

# Implementing and Evaluating the Lancaster Violent Crime Reduction Initiative

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# Focused Deterrence Project

## Goals

- Reduce Violent Crime
- Promote Community Mobilization
- Improve Police-Community Relations

# Project Time Line

Fall 2007-  
Winter 2008

- Recruit Partners
- Visit High Point, North Carolina

Spring 2009

- Identify Target Area
- Police Make Undercover Drug Buys

Summer  
2009

- Screen and Notify Offenders
- Call-in – August 20, 2009

Lancaster City Bureau of Police initiated project. Partners included--

- Office of District Attorney
- Lancaster City Mayor's Office
- Lancaster County Adult Probation and Parole
- Pennsylvania State Parole
- Lancaster County Council of Churches
- Millersville University
- Pastors and Community Leaders

# Target Area Selected

- Crime data used to identify a *target area* within the southeast area of Lancaster city.
- High rates of violent crime and drug-related crime present.
- Target area also contained numerous house of worship and community agencies.



# Implementation

## Identification

- Selective Enforcement Unit makes drug buys from 20 offenders.

## Screening

- Lancaster Bureau of Police Captain of Patrol and Captain of Detectives select four without serious prior records.

## Notification

- Police Captain and pastor or community leader invite each of the four offenders to the “call-in”

# Terms of the Offer

- Offenders must not sell or use drugs. They will be drug tested.
- They must find legal employment or return to school.
- If they agree, they will not be arrested. Instead, they will be monitored and assisted.
- If they fail to live up to their end of the bargain, they will be arrested and prosecuted fully.

# Take Back Our Community Rally



Join neighbors, family, clergy, social service agencies, teachers, students, law enforcement, our elected officials & other members of our neighborhood as they come together to take a stand against violence & declare that "Enough is Enough!"

We are neighbors! Somos Vecinos!  
Let's stand against Violence in our  
neighborhood!

## Featuring:

- Community Awareness
- Interaction with Neighbors
- Community Speeches
- One Voice—One Cause
- Join Effort to End Violence in Our Community
- Information Session on Current anti-violence effort

## Lancaster Violent Crime Reduction Initiative Community Rally

Roberto Clemente Field on South Duke Street (next to King Elem. School)

Time: 7:00 pm

Date: Wednesday, August 19







## The Call-In

A judge addresses one of the offenders

# Outcomes Measured

- Offender Success/Failure
- Crime Rates in Target Area
- Community Perceptions
- Police-Community Relations
- Community Mobilization

# Offender Success/Failure

One failed a drug test after one month in the program.


One charged with theft after three months in the program.

Two successfully completed the program after two years.  
Critical needs – housing, education, job-readiness training, mental health/mental retardation services.

**LANCASTER VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION INITIATIVE UPDATE**

*Lancaster Community Against Violence*

**Jose Anthony Pratts**






**THE MESSAGE**

The Lancaster Violent Crime Reduction Initiative is not a strategy to forgive offenders for drug sales committed in the past. It is a promise to vigorously prosecute repeat offenders who continue to engage in street level drug sales, commit crimes of violence or possess guns. It is an offer by the community to assist those who want to stop dealing drugs and change their lifestyle by delivering resources available in Lancaster. Jose Pratts was a member of the community who was given the opportunity to change his life and avoid incarceration.

**THE PROMISE!**

JOSE was given the message and he didn't listen. He chose to continue to use drugs after being offered a chance to change his life. He was arrested for Delivery of a Controlled Substance IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD and is now incarcerated in the Lancaster County Prison in lieu of \$50,000 bail. Jose now faces a mandatory minimum 2-4 Years in State Prison.

**Make the choice –  
Stop selling drugs, don't commit acts of  
violence and don't be around guns!**



# Crime Incidents Reported Before and After Call-In

## Target Area

	2007-2009	2009-2011	% Change
Ag Assault	26	15	-42%
Ag Assault w/Gun	18	10	-44%
Robbery	22	30	36%
Robbery – Gun	13	8	-38%
Shots Fired	58	61	5%
Weapons	46	27	-41%
Total	183	151	-17%

## Southeast Area

	2007-2009	2009-2011	% Change
Ag Assault	38	35	-8%
Ag Assault w/Gun	12	22	83%
Robbery	35	33	-6%
Robbery-Gun	24	16	-33%
Shots Fired	85	99	16%
Weapons	98	68	-31%
Total	292	273	-7%

# Changes in Community Perceptions

Community Surveys  
1000 randomly  
selected  
households

- Before: May-July 2009
- After: September 2010
- N=140 for each survey

Two Focus Groups  
Conducted 18  
months after call-in

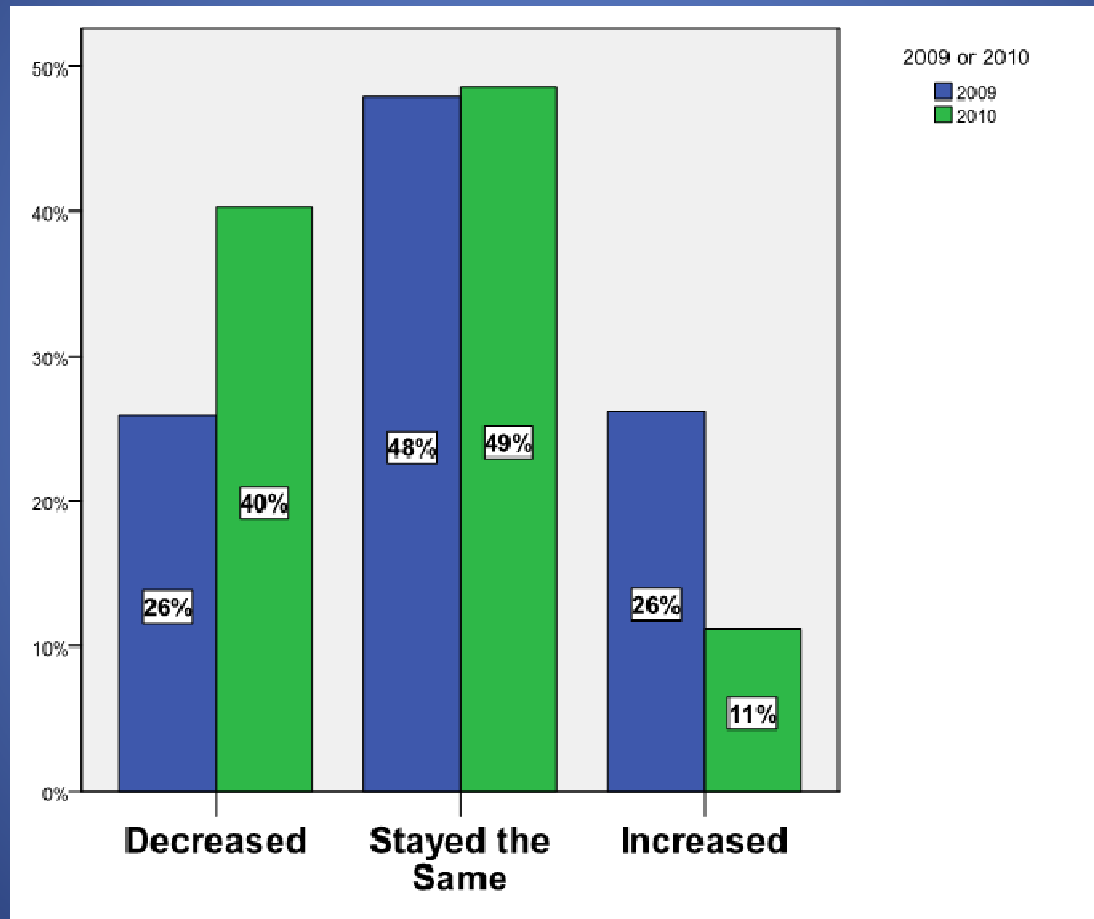
- Residents of target area
- Pastor, teacher, counselor
- Diverse ages
- Black, Latina/o, White



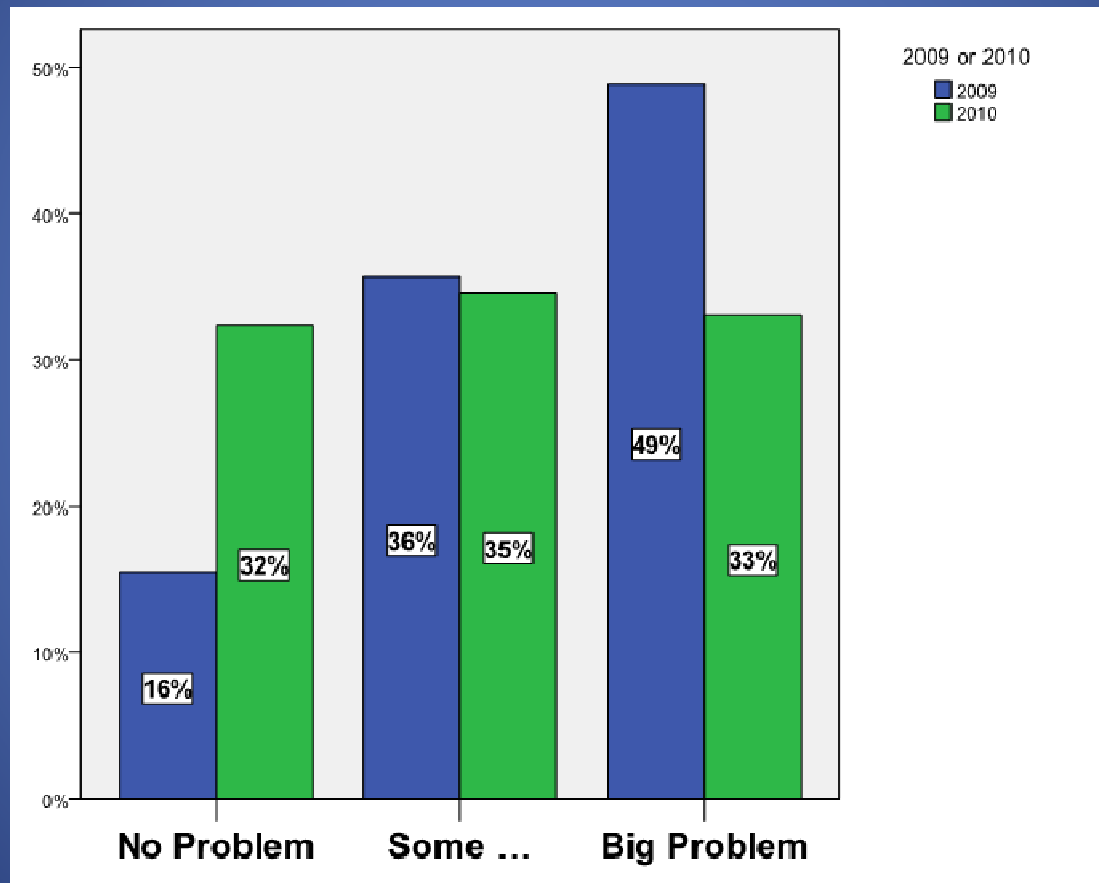
# Statistically Significant Differences in Residents' Perceptions

- Crime had decreased.
- Less of a problem
  - Illegal drug sales
  - Gang-related activity
  - Litter, garbage, and noise
  - Theft and vandalism
  - Violent crime
- More satisfied living in the target area

# Changes in Crime in the Neighborhood

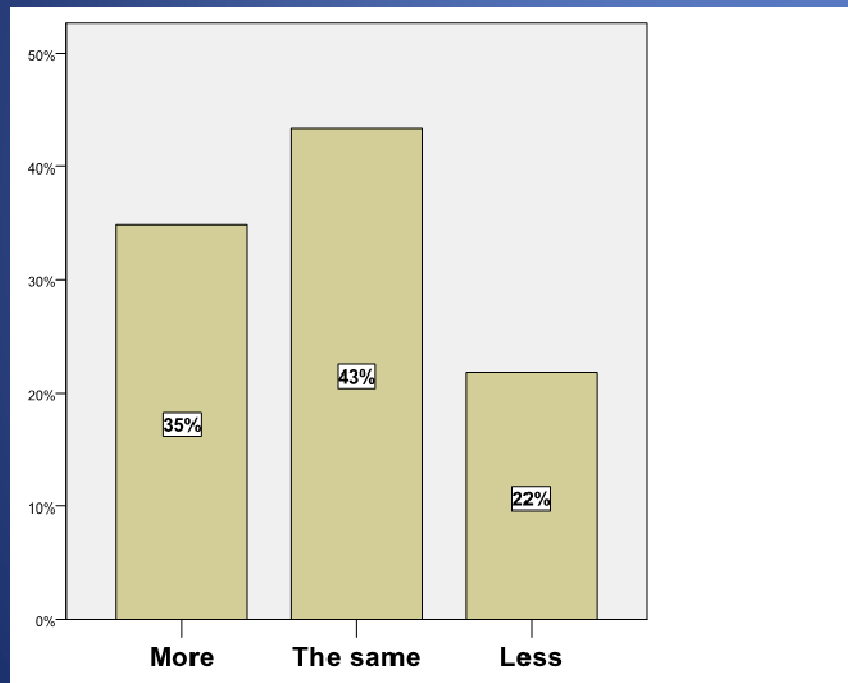


# Illegal Drug Sales and Use



# Police Community Relations

**“In 2010, police patrolled my neighborhood “**



**However in 2010, residents were**

- **No more satisfied with police services**
- **No more likely to know their sector officer**
- **No more likely to believe that police try to help people in the neighborhood solve problems**
- **No more likely to believe police in this neighborhood try to be equally fair to persons of all races.**

# Community Mobilization

- Survey Results
- No significant differences between before and after survey responses to questions measuring collective efficacy. E.G.
  - I speak to my neighbors when I see them
  - People around here are willing to help their neighbors
  - People in this neighborhood do something if a young person is disrespectful to an adult



# Community Mobilization

- Focus Group Comments
  - Participants were unaware of any community changes attributable to the Violent Crime Reduction Initiative.
  - The Initiative lacked an identifiable community partner that could assist residents in addressing neighborhood issues.
  - Focus group participants supported continuing the Initiative but recommended additional community input into offender selection and support.

# Conclusions

- The Lancaster Violent Crime Reduction experienced modest success in addressing its goals of assisting eligible offenders and reducing violent crime in the target area.
- The goals of improving police community relations and mobilizing community members to make positive changes in their community were not met.

# Recent Developments

- Agency responsible for “ready to work”, job training and job placement programs will provide case management services to future call in offenders.
- Negotiations underway for faith-based organization to help underwrite a resource coordinator position.
- Police reviewing crime data in preparation for a future call-in.

# Acknowledgements

Support for this project has been provided by

- The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
- The Millersville University Faculty Grants Committee
- The Millersville University Sociology/Anthropology Department

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