



Nova Scotia's Approach to Crime Prevention: 2012-13 Actions

PARTNERSHIPS:

Crime Prevention Advisory Circle: Working together toward a common purpose

The Province's actions to reduce and prevent crime will be supported through a new Crime Prevention

Advisory Circle. The Advisory Circle will consider how government can combine resources to deliver crime prevention efforts. The Advisory Circle will identify actions that can make a positive impact in communities in Nova Scotia highlight best practices used in other areas of the country and abroad and identify ways to

support communities.

BUILDING OUR CAPACITY TO RESPOND THROUGH RESTORATIVE APPROACHES:

Restorative Practices in Schools: Keeping students in school and out of crime

Restorative approaches put the emphasis on the wrong done to a person as well as the wrong done to the community. Individuals must accept responsibility for their actions and be actively involved in improving the situation. The restorative approach has broad application beyond the criminal justice system. The use of

restorative approaches in schools in North America and Europe has revealed the critical link between

restorative responses and school attachment. This is vital – staying attached and completing school greatly improves students' odds of future success and greatly reduces their odds of participating in crime in the future. We will develop a restorative approaches initiative for our school system. We will begin by developing the tools and resources that Nova Scotia's school administrators need to implement a restorative approach in schools.

Dalhousie Restorative Responses Project: An alternative for student conduct issues

Dalhousie University, the province and Halifax Regional Police are partnering to pilot the nation's first

comprehensive restorative program for university students. The program will give students an

opportunity to accept responsibility for and understand the effect of their actions. Referrals can be made by police under the Adult Restorative Justice Pilot guidelines as well as through the residence life program.

Adult Pilots for the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program: New accountability for adults

Building on the proven success of the Nova Scotia Restorative Justice Program for 12- to-17-year-olds, we will continue to test Nova Scotia's first adult pilot programs. Restorative Justice agencies and correctional services officers will continue to work together at the two pilot sites in Colchester/East Hants and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. The pilots will be evaluated this year.

Restorative Practices for Incarcerated Youth: Promoting accountability and interpersonal skills

The Nova Scotia Youth Facility will pilot a restorative practices project for youth in the facility. Partnerships will be established with a range of community and expert partners and an evaluation framework will be developed.

A New Restorative Approach to Senior Abuse: Creating early intervention options

The issues related to emotional, physical, financial abuse or neglect of vulnerable seniors are complex. Often the abuser is a caregiver or family member. Early intervention with restorative approaches can assist in holding the abuser accountable while repairing family relationships. A network of committed organizations and

individuals – including elder-law specialists, legal professionals, academic researchers, restorative practitioners and seniors – are partnering with us to develop this model.

SMART TARGETED ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES:

Regional Police Crime Analysts: Supporting strategic policing efforts

A small proportion of offenders are responsible for most criminal activity. Research suggests that 15 percent of

alleged offenders are responsible for 58 percent of all alleged crime in Canada. For this reason, it makes sense to focus efforts on active offenders. The Province will support this through the development of regional police crime analysts to ensure police actions are informed by monitoring crime trends and patterns.

Working Together to Respond to Gun Violence: Sharing knowledge and planning a path

In May 2012, the province and key community partners are hosting a knowledge exchange event to explore

responses to gun violence and will begin work on implementing the internationally respected Cease Fire Chicago program, which has had success in reducing gun-related violence in Chicago communities by as much as 67 percent.

Strengthening road safety efforts: We all share a responsibility to be safe

We all share a responsibility to be safe. Nova Scotia's Road Safety priorities include speeding, driver distraction, seatbelts and impaired driving. Road safety is a big part of community safety and is a key focus that we will be maintaining, with the support of our police partners.

TACKLING ROOT CAUSES:

Continued Commitment to the Lighthouses Program: Helping youth connect to their communities

The Lighthouses Program partners connect at-risk youth to positive adult mentors and positive social activity. In 2011-12, Nova Scotia funded 20 programs and connected with over 1,200 at-risk youth. Nova Scotia will continue to fund the program, engage more partners and develop a stable four-year funding model for the program.

Creating a Crime Prevention Planning Guide: Supporting communities with planning tools

A Community Crime Prevention Planning Guide will be developed to begin community discussion on crime prevention and to assist communities in leading a crime prevention response. Each community is different, and one size does not fit all. The guide will allow for tailoring to local issues and help define specific needs in crime prevention, to reflect the reality that every community is different.

Crime Prevention Planning for Distinct Groups: Reducing victimization and over representation

We will collaborate through the Offices of African Nova Scotian Affairs and Aboriginal Affairs and the

Mi'kmaw-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum to establish mechanisms to support communities

experiencing high crime and victimization rates. We are collaborating with community partners to develop new informational materials in a range of languages for immigrants and new Canadians.

Better Reintegration of Inmates: Preventing the cycle of reoffending

The research is clear: if we lower the chance of reoffending, we enhance community safety. That requires a planned, coordinated and supportive integration of offenders into the community. Healthy reintegration also involves healthy family life. We will collaborate with community partners to pilot a new parenting program

targeting vulnerable and high-risk populations, in both institutions and community settings. A pilot of a “Housing First” approach will also be developed, to support reintegration through safe, affordable housing and social supports.

ADDRESSING VICITMIZATION:

Nova Scotia’s Domestic Violence Action Plan: Working across government and with the community to ensure the safety of women and children

Speedy, effective support reduces the lasting impact of crime on victims, particularly in domestic violence situations. Nova Scotia has recently increased efforts in this area, launching our Domestic Violence Action Plan with 48 distinct actions designed to ensure we begin to work differently in responding to and preventing domestic violence. Key actions this year are initiatives focused on victims, perpetrators, at-risk families, youth, community and workers; creating awareness building opportunities to bring together neighbours, friends and families to learn about how they can help; and piloting the Domestic Violence Court Program to help the justice system respond more effectively to domestic violence. The successful implementation of the action plan is a key crime prevention outcome. For more information, please visit the Province’s Domestic Violence Resource Centre at www.nsdombesticviolence.ca