

DOMAINS OF CRIME PREVENTION

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Domains of Crime Prevention

Crime is the result of complex changes in economic, social and cultural factors such as unemployment, dysfunctional families, child abuse, poor education, community breakdown, economic inequality and substance abuse. If crime prevention is to succeed it should focus on broad social outcomes, for example reducing social exclusion.

Compelling evidence suggests that those who feel excluded from participation in community life are more likely to offend against that community. Addressing this sense of exclusion can reduce the risk of offending. Risks can also be mitigated by making crime harder to commit, by creative design, within a framework of **Crime Science**.

The essentials for any crime prevention strategy involves

(SLIDE 1)

- **Instilling respect for the law**
- **Regulating the conduct of people**
- **Affording protection to persons and property**

Crime prevention is guided by strategic intentions and approaches but is ultimately defined by results. The hard strategic framework involves policies to prevent crime, improve safety and reduce disorder while recognising that there is no one single, definable cause of crime. While the financial costs involved with crime are staggering, significant human costs are also involved, for example, the effects on young people with reduced life options and the impact on the next generation.

Domains

One of the issues I want to deal with today are the issues of domain. By domain, I mean the spheres of policy and practice that achieve social objectives. Most of us here today are interested in the criminal justice domain - and that includes institutions such as police, courts, prisons, and the activities that surround these. What we know, however, is that the criminal justice domain plays only a small part in crime prevention and in limiting the supply of motivated offenders.

We have to understand clearly what it is we wish to achieve, and even more clearly to understand the domains within which the **protective** and **preventive** behaviours occur. Different domains shape policy and practice that achieve social objectives. There are family domains, health domains, social domains, economic domains, sporting domains - I could go on and on. Many domains link to develop social capital.

(SLIDE 2)

- **Policy and practice that achieve social objectives**
- **Many domains link to develop social capital**
- **Improved feelings of confidence, pride and safety within communities**

- **Enhanced access to employment and training opportunities**
- **An increase in average levels of education**
- **Accessible and relevant local services.**

One challenge is for us to find the domains to process and deliver these so we can then be on the way to a safety culture, built on a basis of strong social inclusion, and a place in which young people feel integrated, and wanted, and older people are not afraid of, nor disparaging of our youth.

Child Protection

At the beginning of the domain spectrum is the family. And, the most successful crime prevention agency is the family. It is in families that violent and aggressive behaviour is learned and practised, and it is in the family that it is most commonly mitigated and prevented. The family instils many values, but its primary role is not crime prevention.

However, the family can also be a source of behaviour that is extremely detrimental to the most vulnerable members of our society – that is our children. Child abuse and neglect are issues that concern and worry me enormously. It is an area where all our efforts in crime reduction seem to have failed. We at the AIC don't do a lot of work here because it is not considered to be exclusively a criminal justice issue. Other people don't do a lot of work in the area because it is considered to be too marginal and too hard. And, those who are committed to protecting children who have been abused and neglected are all too often thwarted by a system that is grossly under-resourced and they burn out quickly.

One of the reasons for the failure to address child protection adequately is that it falls into too many domains. As such, both the criminal justice response and the health and welfare response have been totally inadequate. And furthermore, our science in the area isn't much good, and the gaps between research, policy and practice leave gaping holes.

The consequences of child abuse and neglect impact enormously on the criminal justice system, not to mention on the children themselves. Research has shown a strong relationship between factors such as poor parental supervision of children, inconsistent, harsh and erratic parental discipline, and a weak parent-child bond, and subsequent juvenile and adult involvement in crime. Many types of destructive and anti-social behaviours including substance abuse can also result from child abuse and neglect. Research from the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research has also shown that economic and social stress can also impact on crime by disrupting the parenting process.

If we don't learn how to deal with child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, child emotional abuse and child neglect, then just about all our activities on crime prevention mean nothing. The area of child protection is an area that we neglect all the time. It is an extremely important area, but we just don't know the answers, we just don't have the skills. We still have not, and probably never will acquire the necessary methodological tools in most circumstances to produce unequivocal non-trivial findings concerning major social issues.

Sport and crime prevention

Sport is another interesting domain area in which crime prevention activity takes place. Here crime prevention is a by-product rather than a prime objective of the activity.

One key assumption about this domain is that of energy diversion, assuming that if a youngster is occupied doing one thing, they won't do crime. Of course we have examples of young people who do sport and crime, and enjoy them both. On the other hand this may be a very small minority of those at risk, and the pay-off might be there in that many youngsters may want to do only one, and that one, hopefully, is sport. However we structure the issues, they are not empirically settled.

A recent Australian Institute of Criminology paper (Cameron and Macdougall 2000) brings together literature on crime, crime prevention and young people, and provides contemporary examples of sport as a means of intervention. The evidence is encouraging and suggests that with careful planning sport and physical activity has crime prevention potential, and that young people can personally benefit from these programs. The paper outlines some processes by which this might occur, and concludes:

Key findings:

(SLIDE 3)

- **Sport and recreation can combine with other interventions to reduce crime in particular groups and communities.**
- **It appears that sport and recreation can reduce crime by providing accessible, relevant activities in a supportive social context. In other words, sport and recreation must be connected positively into the social fabric of groups and communities.**
- **Sport and recreation based interventions must be conducted in collaboration with a range of other strategies and sectors.**
- **It is essential to consider how the design, location and funding of sporting and recreational infrastructure contributes to social cohesion and does not take sport and recreation out of its social context.**
- **The cases do not suggest “one size fits all” strategies, but instead represent the value of community development approaches to tailor programs to particular needs. Nevertheless, this should not prevent us from suggesting common strategies and processes and collecting examples of good practice.**
- **Elite sporting bodies can be involved in programs directly aimed at particular crimes or communities.**
- **The promotion of elite sport in isolation is unlikely to lead directly to crime prevention.**
- **Sports administrators and facilitators should plan programs that espouse desired values.**

Situational crime prevention, community crime prevention and developmental crime prevention have relevance for conceptualising sport and physical activities that have a crime prevention focus. There are examples of sports programs that have been introduced with the intention of limiting crime. Others have potential to make crime prevention an unintended outcome.

The potential for sport could be in its long-term benefits of the social development of young people. It may also have immediate outcomes; police and communities may witness an immediate benefit that coincides with the duration of the sporting or physical activity. Indeed, reported levels of assault, malicious damage, receiving or selling stolen goods, shoplifting goods, break and enter, or motor vehicle theft may drop. The benefits of sport and physical activity may vary from one social setting to another. In Australian Aboriginal communities there is strong evidence to support the contention that Aboriginal-organised and operated sporting carnivals produce remarkable behavioural changes and give Aboriginal people a sense of control (Tatz 1995: 297-339).

Communities can benefit from the leadership of professional sporting bodies. The Liverpool Football Club in England is one of the biggest, richest and most successful teams in world soccer. The club has confronted violence and other problems. Particularly in Europe, soccer has been associated with hooliganism and organised violence, often with racist motives and outcomes. As part of its response Liverpool Football Club established a community development and public relations program. A similar program operates in Victoria through the AFL (Australian Football League).

Through purposive partnerships building on the club's position in the community there have been numerous examples of community based activities with relevance to crime prevention. They are as diverse as football camps which promoted quit-smoking and anti-drug themes. They involved high-profile players. Coaching programs were run for children with physical and intellectual difficulties; joint programs between Liverpool and Italian cities were organised to reduce racist inspired violence.

Liverpool Football Club established a classroom at the club to run a Learning Through Football program whereby at-risk primary school children learned about subjects, such as geography, fitness and lifestyle, and focussed on issues of self-esteem, and class and racial equality. A program addressed truancy, whereby children with a history of truancy who attended school for increasing periods of time received a Liverpool Football Club sticker and certificate, and, for improved attendance, attended the club for a presentation. As a final payoff, hoax calls received by the local fire brigade diminished after the club produced a video starring senior players to send the message to schoolchildren.

Sporting activities can transcend many domains, and the support, promotion and sponsorship of sport can occur in domains as diverse as government departments responsible for community development, or sport, or parks and gardens; high profile clubs, commercial sporting equipment or clothing manufacturers, health agencies, food companies etc. What's unique about sport is that it transcends class and economic positions. It is a great equaliser.

Identity Fraud

Moving across many domains, we find ourselves confronted by the issue of identity. Knowing more about identity can play a significant role in crime prevention. It is very controversial, however.

In the tearoom at the Australian Institute of Criminology there is a cartoon on the noticeboard, and it has a picture of a dog sitting at the keyboard of a computer, and he says to another dog sitting nearby "you know, on the internet, nobody knows you're a dog"

Some people steal somebody else's identity, and others create false identities, and some have no documents at all. This is significant in matters of national security, credit card fraud, and if we extend the identity thing to inanimate objects, to car theft, rebirthing, theft of other products etc..

At the benefit concert in New York to raise money for families of the emergency services victims killed in the World Trade Centre attacks, the legendary British rock group The Who brought the audience to their feet with a rousing rendition of their classic song "Who are you". At the time however, neither the band nor the audience, were aware of just how significant was the timing of this song. Even as it was played, the FBI were busy with the added burden of a new and rapidly escalating economic crime directly related to the New York tragedy.

Within days of the appearance of lists of those missing – or presumed missing – in the rubble of Manhattan, hundreds of millions of dollars of goods and services were being illegally obtained by people who had adopted the identities of the victims. Such was the outpouring of public sympathy that people were literally able to walk in off the street into government offices, shops and banks, report that their usual documentation was lost in the rubble and on the production of the flimsiest of identification, obtain documentation like real driver's licences, which in turn were then used to obtain other genuine documents.

From here, it was only a short step to illegally obtaining goods and services, such as opening up lines of credit large enough to drive away in brand new and expensive cars. False identity was also an issue on September 11 in that nobody knew for a long time who it was who was flying those planes, how they got into the country etc etc.

This example is grotesque under the circumstances but it highlights in graphic detail a problem of identity theft.

Here in Australia we have numerous examples of fraud - I could rattle off lots of Centrelink cases, banking cases, immigration cases, the market in fake University degrees etc, as well as cases of phantom beds in nursing homes occupied by non-existent patients and serviced by non-existent staff. About one quarter of reported frauds to the Australian Federal Police involve the assumption of false identities.

What we have is false identity in funds transfer fraud, revenue fraud, theft, financial services fraud, social security fraud, other Commonwealth benefits, health insurance

fraud, general insurance fraud, workers compensation fraud, payroll tax fraud, and lots more things in the future - things we haven't thought of such as electronic conveyancing.

Product Design and Crime Science

At the other end of the spectrum is product design. This is one part of the science domain. We have published an AIC paper on this (*Trends and Issues* number 206) and have learned a lot from Gloria Laycock at the Jill Dando Institute who is working on the principles of designing new products or redesigning old ones around peoples' behaviours. For instance:

- Have you ever watched women when they sit in a restaurant? One of the first things they do is try to work out where to put their handbag. And perhaps where to put their shopping as well. What is needed is a crime-free chair.
- In Australia, we need a gadget which could just zap a central control unit and lock the house including doors and windows and set the burglar alarm all with one hit.
- There is currently a new video design that will not work if it is stolen and we have been promised smart TVs and other similar goods in the next few years.

Crime science involves the application of scientific principles to the reduction of crime. It is outcome-focussed and evidence-based. Speaking to my colleague Gloria Laycock who has outlined the principles behind crime science, she emphasises that we have to capitalise on what we already know and pull out the preventative implications. To successfully implement the principles of crime science, there are three essential parts, that she is trying to create in her Institute, and a model that the AIC sees as having value:

The application of crime science has implications for all aspects of the prevention of property crime, but the details are a talk for another day.

At the Dando Institute Gloria Laycock sees part of her role as establishing a think tank, a tell tank and a do tank. These ideas resonate well with the AIC.

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A *Think Tank*

A *think tank* will create a research and knowledge base in order to gain authority. The *think tank* would be the home of a research program. It would include a strong social science component which would focus on new ways to reduce and prevent crime. It would adopt research methods that could provide practitioners with the answer to what works, where and why questions. A Crime Science Lab would also be associated with the think tank.

A *Do Tank*

The *do tank* would develop the mechanism whereby the ideas and approaches developed through Crime Science are properly disseminated and implemented. It would also house

the publications section and would be responsible for developing a marketing strategy for Crime Science.

An important element of the Think Tank would be to ensure that research is disseminated to practitioners in such a way that the material is both useful and used.

A *Tell* Tank

The *tell tank* would be responsible for the development of all training programs. These programs would range from mapping techniques to environmental criminology, as well as CPTED which you have in your satchels, and identity fraud which we have been doing all year.

Evaluation

Evaluation is crucial to any crime prevention measure. There are, however, different ways of measuring – if we can't measure well we can't say if we are reducing crime.

(SLIDE 5)

- **Evaluation is the process of acquiring, analysing and using information for making decisions associated with planning, programming, implementing and recycling program components and activities. Its purposes are to facilitate continual effectiveness of the program and to assess the effectiveness of the program at its conclusion.**

There are only really 3 questions in evaluation:

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- **Is it any good?**
- **Is it worth it?**
- **Is it better than what was before?**

There are several approaches that are governed by the politics of evaluation - funders may ask any of these questions.

(SLIDE 7)

- **This is the program – tell us how good it is.**
- **This is what we think we might do – are we on the right track?**
- **Conduct a Process/outcome evaluation.**
- **Demonstration effectiveness.**

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In conducting an evaluation there are four sets of issues, and these will form the basis of our training activities in evaluation next year:

- **Conceptual issues**
- **Measurement issues**
- **Operational issues**
- **Political issues**

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“We don’t need a bridge between research and practice we need a superhighway”.

Concluding comments

This paper has floated the idea of domains and moved across a spectrum of domains. At one end of the spectrum, it has discussed child protection issues and the difficulty we encounter in addressing the relevant issues. At the other end it has dealt with crime science and the science of evaluation.

In conclusion, the key to success for an inclusive crime prevention strategy will be achieving broad agreement to the need to work cooperatively. New approaches must build on local and international experience, be backed by **research evidence**, and involve all the relevant players.

Crime and safety issues are complex, interdependent and embrace the activities of all government agencies at the national, State and local levels. Issues such as employment, education, health, welfare, and economic and fiscal policy, how cities are designed and managed, how our homes and cities secured, and how we treat offenders and their victims, can all directly or indirectly affect criminal behaviour, perceptions of safety and willingness to participate in society.

We all have a role to play in building the partnerships to meet the emerging challenges for community safety. The safest communities are not those with the most police and prisons but those with the strongest community structures, including socialising institutions, families, and economic opportunities.

Those opportunities exist and can be moulded. Human beings, who are almost unique in having the ability to learn from the experience of others, are also remarkable for their apparent disinclination to do so, but I am sure that does not apply to those of us here today.