A Portrait of Sustainable Crime Prevention in Selected Canadian Communities

Volume 2: Community Profiles

Public Safety and Emergency
Preparedness Canada

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Canada

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Sustainability Site Report: Community A

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY

This community is a high-density neighbourhood in a large urban centre. Residents in this neighbourhood include many lower-income families who live in the 400 social housing units and 10 low-rise rental apartment complexes in the area. There are also some lower-middle class families living in single-family homes. Altogether, there are approximately 1,200 children — mainly from lower-income, single-parent households — living in close proximity in this six-block area. The neighbourhood is home to a high proportion of Aboriginal people and new immigrants. Several years ago, this community was identified as "high risk," based on the number of calls for service received by the local police service. In 1994, the local police reported that the crime rate was the seventh highest of 32 neighbourhoods in the region.

The concerns in this community have included: unsupervised youth, vandalism, break-ins, family violence, drug and alcohol abuse, fragmentation and duplication of services for high need families and high levels of fear among residents. Youth in the community have had few resources, and there have been limited activities for them. There have also been concerns about the high population of transients — individuals who are not tenants, but who move in and out of the community when staying in households in the area.

WHAT CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES ARE THEY TRYING TO SUSTAIN?

The core of this initiative has been the development of a working relationship — a partnership — that has amounted to "doing business" in a different way. Essentially, it has required breaking down the barriers between service providers and their professional organizations, as well as between service providers and community members.

The partnership that has developed in this community has served as a bridge between service providers and community residents. It has led to greater cooperation among service providers. It has included efforts to make services more accessible to community residents, who were often unwilling and/or unable to access services. It has focused on achieving community development objectives (which are often outside the mandate of the organizations providing services in the community), and it has put in place a process for responding more effectively to community needs.

Background

This initiative began when several neighbourhood service providers, including police, school and social services personnel and a community advocate, came together to discuss their concerns about the community. It soon became apparent that they shared a commitment to the community. This was the common ground on which they formed the community partnership group.

The Nature of Their Sustainable Activities

From the outset, the partnership group has focused on breaking down barriers by sponsoring small projects that bring people in the community together and demonstrate some immediate success. The partners believe this approach has lent credibility to their efforts and has encouraged people to "buy into" the initiative. They have focused on projects that encourage service providers and community members to make the community a priority and increase their commitment to the community.

Projects have been developed as needs or issues are identified. This is an ongoing process and projects continue for as long as needed. The partnership group has been highly action-focused. They meet to plan an activity, do it, then they meet again to plan for the next project or next iteration, and attempt to do it better.

Project activities have included, for example, identifying and targeting high risk/high need families for support and supervision; and closing a local store, on which many residents depended, that was price gouging and replacing it with a new operation.

As a result of this initiative, the police officer assigned to this area has begun spending as much of his time as possible in the community. This has helped make residents feel safer and contributed to a more positive image for the police.

A neighbourhood foot patrol has been established — staffed by resident volunteers — and it has also helped to make residents feel safer in their community.

Another key activity has been approaching the owners and managers of rental buildings to work with the community partnership to evict disruptive tenants and to share names so that tenants cannot move from building to building and persist in causing problems.

Other events have included projects that bring service providers and community members together — including, for example, summer family barbecues and springtime campaigns to spruce up the neighbourhood.

All the activities that have been undertaken have been designed to make the neighbourhood a better place to live. The focus has been on decreasing residents' fear of crime and increasing pride in the neighbourhood. The key has been making residents feel safer; providing easier access to support; and providing needed services, within the budgets of partner agencies (e.g., recreation, schools, police, etc.).

The information sharing process that has emerged through this partnership has allowed problems to be identified earlier and new issues to be addressed as they emerge. Residents have become more willing to come forward, and service providers have adopted a collaborative, "problem solving" approach.

The Role of Project Funding

Within this partnership, specific projects are a means to meet the partnership's goals of reducing crime and increasing community safety and well-being. As noted earlier, projects have been a means of bringing community members together and demonstrating what can be achieved. The success of each project has encouraged residents to "buy-in" to the partnership process, and to see the benefits of cooperation. Projects have also encouraged service providers and residents to focus on community development and increase their commitment to the community. Projects have also been an opportunity for service providers and residents to work together and get to know and trust each other.

Projects are usually short-term and their funding requirements are quite small. The primary costs are for the partnership coordinator position (see Resources below).

HOW HAS THIS COMMUNITY SUSTAINED ITS CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITY?

The Organizational Structures

Many different organizations and sectors have been involved in this initiative including, for example:

- A club for young people
- Shelters
- Long-term care facility for the elderly
- Child and family services
- Recreation
- Schools
- Police
- Local building managers/owners
- Health
- Ethnocultural communities.

There are currently 24 partners in the group, with varying degrees of involvement. The partnership is anchored around a core group of agencies and individuals including school, police and social services personnel, and a community advocate (who is also the partnership coordinator). Police involvement has been particularly important in offering legitimacy to partnership activities and increasing its profile.

Becoming involved in this partnership is not a formalized process. Over time, the initial group of participants has identified other potential participants and invited them to the table. In addition, as individuals are replaced by their respective agencies, the new people are apprised of the way business is conducted in the community, and they are invited to participate in the partnership.

The criteria for participating in the partnership have included being committed to the neighbourhood, having front-line involvement in the community, being in a strategic

position to address a problem or issue within the community, and being motivated to participate in the partnership. The partnership has sought to include individuals who are prepared to take action, not just plan for it. The key factors are commitment to the community and to the partnership process.

The Processes

The partnership group operates as a team. There is a strong commitment to working together as equals. The basic premise is that the partnership offers participants the opportunity to realize the positive benefits of cooperation.

The process of building trust between and among service providers and with residents is fundamental to the work of the partnership. Trust is something that has been built over time. It is based on respecting confidentiality, and on partners following through on promised actions.

The coordinator of the partnership group is responsible for the vitally important process of communication. The coordinator acts as a communication hub, contacting partners, community residents, businesses, etc., as needed and informing them about what is going on and how they can contribute.

The collaboration of the partners is not formally organized, e.g., through protocols. Rather, it is based on trust. For example, the service providers in this partnership have found ways to work together and share needed information informally, while at the same time respecting confidentiality. They share information as needed, with a clear respect for ethics.

The partnership group works together to set community action goals and priorities. Service providers and community residents bring their concerns/challenges/problems to the community partnership, and the partnership makes plans for action. Within the group, professional partners are asked about upcoming issues, and they play a role in assessing what is needed and determining whether existing projects should continue. Residents also have an opportunity to participate in the group and play a role in the activities of the community partnership. They are valued as a source of ideas and information, as well as for the things they do in the community.

The emphasis is on keeping dialogue, action and decision making at the local level. This focus is important because partners must work within the confines of their agencies; it can be stifling if an issue moves from the local to the administrative level.

The partnership coordinator is responsible for organizing and implementing partnership activities. Having a coordinator has ensured that the partnership activities are conducted in a timely fashion, and in a manner that does not burden the already busy service providers. Leadership is key here, as are regular meetings and ongoing contact with and knowledge of the community.

The focus of the partnership is on action, not talking. Not all partners are involved in all projects. Those partners who are going to work on a specific problem agree on the project(s), and others provide insights and support as needed. Once plans are decided on, the core partners involved work with community residents to achieve their goals. Progress and challenges are reported back to the partnership group, and those less directly involved offer support and insight.

The exception to this approach has been the community barbecues, which all the partners attend as a means of increasing their profile in the community and getting to know the residents and their concerns.

The Partnerships

The community partnership group has actually fostered several different types of partnerships. At the broadest level the community partnership has been a collaborative "umbrella" organization that has allowed all partners to share resources, information and concerns, and to set joint goals and priorities. This has allowed service providers to find new ways to collaborate with each other, and new ways to work with community residents.

The partnership group has also enhanced the working relationships and information sharing process between service providers working for different organizations. While they retain their positions within specific service agencies, they have developed a different way of working together and with community residents. They have accomplished this, while maintaining their commitments to both their organizations and the community. For example, through the partnership group concerns about individual families or young people can be shared with the appropriate front-line workers and problems can be more easily addressed or even avoided by ongoing contact with appropriate community resources.

Project-specific partnerships have also evolved in which partners work with community residents to implement activities in the community and achieve specific goals.

As well, since this is an ethnoculturally diverse neighbourhood, the partnership has facilitated connections to the ethnocultural communities, and this has helped service providers deal more sensitively with community members.

The successes that the partnership group has enjoyed have allowed all of the partners to see collaboration as positive — for themselves and for the community. Through cooperation, partners have gained new insights into the community. As a result of the partnership group, service providers and community members are less isolated. They have found that they all share common concerns and are willing to work together to make a difference. Service providers and residents feel valued. For residents, the sense of ownership and empowerment has led to a greater interest in their community. Residents now know many of their neighbours, and they have put a process in place for welcoming new families moving into the community. Residents also know the young people living in the neighbourhood, and when there is a concern about a young person, they know whom to contact. They now have more faith that the person they contact will respond quickly and appropriately. Developing this trust has been key.

The Resources

This initiative has been supported by in-kind resources (human, financial and other) from partner organizations and local businesses; volunteer labour; as well as some project funding, which has been used to support the partnership coordinator position.

In-kind support from partner organizations has included service providers' time as well as other supports, such as photocopying. Local businesses have provided free space for the storefront operation, donated materials for the spring clean up, and provided food for the barbecues.

Adequate resources are critical for continued success. A sustained source of money is needed to keep the partnership going. Resource needs include ongoing funding for core activities (including the salary for the coordinator, as well as funds to pay for office/storefront space and office supplies); ongoing donations from local businesses; continued in-kind support from partner organizations; ongoing volunteer support from community residents; and some limited resources to implement specific projects.

The partnership coordinator position is particularly important because this person serves as a key communication mechanism and ensures that information flows to the partners and the community. This coordinator also provides visibility in the community, and offers long-term, consistent leadership. The coordinator position also eliminates the problem of partner "burn out" since partners do not have to coordinate the initiative while doing their regular, full-time jobs.

WHAT WERE THE KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS?

Funding: Funding for the coordinator position, in particular, has been key to keeping the partnership going. Without a paid staff member, partners will burn out.

Leadership: Long-term, consistent leadership has helped build a network of trust and connections among partners.

Effective programs/projects: Projects have been based on the community's concerns and issues.

Public relations: Awareness of the partnership has been kept high and the benefits of the partnership have been promoted to community members, community organizations and funders.

Commitment: All partners have been committed to working together for the betterment of the community.

Trust: Partners have felt safe sharing information, and this has allowed them to take action.

Support: The process has provided support for partners; and the activities have been tied to the mandates of partner organizations.

Collaboration: The partnership has been based on an open, welcoming, collaborative "we" process.

Sustainability Site Report: Community B

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY

This community is a large rural region that encompasses 15 small villages. The population of about 2,000 is quite homogenous. Many families have lived in the region for generations. Farming and fishing are the mainstays of the economy, although these industries are augmented in the summer and fall by tourism. There is a strong cooperative movement in this community, and the residents have a long history of relying on each other for support. This has resulted in a strong tradition of volunteerism as well as community leadership. Being a minority group within the province, the residents of this community have learned how to work together to achieve collective goals.

This region faces a number of challenges related to its economic base and minority status. Economic activity is seasonal and fairly low paying, and many people are faced with long periods of unemployment. Residents have experienced difficulties in accessing services in the language of their choice. There have also been concerns about the well-being of the young people in the region. Few opportunities for advancement exist and many young people eventually leave the area to pursue post-secondary education or to find appropriate, full-time employment. Alcoholism has also been a concern — particularly as it relates to drunk driving, family violence and other problems in the community. Other community concerns have included substance abuse, child abuse, bullying and problems related to self-esteem. This region has had a history of low high school completion rates. Although this issue has recently been addressed and much higher completion rates are now reported, community members continue to be concerned about this issue.

WHAT CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES ARE THEY TRYING TO SUSTAIN?

Background

The consultative group within Community B sponsored the initiative that was the focus of the site visit. The consultative group was originally started by the local Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officer but has now taken on a much broader and more independent role. While the RCMP are still involved, the consultative group is firmly entrenched in the community and would continue even if the RCMP pulled out.

The consultative group has been in existence since 1994 and for the first few years, it operated much like a typical RCMP consultative group. It focused on immediate crime issues as well as situational crime prevention strategies. In 1998, the RCMP officer learned about National Crime Prevention Centre's (NCPC) mobilization fund and shared the information with members of the consultative group. The holistic social development strategy being promoted by NCPC was consistent with the cooperative, community approach that existed in Community B, and the group decided to apply for funding. They received an NCPC mobilization grant that set the consultative group on its current course. With the NCPC funding, a community-wide forum was held and community concerns were identified. An action plan was developed based on these concerns and a series of

activities and events were undertaken. A second community consultation is being planned for fall 2003 by way of several themed community forums at which time progress on the initial action plan will be reviewed, current concerns will be discussed and a new action plan will be developed.

The community is trying to sustain its focus on crime prevention. In particular, it is trying to maintain awareness in the community of problems such as substance abuse, family violence and bullying and it is reaching-out to its English minority to better meet their needs and seek their involvement. It has sponsored several events that have provided community residents with information about the services available to them. The group has also used a values-based program to provide community members with a means of collectively addressing self-esteem issues. This program gives participants a means of speaking positively and respectfully to each other.

The Nature of Their Sustainable Activities

The group has organized a Family Fun Fair for the past three years. The fair included booths and displays for service providers in Community B. A range of family-centred activities was also held including a community breakfast, and games and other activities for children. The group has explored various ways of addressing community-wide problems related to lack of respect for oneself and for others. Their research led them to pursue a values-based program. The group's coordinator was trained in this values program and has offered the training to others in the community as well as to other communities in the area. The funds raised through this training are used to maintain the group's activities.

The group has sponsored a number of seminars on pertinent topics since the community forum. These have included substance abuse workshops for children, youth and their parents as well as parenting programs. Various school-based initiatives have also taken place including an anti-bullying program. In addition, many of the school-based programs are youth-led or co-led to also foster leadership training. In addition to these initiatives, the group has produced and disseminated a newsletter/bulletin to all families in Community B. The bulletin keeps the group's activities and issues before the community and promotes these activities. Eight such newsletter/bulletins have been sent to all community residents (900 were mailed out each time).

The Role of Project Funding

The initial funding from NCPC's community mobilization fund helped to launch the current round of activities. While the group was in existence prior to this grant, the project funding allowed the group to call the initial community forum, establish an action plan and mobilize community support for the activities in the action plan. Since the initial funding, the group has sought project funding to achieve specific objectives such as an anti-bullying program. The funds from projects also help to pay the salary of the group's coordinator. This is critical since the coordinator performs a variety of functions for the group that help to sustain this community initiative.

HOW HAS THIS COMMUNITY SUSTAINED ITS CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITY?

The Organizational Structures

The group is broadly representative of the entire community. It includes representatives from the law enforcement, education, health, business and cultural communities. Young people, parents and seniors are also represented on the consultative group. The group is formally organized but operates in an egalitarian manner. Moreover, the minority English population in Community B is also represented in the consultative group.

The group developed an action plan based on the first community forum. They strive to be representative in their approach. In this regard, they are planning to go back to the community this fall to review their progress to date and plan for the future. In order to broaden and encourage community participation, the group will hold a series of sectoral forums in the fall of 2003 in advance of the community-wide forum. For example, there will be one forum for youth and another for seniors as well as forums for other specific groups in Community B. This is being done in order to insure that individuals in each sector have a chance of being heard. Their concern is that some people will not speak in large, public gatherings such as a community-wide forum.

The Processes

The group identified community concerns at the first community-wide forum. They developed particular initiatives to achieve their action plan. The consultative group meets regularly and helps organize, publicize and put on community activities such as the Family Fun Day. The coordinator plays a key facilitation role keeping everyone informed about the consultative group's activities, undertaking the work of the collective and identifying and mobilizing specific community members (groups) who are the focus of particular activities. The coordinator works out of a small office provided by the RCMP. She is the focal point for information and coordination.

The Partnerships

There are a number of informal partnerships in this community related to the group's initiative. Few of the partnerships involved specific protocols outside of those that would be in place with respect to service delivery. Since most of the group's activities are educational in nature, few formal partnerships were required.

The partners generally work together and help however they can. They share resources and information. The partnerships reflect the tradition of volunteering in the community. The cooperative movement has a long history in Community B, and people respond when asked. Trust is a key aspect of the partnerships since those involved know each other and they have worked together in the past.

Partnership types include cooperation, coordination and collaboration depending on the specific activity and the role individual partners are expected to play. For example, the schools collaborate in the programs intended for students and their parents while other partners play less central roles in these initiatives. At the same time, the local health centre may be instrumental in a school-based workshop on mental health or substance abuse. The point is that the partnerships are fluid and people in the community know that they can rely on each other.

The Resources

Adequate resources are critical for the continued operation and sustainability of the group. Resource needs include the salary for the coordinator and funding for specific projects. To date, project funding has provided some support for the coordinator's position but there is a need to have a sustained source of money for this position. Partner agencies provide in-kind support — office space, telephone, Internet, photocopying, etc. Local businesses have provided food and other materials for the specific initiatives undertaken by the group. During lean times (between projects) another organization with which the coordinator is affiliated helped to pay her salary. The coordinator is also contributing funds by offering various types of training to other communities in the region and the province.

WHAT WERE THE KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS?

Funding: Funding is crucial for both a coordinator and for specific projects. Other RCMP consultative groups in the province have not been as successful as this group because they haven't had full-time coordinators. Without a paid coordinator, the task of coordinating the group and implementing the action plan would fall on already over-taxed volunteers. This would seriously jeopardize sustainability. Project funding is required to support specific activities such as the newsletters, family fair and special workshops. Funding is also needed for crucial resources such as the values-based program.

Leadership: In this community, leadership has several meanings. Community-wide leadership is exercised through formal institutions such as the churches, schools, health centre, cultural groups and the police. At an individual level, specific people in each of these sectors need to exercise their judgment and support the initiatives of the collective. In this community, the long history of the cooperative movement has resulted in a culture that expects and nourishes civic participation. This can include volunteering for community projects as well as taking a turn serving on various community committees.

Coordinator: The position of the coordinator of the group is critical for the long-term success and sustainability of this initiative. The person holding this position acts as an information conduit, informing appropriate members of the community about various needs and activities. This person is also crucial for mobilizing community resources in support of collective activities. Finally, the coordinator represents the public face of the consultative group in the community. A known and trusted person replaces the anonymity of the committee. This helps keep the community connected to the group and its projects. The

issue of whether the individual is known within the community and possesses the credibility is also a key to the success of the position.

Meaningful activities: People in the community have responded positively to the group's initiative because it is involved in projects that resonate with community members and meet real needs. When asked about which initiatives fail in the community, those with limited appeal were identified since there was insufficient support to sustain interest in them.

Representative of community concerns: The group's process began with a community forum. The action plan is based on the concerns of the community. This has legitimized the initiative in the community and forms the basis of the group's appeals for community support and involvement. The thought and care being exercised in the planning for the next series of community consultations and community-wide forum demonstrates the importance of including the concerns of all segments of the community.

Visibility: Having a high profile coordinator as well as a visible presence in the community is very important to the sustainability of this initiative. The community newsletters/bulletins were seen as a very useful and important way of keeping the group and its projects before community residents. Having an office on the main street is also important. People feel they can walk in, express their concerns, know that they will be taken seriously and that something will be done. They also know that the coordinator is there and accessible.

Cooperative movement and a history of volunteering: This is a hallmark of this community. They have an expectation of helping each other and have learned to meet their own needs. The fact that this is a minority community that has had to struggle to keep its identity contributes to the sense of community and reinforces the collective spirit and the history of volunteerism.

Partnership and personal relationships: People in this community know each other and have worked with each other for a long time. They have developed a level of trust that comes from living in a small community and facing common challenges. The personal transcends the professional in this community and people work together to achieve collective goals.

Demonstration of early successes: Along with visibility, the demonstration of early success was seen as important. The "talking" at the community forum was quickly translated into action. People see things happening which lends credibility to the initiative and a willingness to invest more time and energy.

Sustainability Site Report: Community C

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY

There are about 1,400 people living in this northerly First Nations community, including more than 800 young people under the age of 16.

This community has had a long history of working to address community problems, beginning in the 1970s. In the late 1970s, this community was regarded as a very violent community. Since that time, community members have worked to successfully reduce their crime problems, though they agree that they still face significant issues.

In recent years, the community has further developed its governance structures. There is local responsibility for education and for the delivery of health and welfare supports. It has worked to reduce substance use and abuse — a problem concerning many members of the community, including its elders and other community leaders. They have built a Band office, a school, a health centre, and elder housing. A skating arena was also recently built and the community now has an active hockey program, which involves young people as well as adults.

WHAT CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES ARE THEY TRYING TO SUSTAIN?

Background

Currently, crime prevention activities are led by the community Justice Committee, which evolved out of the community's concern for developing appropriate approaches to young offenders issues. The Justice Committee originally developed programming through the Police Board but was transferred to the volunteer-driven Justice Committee. The experiences of the Justice Committee led to the focus on crime prevention and youth. The committee found they were seeing the same youth again and again and that these youth were experiencing multiple problems in their lives. They also noted a cultural tradition of being responsible for their children and youth. Their goals were to prevent further criminal involvement by youth and to ensure that the community was safe. They adopted a philosophy of healing a family and a community not just an individual young person, and they hired a part-time crime prevention coordinator.

They began by reviewing their local crime situation and noted that property crime, assaults, and incidents of impaired driving were common. Two specific forms of violence were of particular concern: bullying in school — youth-on-youth violence — and family violence. They also found that much of the property crime was being committed by youth. These crimes related, in part, to boredom and a lack of community activities for youth.

The needs of youth and the problems facing them became the main focus of the Committee's activity. The initiative took a broad view of the needs of youth and included the school, health, family and child services, and recreation. Crime prevention activities have been quite broad including training and education programs, youth ride-alongs with

the police, mediation (alternate measures), visitation and support programs for youth in custody, parenting camp for young parents, recreational camps on the land, and recreational activities (hockey, Family Fun Days, After-school Club). The focus on youth was shared not only by those who were working in crime prevention but by other groups as well — a Youth Council was set up with a youth leader, there was a youth conference, and a youth wellness initiative. In addition, the Band Council developed the Youth of the Year Award.

In addition to crime prevention through social development, the Band Council has also developed some target hardening approaches. They have passed a noise by-law, to reduce problems related to parties; a youth curfew by-law, which is more informal; the Family Service Guidelines are used to pick up youth out late at night; and traffic and zoning by-laws to reduce other conflicts. They also hired four individuals to conduct security patrols.

The Nature of Their Sustainable Activities

The Justice Committee and the crime prevention worker have undertaken a number of projects, events and initiatives. What has persisted is the effort to achieve a coordinated response to youth and youth needs. To date, they have established a commitment to being youth-focused and to having a long-term process of change. This commitment to youth has been an outgrowth of a philosophy of accepting responsibility. This includes taking responsibility for events in the community and having individuals accept personal responsibility for wellness. This, they believe, has led to decreased criminalization of offenders and to a more humanized response. The Committee first built informal and later more formal ties with other organizations in the community. The committee has ties to the Band Council through the Councillor responsible for justice issues, they have ties to health and welfare through the Brighter Futures worker, they have invited workers from family services and the Health Centre to participate. They have liaised with the school through the current justice coordinator.

The approach to crime stresses alternatives to the criminal justice system for dealing with "crime" problems. This includes a belief that many problems cannot be resolved by going through the formal criminal justice system. Crime is viewed as having multiple causes and being related to both the family and community conditions.

The Role of Project Funding

Projects have been a part of the work of this Committee. However, projects are limited and tend not to persist after funding has stopped. In contrast, the philosophy of accepting responsibility and the development of ties to other professionals is persistent. Projects, however, have value for a number of reasons. Projects are more short-term and they provide opportunities to achieve successes. This, in turn, helps validate crime prevention efforts, maintains the commitment of workers, and attracts others to the initiative. Projects are also useful in addressing community deficits and meeting the needs of individuals. The programs are designed to address immediate needs and/or to provide skills and knowledge necessary for long-term effects. This includes projects such as the youth

cultural and parenting camps. In addition, projects such as Family Fun Days, which ran between Christmas and New Years, led to a complete reduction in break-ins during that period. The bullying programs and other educational programs have built awareness and knowledge — precursors to future endeavours and to the goal of long-term change.

HOW HAS THIS COMMUNITY SUSTAINED ITS CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITY?

The Organizational Structures

The crime prevention activity is based in the Justice Committee. The Committee has a part-time justice coordinator and have hired a crime prevention worker to oversee the crime prevention work. The justice coordinator is part of the Band's commitment to increasing responsibility for justice issues and has core funding for the coordinator's position. The rest of the committee are volunteers with the exception of the Band Councillor responsible for justice. The participation of the Councillor gives the Committee access to the Band Council and is a conduit for information about activities, achievements and plans for the future. The committee has encouraged others to volunteer for the committee and has thus developed ties to the police, health and family services areas. They have also had the justice coordinator join the school committee providing a liaison with the school administration. The process involves gradually building up connections and support. The committee has formed an inter-agency committee to share information and are using it to develop a shared vision, plans and new projects. This has also become a site for information exchange, which is assisting in establishing more partnerships.

The Processes

The Justice Committee has primary responsibility for the mediation program. This program generates funds through room rentals and focuses on providing alternatives to the formal criminal justice system as a means of dealing with crime in the community. This role provides the committee with information on crime and crime-related concerns and is used to assess what needs to be done in the long and short terms and to begin the process of generating support (human, in-kind and financial). Inter-agency meetings are also sites for information flow with other groups and to further generate support. The school liaison brings the school into the mix and has provided an important site for youth related issues. There is also regular liaison with the Police Management Board and networking with the local RCMP members who also participate in various crime prevention activities within the community, e.g., playing hockey.

The Partnerships

The Justice Committee has begun to actively pursue partnerships. Their initial activity was aimed at raising awareness and building support for crime prevention and for a social development approach to it. This led to a number of projects and activities designed to raise the profile of crime prevention in the community. The next step in building partnerships has been to integrate members from different sectors into the Justice Committee and to integrate members of the Justice Committee into committees of other

sectors. The increased awareness of the need for crime prevention and the immediate successes have helped make this happen. To date partnerships have begun to emerge in a more formal manner with:

- Police
- Health
- Family services
- Band Council
- Recreation
- Youth and Youth Council
- Community members (coaching volunteers, Blue Light Program volunteers)
- Schools (just emerging).

The Resources

The Justice Committee developed the crime prevention initiative but their primary work was to deal with alternatives to the formal criminal justice system (mediation) and to oversee the mediation agreements. The committee received funding from the NCPC and from the Band. They used project funding to hire the crime prevention coordinator and to lay the foundations of the awareness campaign. Most of the members were volunteers but the coordinator was paid. They had a small sum of money from rental fees for the mediations and they were using this as dedicated money. Project funding was used to develop programs that the committee hoped to turn over to the professionals and volunteers in various sectors to continue them. The Band also provided office space and considerable in-kind support — photocopying, telephones and office supplies.

The Justice Committee members were concerned about resources. They felt that although considerable change had occurred they needed more time to develop the crime prevention strategy and to develop projects that could become self-sustaining. They found year-to-year funding problematic. They were never certain what they could or could not do each year and they spent considerable time looking for alternative sources of funding.

WHAT WERE THE KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS?

Leadership: This was core to the project's success in that it drove the process and assisted in getting many others involved. Good leadership motivated others to get involved and kept the volunteers working in the face of opposition, by some community members, to investing so much time and money in youth in conflict with the law. There was also a strong sense of mutual support among members of the Justice Committee that enabled them to work through various problems and issues.

Commitment: The Committee agreed that without the dedication of the coordinator and the volunteers the process would not have been able to proceed.

Early successes: These successes helped validate the efforts to reduce crime and also helped build commitment to crime prevention within the community and among volunteers.

Skills/knowledge/awareness: These were a critical part of the process. Before crime prevention could become part of the community's approach to crime people had to be made aware of approaches to crime prevention (social development and target hardening). Skills development was needed to lead programs and to establish a base of trained individuals who could, in turn, train others.

Resources: Resources were critical in that they permitted the hiring of the justice coordinator and the crime prevention worker. They also were essential for the various projects that the Justice Committee had sponsored.

Sustainability Site Report: Community D

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY

This medium-sized port city has a population of more than 120,000 residents, living within a 50-km radius. The city serves as the regional centre for a large surrounding catchment area. Each year, approximately 3,400 individuals are released into this community from correctional institutions in the region.

At a 1995 meeting organized by the local lead agency, 60 representatives from various sectors identified the need for youth and family programs in this community. Youth crime, including rising rates of youth violence, was identified as a serious concern. Focus group participants also emphasized the lack of resources for these young people and their families. Bullying, dating violence and family violence were also identified as community concerns.

WHAT CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES ARE THEY TRYING TO SUSTAIN?

Background

This initiative began as a result of the 1995 meeting organized by the local lead agency. A steering committee was established that included ten of the individuals who were at the workshop. The Executive Director of the lead agency was instrumental in getting the initiative off the ground. He said publicly that if the community wanted more programs for youth and families, they would have to provide the necessary resources. He said he started with his own agency. He said he would not ask others to do things that he himself was not prepared to do. With this in mind, he approached his 40 staff members and asked them to volunteer a certain number of hours to the project. Twenty staff members agreed to volunteer. With this start, an additional 20 volunteers were recruited from the community. For a variety of reasons, a separate entity (the Centre) was established to run the youth and family programs.

The Centre provides educational and therapeutic programs for youth and their families as well as high quality training to professional caregivers in the community. They began with a series of cognitive behavioural programming including anger management for both young people and their parents as well as a family nurturing program that is designed to help family functioning and provide support. As the initiative developed, the Centre was asked by various community members and groups to try to meet additional needs. In response, a series of other programs have been developed and offered. These include a program which works on comprehensive social and emotional skill development; a drug awareness program; a summer workshop program which provides skills, experience and opportunities for youth; a shoplifting and theft deterrence program; a relapse prevention program aimed at those that in the past have been in conflict with the law; and a youth justice system and process program which educates youth and their parents about the operation of the youth justice system. The Centre is in the process of adding a number of new programs, including an anti-bullying/anti-hate program; a lying and stealing deterrence program; a

responsible thinking program; and a family violence awareness and violence prevention program.

In addition to this cognitive behavioural programming, the Centre also offers a family support group that helps the family members of individuals who have been incarcerated come together for support and to learn life skills. An institutional visitation program is also available which helps family members visit their incarcerated relatives. The correctional institution is quite a distance away making visits difficult for some members of the community. The Centre also offers an Intensive Social Learning Integration and Family Support (Alternative School) for youth waiting to be reinstated into mainstream schooling. They offer services in schools and provide a youth internship program that focuses on skills enhancement and work experience for young people.

The Nature of Their Sustainable Activities

The activities provided by the Centre respond directly to needs identified by the community or to specific requests for programs by community groups or agencies such as schools. Once needs have been identified, Centre staff conducts research to determine if there are any existing programs that are appropriate. They have worked with representatives from the Correctional Service of Canada to identify programs that have been evaluated and found successful. Many of these programs are based on cognitive learning principles. Funding is sought to purchase appropriate programs or to send volunteers for training in the delivery of a specific program. If no program can be found to meet a particular need, the Centre's staff develop their own program then pay professional social workers in the community to certify their program.

The bottom line with all Centre programs is that they are developed in response to an identified need and they are premised on the fact that members of the community feel strongly enough about the program to provide the physical and human resources to offer the programs. The little funding that is needed is used to purchase established programs, program materials (booklets, etc.) or to send staff for training in a particular program. This roots these programs in the community because they could not operate without considerable community support.

The Role of Project Funding

Projects are a means of providing the funds to purchase the required programs, to pay for certification of programs developed locally, to pay for training or to pay for program materials. As such, the financial requirements of the Centre are really only a fraction of the value-added by the Centre to the community. A large list of community, provincial and federal funders has been developed by the Centre. They have a policy of only seeking support from a funder every second year so as not to burden any funder unduly. They also do not ask for funding to pay for meeting spaces or staff salaries. This contributes immensely to their ability to raise funds since they can show their supporters how their funds are being spent. They can also provide evidence of significant in-kind support from the community. Finally, they can demonstrate that after initial start-up funding, the financial

requirements of the program are minimal. These smaller funds are much easier to solicit on an ongoing basis since the organizations approached for these monies know specifically what they are for.

HOW HAS THIS COMMUNITY SUSTAINED ITS CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITY?

The Organizational Structures

The Centre has an advisory committee but is the responsibility of the lead agency and its Board of Directors. The lead agency has a long history of service in this community and the support of numerous community agencies and organizations. All of the Centre activities are approved by the lead agency's Board of Directors and they are under the supervision of the Executive Director.

The Processes

There is no formal process in place for identifying community needs. This issue was pursued in the focus group sessions as well as in the interviews. The explanation about needs identification that was given suggests that Centre volunteers are deeply enmeshed in their community and in touch with their clients and colleagues. Requests for new or additional programs are either made directly to the Centre or come through volunteers delivering the programs.

The Partnerships

The Centre boasts an impressive list of partners. When questions were raised about "turf" issues among agencies providing services to similar segments of the population, the Centre insists they do not duplicate existing services. Centre staff will look for existing services to meet identified needs and refer clients to these existing services. The Centre will also support their colleagues in fundraising and professional advice if requested. Focus group members stressed the lack of competitiveness in the community in this regard as well as the supportive role played by the Centre.

The Resources

The community itself provides most of the resources required to operate Centre programs. This includes the physical space in which the programs are run and the volunteers that actually deliver the programs. As a result, the need for financial resources is limited to one-time start-up costs to find or develop an appropriate program and the costs to train volunteers to administer it. The ongoing costs involved are the costs associated with program materials and these are minimal. The Centre has a long list of potential and past funders who are approached sparingly and for small funds to pay for specified items such as program materials. While securing ongoing funding is a challenge, this organization has reduced this considerably compared with other projects or initiatives that require much greater levels of funding.

WHAT WERE THE KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS?

Leadership: The local lead agency has provided long-term, consistent and visionary leadership. They have built trust in the community and especially with their partners.

Meaningful programs: The Centre's programs meet real needs in the community and are able to attract volunteers and support as a result.

Effective programs: The programs are sensitive to the needs of the recipients and delivered in a respectful way. This has generated a high degree of satisfaction among those served and encouraged many to become program volunteers.

Flexibility: The Centre is able to monitor their programs and adapt quickly to changing needs. This keeps them relevant.

Commitment: Partners are committed to working together for the betterment of the community.

Trust: The Centre has credibility with the community as well as with other service providers and funding agencies.

Character: The Centre has a strong commitment to its clients and acts with integrity in the community. They put their clients first and do what it takes to meet community needs. This is the basis of the trust others have in them.

Resources: The Centre is able to generate in-kind and financial support on an ongoing basis. They have a waiting list of volunteers as well as a waiting list for their programs. They also have a unique strategy for raising the funds they need including raising some funds by providing much needed professional training to other service professionals in the community.

Sustainability Site Report: Community E

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY

There are about 12,000 residents in this medium-sized town, including more than 2,000 children and youth aged 0 to 18 years. The population is primarily middle- to upper-middle class due, in part, to the lack of affordable housing for lower-income families. The town is spread out and lacks a public transit system, which makes it difficult for young people to get around.

Initial concerns were with making this community a better place for young people to live. There were few serious crime problems — drug and alcohol use and bush parties raised concerns — but youth, for the most part, were not really very visible in the community.

In response to issues raised by youth, the community decided to conduct a survey among local young people. The survey revealed that many of the assets that support the positive development and well-being of youth were lacking in this community.

WHAT CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES ARE THEY TRYING TO SUSTAIN?

Background

Young people in this community have been active in the past. They had successfully petitioned their City Council for a skateboard park. The current initiative began with a youth-led appeal to a voluntary organization of business and professional leaders for funding for a leadership camp. This camp was designed to train youth for a leadership role within the schools and the wider community. The presentation to this voluntary organization resulted in the camp being funded. The issues raised by the youth in the presentation caused a number of the adults present to reflect on what they had been told about the concerns of young people in the community. Several had been exposed to the Search Institute materials on community asset building. A number of active community members were consulted in advance of a community-wide meeting being called. The case for action was made and a plan was developed to implement a community asset survey. This led to the establishment of the Assets Development Initiative (ADI). A survey of the youth in the community was conducted which revealed that 18 of the 40 developmental assets identified by the Search Institute were weak in the community. Specifically, the survey showed that youth felt isolated, devalued and lacked intergenerational contacts. In addition, youth did not feel safe in their schools and felt unwelcome in the wider community.

The results of the survey were widely shared and served as the basis for a community-wide mobilization. The municipality covered the cost of a part-time coordinator and provided office space in city hall. The coordinator proved to be a dedicated and energetic force in the community who was able to garner the support of the city and local voluntary groups. The ADI generated a number of programs intended to build assets in the community. These included a speakers club for youth, leadership classes within the high school, a greeters program that brought seniors into the schools, and a breakfast club. As the asset building continued, the need for more recreational opportunities in the community lead to the establishment of a local club for young people in the city. The building was donated by the city and it was renovated with donated materials and volunteer labour. As energy was directed at establishing the club for young people, the ADI moved into the background. The club was to assume the activities previously overseen by the ADI. As this was happening, funding for the coordinator ended. The coordinator turned her attention to helping to develop a new crime prevention program that involved the business community. With some funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre, local Chamber of Commerce members have started a program that focuses on building entrepreneurial skills with high-risk youth. The new program involves operating two retail outlets and teaches young people various retail skills including pricing, advertising, purchasing, marketing and customer service. It brings together an instructional and a "hands-on" component and it has the potential to generate funds to support other youth initiatives in the community including the club.

This community is working to have a community that values youth and that responds to young people's concerns and needs on an ongoing basis. Current concerns include developing community assets, as these relate to youth. These assets encompass issues related to respect for youth, youth employment and to spaces that are youth-friendly. The community has identified a number of needs and has begun addressing them. They have done this by involving youth and making them feel empowered to act within the community. Public awareness of youth issues has also increased through educating adults in the community about the importance and necessity of including youth in the decision-making process. Community meetings were held at the outset of this project to increase awareness of the needs of youth and to garner support for the asset development initiative. As well, information was communicated through the local press and school newsletters.

The Nature of Their Sustainable Activities

The activities to date have been funded from a number of sources: service clubs, the municipality and federal funding. The city has made an ongoing commitment to provide space for the club and there is some discussion about what its future role will be with respect to the hiring of a coordinator. The service clubs provide funds on a project-by-project basis. Programs that require little funding, such as the greeters program, are maintained through the efforts of volunteers. One potential way of sustaining community activities in this area is through the retail business operation that has just been started. The operation has the potential to yield profits that could be directed toward maintaining a coordinator. This would make the community-wide asset development process highly sustainable.

Overall, expenses are quite low with projects being supported by volunteer labour. A major requirement is a coordinator to ensure effective communication and coordination of activities. A coordinator could also ensure that periodic reviews of the assets development approach are undertaken. This is important since the community has based its activities on building assets related to young people.

The Role of Project Funding

Projects in this community are smaller aspects of the overall plan to build assets. Projects have time frames appropriate to the specific issue and are maintained or end based on the needs at the time. Projects work in relative isolation from one another but are loosely connected through ADI and the former coordinator. What unites the different projects is the ultimate goal of building the assets of local youth. They are a means to meet a particular need (both short-term needs and long-term needs) and not the ultimate goal.

HOW HAS THIS COMMUNITY SUSTAINED ITS CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITY?

The Organizational Structures

Participants have included:

- Police
- Schools
- Business community
- Service clubs
- Youth
- Community members
- Community Health Committee
- Child and Youth Committee

Organizational structure is a key concern in this community. The original structure was an independent organization with a part-time, paid coordinator who brought together stakeholders from within the community. The committee took its cue from the assets survey and decided on activities that then operated relatively independently. Information from the projects flowed through the ADI committee to other projects and to the community at large. Information flow allowed the central group involved in the ADI to ensure that needs were being met or that a project had been successfully completed.

The club for young people was a major initiative and it was originally envisioned that it would assume responsibility for overseeing youth-related activities in the community. Funding for the original ADI coordinator ended and the individual moved on to a new project funded with seed money from the National Crime Prevention Centre. The results are now being reviewed. It was noted that the club was busy trying to get their own programming up and running leaving little time for the ADI activities. As a result, there has been some slippage in the ADI programs with the weakening of the leadership classes and disappearance of the youth speakers groups. Community leaders have begun to consider

the need to re-establish an overview committee for the ADI and to hire a new coordinator. This committee would not only oversee current and future initiatives but would also redo the assets survey to assess progress to date and current concerns.

The Processes

This community set goals and priorities by using an assets survey. The assets are factors necessary for young people to make a successful transition to adulthood. The community conducted a survey of their youth in 1998 and found that they had, on average, fewer than 18 of the 40 assets needed. An ADI committee was formed to develop action plans to address these shortcomings and to build assets in the community. The ADI worked in cooperation with existing programs such as a lunch program at a local church. They also worked on developing low cost programs such as the greeters program and the speakers club in the schools. Then, they began to work on establishing the club with the hope that it would assume the asset development responsibilities that the ADI had started.

The Partnerships

Partnerships are developed in two ways in this initiative. First, the organizing committee has developed partnerships with the police, schools, youth, businesses, service clubs, the municipality and the health sector. These partnerships are focused on setting goals and developing action plans. There are also partnerships within specific projects. These include some of the organizing partners as well as seniors, parents' groups, the local Child and Youth Committee and City Councillors.

Partnerships at the committee level involve coordination of activities. Those within projects and between the projects and other groups within the community involve consultation.

The Resources

Resources are a critical concern in the community. While most of their projects have minimal running costs and can be maintained, an umbrella committee is critical for ensuring that new projects are initiated and ongoing projects continue to receive information and feedback. The shift to the club and the development of support for that Club through the National Crime Prevention Centre project funding has both promises and challenges. The project has been extremely successful, though it is in the early stages. It has the potential to provide funds to support the club. At this time, however, the club is not able to operate their own programs while coordinating a city-wide assets development initiative. Funding a coordinator requires about $20,000 per year and the coordinating committee would require office space. These resources remain a challenge and will be critical to the future sustainability of the initiative.

WHAT WERE THE KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS?

Youth involvement: Young people provided the initial impetus for action in this community by approaching a local voluntary organization of business and professional leaders about the leadership camp and by outlining the challenges facing youth in this community. They continue to play a central role in the asset building activities underway in the community.

Coordinator: The coordinator position is key to (a) coordinate activities and (b) connect individuals and organizations and sustain the information flow.

Leadership: There are a number of individuals who are very active in the community. Their ongoing support is required. This includes young people, community residents, representatives of various agencies such as the schools and health services, members of the business community and local politicians.

Organizing committee: The committee is key to overseeing and guiding activities but it operates at arms length — it does not run projects and activities but it provides information and ideas about what needs to be done.

Partnerships: Community partnerships bring in the right people to the projects and the committee.

Ongoing assessment of needs: It is important to redo the assets survey and bring a new generation of youth into the initiative.

Communication: Awareness and information flow are vital processes to the success of a community initiative such as this.

Timing: This initiative was able to involve the right people at the right time. The youth coming forward when they did helped to identify the issue and the leaders who became involved had a vision of what needed to be done. The local climate was ripe for action to be taken.

Profile: The asset survey garnerd considerable attention in a community that saw itself as well off and devoid of youth problems. It provided a report card of sorts for the community as a whole and provided a visible and tangible yardstick against which this community could publicly measure itself.

Parental support: The initiative benefited from the involvement and support of parents who took the results of the assets survey as an indication of the existence of a serious concern for young people in the community.

Sustainability Site Report: Community F

Overview of the Community

Community F is a social housing community (48 units) in a northerly centre with a population of approximately 8,655. The social housing community consists of several columns of row houses, with little space between the units. When it was initially built, it did not include any communal "spaces" or social or recreational facilities on site. As a result of the community activities, it now has two housing units that have been converted into a communal space for meetings, programs and recreation. In addition, there is now some space for outdoor recreation. The social housing community is on the periphery of the larger community, which is spread out along a narrow strip of land next to the river. Children are bussed to school, however, there are no other public transportation services in the town.

WHAT CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES ARE THEY TRYING TO SUSTAIN?

Background

Approximately 10 years ago (in the early 1990s) the community was experiencing a number of problems, including vandalism, substance abuse, personal safety of residents and child neglect. The community was known as a 'problem' area of town. During that time, up to 300 people were reported to be living in the community. There was no place for recreation and virtually no services in the community. Non-residents, who would come to the social housing community to hang out, were exacerbating the problem.

There were several attempts at neighbourhood improvement and neighbourhood watch initiatives but these early initiatives were not well received by residents and fizzled out. In 1993 there was a change. There had been reports of children in the area being sexually abused. These children were acting out at other children in the community. On the advice of a local social worker, a group of concerned parents got together in one of the housing units to discuss what to do. At that meeting, a number of issues and concerns were explored. The parents quickly focussed on the need to establish a safe place for children to play. They thought that a good place to start would be to find a way to encourage parents and children to spend more time together doing constructive fun things.

This group of parents approached a town crime prevention committee for some help. They organized a family organized street dance, invited the local RCMP as well as some town members interested in crime prevention. The police made their presence known and also sought to engage children by bringing along their safety bear. The street dance had activities for children and encouraged parents to do activities with their children, such as sack races. At that time there were about 300 people living in the community, and what was surprising to organizers, was that the majority people did take part. This boosted the confidence of the organizers (originally 6) and they approached the provincial housing authority to see if they could establish a place for children to play, such as a basketball court. The housing authority manager introduced them to idea of a tenants' association

and also helped to establish a basketball court. Throughout the summer, the community members organized a lot of short-term activities, such as neighbourhood clean ups. More and more people became interested in improving the community.

A turning point occurred in the fall of 1993, when the housing authority paid for several of the community organizers to attend a tenants' association conference in Newfoundland. With the knowledge gained at this conference, and with the support of the housing authority, they held an election and created a tenants association. This conference participation also underscored the importance of tenants' ownership for problem solving, etc. This group did a lot of talking and built connections with others. They wanted to ensure that tenants always have control and ensure that tenants have an equal say.

At this point, the community could only have outdoor activities. If they needed to have a meeting, it took place in somebody's living room. During the winter, they organized friendly contests such as window decorating, and held some fundraising activities (mostly within the community itself) so that they could give out prizes. They also began to seek out donations from local businesses (e.g., grocers and the local garage). They also held smaller-scale activities, such as story time for small children. In the spring, they resumed activities such as Easter egg hunts and family fun days.

They found that the children and youth responded positively. They were really happy to have something positive to do, and the organizers made efforts to include youth by having special events for them, such as hockey shoots (with an autographed hockey stick for a prize). They also held activities that engaged parents and children (e.g., hoolla hoop contests between parents and children).

As a result of these activities, people living in the community started to take pride in their neighbourhood. For example, young people who had been breaking bottles began to help with the cleanup. The stigmatization that people living in the community felt from others living in their town began to dissipate. People started to feel pride in the community, however it is still an ongoing challenge to shift attitudes about the community.

One of the impediments to activities was the lack of "community" physical space: there were no outdoor recreational spaces for children and families to play and no indoor space for activities, meetings, etc. The tenants' association worked with a tenants' association officer, who helped them to develop a proposal to renovate a unit. However, the resources weren't available for this renovation. Eventually the housing authority allowed them to use one of the units. Currently the tenants' association has access to two joined units, which provides space for meetings and programming.

A Community Centre Board was established in spring of 1998, which is now a 15-member board, which follows the format of other municipal community centres. The first board, elected in spring 1998, consisted of nine tenants and six individuals from the larger community (including a representative from the Friendship Centre, the community-wide crime prevention committee, RCMP, Mennonite Central Committee, and local literacy organizations).

Initially, they were able to access some resources for summer programming, including some summer students to help with children's activities. The current programming has evolved to include a Brown Bag breakfast program for children living in the social housing units (as well as a couple of other children from neighbouring housing who take the same school bus); an after school program and a literacy program. There are a variety of resource materials at the centre and it also has several computers available for community use, through an Industry Canada Program. They have accessed NCPC funding for youth recreation activities, including those at the centre as well as to take them to different recreation facilities around town — weight-lifting, swimming pool. The community's priorities are the tenants living within the community, however there are sometimes other participants from the surrounding neighbourhood who participate as well. Some education on issues such as alcohol and drug abuse were integrated into the recreational programming.

Volunteers undertake the majority of these activities. For example, one of the residents is always available at the centre when it is open. Several local residents prepare and distribute the brown bags for the Breakfast Program. As of January 2003, the community has obtained funding for a program coordinator through the housing authority.

The Nature of Their Sustainable Activities

All the activities undertaken by the community partnership were designed to make the housing community a safer place for children and families and a better place to live. The activities brought community members together. The key was to make the housing community a place in which people want to live, to ensure that tenants retained ownership of what was happening in their communities, and to make the community more suitable for children by tapping into available resources, etc. The community has been able to engage others from outside the community (former residents as well as other agencies) in its community board.

The Role of Project Funding

Project funding enabled residents to undertake a broader range of activities to engage children and youth, in particular, in the area of recreation.

HOW HAS THIS COMMUNITY SUSTAINED ITS CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITY?

The Organizational Structures

This community has an active Tenants' Association and Community Centre Board. Some members have been participating in these structures since the beginning. Volunteer efforts are a key component. As of 2003, the community will have a paid coordinator.

The Processes

This community used very open and collaborative approaches, with a "never give up" and "learn as you go" way of doing things. The Association and Board accept residents for who they are – there is no judging of character involved. Their philosophy is that there is a place for everyone – and each person has something to offer the community. While there are several residents who have been with this initiative from the beginning, there is a shared sense of leadership among those who participate in the tenants' association and the community board. All of the members of these boards are dedicated to community improvement. Communication occurs with other residents on an ongoing, regular basis.

The Partnerships

The community has made a number of efforts to establish partnerships and to engage others, such as local businesses, in their activities. The community, which was stigmatized by the broader community for a long time, has a strong sense of "we did it – and will continue to do it on our own". Some partnerships are more active than others. For example, at the beginning, the police were actively involved in this community. The community remains keen on police involvement, however from a policing perspective, it would appear that the community is no longer on the radar screen as a crime problem. Currently an individual who sits on the Community Centre Board is a civilian member of the RCMP, however she does not sit as an official RCMP representative.

The Resources

This community has utilized project funding from a variety of sources (e.g., NCPC, HRDC, Industry Canada) and has received some donations from local businesses for activities. The housing authority provides meeting and recreation space, and as of 2003, project coordinator funding. The community relies heavily on volunteers from within the community, as well as from outside the community.

WHAT WERE THE KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS?

Voluntarism: There is a strong sense of belonging and a corps of residents who volunteer their time. There are a number of tenants who have participated as volunteers for many years. One tenant, who moved out of the community still volunteers and is still considered part of the community.

Leadership: This community has demonstrated long-term, consistent leadership, which in turn has helped to build trust and connections among residents and partners.

Access to knowledge: In its early stages, getting access to information on the rights of tenants, learning about how tenants' associations and community boards work, was extremely helpful in moving forward.

Trust and Respect: The tenants' association and board demonstrate an open, trusting, non-judgemental approach. This has also contributed to a sense of safety.

Effective Leverage of Resources: The community was able to access varied sources of funding and indicated that they demonstrate good capacity to "stretch" project resources e.g., through careful shopping for program supplies.