

**JUVENILE AGENDA:**

**Reducing Juvenile Violence in Our Community**

**CHARLES C. FOTI, JR.**

**Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff**

**March 1992**

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**ACQUISITIONS**

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## CONTENTS

Preface by Sheriff Charles C. Foti, Jr

### I. Measuring Juvenile Violence

A. Nationally - statistics

B. Locally - statistics, studies and surveys

1. Statistics from the Coroner's Office

2. "Chronic Community Violence: What Is Happening To Our Children?"  
a Report by the LSU Medical Center and the National Institute of Mental  
Health

3. Tulane University Gun Study

4. Criminal Sheriff's Juvenile Offender Survey

### II. Proposals for Reducing Juvenile Violence

A. Reduce the number of juveniles murdered or injured in our community

1. Eliminate weapons in schools

2. Promote "Cease Fire" campaign throughout the community

3. Establish Student Crime Watch programs in schools

B. Reduce the number of juvenile offenders in our community

1. Prevention for majority of juveniles

2. Intervention for first offenders and non-violent repeat offenders

3. Incarceration for chronic, dangerous juvenile offenders

C. Make changes in the juvenile justice system

1. Improve the juvenile data system
2. Institute drug testing at the time of arrest
3. Set up "Intervention Volunteers" to work with the juvenile justice system

D. Keep problem kids in the school system

1. Implement "Plan for Parental Involvement"
2. Establish a military-type school for expelled or suspended students
3. Build a stadium and provide other much needed support for schools

III. Addendum

A. Legislative Package

B. Response Card

*Deadly lessons....*

*Kids with guns are setting off an arms race  
of their own across the country. Are schools  
doomed to become free-fire zones?*

*Newsweek: March 9, 1992*

# CRIMINAL SHERIFF

Parish of Orleans - State of Louisiana - New Orleans, Louisiana 70119

CHARLES C. FOTI, JR.  
Sheriff

## PREFACE

*As Criminal Sheriff of Orleans Parish, my interest in the juvenile crime problem is both personal and professional. My office first became involved in the issue of juveniles in 1986 when I was asked by the mayor, police superintendent and juvenile judges to assist the city in holding juvenile offenders. Although I had no legal responsibility to do so, I felt a moral responsibility to help as the city was in the midst of a juvenile crime spree. In 1986, the Criminal Sheriff's Office began holding a half dozen juveniles; today we average between 140 and 180 juveniles - two to three times as many as the city's Youth Study Center.*

*As the number of juvenile offenders escalated, so did our concern. We developed a Juvenile About Face Program, combining aspects of a boot camp and a regular school. We worked with the Orleans Parish Public School Board to develop individualized testing and a year round school curriculum for the juveniles in our custody.*

*Instead of becoming enured to the constant growing number of juvenile offenders, my staff and I increasingly recognized the need to do something to address this problem.*

### *A. WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM?*

*Last April, we completed a report entitled "An Analysis of Juvenile Crime and the Juvenile Justice System in New Orleans, LA". In May, this report was released to the public at a citywide forum sponsored by the Citizens Coalition Against Crime. Copies were sent to all city and statewide elected officials as well as all members of the state legislature.*

*The report was notable in that it listed the types and number of juvenile offenses occurring over a six year period. Not only did it note a measurable increase in the number of offenses committed by juveniles, but it also revealed a very distinct increase in the severity of the offenses. While the increase in murder charges for juveniles showed the greatest increase (389%), all crimes involving guns increased significantly. For example, illegal carrying of a gun increased 328%, aggravated battery with a gun increased 241%, armed robbery with a gun increased 137%.*

*Inadequacies in the juvenile justice system are a national problem. This was pointed out in a report from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention which states "Currently, the system gives the least amount of attention to the youngest kids who have committed the least serious offenses. Conversely, the greatest amount of attention is given to the older kids who have committed the more serious offenses. The juvenile justice system has unwittingly, but affirmatively, nurtured several generations of young habitual criminals."*

## B. WHAT IS BEING DONE TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM?

### 1. "Word to the World"

In February, we printed 5,000 copies of a booklet entitled "Word to the World". This booklet is a compilation of 46 letters written by juvenile offenders here in New Orleans.

The juveniles' letters paint a picture of their world, a world that is sometimes shocking, sometimes mocking as they describe hustling, breaking into cars and homes, playing the dope game, doing it all - even murder. They tell how they progressed from simple transgressions at the age of 7 or 8 to becoming a "stone cold criminal" by the age of 15 or 16. Several expressed the thought that if they had not been incarcerated, they would be dead by now. They realize that in jail they still have a chance to change, to turn their lives around. On the streets, they don't have that chance.

### 2. Juvenile Anti-Violence Committee

In response to a request from the Chamber of Commerce, we formed a Juvenile Anti-Violence Committee to provide leadership in reducing juvenile violence in New Orleans. Representatives from the Chamber, the Orleans Parish Public School Board, the Archdiocese School Board, the Interfaith Ministry, the Citizens Coalition Against Crime, and the Juvenile Judges make up this committee.

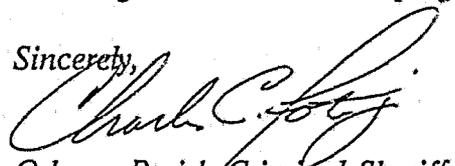
The committee members agreed to support the proposals outlined in this report and to work together to create a consensus for reducing juvenile violence and for legislative changes needed. The Juvenile Anti-Violence Committee will focus on positive steps to take in order to reduce the number of juveniles who are victims of crime as well as the number of juveniles who are offenders.

## C. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM?

This report, "Juvenile Agenda: Reducing Juvenile Violence in Our Community", is an effort to galvanize the community by describing the effects of juvenile violence and offering a number of proposals to target this problem. This report is organized in such a way as to encourage as much community involvement as possible. Schools, churches, businesses, neighborhood groups and civic organizations all have a role to play in helping implement the proposals outlined here and in helping to pass the legislative changes contained in the Addendum of this report.

I hope that this report provokes thought, action and a strong commitment to helping the youth in our community.

Sincerely,



Charles C. Goff

Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff

## I. MEASURING JUVENILE VIOLENCE

Violence has become a fact of everyday life in today's society. And within the ranks of society, juveniles are more likely than adults to experience some form of violence.

### A. NATIONALLY

The level of violence in the United States far surpasses that of other nations. As one example, the Center for Handgun Violence reports that in 1988, handguns were used to murder 8 people in Canada, 13 people in Australia, 19 people in Sweden, 25 people in Israel, 53 people in Switzerland and 8,915 in the United States. By 1990, the number of people murdered by handguns in the United States had grown to 10,567.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that teenagers are the victims of violent crime at rates more than twice that of adults. On an average, there were 67 violent crimes for every 1,000 teenagers as compared to 26 violent crimes for every 1,000 persons age 20 and older.

Juvenile violence is not limited to a socio-economic range or to a particular region; it has become a problem of national importance. The Centers for Disease Control report that homicide is now the leading cause of death among black males under 35. While juvenile violence does not always equate to the use of guns, the incidents of juveniles using guns are increasing rapidly.

Consider these facts:

- \* Gunshot wounds to children ages 16 and under nearly doubled in major urban areas between 1987 and 1990.  
(National Pediatric Trauma Registry)
- \* Every day, 10 American children ages 19 and under are killed in gun accidents, suicides and homicides. Many more are wounded.  
(National Center for Health Statistics)
- \* More than 1.2 million elementary-aged, latch-key children have access to guns in their homes.  
(Centers for Disease Control)
- \* Almost 3 million crimes occur on or near school campuses every year - 16,000 per school day, or one every 6 seconds.  
(National Crime Survey)

\* An estimated 135,000 boys carried handguns to school daily in 1987 and another 270,000 carried handguns to school at least once.  
(National School Safety Center)

## B. LOCALLY

As a community, we are just beginning to measure the extent of juvenile violence and its effects.

1. The Coroner's Office, headed by Dr. Frank Minyard, reports that juvenile homicides have almost doubled since 1987. In the last five years, 252 youth in the 0 to 19 age group were homicide victims. Firearms were the instruments of death in 80% of the juvenile homicides in 1991.

### Juvenile Homicides

1987	29
1988	40
1989	57
1990	72
1991	58

The number of juvenile homicides in New Orleans in 1991 was greater than the total number of homicides in Austin, Texas, which is a city of comparable size. So far this year, eight juveniles have been killed in New Orleans: seven were killed with guns and one was a stabbing.

Dr. Minyard points out that because of the greater caliber weapons and more frequent use of automatic weapons, a person shot with a gun today is less likely to survive than previously. Saturday night specials are no longer the weapon of choice. Today's youth are armed with .357 magnums, 9-mm semi-automatics and even Uzi machine guns.

For every homicide listed there are many more juveniles who are wounded by gun fire, raped, assaulted with another weapon, or just plain beat-up. Often times, these incidents are not reported to the police. A major study in Northeastern Ohio reveals that the total ratio of all kinds of assaults to homicides is about 100 to 1. Using this formula, we can estimate that there were 5800 assaults to juveniles in New Orleans last year.

Juvenile violence is not limited to major cities like New Orleans. The Times-Picayune reported that "half of St. John the Baptist Parish's homicides last year were committed by teenagers."

2. "Chronic Community Violence: What Is Happening To Our Children?" is a research paper prepared by members of the LSU Medical Center and National Institute of Mental Health. The paper, which will be published in the August 1992 issue of Psychiatry, studied the effects on children who grow up in environments where they are repeatedly exposed to significant levels of violence.

The study group consisted of fifth graders from Lockett Elementary School, located near the Desire/Florida Housing Development, and their mothers. Police records show that in 1989 in this area, the Fifth district, there were:

72 murders  
91 rapes  
1521 assaults  
1114 armed robberies

(Other, less violent crime, was reported as 8944. Total reported crime was 11,742.)

The results of the survey of 5th graders and their mothers showed that:

Almost the entire group had heard about some form of a violent episode, 91% had witnessed violence, and over half had been victims of some form of violence. Twenty-six percent of the sample had witnessed a shooting and 19% had witnessed a stabbing. Three children had experienced personally the most severe forms of victimization, stabbing or rape. In addition to exposure to the various forms of violence, 40% of the parents reported that their children had seen a dead body, 72% had seen weapons used, and 49% had seen someone who was wounded.

Survey data also showed strong and significant relationships between exposure to community violence, the incidence of family violence, and the overall stress symptoms observed in the children.

The mothers reported teaching their children to sit in their homes or watch television with their heads below the window sills in order to avoid random bullets. Children learn to dive or run when they hear shots. Very early in their lives, children must learn to deal with loss and cope with grieving over and over for family members or friends who have been killed.

From this study we can clearly see that for these 5th graders violence has become a part of daily life. The authors conclude with "We must not only raise awareness about the magnitude and urgency of the problem, but continue with more intensive research to refine our understanding of the outcomes of such exposure and facilitate intervention efforts."

3. The Tulane University Gun Study was conducted in the spring of 1991 and is part of a larger, multi-city survey on gun use by juveniles. In this survey, 110 juvenile offenders in Orleans Parish ages 14 to 17 were surveyed in a self-administered test to gather information on specific weapons usage. From the preliminary information derived from this study the following profile of gun users emerged:

- Education: only 26% had completed the 9th grade
- Rap Sheet: 76% had been arrested before the age of 14
- Drugs: 28% admitted to using hard drugs  
50% admitted to selling drugs
- Gun Use: 53% admitted to using a gun in a crime by the age of 15

Almost 70% reported that they would have little difficulty in obtaining a gun upon their release from jail.

The bottom line is these kids are young, well armed and quite dangerous.

4. The Criminal Sheriff's Juvenile Offender Survey was conducted in January and February of 1992 and consisted of 30 minute face-to-face interviews with 203 juvenile offenders. This survey found that the age, education and criminal history profile of the interviewees closely matched the profile derived from the Tulane Study. In addition, this survey provides insight and information on the types of offenses first committed, the age at which they began committing criminal offenses and the extent to which these offenders had themselves been victims of crime.

First Offense - Sixty-three percent reported that they had committed their first criminal offense between the ages of 12 and 15 and that the most frequently reported first offenses were:

burglary	12%
auto theft	16%
theft	35%

Associations - In their family relationships, the juveniles reported that 60% of their siblings had been arrested for a crime.

Victims - The majority of these juvenile offenders also reported being victims of crime themselves: 82% reported being victims of theft, 58% reported being victims of robbery, and 51% reported being victims of assault with a gun.

Offense Rate - When the offense rate for this group of juvenile offenders was compared to an adult group of inmates in a similar survey in 1986, the results indicated a much higher offense rate for juveniles overall. For example, juveniles commit an average of 576 assaults and 73 auto thefts per year, compared to adults who commit an average of 4 assaults and 11 auto thefts annually. Overall, with the exception of drug deals, the number of crimes committed by juveniles is 5 times higher than the number committed by adults annually.

Mean Estimates of Offense Rates

	Juveniles - 1992	Adults - 1986
Burglary	22.4	25.1
Robbery	35.4	26.5
Assault	575.8	4.1
Auto Theft	72.6	11.4
Other Theft	57.9	111.7
Forgery	1.8	28.6
Fraud	110.8	85.7
Drug Deals	6259.3	6806.3
All Offenses including Drug Deals	3746.2	2788.2
All Offenses excluding Drug Deals	420.3	87.0

## II. PROPOSALS FOR REDUCING JUVENILE VIOLENCE

The following proposals are suggestions for reducing juvenile violence in our community. Some of the suggestions are short term and can be implemented quickly. Others are long term and will require more effort.

### A. REDUCE THE NUMBER OF JUVENILES MURDERED OR INJURED IN OUR COMMUNITY.

The U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Study states that "almost half of all violent crimes against youths aged 12 to 19 occurred in school buildings, on school property or on the street. Of the violent crime on the street, 37% involved an offender with a weapon. A weapon was present in 12% of crimes in school buildings."

#### 1. Eliminate Weapons In Our Schools

"Caught in the Crossfire: A Report on Gun Violence In Our Nation's Schools" focuses on the increasing gun violence occurring in and around our schools. Among the findings are:

- \* School children aged 14 to 17 are most at risk of gun violence at school
- \* Handguns are the overwhelming choice of firearms (75%) for those who committed gun violence in schools
- \* Males are more frequently the offenders (93%) as well as the victims (76%)

The root causes for gun violence in schools, according to this report, were:

<u>Cause</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Drugs/gangs	18%
Long-standing disagreements	15%
Playing with or cleaning guns	13%
Romantic disagreements	12%
Fights over material possessions	10%
Depression	9%
Vendetta against society	6%
Racial	5%
Name calling	4%
Vendetta against school employee	4%
Undetermined	4%

National figures show that, the majority of gun violence took place in high schools (63%), incidents also took place in junior high schools (24%) and elementary schools (12%).

The same report shows that within the school setting, gun incidents took place in the following locations:

Hallways	25%
Classrooms	19%
School grounds	15%
Adjacent property	9%
Athletic facilities	8%
School buses	7%
School parking lot	5%
Cafeteria	4%
Restroom	2%
Auditorium	1%
Undetermined	5%

Bill Martin, spokesman for the National Education Association tells that "Teachers are much more fearful in the middle schools and upper elementary grades - fifth and sixth grades - than they ever were before." In Washington D.C., parents and teachers protested recently because a 13 year old boy was allowed to return to his elementary school after being arrested for carrying a gun.

Nearly one-fourth of all major urban high schools use metal detectors. "Newsweek" magazine reports on a program in Chicago called "SAFE: Schools Are For Education". This program combines mobile walk-through metal detectors with special police patrols in the schools. Since the program began in 1990, reportedly there has not been one shooting during school hours in the 410,000 student district.

There is no place in our schools for guns. We must, as a community, decide to eliminate guns in our schools. Metal detectors should be provided to every school.

Paul Kingery, Director of Health Promotion at Texas A&M University, says that "The kids are the victims of violence, and the schools are not creating safe environments. Law enforcement is not adequately involved." Kingery believes that schools need more adults on campus to provide supervision and urges parents to get involved in every aspect of their child's school activities. He advises that principals and parents can form volunteer "safety watches" to provide additional adult supervision at ball games, dances and other potentially tense school activities. Businesses can cooperate by giving time off for employees who want to participate in school activities.

## 2. Promote the "Cease Fire " Campaign Throughout Our Community.

The easy availability of guns is one of the main factors contributing to the increase in juvenile violence. In previous years, juveniles used to "duke it out" as a means of settling a disagreement; today, disagreements - sometimes minor ones - are settled by a shoot out.

In order to reduce the number of illegal guns, a concentrated media campaign entitled "Cease Fire" will begin shortly. The campaign will include videos, school posters, billboards, signs at bus stops, public service announcements, etc. The phone number for the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) used to report an illegal gun will be an integral part of this campaign. Too often, citizens and even parents know of kids with guns but do not know how to disarm them and feel powerless in dealing with them. This campaign will provide citizens with a method of reporting an illegal gun and having an outside authority disarm the youth.

A "Safe School hot-line" will also be set up for students, teachers and other school personnel to report any sort of trouble at school or in their neighborhood. This will provide a method of reporting problems at school or on the way to and from school. Having the ability to report specific problems and having action taken on those problems can teach the juveniles two lessons. One, it provides the juveniles with a much-needed sense of empowerment and two, it teaches them that there are other ways to protect themselves without resorting to a weapon.

The "Cease Fire" campaign will focus on what can and should be done to reduce the amount of gun violence in our community.

- \* Illegal guns must be removed from our schools and street
- \* Students must be educated about the danger involved in carrying a gun
- \* Parents must make sure that their children do not have access to guns in the home
- \* Law makers, judges and law enforcement officers must work together to make sure that those who carry guns or commit gun violence on school property receive swift and severe punishment
- \* Everyone - principals, teachers, parents and juvenile justice agencies must work together to ensure a safe environment at school and on the way to and from school.

### 3. Establish STUDENT CRIME WATCH PROGRAMS in all schools

With the increase in school violence, Student Crime Watch Programs should be implemented in all schools in the New Orleans area. Similar to neighborhood watch organizations, the Student Crime Watch program will assist schools in New Orleans and elsewhere in developing student organizations to monitor and prevent:

- \* violence
- \* alcohol and drug abuse
- \* youth gangs
- \* thefts and other crimes
- \* teenage student dropouts

The motivation to make the program work comes from within the students themselves. It is their own program; they set it up, they run it, direct it, take responsibility for it, and are the primary beneficiaries of it. It works because it is a program for students by students.

Student Crime Watch appeals to students' natural desires to form alliances and clubs. Not only can organizations be formed within schools and districts, citywide councils can be formed with representatives from each school. A Student Crime Watch newsletter would be a perfect way to share information and inform parents and teachers as well as other students.

Elementary schools can have poster contests, write essays and perform skits in conjunction with this program. Older students can produce videos on safety topics which can be shown throughout the school system and even on cable television.

An active Student Crime Watch program will promote school loyalty and provide a means for kids to protect their school which should also reduce the amount of vandalism common to so many of our schools today.

Businesses throughout the city are encouraged to assist the schools in their neighborhoods in establishing the Student Crime Watch programs. Making our schools safe environments will not only reduce violence but will also enable students to learn more in a less stressful atmosphere.

## B. REDUCE THE NUMBER OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS IN OUR COMMUNITY

### 1. Prevention for majority of juveniles

We must not lose sight of the fact that the overwhelming majority of juveniles in our community are not involved in delinquent or criminal behavior. Realistically, the majority of kids are in danger of being victimized by the small number of violent juvenile offenders.

The latest population figures show that almost 30% of the population of New Orleans is under the age of 19. According to Woods & Poole Economics Inc., there are 145,159 youth in this category including:

39,200 youth between 1 and 4 years

37,321 youth between 5 and 9 years

35,282 youth between 10 and 14 years

33,356 youth between 15 and 19 years

What can be done to better protect these kids from being victimized or from emulating the actions of the delinquent or criminal juveniles? Our schools and churches must take the lead by providing training in the following areas:

- \* violence prevention
- \* prejudice reduction
- \* conflict resolution
- \* communication skills
- \* alcohol and drug abuse programs
- \* positive self-image programs

Above all, these youth need positive role models. From infancy through adolescence, children learn social behavior. All too often, misbehavior is a cry for attention. We must give these kids our attention. Afterall, they are our future.

## 2. Intervention for first offenders and non-violent repeat offenders

Identifying and quantifying the number of juveniles "at risk" is difficult. On an average, 6000 juveniles are arrested each year in New Orleans. Approximately 2000 are first offenders. According to police reports these first offenders fall into the following age categories:

Age	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Number	19	14	42	60	113	159	235	380	399	445
Percent 1st Offender	83%	64%	81%	56%	51%	41%	34%	34%	28%	29%

Added to that number are another 2000 juveniles who are not arrested but who are reported directly to the Juvenile Court by family or neighbors because of unruly or uncontrollable behavior. Obviously, these juveniles should also be included in the number targeted for intervention.

There are approximately 4000 youth who can be identified as first offenders and another 3000 to 4000 who are termed seriously "at risk" by the juvenile justice system. These are the youth who should receive immediate attention in order to prevent them from becoming repeat offenders. By age 11 almost half of the juveniles arrested are repeat offenders. By age 12, almost 60% are repeat offenders and by 13 almost 70% are repeat offenders. This progression is compelling. Without intervention, first offenders rapidly graduate to become repeat offenders with property offenses escalating to violent crime.

Probation officers with case loads of 120 to 130 are not the answer. These juveniles need one-on-one attention. The "Intervention Volunteers" program outlined on page 14 targets this segment of the juvenile population.

## 3. Incarceration for chronic juvenile offenders

There is no shortage of bedspace for juvenile offenders in Orleans Parish, so there is no reason why juveniles who are chronic offenders are not held once arrested. The results from both the Tulane University Study and the Criminal Sheriff's Juvenile Offender Survey show the need to incarcerate chronic, dangerous offenders for their own good and for the public's safety. Ironically, several of the juveniles' letters in "Word To The World" expressed the thought that if they had not been incarcerated, they would be dead by now. They realize that in jail, they still have a chance to change, to turn their lives around. On the streets, they don't have that chance.

## C. MAKE CHANGES IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

### 1. Improve the Juvenile Data System

The National School Safety Council, in its report "The Need To Know: Juvenile Record Sharing", brings home a telling point. "Our juvenile justice system protects the privacy of the serious youthful offender to such an extent that the rest of society often is at risk. When a juvenile has been actively involved in criminal behavior, all agencies working with the offender have a right to know. The practice of keeping juvenile records confidential, which is intended primarily to respond to individual privacy and other rights, has not kept pace with the vast changes in the juvenile justice system and the rapid expansion of serious juvenile crime."

Currently, there is no integrated data system for juvenile offenders. Juvenile histories are maintained by NOPD, the Criminal Sheriff's Office, Youth Study Center, the Probation Department and Juvenile Court. Problems arise because final dispositions are not included in any but the Juvenile Court records. Nor does the school system have access to vital information regarding the status of a student.

A further complication is that juvenile fingerprints are sent to the central fingerprint repository maintained by the State Police and must be separated from adult fingerprint records and are not included in the State Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).

The legislative package contained in the Addendum details the legislative changes that need to be made. These include:

1. Juvenile Court should submit the final dispositions on criminal offenses by juveniles to local and state law enforcement agencies.

2. Juvenile fingerprints for criminal offenses should be included in the central repository along with adult fingerprints and should be included in the State Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).

3. School authorities should have access to the criminal history, disposition and status of a student.

Ideally, a computerized data base would provide access to interagency information while maintaining some level of confidentiality. Sharing information will not only assist in developing appropriate strategies for educating and rehabilitating these youthful offenders, it will also prevent further juvenile crime and related violence.

## 2. Institute Drug Testing At The Time Of Arrest

The only information we have on drug use by juvenile offenders in Orleans Parish is self-reported from the Criminal Sheriff's Juvenile Offender Survey. Of the 203 juveniles surveyed, 42% reported using drugs before being incarcerated. (Experience with the Drug Use Forecasting Survey for adults, which uses urine screening to confirm self-reports, shows many users do not admit use.)

Of the 84 juveniles who reported using drugs, the following analysis was obtained:

Cocaine	every day	10	28%
	a few times a week	9	25%
	a few times a month	4	11%
	every once in a while	5	14%
	once or twice	8	22%
Marijuana	every day	23	30%
	a few times a week	17	22%
	a few times a month	10	13%
	every once in a while	18	23%
	once or twice	10	13%
Crack	every day	4	17%
	a few times a week	7	29%
	a few times a month	4	17%
	every once in a while	2	8%
	once or twice	7	29%
Other Drugs	every day	2	20%
	a few times a week	2	20%
	a few times a month	2	20%
	every once in a while	1	10%
	once or twice	3	30%

Drug testing at the time of arrest should be implemented in order to determine the number of youth actually using drugs and the type treatment needed. In addition, drug testing can be used diagnostically to identify drug abusing youth before they become established in the cycle of illicit drug use and crime.

Mandatory drug testing can also be used as a condition for release until the offender's adjudication hearing ( which can be up to 90 days) or as a condition for probation once the offender has been adjudicated.

### **3. Set Up An "Intervention Volunteers" Program To Work With The Juvenile Justice System**

The "Intervention Volunteers" Program would be a non-profit organization to work with the juvenile justice system. The intent of this program would be to utilize volunteers and community resources to prevent juvenile crime, reduce recidivism and rehabilitate delinquent prone youth.

The program would entail a paid program coordinator who would be responsible for recruiting volunteers, establishing a computerized network of community resources and interacting with the various elements of the juvenile justice system. During the juvenile's initial contact with the court, he/she would be tested and evaluated by professional volunteers in order to determine their educational level, proficiency, physical or mental problems. The coordinator would use these reports to determine if the offender needs a particular kind of help, i.e. special education classes, counseling, etc.

Each juvenile would be assigned his/her own individual volunteer to provide constant one-on-one attention. The volunteer, in turn, would make sure this youth was attending school and involved in productive activities such as sports, scouts and church youth groups.

The underlying goal of this program is not only to provide constant attention to the juvenile so that it would be nearly impossible for him/her to return to a delinquent way of life; but also to give the people of our community an opportunity to help delinquent prone youth where the juvenile justice system has had little effect.

## **D. KEEP PROBLEM KIDS IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM**

### **1. Implement "Plan For Parental Involvement"**

The following plan was developed by Barbara Ferguson, Associate Superintendent for the New Orleans Public Schools, and was summarized from a report entitled "From The Courthouse To The Classroom: Mandating Parental Involvement In The Treatment Of Juvenile Offenders."

Parents of delinquent youth can be compelled by the courts to be active participants in their child's education. School success lessens the child's chances for becoming delinquent. Mandated parental involvement provides a "linking mechanism" between the schools and courts. This mechanism or the Plan for Parental Involvement (PPI), is explained further in the following three parts: The Orientation Phase, the Implementation Phase and the Supervision Phase.

The Orientation Phase: Once a child has been adjudicated a delinquent, and the parent has been adjudicated as in "need of supervision", {if: (1) a child under the parent's control is a delinquent, a child in need of care, or a child in need of supervision; and (2) the habitual conduct of the parent has substantially contributed to the condition of the child.} the court orders the parent to adhere to the PPI.

The Implementation Phase: Essentially, the parent will be expected to implement two actions: 1) Make an initial contact with the school, and 2) Monitor the child's progress. The parent will be directed to meet with the child's school counselor once a week to discuss the monitoring of attendance, academic progress and conduct.

The Supervision Phase: At the initial meeting with the administrator, the administrator will sign and submit the school notification form either directly to the court, or the court's designee, to indicate that the parent made the initial contact. At these weekly meetings, the parent will sign in. If the parent fails to attend a weekly meeting, a letter will be sent by the school administrator to the parent. If the parent misses two weekly meetings, the administrator will notify the court, who in turn, will hold the parent in contempt.

Through the implementation of the PPI program each child would have a responsible parent in his life and court intervention would not be warranted. Responsible parenting techniques can be learned by those whose children are juvenile offenders. Through this plan juvenile courts and schools can become links in developing parental responsibility in order to reduce juvenile delinquency.

## 2. Establish A Military Style School For Expelled Or Suspended Students

The need for a special military style school has long been recognized. Under Louisiana Revised Statute 17:416.1, provisions are made students who have been expelled or suspended to be kept in the school system by attending an alternative education program.

Teachers routinely report that discipline is a major problem at every grade level. Suspending or expelling a student is not something to be feared by the students in many cases. Without other options, schools often pass problem students on to another school with the hopes that he/she will improve.

A student who is expelled from a private school/parochial school usually returns to the educational system by attending a public school. If more trouble is encountered at this point, he/she may be transferred to another school. When these transfers are exhausted, the last resort is expulsion from the school system; whereby, the streets become the child's teacher.

This project should be considered a priority. In the event that the entire funding cannot be obtained from either the state or federal government, local funding should be sought. The cost of not having such a school is enormous in terms of lives wasted and crimes committed.

In order to help those juveniles who, for one reason or another, do not have parents or guardians who are able to properly care for them, a special residential hall should be set up. This residential hall would be staffed by trained professionals who would act as teachers as well as role models. Discipline, counseling, physical activity would be combined with education in either a regular school or in the military school in order to prepare these juveniles for a better life.

Juvenile Judges would be able to sentence non-violent repeat offenders to this residential hall where they would receive individual attention. The idea is to use this as another tactic in diverting juveniles from criminal behavior.

### **3. Build A Stadium And Provide Other Much Needed Support**

New Orleans Public Schools' secondary students are significantly disadvantaged in their athletic participation because of a lack of an interscholastic playing field or stadium. In fact, New Orleans is the only public school system in the state without a facility for interscholastic sports.

In our society, education is not limited strictly to the classroom but extends to extra-curricula activities as well. Such activities provide students with an opportunity to acquire social skills, to interact with peers, to develop civic responsibility, to demonstrate school loyalty and to heighten self-esteem. Athletics are an integral part of any extra-curricular program at the secondary level. Interscholastic competition is also important in that it builds character and imparts sound values. Students involved in athletics tend to have better attendance records, lower dropout rates, and fewer disciplinary problems than non-participating students.

The lack of a playing field or stadium has negatively impacted the athletic programs and has limited the opportunities for participants. Throughout its 150 year history, the New Orleans Public School System has been without a stadium and has had to rely on renting other facilities. The costs incurred in renting other stadiums, not to mention the psychological value of never having a "home game" seriously jeopardize the continued status of the athletic program.

In February 1992, a Stadium Committee composed of senior high school principals, teachers and community leaders received permission from the Orleans Parish School Board to construct a stadium on the grounds of Kennedy High School. The Committee has developed a budget and is currently in the process of obtaining donations to begin preparing the playing field. Sheriff Foti has made a commitment, not only to providing manpower, services and technical assistance wherever possible, but also to spearhead the drive to see this project become a reality.

In the next few weeks, a citywide campaign will begin to raise money and garner materials for the new stadium. This is an example of a project where everyone can get involved and where everyone will benefit.

#### IV. ADDENDUM

##### A. LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

Proposed additions to existing law are underlined while proposed deletions are lined through.

Enact Article 412 Section A(6) of the Louisiana Children's Code.

A(6) The final disposition of charges for delinquent offenses shall be submitted to local law enforcement and correctional agencies that maintain records of the arrest, and to the central fingerprint repository maintained by the Louisiana Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information as specified under R.S. 15:597.

Amend and Reenact Article 818 Sec.D of the Louisiana Children's Code.

D. Fingerprints and photographs taken pursuant to Paragraph A or B of this Article shall be maintained and indexed separately from those of adults. They shall be made available only to law enforcement and correctional agencies for purposes related to their official functions. ~~They shall not be sent to a central state, regional, or federal bureau of criminal identification unless the child is adjudicated delinquent.~~ Fingerprints taken pursuant to Paragraph A shall be submitted to the central fingerprint repository maintained by the Louisiana Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information as specified under R.S. 15:590, et.seq., and to the fingerprint repository, if any, maintained by the local law enforcement agency.

Amend and Reenact Article 412D of the Louisiana Children's Code.

D. Reports and records concerning matters of proceedings under the juvenile jurisdiction of the court may also be released to a peace officer, probation officer, district attorney, employee of the office of community services or office of juvenile services or the local school board in connection with the performance of his duties.

Amend LA R.S. 13:1570

"...Who violates any law or ordinance, except a child who, after having become fifteen years of age or older is charged with having committed first degree murder, second degree murder, manslaughter, aggravated rape, ~~or a person who after becoming sixteen years of age or older is charged with having committed~~ armed robbery, aggravated burglary, aggravated kidnapping, or distribution of narcotics and serious weapons offenses. Once such a child has been charged with having committed any offense listed in this Paragraph, the district court shall retain jurisdiction over his case, even though the child pleads guilty to, or is convicted of, a lesser offense, and a plea to, or conviction of, a lesser included offense shall not revert the court exercising juvenile jurisdiction of such a child."

Amend LA R.S. 14:95.2(A)

A. Carrying a firearm or other weapons by a student or nonstudent on school property is unlawful and is the intentional possession of any firearm or other weapon, on one's person, on a school campus during ~~regular school hours~~ at anytime or on a school bus as well as at any school-sponsored event, such as athletic competitions, dances, parties, etc.

NOTE: for information on how to contact your legislator call or write

Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office  
2800 Gravier Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

(504) 827-8501

**B. RESPONSE CARD**

(tear out and mail your comments to the following address)

Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office  
2800 Gravier Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119

Dear Sheriff Foti,

YES, I am interested in volunteering to help in the following areas:

- \_\_\_\_\_ "Cease Fire" citywide campaign
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Safe School" hot-line for students and teachers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student Crime Watch for schools
- \_\_\_\_\_ Intervention Volunteers program
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stadium construction project

I would also like to offer the following ideas or suggestions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

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