

The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative and Related Local Initiatives

The Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative builds on leadership and innovations in a number of jurisdictions where enforcement agencies have been focusing on reducing illegal access to firearms. Three important examples follow:

Project LISA: New Jersey's statewide crime gun tracing system. Locally developed crime gun information systems, such as Project LISA in New Jersey, have served as local models for Project LEAD, ATF's national crime gun information system. Information on all recovered crime guns statewide is entered into the LISA system, enabling enforcement officials to identify juvenile and adult offenders. U.S. Attorney Faith Hochberg organized this statewide system through a memorandum of understanding among all enforcement officials in the State.

The Boston Gun Project/Ceasefire. The Boston Gun Project/Ceasefire is a joint Federal and local effort to reduce youth firearms violence in Boston under the leadership of Commissioner Paul Evans, U.S. Attorney Don Stern, and ATF Special Agent in Charge Jeff Roehm. David Kennedy, a senior researcher at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, developed the project under a grant from the National Institute of Justice. Participants also include the Department of Probation, youth outreach workers, the Department of Parole, the Department of Youth Services, and school police. The strategy combines: (1) a local, State, and Federal effort to crack down on the illegal gun supply and (2) a local, State, and Federal strategy to deter violence by youth gangs.

The Boston Gun Project: crime gun supply reduction. This project developed comprehensive tracing and trace analysis and instituted the debriefing of arrestees especially gang members arrested for weapons, drug, and violent offenses, for information leading to local gun traffickers. ATF agents, police, and prosecutors are using traditional criminal investigative techniques to identify and prosecute specific traffickers.

Participants are also developing an enforcement strategy based on trace analysis to disrupt Boston's illegal youth gun market. This focuses on guns recovered less than two years from first retail sale, guns with two or more crime gun traces, guns recovered from members of violent gangs, and guns identified as particularly popular with gang members. ATF and police are restoring obliterated serial numbers, tracing those firearms, and focusing on FFLs and gun purchasers associated with those weapons.

The Boston Gun Project: deterring violent gang crime. Participants in the Gun Project researched the Boston youth homicide problem and determined it to be largely gang related. Participating officials agreed to deliver and act on a new enforcement message to these gangs: *violence will not be tolerated in Boston; it will be met with a strong and coordinated interagency response.* Officials delivered this message through formal meetings with gang members, individual police and probation contacts with gang members, meeting with all inmates of secure juvenile facilities in the city, and gang outreach workers. Where violence occurs, it is met with a coordinated interagency response, using all possible enforcement tools, from probation supervision to Federal investigation and prosecution.

Memphis U.S. Attorney's Anti-Violent Crime Task Force. This task force is a joint Federal and local effort to reduce youth firearms violence in Memphis, spearheaded by U.S. Attorney Veronica Coleman. The group developed comprehensive crime gun tracing and trace analysis and instituted the debriefing of all arrestees, especially gang members and juveniles arrested with firearms or for violent offenses. This task force is currently working with ATF to expand local capacity to restore obliterated serial numbers on crime guns.