Are you tired of walking by playgrounds that are filled with trash and broken equipment? You know kids won't play there because it's such a mess. You can make a difference by cleaning up that playground as a community crime prevention project.

Teens have talent and skills to solve hundreds of problems to make their school, neighborhood, and community safer. If you're an artist, paint a mural to replace graffiti. If you like sports, coach a team in your neighborhood. If you are a listener or a problem solver, help settle arguments. Fit your skill to a problem you want to solve.

Find a group or get one together. Join an existing group like an afterschool program, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4-H, Scouts, YMCA or YWCA, or Camp Fire. If you need help finding out what's around, talk to someone in your school, place of worship, police station, or recreation center.

Steps for Success

1. Decide what your project is going to be. List the problems that you and your group believe you can change in your neighborhood or school. For example, are there too many fights in your school? Are kids doing drugs? Has there been an increase in drunk driving incidents? Choose one problem. (At this point you may want to look around your community and see what people are already doing. Maybe you can work with another group.)

2. Plan what you're going to do and each step you're going to take to get there. Decide who's going to do what and set deadlines for completing each step. Split the work evenly so no one will get burned out. Remember to plan how you'll be able to tell if your project was successful. Are there fewer fights at school? Has the school remained free of graffiti?

NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

Crime Prevention Tips From

National Crime Prevention Council
1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Thirteenth Floor
Washington, DC 20036-5325
202-466-6272
www.ncpc.org

and

Missouri Crime Prevention Information Center
Department of Public Safety
P.O. Box 749
301 W. High Street, Room 870
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(573) 751-4905

BJA **Bureau of Justice Assistance**
Office of Justice Programs ■ U.S. Department of Justice

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ADT

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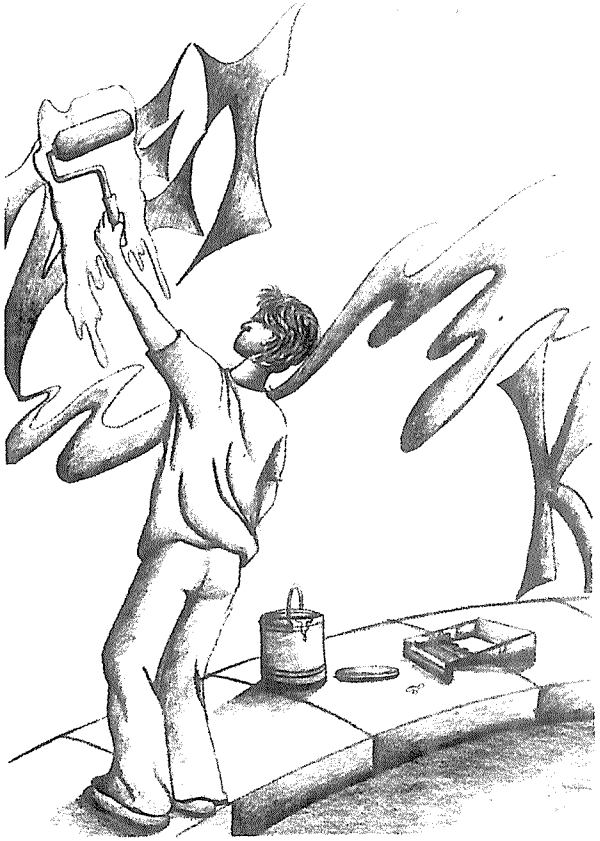
Everyone Is Doing It: Planning a Successful Crime Prevention Event



NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

3. Get what you need. Basically, you need people to do the work, materials (remember to include things like transportation, meeting space, food, photocopies), money, publicity, and the support of adults. Look to local businesses, foundations, parents, the school, community organizations, or places of worship to provide help. Get moving on your project.

4. Check your progress once your project is underway. You want to be able to see if what you are doing is working. Ask people what they think—do they feel safer with less arguing in school? Ask your friends how they think it's going. Or count things. If your project is supposed to reduce fights in your school, you can count how many fights there were in a typical week before your project began and how many there are now.

5. Get the message out. When you've got things moving, share your success in your school or local newspaper. Then celebrate, and thank everyone involved.

Take Action

Here are a few ideas of things you can do to improve your school and neighborhood.

- *Teach younger kids* antiviolence or antidrug strategies.
- *Put on art shows* or performances with prevention themes.
- *Set up a group* for teens to share problems and solutions.
- *Join a group* that builds and renovates houses for low-income or homeless families.
- *Do peer* counseling.
- *Start a teen court* program in your school.
- *Film anticrime commercials* and deliver them to your local television station.
- *Clean up and repair a playground* or build a new one in an area that lacks one.
- *Be a tutor* or mentor to a younger person.
- *Develop a "street smarts"* section for your school's website.
- *Volunteer* at a homeless shelter, preschool, or senior center.
- *Put on drug- and alcohol-free events* to celebrate holidays or other special events.

What Youth Are Doing To Help

- *Youth in South Carolina* participated in an antivandalism campaign in their school that included painting the hallways and beautifying the surrounding grounds.
- *A group in Texas* hosted a community open house night. They educated their friends and neighbors about how to prevent violence and drug abuse.
- *Teens in Iowa* designed and produced a billboard for the highway near their town that provided information about child abuse.
- *Youth in Washington, DC,* organized a crime prevention fair in their school to provide all the students with information on the crime prevention and victim assistance services available in their community.
- *Teens in Boston* created a crime prevention coloring book for little kids.

For More Information

Teens, Crime, and the Community (TCC) is a national program that seeks to involve teens in crime prevention to create safer schools and neighborhoods. Participating teens tackle such critical issues as violent crime, shoplifting, child abuse, rape, hate crime, and substance abuse. **www.ncpc.org**

Youth Crime Watch of America (YCWA) empowers youth to take an active role in addressing problems in their schools and communities. Youth take ownership of their own crime watch program for their school, neighborhood, public housing site, recreational center, or park. Activities include crime reporting, mentoring, and mediation. **www.ycwa.org**