Criminologie

Why Not Crime Prevention? An Evidence-based Perspective
Pourquoi pas la prévention du crime ? Une perspective canadienne
¿Por qué no la prevención del delito? Una perspectiva canadiense

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Résumé de l'article

Cet article offre un aperçu des travaux scientifiques portant sur les programmes efficaces de prévention du crime et sur leur mise en oeuvre. Les évaluations scientifiques de projets de prévention du crime qui abordent des facteurs de risque montrent fréquemment qu'ils peuvent réduire la criminalité et que, souvent, ils sont plus efficaces à le faire que les réponses habituelles de la justice pénale. Les organisations intergouvernementales s'entendent sur les étapes-clés qui sont nécessaires pour en arriver à mobiliser les organismes concernés dans la lutte contre ces facteurs de risque. Malgré les recommandations de comités parlementaires et d'un nombre croissant d'experts, la prévention du crime n'est pas encore arrivée à jouer le rôle prépondérant qui pourrait être le sien afin de réduire plus efficacement les taux de criminalité au Canada. Toutefois, la politique récente annoncée par la province de l'Alberta suggère quelques avenues par lesquelles cette résistance pourrait éventuellement être surmontée.

Why Not Crime Prevention? An Evidence-based Perspective

Lisa Monchalin

Abstract

This paper gives an overview of the literature on effective crime prevention and its implementation. Scientific evaluations of crime prevention projects that tackle risk factors often reveal that they reduce crime and are often more efficient at doing so than standard criminal justice responses. Inter-governmental organizations agree on the critical steps necessary to mobilise relevant agencies to tackle such risk factors. Despite recommendations by parliamentary committees and a growing number of experts, effective crime prevention has not achieved the prominent role that it could occupy in order to more effectively reduce rates of crime in Canada. However, the recent policy announcement by the province of Alberta may offer some ways in which this resistance might eventually be overcome.

Keywords

Crime prevention, evidence based, program implementation, Canada.

Introduction[1]

A growing body of knowledge has been developed in the area of crime prevention. There have been numerous scientific studies (Hahn, Leavitt, & Aaron, 1994; Olds et al., 1999; Schweinhart, 2005), as well as several reviews of research (Sherman et al., 1997; Sherman, Farrington, Welsh, & Layton Mackenzie, 2002; Waller, 2006) that have concluded that prevention efforts which target risk factors, successfully reduce crime[2]. In Canada in 1993, the *Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General*, also known as the *Horner Committee,* analyzed the available data and made several recommendations regarding crime prevention, concluding that, within 5

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[1] French version published in *Criminologie. L'intervention à l'aune des données probantes*, vol. 42, no 1, Spring 2009. Monchalin, L. (2009). Pourquoi pas la prévention du crime ? Une perspective canadienne. *Criminologie*, *42*(1), 115-142. https://doi.org/10.7202/029810ar

[2] If this corpus is well known in English, it is unfortunately less widely distributed in French.

years time, at least 5% of the federal criminal justice budget should be re-directed towards crime prevention efforts, and a top official should be appointed to take the lead on crime prevention (Horner, 1993).

Despite these efforts[3], we will see that little progress has been made in realising the potential for prevention to reduce crime. Further, despite an increase in the body of evidence that certain prevention strategies are effective as well as endorsements of this evidence by prestigious inter-governmental and scientific bodies, federal, provincial and municipal governments continue to invest heavily in the standard reactive systems of policing, justice and corrections. The dominant response to crime control in Canada remains deeply rooted in these three aforementioned pillars of the traditional criminal justice system and its associated concepts of deterrence and increasingly, incapacitation.

The first section of this paper discusses conclusions from scientific evaluations revealing that effective prevention is that which puts primary focus on tackling risk factors. The second section examines evidence and concepts in the new body of knowledge about the implementation of crime prevention, in particular the role of various orders of government in mobilising agencies to focus on tackling one or more of the risk factors that generate crime. In the third section, the extent to which different orders of government have invested in strategies and programs that use effective prevention to reduce crime is examined. In the final section, some conclusions are identified that may lead to greater investment in effective crime prevention.

Defining crime prevention

Before identifying practices considered to be effective in scientific literature, the notion of crime prevention must first be defined. In 2002, Cusson described the prevention of "delinquency" (the author prefers this term to crime) as focusing on the identification and subsequent reduction of the causes of crime; the hope is that preventive intervention will break one of the close links in the causal chain that would have resulted in the crime if the chain had not been broken. More recently (Cusson, Dupont, & Lemieux, 2007), this author has considered delinquency prevention

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[3] E.g. the National Crime Prevention Council (established in 1994 following a recommendation from the Standing Committee on Justice and the Solicitor General), the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (1994) and recently the Institute for the Prevention of Crime (IPC).

to be simply a proactive and non-coercive way of intervening in order to reduce the frequency and severity of criminal offenses. Over the past two decades, the meaning of the concept of crime prevention has become much broader. In this context, the reference to a classification system borrowed from the medical model made it possible to define crime prevention at three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary.

Primary prevention refers to the efforts made to adjust universal policies and living conditions, in social, educational and economic terms. It is directed to changing the conditions in the physical and social environment that can lead to crime (Brantingham, & Faust, 1976)[4]. Programs or initiatives that fall into this category build on the fairly broad link that can be established between the occurrence of the crime and certain social or environmental factors.

Secondary prevention is a "pre-crime" type intervention (and this is the angle chosen in this article). Targeting individuals and groups at risk of being accused or victimized, it is based on early detection, followed by interventions in the lives of individuals or groups considered to be at risk of being involved in a crime. Once the individuals, situations, places or opportunities at risk are identified, interventions designed to change risk factors are implemented in the hope that they can prevent certain criminal activities. Situational crime prevention is a concept that describes prevention that also occurs at the secondary level (Hastings, 1996, p. 320). Its purpose is to modify the design and organization of the physical and social environment, with the intention of making criminal opportunities more difficult to grasp, by increasing the probability of detection, reducing incentives or developing the "guardianship".

Compared to primary and secondary prevention, tertiary prevention focuses on the efforts made after a crime has been committed. Its primary purpose is to reduce recidivism (Brantingham, & Faust, 1976). Most activities at this level focus on the detection, conviction, punishment or correctional treatment of offenders (Hastings, 1996, p. 320). This categorization of the various forms of crime prevention will be a useful reference in the following section, which deals with preventive practices considered effective and based on evidence.

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[4] The World Health Organization (WHO) uses a somewhat different definition of primary prevention, reserving this term for actions aimed at prevention before a crime occurs (WHO, 2002, p. 15). That said, most of the work remains faithful to the old definition which designates rather interventions which tend to focus indirectly on crime (Hastings, 1996, p. 320).

Effective Crime Prevention

Much of the research pointing to notions of crime prevention's effectiveness tends to emphasize the importance of tackling risk factors for future delinquency (Burrows, 2003; Farrington, & Welsh, 2007; Hahn et al., 1994; Institute for the Prevention of Crime [IPC], 2007a; Olds et al., 1999; Schweinhart, 2005; Sherman et al., 2002; Welsh, & Farrington, 2002; Wolfe, Crooks, Chiodo, Hughes, & Jaffe, 2004). Many publicly accountable organizations such as the WHO (2002, 2004) and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (2002) have also come to similar conclusions (Waller, 2006).

Research pointing to the successes of crime prevention has been demonstrated through randomized control trials or based on other empirical evidence[5] (for examples see Burrows, 2003; Hahn et al., 1994; Olds et al., 1999; Schweinhart, 2005; Wolfe et al., 2005). These projects focus on tackling "risk factors," or enhancing "protective factors". According to Farrington and Welsh (2007, p. 94), this approach to prevention has more recently been termed developmental criminology and/or risk-focused prevention. Since the 1990s, the concept of risk-focused prevention has adopted a larger role in the field of criminology. The fundamental design of this approach is very straightforward: "identify key risk factors for offending and implement prevention methods designed to counteract them" (Farrington, & Welsh, 2007, p. 95). This approach to prevention is based on research that has identified risk factors for crime and violence that occur among individuals, families, and peer groups and in communities, and which can induce risks of delinquency and violence (they are therefore found in the secondary prevention category).

This risk-focused approach to prevention was first imported from the medical and public health literature into the fields of community psychology and criminology by David Hawkins and Richard Catalano in 1992 (Farrington, & Welsh, 2007, p. 95). Using the medical model, for

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[5] The examples of effective prevention are only a few of those usually cited in the literature. In fact, many crime prevention programs have been shown to be ineffective. But rather than using these failures to conclude that any form of crime prevention is unsuccessful, failed experiments improve the state of knowledge about what should or should not be advocated for in the future. Several examples of prevention programs considered ineffective but nevertheless popular have been cited many times by police circles: Neighborhood Watch, DARE, and Scared Straight (Sherman et al., 1997, 2002; Waller, 2006). Given the limited space we have and the fact that our intention is not to compare what works with what doesn't, these programs are not discussed in this article. For the results of inconclusive evaluations, see: Gottfredson, Wilson, & Skroban Najaka, 2002; Pate, McPherson, & Silloway, 1987; Petrosino, Turpin-Petrosino, & Finckenauer, 2000; Rosenbaum, Lewis, & Grant, 1985, 1986.

example, if significant risk factors for heart disease such as smoking and a high fat diet are identified and quantified, then preventative measures designed to reduce these risk factors should lead to reductions in rates of that adverse outcome (as in the example, heart disease). The risk-focused approach is similarly applied in crime prevention in order to reduce or prevent the impact of factors associated with victimization or offending. For example, this model asserts that if inconsistent/poor parenting in childhood predisposes one to a higher risk of victimization or offending later in life, then the tackling of these risk factors through measures such as parenting classes and the provision of supports to at-risk populations should lead to reduced rates of offending and victimization. Providing protective factors is another large component of this risk-focused approach. A protective factor is one that reduces the potential harmful effect of a risk factor (IPC, 2008). Protective factors aid in a) counteracting risk factors and b) decreasing vulnerability to conditions such as crime or victimization and c) increasing durable resiliency. For example, the presence of nurturing parents in a home would be considered a protective factor.

This approach to prevention has been lent support by a large body of empirical evidence. Commonly cited projects including the *Elmira (New York) Prenatal/Early Infancy Project*, the *Quantum Opportunities Project,* and *the Fourth R Program,* have demonstrated the benefits of such risk-focused prevention efforts. Many of these projects have been cited for their effectiveness by the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC), the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, and by the IPC at the University of Ottawa. They have also appeared in many comprehensive reviews of effective crime prevention programs (Greenwood et al.*,* 2001; IPC, 2007a; Sherman et al., 1997, 2002; Waller, 2006). To illustrate this risk-focused approach, an early childhood project, a teenage project and a school project will be described.

The *Elmira* (New York)[6] *Prenatal/Early Infancy Project* is a risk-focused prevention program that has repeatedly been recognized for its effectiveness (Farrington, & Welsh, 2002, p. 26-30; Greenwood et al., 2001; Sherman, 1997, p. 10-15; Waller, 2006, p. 26-27). This project

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[6] Elmira is a town in Chemung County, in the south of New York State.

was a randomized controlled trial which took a sample of 400[7] women in the Elmira, New York area who were low income (85%), unmarried, or younger than 19 years of age (Olds et al., 1999, p. 53). The home visits program consisted of public health nurses visiting high-risk mothers[8] for 75 to 90 minutes on a weekly or monthly basis. Mothers typically would be enrolled at the end of their first trimester of pregnancy and continued in the program until their child was 2 years old. The nurses provided mothers with information on health and development of their children, while assisting them in developing supportive relationships with friends and family and other essential health and human services (Olds et al., 1999, p. 49).

The final analysis[9] revealed that the nurse-visited mothers were less likely to abuse and neglect their children, achieving an 80% reduction in verified cases of child abuse and neglect through age 15 as compared to the control group (Karoly et al., 1998, p. 32; Olds et al., 1999, p. 44). Mothers were also less likely to have rapid repeat pregnancies, thereby enabling them to maintain employment more reliably since they would have fewer children. They were also found to avoid substance abuse and other criminal behaviours more effectively when compared to the control group. Furthermore, the children of the mothers who received the visits had 56% fewer arrests than the control group by age 15 (Olds et al., 1999, p. 44; Waller, 2006, p. 26). These results were replicated by similar programs in an African American community in Memphis, Tennessee, and a Mexican American community in Denver, Colorado (Olds et al., 1999, p. 46). A cost benefit analysis conducted on the Elmira project revealed a net savings of $18,611, or more than four times the cost of the entire program (Greenwood et al., 2001, p. 133).

Another commonly cited example in which the risk-focused prevention approach is used is the *Quantum Opportunities Project[10]*. The program focused its efforts on disadvantaged teens

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[7] Five hundred women (500) were invited to participate and 400 enrolled (Olds et al., 1999, p. 53). The women were split into two groups, with 200 receiving the home visits and the other 200 relying on the standard services being offered in the area at the time (Olds et al., 1999, p. 53).

[8] According to Olds et al. (1999) this meant that the mothers were unmarried, adolescent, or poor (p. 45).

[9] Outcomes of program effectiveness were measured using data derived from interviews, observations of parenting and conditions within the homes, and reviews of medical and social service records from pregnancy until the age of 15 (Olds et al., 1999, p. 53). At the 15-year follow-up, assessments were completed on 324 participants, which represented 81% of the original cohort and 87% of the families in which there were no fetal, maternal, or child deaths (Olds et al., 1999, p. 54).

[10] This was a demonstration project carried out in five different U.S communities, beginning in September 1989 (Hahn et al., 1994, p. 6).

by providing them with after-school developmental programming[11]. The programming was structured around educational activities which assured up to 250 hours of education, 250 hours of development activities, and 250 hours of service every full year from grade 9 through high school graduation for in-school teens or teens who had dropped out or left their original school neighbourhoods (Hahn et al., 1994, p. 6). The educational activities consisted of tutoring, computer skills training, life and family skills training, as well as guidance activities, such as planning for post-secondary education or employment following graduation (Greenwood et al., 1996; Hahn et al., 1994). For their participation in the program, the teens from the program groups were also given a small financial incentive, and any money that they earned was matched by the program to put towards a college fund (Greenwood et al., 1996; Hahn et al., 1994).

Results of the evaluation revealed that the groups who received the programming were more likely to graduate from high school, to enrol in post-secondary education, to receive an honour or award, and less likely to get pregnant and be high school dropouts as compared to the no-programming groups (Hahn et al., 1994, p. 15)[12]. The cost-benefit analysis revealed that for every dollar spent on the program, $3.68 in benefits were returned.

Another example of effective crime prevention is seen with The *Fourth R (Relationships)* program, which bears added relevance as it represents a recently executed Canadian example of risk-focused prevention originating in London, Ontario. The program focuses on tackling risk factors for future delinquency related to domestic violence and bullying and is presently being implemented into select school systems throughout Canada (Wolfe et al., 2005). It is based on a 21-lesson skill-based curriculum provided by trained classroom teachers in grades 7 through 10. The lessons encourage healthy relationships, target abuse and violence (such as bullying, dating, peer and group violence), high-risk sexual behaviours, and substance abuse (Crooks et al., 2008, p. 111; Wolfe et al., 2005, p. 4). This study is still undergoing evaluation, but preliminary results from a randomized controlled trial including over 1500 students in London, Ontario are

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[11] These are secondary school students, or those of secondary school age, who were selected from a cohort of families on social assistance. Each site recruited 50 adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds. Subsequently, 25 of them were assigned to a group participating in the program under development and the remaining 25 to a control group (no program; Hahn et al., 1994, p. 6)

[12] This was shown by comparing the exposed group to the program and the control group, throughout the program. As of September 1989 (before the program started), questionnaires were given to participants from both groups. These questionnaires were again given to the two groups after the program began, first in the fall of 1990, then in 1991 and again in 1992 (Hahn et al., 1994, p. 7).

promising, revealing significant reductions in boys' aggressive behaviours towards their peers (Crooks et al., 2008; Wolfe et al., 2005, p. 9-10;).

The aforementioned programs represent but three examples from a growing body of research evidence suggesting that risk-focused prevention strategies do indeed work, and do so more effectively and efficiently than the traditional modes of crime control, namely the police, corrections and the courts systems (Greenwood et al., 2001; Sherman et al., 1997, 2002; Waller, 2006). Despite the existence of this body of evidence, Canada continues to invest much of its financial and human resources in traditional responses to crime and victimization, instead of seeking to implement evidence-based crime prevention[13]. The next section will explore the consensus among experts and publicly accountable organizations on how best to implement these types of effective risk-focused crime prevention programs.

Evidence and Concepts on Implementation of Effective Crime Prevention

Despite the evidence, effective crime prevention has not been implemented to any large extent in Canada. Even though some programs are gaining ground[14], overall implementation has been otherwise minimal.

Many people and organizations working in the area of crime prevention have struggled with how best to translate knowledge of "what works" in crime prevention into tangible action. Guidelines on how to implement crime prevention into public policy have been created in response to this quandary (Linden, 2000; National Crime Prevention Council, 1996; National Crime Prevention Working Group, 2007; Shaw, 2001; United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2002; Waller, Sansfaçon, & Welsh, 1999; WHO, 2004). Many national and international organizations such as The WHO, the United Nations and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) have arrived at a consensus on how to best implement effective and efficient prevention.

In 1999, Sansfaçon and Welsh reviewed recommendations from mayors, analysis of experts and practical proposals created by agencies such as the National Crime Prevention

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[13] As will be revealed and further explored in the section *The evolution of crime prevention in Canada*.
[14] The *Fourth R* is presently being implemented in more than 350 schools in Ontario and adapted and implemented in six other Canadian provinces (Crooks et al., 2008, p. 111).

Council in the United States and Crime Concern in England and Wales. According to them, much of the literature which describes the defining elements necessary for effective crime prevention implementation encompass many of the same themes, as follows:

- **A Permanent Responsibility Centre:** The research calls for national, provincial, and municipal level responsibility centres, which would receive sustained funding (National Crime Prevention Council, 1996) and rely on leadership by a central figure. For example, in the case of a national centre, this would be someone who oversees the entire crime prevention strategy in Canada, where in the case of municipalities; this might be someone in an existing regional leadership role, such as the mayor (Linden, 2000, p. 3; Waller, 2006; Waller et al., 1999, p. 66).

- **The Mobilization and Coordination of Many Sectors and Partners**. Each responsibility centre at the local level would require coordination from many sectors throughout the municipality in order to work together. This would include the coordination and partnerships between those "working across ministries and between authorities, community organizations, non-governmental organizations, the business sector and private citizens" (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2002).

- **Safety Diagnosis of Problems.** Each municipality would require a safety audit of their city using data from Statistics Canada, self-reporting surveys, or emergency-room data. According to the WHO (2004), this data is essential because it creates a more accurate profile of the problem and allows prevention efforts to be targeted at the areas and groups who appear to need it most.

- **The Development of an Action Plan.** Each municipality would then need to develop an action plan based on problems and gaps identified by statistical data and through analysis of crime problems unique to certain municipalities or regions.

- **Implementing the Action Plan.** Each municipality, through the coordination of many sectors and people, would need to set targets using proven knowledge of "what works."

- **Monitoring and Evaluating the Action Plan.** This requires ongoing evaluation to determine whether changes in the projects or initiatives need to be made, as well as an impact evaluation to assess whether the strategy is producing its desired effects.

The figure below illustrates the interplay between components of the strategy:

Figure 1

Effective Implementation of Crime Prevention Initiatives
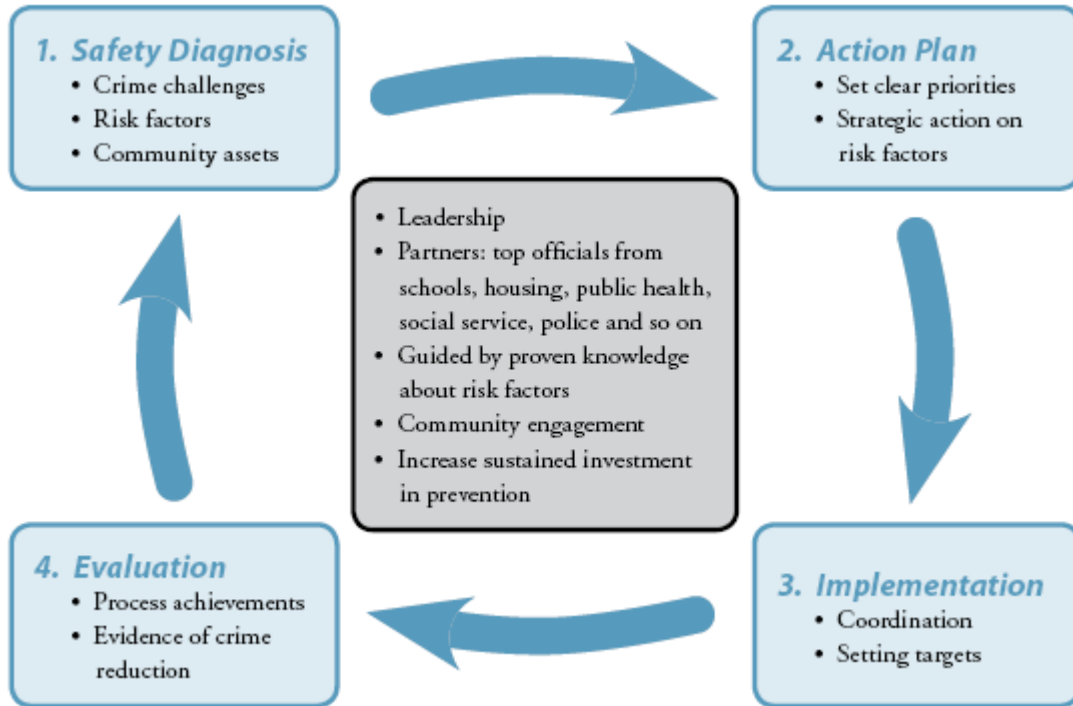
Source: Waller (2006) and Waller et al. (1999)

According to Shaw (2001), Waller (2006) and Waller et al. (1999), this implementation model originated with city leaders in France in the 1980s. One of the first incarnations was seen in *The Mayors Commission on Security* in France formed by Gilbert Bonnemaison[15] in 1982 (Shaw, 2001, p. 9). The implementation model has since evolved using recommendations from mayors, expert analysis, and practical proposals developed by agencies such as the National Crime Prevention Council in the United States and Crime Concern in England and Wales (Waller, 2006, p. 116)[16].

In summary, there exists a consensus from a broad range of experts on how crime prevention programs are best implemented. The approach involves different orders of government mobilising agencies that can tackle risk factors in a systematic way, beginning with

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[15] Bonnemaison was the Mayor of Epinay-sur-Seine (a suburb of Paris) at the time, and it was him who began advocating this multi-agency implementation model.

[16] Scientific research on this implementation model as a whole will remain inconclusive and only allows for interpretation through "logic models". A logic model outlines the structure of a program. It establishes the links between resources and expected results by presenting in a logical sequence the relevant activities, achievements and results of the overall program strategy.

a diagnosis of the gaps, an action plan to tackle those gaps, a rigorous effort to implement programs to fill those gaps, and finally, an evaluation.

Canada has experienced few examples of effective prevention and implementation, and crime prevention proponents in this country continue to face many hurdles in getting evidence-based prevention research translated into action. The past and present state of affairs of crime prevention efforts in Canada will now be considered.

The evolution of crime prevention in Canada

Even though the topic of crime prevention was first formally mentioned in modern Canada in 1949[17], and a national conference on "crime prevention" was held at the University of Toronto in 1965, the field of crime prevention was simply glossed over for many years as public policy remained focused on matters relating to prisons and criminal law rather than on the consideration of crime prevention strategies (Birkbeck, 2005).

It wasn't until the 1980s that crime prevention actually began to achieve greater recognition in Canada. A landmark moment denoting this movement occurred in 1984, when Irvin Waller and Richard Weiler prepared a report entitled *Crime Prevention through Social Development*, published by the Canadian Council on Social Development. As will be revealed, this report represents a watershed moment in crime prevention history in Canada; in that it helped the Canadian government finally recognize and consider the field of "crime prevention". This document, together with Waller's (1989) report prepared for the Canadian government, were then integrated nearly verbatim into a report prepared for the Canadian Parliament in 1992 (Begin, 1992 as cited by Birkbeck, 2005, p. 331)[18]. It was these movements in crime prevention which inspired and pushed the 1993 Horner Parliamentary Committee to publish a report entitled *Crime and Prevention in Canada*.

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[17] According to Birkbeck (2005) the use of the term "crime prevention" was first published within a series of lectures by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The lectures were made into a book covering 20 different topics, one being a chapter dedicated to "crime prevention" where an anonymous author attempted to examine the subject in terms of its political contributions by the police (p. 325).
[18] A comprehensive review of international crime prevention strategies that ultimately stressed the need for the creation of a national council on crime prevention.

This report, embracing much of Waller and Weiler's direction, stressed the importance of crime prevention through social development, and called for a national crime prevention council (responsibility centre) at the federal level, which would work in consultation with provinces, territories and municipalities, and be overseen by a senior official. The report also echoed Waller's recommendation that 1% of the current federal budget for police, courts, and corrections be reallocated to crime prevention efforts over a 5-year period, increasing to 5% after 5 years.

This report had a notable impact on the consideration of crime prevention in Canada, and in 1994, the federal government launched Phase I of a National Strategy on Crime Prevention and Community Safety. Phase I of the National Strategy began with a main focus on children, families and communities. It stressed the importance of mobilizing communities and building community capacity. Following the completion of Phase I in 1997, the government then launched phase II, which incorporated the establishment of the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) in 1998. Today the NCPC's operational guideline is to administer Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy. Their recent *Blueprint for Effective Crime Prevention* outlines its mission, stating that they are focused on the tackling of risk factors for crime in high-risk populations and environments. This emphasis on risk factors denotes a shift in strategy for the NCPC that is more in line with effective crime prevention.

However, the NCPC lacks both a responsibility centre and a key leader as described in the implementation model in Figure 1, and as recommended by the *Horner Committee*.[19] They still very much rely on a bottom-up approach, where the responsibility to apply for crime prevention project funding falls entirely on municipalities or communities themselves. Their mandate states that priority funding will go to communities that demonstrate a strategy that incorporates capacity building and projects that focus on individuals or groups with multiple risk factors. In regards to their Youth Gang Prevention Fund, they state that funding will be allocated to "projects where community-based organizations and municipalities have worked together to

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[19] See Recommendation 1, which states that "the federal government, in cooperation with the provinces, territories, and municipalities, take on a national leadership role in crime prevention and develop a national crime prevention policy" (p. 22); Recommendation 2, which calls for the "support and the development of a national crime prevention council" (p. 23); and Recommendation 4, which states that a "senior official" be appointed and made "responsible for crime prevention policy and program development" (p. 25).

assess needs and develop a coordinated, integrated response to the gang phenomenon they face" (NCPC, 2008).

The NCPC exists as a funding agency whose primary function is the delegation of monies for certain crime prevention projects as described above. Canada does not have an action plan or a centre of responsibility that is charged with the mandate of crime prevention at a national level. As described in the previous section, an action plan and centre of responsibility are key components to effective implementation. Comparable to the American model, individual communities are called upon and expected to organize themselves and request resources by completing complex funding proposals and by satisfying particular measures. Given that they are focused on providing funding to at-risk communities denotes a step in the right direction, however the onus remains on these at-risk communities to approach the NCPC of their own volition, a task which may prove difficult for certain disadvantaged and fragmented communities.

However, some communities in Canada have organized themselves to create crime prevention task forces and/or crime prevention city council groups that employ central leadership as well as a local level implementation model as described in section two (one such example is *Crime Prevention Ottawa*). Presently, four such crime prevention councils/task forces have been created in Canadian cities, namely Québec, Waterloo, Toronto and Ottawa.

In 1992, Québec was one of the first Canadian cities to establish a task force on prevention. Officials in many sectors (municipalities, communities, schools, universities, police departments, police unions, and government agencies and departments) were represented in Québec's task force. The task force established a consensus between these different ministries, associations and experts, and arrived at 25 recommendations which were released in their 1993 report entitled *Partners in Crime Prevention: For a Safer Québec, Report of the Task Force on Crime Prevention* (Table ronde sur la prévention de la criminalité, 1993). Many of the recommendations were focused on implementing proactive evidence-based programs aimed at children and adolescents in their schools, families and neighbourhoods (p. 19-20). The report called for shared leadership between people, volunteer organizations, businesses, police

departments and other social agents working together in the implementation of evidence-based crime prevention programs.

In 2001, Québec adopted a policy to implement most of the recommendations of the 1993 task force. This included local preventative strategies run by municipalities based on partnerships, as well as strategies for research, development and training in crime prevention. However, this policy was not accompanied by the types of financial investment recommended by the taskforce in 1993. Since the creation of the Québec task force, three other municipalities have created crime prevention councils: Waterloo Region in 1993, Toronto in 1999, and Ottawa in 2005. Each of these cities has regular meetings organized around crime prevention efforts, and each has initiated local crime prevention projects.

Despite their sound foundations, these local crime prevention movements have continued to hold relatively little influence with regards to actual government practices, and accomplish very little when compared to other more established justice modalities such as the police, corrections, or courts. In Canada, the primary modes of dealing with crime continue to be dominated by these traditional reactive responses, a point which will be made apparent when considering the expenditures outlined below.

Where Canada is Today

Not surprisingly, the traditionally embedded modes of crime control and criminal justice applications have continued to experience sustained trends in government spending, while crime prevention efforts such as those outlined above have struggled as they have received much less in the way of meaningful fiscal support.

During its first three years of its implementation (1998-2000), the NCPC received $32 million dollars per annum as its total operating budget (NCPC, 2008). It presently receives $70 million dollars per year (NCPC, 2008), or more than double its original allocation. At first glance, $70 million dollars seems a large sum, but when compared to the sums allocated to federal expenditures of the criminal justice system, and to the criminal justice system as a whole, it is actually quite minimal. This $70 million is equivalent to less than 2% of the federal

expenditures on criminal justice.[20] According to the Department of Justice (2003), Canada has spent more than $13 billion per year on the criminal justice system as a whole (federal, provincial and municipal); therefore barely 0.5% of the total criminal justice budget is actually being allocated to the field of crime prevention.

Furthermore, this figure of $13 billion (which reflects the most recent published Canadian data from 2003) is likely an underestimate of the current total, as the well-documented increase in police spending in recent years seems to support the overall rising trend in traditional criminal justice expenditures. In 2006, $9.9 billion was spent on policing (Beattie, & Mole, 2007, p. 10). This is a 4.4% increase from 2005 even after adjusting for inflation and translates into a cost of $303 per Canadian (Beattie, & Mole, 2007). Policing expenditures have continued to see massive increases in funding[21], despite the recommendations by the *Horner Committee*, which suggested otherwise (Beattie, & Mole, 2007, p. 10).

In terms of corrections expenditures, the most recent data (from 2005/2006), published in the *Corrections and Conditional Release Statistical Overview* in 2007, revealed that $3 billion dollars is spent on corrections in Canada (Public Safety Canada Portfolio Corrections Statistics Committee, 2007, p. 25). The most recent data on court expenditures comes from the report on *Justice Spending in Canada*, which revealed a budget of $1 billion for the court system in Canada in 2000-2001 (Taylor-Butts, 2002, p. 7).

Crime Prevention in Alberta

Despite these findings, there are some signs that crime prevention is being increasingly considered and implemented more substantially by policy makers. The Province of Alberta has recently created a task force, entitled *The Crime Reduction and Safe Communities Task Force*, which was initially established for the purpose of collecting information on ways to reduce crime, enhance community safety and develop public confidence in the criminal justice system in

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[20] The federal budget for police, corrections and courts is estimated to be about $3.6 billion. This includes $1.9 billion to the police in 2006 (Beattie, & Mole, 2007, p. 11), $1.69 billion to corrections in 2005/2006 (Public Safety Canada Portfolio Corrections Statistics Committee, 2007, p. 25), and $90 million to the courts in 2000/2001 (Taylor-Butts, 2002, p. 7).

[21] The majority of growth in policing expenditures has occurred at the municipal level, with total contributions exceeding $5 billion, or 56.6% of Canada's total policing expenditures in 2006 (FCM, 2008; Beattie, & Mole, 2007).

the province (Government of Alberta, 2008b). The task force is made up of nine members and chaired by Heather Forsyth. She met with citizens and stakeholders in 14 communities throughout Alberta in April-May 2007 to hear their major concerns and gather information on existing best practices.

In 2007, the IPC (2007b) at the University of Ottawa assisted Alberta's Task Force in compiling research and data for a new province-wide crime prevention strategy, including a new policy vision of *Less Law, More Order* (Waller, 2006) to focus on the reduction of victimization through prevention. The IPC prepared a report entitled *Preventive Solutions to Crime in Alberta: from Evidence to Results* (2007b) which brought together evidence similar to what was described in sections one and two. This report, along with public consultations with the 14 communities as described above, led the Alberta task force to create their own report entitled *Keeping Communities Safe; Report and Recommendations* (2007), which incorporated much of the IPC's key recommendations regarding implementation and evidence-based prevention.

The Alberta Government accepted several of the recommendations; most notably, the action plan and responsibility centre which became the over-arching first priority (Government of Alberta, 2008c). The responsibility centre which they have created will be headed by an assistant deputy minister, thus positioning it higher in the government hierarchy than the NCPC (Government of Alberta, 2007). The Alberta Government is the first government at any level to agree to create both a responsibility centre with a central leadership figure, as well as implement an action plan for prevention based on existing evidence.

The plan calls for four hundred and sixty-eight ($468) million dollars to be allocated to a three-pronged strategy of enforcement, treatment and prevention over a 3-year period, 25% of which will be allocated to prevention, 25% to enforcement, and 50% to treatment (Government of Alberta, 2008a, 2008c). A Government of Alberta press release (November, 2007; voir Waller, 2008) declared the Province's intent to get tough on both crime and its causes. Even though enforcement remains part of their proposed strategy, this program still represents the best example this nation has seen in terms of embracing an evidence-based approach to crime prevention. The new funds for prevention match those for enforcement. In addition, Rick Linden, crime prevention consultant, professor at the University of Manitoba, and his research group

Prairie Research Associates, are currently assisting Alberta in developing its strategic plan and developing an evaluation specification for the whole strategy. They will examine each of the programs to be implemented and develop logic models so that these programs can be evaluated.

In spite of this progress, Alberta's investments and multi-sector efforts are the first of its kind in Canada and help to highlight the fact that nine other provinces and two territories still possess no significant crime prevention strategy, nor does such a well-articulated strategy exist at the federal level. Québec is a partial exception to this trend, as the province passed a policy on crime prevention in 2001, and also employs some risk-focused crime prevention projects. However, these are research and development projects paid for by the NCPC, and the provincial policy implemented lacked the financial investment recommended by their taskforce on crime prevention. Crime prevention in Canada is still dominated by standard criminal justice measures, most of which are reactive rather than proactive. To date, Alberta offers the best example of effective crime prevention being considered and implemented to any significant extent in Canada.

Conclusion

This paper provides an overview of literature relevant to crime prevention and its implementation. The paper first examined conclusions from research revealing prevention practices that have shown to be effective. Scientific evaluations of crime prevention projects that tackle risk factors demonstrate that they reduce crime and do so more efficiently than standard criminal justice practices.

The second section examined the growing body of literature regarding the ways to deliver and implement effective crime prevention. There is a growing consensus among experts that different orders of government must mobilise agencies that can tackle one or more risk factors in a systematic way that starts from a diagnosis of the gaps in services, a plan to tackle those gaps, a concerted effort to implement programs to fill the gaps, and evaluation of the outcomes.

In the third section, the paper outlined what governments have done thus far to implement effective crime prevention. Federally, the NCPC provides $70 million for a research and development program that focuses on risk factors but represents less than 2% of the federal

expenditures on criminal justice and less than 0.5% of total criminal justice spending in Canada. The only province where evidence-based preventative action has been embraced is in Alberta, where a three-pronged strategy of prevention, enforcement and treatment, including new expenditures for prevention that match those allocated for enforcement has recently been introduced.

The paper begs the question as to what happened differently in Alberta in order to get crime prevention on the map? Their utilization of the vision of *Less Law, More Order* (Waller, 2006) and analysis by The IPC may illustrate some ways to overcome the entrenched resistance to prevention practice that has been historically seen throughout Canada, offering some insight for provinces such as Québec, who, despite having taken some notable strides, has fallen short in terms of establishing a province-wide evidence-based strategy.

Firstly, the Alberta taskforce was given recommendations from the IPC in an easily accessible format. The report prepared for them assessed their current crime situation and described solutions using simple terminology. The IPC also referred the taskforce to *Less Law, More Order* (Waller, 2006), which is a short book that communicates the effective crime prevention research in a language that both policy makers and voters can understand. Comprehensive reviews of effective prevention cited throughout this paper bring forth much of the evidence of "what works", although they are seldom written in layman's terms for consideration by an audience outside the academic setting.

Second, the taskforce was provided with clear and practical recommendations. It is surprising that of all the provinces in Canada, Alberta, which is a province heavily dominated by right of centre government, decided to invest so much money in prevention. This can be explained, at least in part, by virtue of the fact that they were given recommendations which were practical and achievable, with proposed goals that meshed well with the realities of their current crime situation.

Third, the vision proposed by Waller (2006) shifts the public debate in criminology from one which focuses on the workings of the criminal justice system and the interests of offenders and suspects to one which focuses on victims. Waller's debate is largely centred on how best to reduce harm to crime victims. He aligns victims of crime with taxpayers, suggesting that the

current punitive system is ineffective in achieving greater safety for them. Instead of focusing on the usual themes espoused by mainstream criminological literature, such as the power of the rich and the powerlessness of the poor, as is embraced in Marxist criminological theory, Waller moves away from such debates, and reframes the question as to what can be done for victims, rather than what can be done to stop the criminal justice system from treating the poor unfairly. Criminologists such as Reiman (2007) focus on a notion that the criminal justice system is a cycle providing benefits to people who hold a position of power to make changes, while inflicting costs on those devoid of such power. Instead of questioning the system and its underlying workings, Waller (2006) moves beyond this to focus attention on what will actually make a difference in levels of crime.

Fourth, the vision put forth by Waller does not endorse radical recommendations such as eliminating police, corrections or courts. He does not argue that enforcement should be removed from the criminal justice arena. Instead, he proposes how much of the funding of the massive criminal justice budget should be re-allocated to prevention in order to make a difference in reducing the number of victims. He avoids distracting arguments such as "police bashing," instead offering actionable recommendations that can be easily incorporated into the current system. It is likely because of this well-articulated, realistic and proactive approach, that the Alberta government was able to incorporate many of the evidence-based solutions proposed. Their three-pronged strategy of enforcement, prevention and treatment has been adopted with greater vigour as compared to any other prior prevention efforts in this country. Perhaps the strategy's greatest appeal stems from the fact that it aligns itself alongside the established bastions of police, corrections and courts rather than appearing to be in conflict with them. In choosing to embrace and emphasize the essential roles that these traditional criminal justice entities play within the system, the field of crime prevention might have finally discovered that elusive roadmap that will allow for its continued consideration and more widespread implementation in the future.

Fifthly, these were communicated at a time when there was a special task force. In Canada, the major commissions chaired by Archambault, Ouimet and Fauteux all resulted in significant reforms of criminal policy in Canada – like the Presidential Commissions in the 1960's in the USA. While not all the recommendations get implemented, governments invest

new funds and adopt new laws. The Alberta task force used the evidence-based research to interpret their public opinion survey and the political concerns. Their 31 recommendations were proposed just before an election and became government policy following the election. It remains to be seen over the next few years how successfully the recommendations are implemented.

To conclude, it may be that reframing criminological issues into a debate on the fate of victims is one of the first steps to reduce crime through prevention. Currently, several debates in criminology have moved away from an interest in reducing victimization caused by crime. A recent anti-empiricism movement within the discipline has fostered acceptance of radical theories and, more recently, philosophical explorations of the "reality" of the social world.

Criminology and its supporters seem to us to need to return to a "reality" that the majority of individuals perceive as being, after all, a good reflection of the world in which we live. The perspective put forward by Waller represents a step in the right direction for criminology as a discipline, but also as a powerful tool which could offer the opportunity (to the public and to decision-makers) to achieve significant rate reductions of crime and victimization.

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Résumé

Cet article offre un aperçu des travaux scientifiques portant sur les programmes efficaces de prévention du crime et sur leur mise en œuvre. Les évaluations scientifiques de projets de prévention du crime qui abordent des facteurs de risque montrent fréquemment qu'ils peuvent réduire la criminalité et que, souvent, ils sont plus efficaces à le faire que les réponses habituelles de la justice pénale. Les organisations intergouvernementales s'entendent sur les étapes-clés qui sont nécessaires pour en arriver à mobiliser les organismes concernés dans la lutte contre ces facteurs de risque. Malgré les recommandations de comités parlementaires et d'un nombre croissant d'experts, la prévention du crime n'est pas encore arrivée à jouer le rôle prépondérant qui pourrait être le sien afin de réduire plus efficacement les taux de criminalité au Canada. Toutefois, la politique récente annoncée par la province de l'Alberta suggère quelques avenues par lesquelles cette résistance pourrait éventuellement être surmontée.

Mots clés
Prévention du crime, données probantes, implantation de programmes, Canada.

Resumen
Este artículo ofrece un panorama de textos científicos relativos a programas de prevención del crimen eficaces y a su puesta en práctica. Las evaluaciones científicas de proyectos de prevención del crimen que abordan los factores de riesgo muestran con frecuencia que pueden reducir la criminalidad y que a menudo son más eficaces que las respuestas del sistema penal. Las organizaciones intergubernamentales coinciden sobre las etapas clave que son necesarias para movilizar a los organismos pertinentes en la lucha contra dichos factores de riesgo. Pese a las recomendaciones de comités parlamentarios y de un número creciente de expertos, la prevención del crimen no desempeña aún el papel preponderante que podría tener a fin de reducir de manera más eficaz la tasa de criminalidad en Canadá. Sin embargo, la reciente política anunciada por la provincia de Alberta sugiere algunas vías a través de las cuales dicha resistencia podría ser superada eventualmente.

Palabras clave
Prevención del crimen, prácticas basadas en la evidencia, implantación de programas, Canadá.