

The B.C. Coalition for Safer Communities notes in their brief that:

...it is important to emphasize that while Canada has many statutory and funded social and community programs, which provide a foundation for this approach, they are not structured, integrated or targeted to meet the objectives of a safer community strategy. (p. 8)

According to Jill Lightwood, of the Prince Edward Island Department of Justice and Attorney General, one factor inhibiting the development of the safer communities approach to crime prevention is the segmentation of programs and services.

One of the reasons it is so hard to coordinate and target services to the people who need them is that we have services in these little boxes. Education is over here, addictions is over there, welfare is over here, courts are over there, and whether you are a victim, offender or first-time offender, you tend to go shopping for services, which are often delivered from contradictory philosophies. So we do need some really broad structural changes. (73:26)

In other words, community-based agencies, like government departments, must form partnerships, coordinate their efforts and recognize they are providing preventive services to enhance community safety. To facilitate partnerships and coordination, local infrastructures such as municipal inter-agency safety committees are recommended. Local crime prevention committees diagnose community crime problems and adopt, coordinate and implement short-term and long-term measures specific to the crime situation with assistance from other orders of government.

TANDEM Montreal is an example of a municipal inter-agency crime prevention committee. Serge Bruneau described TANDEM Montreal as follows:

In each of the city districts, we are opting increasingly for the creation of a type of security committee with representatives from the public agencies, such as community health departments or the local community service centres. These committees may also have representatives from municipal housing offices, the police department, and the community. (70:47)

Marguerite Delisle, President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, informed the Committee of the unintended benefits of inter-agency collaboration, such as identification and prevention of overlap and duplication in service delivery. (70:22)

The Committee believes that Dr. Carol Matusicky, of the B.C. Coalition for Safer Communities, is a positive example of people who have begun to link the human services work they perform to crime prevention. She stated to the Committee that:

I've spent probably the last 15 or 20 years of my life involved in work that focused on education and prevention and in developing support programs and opportunities for parents and children. It is only in the last three or four years, perhaps thanks to the Coalition, that I see that what I do has everything to do with crime prevention. I am probably an example of a lot of people who are beginning to see the connections and the interconnections when working in the area of education, prevention, social policy as having so much to do with crime prevention. (80:31)

In summary, the safer communities approach recognizes that social and economic conditions are associated with crime. It emphasizes the need for governments and community agencies to recognize that what they do has an impact on crime, to coordinate their efforts to target