

Setting the scene

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1. Introduction

This module includes ideas and tools to help make sense of some of the claims made about crime and how we should deal with it. It's intended to give you a range of perspectives, to challenge perceptions and to encourage discussion and ideas about safety and what we can do to build and maintain it. It gives you some facts, and challenges other facts. But it doesn't just look at facts. It looks at the role of feelings, perceptions, stereotypes and fears and the need to address these, given their effect on people's behaviour.

What is crime? Does it mean the same thing to everyone? What kinds of crime are most common? Who is at most risk of becoming a victim? An offender? What are we most fearful of? Do our fears reflect the real level of risk? How do we decide what crimes are most significant? Social impact? Personal impact? Economic cost?

This module introduces a range of approaches to crime prevention. Your group might look at some of the evidence relating to approaches that seem to work and those that have been less successful. You might also discuss the people and institutions that contribute to crime prevention. Is the baby health care centre or the pre-school as important as the police station in reducing the risk that someone will get involved in crime?

2. Community safety: what does it mean?

Often you'll hear people say they feel their neighbourhood is less safe than it was 20 years ago. Once they might have gone out to the local shop without locking the back door, but they would never do that now. Once they felt safe walking home from the train station at night, but not any more. You never heard of cars being broken into in people's driveways, but now the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter regularly includes such reports.

When we talk about community safety, it is important to distinguish between the actual risk of crime and fear of crime. For example, research shows that, whilst women and older Australians are at less risk of being victims of most types of crimes¹, they have higher levels of fear than their younger male counterparts. Although a person's perception of their personal safety may not be well founded, the anxiety they feel is real for them and detracts from their quality of life. Thus addressing fear of crime can be just as important as tackling the crime itself.²

If you want to do more than complain, think about what you would like to see in your community in, say, five years' time. Then work out how you might get there.

Activity

- Close your eyes. Take a couple of minutes to visualise your community as a safe environment. Walk around it in your mind.
- Split into groups of three or four people and make a list (on a board or butcher’s paper if you have it) of your ideas about what it means to be safe. Think broadly, including about the kinds of economic, social and environmental conditions needed for a community to feel safe. Spend about 15 minutes on this and then present your thoughts to the whole group, explaining why you came up with your list.
- Alternatively, each person might tell a story about their ideal community—what would it look like? What features help make it feel safe?
- Are there some features common to most people’s idea of a safe community? Keep a list of these—they could be helpful if your group decides to get involved in practical activities in your local area or workplace.

What can we do?

Every day we make choices that influence how we and others live and the kinds of communities we have. How we mix with others, how we treat our neighbours, how we treat the environment, how we raise children—these choices influence our quality of life.

Our behaviour as public citizens fundamentally creates the society in which we live ... How we choose to live with others, how we work with others to solve problems is the foundation on which economies and societies are built. The formal political processes and the political and economic systems and organisations depend for their survival on the ways in which the public do their social, political and economic business with each other.

Lynden Leppard, *Learning Citizenship: Solving Community Problems in Public*, Department of Education, South Australia, 1995, p. 7.

Whose responsibility?

What influence do you think you have or can have on safety in your community? Below you’ll find some views about power and decision-making, plus columns headed and to indicate whether you agree or disagree. Spend three or four minutes going through the table on your own, marking the boxes you think most appropriate.

statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The kind of community we live in is determined more by the actions and choices of ordinary people than by the rules and regulations of governments.		
Most people don’t know enough to really help solve the complex problems that communities face.		
Community problems can be solved successfully only by members of that community working together.		
Crime just seems to be getting worse, and there doesn’t seem to be anything we can do about it.		
Communities are made up of people—we can all do something to make our communities safer and more enjoyable places to live in.		
Feelings, perceptions and emotions (like safety, security, fear, anxiety) can be as important as facts (like levels of unemployment or crime) in determining a community’s level of well-being.		

We can't afford to leave the future of our community to experts. They can never know the whole situation and they're influenced by assumptions and values just like we are.		
Ordinary people aren't interested in being involved in community safety and crime prevention activities—family, work and leisure are more important.		
Sooner or later individuals who make up a community (a school, street, a suburb, town or country) have to find ways to live together and solve common problems, whether they like each other or not.		

Discussion starter

- When everyone has finished, go through each statement as a group, identifying how many agreed and how many disagreed. Did the group make common assessments? Were you divided in your views? Why? Why not?
- Is it possible for the group to agree on what it considers an appropriate role for citizens in helping to address community problems?
- Is there enough opportunity for ordinary people to participate in decision-making on issues that affect them?
- What kinds of factors influence you in deciding whether, and how far, to get involved in working on an issue?
- Would your group be interested in meeting with local politicians to discuss your ideas on how people in the community might contribute more to decision-making?

Partnerships matter

The experience in Australia and overseas is that partnerships between government, the community and the private sector are important to crime prevention. Preventing crime also requires a range of approaches and strategies. Many of these need the support and involvement of the community. There is no one right way.

Many of the things that can help prevent crime don't involve traditional policing. They include community-level actions like providing leisure opportunities and meeting places for young people, helping new mothers who are struggling, and providing job opportunities. These actions will enable people to feel part of the community and teach them to value the public spaces in their neighbourhood.

Many of these strategies involve local government or local businesses. But they are all likely to be more successful with community involvement. People in a local community are well placed to know the problems in their area and what kinds of approaches might work. Those who have offended are likely to have ideas about what alternatives might have prevented them from committing a crime. Listening, talking, consulting, participating—these are good ways to understand the problems or challenges facing a community, possible causes, their impact and what might be done to fix them.

Discussion starter

- There are opportunities to explore crime prevention in detail later in the module. For the moment, break into groups of three or four and spend 10 minutes talking about what you think are the main crime and safety issues in your community and why. Then share your views with the group. Did everyone identify similar issues? If not, why do you think this might be so?

Perceptions matter

People will often see problems differently, depending on their situation and their experiences, their fears, their gender and their sense of vulnerability. For example, older people, particularly older women, may be very fearful of assault, despite the fact that they are the least likely group in the community to be the victim of an assault.² This is perhaps because they realise how it could affect them if it happened. If we want to address and respond to people’s fears and needs effectively, the perception is as important as the reality. What people think affects their behaviour and quality of life.

Discussion starter

- You’ve just seen a movie and are heading to the car park to drive home. It’s dark and the path is poorly lit. You see the following groups coming towards you out of the shadows:
 - a. a group of 10 people wearing a group uniform—baggy pants, baseball caps, sports shoes/basketball boots
 - b. a group of 10 people wearing a group uniform—suits, ties, black shoes, briefcases
 - c. a group of 10 people wearing a group uniform—fire-fighters in hats and coats

What’s your response? Do you feel more threatened by one group than another? Why? Is your response based on real risk? Do you think your responses are influenced by stereotypes?

What are the issues in your area?

In any area of life, developing strategies that work requires a clear understanding of the problem to be addressed. Preventing crime and enhancing community safety requires a clear understanding of the specific problems in a local area and their causes and effects. Otherwise, responses might not be as effective as they could be, and the focus might not be on the highest priorities. Sometimes the problem might be people’s fears and perceptions—and any measures taken will need to address these.

Activity

- On your own, take one minute to go through the survey that follows. Then go through your responses as a group. Note how many people ticked each box.
- When you’ve finished, look at the results. Did people have similar views? Or were there considerable differences in people’s ideas? What conclusions do you draw from this exercise?
- Where could you find out the figures for your local area and your state/territory? Would someone be interested to do this and report to the next meeting?

The one-minute crime survey

1. Which crime is of most concern in your local government area ? (please tick ONE only)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic offences	<input type="checkbox"/> Fraud
<input type="checkbox"/> Drug offences	<input type="checkbox"/> Robbery
<input type="checkbox"/> Stealing (including shoplifting)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual offences
<input type="checkbox"/> Motor vehicle theft	<input type="checkbox"/> Assault (excluding sexual)
<input type="checkbox"/> Public disorder	<input type="checkbox"/> Homicide

Property damage	Other.....
Burglary (break and enter)	
2. Compared to five years ago, has crime in your local government area:	
increased a lot	
increased slightly	
stayed about the same	
decreased slightly	
decreased a lot	
3. Compared to five years ago, has crime in your state/territory:	
increased a lot	
increased slightly	
stayed about the same	
decreased slightly	
decreased a lot	
4. Are crime levels in your local government area:	
a lot higher than in the rest of your state/territory	
slightly higher than in the rest of your state/territory	
about the same as in the rest of your state/territory	
slightly lower than in the rest of your state/territory	
a lot lower than in the rest of your state/territory	

Understanding the problem matters

Developing practical ways to improve safety in your community requires consultation, research and planning. Good decisions require good information. You need to define the problem clearly, you need to know what is already happening to address it, and you need a good understanding of the specific needs of your community. At the end of this module you will find information on some tools that can help you.

One way to get started is to conduct a safety audit. Safety audits are detailed inspections of an area by a team of locals who identify conditions that help to create opportunities for crime (for example, badly lit car parks that might encourage car theft) and environments which might encourage crime and create fear of crime (for example, public spaces with graffiti, vandalised street furniture, litter or bad lighting). A safety audit can:

- help address fear of crime
- encourage communication between groups within the community
- address myths and stereotypes
- encourage people to work together towards solutions
- involve the whole community in identifying what is needed in their area
- identify long- and short-term problems within the community
- involve the local community in planning and development decisions
- focus on dangerous or unsafe areas and improve public awareness
- give the community an outlet for expressing their concerns
- work towards developing a sense of community ownership and responsibility.

Done properly, a safety audit can be useful, even if you do nothing else. But those doing the audit need to be representative of all the users of the area, including people who work in the area but don't necessarily live there. Gender, age, ethnicity and socio-economic status all affect our sense of what is threatening or reassuring. For example, if the team were made up only of men, they would not be likely to identify all the places where women might be afraid.

At the end of the module you will find information on developing a crime profile for your area. It provides a more detailed picture of crime rates, victims and offenders.

Discussion starter

- If your group is still deciding what it wants to cover, you might look at some material on safety audits and use it to talk about which areas of your community you think feel safe, which ones don't, and why. The module *Public safety/Getting around safely* provides an opportunity to look at community audits in more detail, including examples of what other communities have done.

If you want to conduct a safety audit, don't do it on your own. Consult. Get other people involved—the local council, local business, other interested community groups.

3. What is crime?

Although this is a simple question, the answer is not quite so straightforward. Usually, 'crime' is used to mean those activities that are prohibited by law. This includes a wide range of activities from minor incidents to major crimes like murder, assault or robbery.

But what is defined by society as a crime varies over time. It varies between cultures and it even varies from one state to another. There was no such crime as computer hacking 30 years ago. Not so long ago there was no such thing as rape within marriage. Part of the marriage deal was a man's right to have sex with his wife. Now, sex without consent is a crime, wherever it happens. Until very recently, sex between consenting adult males in private was a crime in Tasmania but nowhere else in Australia. Only 20 or so years ago, domestic violence was a private matter. Now, such violence is regarded as a crime whether it takes place in the home or in public.

People's moral, political or ethical position can influence whether they agree that something defined by authorities as a crime is really a crime.

People protesting about a new uranium mine within the bounds of Kakadu National Park or protesting about the logging of old growth native forests in the south-west of Western Australia might be committing the crime of trespass. But they would probably argue that their action is a legitimate protest to stop a greater crime of environmental destruction. Sometimes such protests lead to changes of policy. Protests about the proposal to flood the Franklin River in Tasmania eventually stopped the development—arguably justifying the stand of the protesters and acknowledging that the trespass was a legitimate action.

In another case, a magistrate dismissed a case where a group of women had spray-painted graffiti on a large billboard showing a woman with few clothes on, arguing that using women as objects to sell products was the real crime, not their response. Defacing cigarette advertising billboards by the group BUGA UP (Billboard-Utilising Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotions) may have contributed to the eventual decision to ban such advertising.

Tax evasion is another example of a criminal activity that many people wouldn't regard as a crime. If a tradesperson offered you a lower price for a job if you paid cash, how many of you would agree? This is effectively supporting tax evasion—something which is illegal, costs the country millions of dollars each year and costs you money in higher personal income tax levels.

What is defined as crime changes as society changes. And what is crime today covers a range of activities—from those that are serious and life threatening to things that people might regard as fair game or legitimate protest. Not all of these activities make our communities or us less safe. One

implication of this is that statistics which refer to overall crime levels don't give us a very good picture of the relative safety of our community.

Discussion starter

- Can you think of something that is a crime today but which was not seen as a crime 30 years ago? Go round the group with each person contributing a suggestion until you run out of ideas, noting the main points on a board or butcher's paper.
- Are there things that are regarded as a crime by some cultures but which are not illegal under Australian law? Given the many backgrounds from which Australians come, do you think such differences have an effect?

How do we determine what crimes are most significant?

How do we decide what crimes are of 'most concern'? Most concern to whom? Ratepayers, local councils, police, community groups, business, the general community? Should we look at how common the crime is? Its personal impact? Social impact? Whether it is likely to lead to other crime? The economic cost of crime?

For the period 2002-2003, the Australian Institute of Criminology estimated that the government expenditure on justice was \$7.2 billion. The largest component of this was police services (68 per cent or \$4.9 billion), corrective services accounted for a further 23 per cent (\$1.5 billion) and court administration accounted for the remaining 11 per cent (\$0.8 billion).³ Fraud is probably the most economically damaging crime, yet it rarely rates highly on surveys about what crimes concern us most.⁴

Numbers of crimes and economic costs are obviously not the only factors that influence people's levels of concern about crime. Other factors we could use in determining seriousness include:

- **Moral outrage** — some crimes, especially those against the more vulnerable in our community or those that offend some of our basic values, cause greater public outrage than others.
- **Personal impact** — an assault that permanently disables a victim psychologically and physically may be seen as a worse crime than one with a lesser impact, even if the offence is the same.
- **Wider social impact** — some crime leads to other crime. For example, family violence and child abuse is linked with later crime and victimisation. Some people argue that crimes with a flow-on effect are the most important ones to tackle.
- **Perceptions of community safety** — public disorder, such as groups cruising the streets late at night, may not be a crime, but may make citizens feel their area is unsafe. This could be a major issue for local governments keen to ensure that their locality is seen as a secure and desirable place to live or visit.

Discussion starter

- At the start of this module, a quick quiz asked you to identify what crimes were of most concern in your local government area. How did you decide? If you didn't do the quiz, how would you decide what crime is of greatest concern in your community?
- How do you think governments (local, state/territory and federal) should divide up their budget for tackling crime? Where should most effort be put?

4. Making sense of crime statistics

Organisations and individuals often use statistics to support an argument. But depending on which statistics are chosen, and what the current situation is compared with, similar statistics might show that things are getting better or that they are getting worse. During state and territory elections, governments and oppositions use crime statistics (and sometimes the same figures) either to show what a good job has been done or to prove how bad things are and the need for more police or tougher sentences. It gets confusing. Is crime up or down? How can we know?

One approach would be to rely on our own judgment and feelings. However, while how we feel about something is important and can affect how we behave, it's not always a reliable guide. One person's experience may be different from the next person's.

Statistics can help fill in the picture, but they can also be misleading. A study might show that murder per head of population has declined in a particular city over the past 20 years. This could be because improvements in medical and emergency care mean people get treatment more quickly and so fewer people die from their wounds than they did 20 years ago. It doesn't necessarily mean that fewer people have been seriously assaulted.

The main thing is to be aware of how statistics can be used and abused—and to analyse them critically.

'Recorded crime' is not the same as 'crime'

Official crime statistics report recorded crime. Recorded crimes cover crimes recorded by police after they have been reported to, or otherwise detected by, police.⁵

Some crimes are not reported because people are frightened to do so or think reporting will make the situation worse—say in cases of domestic violence or blackmail. Sometimes crimes are not reported because people think it's not their business—for example, domestic violence, tax evasion or drug offences. Sometimes people think the police won't take them seriously.

The most commonly reported offences are those involving loss or damage of property, like car theft or home burglary. Apart from murder and car theft, there are very few offences where the recorded rate is the same as or close to the actual rate of occurrence. Recorded crime is an important statistic. It provides a basis for funding police and other support services. It is the main statistic we use to judge whether crime rates are going up or down, and whether particular approaches to crime are having an effect. But it doesn't tell us how much crime happens. We need to add other information, like victim surveys, to get a more accurate picture.

Discussion starter

- Do your own experiences confirm that there is a gap between recorded crime and actual crime levels?

Changing attitudes

Changes in social attitudes can affect the rate at which crimes are reported. For example, there has been a major increase in reported cases of sexual assault of children in the past 15 years. The main reason for this has been greater awareness of the crime and a greater willingness to report incidents of the crime. This has been influenced by the legal requirement for certain groups of people (such as teachers and health care workers) to report any incidents they know about or suspicions they have. The increase in reported cases doesn't necessarily mean there is more sexual assault; all it shows is

that more cases are being reported.

Changes in policing

Reported crime can be affected by the number of operational police (not administrators or managers) and by their priorities. For example, if police target random breath testing, convictions for drink-driving are likely to increase but that doesn't necessarily mean more people are drinking and driving. If police target offensive behaviour outside pubs or clubs, the number of arrests for this, and probably for resisting arrest and assaulting police, are likely to increase. It doesn't necessarily mean the amount of offensive behaviour has increased.

But what the police focus on can, in the longer term, influence crime levels. If people believe there is a high risk they will get caught for drink-driving, then they may change their behaviour. The introduction of random breath testing changed how people behaved, not just how many people got caught.

Changes in population levels

The number of crimes recorded is affected by changes in the size of the population. As the population grows, so does the amount of crime. Whether this means any one of us is at greater risk of being a victim depends on whether the amount of crime has grown more than the population has grown. Using technical language, this would mean the rate of crime per head or the victimisation rate had increased. For example, although the number of murders in New South Wales increased significantly since the beginning of the 20th century, the rate of murder per head of population remained roughly the same throughout the century. Only two people in every 100,000 become a victim of a homicide in any one year.⁵

Another way changes in population may affect crime levels is if there is a change in the proportion of people likely to commit crime. For example, the group most likely to commit crime is adult males under 30. If the size of this group increases compared with other sections of the population, crime rates are likely to go up, all other things being equal. As our population ages, rates for all crimes except shoplifting (where older people are the major offenders) might be expected to decline.

Victim surveys

One way to get more information on crime, particularly where recorded crime statistics are unreliable, is to do victim surveys. These tell us how often particular groups in the community report being a victim of crime. But victim surveys have their own limitations. They depend on what people remember and are willing to report. They also depend on someone identifying an incident as a crime.

In 1996, the Australian Bureau of Statistics conducted a Women's Safety Survey. There has been no more recent survey, and you'll find information on the findings in the module *Personal Violence*. It confirmed that most violence experienced by women is not reported to police, underlining the fact that reported crime statistics do not give an accurate picture of women's experiences.

- A woman who had been assaulted by a man would, typically, respond by talking to other people, particularly family and friends. Of those women who had been assaulted at some time since the age of 15, 79 per cent who were physically assaulted and 72 per cent who were sexually assaulted discussed their last experience with family, friends or others. Relatively few contacted a crisis service (11 per cent for sexual assault, 6 per cent for physical assault).
- Of women who had been physically assaulted by a man in the previous 12 months, 19 per cent said they reported the last incident to the police, as did 15 per cent of women who were sexually assaulted.
- The reporting rates rose to 35 per cent and 25 per cent when the person involved was a

stranger rather than someone they knew. Women who were physically assaulted by a current partner were very unlikely to have reported the incident (5 per cent).

- About 40 per cent of women who had been physically assaulted by a man at some time since the age of 15 said that the main reason for not telling the police was that they had dealt with the incident themselves. Almost 25 per cent of those who were physically assaulted and 14 per cent of those sexually assaulted did not contact the police because they did not consider it a serious offence. Of those who were sexually assaulted, 12 per cent said they did not report the last incident to the police because they were ashamed or embarrassed.

Discussion starter

- Are you surprised at any of the information about how often women report assault? What does it tell you about the role of victim surveys in understanding rates of crime?

If you are interested in finding out more about how women deal with violence and information on programs, services and useful web sites, go to the Australian Domestic and Family Violence website at: www.austdvclearinghouse.unsw.edu.au

5. Crime and safety: fears and perceptions

What do we fear?

On Wednesday 11 August 2004, the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs tabled its report on crime in the community entitled *Crime in the Community: victims, offenders and fear of crime: Volume One and Volume Two*

A copy of the entire report and the individual chapters are provided in Portable Document Format (PDF).

In the course of its Inquiry, the Committee received a substantial number of submissions from individuals who shared with the Committee their personal experiences and fears. Not surprisingly, many of these submissions were provided on a confidential basis in the interests of personal safety. The number of submissions prepared demonstrated to the Committee that fear of crime is widespread, and has had a crippling effect on some groups within our society. However, the Committee also found that there is little correlation between the levels of fear experienced and the actual levels of reported crime.

Although people are often most worried about safety in public places, homes are much more dangerous places to be. In 2002-2003, 58% of homicide incidents occurred in a residential premise.⁶ 47% of female assault victims were assaulted in the home.

The challenge for governments, and for others involved in crime prevention, is to deal with the reality of people's perceptions and experiences without exaggerating or dismissing their concerns.

Discussion starter

- Research suggests fear of crime may be increasing in Australia. What do you think might explain this?
- What kinds of factors influence how you assess risk? You might break into pairs and spend a couple of minutes talking together before sharing the main points with the group. Note these down on a board or butcher's paper.

- Did people in the group report similar influences? Were there significant differences in what made people feel fearful?
- Are you more or less fearful of crime than, say, 10 years ago? Why?

Who is at risk of becoming a victim of crime?

Quiz

Go through the questions on your own, marking which responses you think are correct. Then discuss responses with the group.

- Did others have similar views? How did the group’s views compare with the answers? What do you think might explain any differences?

Question	Answer
1. You are most likely to be the victim of an assault if you are:	Male Female
2. You are more likely to be a victim of personal crime if you are:	15–24 25–34 35–44 45–54 55–64 65 & over
3. How likely is it that you could be attacked or threatened over the next 12 months?:	Less than 6% Between 6% & 10% Between 11% & 30% Between 31% & 50% More than 50%
4. The group most likely to commit violent crime is:	Young men 15–24 Males 25–34 Males over 35 Other
5. Being a victim of burglary once makes the chances of becoming a victim again:	Less likely The same More likely
6. The group generally with the highest fear of crime is:	Older people (65 & over) Adults (25–64) Young people (12–24) Children (under 12)

(Answers are in [Additional Resources](#) at the end of this module)

Common victims

Many groups, particularly women, young people and people from some ethnic groups under-report crime. So we don’t have a complete profile of victims and offenders. On the figures we have, those who most fear crime are often those least at risk of being a victim. The media create fear about young people’s participation in crime. The reality is that young people are more likely to be the victims of personal crime than other age groups.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (*Recorded Crime 2003*), young people have the highest rate of victimisation for personal crime. This publication shows that:

- for assault the highest rates are males and females between the ages of 15 and 24 (Men are

- more likely to be assaulted than women, across all age groups);
- for sexual assault the highest rates are for females between the ages of 15 and 19 and for males between 0 to 14 years; and
- for unarmed robbery the highest victimisation rates are for males aged 15 to 19 years.

Discussion starter

- How do these figures compare with your perceptions? You might split into pairs and talk for five minutes or so before sharing your thoughts with the group.
- The figures above are either national figures or New South Wales figures. Do you think the situation is different in your local area? How could you find out?

6. Crime prevention: what, why and who?

Crime is the result of a complex interaction of economic, social and cultural factors (such as unemployment, families that don't get along with each other, child abuse, poor education, community breakdown, economic inequality and substance abuse), together with a physical environment that makes crime possible and where the potential benefits outweigh the risks. Prevention involves tackling all these things.

Crime is expensive, costing Australia around \$32 billion per year. \$13 billion of this cost involves pursuing offenders, prosecuting them and imprisoning them.⁸ Crime is also costly in human terms—for offenders and victims. Preventing crime reduces these costs.

Traditionally, the criminal justice system was seen as responsible for preventing crime, so community concerns about crime became calls for more police and tougher sentences. But the police and the corrections system mainly deal with crime after it happens. If we want to prevent crime and reduce its impact, we have to intervene before this. Yet governments are generally under greater pressure to get tough on crime than to spend more on crime prevention—despite evidence from around the world that traditional approaches to punishment don't reduce crime. How should they respond?

Discussion starter

- Think back to your last state/territory election. Was law and order a major issue? Was the focus getting tougher on crime and criminals or doing more to tackle the underlying causes of crime?
- Do you think people find it hard to think of options other than more police and tougher sentencing? Why/why not? If you wanted to change the way the community thinks about crime prevention, what approach would you recommend to your state/territory parliamentarian?

What needs to be prevented to prevent crime?

Research has increased our understanding of the links between social conditions, crime and victimisation.

- Victims and offenders are often the same type of people—young, disadvantaged, male, Indigenous and unemployed.
- Violence mainly occurs between people who know each other, especially where the victim is female.

- Crime is both a cause and an effect of social disadvantage.
- According to the Australian Institute of Criminology, your chances of being taken into police custody if you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander are 17 times that of a non-Indigenous person.⁷ Prison statistics show a similar proportion.
- Many people in prison are themselves victims, especially of childhood abuse.
- You are more likely to be a victim of crime if you have already been victimised.
- The amount of crime is not fixed. Improving household security in one area doesn't necessarily shift the crime elsewhere; more often it leads to a drop in crime and criminality in that and in other neighbourhoods. A lot of crime is opportunistic—a person may not have broken into a house if it wasn't such an easy target.

Discussion starter

You might like to break into small groups and spend 10 minutes or so discussing these issues and then pass on your main ideas to the group.

- After reading this, what do think we need to do to prevent crime?
- Do you think we have a reasonable balance between dealing with crime after it happens and preventing crime? If your group were in government, what changes would you make?

Approaches to crime prevention

At its broadest, crime prevention means any activity that reduces the future risk of crime. A focus on crime prevention essentially recognises that to tackle crime effectively we need to find out and deal with the root causes of crime, not just deal with the problem after it's happened.

Changing awareness, attitudes and behaviour

For some offences like tax evasion and violence against women, crime prevention may involve changing public attitudes so that certain behaviour is regarded as unacceptable. Public education campaigns about the risks of drink-driving, together with increasing the risk of getting caught, have also been a key crime prevention tool in recent years.

Education, counselling and behaviour modification programs for perpetrators of child sexual assault and violence against women are controversial. Some people argue that they can help individuals control their behaviour. Some claim such programs give perpetrators new ways of manipulating victims. Others believe such offences should always be treated as a crime and dealt with in the criminal justice system. Evaluation of programs, including their impact, can be difficult and there is not enough information available yet to say how effective such interventions are compared with other responses.

Changing the law

Changing the law so that something is no longer a crime or changing the penalty for an offence can also be used to prevent crime.

Changing the odds

The decision to commit a crime is influenced by a range of factors, including the immediate situation or circumstances—for example, how easy it is to commit, the potential rewards, and the degree of risk or personal cost involved. Crime can be prevented by reducing the opportunity for offending and the rewards for offenders. This can be done in the following ways:

- **Making it more likely that offenders will get caught** — If the likely risk or personal cost involved in committing a crime is high, it will deter some potential offenders. Measures can be quite simple (improved lighting, cutting back trees and bushes so a house or business is visible from the street) or they might involve a change in how police use their resources (targeting speeding or motor vehicle theft). Improvements in technology (computerised databases) or in forensic techniques such as DNA testing can also increase the likelihood that an offender will be caught.
- **Making a crime harder to commit** — Improving security of information, houses or commercial premises makes theft more difficult. Improving lighting or increasing security patrols can reduce the risk of assault. Gaol or supervision/parole reduces the opportunity for an offender to commit a crime.
- **Reducing the rewards for crime** — If the potential rewards involved in committing a crime are reduced, particularly in comparison with the risks involved, rational offenders may be deterred. For example, security codes on car stereos that make a stereo useless without the code can significantly reduce their value to an offender.
- **Reducing the motivation to commit crime** — for example, by providing young people with more job opportunities or leisure facilities, breaking the link between drug use and the need to steal to sustain a drug habit, or increasing people's pride in local public spaces.
- **Increasing the costs of offending** — for example, when a restraining order is given to prevent domestic violence, breaking the order can result in gaol. To the offender, longer sentences increase the cost of offending.
- **Reducing the opportunity for crime** — for example, vandalism can be reduced by using materials that are hard to scratch or mark and improving lighting and design to make it more difficult for vandals to hide.

Changing social conditions

Pressures of work and the need to move around to find a job may mean that immediate and extended families aren't around to provide the same support for children and young people as was possible in the past.

The growing gap between rich and poor in Australia in recent years has created social pressures, some of which may increase the risk of anti-social or criminal behaviour. Unemployment can lead to isolation and alienation, particularly in a society where people's sense of worth and identity is closely linked to the work they do.

Crime prevention is as much about improving social and economic outcomes as it is about policing strategies. Those who feel excluded from community life are more likely to offend against that community. If you don't feel an attachment to your community, if you feel you don't belong, then there may be little personal or emotional cost involved in committing a crime. If you feel society has let you down, then why not hit back?

This is not to suggest that social and economic disadvantage cause crime. But as a society, we make choices and these choices have consequences. Addressing poverty, improving job opportunities and providing a welfare system that helps the most vulnerable are good objectives in themselves. Such objectives also take into account factors that increase the risk of someone being involved in crime. Equally, strengthening the sense of community is not just a good thing in itself—it's likely to reduce social disorder and crime.


Changing the social conditions that lead to criminality is a long-term strategy. It includes initiatives to prevent the development of offending or of risk behaviours through early childhood and adolescent interventions—for example, family support programs or anti-bullying programs in schools.

A neighbourhood which has strong social bonds, where people take pride in their street and ‘own’ their public places, where the needs of all groups in the community are met and where people regard the area as an attractive and safe place to live and work, is likely to have a low crime rate ... How do you create social bonds? Any neighbourhood project which gets people to meet each other, to co-operate or work together, to play together, will encourage social bonding.

Crime Prevention Resource Manual, NSW Attorney-General’s Department, 1998, pp. 79–80.

A problem-solving approach

One of the challenges facing community groups that come together to help prevent crime is to move from talk to action. The Community Crime Prevention Manual developed by the NSW Attorney-General’s Department sets out a simple problem-solving approach. The steps were developed by ‘Crime Concern’, a British anti-crime organisation supported by the British Home Office.

 A problem-solving approach

Discussion starter

- From your knowledge or experience, are there other approaches to crime prevention that are worth considering?
- Which approaches do you think work best? Draw on your own experience or views you have developed from watching TV, reading or talking with friends or colleagues.
You might break into groups of three or four to explore these questions. Decide how much time to spend and then share the main ideas with the whole group.
- Did people generally agree on what worked? Or was there a lot of disagreement or uncertainty because people felt they didn’t know?

Crime prevention: who needs to be involved?

Once you start thinking broadly about crime prevention, it becomes clear that it’s not just a job for the police. Police are certainly involved, through community policing and liaison with community organisations. Community groups, local governments and institutions such as schools all have a role to play. Planners and developers can help by designing physical environments that deter crime—for example, areas that are well lit, and buildings that can stand up to wear and tear and are resistant to vandalism.

When the National Campaign Against Crime and Violence conducted a Crime Prevention Training Needs Assessment in 1998, it identified about 1.2 million people working in occupations with a crime prevention function. This doesn’t include the tens of thousands involved in volunteer crime prevention activities like Neighbourhood Watch, night patrols and Safety House, or resident action groups and activities for young people.

As members of the community, we can also help prevent crime in lots of informal ways. For example, get to know people in your immediate neighbourhood and keep an eye on their children, property and pets. If you want to be more involved, you might participate in local government community safety groups or activities. Businesses and community groups can form partnerships to help tackle some underlying causes of crime by creating job opportunities or providing a legal graffiti wall and paints for artists.

Discussion starter

- Brainstorm the kinds of activities or programs or institutions in your community that you think contribute to crime prevention.
- Do you think there are other things you could be doing as a community? What would be required to make these ideas happen?

7. Crime prevention: what works?

More work is needed on the effectiveness of different approaches. And what works in one place won't necessarily work somewhere else. However, research and experience suggest that a combination or mix of different approaches is usually the most effective way to prevent crime. For example, a community might:

- do **immediately** those things that are relatively easy to do and that can help improve safety, like installing better lighting in a car park where assaults have taken place
- promote community safety over the **medium-term**
- work with schools and families to improve educational achievement and family support over the **long-term**.

But this is very general. What specific kinds of initiatives work? This section provides some examples. In the Additional Resources section at the end of the module you will find a list of general lessons drawn from Australia and overseas.

The Sherman Report (see [More Information](#) at the end of this module)

In 1997 a major report about crime prevention, known as the Sherman Report, was published. The report to the US Congress, called *What works, what doesn't work, what's promising in crime prevention*, is one of the few studies to look in detail at what has worked.

The report's approach was to focus not on whether something was *intended* to reduce crime but on whether it *actually* reduced crime. For example, long-term frequent home visits to mothers at risk, together with attendance at pre-school, were very effective in preventing involvement in crime, even though this was not why they were set up. This idea of looking at outcomes—what is actually achieved, rather than what is intended—has made a major contribution to how people think about crime prevention.

Sherman found that some programs designed to reduce crime didn't do so. What didn't work was general counselling of offenders or potential offenders, unfocused recreational or developmental activities, or tougher approaches such as 'boot camps' and scare campaigns designed to deter people from offending. Arresting juveniles for minor offences, or home visits by police after domestic violence, didn't reduce the risk of future offences.

The Sherman Report also challenges traditional views about who contributes to crime prevention. It may be the community health nurse or pre-school teacher, rather than the police officer or security guard, who are the main crime prevention workers.

There are significant differences between Australia and the United States when it comes to crime and crime prevention. There are different social systems, different ethnic mixes, different patterns of government expenditure and different attitudes towards guns. We can't simply assume that what worked and what didn't in the United States will be the same in Australia. But the US experience can be a starting point in thinking about what is likely to be useful in Australia.

Working together: how partnerships can help

Crime and fear of crime are complex. Lots of factors contribute to crime, and a range of measures can help prevent it. Equally, what makes a place feel safe is influenced by a range of factors. There is rarely any one right approach: what is often needed is a mixture of approaches. Given this, governments, police forces, councils, business and communities are increasingly recognising that partnerships are important to effective crime prevention.

Another reason partnerships and cooperation are important is that what happens in one place can influence outcomes somewhere else. For example, if funding for the drug treatment agencies decreases, this has a negative impact on the number of people who can be treated at any one time. As a result, courts may be more likely to gaoil a drug offender because it is difficult to get them into a diversionary program. This increases the load on the correctional system. Agencies need to work together to get the most benefit from their efforts.

Partnerships take time and effort, and sometimes agencies may see themselves as having different interests. Often groups may feel they don't have enough time to do their own job, let alone build partnerships with others. But working together can mean less wasted effort for everyone. And time invested in prevention will often reduce the workload in other parts of the system. But it requires a good understanding of what is happening elsewhere—in gaols, on the streets, in workplaces, in schools, in community organisations.

Most governments in Australia are putting resources into crime prevention, including working in partnership with the community and business. For example, the Australian Government has contributed \$38 million from 1996 to 2004 to the National Community Crime Prevention Program, through which it works with all levels of government and the community in addressing crime and the fear of crime from both the behavioural and situational change models. The Australian Government's National Community Crime Prevention Program commenced in June 2004 and has now a budget of \$58 million.

Case study: School safety partnerships, South Australia

In South Australia, a joint police and education program called 'School Watch' has been operating since October 1990. Nine schools that had been subjected to extensive and expensive damage participated in the pilot project. Students, staff, parents, neighbours and the local community planned ways to protect the schools during the coming holidays, based on the Neighbourhood Watch model. As a result, there was a 40 per cent reduction in damage, vandalism, graffiti and arson attempts compared with the previous holiday period.

School Watch expanded to more schools. Initially the focus was on protecting buildings. As the program developed, it expanded to target personal safety as well, and to develop a range of approaches. About 300 schools are now involved. Each participating school has a local committee that plans and manages activities. Students learn how to play a part in decision-making in their classroom and their school. Two project officers, one a teacher and the other a police officer, support school communities to maintain and strengthen the program.

The schools that have been most successful encourage and draw on student enthusiasm and ideas. A School Watch representative is part of each Student Representative Council. Students identify what they want to address.

A major evaluation was done in 1997. Information was collected from schools involved in the program and those that weren't. The rate of property crime reported to police was 10.9 per cent less for those with School Watch compared with schools that weren't in the program. Data collected by the South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment showed that for all schools involved in School Watch, the rate of incidents reported to the education department decreased by 59 per cent after they joined the program.

Here's an example of how the program works in practice. Students in one school were distressed by graffiti that appeared overnight in their school. They joined School Watch to get some advice about how to protect themselves. They painted murals on walls that were often targeted. A cooperative father arrived at school every day at 7am to check and paint over any new graffiti. The graffiti quickly stopped because no one saw it.

Case study adapted from Margaret Ford, 'Partnerships for Schools: Community safety and crime prevention', a paper presented at the Partnerships in Crime Prevention conference, 25–27 February 1998.

www.decs.sa.gov.au (type 'school watch' in 'Search')

Discussion starter

- What elements do you think made the School Watch program successful? Do you know of similar kinds of partnerships in your community?
- Would a partnership approach help address any safety issues that concern your group?

Case study: Surfers Paradise action project, Queensland

The project aimed to reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder in a particular area of Surfers Paradise. A community forum was set up and led to community-based task groups and the implementation of a safety audit. Stakeholders included:

- Gold Coast City Council
- Queensland Department of Health
- nightclub owners and managers
- nightclub patrons
- police
- the liquor licensing division
- other business owners and managers near the targeted nightclubs and their patrons.

A project officer was employed by the council. They worked with Queensland Health on risk assessments in licensed premises. A Code of Practice was developed by nightclub managers. Police and liquor licensing inspectors worked with nightclubs, focusing on preventing assaults by bouncers and preventing drunk persons from being served alcohol.

The project was evaluated using interviews with licensees, direct observation (using a standard form), incidents recorded by security companies and police records. At first, the results of the project were impressive, with reduced rates of physical violence and reduced levels of intoxication. However, later results from the project highlighted the difficulty in maintaining its momentum, and the need for strong ongoing commitment from the community to achieve long-term success.

Discussion starter

This case study provides a good example of agencies and community representatives working together under the umbrella of the local council. It also shows the dangers of not sustaining crime prevention strategies over the long term.

- Do you know of situations in your area where it was hard to maintain energy and enthusiasm for an initiative? How do you think such problems can be avoided?

8. Where to now?

Statistics, perceptions, fears, personal experiences—they all tell us something, and they can all influence our views and attitudes about crime, safety and what matters most to us and our community. How do we decide our priorities? If we want to do something, where should we put our efforts?

This module, and your discussions as a group, may have given you some new ideas or helped clarify your thoughts. Some of the information here will be developed in the modules that look at specific issues, like violence or drugs or property crime. Many of you may already be involved in crime prevention in some way. But you might find it useful to spend some time considering what you might be interested in doing as a group.

Why get involved in crime prevention?

Individuals and communities often get interested in crime prevention because of a specific problem they want to tackle, like vandalism or high rates of burglary. Others get involved to address fears, such as older people's fears of young people hanging around malls or train stations. Some want to support children or young people at risk. Others enjoy their community and want it to stay a safe and enjoyable place to live.

Discussion starter

- What are the main reasons you got interested in crime prevention? Go around the group and get everyone's response.
- What do you see as the main arguments for giving greater attention to preventing crime? What about arguments against?

Thinking about priorities

Upgrading your security at home may help you feel safer, but it won't make you feel part of your neighbourhood or help create a sense of belonging and community. Getting to know your neighbours is one way of creating a community in which everybody knows one another better. Getting involved in local activities or organisations can help you be part of the long-term solution to some of the problems of social isolation and dislocation that contribute to crime.

There are good reasons for being clear about risks and priorities. Otherwise energy can be spent on the wrong activities, or limited crime prevention resources can be used on actions that are less effective in making our communities safer.

Discussion starter

- What does the group see as the main priorities in terms of crime prevention? You might break into small groups and spend 5–10 minutes discussing this before reporting the main ideas to the whole group.
- Do you need to change any of the objectives agreed to at your first meeting? Which issues will you focus on?

Wind-up

The last part of each learning circle session is an opportunity to reflect on what has been learned, evaluate how the session has gone, and allocate any tasks the group agrees need to be done before the next session. You could sum up your discussion under these headings:

Difficult points

- Are there any areas where you need more information? You might like to invite a guest speaker or find more information from an expert group or government department. Don't forget local libraries, community groups and the Internet.
- Summarise those areas where you have agreed to disagree. Minority views are valid.

Decisions

- Is there anything that the whole group has decided about your discussion?
- Is there anything you would like to do differently next time?
- Did you achieve what you had hoped?
- Is there any other action you want to take? This might include contacting your local council or politicians, sharing a meal, or watching a video.

Finally

- Remember to collect articles for your media file.

Additional Resources

1. Answers to the quiz on risk levels

Question	Answer
1. You are most likely to be the victim of an assault if you are:	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
2. You are more likely to be a victim of personal crime if you are:	15–24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25–34 35–44 45–54 55–64 65 & over
3. How likely is it that you could be attacked or threatened over the next 12 months?:	Less than 6% Between 6% & 10% Between 11% & 30% Between 31% & 50% More than 50% <i>There is no one answer: the average risk is between 1% and 10% depending on your age and gender</i>
4. The group most likely to commit violent crime is:	Young men 15–24 Males 25–35 <input type="checkbox"/> Males over 35 Other
5. Being a victim of burglary once makes the chances of becoming a victim again:	Less likely The same More likely <input type="checkbox"/>
6. The group generally with the highest fear of crime is:	Older people (65 & over) <input type="checkbox"/> Adults (25–64) Young people (12–24) Children (under 12)

This is true generally, but the relationship between age and fear is complex and varies with different kinds of crime as well as personal experience

From a questionnaire developed by the National Campaign Against Crime and Violence

2. Crime prevention: What works?

While more research is needed, initiatives in Australia and overseas are providing some ideas about what factors help to make a crime prevention program successful.

The material below is adapted from Goldblatt P and Lewis C (eds) 1998, *Reducing Offending: an assessment of research evidence on ways of dealing with offending behaviour*, Home Office Research Study 197, London, and a pamphlet from the Australian motoring and insurance organisation, NRMA, *Introducing Crimesafe*, an initiative aimed at increasing community awareness of crime reduction measures.

- No one initiative will control crime. An effective crime reduction program brings together and integrates proven approaches and applies them consistently over time.
- Projects should be based in the community. Views of local residents must be respected so the community feels it owns the project.
- Collaboration leads to positive outcomes. Decision making should be based on consultation with all affected locals. Power and responsibility need to be shared.
- Simple but effective plans detailing step-by-step how you will meet each goal are important in building collaboration.
- Be flexible and willing to adapt and recognise change. Maintaining a positive local community is a slow, voluntary process. The best approach is to accept diversity, have ongoing communication and develop shared understanding.
- Look forward to solutions, not backwards at blame.
- Communicate effectively with those you are working with and onlookers. Diverse communities mean a range of perspectives, all of which need to be considered. Actions should be joint strategies that address special interests.
- Resources must be adequate. Community members or residents need to be realistic about fundraising targets to pay for proposed activities.
- Ongoing funding is essential when demand is ongoing, such as recreational activities in school holidays. Encourage a mix of government and local business sponsorship.
- Working on a number of fronts is generally more cost-effective than initiatives with a single focus. For example, prevention programs for young people should target risk factors affecting all aspects of a child's life.
- Many initiatives produce their main crime reduction benefits over a long period. They have earlier, beneficial effects on other outcomes (education, employment and family cohesion) which can help reduce the risk of later involvement in crime. The long timeframe means the impact on risk factors needs to be carefully monitored so that good initiatives can be emphasised and ineffective ones stopped.
- Implementation should focus on what is known to work and should ensure adequate, appropriate training and evaluation. Evaluation results should influence the design and running of future programs.
- There is currently limited evidence on effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of particular initiatives. Future projects need to be set up and monitored in a way that enables such information to be generated.

3. Researching your local area

Good decisions are based on good information. A crime profile is a useful starting point. Its role is to describe the extent and nature of crime and community safety in the area:

- crimes—number, type and where committed
- offenders—age, gender, ethnicity, residence and factors linked to offending
- victims—characteristics of victims
- disorder—details of incidents of disturbances, noise, disputes.

The police and other agencies will be able to provide some of this information. Your local police may be the best place to start.

Collating and making sense of crime data is not always straightforward. The data you want may not be kept or might be difficult to retrieve. It is difficult to link information with a police beat or neighbourhood. It can be difficult to make sense of and compare data that has come from different sources.

If possible, a crime profile should be prepared or supervised by someone with experience in this work. The job will get done more quickly and to a standard that provides a useful basis for decision making. Three months should be enough time. Because the profile describes the current situation in some detail, it gives you a way of measuring whether any prevention measures you take are successful.

Content of a crime profile report

1. Description of area (demographics, trends)

2. The local crime problem

- recorded crime statistics (including trends over the past two years, maps, hot spots and times)
- incidents of anti-social behaviour and disorder (incidents to which police are called—not crimes)
- relative seriousness of crime problems compared with other areas (state/territory average, other similar areas)
- crime information from any non-police sources (local council, housing department, business organisations)
- impacts and costs of crime (estimated costs, effects on residents, agencies and businesses)
- information about offenders (age, residence, risk factors linked to offending)
- results of consultations with residents, young people, businesses

3. Review of adequacy of current measures to prevent crime (mainstream services and crime prevention projects)

4. Summary and recommendations—priority issues and descriptions of:

- sites where crimes occur
- victims of crime
- circumstances or environments which encourage the occurrence of crime
- times of day when crimes occur
- incentives and opportunities for the commission of crime

More information

There is a lot of material dealing with crime prevention programs and strategies. There is also a range of useful Internet sites you can access. Some examples are listed below. Most of them provide links to other useful resources.

Crime prevention including safety audits

ACT Planning Authority and ACT Attorney-General's Department 1995, *Role of urban design in crime prevention and community safety*. Includes findings from reported crime statistics for the ACT and a safety audit of Canberra's central business district. Describes the safety audit process and includes the kit used for the audit.

Sarkissian Associates Planners and ACT Planning and Land Management 2000, *ACT crime prevention and urban design resource manual* http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/publications/crime_prevention/ResManual.pdf

Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC)

<http://www.aic.gov.au/> produces a wide range of research on crime and crime prevention—for example:

- AICs publication *AICrime reduction matters*: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/crm/>
- *Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards*: <http://www.aic.gov.au/avpa/>
- *Crime and violence prevention*: <http://www.aic.gov.au/research/cvp/>
- *Crime prevention conference (2002)*: <http://www.aic.gov.au/conferences/crimpre/>
- *Preventing crime in Australia 1990-2002*: a selected register of crime prevention projects: <http://www.aic.gov.au/research/cvp/register/>

Crime Prevention Victoria

<http://www.crimeprevention.vic.gov.au>

Agency established to develop and implement a comprehensive crime prevention and anti-violence strategy in Victoria and provide information and support on best practice models of crime prevention.

Crime prevention knowledge bank

Source of information on crime prevention activities across Victoria, research, evaluations, and step-by-step guides to developing and implementing crime prevention initiatives.

<http://www.crimeprevention.vic.gov.au/knowledgebank>

Crime Reduction (UK) <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/>

Crime Stoppers

National site featuring unsolved crimes, missing persons, tips and education programs, with access to state sites. <http://www.crimestoppers.com.au/>

Darebin City Council (Melbourne), *Safer communities project*:

<http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/safety/safe.html>

Another comprehensive local government community safety site:

City of Greater Dandenong (Vic), *Safety matters: City of Greater Dandenong community safety site*:

<http://www.greaterdandenong.com/safety/>

Glenorchy City Council, assisted by the Tasmanian Department of Justice 1998, *Community safety audit kit*.

Provides councils, community groups, schools and individuals with a practical guide to conducting a community safety audit. <http://www.gcc.tas.gov.au/>

See also: *City of Glenorchy community safety initiatives* <http://www.gcc.tas.gov.au/>

National Crime Prevention Program

Provides background on the Australian Government's key crime prevention initiatives. It's a good place to get an overview of what's happening in the area of crime prevention, what activities are being funded, research material and resources, publications and upcoming events.

<http://www.crimeprevention.gov.au/>

National research project into good practice in community crime prevention

Available at <http://www.crimeprevention.gov.au/>

New South Wales Attorney-General's Department, Crime Prevention Division.

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/index>

Provides details of crime prevention research and community projects, a list of local government crime prevention plans in New South Wales and many resources developed to assist local communities with crime prevention activities:

- *Community crime prevention manual: getting your community involved*
<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/cpdcommunityindex>
- *Community crime prevention: what you can do in your community*
<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/cpdbelongindex>
- *Crime prevention resource manual (1998)*
A useful and readable resource for local councils and groups interested in taking an active role in preventing crime in their local area.
<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/moduleindex>
- *How to develop local crime prevention plans*
<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/cpddevelopindex>
- Homel, R 1999, *Preventing violence: a review of the literature on violence and violence prevention*
http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpd.nsf/pages/violreport_index

New South Wales Community Builders, Community solutions and crime prevention

<http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/solutions/index.html>

New South Wales Department of Local Government

<http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/>

- *Report on crime prevention planning and initiatives survey (2001)*
<http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Information/CrimePreventionReport2.pdf>
- *Crime prevention resource manual for local councils (1998)*
<http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/documents/Information/98-87.pdf>
- Working Group on Local Crime Prevention Initiatives 1997, *Findings from the survey of local council community safety committees.*

Youth Consultation Research Project reports:

- *How local councils consult with young people : a report on findings from a survey of local councils in NSW (1997)* . Includes a list of principles for effective consultation with young people but is also relevant to consulting with other sections of the community.
<http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/Files/Information/97-63.pdf>
- *Council staff and councillors' views about youth consultation (1999)*
<http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/Files/Circulars/99-22.pdf>

Northern Territory Office of Crime Prevention

<http://www.nt.gov.au/justice/ocp/>

Guide for community crime prevention partnerships (2003)

<http://www.nt.gov.au/justice/ocp/docs/guide.pdf>

Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Inc. <http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au/>

Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2002, *Building safer communities : a crime prevention manual for Queensland*

http://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/library/pdf/cp_manual.pdf

South Australia Attorney-General's Department, Crime Prevention Unit

<http://www.cpu.sa.gov.au/>

Sherman L, Gottfredson D, MacKenzie D, Eck J, Reuter P and Bushway S 1998, *Preventing crime. What works, what doesn't, what's promising*. A report to the United States Congress prepared for the National Institute of Justice. Available at <http://www.ncjrs.org/works/>

Townsville City Council 1996, *Aitkenvale safety audit report*, October 1996. Describes the process used, including the recording sheet used for the audit and media and other notices used to promote the audit, as well as findings and recommendations from the audit.

See also:

Isnard, A 2002, 'Townsville safety audits 1997-2002', paper presented at the *Crime prevention conference*

<http://www.aic.gov.au/conferences/crimpre/isnard.html>

United Nations Habitat Program, *Safer cities tools*

<http://www.unchs.org/programmes/safercities/tools.asp>

Western Australia, Office of Crime Prevention

<http://www.crimeprevention.wa.gov.au>

YWCA 'Week Without Violence'.

YWCA local associations in metropolitan and regional areas throughout Australia, in conjunction with local councils, businesses and community groups, run a week of activities for children, young people, men and women aimed at reducing violence. The YWCA can provide advice on potential activities. Contact your local YWCA or the main office in your state or territory.

Crime statistics

Australian Bureau of Statistics, <http://www.abs.gov.au/>. ABS releases *Recorded Crime–Victims Australia* each year, detailing recorded crime for the previous year. Periodically the ABS conducts a household survey of crime and safety. Results from a national survey in April 2002 were released in June 2003 in *Crime and Safety Australia*.

New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, *Recorded crime in local government areas 1999-2003*

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar1.nsf/pages/crimestatsindex>

ACT Department of Justice and Community Safety, *Quarterly criminal justice statistical profiles*

<http://www.jcs.act.gov.au/eLibrary/crimestats.html>

Australian Institute of Criminology, *Australian crime: facts and figures*

<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/facts/>

New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar>

Northern Territory Office of Crime Prevention, *Quarterly crime and justice statistics*

<http://www.nt.gov.au/justice/ocp/pages/stats.shtml>

Queensland Office of Economic and Statistical Research, *Crime statistics*

<http://www.oesr.qld.gov.au>

Queensland Police Service, *Annual statistical reviews*

<http://www.police.qld.gov.au/pr>

South Australia Office of Crime Statistics and Research

<http://www.ocsar.sa.gov.au/>

Victoria Police, *Crime statistics annual reports*

<http://www.police.vic.gov.au>

Western Australia Crime Research Centre, *Annual statistical reports*

<http://www.crc.law.uwa.edu.au>

Environmental crime prevention

URBAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

City of Unley (SA), *Crime prevention through environmental design project*

Educational materials aimed at developers, landscapers, residents, business owners, and owners of public space were developed as part of this project, available from

<http://www.unley.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm>

Geason S and Wilson P 1989, *Designing out crime. Crime prevention through environmental design*, Australian Institute of Criminology.

<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/crimprev/cpted/>

Safer communities: strategic directions in urban planning (1998)

Papers from the conference organised by the Australian Institute of Criminology and Victorian Community Council Against Violence.

<http://www.aic.gov.au/conferences/urban/>

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