

...this survey is not sufficiently refined to address important issues in depth nor is it adequate to examine sub-groups of the population. An expanded program of crime victimization surveys is necessary for meaningful trend analysis, and in order to respond to the need for useful information about vulnerable peoples who may be among those at greatest risk of crime victimization and who have the most limited access to criminal justice and social service agencies. (p. 3)

The Committee agrees that a comprehensive program of victim surveys will assist in policy and program development in the area of crime prevention and support part of the mandate of the proposed national crime prevention centre which is to gather, analyze and disseminate information about crime, crime trends and crime prevention.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that the federal government expand Statistics Canada's program of victimization surveys to allow for the analysis of trends in crime victimizations at regular intervals and to allow for population samples sufficiently large to capture the experiences of important sub-groups of the Canadian population. The information collected from the victimizations surveys should be used to support the research agenda of the proposed national crime prevention centre.

The Committee believes that information on repeat offenders who come into contact with the criminal justice system is also necessary to assess the impact of crime prevention initiatives. It is aware that with the Adult Court, Youth Court and Uniform Crime Report Surveys becoming national, there is ever-increasing potential to measure recidivism within these components of the criminal justice system. The Committee is encouraged that there is ongoing feasibility work at the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics to pursue data on recidivism and it awaits the availability of these national statistics.

H. Violence-Prevention Education

The Committee is dismayed over the level of crime in this country, particularly crimes involving violence that occur in the home. The Committee heard over and over that those who experience and witness physical and sexual abuse in their family environment lack self-esteem and have a high probability of becoming school bullies, school drop-outs, substance abusers and future perpetrators of physical and sexual assaults. It has concluded that violence does, indeed, breed violence.

The Committee believes that if Canada develops a comprehensive approach to crime prevention that includes social development, in the long term we will create an environment that is less violent and in which everyone will have the opportunity to participate and succeed. It agrees that we need a national public education campaign, as an immediate preventive measure, targeted to schools to denounce violence and to raise awareness of prevention strategies. Donna Birch of the East Prince Committee on Family Violence recommended education, beginning in the elementary grades, that instills positive self-esteem and age-appropriate knowledge of the types of abuse that occur in the family, available services, and prevention strategies. (73:43) Lisa Cheyne, of the Saskatoon Sexual Assault and Information Centre, told the Committee that to break the cycle of violence, human relations should be a core subject in school: