

Table 2
Effects of Fear Reduction Programs
(Panel Results)
PRIMARY GOALS

Programs	Reduce Perceived Area Physical Deterioration	Reduce Perceived Area Social Disorder	Reduce Fear of Personal Victimization	Reduce Worry About Property Crime	Reduce Perceived Area Personal Crime	Reduce Perceived Area Property Crime	Improve Evaluation of Police	Increase Satisfaction with Area
Houston Newsletters with and without Statistics	n.a.	n.a.						
Newark Newsletters with and without Statistics	n.a.	n.a.						
Houston Victim Recontact Program	n.a.	n.a.						
Houston Police Community Station	n.a.		x		x			
Houston Citizen Contact Patrol	n.a.	x					x	x
Houston Community Organizing Response Team	n.a.	x			x	x	x	
Newark "Signs of Crime" Program								
Newark Coordinated Community Policing		x	x	x		x	x	x

x = Desired goal achieved; significant at .05 level
n.a. = Not applicable

Police-Community Newsletter: Houston and Newark

The evaluation showed that although people appreciated receiving the newsletters and wanted to continue to do so, neither version of the newsletter, in either city, had significant effects on the desired outcomes. This is partly attributable to the fact that relatively few residents, especially those with less than a high school education, recall reading the newsletters.

Community Organizing Response Team: Houston

The regression analyses of both the cross-sectional and pane data indicate that the program was associated with a significant reduction in the level of perceived social disorder in the area and with a significant improvement in the evaluation of police service. In the panel analyses only, there were significant reductions in the levels of perceived personal and property crime in the area. One unanticipated effect was discovered in the cross-sectional analyses, in which a significant increase in perceived police aggressiveness was discovered among program area residents.

Analyses of possible differential program effects on subgroups of panel respondents found that blacks experienced the programs' benefits to a lesser degree than whites or Hispanics. Further analyses show that blacks were less likely to recall a police officer coming to their door or otherwise being aware of the program, suggesting it was less successful in reaching out to blacks.

Within the program area, analyses of the effects of recalled exposure to various program components found these statistically significant results:

- The program had a more desirable association with evaluations of police service among those who recalled that an officer had come to their door than it did for others.
- The program had a more desirable association with evaluations of police service and household crime prevention measures for residents who reported awareness of community meetings than it did for others.
- The program had a more desirable association with evaluations of police service and personal victimization among those persons who recalled having seen an officer in the area during the last day than for those who did not.

Citizen Contact Patrol: Houston

In both the cross-sectional and panel regression analyses, the program was associated with significant reductions in levels of perceived social disorder in the area, increased satisfaction with the neighborhood, and reduced property victimization. In the cross-sectional analyses only, significant reductions in the fear of personal victimization as well as reductions in levels of perceived personal and property crime and police aggressiveness in the area were found. In the panel analysis, a significant improvement in evaluations of police service was indicated.

Analyses of possible differential program effects on subgroups of panel respondents disclosed that black respondents and those who rent their home tend not to benefit from this program. Both blacks and renters (95 percent of blacks were renters and 39 percent of renters were black) were significantly less likely than whites and homeowners to report awareness of various program elements. These results again suggest that the program was not as successful in contacting such persons.

Within the program area, analyses of the effects of recalled exposure to various program components displayed these statistically significant results:

- For respondents who reported that an officer had come to their door, the program had a more desirable association with evaluations of police service, satisfaction with the area, and perceived personal and property crime problems in the area.
- The program had a more desirable association with evaluations of police service, satisfaction with the neighborhood, and fear of personal victimization in the area for those who recalled seeing an officer in the area in the past 24 hours.

Police Community Station: Houston

Both the cross-sectional and panel regression analyses found that the program was associated with significant reductions in fear of personal victimization and in the level of perceived personal crime in the area. In the cross-sectional analyses only, significant reductions in levels of perceived social disorder and perceived property crime in the area were achieved. The cross-sectional analysis also found that program area residents took significantly fewer defensive actions to protect themselves from crime.

Analyses of possible differential program effects on subgroups of panel respondents found that blacks and renters demonstrated few of the program's benefits. This may be because both blacks and renters recalled much lower levels of program exposure than did other subgroups, suggesting that the program was less successful in making contact with such persons.

Within the program area, analyses of the effects of recalled exposure to various program components found two statistically significant results:

The program had a more desirable association with the evaluations of police service for respondents who reported being aware of the community station than it did for persons who did not report such awareness.

For persons who recalled having seen a police officer in the area in the previous 24 hours, the program was more desirably associated with levels of fear of victimization, perceptions of area personal crime problems and social disorder problems, satisfaction with the area, and evaluations of police service than it was among those who had not seen an officer.

Recontacting Victims: Houston

Recontacting victims had only one statistically significant overall effect: victims who were recontacted perceived more personal crime in the area than did victims who were not contacted. Further analysis revealed that Hispanic and Asian victims who were recontacted demonstrated significantly higher levels of fear of crime and of perceived area crime. In addition, such persons were significantly more likely to report taking defensive steps to protect themselves from crime. Such results may be due to the fact that those with a poor grasp of English could not clearly understand the police officer calling them.

Reducing the "Signs of Crime": Newark

Tables 1 and 2 indicate that the program did not achieve any of its primary goals. Two other effects concerning primary goals were significant only among the cross-sectional analyses. Specifically, residents of the program area:

- Indicated higher levels of perceived area personal crime problems.
- Demonstrated lower levels of satisfaction with the area.

The analysis of the panel data revealed only one significant effect other than that pertaining to household crime prevention efforts: residents of the program area perceived more physical deterioration problems than did those living in the comparison area.

Analyses of possible differential effects on subgroups of panel respondents revealed that the program's limited positive effectiveness were even smaller for those who had previously been

victims of crime, perhaps because their attitudes were more firmly grounded in personal experience. The results with respect to residents of single family homes differed in certain cases from those of other types of housing. But no consistent pattern was discovered among these results.

Within the program area panel sample, analyses of the effects of recalled exposure to various program components produced these statistically significant results:

- The program had a more desirable association with fear of personal victimization among those who recalled having seen or heard of foot patrol in the area than among those who did not.
- The program had a more desirable association with evaluations of police service in the area among those respondents who recalled having seen or heard about bus checks than among those who did not.
- The program had a more desirable association with evaluations of police service in the area and perceived police aggressiveness among respondents who said they had seen or heard of police operations to remove groups of loiterers from the streets than among others.
- The program had a more undesirable association with perceived social disorder problems among those who recalled exposure to road checks than among those who did not.
- The program had a more desirable association with satisfaction with the neighborhood among those who recalled local physical clean-up activities than it did among others. In addition, the program was more strongly associated with engaging in defensible behaviors among those who recalled such clean-up activities.

Results from interrupted time series analyses of recorded crime data from the program area show that significant reductions occurred in the level of (1) total Part I crimes, (2) personal crimes, and (3) burglary. No significant changes were found in the comparison area.

Coordinated Community Policing Program: Newark

Regression analysis results from both the cross-sectional and panel data indicate that the program had consistently significant results in both types of analysis on four different outcome measures:

- In both analyses, the program was associated with significant reductions in perceived social disorder problems.
- Both analyses indicated that the program was related to significant reductions in worry about property crime.
- The program was shown to be associated with significant reductions in the level of perceived area property crime problems.
- Both types of analyses showed the program to have been associated with significant improvements in evaluations of police service.

Analyses of the panel data revealed two significant effects on its primary goals in addition to those revealed by both types of analysis:

- Fear of personal victimization declined significantly.
- Satisfaction with the area increased significantly.

Analyses of possible differential program effects on subgroups of panel respondents indicate that the program's positive effects were stronger among females than among males. In addition, those respondents who had live in the program area showed the smallest relative

increase in satisfaction with the area, the least improvement in evaluations of police service, and the greatest reduction in household crime prevention efforts.

Within the program area panel sample, analyses of the effects of recalled exposure to various program components produced these statistically significant results:

- The program had more desirable associations with perceived area social disorder problems, perceived area property crime problems, and perceived police aggressiveness among respondents who recalled police officers coming to their door than it had among others.
- The program was more favorably associated with evaluations of police service among those who recalled the newsletter than those who did not.
- The program was more favorably associated with evaluations of police service among respondents who recalled foot patrol in the area than among others.
- The program was more favorably associated with evaluations of police service among those who recalled the community service center than among those who did not.
- The program was more unfavorably associated with perceived personal crime and physical deterioration problems, but more favorably associated with satisfaction with the area, among respondents who recalled bus checks than among those who did not.
- The program was more favorably associated with evaluations of police service and satisfaction with the area among respondents who recalled the enforcement of disorderly conduct laws than it was among those who did not.
- The program was more unfavorably associated with perceived area personal crime problems among those who recalled clean-up activities than it was among those who did not.
- The program was more favorably associated with evaluations of police service among those who recalled seeing a police officer in the neighborhood recently than it was among those who did not.

Results from interrupted time series analysis of recorded crime data from the program area indicate significant reductions occurred in the level of (1) total Part I crimes, (2) personal crimes, (3) auto theft, and (4) crimes that occurred out of doors. No significant effects were found in the comparison area for any crime type.

VI. DISCUSSION

While the evaluation of each strategy stands alone, it is worthwhile to consider them as a group in order to speculate why some were more successful than others. Neither the newsletters nor the victim recontact strategy, both of which focused on individuals and were evaluated with a random experimental design, had any measurable effects. It is possible that both programs provided treatments that were simply too weak and too short in duration to have an effect. In addition, the newsletters may not have been designed appropriately to appeal to residents with less than a high school education. Finally, the victim recontact strategy may have provided too little assistance too long after the victimization to have been of much value to the victims, especially those with poor facility in English.

Among programs with an area-wide focus, and evaluated using quasi-experimental designs, a clear distinction in program content was apparent between the "Signs of Crime" approach tested in Newark and all other programs, i.e., Houston's Police-Community Station, Citizen Contact Patrol and Community Organizing Response Team, and Newark's Coordinated Community Policing Program. The "Signs of Crime" program, which was basically a test of what Wilson (1983) has called a "crime attack model" and what has become known as the "Broken Windows" approach to order maintenance and law enforcement (Wilson and Kelling, 1982; Kobrin and Schuerman, 1982), appeared to achieve none of its desired goals. This may be because the program produced few physical improvements and because the enforcement efforts were implemented at random and without extensive contact with citizens. It is also possible, however, that such programs cannot deliver the benefits anticipated from them without even greater levels of effort than those committed in this test.

The other programs, on the other hand, were designed to increase the quantity and improve the quality of contacts between citizens and police, in line with what Wilson has called the "community service" approach. In this approach, "officers are encouraged to become familiar with the neighborhoods in which they work and to take larger responsibilities for following through on citizen requests for assistance as well as on complaints of crime...[so that] they will win the confidence of and thus the cooperation of the public and will gather better intelligence about criminal activities" (Wilson, 1983, p. 68).

What is most notable about the community-oriented approaches, apart from the fact that they achieved several of their desired goals, is that they were especially adroit at continually responding to change in their environments. Most explicitly, all of these programs provided police officers with the opportunity to learn from the people they serve by listening to them intently and regularly. By so doing, the police obtained current information about what local residents felt were problems, what the causes of those problems appeared to be, and the kinds of approaches that could be used to resolve those problems. There is ample evidence among the data analyzed to suggest that these approaches have had significant, positive effects on the attitudes of residents exposed to them.

In addition, anecdotal evidence has shown that, in the short term, other clearly desirable results have been achieved. In Newark, for example, the standing ovation given to officers after a bus check, which restored order in an otherwise disorderly environment, could leave no doubt that positive effects had been achieved. In the same city, five new businesses opened within the Coordinated Community Policing area. Several of their owners demonstrated that they had selected their site specifically because of the police programs in the neighborhood. Talking to visitors at either of the "storefronts" clearly demonstrated the sense of police concern for the neighborhood that those facilities conveyed. In Houston, there was

evidence that a large fencing operation was exposed and a burglary ring uncovered because of the information provided through the contacts developed through the work of the officers at the community station.

Unexpectedly, each successful program relied on the autonomy, initiative, innovativeness, and responsibility of individual officers to develop and implement programs best designed to respond to the needs citizens had identified. Unfortunately, there were too few officers involved in these programs to permit a rigorous evaluation of the effects of this approach. Nevertheless, we saw the pride displayed by officers who solved the apparently disparate problems of loitering youth and a litter-strewn lot by obtaining financial assistance from local businesses to organize the youth into a baseball team, and by having the team members clean up the littered lot on which they would play. We heard the excitement of the officer who told us with pride that a citizen still recalled his name fourteen months after having talked to him. We remember the officers who told us that when first told to go door to door to talk to residents, they thought it was a “ridiculous” assignment but two weeks later, these same officers said, in astonishment, “We’re really learning a lot. We can help. And the people like it.”

Finally, we cannot forget the officer who, when asked what working in a “storefront” had meant to him, told us that, “It gave me the opportunity to be nice to people.” In the end, the most successful programs provided citizens and police officers the chance to treat one another as adult partners, with respect and trust. Both citizens and officers appreciated such treatment and demonstrated that they deserved it.

VII. IMPLICATIONS

The results summarized in this report have implications for both researchers and practitioners.

For researchers, it would be desirable to study the programs tested under circumstances in which their effects might be enhanced. For example, some programs were implemented in a weak fashion. The victim recontact program possibly could be improved if more services were provided to victims directly, sooner after the victimization and, in some settings, in languages other than English. The newsletters could be delivered to particular individuals and be given a format more enticing to readers of relatively limited education. The “Signs of Crime” program, especially that aspect designed to reduce physical deterioration, could be more visibly implemented, and the efforts to decrease social disorder could be effected more predictably.

Implementing any of the programs over a longer period of time would provide a better opportunity for researchers to determine whether an effect could be achieved and to judge whether the effects demonstrated in these tests could endure beyond the relatively brief period possible here.

Many of the programs proved to be less successful for blacks, Hispanics, and renters than for others. More research concerning why these differential effects were achieved and how to overcome them would be desirable. In addition, it would be useful to test many of these programs in areas quite different—in terms of income, social cohesion, fear, crime, and other factors—from those used in these studies, to determine whether the effects can be generalized to other types of neighborhoods.

Finally, because some of these programs included many different components, it was impossible to determine the unique contribution—or detrimental effect—provided by each component. It is possible that, in certain cases, combining several elements produced greater impact than could be achieved by any element tested independently. It is also possible that the effects of some elements restricted those achieved by other components. Further research to test these components separately would go a long way toward disentangling their composite effects.

For practitioners, there are certain clear implications that can be applied even while further research is being conducted. Based on the fact that the programs involving citizens had the most desirable impacts, and were easier and less costly to operate, the following suggestions can be offered:

- Every available opportunity should be taken to increase the quantity and improve the quality of contacts between police officers and the citizens they serve. This would involve a dedication of “out-of-service” time, which officers usually use for nondirected patrol, to making contacts with citizens.
- During the course of police-citizen contacts, officers should attempt to determine what problems are of greatest concern to the residents of particular neighborhoods, what they believe are the causes of those problems, and what they think can be done about them.
- Stringent efforts should be made to reach out to all types of people, not just those who are easiest to reach or who initiate contacts with the police.

- Programs should be developed to address the problems identified by the citizens, not those assumed to exist by the police themselves.
- Every effort should be made to involve citizens in addressing the problems they have identified.
- A continuous process should be established to determine when some problems have been alleviated and others have arisen.
- Officers selected for assignments such as these should be clearly informed as to what the purpose of the program is and that their efforts, at least at the beginning, may appear unorthodox and frustrating.
- Personnel involved in these programs will need respect, trust, and considerable latitude to determine the nature of the problems they should address and how best to do so.
- Those officers who are most creative, enthusiastic, and self-motivated will perform best. (The surest way to “bury” a program is to use it as a way to “bury” an unproductive officer.)
- Because these community-oriented programs are unlike usual police operations, special efforts should be taken to provide recognition and rewards to officers who perform well.
- Supervisors should be selected who provide enough oversight to demonstrate concern, but not so much that individual officer initiative is stifled.
- A great deal of tolerance will be necessary, particularly at the early stages, to allow officers and their supervisor room to experiment and, occasionally, to fail.
- Training is crucial, and can best be provided by those who have proven their ability to conduct such programs.
- Any department considering the programs discussed in this report should examine those programs directly. No report, including this one, can effectively substitute for first-hand experience, including the excitement of their successes and the disappointment of their failures.
- Finally, successful implementation of such strategies requires more than just a mechanical examination of steps such as these. In the end, a sincere commitment to problem solving with the community must infuse the organization and its members.

The most significant implication of all is that there is, based on these results, reason to believe that the police, if they follow the suggestions provided above, can interrupt the cycle of fear and crime that has been destroying our urban communities.

AVAILABILITY OF REPORTS

The following reports, available from the Police Foundation, describe each program mentioned in greater detail:

Reducing the “Signs of Crime”: The Newark Experience, Technical Report

Reducing the “Signs of Crime”: The Newark Experience, Executive Summary

The Houston Victim Recontact Experiment, Technical Report

The Houston Victim Recontact Experiment, Executive Summary

Citizen Contact Patrol: The Houston Field Test, Technical Report

Citizen Contact Patrol: The Houston Field Test, Executive Summary

Neighborhood Police Newsletters: Experiments in Newark and Houston, Technical Report

Neighborhood Police Newsletters: Experiments in Newark and Houston, Executive Summary

Coordinated Community Policing: The Newark Experience, Technical Report

Coordinated Community Policing: The Newark Experience, Executive Summary

Police Community Stations: The Houston Field Test, Technical Report
Police Community Stations: The Houston Field Test, Executive Summary

Police as Community Organizers: The Houston Field Test, Technical Report

Police as Community Organizers: The Houston Field Test, Executive Summary

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