

Ronald J. Johnson
Community Coordinator
North side of Milwaukee -District # 5
2009 Report

COALITION BUILDING

Community collaboration and coalition building continues to be the strength and the anchor of the Milwaukee Safe Streets program. The community coordinator works to maintain open lines of communication and cooperation with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, block clubs and community residents and stakeholders.

Some of the agencies and programs that Safe Streets works with on a regular basis includes: the Milwaukee Public School system, the Milwaukee Police Department (districts 2 & 5), the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office and the Community prosecution program, Safe and Sound (Community Partners), the Milwaukee Boys and Girls Cubs, Northcott Neighborhood House, the JAHA Workshop, Inc., Milwaukee Urban Ecology Center, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, the Urban Faith Roundtable, Word of Hope Ministries, the Wisconsin Medical College's Violence Prevention Initiative, the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative, Wisconsin Community Services, Project Ujima, Believers Block Club, Hands Around First Street Neighborhood Association, Merrill Street Neighborhood Association, St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church, the Latino Community Center's Violence Free Zone Project, St. Vincent Catholic Church, Hepatha Lutheran Church, Church of the Living God, the God Squad, Solomon Community Church, Career Youth Development, the HOPE School, Running Rebels Community Organization, Stand Together Milwaukee, the Hillside Family Resource Center, Hands Across Milwaukee, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Harambee Ombudsman Project, River Works Development Corporation, Inner-City Development Project, the Milwaukee Urban League, Fighting Back, Inc., Inc. and other community stakeholders.

NOTIFICATION SESSIONS/COMMUNITY LISTENING CIRCLES/RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Notification sessions/community listening Circles occur each month at various locations throughout the 5th police district. These sessions are designed to give returning offenders notice of the city's no-nonsense attitude toward continued crime and violence and that the community is working in tandem with law enforcement to help improve the quality of life in the greater Milwaukee community. The concept of the community involvement in these sessions is based on a model of Restorative Justice practices. The restorative justice approach attempts to focus on victim/community needs and encourages offenders to accept responsibility for their actions and work toward restoring harm done to the community.

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A typical Circle would include the following entities: about 6-8 recently released offenders, a US Attorney, Milwaukee police officers, probation agents, clergy, resource providers, community prosecutor, community stakeholders and residents. To date, the 5th district has conducted 6 Circles; we have hosted 35 offenders and 124 community representatives each month. A Circle lasts about two hours. The locations of Circles in the 5th district include: Coffee Makes You Black, Church of the Living God, Northcott Neighborhood House, the Wisconsin Medical College's Violence Prevention office and Career Youth Development (CYD).

The program has also conducted Circles at Lloyd Street and Hopkins elementary schools working in conjunction with the Milwaukee Boys and Girls Club's Targeted Truancy Abatement program. Circles were also done at South Division High School, working in conjunction with the Latino Community Center's Violence Free Zone. The Safe Streets Community Coordinator was involved in a series of Circles at Marquette University High School. The program is currently working with the parent Coordinator at Messmer High School to conduct a series of Circles at that school this summer.

The Circles in the schools were intended to address issues of violence and student responsibility. The Circles at South Division High school centered around incidences of violence which erupted in the school between Black and Puerto Rican students. The program initially offered to do Circles with the boys in the school, but school officials insisted that we work with the girls, whom it seems, were the source of much of the tension in the school. This work, as well as the Circles with the other schools, will continue next semester.

CALL IN

During this reporting period, the Safe Streets program worked closely with the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) and the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Community Prosecutor to conduct a community "Call In" on the East side of Milwaukee in a community near the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee campus. The Call In was designed for ten young men involved in selling high quality marijuana out of homes and apartments in their UWM neighborhood and the subsequent home invasions and robberies which resulted. The MPD and the DA's office conducted the arrests and prepared the cases, then worked closely with the Community Coordinator to involve participation from neighborhood associations (Merrill Street), the Urban Ecology Center and a local church (Point of Grace) to bring resident and community stakeholders participation to the process.

The Call In was held in the auditorium at Columbia St. Mary's Hospital on the UWM campus. City of Milwaukee Mayor, Tom Barrett, Milwaukee District Attorney John Chisholm and District Commander

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Anthony Smith were present to address the offenders and the audience of community residents. Members of the community also spoke. Approximately 100 people were present at the Call In. The next week, a restorative Justice Community Listening Circle was held for the offenders and members of the community at the Point of Grace Lutheran Church. The safe Streets program and Keisha Turner from the Community Prosecutors office continues work with the offenders including case managing their community service requirements.

COMMUNITY ACTION

The program works collaboratively with many community initiatives such as the Silver Spring Neighborhood Association's Violence Prevention March for Peace and SEEDS of the Future's Stop the violence March and Rally. The community coordinator sits on the Asset Development committee with the Riverworks Development Corporation and the Juneteenth Day security committee at Northcott Neighborhood House.

In early spring of this year, Safe Streets worked with the Community Prosecutor, the MPD and Safe and Sound Community Partners and organized a community Resource fair for Parents and youth. The event was held at Incarnation Lutheran Church and hosted approximately 20 resource providers. Those in attendance included: The Milwaukee Public schools, Milwaukee Boys and girls Clubs, the Milwaukee Area workforce Investment Board (MAWIB) , MPD, Career Youth Development, the Milwaukee Health Department, the YMCA, Milwaukee Job Development, Inc., Believers Block Club, Hand around First Street Block Club and others. The MAWIB disseminated over 400 summer youth job applications during the Resource fair.

The Safe Streets program also worked collaboratively with law enforcement and the community to put on a community Resource Fair at the Children's Outing Association's Golden Center. Many community resource providers were present, MPD conducted a public role call outside and scores of residents showed up to sign up for summer activities and job opportunities and to eat the free food being cooked and served by area churches and Milwaukee police officers.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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