

Interim report for Safe Streets Initiative
MPD District #5
December, 2007

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My most important objective to date has been working to establish a collaborative working relationship among the varying Safe Streets partners. Both Community Coordinators (Paulina Jasso, 2nd MPD District and Ron Johnson, 5th MPD District) have been busy visiting programs, community-based organizations and agencies in an attempt to develop a data base of supporters, volunteers and service providers. To that end, their efforts have been very successful. Not only have they developed a data base that is specific to the 2nd and the 5th police districts, they have also established a relationship with the city-wide data base through IMPACT 211.

Accomplishments Specific to the 5th MPD District

One of the primary directives of the Safe Streets program in Milwaukee has been the inclusion of the Restorative Justice model. Through our collaborative work with the Marquette University Law School Restorative Justice Initiative, the language, philosophy and processes of restorative justice have been woven into all that we do in the districts. We work with the understanding that crime affects not only the victim and the perpetrator, but the community as a whole. Consequently, we have been busy learning and developing Community Listening Circles as a tool to engage the community in our efforts to help prevent and address the issues of crime and violence.

We are also working closely with the State Department of Corrections Probation and Parole agents to do notification hearings and circles with recent parolees. In these circles, we have included members of the community to help address issues and concerns involving crime, violence and the quality of life in Milwaukee. Community members usually include residents, victims of crime, representatives of educational programs, job developers, police, parole officers, other service providers and the clergy. In the 5th police district we have done two circles thus far. We are working with the Department of Corrections to identify serious parolees with gang membership to include in monthly circles.

Additionally, we have developed a speaker's forum at North Division High School. We meet with students every Wednesday and bring in speakers to discuss issues of concern and topics relevant to teens. We have developed a Pen Pal program with students at the Holton Street YMCA. One of the Marquette University volunteer students assigned to work in the 5th district assisted in developing a relationship with students in South Africa. It is our intention to expand the Pen Pal exchange to include students in a variety of schools in Milwaukee.

We are in the process of designing the Safe Streets law enforcement led "Call Ins", or notification hearings/circles. These Call Ins will involve gang affiliated offenders recently

released from incarceration and currently completing their sentences on parole. A law enforcement team will first talk to the offenders and then a follow-up session with other members of the community will take place in a listening Circle. The first of these Call Ins sessions will take place in January, 2008. We will assist coordinating the dialogue to link up case managers with the parolees to address their various rehabilitative needs.

Finally, in all that we do, we continue to be advocates for peace, non-violence and restorative justice. This advocacy frequently takes place in schools, community meetings, print and the electronic media. We will continue to develop our role as the “diplomats” in this process bringing together the various constituencies and facilitating the dialogue to work toward achievement of the goals of Safe Streets.