

**Evaluating the School Based Partnership Program
In Hollywood, Florida**

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Introduction

The Hollywood Police Department received a grant award from the Office of Community Oriented Police Services (COPS Office) in 1999 to conduct a problem-solving project in Attucks Middle School. The grant focused on the problem of drug dealing in the area next to the school.

21st Century Solutions, Inc, the evaluators for the COPS Office School Based Partnership program, contacted the Hollywood Police Department to conduct a case study. In-person interviews were conducted and data from the school and police were analyzed. This report is divided into four major sections: 1) Background, 2) The Partnership, the School, and the Police, 3) Implementing Problem-Oriented Policing, and 4) Impact of the Project.

Section 1. Background

In 1998, the COPS Office initiated a grant program to deal with the problem of school crime. The idea behind the program was to assist police and schools in implementing Problem-Oriented Policing, a strategy first developed by Herman Goldstein in 1979 (Goldstein, 1979 and Goldstein, 1990). While police agencies had successfully used the problem-solving model for crime and disorder problems on city streets, in parks and recreational areas, and in public housing, rarely did they work with schools. The School-Based Partnership program (SBP) was an attempt to encourage law enforcement to work with school administrators, students, faculty, and parents using this model. Over 150 jurisdictions received funding in 1998 at a cost of nearly \$20 million. As part of the grant, the COPS Office requested that 21st Century Solutions, Inc. document and describe the implementation of the program.

The SARA Model

The most well known method for implementing Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) is the SARA model, which stands for Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment. First developed in 1987 by John Eck and William Spelman in their study of the Newport News, VA Police Department (see Eck and Spelman, 1987 and Eck, et al. 1987), the SARA model utilizes a variety of participants, including the police and community members to solve a specific problem.

Scanning involves identifying a specific problem at a specific location to narrow the problem's scope for manageability. Having the police talk with citizens or other officers, checking calls-for-service records, or requesting information about problems from other agencies are methods used to identify the problems requiring solutions.

Analysis means collecting and analyzing data about the problem selected during the scanning stage. During this stage, specific questions regarding the victim, suspect, and location of the problem or crime are asked such as what are the characteristics of the victim and suspect and where does the problem occur?

In the *Response* stage, officers and other problem-solvers use the information collected to attempt to solve or reduce the scope of the problem by formulating short and long-term goals. In some instances, the response can constitute a single action, such as an arrest or an eviction or the response may be a multifaceted strategy that relies on the cooperation of police, teachers, administrators, students, local officials, and citizens.

In the *Assessment* stage, stakeholders systematically examine the efficacy of their response strategy. In some cases, the assessment may be simple, as the source of the problem is a single offender who has moved away or is serving a long prison term. In most POP cases, the assessment should be more involved and more systematic. The basic question to be answered during this stage is whether the response was effective. Good assessments move beyond this simplistic approach, examining the duration of effectiveness. For instance, if police attempt to alleviate a problem with speeding motorists by issuing citations over a short period, they should follow this up by determining how long it takes before the effects of the increased enforcement begin to diminish. Another important issue during assessment is displacement, as a response cannot be judged effective at crime reduction in one area if it increases crime in another area. Taking this stage of the SARA process seriously is one of the challenges in implementing POP as it is often systematically ignored by many agencies professing to practice POP.

The SARA model is a dynamic process involving a series of stages, many of whom fall outside the routine processes of police work and school functions. They involve data collection, systematic analysis, creating solutions that possibly require a formal criminal justice response, such as arrest, and the involvement of other agencies and organizations.

Research Questions and Methods

For this evaluation, a number of questions were asked related to the implementation and the impact of the SARA model within Hollywood Police Department and in Attucks Middle School. Each step of the SARA process required asking specific questions.

1. *Scanning Phase:* What was done and by whom? Who were the stakeholders and key players involved in the process?
2. *Analysis Phase:* What was the analysis process? Who was involved? What types of data were used? What were the sources of the information? Did the partners look at the offenders, victims, and locations? How long was this phase (months, days)?
3. *Response Phase:* What happened and who was involved? How was the response implemented? What resources did they draw upon to conduct the response phase? How long was this phase (months, days)? What were the challenges and obstacles encountered by those who participated?
4. *Assessment Phase:* Who, what and how did things take shape? What types of data were used in this phase?

To answer these questions we conducted interviews with key stakeholders, analyzed survey results collected by the school and police, and reviewed police documents.

Section 2: The Partnership, the School and the Police

The Neighborhood

Hollywood, Florida covers 28 square miles and is the second largest city in Broward County. The "Diamond of the Gold Coast" was founded in 1925 by Joseph Young as a tourist mecca and has maintained that image through the years. The year round population of 133,000 residents increases to 253,000 during the winter months.

Liberia is a two square mile neighborhood located in the northeast side of Hollywood. With the introduction of the railroad, this low-income neighborhood established itself and is now nestled between the freight rail tracks bordering the city edge and a four-block long strip mall containing multiple chain stores such as Home Depot, KMART and the recreation club, Dave and Busters. The neighborhood is home to three community stores, Attucks Middle School, and Flanagan High School. The 2,870 plus residents are predominantly African American and live in approximately 500 single-family homes. Apartments, most in significant disrepair, are located on the west and northwest corners of the neighborhood.

Attucks Middle School

Attucks Middle School is one of Broward County's leading magnet schools with an educational focus on communications and broadcast arts. Studies include newspaper journalism, radio, television, and public speaking. As a magnet school, any student living in the neighborhood or throughout Broward County that wishes to study communications and broadcast arts can attend Attucks. In 1999-2000, 1,125 students attended Attucks and in 2000-2001, 1,038 students attended. The ethnic makeup of the student body is diverse and in 2000, the student body was made up of 54 percent African Americans, 28 percent Caucasians, and 15 percent Hispanic with 49.7 percent of all students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

Hollywood Police Department

The Hollywood Police Department serves a community of over 133,000 residents with 341 officers and 240 non-sworn civilians. The Department has practiced components of community policing since the late 1980's. In 1999, the Department adopted community policing as a philosophy of policing, realigning the force to accommodate this focus. Officers operate in neighborhood teams of seven to eight officers. The command staff meets quarterly with Lieutenants to discuss objectives for each of the neighborhoods to attack problems at the root level through community interaction. The Department sends officers to every civic meeting and publishes neighborhood meetings times on the Department web site. Command staff report that, since 1999, the crime rate has fallen by 12 percent.

Section 3: Implementing Problem-Oriented Policing

Scanning

The School Based Partnership grant application required completion of the scanning component of the SARA process. To achieve this, HPD relied on information collected through calls for service, citizen input during community meetings, a community policing survey conducted by area officers, and an environmental assessment of the Liberia area conducted by the city.

Of the 22 Hollywood neighborhoods, Liberia ranked first in felony assaults (82), auto thefts (145), and theft (546) in 2000. Overall, the community has the highest part one and part two crimes (854 incidents) in the city.¹

Street level drug dealing has plagued this low-income area for over 20 years. During monthly civic meetings and a survey conducted by the Liberia community policing team, residents stated that their number one concern was street level drug dealing. During 1998, residents made 297 drug-related calls for service, 60 percent occurring between 6:00 am and 7:00 pm and 80 of these calls occurring during the times children were walking to and from school.² Police were particularly concerned because multiple shooting incidents attributed to the drug trade had occurred in the area adjacent to the school in the year prior to the grant.

Concurrently, Hollywood City officials hired an urban planning consulting firm to analyze the Liberia area. They discovered that the neighborhood lacked a sound environmental design with its narrow streets and poor lighting conditions, which area officers felt made Liberia attractive for drug dealers. The consulting firm recommended the demolition of the apartments

During interviews with the School Resource Officers and other Hollywood Police Department staff, it was discovered that Attucks Middle School was well known as a rough school that was often compared to a prison with a somewhat similar name, Attica. Despite its negative reputation, the number of crime and violence incidents was somewhat lower per student than other Broward schools. Crime and violence incidents ranged from 639 incidents in the 1996-97 school year to 335 in the 1998-99 school year.³ In the 1996-97 school year, 678 external suspensions were issued and one student was expelled with the numbers dropping to 454 external suspensions and one expulsion during the 1997-1998 school year.⁴

Through the School Based Partnership grant, the Hollywood Police Department sought to secure the safety of the students to and from school, to reduce the level of fear associated with the school and the neighborhood, and to impact the perceptions held by those throughout the Broward community about the Liberia neighborhood and in particular, the school.

Analysis

Four efforts were undertaken concurrently during the analysis phase:

Conducting surveys about perceptions and fear of crime in the neighborhood with area residents, merchants, students, faculty, and parents.

Resident Survey (571 surveys completed)

- Residents reported feeling safe during the day and in the evening in their homes and neighborhoods, with the majority always feeling safe.
- Half of the residents believed there was inadequate street lighting in the neighborhood.
- 44 percent believed that pay phones were being used for drug sales.

¹ <http://www.hollywoodfl.org>

² Hollywood Police Department 1999 School-Based Partnership Grant Application, p. 45.

³ Florida Department of Education web site <http://www.fldoe.org>

⁴ MGT of American, Report on Broward County Schools: Safety and Security, page 15-64. www.mgtamer.com

- One-third of residents felt crime had increased at Attucks Middle School during the past three years. Eighteen percent felt crime had stayed the same.
- 35 percent were very satisfied with the School Resource Officer's performance with another 25 percent being somewhat satisfied.
- 61 percent were satisfied with the Neighborhood Team Leader's performance in Liberia.

Business/ Employee Survey (28 surveys completed)

- Half the business employees always felt safe at work, yet 43 percent sometimes felt safe.
- The majority (64 percent) believed that there was insufficient street lighting and the majority (63 percent) believed that pay phones were used as a tool for drug dealers.
- 79 percent were very satisfied and 21 percent were somewhat satisfied with the job done by the Neighborhood Team leader.

Faculty and Staff Survey (37 surveys completed)

- 43 percent always felt safe at school or on school property while the remaining 54 percent reported feeling safe sometimes
- Half of the staff believed that there was inadequate lighting in the neighborhood and half believed that pay phones were used as a tool for drug dealers
- 35 percent believed that crime had increased at Attucks over the past three years while 32 percent believed that crime had stayed the same.
- 76 percent were very satisfied with the job of the School Resource Officer was doing.

Student Survey (68 surveys completed)

- The majority of students walked to school. Most *sometimes* felt safe traveling to and from school. Only three students never felt safe traveling to and from school
- 55 percent felt that the street lighting in the neighborhood was adequate; 50 percent believed that pay phones were a tool for drug dealers
- 15 percent felt that crime at Attucks had increased, while 19 percent felt it had decreased.
- 58 percent were very satisfied with the School Resource Officer's performance while 23 percent were somewhat satisfied
- The majority was very or somewhat satisfied with the job done by the Liberia Neighborhood Team Leader.

Analyzing crime data to determine the displacement resulting from the Broward County Sheriff's Office enforcement efforts in the neighboring community of Dania Beach.

Conducting an Intersection Security Survey

Observing students, faculty, and staff within the school environment.

Five day evening inspections of the Attucks area to inspect landscaping and lighting. During the night survey, a light meter was used to obtain illumination information and calls were reviewed for service and incident data. The Liberia area recorded 326 incidents from January 1, 2001 to May 1, 2001, utilizing these six incident types.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Shootings | • Narcotics |
| • Suspicious persons or incidents | • Robbery and/or breaking and entering |
| • Disturbance noise or persons | |

During her January 2001 lighting inspections at North 23rd Avenue and Forrest Street, CPS Wilson found the following public access areas to lack sufficient lighting:

- A payphone lacked any lighting due to bulb outage
- One corner of a parking lot lacked sufficient lighting due to city light pole placement
- A bus stop lacked lighting due to bulb with low lumens in the streetlight.
- Tree branches were found blocking traffic signs and lighting in some areas.
- Crime watch signs, believed to aid in the deterrence of crime, were missing in the area.

Student and Staff Observations at the School. As the new School Resource Officer at Attucks Middle School, Officer Huneke spent the first few weeks of the 2000-01 school year observing the activities of students, faculty, and staff throughout the entire school day, both in and out of school. From the survey, he knew that students were fearful on the way to and inside school, but he wanted to know what specifically caused their fear.

Huneke did not find a significant gang problem or group of troublemakers at Attucks. However, there did appear to be a lack of respect for the school itself. Students randomly dropped garbage in the hallways and neither students nor teachers picked it up. A number of teachers did not leave their classrooms during period changes and yet, these same teachers did not personalize their classrooms or treat them as their offices. Parents did not attend school events as evidenced by only 30 parents attending the back to school night.

Huneke approached Ms. Vera H. Hankerson, the school's principal, about instituting a zero tolerance policy. Huneke told her he wanted to change the perception of the SRO as solely a counselor to more of a police officer that would ensure the safety of the school while also being a coach and mentor. The principal was agreeable because she needed control over the school.

Responses

The Hollywood Police Department employed multiple responses to reduce fear and address crime problems plaguing the area. These efforts ranged from zero tolerance policies in the school to community engagement to code enforcement and police visibility.

At Attucks. Within the school, SRO Huneke initially instituted the zero tolerance policy to assert control. His requirements included banishing gang color representation in clothes, exposed underwear, and an explanation that verbal and/or physical threats to teachers or students would not be tolerated. During the first year, arrests averaged three per day for reasons ranging from strong-armed robberies to order maintenance violations.

The zero tolerance policy applied throughout the school day and began on the school bus where Huneke worked with the bus driver to identify and arrest offenders, if necessary. During school hours, he maintained a constant presence and even spent his lunch break in the school cafeteria. He was known to follow troublemakers between classes until they were deterred from delinquent activity. After a couple of arrests and talks with Huneke, most of the troublemakers either began to behave or transferred to other schools.

Huneke realized he needed to build a rapport with the students while still enforcing the zero tolerance policy. Huneke stated that, "...with a little interest, the kids are great. Most kids [in the Liberia neighborhood] don't like cops and in most cases, their parents are gone. However, kids see the SRO as a different person," as someone they will seek out for attention and advice. Huneke also worked to gain the cooperation of the faculty and staff. When he first arrived, the teachers would not talk to him. He held a large meeting with all 40 teachers and staff members where he talked to them about taking pride in their school by treating it as they do their home by leaving the classroom to monitor the halls during periods and picking up after the kids.

Huneke recalls once when an armed subject ran towards the school and he assumed control of the situation, placing the school in lockdown. One teacher refused to comply with his orders and allowed students into the hallways. Following the incident, Huneke held the teacher as accountable as he held the students. Ms. Hankerson stood by his actions and disciplined the teacher for her noncompliance. Over time, SRO Huneke began to notice that teachers were picking up after students and beginning to personalize their classrooms.

As order was regained in the school, SRO Huneke introduced a number of crime prevention programs, which were coordinated as part of a larger Hollywood Police Department effort referred to as SAVI, the School Anti-Violence Initiative. Lieutenant, now Captain Tom Sanchez, the Commander of the Youth Services Division, developed a coordinated plan to "provide the safest learning environment possible to maximize your child's learning potential."⁵ SAVI efforts ranged from the assignment of School Resource Officers to all public schools in Hollywood, annual school security plans, classroom instruction focusing on conflict resolution, drug awareness and civic responsibility, and the identification of children in need of services.

Under SAVI, Lieutenant Sanchez provided SRO's with special training, blue Ford Explorers with "SAVI" on the side, and clearly identifiable uniforms. Programs under the SAVI umbrella included the Police Referral Outreach Program, Youth Mentoring, D.A.R.E. program, teen court, peer counseling, and truancy prevention alternative suspension programs.

Throughout the response phase, SRO Huneke employed these programs in creative and proactive ways. First, SRO Huneke reactivated the Student Crime Watch, a nationwide program where a school takes action to reduce fear and the threat of criminal activity. In Broward County, Crime Watch is administered through Crime Stoppers.

On January 25, 2001, the Attucks School Crime Watch grew from 20 active members to 65. With the help of Mat Bankston, the School Security Officer, objectives, goals, and rules were developed for the new members. Officer Roussell assisted in obtaining radios, Youth Services office donated an e-mail address for tips and other information to be sent in, and Heico Aerospace, a local business, donated a tip box for criminal tips. By January 30, Officer Huneke had received four tips relating to criminal activity around Attucks as a result of the Crime Watch efforts.

One of the first official activities of Attucks Crime Watch was the "Give Back to Our Neighborhood" clean up held on February 17, 2001. SRO Huneke stated that this event was a

⁵ SAVI Promotional Brochure, 2001

pivotal point in the program, as over 40 students from all over Broward County showed up to clean up the campus. Afterwards, the students began to police themselves, which resulted in a reduction in graffiti and cleaner halls.

As a mentor, SRO Huneke continued to build relationships with the students by chaperoning dances and attending sporting events and using SAVI resources for students with more serious issues. Programs included referrals to the Youth Evaluation Service (Y.E.S.), a joint program between the Hollywood Police and Memorial Hospital that provides counseling for children ages 5-17 and their families and also the Police Referral Outreach Program (PROP), a program for juveniles with drug problems run by the Hollywood Police and Starting Place.

Outside of Attucks. To address trespassers, Huneke began a block-by-block visibility effort to gain control of a four-block perimeter around the school. This included chasing trespassers off school property, working additional shifts after school, and talking with individuals to interrupt their illicit business. Working two to three extra shifts per week, the message began to stick. Huneke often worked alone, using the SAVI vehicle to enable him to talk with suspected drug sellers and users as an SRO rather than an officer, although other officers worked in the area overtime to increase visibility. In the Liberia neighborhood, a history of racial tension exists between the police and the residents. For his part, Officer Huneke worked closely with Neighborhood Team Leader Phyllis Wright on truancy problems and in securing the perimeter of the school. Over time, animosity toward police appeared to decline.

Officer Phyllis Wright, the Neighborhood Team Leader, continued to build relationships with residents through the Liberia Civic meetings, informal discussions, and a coordinated Landlord/Tenant meeting starting in August of 2001. Lieutenant Healey also worked to address the environmental problems in the area, including working with Florida Power and Light to increase the lighting in and around the school. Finally, the team created a Critical Incident Plan, a comprehensive security plan designed by the Hollywood Police Department, for Attucks Middle School as part of the larger efforts undertaken under SAVI.

Assessment

At the conclusion of the grant, a comprehensive and formal assessment was incomplete, though Lieutenant Healy reviewed crime data and found a reduction in drug crime calls for service and arrest in the area of 50 percent.

The Florida State Department of Education statistics indicate violence and crime in Attucks Middle School dropped from a high of 639 incidents in the 1996-1997 school year to 184 during 2000-2001. When crime and violence incidents per student are analyzed, we find one incident per every two students in the 1999-2000 school year compared with one incident per every six students during the 2000-01 school year.

Officer Huneke and his successor, Officer Josh Czerenda, tell us that from December 2001 to May 2002, arrests declined from the previous year to only 68 arrests. Czerenda reported few arrests at the start of the 2002-03 school, compared to as many as three arrests made per day during the project years, with more students, teachers, and parents involved in prevention efforts such as peer mediation, teen court, back to school night, and Crime Watch. The School

Administration is in the early stages of forming a Parent Teacher Association, an Alumni Association, and has produced two public service announcements for the Hollywood Police Department. In turn, Hollywood Police Department has continued code enforcement and maintained street lighting. They also recently opened a full service substation in the neighborhood.

Section 4: Impacts

While the efforts undertaken as part of the COPS funded School Based Partnership were clearly part of a larger effort to improve conditions in the Liberia community, the grant clearly served as a foundation for their efforts. By providing money for enhancing enforcement and visibility, and engaging quality School Resource Officers by supplementing their creativity with training and limited financial support, Hollywood Police Department utilized federal dollars to create positive change.

In turn, as the situation at the school improved, officer time was freed. Whereas multiple officers were required to handle school arrival and dismissal concerns, one officer can now sufficiently manage the tasks. SRO Huneke and the other officer involved used the SARA process to identify the root problems, developed creative solutions, and worked the problems during the response phase. Hollywood Police Department followed up with solid order maintenance plans and appears to have succeeded at making a change at Attucks Middle School.

Due to the success of this coordinated effort, Hollywood Police Department and Captain Sanchez have been recognized and asked to share the SAVI model with other jurisdictions. The changes implemented at the Attucks Middle School are ones that any school district, in conjunction with a dedicated police department, can institute for positive change in schools and ultimately, in their community.