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# Summary of Research 1997-1998

# Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative: Youth Violence in Winston-Salem/ Forsyth County, North Carolina

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# Executive Summary

The overall goal of this two-year initiative is to substantially reduce juvenile violent and assaultive crimes in Forsyth County, North Carolina to below state and national levels, using both short-term and long-term strategies. To accomplish this goal, research was conducted in order to identify prospective and serious violent juvenile offenders in three age groups ( 0-11, 12-15, and 16-17). Research was also used to determine the characteristics of violent incidents (e.g., locations, time of day, incident type) and of victims and offenders (e.g., family history, place of residence, relationship between victim and offender).

Results of this research was used to develop short-term strategies of enforcement and prevention for reducing juvenile violence, longer-term strategies for preventing its occurrence, and to guide implementation of these strategies in the local community. Results of continuing research will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness (cost and otherwise) of each strategy and adjust each accordingly.

This report presents key research findings from three research initiatives: focus groups, Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD) incident reviews, and agency statistical data. In 1998, there were 68,298 persons under age 18 residing in Forsyth County. The County's ethnic composition was 25.6% Non-white, 74.4% White. Based on records of the Winston-Salem Police Department and the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department 2,816 or 4.0 percent of these juveniles have been charged with some type of criminal offense. Of these 2,816 offenders, 243 or 11.0 percent have been charged with at least one violent offense. Thirty-six or 15 percent of the 243 are characterized as serious offenders, having been charged with two or more SACSI-defined violent offenses during 1998. The 243 constitute 0.20 percent, and the 36 only 0.05 percent of the total Forsyth County juvenile population. While violent juvenile crime is a serious community problem, figure three shows that a very small fraction of the total juvenile population in the county has engaged in this behavior.

A similar analysis of offenders involved in 1998 offenses affirms that a small number of juveniles are responsible for Winston-Salem's juvenile violence. In 1998, 140 juveniles (less than 1% of the city's juvenile population) accounted for the city's juvenile violence. Of these, 32 were repeat violent offenders during 1998. Over half of the 140 youth are under probation supervision, and the other half have had frequent contacts with the police. Slightly more than half (52%) have had one or more contact with CenterPoint Human Services for mental health issues. Of these, about half have been involved in firearm violations.

Interest in reducing particular types of offenses (e.g. assaults, weapons, etc.) committed by juveniles under age 18 led to a focus on incident reviews for four geographic areas shown by the data as having the highest concentration of such offenses: (1) Southside, (2) Cleveland Avenue, (3) North Cherry/Kimberley, and (4) Happy Hill. Data from various agencies were collected and analyzed, in order to determine the characteristics of juveniles involved in offenses in these neighborhoods.

Findings from these research efforts led to the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. **Location**- The findings reveal that juvenile violence appears to flourish around certain convenience and neighborhood stores (usually with pay phones on the premises), residential streets and blocks. Some sites have long-standing histories of violence and drug selling. Poorly lighted streets, abandoned and substandard houses, characterize a number of the hot-spot residential areas.

2. **Older/Younger Co-offenders**- The frequency of older individuals involved in co-offending behavior with juveniles suggest a pervasive "tutoring process" through which younger offenders learn delinquent norms from their older counterparts. Removing the "tutors" may prevent the progression of juvenile offending from minor to major offenses.

3. **Key Individuals** – The ability to reduce serious and violent juvenile crime may be greatly enhanced by focusing intervention on the small group of individuals/groups who commit a disproportionate amount

of the crime. These key individuals tend to be embedded in larger networks of offenders; therefore, focusing on them would be a visible intervention that sends a strong message to their friends.

4. **Coordination of Services** – While there are many effective intervention and prevention efforts, there remains a critical need for more consistent and coordinated focus, demanding strong monitoring and assessment systems. What is needed is coordinated, efficient and effective delivery of services, including long-term family case management, to the small core group of juveniles who are at the highest risk of committing and/or being victims of serious and violent crimes.

5. **Mental Health Needs** – There is anecdotal evidence that a substantial proportion of both one-time and repeat offenders have psychological and emotional disabilities. However, many officers and front-line workers believe that the mental health needs of these youth are not adequately addressed. Whether these individuals would benefit from therapy may depend on the type of therapeutic intervention as well as the skills of the therapists.

6. **School Disciplinary Actions.** In general, the WSFCS data suggest that a greater percentage of non-White students receive both in-school and out-of-school suspensions than do White students. It should be noted that the data do not allow us to distinguish the precise race/ethnicity of the non-White students being suspended nor of the school personnel issuing the suspensions.

7. **After School Activities** – There needs to be time (between 2 and 6pm) when children are supervised in play or education, etc. Programs serving this purpose may include drama, sports, chess, and mentoring programs (young adult mentors), at middle and secondary level boarding schools.

8. **Mentoring Programs**- Strategies should include adult and older peer mentoring programs. School-based mentoring programs, such as the one at LEAP Academy involving law enforcement officers and students, should have a strong evaluation component. K-12 school-based violence prevention and conflict resolution education should also be implemented and/or expanded as needed.

9. **Cultural sensitivity** – Respondents in both the incident reviews and focus groups called for more cultural awareness training for front-line workers. We believe that such program efforts should contain strong evaluative components and be culturally specific.

10. **Recommendations for Further Research and Data Collection Practices** - Overall, continuation, coordination, and standardization of data collection and analysis across organizations will be necessary to inform the continuing improvement of intervention and prevention strategies. Some specific recommendations:

- **At least quarterly**, analyze arrest data to maintain a current list of the most violent offenders (using the SACSI criteria), and analyze incident reviews to maintain a list of the current "hotspots."
- **Begin cross-agency collection** of intervention outcomes data, and tie it to the baseline SACSI data on violent offenders and on these offenders individually.
- **Implement a standard spreadsheet reporting format** for use by all agencies, either in paper or electronic formats.
- **Further standardize the usage of nomenclature across agencies.**
- **Provide training for all staff** on the use of standardized reporting formats, and provide all staff with feedback from the ongoing research process, so that they can see how the information is used and how it helps them in their work.

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that the research findings and recommendations above have already been put to use by the SASCI partner agencies and organizations as they implemented a number of enforcement, prevention and intervention programs aimed at reducing juvenile violence. A discussion of these research-driven programs is included in the appendices of this report.

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# INTRODUCTION

Violence among youths continues to be a significant social and public health problem in the United States, but more particularly, in Forsyth County, North Carolina. Figure 1 shows that, in the U.S., The rate of violent crime arrests for youth under age 18 years decreased steadily from 1.79 per 1,000 in 1993 to 1.28 in 1998. In North Carolina, the (somewhat higher) rate for comparable crimes decreased from 1.96 per 1,000 in 1993 to 1.59 in 1998. During the same period, the arrest rates for Forsyth County exceeded that of both the state and nation, with 2.40 in 1993, 3.00 in 1996, and 2.19 per 1,000 youth being arrested in 1998. Initial review of local data suggested that violent and assaultive behavior represented a large part of this number. For this reason, and because of the interweaving of violent crime in other juvenile crimes, it was decided to focus this community project on the reduction of juvenile violence.

The attempt to moderate these rates of juvenile violence is a difficult task, and understanding the complex factors that are related to juvenile violence is crucial for law enforcement officials, human service professionals and researchers. These groups share the goal of ultimately reducing juvenile violence, yet too often they conduct their business in isolation from each other. This institutional isolation precludes the development of a comprehensive knowledge base that would facilitate meeting the common goal.

The Strategic Approaches to Community Safety (SACS) initiative represented a broad-based coordinated effort to inform policy decisions on juvenile violence through research. The SACS initiative brought together members of the United States Attorney's Office, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, the Forsyth Juvenile Services, the Winston-Salem Police Department, the Department of Social Services, and Wake Forest University. This diverse set of organizations collaborated in an attempt to provide solutions to the problem of youth violence in Forsyth County.

## Goals and Objectives of Project

The overall goal of this two-year initiative was to substantially reduce juvenile violent and assaultive crimes in Forsyth County to below state and national levels, using both short-term and long-term strategies. To accomplish this goal, research was conducted in order to identify prospective and serious violent juvenile offenders. Research was also used to determine the characteristics of violent incidents, victims and offenders.

Results of this research were used to develop short-term strategies of enforcement and prevention for reducing juvenile violence, longer-term strategies for preventing its occurrence, and to guide implementation of these strategies in the local community. Results of continuing research will be used to evaluate the overall effectiveness (cost and otherwise) of each strategy and adjust them accordingly.

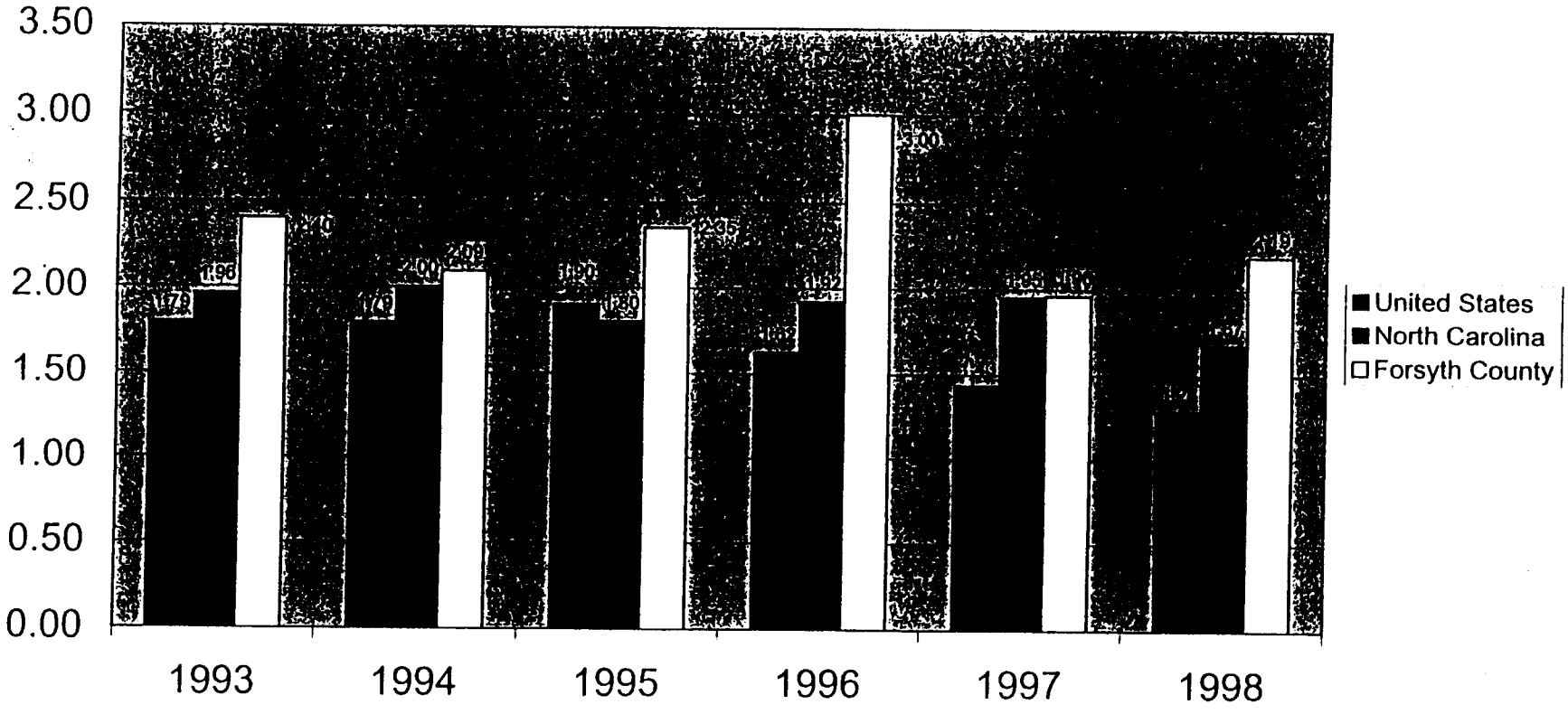
## Community Organizations and Mobilizing for Intervention

Juvenile violence has been a primary concern for Forsyth County for several years. This concern led to the formation of two community groups: Forsyth Futures and the Communities That Care Planning Team. Forsyth Futures, established in 1995, is comprised of 22 local, state and federal agencies whose individual missions require that they deliver services to children, youth, and families. Representatives from the business community and private foundations were also included.

An early effort by Forsyth Futures, in partnership with the Governor's Crime Commission, led to training front-line workers in a research-based risk and resiliency crime prevention program called Communities That Care (CTC). This program addressed adolescent problem behavior by reducing risks while creating support through families, schools, and community protective mechanisms. Clergy, university researchers, and youth-service professionals were trained in data collection and analysis. From their research, a CTC planning team identified certain risk factors to be addressed by the community's protective mechanisms,

# Rate of Juvenile Violent Crime Arrests by Locale and Year*

(*Rate = per 1,000)



which led the group to develop a program to provide services for siblings of youth who are currently involved in the juvenile court system. The present Strategic Approaches to Community Safety (SACS) initiative is a timely addition to this existing community-based action.

For the purposes of the SACS initiative a working group was established, the Strategic Planning Core. Comprised of partners representing the United States Attorney's Office, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, the Winston-Salem Police Department, Wake Forest University, the Juvenile Justice Council, Forsyth Juvenile Service, the Department of Social Services, and the CTC, the Core leadership established policies and procedures aimed at the implementation of research and ensuing strategies for enforcement, intervention and prevention of juvenile violence.

These policies were designed to ensure commitment and facilitate agency implementation of coordinated action. Groups of front-line workers from the various agencies were assigned to address several tasks, including enforcement and monitoring activities, providing a way for agency representatives, community leaders, project partners, and citizens to contribute to the project on a continual basis. The establishment of new communication networks among the Core-represented agencies were to form the basis for long-term cooperative efforts to be enhanced by the inter-agency linkage of information systems.

# Violent Offenses and the Scope of the Local Problem

Juvenile violence was identified as the community's most pressing problem. For the purpose of this project, "juvenile" was defined as an individual under age 18. North Carolina is one of only three states that considers person 16 years old and older adults. Thus, North Carolina's definition of a juvenile was not used so that meaningful national comparisons could be made. After reviewing the County's juvenile crime rates (see process below), for purposes of the SACS Initiative (SACSI), a violent offender was defined as a juvenile with one or more arrests during a twenty-four month period for the following crimes: rape, murder, aggravated assault, robbery, sexual offenses, weapons violations and kidnapping. Once listed as a violent offender, a juvenile could get off the list by not being arrested for a violent crime during the twelve months following the last arrest.

To determine the extent of the community problem, a three-step process was used. First, preliminary trend data were collected to compare the County's juvenile violent crime rates with state and national figures and to determine whether the perceived problem is persistent over time or simply a one-year anomaly. As shown in Figure 1, the data generally reveal the Forsyth County juvenile violent crime arrest rates are considerably higher than both state and national levels. Furthermore, these differences have persisted over time, supporting claims concerning the seriousness of juvenile violent crimes in Forsyth County.

A caveat is in order here when comparisons using 1998 county data are made. The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation noted that "Improved reporting methods at the Winston-Salem Police Department contributed to the 50 percent increase in juvenile arrests in Forysth County." An examination of the 1997 and 1998 data in the state Uniform Crime Report for Forsyth County suggests that the largest increases in juvenile violent crime were in weapons violations (96 arrests in 1997, 153 in 1998), robbery (48 and 74) and sex offenses. The largest increases were in "non-SACSI" offenses: drug offenses went from 358 to 378 and simple assault from 427 to 763. Thus the changes in reporting practices are not as likely to distort actual changes in the rates of arrests for SACSI violent crimes as for other offenses.

Second, trend data were requested from local agencies (i.e., law enforcement, the school system and juvenile services) on a wide range of offenses (including Crime Index, non-Index Crimes, and consistent rule violations ) for juveniles under 18 years old (Figure 2 shows 1998 data. Data for prior years are similar and are found in Appendix II, Figure 6). As Bilchik (1998) suggests, there are behaviors that are distinctive indicators of future violence perpetrated by boys. The non-index and rule violation offenses are predictors of later violent behaviors and require monitoring and intervention. Overall, data reveal high rates of violent and assaultive offenses. Since 1993, more than half of all juvenile offenders in Forsyth County were arrested for violent and assaultive crimes. Agency personnel, especially those working in the field, agreed that incidents involving violent and assaultive behaviors represent the greatest problem therefore decided to

focus on these types of crimes. For purposes of measurement, violent and assaultive crimes were initially defined as forcible rape, kidnapping, weapon carrying, communicating threats, robbery, sexual offenses homicide, simple assaults, car jacking, and aggravated assault. While simple assault, was the most prevalent violent offense, it is often difficult to agree on what behavior is or is not legally violent. Initially, simple assaults were included in the SACSI violent and assaultive crimes definition because the commission of such offenses are viewed as strong predictors of more violent assaults. As the research progressed, simple assaults were not included because of definitional difficulties. Figure 2 shows that, by not including simple assault, arrests for these clearly violent offenses total 14% of all arrests.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of offenses within the 137 1998 arrests for SACSI-defined violent offenses: robbery accounted for 36%; aggravated assault and weapons violations, 28% each; sexual offenses, 5%, rape, 2%; murder, 1% and kidnapping, less than 1%. These 1998 patterns are typical of prior years. Numbers for those years are found in Appendix II, Figure 7.

Analysis of arrests for non-violent offenses also reveal another striking trend: the number of arrests due to drug offenses increased by 250% from 1993 to 1998. Substance use tends to cluster with violence and weapon carrying among middle and high school students, suggesting that this increase in drug arrests may be an indicator of other violent behaviors and weapon carrying. However, Kennedy, Braga and Piehl (1997:45) caution that "drug offenses ... are ... most open to police discretion and enforcement bias ... "

Third, in order to gain a more nuanced view of the problem, a focus group meeting was held with front-line workers. The front-line workers included officers from the Juvenile Repeat Offenders Unit and the Winston-Salem Police Department; School Resource Officers from the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department; School Social Workers, and a Middle-School Principal from the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, Probation Offices from Juvenile Services; and Child Protective Services Workers from the Department of Social Services. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain information about the violent and assaultive behavior of juveniles by age cohort: 11 years and under, 12-15 year olds; and 16-17 year olds. The front-line workers confirmed that the offenses noted above were the critical offenses that they dealt with in their daily routines. All front-line workers encouraged the Core to include youth under age 11 years old.

# Research Design and Methodology

The overall research objectives of the initiative were to identify prospective and serious violent juvenile offenders in three age cohorts ( 0-11 years, 12-15 years, and 16-17 years) and determine the characteristics of violent incidents (e.g., locations, time of day, incident type) and of victims and offenders (e.g., family history, place of residence, relationship between victim and offender).

Initial questions that guided the analysis of the compilation of demographic profiles and of the incident reviews included the following:

- Are the incidents clustered geographically around particular schools, street corners, theaters, shopping malls, etc.?
- Are the offenders and/or victims under court supervision at the time of the incident?
- Are the incidents committed by a single individual or a group?
- Are there ethnic, gender, social and economic variations?
- Is there a core group of offenders who are responsible for most incidents?
- To what degree are gangs or specific groups of juveniles responsible for most of in-school and out-of-school violence?

### Cross-sectional cohort design

In order to develop both short-term enforcement and prevention, and long-term intervention strategies, age-specific data was needed. The planned methodology for this project involved a cross-sectional, cohort approach to develop age-specific efforts. Youth were divided into three age cohorts: 0 – 11 years, 12-15 years and 16 and 17 years. These three cohorts parallel Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

classifications of elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as analyses of problem juvenile behavior found in much of the literature on juvenile offender groups.

The first cohort ( 0-11 years old) was selected because roughly half of the most persistent serious offenders start their delinquent career before age 12 (Farrington, 1998). Moreover, persistent precocious behavior problems during elementary school years are strong warning signals of later serious violent juvenile offending (Butts and Snyder, 1997).

For the 12-15 year-old cohort, law enforcement statistics indicate a significant shift in youth contacts with law enforcement and youth service agencies from principally victim to offender status around age 12. There is considerable evidence that for a substantial number of persistent serious offenders, the onset of offending behavior before 15 years of age.

The 16-17 year old cohort is designed to capture a unique feature of the North Carolina courts: classification of these juveniles as adults. The highest incident rates for serious violent juvenile offenses are within this cohort (Butts and Snyder, 1997)

Finally, the cohort method is consistent with recent policy recommendations from a number of researchers who emphasize that it is important to identify prospective and serious violent juvenile offenders at every point along the age continuum.

**Initial Data Collection**

Because 1997 is the most recent year for which complete data was available at the start of the project, it was initially selected as the baseline year, later replaced by the 1998 data used here. Data was gathered from multiple sources. The 1998 data collection strategy was to sample the most violent and at-risk juveniles in each age cohort (see definitions above). The steps in the sampling selection are described in more detail below. First the Winston-Salem Police Department identified juveniles in each cohort whom they deem to be most violent or at the greatest risk of displaying violent behavior. This was determined by frequency of contact and/or arrest in those crimes categories identified as constituting the most serious violent and assaultive behavior (i.e., murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, kidnapping, weapons violations, communicating threats, sex offenses) .

The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, Forsyth Juvenile Services, the Department of Social Service, and CenterPoint Human Services (mental health) also generated similar lists, disaggregated by age cohorts, denoting their most violent case clients. These agencies were also asked to outline the criteria used for inclusion on their lists.

Second, front-line service workers from each agency identified juveniles whom they considered to be the most violent or at the greatest risk of displaying behavior. Each worker was asked to provide a profile of each youth (including demographic data and reasons for selection).

Third, names common to all lists were identified. Youths were selected based on both the frequency of their cross-listing and the level of violence involved. Individuals whose names occurred on all lists were noted as "high at-risk" juveniles and placed in the semi-final subject pool.

Fourth, a focus group was conducted with front-line workers from the various agencies involved to evaluate the inclusiveness of the semi-final subject pool. When they approve the assembled cohort listing generated in the first two phases, the subject list then constituted the final subject pool. When these front-line workers knew of a juvenile not on the list, but who they believed was a significant "high at-risk" individual, that name was added.

In addition to the list of subjects, a sample of law-enforcement and agency incident and case reports of the most violent crimes during 1997 was collected and presented in a focus group of front-line workers. The reports were examined individually to probe for a deeper understanding of the specifics of the incidents (including precipitating event, prior conflicts, etc.) This intense examination yielded rich qualitative

information to guide our intervention strategies, and also helped ensure a focus on the most at-risk juveniles in each cohort.

This same group of front-line personnel also examined drug incident reports from 1997 to develop a deeper understanding of the role that drugs play in juvenile violent and assaultive behavior. This information provided an important context to information gleaned about violent and assaultive behaviors as discussions began to determine appropriate intervention strategies at each age level.

Based on the results of the focus groups with front-line workers as well as previous studies, questions were developed for interview protocols. These protocols were used to conduct interviews with a variety of individuals, including juvenile offenders and individual front-line service workers. The analytic focus extended beyond the individual offender to include parents as well. This strategy allowed for addressing the learning of violence in the family systems. Because violent individuals are typically products of violent systems and structures, the research team considered it essential that interviews cast a wider net around the problem. Insights from these individuals was extremely valuable in understanding the implications of the data, i.e., these interviews helped put the quantitative data into the practitioner's context. These focus group sessions and interviews helped sharpen and deepen the discussions of potential intervention and prevention strategies.

**Initial Data Analysis**

Once the final offender subject pool was defined, descriptions were developed of their demographic and residential characteristics. Focus groups with front-line workers as well as other youth-service providers provided additional insight into criminal histories of offenders as well as victims. Drawing on these quantitative and qualitative data sources, general statistical patterns were identified and demographic profiles of offenders were developed.

The next phase of the analysis drew heavily on the incident reports complied by the Winston-Salem/ Forsyth County Schools and law enforcement agencies as described above. These analyses identified situational data, such as time and location of the incidents, whether the offender and victim knew each other, and whether drugs were involved, etc. These data were used to develop enforcement and prevention strategies for criminal justice agencies.

## Using Theoretical Perspectives to understand the results of research

As part of the research process, the Research Team developed an extensive literature review, which formed the basis for the following discussion. The full review and all citations can be found in Appendices III and IV.

While the current research can reveal patterns of behavior in the community and commonalties among a group of violent juvenile offenders, understanding why violent behavior patterns persist, or why certain juveniles and not others are involved in large numbers of violent acts, must come from a larger theory of behavior that can explain these things. In this context, using a theory is not an exercise in abstraction, but a very practical way of systematically developing an understanding of behaviors the community wants to change. While theories can come from many different places (religion, politics, folk wisdom), a useful theory will generate systematic insights that can lead to concrete action for change. In this project, theoretical insights are augmented by the systematic analysis of front-line worker focus groups working to interpret the daily experience of violent juvenile behavior.

The most applicable body of theory for a systematic understanding of violent behavior provides a typology of motives for violence. Violent behavior generally takes three forms: moralistic-instrumental, economic-instrumental and expressive. Moralistic violence presents a special challenge to policy efforts to reduce violence because it is more difficult to deter through threats of legal punishment than violence related to predatory or instrumental purposes. Expressive violence is difficult to predict, and is grounded in mental health and drug use issues as well the inability to communicate effectively in other modalities. The deterrent effect of punishment is probably greatest for economically instrumental violence because such violence typically involves calculated planning and weighing of risks. In contrast, moralistic violence may

Figure 2

# 1998
# SACSI vs. Non-SACSI Offenses

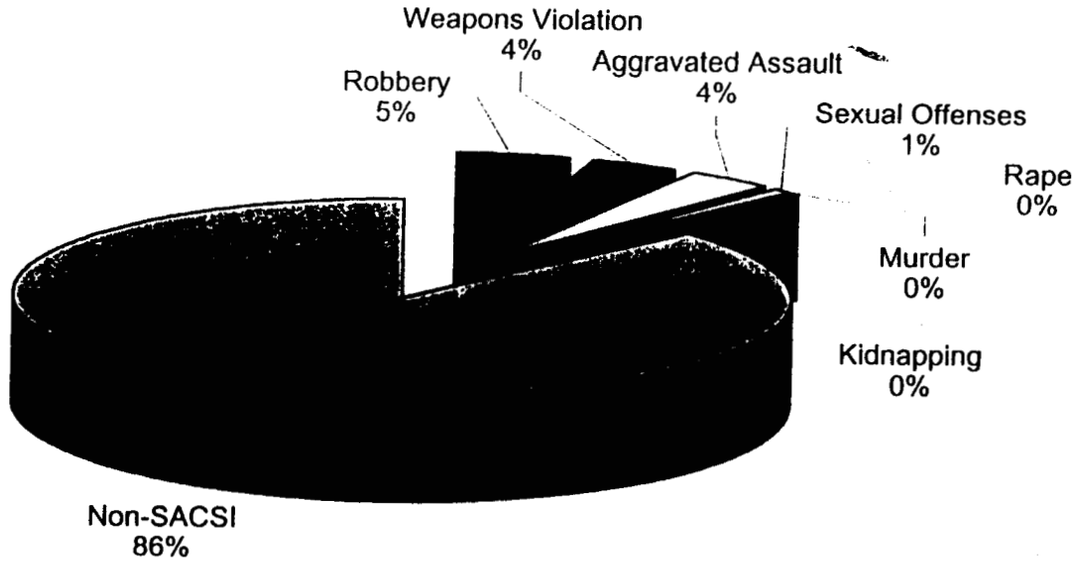
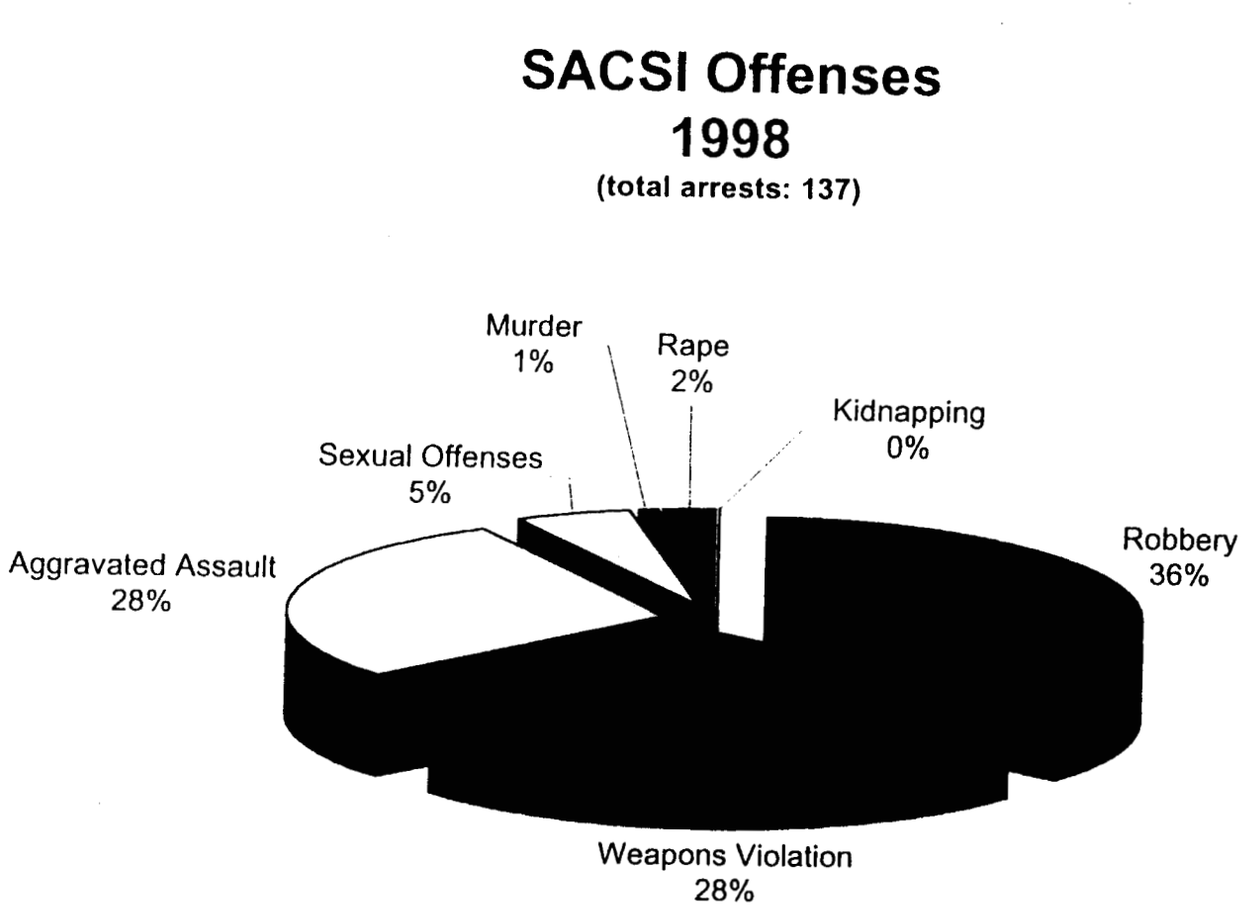


Figure 3



involve calculation, but the risk of not acting is the destruction of the social self, honor and reputation. Expressive violence is emotional and erupts impulsively. For moralistically-violent youth, the important consequences of their behavior lie within the values of the juvenile community. Any future punishment they may receive from the police, from parents, etc. becomes a secondary concern, if it is a concern at all, to their primary concern with inflicting their own brand of punishment on the perceived wrongdoer and avoiding the degradation of an unanswered affront.

While the analysis above separates motives for violent behavior, it also suggests that the motives are intertwined, mutually reinforcing, and filling needs that the community is not. Thus, the drug trade is a response, not only to a market, but also to the need for participation in the economy by juveniles who are barred by law and circumstance from participation as producers in the larger economy and by family circumstance as consumers. The specifics of the street moral code are counter to the specifics of the moral code of the larger economy. As long as violence is useful in both the drug trade (it is difficult to go to the police for redress of a drug deal problem) and maintaining honor on the street, a reputation for instability, hot temper and a willingness to escalate violence rapidly, are valuable assets. Changing this street world will require a long-term commitment to a variety of actions and community changes.

For reasons of cost and conflicting community values, not all of the actions and changes needed will occur. Some that are practically possible include the following. If the threat of formal punishment by authorities or parents is not a meaningful deterrent, then moralistically-violent youth will need to relearn how to manage conflicts with their peers and others in a conciliatory, peaceful fashion. Toward this goal, school-based conflict-resolution programs have proved successful interventions. To be most effective, training in nonviolent methods of conflict resolution should start at the earliest possible age, and should be extended to the parents, teachers, counselors, and peer-networks of violent youth. In contrast, violence of an instrumental nature (such as that occurring in the course of a robbery of a car jacking) may be best deterred through a heightened awareness among youth of the legal consequences. The use of violence as a preferred mode of expression can be addressed through the mental health system, family intervention and in programs that train children to use words and speech effectively. In efforts guided by the SACSI findings above, Winston-Salem has received a grant through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative and related COPS funding. The SACSI analysis and implementation plan provided the framework for the grant, and the money will fund specific SACSI strategies addressing moralistic violence.

# Research Findings

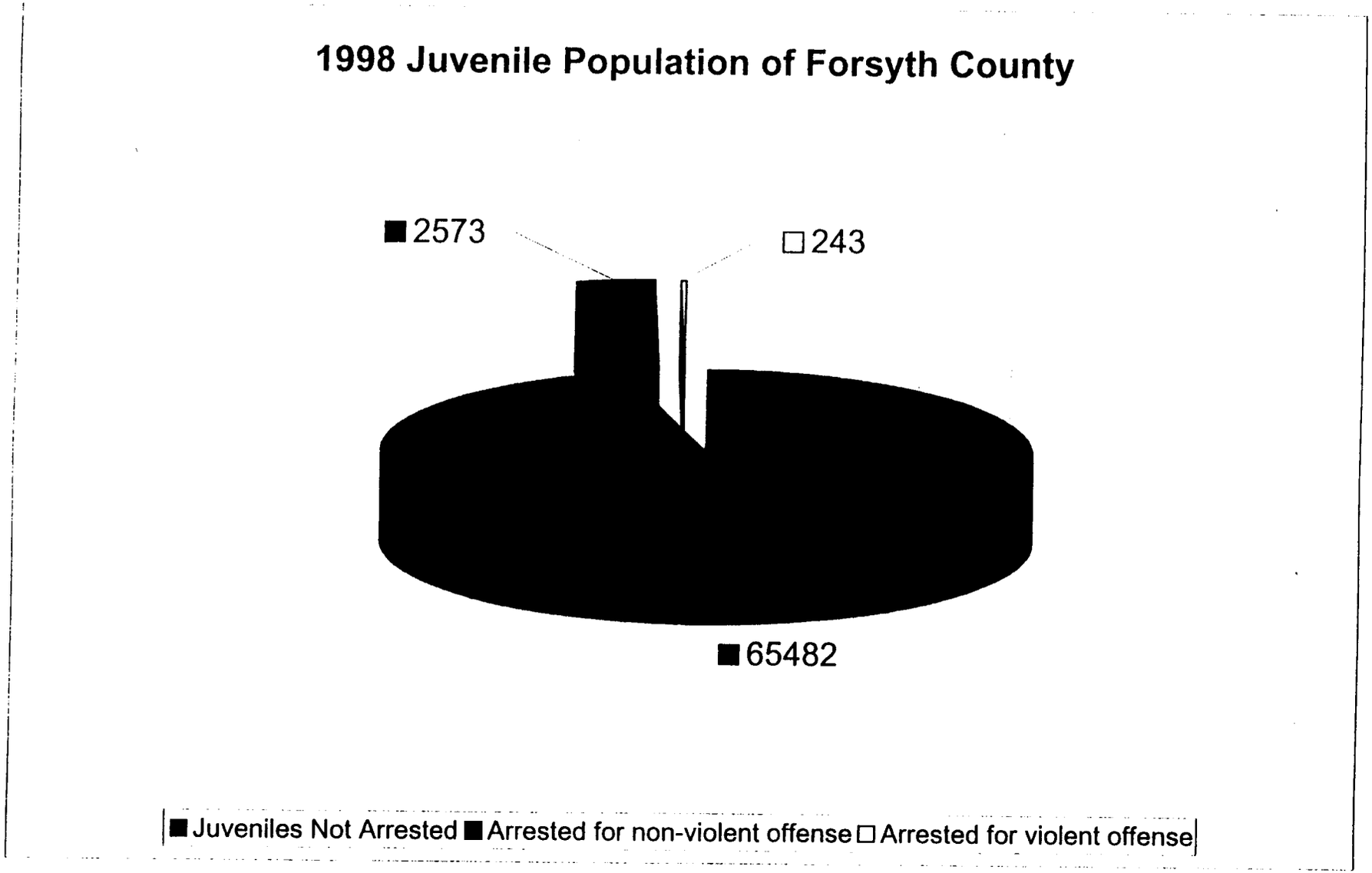
## 1998 Violent Offenses Involving Juvenile Offenders

### Juvenile Offenders as a Percent of the Total 1998 Forsyth County Juvenile Population

In 1998, there were 68,298 persons under age 18 residing in Forsyth County. The County's ethnic composition was 25.6% Non-white, 74.4% White. Figure 4 shows that, based on records of the Winston-Salem Police Department and the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department 2,816 or 4.0 percent of these juveniles have been charged with some type of criminal offense. Of these 2,816 offenders, 243 or 11.0 percent have been charged with at least one violent offense. Thirty-six or 15 percent of the 243 are characterized as serious offenders, having been charged with two or more SACSI-defined violent offenses during 1998. The 243 constitute 0.20 percent, and the 36 only 0.05 percent of the total Forsyth County juvenile population. While violent juvenile crime is a serious community problem, Figure 4 shows that a very small fraction of the total juvenile population in the county has engaged in this behavior.

In the oldest part of this age cohort, 887 sixteen and seventeen year-olds have been charged with at least one criminal offense; 31 percent of the 2,816 in the juvenile offender population. Of the 243 violent juvenile offenders, 84, or 35 percent are sixteen and seventeen year-olds. Of the 36 SACSI-defined violent offenders, 53 percent are sixteen or seventeen years of age.

Figure 4



## Multiple Offenders

Research identified a core group of fifty-six juveniles who were arrested for multiple violent offenses, defined as one or more arrests during a twenty-four month period for the following crimes: rape, murder, aggravated assault, robbery, sexual offenses, weapons violations and kidnapping. Once listed as a violent offender, a juvenile could get off the list by not being arrested for a violent crime during the twelve months following the last arrest. These fifty-six offenders are characterized as follows:

**Demographic Profile**

- Age: 12-15 yrs.=39%; 16-17 yrs.=61%
- Gender/Ethnicity: Black Male=82%; Black Female=5%; White Male= 11 %; White Female=2%
- Residence: 81% live in the four areas designated as violent crime "hot spots." These areas also comprise the Zip Codes with the lowest median incomes

**School Status 1998-99**

- Type: Middle School=30%; High School=70%
- Enrollment: Early Leaver Withdrawal=41%; Transfer Withdrawal=23%; Initial Entry-No Previous Public School Enrollment= 16%)
- Average Number of Suspensions per Offender: Blacks=6; Whites= 1
- Average Number of Disciplinary Actions per Offender: Blacks=9; Whites= 1
- Exceptional Designation: 18 Blacks--6 EM, 6 EH; 2 Whites-both LD;

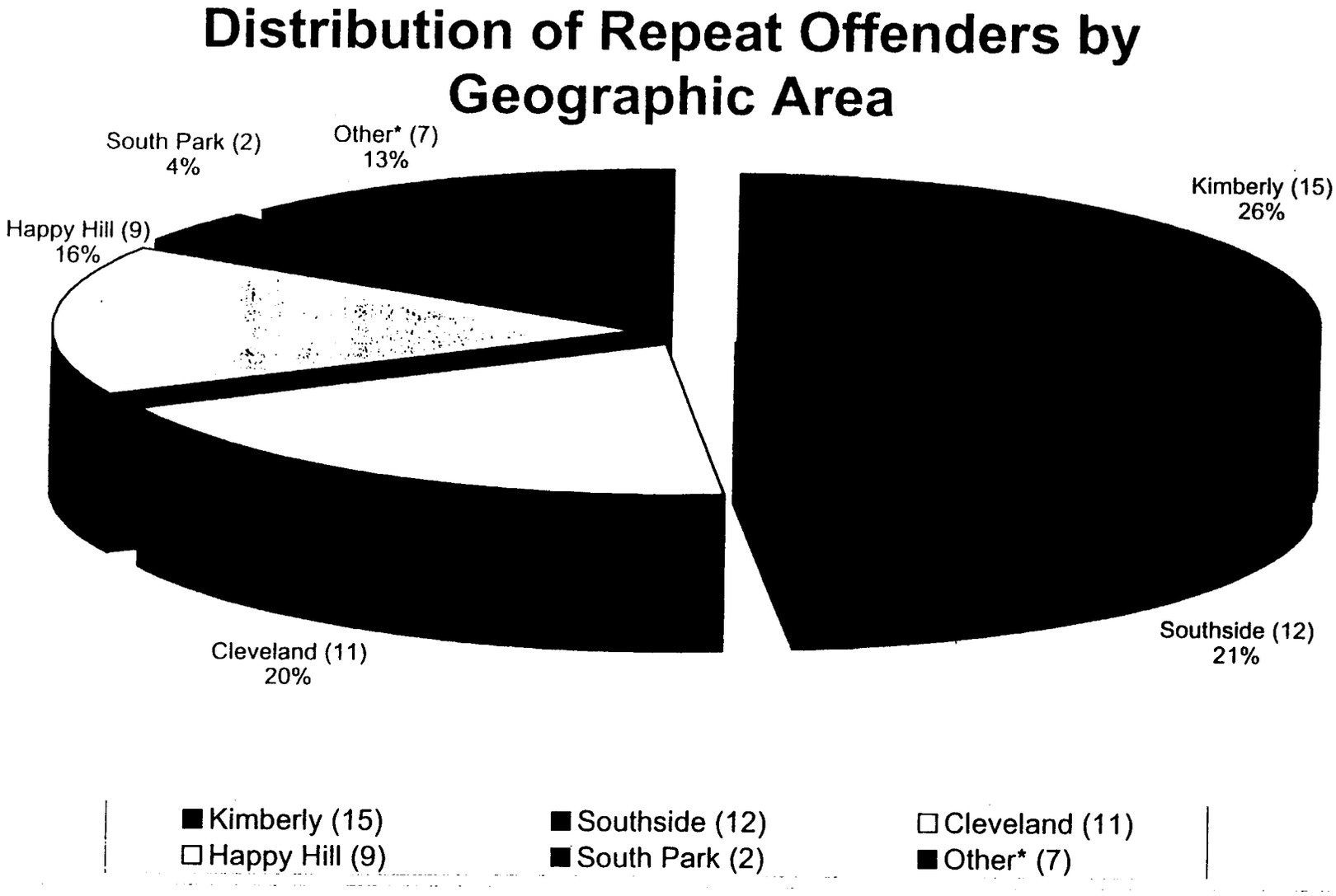
**Mental Health Visits (CenterPoint, the county mental health agency)**

- Contacts: 60% (N=34) have one or more contacts
- Prevalence of diagnosis:
  - Oppositional defiant disorder (hostile, defiant, loses temper, vindictive, spiteful, blames others, etc. (32%)
  - Cannabis Abuse (23%)
  - ADHD (Inattentive, hyperactive, impulsive) (13%)
  - Diagnostic Rankings for Blacks: 1. Oppositional defiant disorder 2. Cannabis abuse
  - Diagnostic Rankings for Whites: 1. ADHD 2. Depressive disorder with anxiety
  - Nearly two-thirds (66%) have been diagnosed with a disorder by CenterPoint and/or designated as exceptional by WSFCS.
- Referral Source:
  - Court (45%) 2. Family (14%) 3. School (10%) 3. Self (10%)
  - Court ranks first for Blacks and Whites

This summary description of the fifty-six offenders suggests the kind of juvenile behavior patterns discussed above in the theoretical discussion, and answers two research questions. First, the ethnic, gender, social and economic characteristics of those who met the initial SACSI offenses criterion are similar, if not entirely uniform. Modally, these juveniles are sixteen and seventeen year-old black males, living in low income neighborhoods, having a record of problems with school, the criminal justice system and have been referred to the mental health system. The diagnoses are, with the exception of cannabis abuse, fairly nonspecific descriptions of undesirable behavior -- "oppositional defiant disorder," attention and hyperactivity disorders -- the type of behavior consistent with the concept of expressive violence. While this would suggest the need for early mental health intervention in dealing with expressive violence, it is worth noting that the courts are the major source of mental health referral for this group, suggesting both the large role the criminal justice system plays in social services for these juveniles (and presumably others in similar circumstances) and the unlikelihood of early referral if behavior must reach the notice of the courts before action is taken.

The individuals profiled here also show that indeed there is a core group of offenders who are responsible for most incidents. The juvenile arrestees in this group accounted for: 54% of aggravated assaults; 100%

Figure 5



of rapes; 43% of robberies and 33% of weapons violations. These numbers indicate that knowing the demographic profile of offenders is not, of itself, a useful tool in addressing violence. Rather, it is the establishment of a fairly restrictive criterion (one or more serious violent offenses) that leads to identifying the small group responsible for the bulk of offenses, so that preemptive enforcement and intervention can occur swiftly and be precisely targeted. The profile does help target prevention activities directed at younger juveniles, and gives a sense of the complex and troubling world these young men and women are dealing with.

A similar profiling of offenders involved in 1998 offenses affirms that a small number of juveniles are responsible for the city's juvenile violence. For example, in 1998, 140 juveniles (less than 1% of the city's juvenile population) accounted for the city's juvenile violence. Of these, 32 were repeat violent offenders during 1998. Over half of the 140 youth are under probation supervision, and the other half have had frequent contacts with the police. Slightly more than half (52%) have had one or more contact with CenterPoint Human Services for mental health issues. Of these, about half have been involved in firearm violations. The research findings suggested the need for multiple intervention and prevention strategies.

## Analysis of 1998 Incident Reports

Initial interest in reducing particular types of offenses (e.g., assaults, drugs) led to an initial focus on those four areas of Winston-Salem having the highest concentration of such offenses: The Cleveland Avenue area, the Happy Hill area, the North-Cherry/Kimberley area, and the Southside area. Incident report data includes 296 offenders across 180 incidents. From these reports, a statistical portrait of these areas was created. The research team met with officers to discuss each incident, gaining additional valuable information about the young people involved in the incidents and about these particular areas of town.

### Overall Characteristics of Incidents

Most incidents involved solo offenders as opposed to group offenders. Approximately 35 percent of the 180 incidents involved groups of two or more offenders (with almost 20 percent involving three or more offenders). Group offenses such as these were more likely in the Cleveland Avenue and North Cherry/Kimberley areas. Group offenses were more likely than solo offenses to be drug-related and victimless. Some of these drug-related group offenses involved people getting high in groups; other drug-related group offenses involved actual drug transactions between a buyer and seller.

Of the 180 incidents, 53 percent of the incidents (n=95) had a victim. Southside incidents were most likely to have a victim (72%), followed by the Happy Hill area (62%), North Cherry/Kimberley area (52%), and Cleveland Avenue area (33%). The Cleveland Avenue area's low rate of victimization can be attributed largely to the high rate of drug incidents in this area (61%).

When we examine only those cases with victims (n=95), we find that in group offenses the probability of physical violence against the victim is somewhat higher: Physical violence against a victim was reported in 80 percent of the incidents involving two or more offenders, compared to 66 percent of the incidents involving solo offenders. In short, when group offenses involved victims, they were more likely to be violent than single-offender incidents involving victims.

Finally, Figure 5 shows that the majority of multiple offenders identified in the research described above were resident of the four neighborhoods identified as "hot spots" in the incident reviews. Twenty-six percent of the SACSI offenders lived in Kimberly, 21% in Southside, 20% in Cleveland Park, and 20% in Happy Hill. Seventeen percent lived in other neighborhoods.

### General Characteristics of Specific Neighborhoods

Based on the incident report analysis, each of the four identified areas were ranked on three sets of items: the presence of each age cohort in the incident, the number of specific offenses (using the standard UCR nomenclature) and the manner in which incidents were brought to the attention of police. From this ranked

summary, some generalizations can be made about criminal activity in each neighborhood, and about the age patterns of juveniles and others involved in this activity. These short descriptions suggest differential neighborhood targeting for different patterns of offenses and offenders.

**Cleveland Avenue**

The Cleveland Avenue neighborhood was characterized by a predominance of drug trade-related offenses, weapons violations and stolen car offenses, all "economically instrumental" crimes. Cleveland Avenue ranked first in incidents generated by proactive policing and last in citizen complaints, underscoring the economically useful (for participants) nature of the crimes. Cleveland Avenue ranked last in assaultive crimes. The age structure of crime in the neighborhood also shows the importance to the drug trade of people from a wide range of ages as sellers and buyers. Cleveland Avenue ranked last in the participation of twelve to fifteen year olds and there was no other clear pattern: it ranked second in the participation of all other groups (7-11, 16-17, and 18-55). In brief, the dominance of the drug trade has determined the nature of crime and of the offenders in this neighborhood.

**Happy Hill**

The Happy Hill neighborhood ranked first in rape, sex offenses and assault with a deadly weapon, but last in the percent of incidents involving firearms. Here the age structure is telling, with a predominance of older "mentor" offenders and second and third rankings for other age groups. Happy Hill ranked last in marijuana and crack cocaine-related arrests. While older arrestees may be mentoring younger, the data and sexual nature of the first-ranked crimes suggest that those being mentored and their female age-peers, are also at risk as victims. Also, given the nature of the predominant offense pattern, it is not surprising that Happy Hill ranked first in citizen-initiated police contact and last in proactive police contact. Happy Hill ranked last in the overall number of incidents and the overall number of offenders involved.

**Southside**

The incidents in the Southside neighborhood were characteristic of the young offenders involved in them. Southside ranked first for the involvement of both 7-11 year olds and 12-15 year olds. Southside ranked first in alcohol-related offenses, simple assault, assault by pointing a gun, and robbery. Southside ranked last in drug-related offenses. Given the age group involved, it is somewhat surprising that Southside also ranked first in percent of incidents involving firearms, although the nature of the offenses make it somewhat less so. These patterns, and the age of the offenders, suggest a strong element of "morally instrumental" behavior, aimed at answering "disrespect," but also a juvenile economy that has no resources (not even the drug trade) except to turn exploitatively inward through robbery.

**Kimberley Park**

Kimberley Park was characterized by an older offender group, ranking first for 16-17 year olds and second for the 18-55 group. There was no clear pattern to the types of offenses, but Kimberley park ranked second or third in virtually all offense categories. However, Kimberley Park ranked first in overall incidents and first in the overall number of offenders involved.

## Identifying and Characterizing Overall Community Social Context: Juvenile Co-Offenders (gangs), Older Offenders, Victims

The groups of co-offenders in Winston-Salem do not fully resemble the notorious drug gangs of larger cities. For example, in reviewing these incidents, officers mentioned that co-offenders are not "true gangs." However, they may have gang-like aspirations to turn drugs into organized big business. And, as suggested above, they do resemble each other in at least one important way: Their propensity for violence in the presence of an adversary or victim. Given an adversary, groups are more violent than individuals, and it is the complex dynamics of "groupness" which lie behind the violence of large-city gangs as well as the violence of the less-tightly organized co-offenders in our own city. Key factors here (factors identified by sociological theory as well as the officers in the incident reviews) include (1) the need to "save face" or maintain honor in the eyes of peers, and (2) the inability to save face nonviolently because nonviolent methods have not been learned.

Overall, roughly 1 out of every 4 offenders was at least 18 years old. The percentage of offenders aged 18 or older was highest in the Happy Hill area (44%), followed by the Cleveland Avenue and North Cherry/Kimberley areas (28%, respectively), then the Southside area (9%).

The frequency of these older offenders is sufficiently high to suggest the possibility of a pervasive "tutoring process" through which younger offenders learn delinquent norms from their older counterparts. Several officers and front-line workers have mentioned the influence of older offenders on the younger ones. Indeed, at least 40 percent of the group offenses involved younger offenders together with offenders 18 or older (our data set contains numerous missing age values, thus the percentage could be even higher). These incidents were for the most part drug-related (as were all group offenses), yet there were also a few firearm incidents, assaults, and one robbery included here.

The viability of the concept of a "tutoring process" would seem to depend on the extent to which older individuals are in fact regarded as leaders to emulate rather than as followers. If regarded as leaders, then the tutelage they provide would represent one important mechanism through which you offenders learn delinquent norms and behavior. In some cases, such tutelage may even be an important mechanism by which younger offenders progress down a pathway toward more serious criminal careers.

To what extent were the same names involved across incidents? In other words, were there any "repeat players" and if so, did they play a substantial role in "driving up" the number of incidents? Our ability to answer this question is limited by the fact that the offenders will often give false names to officers. Nonetheless, the incident reports point to the disproportionate involvement of a few individuals within each area. For example, of the 36 Southside area incidents, 14 percent involved the same person. This person (age 14 at time of incidents) has been labeled "BED" - Behavior Emotionally Disabled.

As suggested above by the above person labeled "BED," there is evidence that a substantial percentage of both one-time and repeat offenders have psychological and emotional disabilities of various kinds. Whether they would benefit from therapy would depend on the type of therapeutic intervention as well as the characteristics and skills of the therapist (in general, therapy is more successful when the social distance between patient and therapist is minimized).

Very few offenders were age 11 or younger. However as noted above, the offenders in the Southside area tend to be younger on average than those in the other three areas. A full 91 percent in Southside were 17 or younger. In the other three areas the percentage of offenders who were 17 or younger ranged from 56 to 72 percent.

### Identifying and Characterizing Time and Type of Location of Violent Crime "Hotspots"

Overall, 30 percent of the incidents occurred during "latch-key" hours (between 3-7 p.m.). The Happy Hill area had the highest percentage of incidents occurring during this time period (50%), followed by the Southside area (34%). One might expect to find a larger percentage of latchkey hour incidents in Southside, given the Southside area's larger proportion of school-age offenders. But the relationship between an area's school-age population and latchkey incidents is not straightforward. Factors which might mitigate the relationship include: (1) the prevalence of truancy in the area (truants do not limit their offending to after-school hours); and (2) the rate of out-of-school suspensions in an area (again, if not in school, there is no reason to expect offenders to save their offenses for after 3 p.m.).

We have only the sketchiest information on the types of places where offenses occurred (whether residence, business, school, or other place). Sometimes the type of place is not obvious from the incident reports. In any case, overall at least 44 percent of the incidents occurred at residential addresses. And only about 6 percent (10 cases overall) were identified as business addresses. Four of these ten business incidents occurred in the Southside area, at 901 Waughtown Street. This is the address of a Citgo station, which also happens to be a known hangout. All four of these Citgo incidents were drug cases (two involving crack cocaine, one involving marijuana, and one involving both marijuana and underage drinking). This Citgo station (and any other public space known to be a location for drug transactions) is an obvious target for a location-level (as opposed to individual-level) intervention.

In addition, there was a tendency for offenses to be concentrated within a limited number of block areas and specific streets. In the Cleveland Avenue area, for example, about 35 percent of incidents occurred on 5 blocks. And 13 percent of the incidents occurred specifically on East 23rd Street between the 1100 and 1600 blocks. The available evidence suggests these 13 percent are possibly all residential locations. The specific offenses at these locations include three drug offenses, two weapons violations, and one robbery. There may be some distinctive characteristics of this 5-block area - beyond the characteristics of the specific persons involved - that are conducive to offending, such as poorly lit streets or a dead-end street where people congregate. (In the Cleveland area incident reviews, the 1600 block of 24th Street was identified as a dead end.)

### Identifying and Characterizing Drugs and Firearms in the Community

Overall, 4 out of every 10 incidents involved drugs, typically crack cocaine or marijuana. The percentage of drug-related incidents was highest in the Cleveland Avenue area (61%) and the North Cherry/Kimberley area (44%). In only one drug incident was an offender aged 11 or younger; drug incidents typically involved older offenders aged 16 or above.

Overall, about 25 percent of the 180 incidents were firearm-related incidents. The percent of incidents involving firearms was higher in the Southside Area (33%), and Cleveland (28%). Drug incidents and firearm incidents are largely unrelated in these incident reports: Only about 10 percent of the firearm incidents were drug-related. The source of the firearms is often described by the officers as 'from the streets". The exact sources of the firearms is something we need to determine; the sources may vary across the four different areas.

When examining firearm-related incidents, one distinction to keep in mind is whether the firearms were actually used to threaten or injure a victim. In some cases, the firearm represented simply a "weapon violation" offense but in others, the firearm was actively used as a weapon of aggression. The research team wanted to determine not only the prevalence of firearms but also the extent to which they are actually used in an aggressive manner against a specific victim. In the majority of cases there was indeed a specific victim involved. This was less likely to be the case in Cleveland compared to the other three areas: In Cleveland, only about half of the firearm incidents had a specific victim, while in the other three areas it was closer to three-fourths.

How prevalent are firearms among the younger offenders? Were younger or older offenders more likely to be involved in firearm-related incidents? Before answering these questions, several points need to be considered. These points underscore some of the limitations of the incident report data. First, in firearm incidents with more than one offender, it is often difficult to tell from the reports which offender was in possession of the firearm. The recorded accounts of eyewitnesses or victims are unreliable because they frequently do not specify which offender had the gun. Thus, when using the incident report data, the prevalence of firearms across age categories is more reliably estimated if only those incidents involving single offenders are involved. This allows us to focus more directly on the issue of firearm possession.

Looking at only those firearm incidents involving single offenders, firearms were most likely to be found in the hands of older offenders aged 16 or more. Southside is the exception: 67 percent of Southside's single-offender incidents involved offenders in the 12-15 age range.

Finally, the data indicated that incidents occurring in the Southside and Happy Hill areas involved the highest rate of assaults, including assault with a deadly weapon and assault by pointing a gun.

### Summary of Focus Groups

Twelve focus groups were conducted with various sets of participants. The number of participants in the groups varied from four (ministers) to thirteen. Session times varied between 2 1/2 and 4 1/2 hours. All sessions were audio-taped and three investigators took notes at all sessions. Four issue areas were identified: family, education and training of youth, management and coordination of services, community

values and relationships and the characteristics, motives, and needs of young people. A detailed summary of these twelve focus groups is found in the appendix.

Groups involved were:

1. Ministers from the Winston-Salem/ Forsyth County community.
2. Personnel from a number of schools in the community, pre-kindergarten - sixth grade (including school social workers)
3. Personnel from a number of schools in the community, seventh - ninth grade (including teachers, assistant principals)
4. Personnel from a number of schools in the community, tenth - twelfth grade (including school psychologists, directors of programs in character and ethics formation)
5. Staff of CenterPoint community mental health facility
6. City and county juvenile justice staff
7. City district attorney's office
8. Community non-profit organizations working with youth
9. North Carolina Department of Social Services staff
10. A group of current (1/3) and ex-probationers (2/3) aged 20-26, held at the probation officer's office.
11. Forsyth County Sheriff's Department staff
12. Winston-Salem Police Department staff

Four issue areas were identified across the various focus groups: family, education and training of youth, management and coordination of services, community values and relationships and the characteristics, motives, and needs of young people.

# Summary of Research Findings and Recommendations

Based on focus group discussions, the demographic profiling and analysis of incident reviews, the following are the findings of the research project:

1. **Location**- Juvenile violence appears to flourish around certain convenience and neighborhood stores (usually with pay phones on the premises), residential streets and blocks. Some sites have long-standing histories of violence and drug selling. For example, the incidents that took place around the Citgo station in the Southside area involved the drug trade. This was also the case for the hot-spot residential areas. Incidents involving firearms seem to cluster in key location, especially in the Southside and Cleveland Avenue areas. Incident review participants indicated that the guns were readily available on the "streets" in these areas. Poorly lighted streets, abandoned and substandard houses, characterize a number of the hot-spot residential areas.

2. **Older/Younger Co-offenders**- The frequency of older individuals involved in co-offending behavior with juveniles suggest the possibility of a pervasive "tutoring process" through which younger offenders learn delinquent norms from their older counterparts. Several front-line workers and officers mentioned the influence of older individuals on the younger ones. Most of the co-offending involving older adults and juveniles was drug related. However, a few of the cases involved robberies and firearm incidents. By removing the "tutors", this may prevent the progression of juvenile offending from minor to major offenses.

3. **Key Individuals** – The ability to reduce serious and violent juvenile crime may be greatly enhanced by focusing intervention on the small group of individuals/groups who commit a disproportionate amount of the crime. Most of these key individuals tend to be embedded in larger networks of offenders; therefore, focusing on them would be a visible intervention that would send a strong message to their friends.

4. **Coordination of Services** – While there are many effective intervention and prevention efforts, there remains a critical need for more consistent and coordinated focus. There is a consensus among focus group and interview respondents that any systematic effort should have as it its highest priority the community's

most at-risk youth, especially repeat juvenile offenders. Such a strategy should be accomplished by strong monitoring and assessment systems to facilitate a more efficient and effective delivery of services to what front-line workers describe as a small core group of juveniles who are at the highest risk of committing and/or being victims of serious and violent crimes. Also, there is a need for long-term family case management.

5. **Mental Health Needs** – There is anecdotal evidence, and evidence from the serious offender profiles, that a substantial proportion of both one-time and repeat offenders have psychological and emotional disabilities However, many officers and front-line workers believe that the mental health needs of these youth are not adequately addressed. Whether these individuals would benefit from therapy may depend on the type of therapeutic intervention as well as the skills of the therapists.

6. **School Disciplinary Actions.** In general, the WSFCS data suggest that a greater percentage of non-White students receive both in-school and out-of-school suspensions than do White students. It should be noted that the data do not allow us to distinguish the precise race/ethnicity of the non-White students being suspended nor of the school personnel issuing the suspensions.

7. **After School Activities** – There needs to be time (between 2 and 6pm) when children are supervised in play or education, etc. Programs serving this purpose may include drama, sports, chess, and mentoring programs (young adult mentors), at middle and secondary level boarding schools. In some communities these programs need to be in the schools, and in others they need to be in the neighborhoods. There is a particular need for these programs for children over 12. There is a critical need for sufficient funds and volunteers for the rebuilding of play areas, e.g. playground, ballparks, sports uniforms, and equipment for neighborhood teams.

8. **Mentoring Programs**- Strategies should include adult and older peer mentoring programs. School-based mentoring programs, such as the one at LEAP Academy involving law enforcement officers and students, should have a strong evaluation component. Ultimately, the evaluation would lead to the strengthening of the program for expansion into Community Policing and through School Resource Officers. K-12 school-based violence prevention and conflict resolution education should be implemented and/or expanded as needed.

9. **Cultural sensitivity** – Respondents in both the incident reviews and focus groups called for more cultural awareness training for front-line workers. Such program efforts should contain strong evaluative components and be culturally specific. For example, analysis revealed that non-White students seem to be over represented among those suspended from school. What remains unclear is whether non-White teachers write up non-White students any differently than do White teachers. Moreover, it is unclear whether the issue is related to class, race, ethnicity or some combination of the three.

10. **Recommendations for Further Research and Data Collection Practices** - Overall, continuation, coordination, and standardization of data collection and analysis across organizations will be necessary to inform the continuing improvement of intervention and prevention strategies. Some specific recommendations:

a. At least quarterly, analyze arrest data to maintain a current list of the most violent offenders (using the SACSI criteria), and analyze incident reviews to maintain a list of the current "hotspots." Currency is extremely important for this type of analysis. The planned implementation of a Geographic Information System will be very useful here.

b. Begin cross-agency collection of intervention outcomes data, and tie it to the baseline SACSI data on violent offenders and on these offenders individually.

c. Using one of the common commercial software packages, implement a standard spreadsheet reporting format for use by all agencies, either in paper or electronic formats. Data review was impeded by the variety of formats used by various agencies and researchers.

d. Further standardize the usage of nomenclature across agencies. For example, throughout the project data, the terms "arrest" and "offender" were occasionally used interchangeably.

e. Provide training for all staff on the use of standardized reporting formats, and provide all staff with feedback from the ongoing research process, so that they can see how the information is used and how it helps them in their work.

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that the research findings and recommendations above have already been put to use by the SASCI partner agencies and organizations as they implemented a number of enforcement, prevention and intervention programs aimed at reducing juvenile violence. A discussion of these research-driven programs is found in Appendix I.

# Appendix I

# Impact of Research on Enforcement, Intervention and Prevention of Juvenile Violence

## Strategic Enforcement Accomplishments

Utilizing the results of the incident reviews, the original Weed & Seed site (Salem Garden Apartments) was extended to include the four SACSI-identified neighborhoods. In connection with expansion of Weed & Seed, an OCDETF investigation is under way targeting older offenders involving youth in drug operations or utilizing acts of violence in connection with the drug trade. The first indictment was issued Oct. 25, 1999 and additional indictments are anticipated within the next few months.

Based on the identification of serious and multiple offenders, five notification sessions have been held for a total of over 100 offenders on probation for violent acts or those known to associate with repeat, violent offenders. Sessions for older offenders had approximately 60 participants and included those identified through SACSI analysis as co-offending with juveniles in target neighborhoods. Sessions for youth addressed 38 people. Twenty parents also attended those sessions.

Based on the finding of an offender-mentor group, a strong message has been delivered to older offenders: *Stop the violence: no guns, no kids*. Youth received a similar deterrence message, along with the offer of resources from community agencies and groups. Ministers and other community advocates took part in these sessions. Community meetings with residents of the four SACSI neighborhoods are now being held to reinforce the deterrence message and inform residents about SACSI.

OPERATION REACH, begun December 1999, teams ministers with police and probation officers to make contact with larger group SACSI-identified youth in their homes or on streets. The purpose is to deliver a stop-the-violence message and to assess the needs of emerging violent offenders. The program makes over 100 contacts monthly.

Pilot multi-agency responses to four specific violent incidents have been conducted, with the intent of solving crime, reducing community fear, and reinforcing a no-violence message.

## Strategic Intervention Accomplishments

Case staffing began in October, 1999 (with 15 clients) for each SACSI youth involved in notification sessions. These staffings, which involve youth and a parent or guardian, form the basis of a case-management system and establish individual plans for priority treatment and services.

A case management coordinator will be hired so that SACSI youth are connected to needed services. This position will be supported by Safe Schools Initiative funding, an initiative built upon the SACSI research.

An enhanced truancy prevention program, involving teams of school safety officers and social workers, will be focused on SACSI youth. Again, the Safe Schools Initiative will provide funding support.

SACSI-youth at the LEAP Academy have been assigned to rookie cop mentors. The police department mentoring program has been enhanced and expanded beyond the rookie class as part of field services training. Once again, Safe Schools Initiative will provide funding support.

## Strategic Prevention Accomplishments

A special recruiting effort is under way for other mentors for SACSI youth, with emphasis on those youth notified in September, 1999 sessions and those identified through OPERATION REACH. Mentors are to receive enhanced training developed by Governor's One-on-One program and Urban League.

SACSI youth still enrolled in school will automatically become part of the VIP (Victory in Partnership) dropout prevention program. This program includes strong school-home monitoring and parental accountability and support.

The Family Ties program, which provides "wraparound" services to siblings and families of adjudicated youth, will reserve slots for SACSI families. Priority is being given to those repeat offenders with siblings under 11 years of age.

Discussions of job skills training and jobs programs are beginning with business community, city officials, technical college, and school system. Emphasis will be on 15 to 17 year olds who are currently in alternative educational settings.

Supported by the Safe Schools Initiative, additional after-school programs are being established in elementary and middle schools in two SACSI-identified neighborhoods.

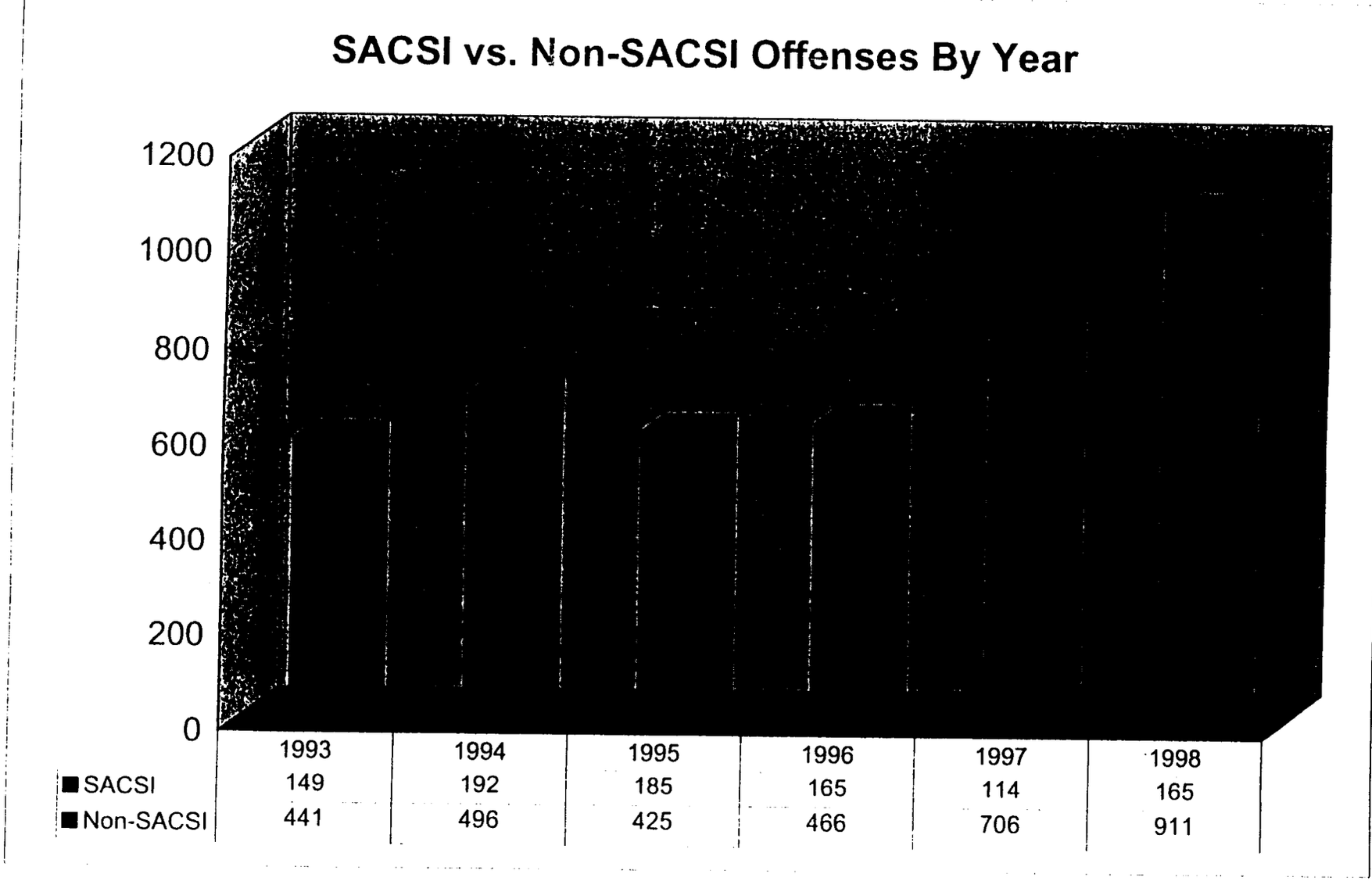
# Appendix II

## Figures

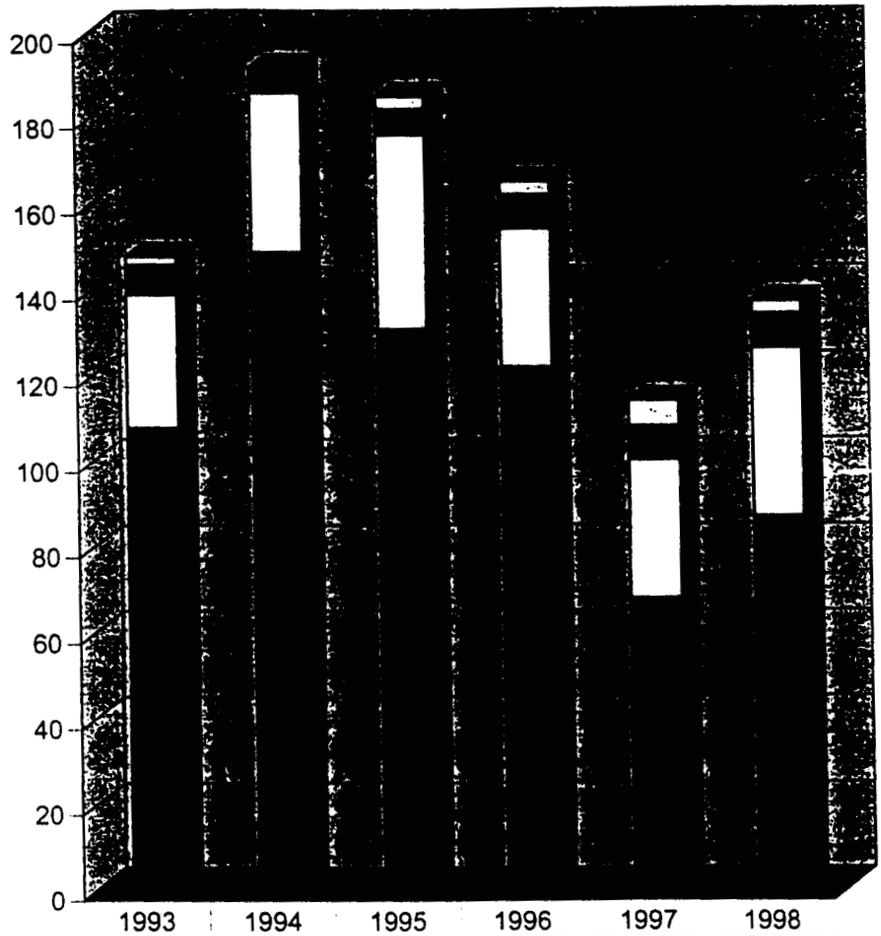
## SACSI and non-SACSI Arrests, 1993-1998

## SACSI Arrests, 1993-1998

Figure 6



# SACSI Offenses By Year




| | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ■ Kidnapping | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| □ Rape | 2 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 |
| ■ Murder | 6 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| ■ Sexual Offenses | 1 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 7 |
| □ Aggravated Assault | 31 | 37 | 45 | 32 | 32 | 39 |
| ■ Weapons Violation | 45 | 97 | 61 | 25 | 31 | 38 |
| ■ Robbery | 63 | 52 | 70 | 97 | 37 | 49 |

# Appendix III

## Review of Relevant Literature

Violence among juveniles contributes to a significant social and public health problem in the United States (Prothrow-Stith and Weissman, 1991; Ruchuba, Stanton, and Howard, 1995). Nationwide, homicide rates among adolescents and young adults increased from 1987 to 1993, but have declined slightly from 1993 to 1995. Youth homicide rates remain unacceptably high, particularly among young African American males, whose firearm homicide rate was 119.9 per 100,000 in 1995 compared to 13.3. per 100,000 for white males of the same age (Fingerhut, Ingram, and Feldman, 1998).

Recent national data collected by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (1998) also show that violence is a serious problem among American youth The 1997 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) of 9th-12th grade students found that 18.3 percent had carried a weapon, and 5.9 percent of students had carried a gun in the previous 30 days. In addition, 36.6 percent had been in a fight and 3.5 percent had been injured in a fight and required medical attention in the previous 12 months. The CDC also found that 8.5 percent of students had recently carried a weapon to school, 14.8 percent had fought at school, 7.4 percent had been threatened or injured with a weapon at school, and 32.9 percent had reported property stolen or deliberately damaged at school. These findings are consistent with both 1993 and 1995 National and State YRBS data (Kann et al., 1996)

In the United States, the rate of violent and property crime arrests for youth under age 18 years increased from 10.5 per 1,000 in 1993 to 11.1 per 1,000 in 1994 but decreased to 9.3 in 1996 (most recent figures). In North Carolina, the rate for comparable crimes increased from 9.9 per 1,000 in 1993 to 10.5 in 1996 and declined slightly to 10.3 per 1,000 in 1997. During the same period arrest rates were higher in Forsyth County than both North Carolina and the nation, with 13.2 in 1993, 13.9 in 1996 and 12.2 in 1997 for violent/property crimes (SRI, 1998).

### Violent Assaults as Moralistic Behavior

A large number of studies from psychological, sociological, and anthropological literature converge on a single important finding: Much of the violence among young people, as well as in other age groups, is "moralistic" (for overviews, see Black, 1983; Cooney, 1998; Luckenbill, 1977; Tedeschi and Felson, 1994). In examining the immediate context in which violent acts are committed, these studies have discovered that violence is typically a response to perceived wrongdoing. In other words, much violence is an expression of a moral grievance, an attempt to right a wrong, rather than predatory or instrumental behavior (i.e., committed for personal pleasure or gain.)

Violent behavior is not commonly equated with moral behavior. As such, there is a paradox to violence that is often ignored or misunderstood. The more common view of violence derives from popular mass media depictions of serial killings, robberies and other opportunistic acts that are unrelated to any prior conflict between people (see Cooney, 1998). In asserting that violence is often "moral", we are not saying that it is appropriate or ethical, only that many violent actions erupt from interpersonal confrontations in which one part (the aggrieved) seeks to punish the other party (the original offender ) for wrongdoing.

Luckenbill (1977) and Tedschi and Felson (1994) have formulated similar stages through which confrontations escalate to violence. Their work suggests the following sequence: (1) One person insults or otherwise humiliates another; (2) The aggrieved party interprets the insults, influenced by the reactions of friends or other witnesses who represent an audience for the aggrieved party's humiliation; (3) Taking cues from these reactions the aggrieved party briefly considers possible responses, such as a conciliatory response or a verbal or physical reprimand. If the aggrieved party chooses to physically fight, the violence begins. If the aggrieved party responds with a verbal reprimand, the situation proceeds to stage 4; (4) The original offender, now facing humiliation, considers wither to fight or, make peace; and (5) If the original offender chooses to fight, an assault and possibly even lethal violence ensues.

In short, the origins of violence can be found in insults, unpaid debts, encroachments onto social or sexual "turf," and other perceived slights that are interpreted as signs of disrespect. Moreover, the role played by peers is a crucial factor in encouraging or discouraging violence. Slights and counter-slights will spiral toward aggression among people who have learned that violence is an acceptable way of expressing a grievance.

Cooney (1998) and others estimate that at least 60 percent of homicides in America result from such confrontations. One study of FBI homicide data found that 60 percent of all homicides result from interpersonal disputes, and the remaining 40 percent are committed for instrumental or predatory reasons – as opposed to moralistic reasons (Maxfield, 1989)

A recent study of over 22,000 cases of homicide in Chicago over a 30 year period, found that the majority (64 percent) was moralistic or expressive, and only 19 percent was instrumental (committed to gain money or property). The remaining 17 percent of homicides could not be classified due to insufficient information, but many of these might be classified as moralistic (Block and Christakos, 1995).

This view of violence-as-moralism is a general empirical description of violence that has application across age-specific incidents. For example, Lockwood's (1997) ethnography of violent assaults among middle school and high school students has findings that are consistent with this view. Using in-depth interviews with 110 students, Lockwood reports that:

Aggravated assault and homicide often result from events similar to those triggering less serious offenses, such as transactions over seemingly trivial matters, occurring between people who know each other.

In the largest proportion of violent incidents, the "opening move" involved a relatively minor affront but escalated from there.

The students stated that retribution was the most frequent goal of their violent behavior – punishing the antagonist for something he or she did (40 percent of all goals).

The students who acted violently usually said the victim had done something to deserve harm (Lockwood, 1997: 1-6).

In addition to Lockwood's ethnography, Heimer's (1997) statistical analysis of the National Youth Survey further illustrates these patterns. Noting that young people frequently find themselves in potentially violent situations involving "saving face with peers, controlling the behavior of others, or defending oneself" (1997:818), Hiemer identifies the economic and domestic conditions that are conducive to violence among young people.

"Specifically, lower-SES (socioeconomic status) youth are more likely than higher-SES youth to engage in violent delinquency because they have learned definitions favorable to violence through interactions with parents and peers. Parents of lower SES are more likely to use power assertive discipline [defined as disciplinary strategies involving the use of threat, removal of privileges, and physical punishment], which increases the chances that their sons accept definitions favorable to using force, coercion, and even violence to solve problems (Heimer, 1997: 820,822)."

Research on violent youth in Winston-Salem will determine whether the dynamics of local violence conform to these patterns. Are the violent assaults committed by the city's youth motivated primarily by a moralistic urge to punish learned through generational transmission and encourages by peer groups? At the very least, the findings reported above require us to be sensitive to the differences between moralistic and instrumental forms of violence. The distinction between the two has important implications for programs to reduce violence.

The prevalence of moralistic violence indicates that, in addition to the explosive mix of guns, poverty and hopelessness, other factors in the causal chain are seemingly trivial slights during social interactions. Far from being meaningless and irrational, the violent response to such slights is seen by the perpetrator as

reasonable and appropriate. Children have their own code of honor, and their violent acts are often attempts to maintain honor and save face. Programs intended to reduce youth violence are destined to fail if they do not recognize this fundamental aspect of youth violence.

### Risk and Protective Factors

The development of an effective intervention to prevent both moralistic and instrumental violence requires an understanding of the risk and protective factors for violence. Although violence is a problem that affects youth from all racial and socioeconomic groups, youth living in neighborhoods characterized by poverty and unemployment are often exposed to more risk factors for violence (Heimer, 1997; Krivo and Peterson, 1996). A risk factor consistently associated with the use of violence and illegal weapon carrying by adolescents is exposure to violence and personal victimization, both in the community and in the home. In addition, depression, hopelessness, and multiple substance use are associated with the use of violence and weapon carrying. Church attendance, on the other hand, is associated with less violence and weapon carrying (DuRant, Pendergrast and Cadenhead, 1994; Resnick et al., 1997).

The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health is the largest and most comprehensive study of adolescent risk and problems behaviors. The study was designed to operationalize key variables derived from Problem-Behavior Theory. In their study, Resnick et al. (1997) found that after controlling for sociodemographic variables, household access to guns, and recent history of family suicides or attempts were correlated with the level of violence of $7^{th}$-$12^{th}$ grade students. Lower levels of violence were correlated with family connectedness and parental expectations for school achievement. Violence level was also inversely correlated with level of connectedness to school. Individual characteristics correlated with level of violence include having: (1) been a victim of violence; (2) witnessed violence; (3) been involved in other deviant or antisocial behaviors; (4) carried a weapon, and (5) been involved in selling marijuana or other drugs. Among $7^{th}$ and $8^{th}$ grade students, interpersonal violence was associated with lower grade point average and higher perceived risk of an untimely death.

Violence occurs in all settings, even those that we expect to be safe, for example schools. However, the prevalence of school violence is increasing, and factors associated with it require examination. For example, in a study of 744 students attending two middle schools in predominantly low-income Black neighborhoods in North Carolina, Cotton et al. (1994) reported that 19 percent had carried a weapon to school, 37 percent had been in a fight at school, and 18 percent had been suspended for fighting.

In addition, the use of violence is reinforced by exposure to violence in the media and the community. Easy access to guns, alcohol, tobacco, and other illegal drugs in the home are associated with both the use of violence and with other risk factors associated with violence and weapon-carrying by adolescents. It is clear that when demographic characteristics are controlled, social context plays a key role in determining which youth are resilient and which ultimately engage in multiple risk and problem behaviors (Resnick et al., 1997). Specifically, there is convincing evidence that perceived caring and connectedness to others are important factors in protecting youth from risk of violence. While not surprising, perceived parental expectations regarding adolescents' school attainment are an important protective factor. Similarly, feelings of family connectiveness are also a key protective factor. Connectedness with school is another protective factor in the lives of young people. School connectedness is influenced by perceived caring from teachers, high expectations for school performance, and opportunities to be involved in school activities, clubs, sports, etc. In addition, individual factors, such as low academic achievement, emotional distress, and substance use, and the early onset of health risk and problem behaviors increase adolescents' risk for engaging in violence.

### Theoretical Framework

Much of the research described above has been based upon Problem-Behavior Theory, which states that the use of violence clusters with other risk and problem behavior (Jessor and Jessor, 1977). Jessor (1992) argues that such behaviors cluster for three primary reasons. First, within peer groups, including gangs and other primarily social groups, adolescents learn to engage in multiple risk behaviors together. Second, risk and problem behaviors often serve to help adolescents meet normal development goals, such as experimenting with adult roles and declaring independence from parents, when adolescents are not

provided with "healthy" alternatives. Third, these behaviors cluster because they are a result of the same causal foundation.

In addition, the more risk factors adolescents are exposed to, the more likely they will be to engage in violent and other delinquent acts (Richman, Brown and Clark, 1984; Cadenhead and Richman, 1996). For example, poverty, a family history or substance abuse, and low self-esteem cumulatively increase the likelihood that a young person will participate in delinquent activities. However, exposure to protective factors is associated with both resiliency among youth exposed to multiple risk factors (Garmezy, 1985; Resnick, Harris, Blum, 199) and with resisting problematic behavior. Thus, a cohesive family, interested teachers, and church attendance, for example, will decrease the likelihood of delinquency, even among youth who are otherwise at risk.

Problem-Behavior Theory shares much in common with an approach developed under the auspices of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This second approach, described in Loeber and Farrington (1998) and Bilchik (1998), focuses specifically on the risk factors involved in the onset of serious and violent juveniles (SVJ) offending. This approach (Hereafter, the SVJ Model), identifies three different tracks, or pathways, along which delinquent "careers" proceed. First, the authority conflict pathway, which tends to occur before age 12, is characterized by stubborn behavior, defiance or disobedience, and "authority avoidance" as indicated by truancy and staying out late. Second, the overt pathway, which occurs after age 12, is characterized by minor aggression such as bullying or annoying others, physical fighting, and more serious interpersonal violence such as rape. Third, the covert pathway, which also occurs after age 12, is characterized by frequent lying, property damage and motor vehicle theft. The three pathways in the SVJ Model illustrate the avenues through which many less-serious problem behaviors develop over time into more serious and violent offending. The focus of the model on violent delinquency is especially valuable for our purposes because although SVJ offenders are small in number, the contribute disproportionately to the total amount of juvenile crime (see Bilchik, 1998:1).

Like Problem-Behavior Theory, the SVJ Model calls our attention to clustering of violence and other problems: The majority of SVJ offenders "tend to have multiple problems such as substance abuse and mental health difficulties in addition to truancy, suspension, expulsion, and dropping out of school" (Bilchik, 1998:2). Furthermore, both approaches emphasize the increased likelihood of violence associated with exposure to multiple risk factors: "Those juveniles with the most risk factors are 5 to 20 times more likely to engage in subsequent SVJ offending than other youth" (Bilchik, 1998:3). Where the two approaches do not overlap, they compliment each other, each providing a distinctive set of concepts, methodological tools, and empirical findings.

Taken together, both Problem-Behavior Theory and the SVJ Model serve to sensitize the researcher to virtually all the relevant issues in juvenile violence. Combing the two approaches yields a comprehensive framework incorporating many of the features of other well-known, empirically-validated theories of crime etiology and prevention (see, e.g., Sutherland, Cressy, and Luckenbill, 1992). The combined strengths and insights of both approaches will greatly facilitate our analysis of juvenile violence in Forsyth County.

# Appendix IV
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