



# Department of Justice

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## **LOCAL TEAM MEETS WITH DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICIALS, ENHANCES STRATEGIES TO COMBAT GANG VIOLENCE AND GUN CRIMES**

Thirteen Representatives from the Southern District of Indiana attend Conference

Indianapolis – The fifth Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) national conference is taking place this week in Atlanta and 13 local representatives are joining more than 1,000 attendees to share the initiative’s successful strategies for combating gun crime and gang violence that have contributed to near record low crime rates. The Bush Administration has devoted approximately \$2 billion to PSN since 2001, including over \$50 million that will be distributed to local task forces this year to support PSN’s gun crime reduction and anti-gang efforts.

“Project Safe Neighborhoods is about teamwork, and we’ve learned that with teamwork, we can all make a difference in our communities and in our nation. I salute all of the effort of the individuals who strive to make America safe – safe from gun and gang violence,” said Acting Deputy Attorney General Craig S. Morford.

“I regard Project Safe Neighborhoods as one of the most significant gun and gang violence reduction efforts ever developed in this country,” said Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Acting Director Michael J. Sullivan. “When local, state and federal law enforcement organizations team up with members of the community, they become a formidable force in the effort to reduce violent crime.”

The conference centers on PSN’s many successes in fighting gun crime since the initiative was announced by President Bush in 2001, and on using PSN’s partnerships and successful strategies to combat the problems of gun and gang violence.

“As our city is stunned by the shooting death of the Northwest High School student last week due to a long-time feud between young female students, I am proud to be involved with this dedicated group of individuals who continue to believe in the PSN strategy. This senseless death shows that this community has much work to do to educate our young people about gun violence

and the horrific consequences when we do not resolve conflicts peacefully,” remarked local U.S. Attorney Susan W. Brooks.

The Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, Domingo Herraiz, announced that the Department of Justice released over \$30 million in grant assistance to support state and local anti-gang efforts of PSN task forces across the country. In addition, the Department will award approximately \$20 million across the country to support PSN efforts to prosecute, prevent and deter gun crime.

These efforts will complement additional Department programs, such as the Attorney General’s Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative, which has allocated approximately \$2.5 million for prevention, enforcement and offender reentry in each of the following sites: Los Angeles, Tampa, Cleveland, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Milwaukee, the “222 Corridor,” between Easton and Lancaster in Pennsylvania, Oklahoma City, Indianapolis, Raleigh/Durham, N.C., and Rochester, N.Y.

The Department of Justice also announced new PSN public service announcements, created in partnership with the Ad Council. The 30- and 60-second television spots, titled “Babies,” are intended to educate youth about the perils of gun crime and its devastating family impact. The radio spots provide a glimpse into the reality of gun crime and its consequences through interviews with individuals convicted of gun crimes and their family members. The public service announcements will be distributed to English and Spanish language television and radio stations nationwide and begin airing in late September.

PSN conference training topics range from enforcement strategies to remove violent gang members and gun criminals from the streets, to school violence prevention programs, and community partnerships. The strength of PSN continues to be its strategic mix of federal, state and local agencies and community leaders focused on law enforcement and crime prevention. Prosecutors pursue the strongest possible punishment for those who violate firearms statutes, while community partners aggressively educate their constituents about consequences of illegal gun violence and gang activity through services and resources provided by PSN.

For more information, please visit the PSN website at [www.psn.gov](http://www.psn.gov).

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