Strategic Approaches to Reducing Firearms Violence: Final Report on the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership

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Executive Summary

The Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership (IVRP) was a multi-agency, collaborative effort to reduce homicide and serious violence in Marion County (Indianapolis), Indiana. The IVRP was part of the U.S. Department of Justice's Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) that was originally implemented in Indianapolis and four other jurisdictions and later expanded to five additional cities. The SACSI model is based on a data-driven, strategic problem solving approach whereby the firearms violence problem is analyzed, interventions based on the problem analysis are crafted and implemented, the strategies are assessed and evaluated, and there is a continual feedback mechanism to allow ongoing refinement of strategies. An additional component of the SACSI model is that a research partner is included as part of the multi-agency working group to assist in analysis, strategy design, assessment and evaluation.

This report is based on the evaluation of the IVRP by the research partners involved in the IVRP initiative. The report attempts to achieve three goals. First, to tell the story of the IVRP as a multi-agency effort to reduce firearms violence. Although any such story is idiosyncratic to the specific site, we hope that description of the problem solving process will be useful to other jurisdictions considering data-driven, strategic problem solving. Second, we present findings on the problem solving process. Third, we present findings on the impact of the initiative on firearms violence in Indianapolis.

Key Findings

Interview and observational data suggest that the IVRP was successful in achieving many of the goals of strategic problem solving. The most consistent finding from the interviews was that the IVRP structure and process resulted in unprecedented sharing of information among officials from all the local, state, and federal criminal justice agencies serving Indianapolis. As time went on, this sharing of information extended to key community partners as well. The problem solving process was also described as providing a focus to the IVRP that made the process different from many multi-agency task forces, commissions, and similar structures in which criminal justice agencies are routinely involved. The regular meeting structure whereby problems were analyzed and interventions designed appeared to provide a data-informed focus that blended strategic analysis with an action orientation. The value of this process to criminal justice officials was suggested by the fact that participants made a very substantial commitment to the process. Indeed, a group of 20-30 officials representing local, state, and federal agencies, a research team, and key community partners have continued to meet every other week since the program began in January 1998.

The problem analysis was dynamic and based on a wide variety of official and unofficial data sources. These included offenses known, calls for service, court records, probation and parole records, and firearms tracing data from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. Many of these data sources were also available for Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping analyses. The research team also collected data

through participant observation, focus groups, and interviews. Additionally, a technique that proved very useful was the systematic incident review. This involved case-by-case review of homicide incidents (expanded to include firearms assaults) by teams of detectives, street level officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers, and other criminal justice actors. The incident reviews took advantage of the detailed knowledge of cases possessed by criminal justice officials as well as their knowledge of the social networks in which many offenders and victims are involved and the areas where street violence frequently occurs. The incident review findings revealed patterns of violence in Indianapolis that were not available in official data sources.

The problem analysis revealed that homicides and gun violence in Indianapolis were largely characterized by the following:

- Young men
- Using firearms
- Suspects and victims sharing extensive criminal histories
- Concentrated in particular geographic areas
- Suspects and victims that are involved in known groups of chronic offenders
- Associated with drug distribution and use

The overall strategy developed by the IVRP was a focused deterrence approach that included an attempt to increase the linkage of high-risk individuals to legitimate opportunities. The focused deterrence approach involved an attempt to increase the certainty and severity of sanctions for illegal possession and use of firearms, to communicate this message in as many ways as possible to individuals and groups believed to be at high-risk for involvement in gun violence, and to impose group accountability to known groups of chronic offenders. The focused deterrence approach also recognized the resource constraints on the criminal justice system and thus involved an attempt to focus limited resources on the problem of firearms violence. Among the key interventions that were utilized to implement the focused deterrence strategy were the following:

- Offender notification meetings (lever pulling meetings) with groups of high-risk probationers and parolees
- Multi-agency responses to areas or groups involved in specific incidents
- Joint federal-local police and prosecution firearms crime case screening unit
- Chronic violent offender program
- Probation/parole - law enforcement teams conducting home visits
- Public education campaign involving billboards, posters, public service announcements

Additionally, the IVRP included prevention and intervention efforts through partnerships with community groups such as Weed and Seed, members of the faith community, and various service providers. A key element of the strategy was to make direct contact with high-risk individuals as a way of increasing the likelihood that they would access support and services.

In terms of impact on crime, the most positive finding was that the monthly rate of homicides declined over 40 percent when comparing the intervention period with the pre-

intervention period. Time series analysis indicated that this was a statistically significant decline. The largest absolute decline in homicides, measured in both the number of victims and suspects, was for African-American citizens, the group most heavily affected by homicide. Gun assaults and armed robberies similarly declined although the time series analysis did not indicate a statistically significant decrease. The nature of homicides changed in the intervention period. Fewer homicides involved guns, groups or gangs, drugs, and incidents were more geographically dispersed. Given that these were the key dimensions upon which strategies were predicated, these shifts were suggestive of strategic impact.

The findings also revealed that offenders perceived an increase in the likelihood of sanctions for violent crime following the implementation of offender notification meetings. Offenders attending these meetings were also more familiar with the IVRP strategies and were more likely to believe that they were effective. Yet, there was little evidence that the offenders attending the meetings changed their offending behavior when compared to other probationers and parolees that did not attend the meetings. To the extent that the meetings were intended to significantly change the behavior of those attending (selected on the basis of being at "highest risk"), there was not strong evidence of impact. On the other hand, to the extent that the meetings and related communication strategies were intended to communicate to a broader offender population, the results were more promising.

The outcome findings must be considered in light of the methodological limitations of evaluating change in a single site. With this qualification in mind, the findings are encouraging, particularly when considered in light of similar findings in Boston, Minneapolis, and several other jurisdictions (Kennedy, Braga, and Piehl, 2001; Braga, Kennedy, Piehl, and Waring, 2001; Kennedy and Braga, 1998; Decker 2003). Given the significance of the firearms violence problem in the United States, the results suggest continued experimentation with data-driven, multi-agency, strategic problem solving approaches to reducing gun crime violence.

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Chapter One

From Reactive to Proactive Approaches to Homicide and Serious Violence

Confronted with record setting levels of homicide, in late 1997 Indianapolis officials decided to try a different approach to reducing lethal violence. For decades homicide was considered a rare crime that was difficult if not impossible to prevent. The emphasis for criminal justice officials was to respond to these incidents in a professional manner that would maximize the likelihood of arrest and prosecution of perpetrators. In the face of the crisis of unprecedented levels of murders, several Indianapolis leaders argued that there must be something more that could be done to reduce homicide than merely try to increase an already high clearance rate.

The result of these deliberations was the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership (IVRP). The IVRP is a multi-agency coalition of criminal justice agencies, working with a variety of community partners, and committed to employing a strategic problem-solving approach to addressing homicide and serious firearms-related violence. Since January 1998 the IVRP group has studied patterns of homicide and firearms violence in Indianapolis, crafted interventions, assessed the impact of these interventions, and revised the strategy.

Soon after the inception of the IVRP, the National Institute of Justice initiated the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI). SACSI too was based on the notion of strategic problem solving and the Indianapolis initiative became one of five cities to receive federal support for engaging in the SACSI process. The following is the

story of the development of the IVRP, a description of the problem solving approach, an assessment of the impact of IVRP, and lessons learned from the experience.

Problem Solving Approaches

The 1990s witnessed unexpected declines in crime as well as changes in criminal justice practice. One area of significant development was in the application of problem solving approaches to crime issues. Sparked by Herman Goldstein's (1990) seminal writing on problem-oriented policing and linked to the community policing movement, numerous examples have emerged where criminal justice officials have systematically analyzed a crime problem, developed responses to the problem, acted, and then assessed impact.

New York Police Department's COMPSTAT program initiated under former Mayor Giuliani and former commissioners Bratton and Safer is an example of an initiative that formalized the problem solving process into the day-to-day administration of the department (Silverman, 1999). Under COMPSTAT, top officials from NYPD convened twice weekly crime analysis meetings whereby precinct commanders were questioned about crime patterns in their geographic commands, their strategies for addressing these problems, and their evidence that their strategies were having an impact. No longer would a purely reactive approach to crime be acceptable. Police managers were held accountable for knowing the nature of crime, developing and assessing strategies for reducing crime, and ultimately for reducing the level of crime. Although difficult to assess the direct impact of COMPSTAT on levels of crime, the dramatic declines in crime in New York City that coincided with the implementation of this

managerial strategy convinced NYPD officials that this proactive accountability model played a significant role in crime reduction.

Another successful problem solving approach emerged from the Boston gun project, sometimes referred to as Operation Ceasefire. Like COMPSTAT, Operation Ceasefire sought to study crime patterns and to craft interventions based on analysis. Unlike COMPSTAT, the Boston initiative was focused on youth firearms violence as opposed to all types of crime. The Boston project was also innovative by its inclusion of a University-based research partner. The Boston effort ultimately served as a model for the SACSI initiative.

Boston's Problem Solving Process

Beginning in early 1995, a multi-agency working group of Boston officials and researchers began to meet on a bi-weekly basis to engage in the problem solving processes of: research and analysis, strategy design, implementation, and assessment (Kennedy, Piehl, and Braga, 1996; Kennedy, Braga, and Piehl, 2001). The working group included local level officials including police, probation and parole, prosecution, school police, and outreach workers, federal agencies including the U.S. Attorney and BATF, and researchers from Harvard University.

During the analysis stage, the group employed multiple methods and relied on multiple sources of information. These included official crime statistics, BATF gun tracing data, formal and informal interviews with criminal justice actors and youth workers, interviews with probationers, emergency room records, and related data. The picture that emerged from the analysis was that the youth violence problem was highly concentrated in three neighborhoods, involved firearms, and involved a relatively small

number of individuals as both perpetrators and victims. Further, this small pool of violence-involved youth was dominated by gang members who had prior involvement in the criminal justice system.

The pattern of youth homicide uncovered in the analysis stage suggested that the intervention be focused on gang-involved youth, particularly youth with criminal histories, in targeted areas of Boston.

Boston's Ceasefire Program

The strategy that emerged from the analysis became known as Ceasefire and consisted of three key elements. First was a crack down on illicit gun trafficking. Guns used in crimes began to be systematically traced through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) database and offenders using or in possession of guns were debriefed following arrest. Using the intelligence thus acquired, illegal gun traffickers were targeted for enforcement. A second key aspect focused on the youth gang component of the violence problem and involved establishing new norms for gang members. Ceasefire members systematically informed gang members, particularly chronic offenders, that violence would no longer be tolerated and would be met with an unprecedented multi-agency law enforcement response. The third element involved the actual multi-agency response to violent incidents. When a violent incident occurred in Boston, the multi-agency team responded by imposing all possible sanctions on chronic offenders residing or found within the high crime area where the incident occurred or associated with the individuals involved in the violence. This comprehensive use of sanctions became known as applying "levers". When a violent incident occurred, all potential levers were pulled. The strategy was feasible because of the characteristics of

high crime offenders. By its very nature, their chronic offending left them particularly vulnerable to a varied menu of sanctions (Kennedy, 1997).

The Boston project appears to have had a dramatic effect on youth firearms violence.[1] Implemented in May 1996, gun homicide victimizations for ages 14-24 dropped 63 percent from 1990-95 averages. Shots fired, gun assaults, and youth gun assaults declined by 25, 32, and 44 percent, respectively (Kennedy, Braga, and Piehl, 2001). Indeed, the city experienced a two and one-half year period in which no juvenile homicide victimizations occurred.

Several key elements of the Boston problem solving approach appeared to be transferable to Indianapolis and other jurisdictions. These included the formation of a multi-agency team to conduct the problem solving process; the partnering of criminal justice agencies with a research team; and reliance on street-level knowledge (e.g., police, probation, school, detention personnel, youth workers) in problem analysis and strategy development.

As noted earlier, the success of the Boston model led the Department of Justice to initiate the "Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative" (SACSI). The SACSI model was originally implemented in five cities and later expanded to five additional cities.[2] The key components of the SACSI approach include a multi-agency working

[1] The Boston problem-solving model was subsequently implemented in Minneapolis with similarly promising results, see Kennedy and Braga, 1998.

team, collaboration with a research partner, and application of formal problem solving techniques to a locally chosen serious crime problem.

[2] The original five cities were Indianapolis, Memphis, New Haven, Portland, and Winston-Salem. The second set of cities were Albuquerque, Atlanta, Detroit, Rochester (NY), and St. Louis.

Chapter Two

The Development and Evolution of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership

During the mid-1990s Indianapolis experienced a significant increase in its homicide problem. For most of the 1970s and 1980s the city experienced fairly stable levels between 60-90 homicides per year. This began to change in the early 1990s and reached peak levels in 1997 and 1998 at 157 and 149, respectively. This equated to nearly doubling the homicide rate from 10.2 in 1990 to 20.1 in 1998 (per 100,000 population). Local wisdom is that this period witnessed the late arrival of crack cocaine in this mid-western city. That is, whereas the large coastal cities experienced the crack cocaine epidemic and its associated violence problems during the mid- to late-1980s, crack did not become a major problem in Indianapolis until the 1992-1994 period.[3]The 1990s were also years, during which Indianapolis experienced a very vibrant economy and major re-development of the downtown core. Indeed, Indianapolis found itself in the rather odd situation of having experienced a longer and healthier economic expansion than many of the coastal cities yet the city was experiencing increasing levels of homicide and violent crime at a time that much of the nation, and cities like New York and Los Angeles, were witnessing unprecedented declines in crime.

The irony of these trends was not lost on Mayor Stephen Goldsmith. A former prosecuting attorney, Goldsmith was an advocate of community- and problem-oriented

[3] Data from the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program indicates that there is support for an association between the arrival of crack and increased violence but that it is not a clear one-to-one type of association. The percent of both male and female arrestees testing positive for cocaine increased significantly during the 1992-1994 period. These years also witnessed an increase in homicide. The percent testing positive declined from the 1994 peaks and stayed relatively level through the remainder of the 1990s. Yet, homicides continued to increase in the 1995-1998 period.

policing. In 1995 he had begun to work with a team of researchers from Indiana University and the Indianapolis-based Hudson Institute to assist the police department in the transition to a proactive, problem-solving approach. Included in these efforts was the introduction of NYPD-style COMPSTAT crime analysis meetings, hiring of civilian crime analysts (supervised by the University-based researchers) to support the police department's new decentralized structure, and implementation of a directed patrol experiment intended to reduce firearms-related violence (Weiss, McGarrell, and Verma, 1999; McGarrell, Chermak and Weiss, 1999; McGarrell, Chermak, Weiss, and Wilson, 2001).[4] In the fall of 1997, faced with a record setting number of homicides, Goldsmith asked the research team to look into the Boston Ceasefire Project and report back on its potential applicability to Indianapolis.

At the same time, Judith Stewart, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana had learned of the involvement of the U.S. Attorney's Office from Massachusetts in Boston's Operation Ceasefire. Sharing Goldsmith's concern with the high levels of homicide, Stewart independently contacted the research team for information about the Boston project.

The result of these discussions was a meeting in December 1997 involving the agency heads of all local, state, and federal criminal justice agencies serving the Indianapolis area. The research team prepared a presentation on Boston's Project Ceasefire. The presentation emphasized that Ceasefire was both a process and a set of interventions. Although some of the interventions appeared attractive to policymakers, there was also

[4] See Weiss, A. & McGarrell, E. "Criminology Against Crime: Criminologists and Crime Control for the Indianapolis Police Department," National Institute of Justice, 1997.

understanding that the Indianapolis violence problem might be different than that experienced in Boston and that the interventions might not be transferable. The group also felt that the violence problem in Indianapolis included adult as well as youth components and that a focus on youth violence alone might be inappropriate. A consensus emerged that Indianapolis would put into place a multi-agency team that would follow the type of problem solving approach utilized in Boston.

At the conclusion of the meeting the policymakers committed to either personally participating in the working group or to designating personnel from their agencies. The question arose, however, as to who would coordinate the effort. Similar to what occurred in Boston, but likely unusual in many jurisdictions, the research team was asked to provide this coordination. This appeared based on several criteria. First, the research team was already engaged in crime analysis through the Indianapolis Management Accountability Program (IMAP).[5] Thus, the team was very familiar with the crime information systems available in the city. Second, by having the research team central to the working group, there was a commitment to ensuring that this initiative would be data-driven. Third, the group wanted to ensure that this initiative be a true multi-agency partnership and not be seen as the Mayor's initiative, the U.S. Attorney's project, or another police department task force. The research team represented a neutral body. Finally, the long history of the researchers' involvement with the police department, the sheriff's department, and the prosecutor's office created a degree of familiarity and trust. This likely eased potential concerns about not only including non-law enforcement personnel but also asking the team to play a leadership role.

The initial meeting of the working group took place in January 1998. The group has met on a bi-weekly basis since that time and continues to meet every other week as this is being written. In the following pages we describe the chronology of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership from 1998 through mid-2001. Subsequent chapters provide substantive detail on the problem analysis, interventions, process and outcome evaluation findings.

Getting Started

The group began with a meeting held at the Hudson Institute. Although a matter of convenience, the group decided that the Institute was a good meeting site. It was a neutral setting, parking was easy, and participants were able to set aside time from their normal duties.

Participation in the early meetings matched the commitment made by the policymakers during the December meeting. Figure One lists the participating agencies and includes all the relevant criminal justice agencies serving the region.

Initial meetings included presentations on Boston's Operation Ceasefire and focused on matters such as a name for the group, development of a mission statement, and informal but crucial agreements about confidentiality and mutual respect. The group decided on the name, the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership (IVRP).

The vision and mission of the group was described as:

VISION: We seek a city and county where violent crime has been significantly decreased over current levels.

[5] The Indianapolis Management Accountability Program (IMAP) was Indianapolis Police Department's version of COMPSTAT.

MISSION: The mission of the multi-agency working group is to use a focused and coordinated problem solving approach to reduce the level of homicide and serious violence in the community. The working group will draw on information and expertise from multiple sources to develop a systematic picture of the violence problem in the county. From this picture the working group will suggest responses to the problem and then analyze the effect of these strategies on the violent crime problem.

During these early months, the working group decided to initiate several efforts despite the fact that the problem analysis had not yet been conducted. The first of these was known as the VIPER program.[6] The finding from Boston that many homicide victims and suspects had long extensive involvement in the criminal justice system resonated with many of the Indianapolis officials. A sergeant within the police department, and former homicide investigator, decided to attempt to use arrest and court data to identify the group of offenders with the most extensive and violent criminal histories in the city. The idea was to make the identity of these offenders known to police and to other criminal justice actors. The original purpose of the initiative was two-fold. First, to increase the likelihood of arrest, prosecution, and conviction of these individuals should they become involved in future criminal activity. There was a sense that some homicide victims and suspects had slipped through the system in the past. Had these individuals been incarcerated, they would have been less likely to become either a victim or a perpetrator. Second, these individuals were considered high-risk offenders and developing the capability of having this information available to officers during traffic stops or other forms of interaction was considered a matter of officer safety.

The second initiative was the creation of a joint federal-local firearms unit. The unit

[6] Violence Impact Program Enhanced Response.

was comprised of county prosecutors, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, the police department, and the BATF. The joint unit would screen all firearms cases to decide whether the case was best handled in local or federal court, work with BATF to trace illegal firearms, and proactively investigate problems related to illegal firearm possession and use. Despite the fact that these two initiatives could only loosely be described as "data-driven" they seemed to be important steps for the working group that was still largely involved in planning and discussion while the research team was engaged in problem analysis.

During this period the IVRP group also conducted an inventory of existing violence reduction initiatives that the various participating agencies were involved in. The idea was to include existing efforts into the overall strategy.

Initial Problem Analysis Stage

As will be described in greater detail in the next chapter, this was a period in which the research team was bringing together a variety of data sources to better understand the nature of the homicide problem in Indianapolis. The initial work relied on official sources of police and court data and examined issues such as seasonal, day of week, and time of day patterns. The demographic characteristics of victims and suspects and the relationship between victim and suspect were assessed. Crime maps were developed examining the geographic distribution of homicides throughout the county as well as the patterns of homicides compared to other crimes, drug complaints, probationer and parolee addresses. The court data were used to assess the prior involvement of victims and suspects in the criminal justice system. The basic pattern that emerged was similar to that found in many urban settings: homicide victims and suspects were predominately young men, using firearms, in geographically concentrated areas of the

city, and disproportionately drawn from the minority community. The data revealed few surprises among criminal justice officials. Perhaps the one exception to this statement was the extent to which victims and suspects mirrored each other and the extensiveness of their criminal histories. The initial data analysis suggested some general strategies but did not prove particularly helpful in developing interventions.

The Initial Incident Review

In February the research team contacted David Kennedy, the lead researcher in Boston's Project Ceasefire. The general patterns from the official records sounded similar to those witnessed in Boston and in Minneapolis. Kennedy suggested that Indianapolis consider conducting an incident review where investigators, street-level officers, parole and probation officers, prosecutors and others with knowledge about the homicides, the participants, and the neighborhood contexts could systematically review cases and share what they knew about the people, places, and situations involved in these incidents.

Although there was some initial reluctance about the time commitment involved in participating in an all day review, the group decided it was worth a try. The initial review occurred in March 1998 and involved the review of homicides that had occurred from January-August 1997 (the other homicides that occurred in 1997 were reviewed later by meeting informally with key informants). All of IVRP's participating agencies provided representatives at the incident review (approximately 75 participants from 10 agencies). The research team prepared an information packet on each incident as well as overhead slides for display. A homicide investigator presented information on what was known about the incident and then the participants with knowledge about the individuals

or the context shared what they knew. The research team used the review as a data collection opportunity.

During the incident review, two characteristics about homicides in Indianapolis became very clear. First, there was a clear group component to the violence. Both victims and suspects were routinely described as being part of either a named gang or part of a crew or group of chronic offenders that were well known to the police and other criminal justice officials. Second, a clear nexus between drug use and distribution and homicides emerged. These included incidents with a direct connection to drug distribution, such as a robbery of a crack house or retaliation for a drug rip-off, as well as indirect connection where the victim or suspect were known users hanging out in a known crack market but where it was not clear whether drug activity was the motive behind the homicide.

The findings were important in a number of respects. First, they helped produce a shared understanding of the nature of homicide in Indianapolis. Like many cities, there had long been disagreement on the presence and prevalence of gangs in the city and the role gang activity played in crime. Similarly, there was little agreement about the role of drugs. Although officers had often claimed that the violence was "all drugs and gangs," official U.C.R. records showed that very few incidents recorded drugs or gangs as the motive behind a homicide.[7] The incident review convinced all involved in the IVRP that there was a group component to the homicide problem and that illegal drug sales and markets were key contributing factors to the homicide rate.

[7] Prior research has demonstrated wide variation from community to community in how the police record items such as gang- or drug-involvement. In Indianapolis it appears that the police take a very conservative approach to applying such labels in the formal incident report.

The results of the incident review, combined with the findings from the analysis of police and court records, were shared with the IVRP working group in several meetings during April 1998. The working group also assembled a larger group of officials from all the participating agencies for a daylong session in which the problem analysis findings were shared and the group began developing potential strategies for intervention.

Community Outreach

One of the results of the meetings whereby a strategic plan began to be formulated on the basis of the problem analysis was a recognized need to begin to work collaboratively with the community. Consequently, a number of community outreach activities were implemented in late spring and summer 1998.

The U.S. Attorney Office and the police department were already involved in the city's weed and seed program. Representatives of IVRP attended weed and seed meetings and informed neighborhood representatives about IVRP. The IVRP representatives, in turn, would report back to the IVRP working group about weed and seed activities.

IVRP team members visited area middle and high schools and gave presentations about the IVRP's commitment to reducing violence, penalties associated for illegal firearms possession and use, reminders about the curfew law, and information about legitimate summer activities and resources. One of the presentations was converted to videotape for broader distribution throughout the school system.

Formal press conferences announced the IVRP and the U.S. Attorney and the research partner participated in a variety of media forums (television and radio news and talk shows). Later, when Melinda Haag was appointed Assistant U.S. Attorney and

named the IVRP Project Coordinator, she routinely met with neighborhood groups and associations.

The outreach effort was enhanced through the involvement of the Mayor's Office in IVRP. Mayor Goldsmith had created the Front Porch Alliance (FPA) within the Mayor's Office. The FPA provided technical assistance and funding for neighborhood groups, including the faith community, to engage in community building activities. This provided a viable infrastructure of neighborhood associations and leaders as well as an office within city government to disseminate information and coordinate activities. In summer of 1998, the FPA invited the Reverend Eugene Rivers, founder of the 10 Point Coalition in Boston, to come to Indianapolis and speak about 10 Point's efforts to reduce youth violence. Rivers came in and met with a group of neighborhood leaders and inner-city ministers. He also spoke at a major community forum where over 700 neighborhood leaders, criminal justice officials, and city leaders attended, and he offered his advice, guidance, and an outreach template for those interested in the model that was implemented in Boston

The result of the Rivers' visit was the formation of the Indianapolis 10 Point Coalition. The Reverend Charles Harrison was appointed Executive Director. The 10 Point identified violence, gang and drug activity, employment opportunity, and educational attainment, as the key areas of focus. As will be described throughout this report the 10 Point Coalition became a key partner of the IVRP.

Strategy Development

In addition to the community outreach that occurred in the summer of 1998, the IVRP began implementing the strategic plan that was developed in May. In August a

second large-scale homicide review session was convened. Incidents occurring from January through the first week of August were reviewed. The patterns emerging from the analysis were very consistent with the initial review. Homicides were concentrated in certain areas of the city, involved firearms, young men, drug and gang activity. During this period the IMAP crime analysts had also generated a series of crime maps that indicated that homicide locations were also locations of drug complaints and arrests, with heavy concentrations of home addresses of probationers, parolees, and VIPER-designated violent offenders.

The basic strategy that emerged was a targeted deterrence focus coupled with expanding linkages to legitimate opportunities. One element of the strategy involved a multi-agency response to every new homicide incident. In addition to normal canvassing for investigation purposes, a number of agencies would respond to the neighborhood where the homicide occurred to send a signal of the increased attention given to violent crime. The initial multi-agency response to a homicide occurred in May 1998.

A second element of the implemented strategy, borrowed from Boston's Ceasefire, was what became known as "lever pulling" meetings (see Kennedy, 1997). These meetings, described in greater detail in the next chapter, involved face-to-face meetings with groups of high-risk probationers and parolees. Criminal justice officials and community members described their concern that the probationers/parolees were at high risk of either committing a violent crime or of being a victim of a violent crime. A deterrence message was communicated with an explanation of the severe penalties available under federal law for felons in possession of a firearm and the commitment of local, state, and federal law enforcement to impose severe sanctions for firearms crimes.

In addition, probationers and parolees were urged to take advantage of a range of services and opportunities including mentoring from ex-offenders, employment, housing, substance abuse, education, and vocational training. The first lever-pulling meeting was held in October 1998. For much of the next year approximately two meetings per month were held. The meetings have continued since that time though they were reduced to approximately monthly meetings due to resource constraints.

An additional outcome of the second homicide review was that the sergeant directing the VIPER initiative conducted an analysis that indicated that approximately one-half of the individuals on the VIPER list were either confirmed gang members or gang associates. Further, most of these chronic offenders were affiliated with either the Black Gangster Disciples or the Vice Lords. This finding suggested that in addition to the individual-level focus on particular VIPERS that these individuals may be subject to group-based deterrence strategies as well.

Additional elements of the strategy being implemented throughout fall 1998 included street ministry by the 10 Point Coalition, targeting of several suspected federally licensed firearms dealers, a training video on the VIPER program, and police-probation home visits.

During late fall, IPD's Special Operations and Response Team (SOAR) was given the responsibility for coordinating the multi-agency responses to homicides and serious shootings. Additionally, the IVRP implemented an additional problem analysis tool. In addition to the bi-weekly meetings of the IVRP working group, an incident review team would begin meeting every other week. The incident review team would draw on the knowledge and experience of line level officers and district supervisors, the gang and

narcotics units, probation and parole officers, prosecutors, and homicide investigators, to review each incident, determine the dynamics behind the incident, and make an assessment of whether there was a neighborhood, group or drug market component to the incident that should be targeted for a response. The model for IVRP became one where the incident review team met every other Monday. The information was analyzed and summarized by the research team and then presented to the IVRP working group on Tuesday. The working group would then decide whether additional agency or community resources should be activated in response to a homicide incident or series of incidents, as well as address broader issues.

Year Two – Early Consternation and Eventual Evidence of Impact

The first quarter of 1999 witnessed continued implementation of the strategic plan. Lever pulling meetings continued. The VIPER designation became available electronically whereby if an officer requested information on an individual that turned out to be on the VIPER list the designation would flash on the officer's mobile data terminal (MDT). IPD crime analysts began to routinely map out locations of outstanding warrants and the home addresses of probationers and parolees. The probation and parole departments increasingly conducted joint home visits with law enforcement officials.

In February, following a particularly brutal gang-related homicide a very detailed multi-agency plan was developed to focus on both the neighborhood where the incident occurred as well as the groups involved. For the next several months, the area received increased directed police patrol, probationers and parolees received home visits (particularly those with gang affiliations and sentenced for violent and drug offenses), and warrants were served to individuals with outstanding warrants. Lever pulling meetings

with high-risk probationers and parolees associated with these groups were also conducted.

An additional organizational change occurred during this period as well. Melinda Haag, a county assistant prosecutor that had been the prosecutor's liaison with IVRP, was appointed as an Assistant United States Attorney. In addition to handling some firearms cases, Haag was appointed the coordinator of the IVRP. Although the appointment of a coordinator within the U.S. Attorney's Office might have been a political problem in the early stages of the project, this was no longer the case. The U.S. Attorney had proven herself an equal partner with local law enforcement, there was a recognition of the need for a full-time coordinator to work with the community and the variety of participating agencies, and Haag was known and well-respected within the criminal justice community as well as the broader community (through her role as a community prosecutor and heavy involvement in weed and seed).

Despite this progress, 1998 had again seen record levels of homicides and the first three months of 1999 were on pace with the same period of 1998. Despite the many efforts of the IVRP and the increased information sharing and coordination, there was no evidence of impact on the homicide problem. This proved frustrating to IVRP leaders who were confronted with bi-weekly evidence of the loss of young lives and it fed the skepticism of some participants who believed there was little other than arrest and prosecution that you could do about homicide.

The Tide Begins to Change: Late Winter-Spring 1999

Several factors came together in late winter and spring of 1999 that led to rejuvenation of the IVRP team. First, as described in Chapter Four, the research team

conducted a series of interviews with IVRP members. Although there were concerns that homicides continued at high levels there was strong support for the IVRP approach. Members stated that there was a greater shared understanding of the homicide and firearms violence problem, that the strategies made sense in terms of the problem analysis, and that the IVRP had led to significantly improved inter-agency communication and collaboration. There was some concern that the strategies be implemented more thoroughly, for example not all drug- and gang-related homicides received any type of response (beyond normal investigation) but the approach was supported by virtually all members.

Second, in April a major long-term, federal-local investigation of a violent gang operating in the Brightwood neighborhood—one of the cities' most violence-producing areas--culminated in the arrest of 16 individuals and confiscation of over 70 firearms.[8] Importantly, the individuals were charged in federal court and were held in detention without bond. The Brightwood arrests were important not only because of the heavy involvement of these individuals in criminal activity but also because it was the first highly visible evidence that the IVRP agencies were serious about the focus on gang- and drug-related violent crime and that federal sanctions would be used. Since October 1998 this message had been communicated to gang members and high-risk offenders but now there was evidence the threat from the IVRP was credible.

[8] The Brightwood investigation was initiated during the early formation of the IVRP. It involved a joint investigation of the FBI and IPD. It likely would have occurred without the formation of IVRP. The interesting feature, however, was that members of IVRP from the FBI and IPD were both involved and aware of the Brightwood investigation and would periodically inform the IVRP that a major gang investigation was underway and that it would be consistent with the IVRP strategy.

The Brightwood example was then used in subsequent lever pulling meetings where IVRP members would say, "you know what happened to the Brightwood group, don't be next." Also important to the momentum of IVRP was that just about immediately after the Brightwood arrests there was a dramatic reduction in homicide incidents. Indeed, for the first time since the inception of the IVRP a two-week period went by without a single incident to review.

The third event that seemed to renew the IVRP working group was a visit by Attorney General Reno during late April. Representatives of the five cities involved in the National Institute of Justice's Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) came to Indianapolis for a cluster conference on the SACSI initiatives. The Attorney General spoke at the conference but also used the visit as an opportunity to observe an IVRP working group meeting, a lever pulling meeting, and to meet with IVRP members and community partners. The attention of the Attorney General, other Department of Justice Officials, and professional counterparts from the other five cities seemed to signal that the IVRP was important and was here to stay.

Community Outreach – Summer 1999

The summer of 1999 also saw a number of accomplishments. A citywide probation-parole-law enforcement sweep occurred that generated significant media attention and involved a broader pool of officers and agencies. This again seemed to signal, at least to criminal justice agency participants, that something new was occurring in Indianapolis. Increased attention was given to community collaboration. An IVRP newsletter was prepared and widely disseminated to community and neighborhood

leaders and throughout the partner criminal justice agencies. Similar to the previous year, the IVRP made presentations at schools throughout the county.

The IVRP coordinator also engaged in a series of discussions with community and neighborhood leaders about their involvement in the IVRP. The IVRP team proposed to the leaders that a Citizen Advisory Board be formed as part of IVRP. Surprisingly to the IVRP leaders, although there was strong support for IVRP and a willingness to collaborate with IVRP, the citizens did not want to form what they saw as one more advisory board. Many were already involved in weed and seed boards, block watch, the Front Porch Alliance, and similar activities and thought that it was better for IVRP to coordinate with these existing community-based structures than to create an additional board. Consequently, the IVRP coordinator attempted to work with the existing community entities.

This was also a period in which the IVRP began to consider a broader public education campaign. The group was familiar with the work of Project Exile in Richmond, Virginia where a major public education campaign was used to communicate the message that felons in possession of a firearm faced stiff penalties in federal court. The IVRP did not believe that it could copy the Richmond program. Significantly, only a small portion of eligible felon-in-possession cases were actually prosecuted in federal court and it did not appear that there were the prosecutorial resources or the federal judicial support to significantly increase the number of cases prosecuted federally. Thus, the group did not want to create a media campaign based on a false threat. Yet, the group did believe that the use of billboards, posters on buses, and perhaps television and radio ads should be used as a way of communicating the no tolerance for violence message.

A local advertising company agreed to work with the IVRP on a pro-bono basis. The IVRP had earlier created a communications subcommittee to coordinate the lever-pulling meetings and it also worked with the ad committee. Several thematic examples of posters were developed and the research team and the ad team conducted interviews and focus groups with probationers and with community members about the messages they perceived and their preferences. On the basis of this feedback the ad company revised the posters. In June several prototypes were presented to the IVRP group. The majority of IVRP members were pleased with the prototypes. The U.S Attorney and several key community leaders objected however. They found the messages too "hard-hitting" and believed that they were likely to turn-off community members and perhaps inadvertently communicate to potential offenders a "violent response to violent crime" theme.

This proved to be one of the first main conflicts for the IVRP. Although the U.S. Attorney was very well-respected by the group, as were the key community leaders that objected, many other IVRP members pointed to support by other key community members and believed that no design would ever satisfy all members and that too much time and effort had been expended to begin anew. Ultimately, the group decided to ask the ad company to develop a new set of posters but it was nearly one year before the posters were actually printed and distributed.

The conflict over the posters was an interesting challenge for a multi-agency group like the IVRP. Most decisions had been made on a consensual basis and where disagreements surfaced minority opinion would typically defer to the majority. In this instance, the U.S. Attorney was the principal voice in opposition. This led to comments among some participants such as "I guess some of us are more equal than others."

Fortunately, by this point in the process the U.S. Attorney had established positive relationships with other IVRP participants, had proven her commitment by attending virtually all IVRP meetings and activities, and had established high levels of trust with other officials. Thus, the group continued its work despite the delay in the public education campaign.

Continued Development of Strategic and Operational Components

There was also additional development of the strategic and operational elements of the IVRP during this summer and fall period. The county prosecutor worked in the state legislature to pass a new state law that significantly increased the penalties for a convicted felon caught in possession of a firearm. Previously state law was quite weak and thus if a case was not prosecuted federally there was little that would happen to a felon in possession of a firearm.

The joint federal-state-local firearms unit developed a training tape for all law enforcement agencies in the county. The tape provided information about the new state law, probable cause and evidentiary issues.

Interviews with community leaders that participated in the lever pulling meetings led to revisions in the meeting format (discussed in the next chapter). Following two months of very low numbers of homicides and shootings, there was a flare-up of gang and drug related violence in late June and early July. This resulted in an intensive multi-agency homicide response that appeared to quiet the streets. Coincidentally, a second federal-local investigation of a major drug distribution gang culminated in a series of arrests in July.

In late fall an IVRP team visited the Indiana Boys School. The Boys School is one of the major Department of Corrections facilities housing delinquents with the majority of its residents being Indianapolis youths. The basic lever-pulling message was communicated to large groups of residents of the facility in a series of meetings.

Despite these many accomplishments, and the reduction in homicide that the county was experiencing, several concerns arose late in 1999. Attendance at the Monday incident review meetings was dwindling during the fall. Although the IVRP members continued to appear, there was often poor attendance by street level officers from the areas where the homicides had occurred and from the gang and narcotics units. The major responsible for the SOAR unit that had been coordinating the incident review meetings was frequently assigned to other duties. Additionally, the SOAR unit that had been a key element of the homicide responses was asked to respond to a variety of other responsibilities and was often unavailable.

Two problems became apparent. First, the incident review meetings often revealed little about the incident beyond what was in the formal incident report. When questions were asked about the location of the incident, the individuals involved, or local drug market activity, there was little information available. Thus, it became very difficult to identify the incidents involving a gang, a group of known chronic offenders, or an active drug market that may have warranted a multi-agency homicide response. Second, it became unclear who within the police department would initiate a formal homicide response. This became an ongoing issue throughout the IVRP initiative and seems to reflect the challenge of coordinating multi-agency approaches like the IVRP.

The sense among the IVRP leadership was that the significant reduction in homicide since April had reduced the sense of crisis that had generated such attention and action for the previous year. Thus, by the end of 1999 there seemed to be a sense that some partners to the IVRP had moved from a sense of consternation about the seeming intractable nature of the homicide numbers to a complacency that the crisis was over.

Winter 1999-2000 Leadership Changes

Beginning with the November mayoral election and continuing for the next four or five months the IVRP experienced significant turnover, particularly at formal leadership levels. Mayor Goldsmith, a republican, did not run for re-election and Bart Peterson, a democratic, was elected mayor. Thus, the mayor that had initiated the IVRP program and his deputy mayor, who had been actively involved in the IVRP, were out of office. This eventually led to the resignation of the current chief of police. Fortunately, in terms of the momentum of IVRP, he was succeeded by the Deputy Chief of the west district who had previously been involved in IVRP. Additionally, Judith Stewart, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana and another key leader of IVRP resigned her position to assume a judgeship. At approximately the same time, Marion Superior Court's Chief Probation Officer resigned to accept a position in California.

Many of the leadership changes also resulted in other personnel changes in IVRP as new administrators made changes in their organizations. Given this significant turnover in a short amount of time, this would have been a logical time for IVRP to fade away, particularly in light of homicides being down considerably from the previous four years. To the credit of the new mayor and his staff, the new chief, the interim U.S.

Attorney, and the new chief probation officer, IVRP continued and indeed was supported by these officials and their designees.

Continued Implementation and Related Strategic Actions: Summer-Fall 2000

The summer of 2000 witnessed several new initiatives. The new state law on felons in possession became effective and the firearms unit continued its training of law enforcement officers. The probation department increasingly coupled drug testing with home visits and with lever pulling attendees. The IVRP working group increasingly identified associates in drug- and group-related homicides that became targets for lever pulling meetings, probation/parole home visits, and warrant service. Special lever pulling sessions were convened with juveniles convicted of firearms-related charges and with groups of inmates in a pre-release center or just released from prison. Two resource units became increasingly involved with IVRP late in 2000. The first was a prosecutor-led nuisance abatement team that would investigate drug-houses and other problem addresses in high-violence areas. The second was a Failure-to-Appear team that increasingly supplemented the work of the U.S. Marshal's warrant team in serving warrants to associates in homicide incidents.

This was also a period during which the 10 Point Coalition became more ingrained in the IVRP with a representative regularly attending IVRP working group meetings. Additional community partners emerged through the inmate re-entry lever pulling meetings whereby 6-10 service providing organizations began to regularly attend the meetings to present their services to recently released probationers and parolees. These service providers included former inmate support groups, employment services,

drug and alcohol treatment providers, vocational training specialists, and representatives of the faith community. Finally, in December 2000 the IVRP policymakers convened a well-attended press conference to announce a public education anti-violence campaign that included bus posters, public service announcements, and billboards.

Thus, 2000 was a period in which the IVRP successfully transitioned in key leadership positions and new resources were added to the violence reduction effort.

Institutionalization at the Local Level: 2001

Early in 2001 the research team presented to the IVRP working group the results of its survey of IVRP participants. The survey focused on the original strategic plan and asked participants to indicate whether each element of the plan continued to make sense, whether progress had been made, and whether new goals had emerged. The results indicated a high level of consensus among the IVRP participants. This was interesting because a high percentage of the survey participants were not part of the original IVRP group that had developed the strategic plan. The results indicated that the key elements of the strategy were supported and should be continued. The group also indicated that more should be done to coordinate with the geographically based police districts and to implement the plans to target youths and to communicate the anti-violence message throughout the community. Perhaps most important, the survey indicated that the group continued to support IVRP and strongly desired to see it continue beyond the end of the federal funding.

Consequently, the first half of 2001 witnessed several steps to strengthen IVRP. The concerns about uneven attendance at IVRP incident review meetings led to the

decision to move to a once-per-month schedule (as opposed to the every-other-week practice) with the understanding that the police department would increase its commitment to having street-level officers and key supervisors attend these meetings. The VIPER unit and the homicide unit increasingly worked together, and with the other IVRP agencies, to identify associates in drug- and group-homicides for intervention. District officers were detailed to the VIPER unit so that the unit would move from primarily an intelligence-focused unit to a proactive investigation unit. GIS technology was employed to map the locations of returning inmates and regular lever pulling meetings focused on recently released inmates. Additionally, the research team implemented an evaluation plan to assess impact on this re-entry initiative. The police department's north district, in an attempt to focus on high-risk youth, developed a specialized lever-pulling meeting with youths arrested on vehicle theft charges. This was based on the officers' belief, supported by homicide incident review data, that vehicle theft was often a precursor offense for more serious offending and violence in particular.

Several events also signified the commitment to IVRP outlasting the federal funding. First, the Chief Probation Officer decided to implement an internal incident review for any homicide involving a current or past probationer. This information would be used to assess internal operations and was also fed-back to the IVRP. Second, Melinda Haag, Director of the Marion County Justice Agency who had previously served as the IVRP coordinator as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, decided to pursue state funding to support the IVRP. She was able to secure funding to hire a full-time project coordinator, Jason Hutchens. Hutchens had been a member of the research team and was thus able to continue to link IVRP activities to research. Haag was also able to secure funding for the

public education campaign. Thus, as IVRP moved into the second half of 2001 and into 2002 the group was continuing to formally meet every other week, conduct incident reviews on a monthly basis, implement a wide variety of interventions, and have a full-time coordinator located within the local agency responsible for shared information systems and multi-agency coordination. By all accounts, the IVRP multi-agency problem-solving model had been institutionalized in Indianapolis.

Chapter Three

The Strategic Problem Solving Framework

As key Indianapolis criminal justice officials were convened in December 1997 to address the homicide problem and consider the Boston Ceasefire initiative as a potential model, two key elements of the Boston approach appeared to resonate with Indianapolis officials. The first was Boston's multi-agency structure. The second was the integration of research into a problem-solving framework. Although the seriousness of the homicide problem left officials hoping to quickly respond to the violence, and undoubtedly considering some of the interventions developed in Boston, all committed to bring together a multi-agency working group and to institute a formal problem solving approach with the active involvement of a team of researchers.

Multi-Agency Working Group

In the United States, given the federated structure of government and the separation of powers between executive and judicial branches, criminal justice is a highly fragmented operation. Although sometimes called a "system," many scholars have noted that these agencies typically operate as a loosely coupled "non-system" (Hagan 1989). The Boston experience, coupled with other examples arising from community policing efforts to coordinate multi-agency resources, suggested the potential of sharing information and marshalling resources to address specific problems.

Consequently, a working group (see Figure 3-1) of representatives from every criminal justice agency, at local, state, and federal levels, serving the Marion County region was formed in January 1998 and has been meeting regularly since that time. The

working group also partnered with a team of researchers from the Crime Control Policy Center at the Hudson Institute, a private, not-for-profit, research organization located in Indianapolis.[9]

Figure 3-1
Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership
Working Group Members

Indianapolis Office of the Mayor	Indiana Department of Correction
Indianapolis Police Department	Indiana State Police
Marion County Prosecutor's Office	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
Marion County Sheriff's Department	Federal Bureau of Investigation
Marion Superior Court-Criminal Division	U.S. Attorney's Office
Marion Superior Court-Juvenile Division	U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
Marion Superior Court Probation-Adult Services Division	U.S. Marshal's Service
Marion Superior Court Probation-Juvenile Services Division	
Marion County Justice Agency	Hudson Institute/ Indiana University

The working group reported to a policymaking group comprised of the agency heads of the various criminal justice agencies and the Office of the Mayor. There was overlap between the two groups as some of the agency heads were actively involved in the working group (e.g., U.S. Attorney, Chief Probation Officer).

Over time a third group emerged. This was an incident review and action team formed in late fall 1998. The incident review group, again with overlap with the working group, met bi-weekly (later monthly) to review homicide and serious violent incidents. The idea was to continuously review violence and to link street-level knowledge with investigative information to identify violence-related drug activity and groups or gangs involved in violent crime. The incident review team was intended to then suggest

[9] The Crime Control Policy Center represents a partnership between Hudson Institute and the Department of Criminal Justice at Indiana University, Bloomington.

potential interventions. The information was then fed back to the working group. The incident review team met on Mondays so as to capture activity through a weekend. The working group met on Tuesdays and was thus able to learn of information from the previous day's incident review meeting. The incident review team proved to be the most difficult aspect of the IVRP model to coordinate.

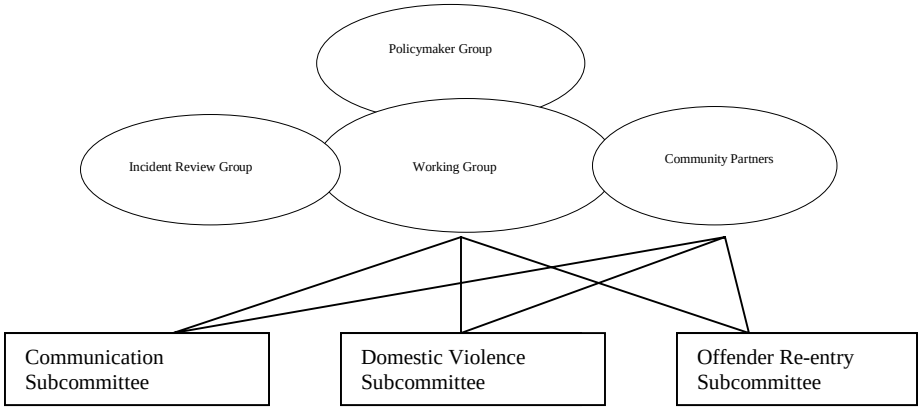
The additional layer of the IVRP model involved community linkages and partnerships. The key community organizations involved in the IVRP included the Indianapolis Front Porch Alliance (FPA), Indianapolis 10 Point Coalition, Weed and Seed, Westside Ministers, and a number of service providers. The FPA was a city-supported coalition of neighborhood associations, service organizations, and faith-based organizations that initially worked to coordinate IVRP with the community. The FPA brought Reverend Eugene Rivers to Indianapolis to discuss the Boston 10 Point Coalition and led to the creation of the Indianapolis 10 Point Coalition. The 10 Point Coalition was led by a group of inner-city ministers and became a key community partner to the IVRP. 10 Point was the community partner regularly participating in the working group meetings. The linkage to Weed and Seed was provided by the U.S. Attorney and the IVRP coordinator who both regularly attended Weed and Seed coordinating committee meetings. A variety of service providers were involved in the lever pulling meetings in the attempt to link high-risk probationers and parolees to a variety of employment, vocational, educational, drug and alcohol, mentoring and related services.

As the IVRP developed three subcommittees emerged. Members of the working group as well as representatives of the community partners participated in communication, domestic violence, and offender re-entry subcommittees. These

subcommittees coordinated much of the community outreach that occurred through IVRP. Also included were government and criminal justice officials who were not regular members of the working group.

Figure 3-2

IVRP Structure



In summary, the multi-agency structure was intended to serve two key goals. The first is the sharing of information. The agencies involved are repositories of information about crime and violence but rarely do they have the opportunity to come together on a regular basis to share that information about a specific problem. By meeting every other week, the working group brought sustained focus on the violence problem and established trust relationships that facilitated the sharing of information across agencies. The second goal of the multi-agency structure was to bring expanded resources to the problem. Having all local, state, and federal agencies, as well as key community partners, collaborating secured a much richer set of resources than would be possible for any one or two agencies. Although not discussed in these terms by the IVRP, the multi-agency structure

was an attempt to more "tightly couple" the fragmented criminal justice system and to strengthen community partnerships in a coordinated effort to reduce lethal violence.

Interviews conducted with IVRP working group members were nearly unanimous that the IVRP has resulted in greater sharing of information and increased cooperation among the participating agencies. The bi-weekly meetings provided a regular opportunity for sharing information. Perhaps more important, however, the meetings formed relationships that lead to contact and collaboration outside the meetings themselves. In addition, the working group established an e-mail exchange that allowed the entire group to share information effortlessly. The most concrete example related to homicides whereby the IPD or MCSD provided a basic description of the incident and the rest of the group can then send messages about prior contacts they have had with victims, suspects, witnesses, or associates. One working group member summed up the level of cooperation by stating that in more than 20 years of law enforcement he had never seen the various agencies working together so closely or effectively.

Strategic Problem Solving

The second element of the Boston Ceasefire Program that the IVRP working group decided to adopt was a formal strategic problem solving process. As noted in the mission statement described in the previous chapter, the IVRP committed to analyzing the homicide and firearms violence problem, crafting interventions on the basis of analysis, and continuously assessing the impact of these interventions. This was the reason for including the active participation of a research team as partners in the IVRP working group. Yet, it was also understood that the research team would not conduct research in

isolation of the working group but rather the entire working group would be involved in gathering information and data, analyzing, and assessing.

The basic problem-solving model followed by the working group was the SARA approach based on Herman Goldstein's problem-solving model (Goldstein, 19XX). It consists of Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment. In the following sections we use the SARA model as a way of describing the process followed by the IVRP.

Figure 3-3

Key Elements of IVRP

1. **Multi-agency Commitment**
   - **sharing of information**
   - **expanded resources**
2. **Problem Solving Process**
   - **analyze problem**
   - **plan targeted responses**
   - **evaluate impact**
   - **feedback and refinement**

Scanning

As noted in previous chapters, identifying the key violent crime problem facing Indianapolis at the end of 1997 was a given for IVRP. The partnership was formed to address homicides. Further, existing data indicated that three-quarters of the homicides involved firearms thus the group decided to focus on homicides and serious firearms violence.

Analysis of Homicide Incidents

The initial step in the analysis involved examining existing records that provided a picture the nature of homicide violence in Indianapolis. One of the IVRP research partners had been involved for several years in the Indianapolis Management

Accountability Program (IMAP). IMAP involved the application of a modified NYPD-style COMPSTAT program of routinely analyzing crime patterns, sharing the information among district commanders and specialized unit supervisors, crafting interventions, and holding managers accountable for reducing crime. As such, the research team had well-established relationships with the crime analysis unit of the police department and ready access to existing data. Further, the team had the capability of mapping geographic patterns of crime. Additionally, the homicide unit maintained a database on homicides that was made available to the research team. These data sources provided information for an initial assessment of the homicide problem.

In addition to the police data, the research team decided to examine justice system data on the prior involvement of homicide victims and suspects in the system. Following the analysis of data from official records, the IVRP then collected data from additional sources including systematic reviews of homicide incidents.

In the section that follows we present data from 1998 that were collected as part of IVRP's initial problem analysis stage. These data included all homicides from 1997 through the first week of August 1998. These findings were used to develop a strategic plan for intervening in the attempt to reduce homicides and serious shootings. In much of the subsequent presentation, we present the 1997 homicide review data in an attempt to portray the problem analysis that informed the IVRP at the time.[10] Homicides continued to be monitored through mid-2001, however. The data from all homicides occurring during the January 1997 through June 2001 period are included in Appendix A. The

[10] Occasionally we present data from the full study period where small n's from 1997 data alone make interpretation problematic. In these cases the data from the full period are consistent with the data reviewed from 1997 incidents.

general patterns of homicides during the analysis period (1/1/97-8/7/98) are very similar to those of the entire period (1/1/97-6/30/01). Differences that arose over time are presented in the subsequent chapter.

Initial Findings – Official Data Sources

Basic Descriptive Information

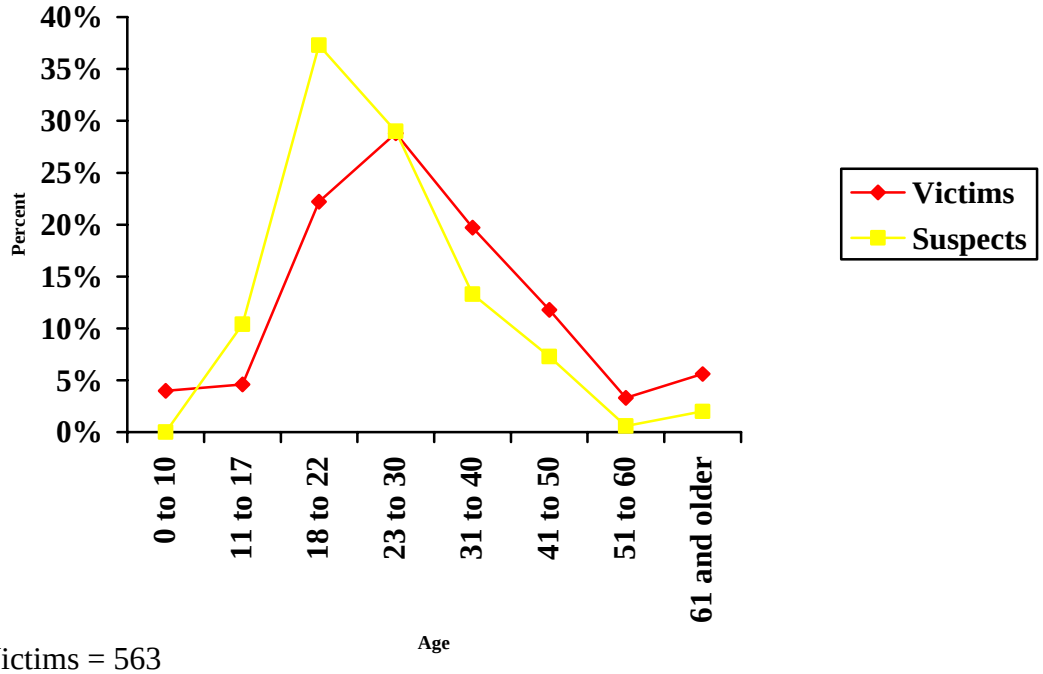
Table 3-1 provides basic information about the victims and suspects involved in 158 homicides occurring in 1997. Over 80 percent of the victims and 87 percent of the suspects were males. African-Americans were disproportionately victimized (65% of victims) and suspects were much more likely to be African-American (73%). Homicide disproportionately affected young people with the average age of victims being 31 and for suspects 26. The median age was even younger (28 and 22 for victims and suspects, respectively) because the small number of older individuals does not affect it. Figure 3-4, taken from the full study sample, demonstrates that victimization was most likely for individuals aged 18 to 40 and suspects were most likely to be between 18 and 30 years of age.

Table 3-1
Demographic Profile of Homicide Victims and Suspects,
Marion County Homicides, 1997

	Victims			Suspects*	
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Gender:					
Male	130	82.3%		124	87.3
Female	28	17.7%		18	12.7
Race:					
African-American	102	64.6		104	73.2
White	50	31.6		37	26.1
Other	6	3.8		1	0.7
Age:	Mean=31.1	Median=28.0		Mean=26.1	Median=22.0
0 to 10	6	3.8		0	
11 to 17	7	4.4		16	11.3
18 to 22	35	22.2		56	39.7
23 to 30	44	27.8		36	25.5
31 to 40	35	22.2		18	12.8
41 to 50	17	10.8		12	8.5
51 to 60	1	0.6		1	0.7
61 to 93	13	8.2		2	1.4

* A total of 208 suspects were identified. For 54, there were no identifiers that would allow for a search of criminal history. An additional 12 were suspects in two or more cases. Thus, for analyses of suspects, there were 142 valid cases for most variables.

Figure 3-4
Age Distribution of Homicide: Victims & Suspects



Victims = 563
Suspects = 685

Figure 3-5 demonstrates that homicides were most common in IPD's east, west, and north districts followed by homicides in Marion County Sheriff Department (MCSD) jurisdiction. Examination of crime maps indicated that within these districts a relatively small number of police beats accounted for a disproportionate number of homicides (insert map 3-6).

The geographic concentration was also evident by examining data on aggravated assaults with guns and armed robberies according to the police beat where the offenses occurred. Out of 52 police beats, the top 5 accounted for 24 percent of all gun assaults and armed robberies. The top 10 beats accounted for 40 percent of these offenses and the top half of the beats accounted for nearly 80 percent of all these crimes. In contrast, the

five beats with the fewest gun assaults and armed robberies accounted for only 1 percent of the city's total.

Figure 3-5
Homicides by Jurisdiction, 1997

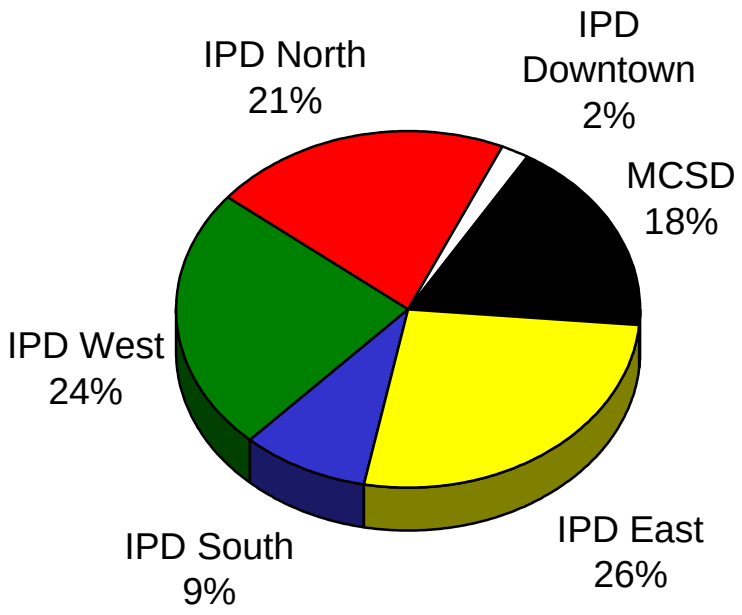


Figure 3-7 indicates that firearms were by far the weapon of choice (79%). There were no dramatic patterns in terms of the day of week, though homicides occurred least frequently on Sundays (see Figure 3-8). Figure 3-9 illustrates that there was seasonal fluctuation but the patterns are not easily interpreted. The warm weather months of May and June were high but so were the cold months of December and January.

Figure 3-6

Homicides in Indianapolis, Pre-Intervention (1/1/97-4/4/01)

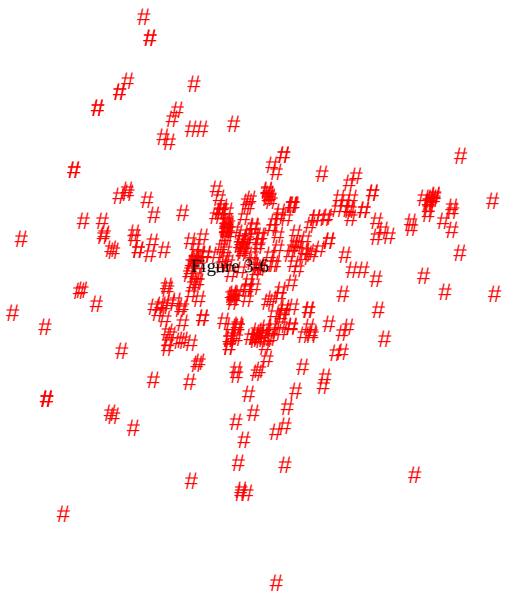


Figure 3-7
Homicides by Weapon, 1997

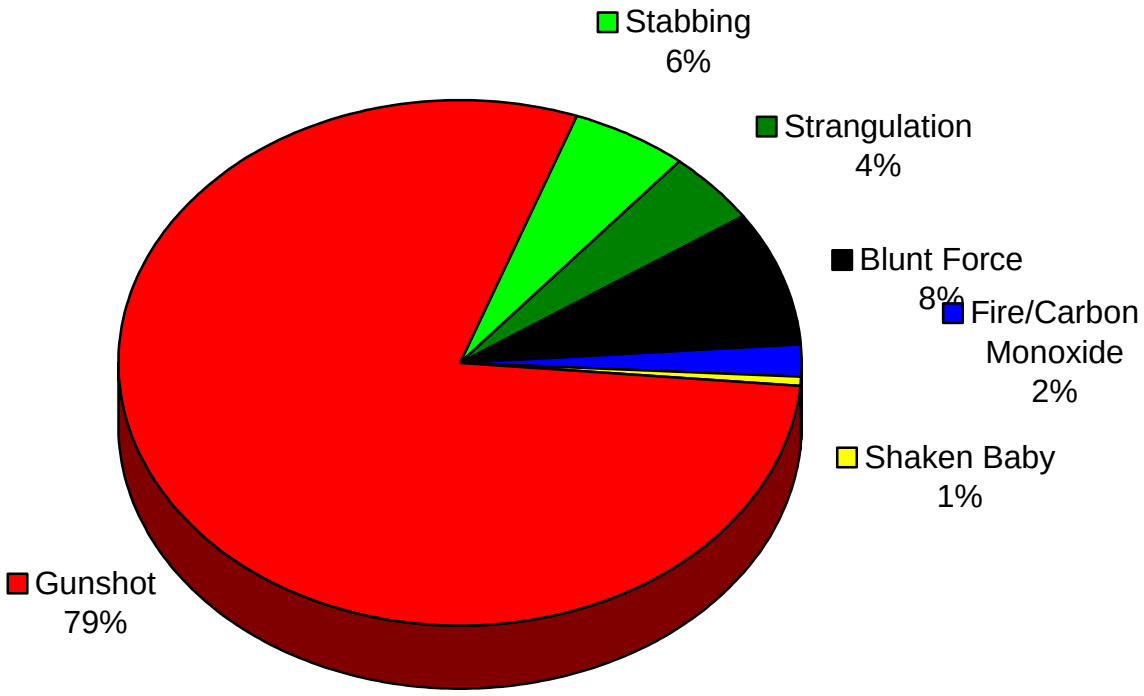


Figure 3-8
Homicides by Day of Week

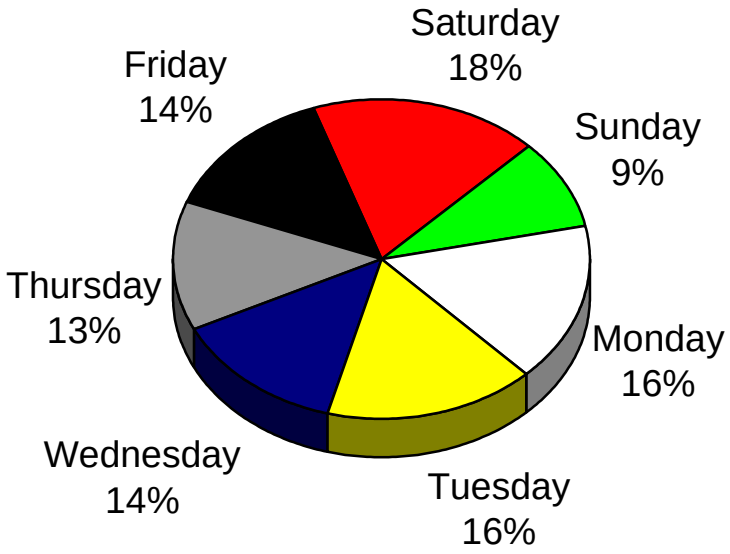
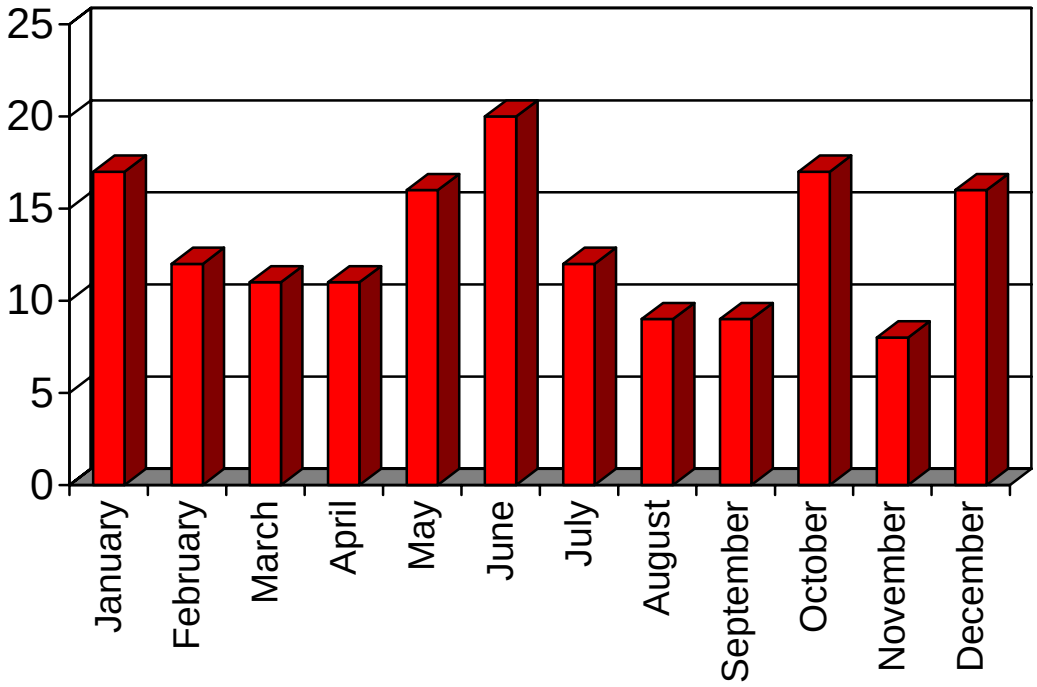


Figure 3-9
Homicides by Month, 1997



Criminal Histories of Homicide Victims and Suspects

Victims

Table 3-2 presents information on prior arrests and convictions. These include only arrests occurring within Marion County. Fifty-six percent of homicide victims had an adult arrest record. For over forty percent the record included three or more arrests. The average number of arrests was 4.6. Just over 20 percent had a juvenile arrest record, though this is an under-estimate.[11] Just under two-thirds (63%) had either an adult or juvenile record. Forty-five percent had a conviction as an adult with one-third having a felony conviction. Just under forty percent of victims had an arrest for a violent crime, 27

[11] The computerized record system for analyzing juvenile histories does not include records for older individuals. The most likely individuals to have a computerized juvenile record were under the age of 24 or 25. For an indication of the extensiveness of juvenile records, 67% of the victims ages 22 and younger and 54% of the suspects ages 22 and younger had a juvenile record.

percent for a drug crime and one-quarter for a weapons offense (see Table 3-3). Only 9 victims had an open case pending and only 10 were on probation at the time of the homicide.

Suspects

Very similar patterns emerge for suspects (see Table 3-2). Just under 60 percent had an adult arrest and nearly 40 percent had 3 or more arrests. The average is 3.7 arrests. A higher proportion than was true for victims had a juvenile arrest (37%), though the difference may be an artifact of suspects being younger and hence more likely to be on the computerized juvenile record system. Three-quarters of suspects had either a juvenile or adult record. Forty-five percent have been convicted as adults, most for felonies. Thirty-nine percent had arrests for violent crimes, 30 percent for drug offenses, and one-quarter for weapons offenses (see Table 3-3). Fifteen (11%) had open cases and only four were on probation at the time of homicide.

Table 3-2
Prior Arrests of Victims and Suspects,
Marion County Homicides, 1997

	Victims			Suspects	
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Prior Adult Arrest	(mean=4.6)			(mean=3.7)	
0	70	44.3		57	40.4
1	16	10.1		15	10.6
2	2	1.3		13	9.2
3 to 5	22	13.9		24	17.0
6 to 10	24	15.3		18	12.8
11 to 19	18	11.5		11	7.8
20 to 63	6	3.6		3	2.1
Juvenile Arrests					
0	124	78.5		89	62.7
1	8	5.1		6	4.2
2	6	3.8		7	4.9
3 to 5	8	5.1		15	10.5
6 to 11	12	7.6		25	17.5
Either Juvenile or Adult Arrest					
0	58	36.7		36	25.5
1 or more	100	63.3		105	74.5
Prior Adult Convictions	(mean=2.0)			(mean=1.5)	
0	87	55.1		78	54.9
1	13	8.2		20	14.1
2	13	8.2		12	8.5
3 to 5	20	12.6		19	13.4
6 to 16	25	15.8		13	9.2
Highest Conviction					
None	87	55.1		80	56.7
Misdemeanor	18	11.4		5	3.5
Felony D	25	15.8		25	17.7
Felony C	16	10.1		13	9.2
Felony B	10	6.3		11	7.8
Felony A	2	1.3		7	5.0

Table 3-3
Type of Prior Adult Arrests of Victims and Suspects,
Marion County Homicides, 1997

	Victims			Suspects	
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Violent Crime Arrests					
0	1997	61.4		87	61.3
1	18	11.4		22	15.5
2	20	12.7		10	7.0
3 to 11	23	14.5		23	16.2
Violent Crime Convictions					
0	120	75.9		108	76.1
1	23	14.6		21	14.8
2 to 6	15	9.5		13	9.2
Violent Crime Open Cases					
0	155	98.1		128	90.1
1 to 2	3	1.9		14	9.9
Drug Crime Arrests					
0	114	72.6		100	70.4
1	25	15.9		22	15.5
2 to 6	18	11.5		20	14.1
Drug Crime Convictions					
0	133	84.2		121	85.2
1	19	12.0		16	11.3
2 to 5	6	3.8		5	3.5
Drug Crime Open Cases					
0	157	99.4		132	93.0
1 to 2	1	0.6		10	7.0
Prior Weapons Offense Charges					
0	119	75.3		107	75.4
1 or more	39	24.7		35	24.6

Detailed Juvenile History

Thirty-one of the victims and 53 of the suspects were located in the computerized juvenile record system. As noted elsewhere, this is an under-estimate of the juvenile records of victims and suspects but it does provide the opportunity to examine juvenile court histories for individuals involved in homicides. Table 3-4 shows that victims and suspects were approximately 14 at the time of their first arrest, averaged 5 arrests as a juvenile, and two and one-half felony charges. Nearly 80 percent were charged with at least one felony as a juvenile. Table 3-4 also shows that there are very few differences between the juvenile records of victims and suspects. Suspects had somewhat more extensive juvenile records. Given the similarity between victims and suspects with juvenile records, the subsequent tables present the data for the entire group of victims and suspects with juvenile records.

Table 3-4
Homicide Victim and Suspect Juvenile Arrest History

	Total		Victims		Suspects	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Age at first arrest:	(mean=13.9)		(mean=14.0)		(mean=13.9)	
8 to 12	17	20.2	5	16.1	12	22.6
13 to 15	48	57.1	20	64.5	28	52.8
16 to 17	19	22.6	6	19.4	13	24.5
Number of arrests:	(mean=5.2)		(mean=4.5)		(mean=5.7)	
1	11	13.1	5	16.1	6	11.3
2	13	15.5	6	19.4	7	13.2
3 to 5	23	27.4	8	25.8	15	28.3
6 to 10	31	36.9	11	35.5	20	37.7
11 to 17	6	7.1	1	3.2	5	9.4
Number of felony charges:	(mean=2.6)		(mean=2.2)		(mean=2.8)	
0	20	23.8	9	29.0	11	20.8
1	17	20.2	5	16.1	12	22.6
2	10	11.9	3	9.7	7	13.2
3 to 10	37	44.0	14	45.2	23	43.4
Number of misdemeanor charges:	(mean=3.6)		(mean=3.1)		(mean=3.9)	
0	11	13.1	4	12.9	7	13.2
1	10	11.9	6	19.4	4	7.5
2	18	21.4	6	19.4	12	22.6
3 to 18	45	53.6	15	48.4	30	56.6
Number of status charges:	(mean=1.3)		(mean=1.0)		(mean=1.5)	
0	34	40.5	16	51.6	18	34.0
1	21	25.0	9	29.0	12	22.6
2 to 11	29	34.5	6	19.4	23	43.4
Highest charge:						
Status	3	3.6	2	6.5	1	1.9
Misdemeanor	15	17.9	6	19.4	9	17.0
Felony D	20	23.8	5	16.1	15	28.3
Felony C	18	21.4	9	29.0	9	17.0
Felony B	16	19.0	6	19.4	10	18.9
Felony A	12	14.3	3	9.7	9	17.0

Table 3-5 indicates that 75 percent had juvenile arrests for violent crimes with battery and resisting law enforcement the most common charges. Two-quarters had arrests for property offenses with theft/conversion (48%) the most common followed by auto theft (34%). Thirty-six percent had arrests for drug charges and 44 percent for disorder offenses (see Table 3-6).

Table 3-5
Homicide Victim and Suspect Juvenile Violent Crime Charges

	Total	
	#	%
Violent Crime Charges:	(mean=2.4)	
0	21	25.0
1	22	26.2
2	11	13.1
3 to14	30	35.7
Specific charges of:		
Murder	2	2.4
Robbery	6	7.1
Battery	39	46.4
Sexual Battery/Rape	1	1.2
Molest/Deviate Sexual	4	4.8
Criminal Recklessness	10	11.9
Criminal Confinement	2	2.4
Intimidation	9	10.7
Resist/Flee Law Enforcement	41	48.8
Handgun Charges	15	17.9

Table 3-6
Homicide Victim and Suspect Juvenile Property, Drug and Other Crime Charges

	Total	
	#	%
Total Property Charges:	(mean=1.5)	
0	29	34.5
1	21	25.0
2	17	20.2
3 to 9	17	20.2
Specific charges of:		
Residential Entry	3	3.6
Burglary	15	17.9
Theft/Conversion	40	47.6
Receiving Stolen Property	2	2.4
Auto Theft	29	34.5
Total Drug Charges:	(mean=.62)	
0	54	64.3
1	16	19.0
2 to 4	14	16.7
Specific charges of:		
Possession Cocaine	16	19.0
Possession Other	17	20.2
Sale Cocaine	7	8.3
Sale Other	4	4.8
Disorder Offense Charges:	(mean=.87)	
0	47	56.0
1	17	20.2
2 to 15	20	23.8
Driving Charges:		
0	76	90.5
1	8	9.5
Other Charges:		
0	34	40.5
1	21	25.0
2 to 7	29	34.5

Victims and suspects with a juvenile record averaged nearly 3 true findings, the equivalent of a conviction, with over 40 percent having had a true finding for a felony (see Table 3-7). Over half had been on probation as a juvenile and they averaged nearly eight placements on either a diversion, treatment, probation, community corrections, or Department of Correction (DOC), program. Over half the individuals had violated probation.[12] Over 85 percent had been detained as a juvenile and 30 percent had been placed in a DOC facility.

[12] This is based on violations of probation only. It does not include failures of diversion, home detention, and other programs.

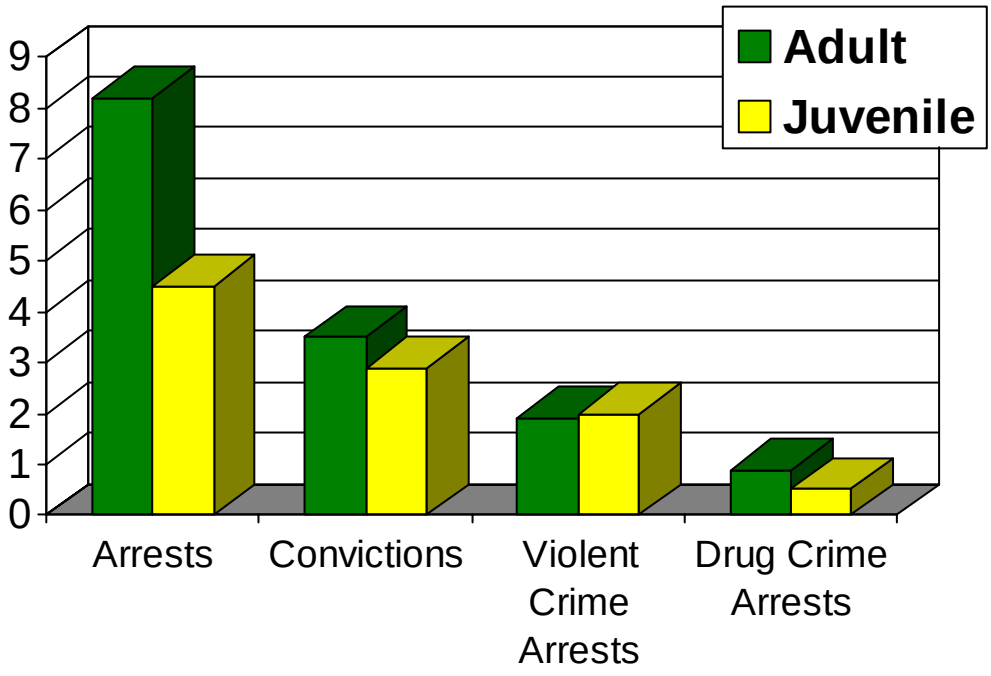
Table 3-7
Homicide Victim and Suspect True Findings
in Juvenile Court and Probation Experience

	Total	
	#	%
True Findings:	(mean=2.9)	
0	15	17.9
1	21	25.0
2	4	4.8
3 to 11	44	52.4
Highest True Finding:		
None	15	17.8
Status	3	3.6
Misdemeanor	29	34.5
Felony D	17	20.2
Felony C	10	11.9
Felony B	8	9.5
Felony A	2	2.4
Times on Probation:	(mean=.78)	
0	38	45.2
1	32	38.1
2 to 4	14	16.7
Times on Diversion, Probation, Community Corrections, and DOC:	(mean=7.8)	
0	7	8.3
1 to 3	16	19.0
4 to 10	34	40.5
11 to 23	27	32.1
Probation Violations*:	(mean=1.5)	
0	40	47.6
1	17	20.2
2	12	14.3
3 to 10	15	17.8
Times Detained:	(mean=3.8)	
0	11	13.1
1	17	20.2
2 to 15	56	66.7
Committed to DOC:	(mean=.42)	
0	59	70.2
1 to 2	25	29.8

Summary of Prior Adult and Juvenile Arrest Histories

When we examined the arrest and conviction histories of those who had a prior adult or juvenile history, excluding victims and suspects with no prior involvement, the extensiveness of the records became even more pronounced. Figure 3-10 presents data on victims with a prior record. As the Figure demonstrates, victims averaged over 8 adult arrests and 4.5 juvenile arrests. They had been convicted over three times as an adult and nearly three times as a juvenile. They averaged approximately two adult and two juvenile arrests for violent crimes.

Figure 3-10
Average Number of Arrests and Convictions Among Victims with Prior Record



The picture is quite similar for suspects. As Figure 3-11 indicates, suspects averaged over six adult arrests and over five and one-half juvenile arrests. They had over

two adult convictions and nearly three juvenile true findings. They had nearly two adult arrests for violent crime and approximately two and one-half juvenile arrests for violent charges.

Figure 3-11
Average Number of Arrests and Convictions among Suspects with a Prior Record

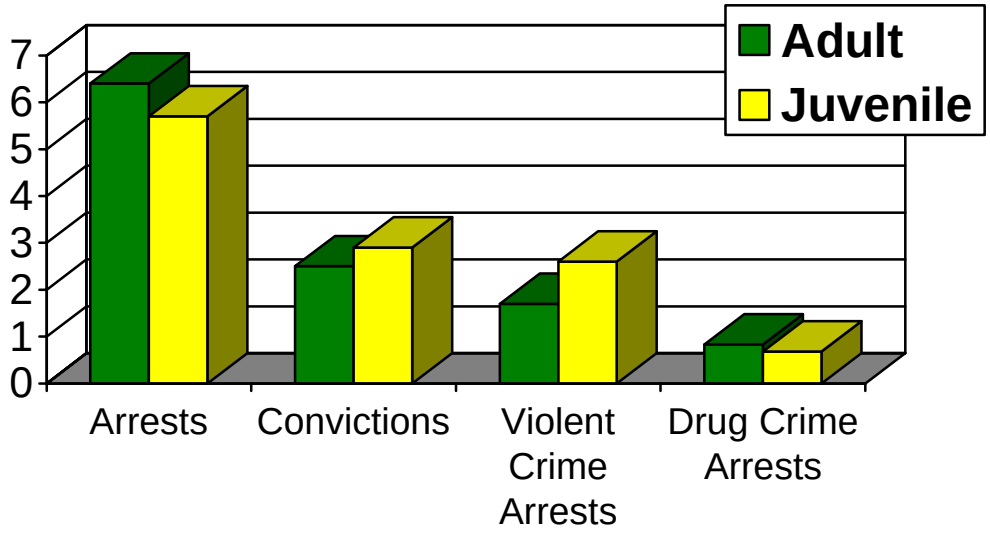
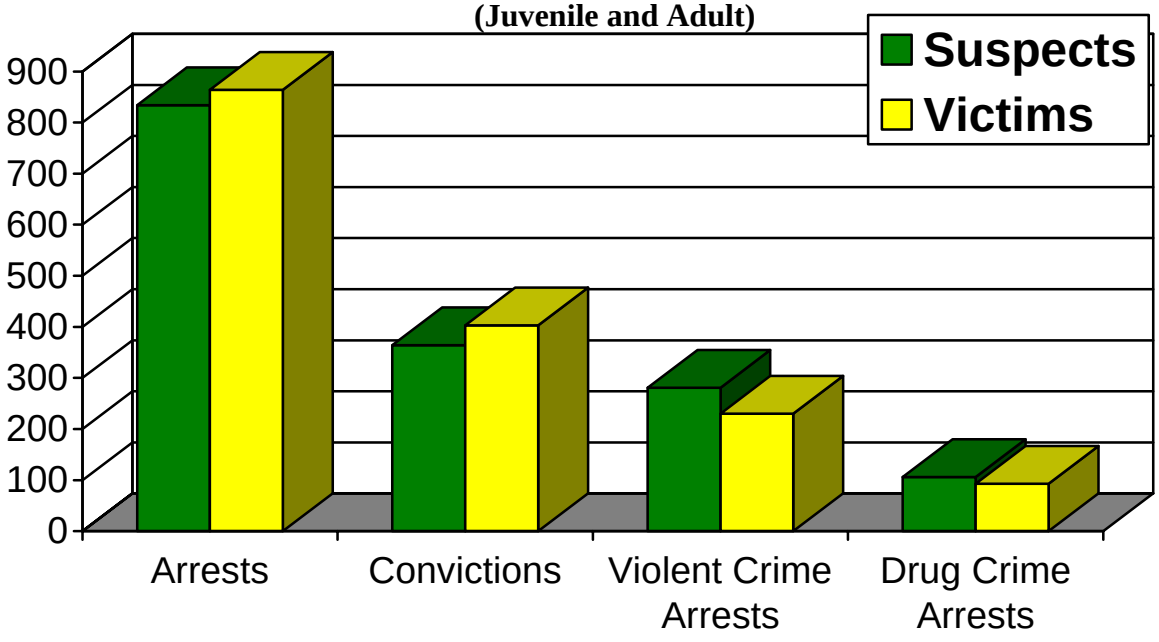


Figure 3-12 demonstrates the full extent of this prior involvement. The 206 victims and suspects with an adult arrest history generated over 1,600 total arrests, approximately 500 arrests for violent crimes, and nearly 800 convictions.

Figure 3-12
Total Number of Arrests and Convictions
(Juvenile and Adult)



Digging Deeper – Homicide Incident Reviews

Although the extensive criminal histories, particularly among victims, caught some IVRP officials by surprise, most of the findings from the analysis of official records only confirmed prior understanding of the homicide problem. "Of course homicides involve young men using firearms in high crime neighborhoods." To go beyond the picture of homicides gleaned in official data, the IVRP working group decided to follow a process used by David Kennedy and colleagues in Boston and Minneapolis (Kennedy and Braga, 1998). Specifically, the IVRP would bring line level officers and investigators from all the participating agencies together to conduct a case-by-case incident review of homicides. The idea was to assess whether additional patterns could be uncovered through the knowledge of law enforcement, prosecution, probation, and parole officials familiar with the cases, the neighborhoods, and the participants in violence.

Consequently, IVRP brought together officials with street-level intelligence on homicides and violence to participate in a review of every homicide incident occurring in 1997. Participants included detectives and officers from the Indianapolis Police Department and Marion County Sheriff's Department, prosecutors, probation officers, corrections officials, and federal law enforcement (approximately 75 representatives from 10 agencies participated). The intent was to move beyond the picture of homicides available in official records and tap into the extensive knowledge that exists among the law enforcement professionals working these cases.

The purpose of the review was to find out what was behind each homicide incident.[13] Specifically, we sought to:

- identify the proportion of homicides involving chronic serious offenders and those involving domestic violence
- identify the networks of chronic offenders involved in homicides
- assess the number of homicides related to illegal drug use and distribution

The initial review took place in March 1998 and covered all Marion County homicides occurring in 1997. The research team subsequently conducted a review of the adult and juvenile criminal histories of all suspects and victims. A second homicide review occurred in August 1998 and covered all the homicides from January 1, 1998 through the first week of August.

[13] Although the objective of the incident review was primarily analytical, the review also proved valuable to homicide investigators. Indeed, several of the investigators left during the course of the review to follow-up on leads from information shared during the review.

The research team prepared materials for the homicide incident review. A PowerPoint presentation was developed whereby a summary of each incident was displayed with basic information such as date and location of incident, names and demographic information about victims and suspects, and a brief summary of the incident. Where available, pictures of victims and suspects were displayed. This information was also provided to participants several weeks prior to the review with the request that they look through the incidents and compare to their notes and case files.

During the actual review, a homicide investigator would present the cases that they had investigated. They would go through the case with the summary information displayed to the audience. At the same time, the research team posed to the group the following set of questions for each incident (and the researchers captured the data generated):

- Do you know what happened in this case?
- Was the victim part of a group of known, chronic offenders?
- Was the suspect part of a group of known, chronic offenders?
- Was the incident drug-related?
- What do you think was behind the incident?

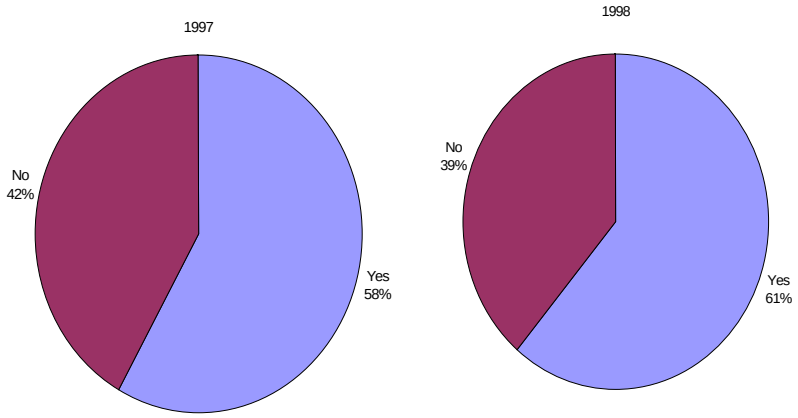
During the two initial incident review sessions, approximately 100 cases were reviewed in exhausting nine-hour days. Since that time, as will be discussed subsequently, the review of homicides occurred on an ongoing basis as part of the working group process (every two weeks or monthly).

The homicide review generated a rich description of the backgrounds of victims and suspects, the locations of incidents, and the context and motives of specific

homicides. The key findings that emerged from the reviews related to group or gang involvement and the connection to illegal drug use and sale.

We adopted the terminology "groups of known, chronic offenders" to reflect the lack of a consensual definition of gang and the reality that much gang activity in Indianapolis is of a relatively loose structure. That is, many of the groups of known chronic offenders law enforcement encounters are not part of a nationally or regionally organized, well-structured gang but rather may reflect local cliques or crews of offenders who are well-known to law enforcement (see McGarrell and Chermak, 2003). In addition to these crews, were several more organized gangs with leadership structure and ties to gangs outside Indianapolis. With this definition in mind, the incident review revealed that 58 percent of the homicides in 1997 and 61 percent of those in 1998 involved suspects or victims who were described as being part of a group of known chronic offenders (see Figure 3-13). This is a broader definition than formal crime classifications because it includes incidents that may not have been gang related (e.g., retaliation or initiation) but where the participants were known to be part of these groups.

Figure 3-13
Homicides in which the Victims or Suspects are part of a Group of Known Chronic Offenders



One example from the incident review appeared to illustrate the value of the approach. During the presentation of an incident occurring on the north side, there was initial silence when the question of the suspects' involvement in a group of known, chronic offenders was posed. Finally, an officer assigned to the neighborhood spoke up, "your suspects are part of the Dog Pound." The officer then pulled out his notebook with a list of names, ages, and addresses of members of the north side gang. He also described a series of drug robberies involving the Dog Pound and area drug sellers that were thought to be behind the homicide.

The interesting point from the example was that neither the homicide investigators nor the gang unit were aware of the gang-involvement in the homicide or the Dog Pound gang. At the end of the initial incident review meeting, an FBI gang analyst from Quantico who had been brought in to observe the review stood up and said, "there should be no doubt that Indianapolis has a gang problem."

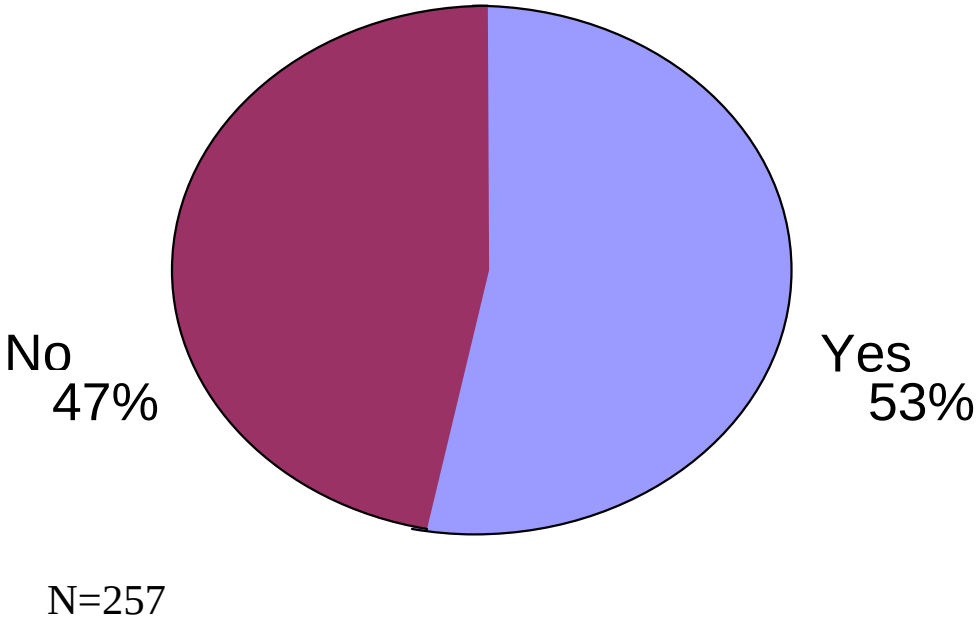
The incident review thus moved the group well beyond the problem analysis provided through official records and helped to explain the discrepancy between the incident review finding that approximately 60 percent of homicides involved groups of known, chronic offenders and the official records indication that less than 3 percent of Indianapolis's homicides were gang-motivated.[14]

The additional key finding from the incident review was the close connection between drug sales, drug use and homicides. Indeed, over half the homicides had some

[14] The low estimate in official records reflects both the narrower definition used in official records (gang-motivated versus gang-involved) but also the lack of a reliable gang database within the police department's information system. During the course of the IVRP process, gang unit supervisors consistently bemoaned the inconsistency of officer's completing gang contact sheets.

type of drug connection (see Figure 3-14). These included incidents involving known users and dealers as well as incidents tied to drug sales, retaliations, and drug turf battles. Again this is likely to be a conservative estimate because some of the homicides with unknown motives are likely to include drug involvement.[15]

Figure 3-14
Homicide Incident Drug-Related



The next largest category of homicides involved household violence situations. These comprised approximately 25 percent of the homicides. The household violence incidents were comprised of just over one-half domestic violence incidents[16], 12 percent child abuse, 9 percent sibling, and an other category involving friends, extended family,

[15] The research team attempted to take a conservative approach to coding an incident as group or drug involved. If a review participant indicated that the victim or suspect was group- or drug-involved it was only coded so if there was confirmatory evidence (e.g., confirmed gang member; drug seizure at the scene) or if at least two review participants independently provided information indicating such involvement.

and similar situations. The IVRP group decided that the initial focus should be on the group and drug related homicides.[17]

Summary of Problem Analysis

To summarize, the analysis of official records indicated that homicides in Indianapolis tended to involve:

- young men
- using firearms
- geographic concentration within three police districts
- victims and suspects with extensive prior involvement in the criminal justice system

Although seemingly helpful to provide a common picture of the homicide problem, the official records did not take the group very far in terms of information for developing strategic interventions. The incident reviews, however, did. Specifically, the incident reviews created consensus among the IVRP that strategies would need to be focused on the group and drugs component of the violence problem. Indeed, at an Indianapolis Management Accountability Program meeting (IMAP)[18] soon after the first incident review, the Chief of Police stood up and stated that after participating in the incident review there should no longer be any debate about whether the city's homicide problem was tied to gangs and drugs. Thus, in addition to the components identified above, the

[16] Our coding of domestic violence included a man and women romantically involved including triangle situations.

[17] The research team did become involved in an effort to provide ongoing problem analysis for a newly formed multi-agency domestic violence unit. The strategic problem-solving element of the domestic violence initiative was an outgrowth of IVRP though it involved a separate set of criminal justice officials with overlap to the IVRP provided by the IVRP coordinator and research partner.

problem analysis revealed the need to focus on:

- gangs and groups of known, chronic offenders
- drug sales and drug markets

This analytic process was crucial for several reasons. First, it eliminated abstract debates over the nature of the violence problem. Second, the group could begin to formulate strategies based on common assessment of the problem. Third, the systematic collection of data proved crucial in community discussions about strategies for reducing homicide.

Response: Strategy Development

Having identified the key factors involved in the largest category of homicides the IVRP working group engaged in a retreat to develop a series of strategies focused on the elements identified through the problem analysis. The retreat was more inclusive than the working group as key officials within all the participating agencies were asked to participate in the strategy retreat. The result of the retreat was a strategic plan that guided much of the IVRP's subsequent activity. The full plan is presented in Appendix B. The following discussion presents the key elements of the plan.

[18] The IMAP program was an adaptation of New York Police Department's COMPSTAT program. It has been discontinued in Indianapolis.

Elements of the Strategic Plan (developed May 1998)

- Increased arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of the most serious and chronic violent offenders
- Disruption of illegal firearms markets
- Multiple-level and multiple-agency strategic response to homicides
- Communication of anti-violence message to potential offenders and to community at large
- Development of community-based prevention components

Key Principles

- Incapacitation of serious and chronic violent offenders
- Reduction in illegal firearms possession and carrying
- Specific deterrence of potential violent offenders
- Reaffirming and communicating a set of norms and values that violence is unacceptable
- Development, coordination, and communication of legitimate opportunities for potential offenders

Key approaches to achieving these goals included a lever pulling strategy, a chronic offender unit, increased accountability for high-risk probationers and parolees, development of a multi-agency firearms unit, increased collaboration between federal-state-local law enforcement, and community collaboration.

Lever Pulling

Recognizing that the homicides involved groups of known, chronic offenders, one element of the strategy was to attempt to deter the individuals most likely to engage in violence by what became known in Boston as the lever pulling strategy (Kennedy, 1998; Kennedy and Braga 1998). Essentially this is a focused deterrence approach whereby those most involved in the problem behavior are identified, warned of potential sanctions,

and informed that the criminal justice system was focused on this particular crime problem (homicide and gun violence). Thus, potential offenders would be warned by the multi-agency team that violence was no longer going to be tolerated, they would describe the various sanctions or levers that would be applied to those continuing to engage in violence, and when a homicide or shooting occurred involving the above elements the law enforcement team would respond to the group or drug market and apply as many sanctions as possible. In other words, the groups would learn that violating the rule against firearms violence would mean an aggressive law enforcement response.

Two characteristics of those involved in homicides supported this strategy in two ways. First, the fact that such a high proportion of victims and suspects had criminal records means that there is likely to be some criminal justice jurisdiction over at least a portion of the potential offenders (e.g., probation and parole). Thus, high-risk probationers and parolees could be ordered into a meeting to hear the lever-pulling message. Second, the group structure means that the potential offenders are part of a network whereby the message delivered to some group members is likely to be spread throughout the network.

An additional component to the lever pulling strategy involved developing relationships with different community groups in order to provide positive alternatives to gangs, drugs, and violence. That is, if law enforcement was going to emphasize the costs for continuing involvement in violence, then it was clear that opportunities for moving in a prosocial direction also had to be part of the strategy.

The result of this strategy was the implementation of lever pulling meetings in fall of 1998. Approximately twice per month (later reduced to approximately every 6 weeks),

groups of probationers and parolees, selected because of current or prior involvement in firearms crime and/or drug offenses, from high violence areas of the city, were ordered into a lever-pulling meeting. The group would hear a message emphasizing the following themes:

- The level of violence is unacceptable
- All local, state, and federal agencies are working together like never before to reduce the violence
- Given the probationers and parolees previous behavior they are at high risk for either being the victim or the perpetrator of violence
- Neither the community representatives nor the criminal justice officials want to see the probationers or parolees be either the victim of the homicide or to be incarcerated as a convicted felon.
- Convicted felons in possession of a firearm are subject to severe sanctions, particularly in the federal system with no right to bail, the likelihood of being incarcerated far outside the state, and the expectation of serving at least 85 percent of the federal sentence.
- That alternatives and legitimate opportunities exist with community members and service providers included in the meeting to describe support services (e.g., job training, job placement, educational and vocational programs, drug treatment, ex-offender mentoring, faith-based support, etc.).

The lever pulling meetings typically involved 20-30 probationers and parolees. The U.S Attorney or the Assistant U.S. Attorney (project coordinator) would usually convene the meeting. Presentations would typically be made by a community representative, police official, assistant U.S. attorney, county prosecutor, probation and/or parole officer, and service provider. The meetings often included handouts presenting information about recent homicide victims or individuals prosecuted as well as resource information about services and support. Meetings typically lasted 45 minutes to one hour. The meetings were modified in various ways over the course of the project (discussed subsequently).

The lever pulling meetings were thus an attempt to address several elements of the homicide problem: young men involved in groups of chronic offenders, with extensive records, previously involved in gun violence, drugs, and/or gangs, from high crime neighborhoods. The theoretical framework behind the approach was based on combining a focused deterrence approach with linkage to opportunities. The IVRP group was willing to rely on the Boston and Minneapolis experiences (Kennedy and Braga, 1998) to give this approach a try.

The second element of the lever pulling approach was based on a multi-agency response following a homicide incident. Specifically, for homicides that appeared to involve street violence involving groups of known, chronic offenders, drug markets, and high crime locations, the strategy called for a significant law enforcement response. Essentially this would involve applying levers or sanctions in the way promised in the lever pulling meetings. As shown in Appendix B, the strategic plan called for applying as

many levers as possible following one of these incidents. This could mean directed police patrol, probation and parole home visits, nuisance abatement enforcement, crackdowns on drug markets, service of outstanding warrants, and similar activities.

As will be discussed subsequently, this became one of the most challenging aspects of the lever pulling strategy. Resource constraints, lack of coordination, confusion over authority to order a multi-agency response, all conspired to result in only a small portion of gang and drug homicide incidents actually experiencing the envisioned multi-agency response (beyond normal investigation).

Firearms Unit

Given that three-quarters of homicides in Indianapolis involved firearms, the IVRP working group supported the police department's initiative in February 1998 to reactivate its firearms unit. The unit involved two IPD sergeants, a Marion County Prosecutor, and representatives of the Indiana State Police, ATF, and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

One of the principal goals of the unit was to increase the successful prosecution of illegal firearms possession and firearms crimes. To achieve this goal the unit monitored the processing of firearms related cases once an arrest was made. The unit screened all cases involving firearms and worked with the local and federal prosecutors to determine whether the case should be handled locally or in federal court. The unit also monitored cases that were not filed to determine whether there are any systematic problems that, if addressed, could result in a higher filing and conviction rate.

An additional strategy of the unit was to examine the extent to which illegal felons were able to retain or receive a firearms permit. During the first few years of the IVRP project the firearms unit reported that it was identifying approximately 25 cases per month whereby an individual prohibited from possessing a firearm carried an Indiana gun permit.[19]

The firearms unit also provided training law enforcement agencies. The goal of the training was to assist law enforcement officers in building stronger cases for successful prosecution.

VIPER Program

The finding that much of the violence involved chronic offenders with extensive involvement in the criminal justice system led the police department to implement the Violent Impact Program Enhanced Response (VIPER) program. The VIPER program, largely developed by an IPD sergeant who was a central figure in the IVRP working group, was designed to focus police and prosecution attention on the most violent chronic offenders in the county. Specifically the program sought to:

- Identify the most violent adult and juvenile offenders
- Aggressively prosecute chronic violent offenders at state and federal levels
- Aggressively enforce laws prohibiting illegal use, possession, and purchase of firearms
- Strict parole and probation supervision of VIPER offenders

The VIPER program also sought to provide information to law enforcement officers about VIPER offenders to ensure officer safety and to provide this information to

[19] This was due to a variety of factors such as applying for the permit following an arrest but before a conviction and delays in revocation due to backlogs of court conviction data.

justice system officials to minimize instances where chronic violent offenders "slip through the cracks."

Early in 1998, the VIPER unit focused on developing criteria for placement on the VIPER list. As an initial criteria, the JUSTIS information system was searched for two or more arrests for the most violent crimes such as murder and attempted murder, robbery, rape, possession of a machine gun or bomb, sawed off shotgun and unlawful use of body armor. This generated a list of 270 individuals with the following arrest profile:

Table 3-8
VIPER Arrests and Violent Crime Charges

Violent Felony Arrests*	1,173
Weapons Charges	325
Murder Charges**	173

*excludes non-violent felonies and misdemeanors

** includes attempted murder and conspiracy to commit murder

Of these 270 individuals, approximately one-half were in prison during 1998, the initial year of the VIPER program. Of those in the community during 1998, two were victims of homicide and 31 were arrested. Following the incident review, the VIPER unit reviewed the list against the gang unit database and discovered that he VIPER list also included 51 confirmed gang members. Over one-half were Vice Lords, including several of the more organized gangs with ties extending beyond Indianapolis.

The VIPER program included a Marion County Prosecutor's Office policy instructing prosecutors to seek the most severe sanctions possible when dealing with VIPER offenders. The VIPER program thus sought to increase the certainty of punishment for the most chronic offenders within the county.

Probation and Parole Initiatives

Several probation initiatives were implemented during 1998 that also directly related to the IVRP strategic plan. These included probation-police home visits, the previously described lever pulling meetings, and increased drug testing of probationers and parolees. Although these were general strategies of the probation and parole department, both departments also began to focus on their clients that appeared at greatest risk for being involved in violence. Further, the goal was to apply these interventions as part of the overall lever pulling strategies to groups or neighborhoods when violence occurred.

Operation Probationer Accountability began in 1997 and was expanded significantly in 1998. The program involved police and probation teams making home visits to probationers. The intent was to send the message to probationers that they are likely to be visited and that they need to stay in compliance with the terms of their probation. As the table indicates, the number of attempted investigations increased from 261 in 1997 to 1,705 in 1998. This resulted in 209 completed investigations in 1997 and 1,303 in 1998. By the end of 1998 and into 1999, the targets for Operation Probationer Accountability were increasingly coordinated with the goals of IVRP so that probationers

could hear the zero tolerance of violence message from their probation officers and so that home visits came to be seen as partially the product of violence in the neighborhood.

Table 3-9
Operation Probationer Accountability

	1997 Total	Percent	1998 Total	Percent
Searches attempted	261	100.0	1705	100.0
Investigations completed	209		1303	
Residences with no answer	52		402	
Of completed investigations:				
In compliance	115	55.0	828	62.4
Outright arrests	8	3.8	21	1.6
Incorrect addresses	64	30.6	326	25.0
Contraband/ Other possible violations	22	10.5	128	9.8

The second major strategy implemented in 1998 was the lever pulling meetings. Probation and parole played crucial roles in identifying high-risk clients and ordering them to attend the meetings as a condition of their probation/parole. During 1999 two additional elements were added. The first was meetings with specific gangs. This introduced the notion of group-accountability similar to the strategy utilized in Boston (Kennedy, 1997) The second was coordinating lever pulling meetings with drug testing. This strategy was utilized when a group was identified as being connected to a violent incident(s). Probationers and parolees were tested prior to the meeting. At the end of the meeting, those having failed the drug test were placed under arrest for violation of conditions of probation or parole. The intent was to demonstrate that levers would be pulled for group involvement in violence. The movement from a geographic-based selection of high-risk offenders to selection that combined geography with gang- and drug involvement appeared to be evidence that the IVRP group continually attempted to move strategy toward problem analysis (group and drug component of violence).

Federal-State-Local Collaboration and Focusing of Resources

As noted earlier, a key ingredient of the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) model is that having multiple local, state, and federal agencies included in the working group will not only increase information sharing but also bring a new mix of resources toward interventions. This was evident in the joint firearms unit and in pairing of police and probation and parole officers in the home visits. It was also evident in a number of additional ongoing strategies.

One of the key strategies that developed related to the service of outstanding warrants. The working group discovered that there were over 20,000 outstanding felony warrants in the county. Local law enforcement was woefully under-resourced to serve even a small portion of the warrants. A warrant squad would take a small number of warrants and attempt to locate and arrest the fugitive but primarily outstanding warrants were served incident to a traffic stop or a new arrest.

Although making a significant dent in the outstanding warrant problem was well beyond the resources of the IVRP, the U.S. Marshals Service introduced a strategic component to the lever pulling philosophy. Specifically, the Marshals Service used its fugitive squad to track down and arrest fugitives identified through the incident review process as being part of a group of known offenders or drug distribution network that was involved in violence. Thus, when a group such as a Westside gang long known to be involved in drug sales was implicated in a series of homicides and shootings, the IVRP working group checked the gang's membership for outstanding warrants and the Marshals Service served these warrants, even warrants for low level offenses that would previously have been ignored. The Marshals Service agents would often inform the

surprised fugitive that the reason were serving this warrant is because of the continued violence caused by you and your crew. The police and sheriff's department began to take a similar approach, coordinated with the Marshal's Service, as a response to homicides within their jurisdictions. Additionally, the Marshals Service used its national network to track down chronic offenders such as members of the VIPER list.

A second key component of the IVRP strategy was based on long-term joint federal-local investigations. These types of investigations would have occurred despite the development of the IVRP. However, by having key members of the FBI's Violent Crime Task Force, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the police and sheriff's department's covert investigations units that were part of the joint federal-local task forces be part of the IVRP, the selection of targets for long-term investigations could be informed by evidence from the IVRP incident review process about groups involved in violence. Additionally, the arrests made in long-term investigations were used in lever pulling meetings with probationers and parolees as examples of the application of sanctions to groups that stayed involved in violence. This was perhaps most evident in the arrests on federal charges of the Brightwood gang (discussed subsequently).

Collaboration with the Community

From the outset the IVRP group recognized that effective community partnerships were needed if violence reduction was to occur. Further, there was a recognition that many collaborative relationships between neighborhood groups and criminal justice were already in place. The question became how to support these efforts and integrate into the IVRP without duplicating efforts and creating a new series of meetings for both neighborhood leaders and criminal justice officials.

One effort involved the IVRP working with the Front Porch Alliance[20] to bring Reverend Eugene Rivers to Indianapolis to describe the work of the Boston 10 Point Coalition. This was a very successful event in July 1998 in which approximately 800 neighborhood leaders and criminal justice officials attended a community forum to hear Reverend Rivers. Reverend Rivers then worked with a group of leaders from the faith community to create an Indianapolis 10 Point Coalition. Rivers returned the first week of January for an announcement of the formal designation of the Indianapolis 10 Point Coalition headed by Reverend Charles Harrison.

The 10 Point Coalition identified three primary goals: saving children from crime, increasing literacy, and economic development. One of the first steps, also undertaken by a group known as the Westside Concerned Clergy, involved street ministry on Friday and Saturday evenings in many of the neighborhoods that had suffered from high rates of violent crime. Ministers and other neighborhood volunteers began to walk through these neighborhoods and talk with youths as a vehicle of developing relationships with young men and an attempt to prevent street violence.

A second IVRP effort involved the collaboration with neighborhood leaders on the lever pulling meetings. Neighborhood representatives attended the lever pulling meetings and were part of the presentation. Typically this involved a community leader that would be the first speaker following the U.S. Attorney's introduction to the meeting. The community leader would usually express concern over the level of violence in the neighborhood and concern over the loss of young men to violence (through victimization

[20] The Front Porch Alliance was a coalition of neighborhood groups and churches provided technical support and resources intended to develop and strengthen community institutions (Goldsmith, 1997).

or incarceration). The community presenter would often then urge the attendees to avoid violence but also note that they supported law enforcement's efforts to reduce violence. A second community representative would typically close lever-pulling meeting with a similar message but also a description of services and sources of support for the probationers and parolees. As an example, one of the 10 Point Coalition leaders was known to had out his business card and tell the attendees that if it is a job they need he guaranteed he could find them a job. The speakers and other neighborhood leaders were then available to meet with probationers and parolees at the conclusion of the meeting.

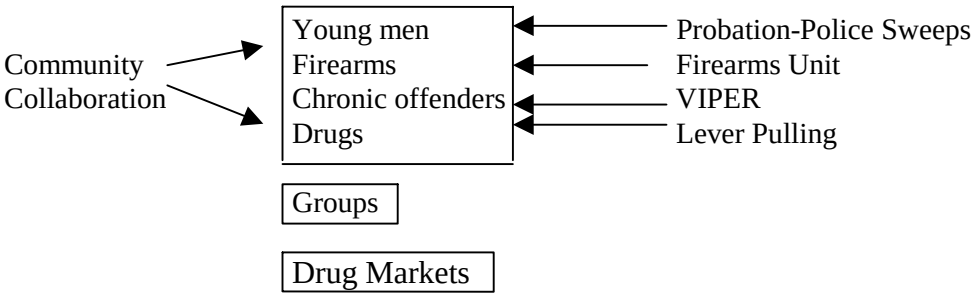
The IVRP also attempted to coordinate with the local weed and seed efforts. Weed and seed initiatives were in all the prime neighborhoods plagued with violent and drug-related crime. The U.S. Attorney and the IVRP coordinator routinely attended weed and seed committee meetings, made presentations about the IVRP, and provided updates on IVRP activities in the neighborhoods. Weed and seed leaders were also often involved in the lever pulling meetings.

Finally, IVRP research assistants worked with the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee's (GIPC) task force on violent crime. The researchers reviewed best practices in crime prevention and conducted an inventory of existing programs in Marion County. GIPC's focus was on long-term prevention. GIPC's recommendations were included in the United Way's community-based initiatives on reducing youth crime as well as provided to other youth service groups throughout the county.

Refined Strategic Responses

As the end of the first year, there was a sense among the IVRP working group that significant progress had been made. There was also a sense that there was significant progress still to be made. As the figure below indicates, during 1998 the initiatives were primarily targeted at the four ingredients of young men, firearms, chronic offenders, and drugs. Although it was unclear if there was consensus, certain members of the IVRP group were concerned, whether the initiative was addressing the group nature of the violence and whether drug markets associated with violence were being addressed.

Figure 3-16
Link Between Problem Analysis and Strategies at end of 1998



Thus, in early 1999 several changes were made to help address the group and drug elements of the problem. First, the working group process was altered to a two-stage process of routine meetings. On Mondays, a homicide review and response meeting occurred. The goals were to solicit more street-level knowledge about homicide and to develop the initial outline of a homicide response as appropriate.

Homicide Review Meeting
Utilize Street-Level Knowledge to Determine:

Does the Homicide Involve?
Gang Local Crew Drug Market

If yes, how do we make the group pay a tax for their violence?

The model behind the approach was based on the assumption that by bringing street level officers together with the gang, narcotics, VIPER and SOAR units, the working group hoped to better target groups and markets. The working group meeting then occurred on Tuesdays (bi-weekly). The intent was to present a summary of recent homicides and serious shootings, the initial response plan would presented, and the working group would then attempt to add to the plan through the involvement of other units/agencies.

The information would then lead to one of three types of homicide responses:

1) Homicide Canvass
   Primary purposes
      Generate information
      Reassure neighborhood
   Secondary purpose
      Disrupt criminal activity

2) Group-Based Response
   Primary purpose
      Apply levers to those who have broken rules
   Secondary purposes
      Generate information
      Reassure neighborhood

3) Drug Market-Based Response
   Primary purpose
      Pull levers on market players who have broken rules
   Secondary purposes
      Generate information
      Reassure neighborhood

In reality, the incident review and response meetings proved to be one of the most difficult aspects of the IVRP process. The decentralized nature of the police department raised continual questions of who would coordinate across the five police districts and the specialized units. Attendance was irregular. On a number of occasions, the right combination of street level officers, investigators, and drug and gang unit investigators were in the room and an incredible exchange of information took place that not only aided in the investigation but also identified individuals, groups, places, and drug markets that were generating violence and that warranted strategic response. When this occurred, the IVRP working group then proved to be an effective vehicle for pulling together a multi-agency and multi-dimensional (e.g., lever pulling meeting, warrant service, directed police patrol, probationer/parole home visits) response. Most commonly, however, the meetings were poorly attended, other than the same IVRP working group members that participated in the Tuesday working group meetings. The research team, supported by interviews with working group members, came to the conclusion that the incident review meetings held great promise but were only successful during those periods when leadership and commitment made it clear to all the various units that this was a high priority.

Second, as mentioned earlier, lever pulling meetings were increasingly targeted at groups known to be involved in violence. Following a homicide or series of homicides

that appeared to involve a group and/or drug component, the working group would develop lists of associates to the suspect(s) and victim(s) (or the group involved in the drug market) and use these lists to identify probationers and parolees invited to lever pulling meetings.

Ongoing Assessment and Evaluation

The final component of the SARA problem-solving model is ongoing assessment, evaluation, feedback and revision. A variety of research strategies were implemented by the research partner team. These activities are described in the next two chapters. The crucial point to keep in mind, however, is that the research team played a different role than is the case in a traditional evaluation. Rather than remain removed from the process and issuing an evaluation of the project after a specified period, the research team was actively involved in the IVRP problem solving process and continually providing feedback to the working group.

Chapter 4

The Multi-Agency Problem Solving Model: Process Evaluation

Introduction

The problem-solving framework was difficult to evaluate for several reasons. First, we were faced with the same obstacles naturally part of any study attempting to evaluate criminal justice in action. A core principle of problem solving is that the nature of the intervention is determined by an extensive analysis of the problem. Such projects are constantly evolving in unpredictable ways. This evolution accurately reflects criminal-justice decision-making, but it also presents thorny research problems. Second, previous research has documented many different variables contributing to the success and failure of an intervention. Political and community support, leadership, resource allocation, mechanisms of accountability, and discretionary coping strategies are a few of the variables that may impede or enhance the implementation of an intervention. Since theory development in criminal justice administration is still in its infancy, it is difficult for researchers to avoid a "kitchen-sink" approach that includes as many influences as possible. Third, the problems discussed above were exaggerated because of the scope of the Indianapolis problem-solving effort. There were over fifteen agencies that participated in the working group since its inception in late 1997, and many other agencies made additional contributions depending on the problem and strategic action. Moreover, problem solving included political organizations, federal, state, and local criminal justice bureaucracies, social service agencies, and community organizations. The impressive level of participation was one of the clear successes of this project, but the scope of the effort and the length of time it has been in place present many evaluation

challenges. Describing what we learned, however, is very important because of the large number of cities attempting to replicate this type of problem-solving framework.[21]

We present the evaluation results in two chapters. In this chapter, we provide a process evaluation of the problem-solving framework, focusing on how closely the intervention corresponded to what was desired. We consider how the Boston problem-solving template influenced the Indianapolis effort, but also highlight how the working group deviated from and extended the model. The efforts of the working group to work through the various problem-solving steps are examined by an identification of the key successes and critical decision points of the process. This discussion also includes major hurdles that slowed the process and considers limitations in the delivered intervention.

The next chapter describes two additional elements of the evaluation. First, Chapter 5 focuses on overall outcome indicators. Since the primary objective of the working group was reducing current levels of violence in Indianapolis, it is important to examine violent crime patterns over time. In particular, we examine homicide, gun assault, and armed robbery trends. Although it is difficult to substantiate the claim that the problem-solving efforts of the working group *caused* the downward trend in violent crime, we present these data trends as illustrative of the coexistence of working group activities and violent crime pattern changes. We consider other potential explanations and describe the trends in relation to the strategies being implemented as a result of the working group's efforts.

Second, the next chapter describes several large data collection efforts we initiated

[21] The strategic problem solving approach is one of the key elements included in the U.S. Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhood initiative (www.psn.gov).

in order to strengthen the evaluation of the Indianapolis problem-solving framework. Even with the evolving nature of the problem-solving process, we were able to undertake several long-term and fairly rigorous research projects that provided important information that helps us better document the impact of some of its key component elements. We describe three research projects: first, we discuss a multiple-wave survey effort of recently arrested offenders to gauge whether the general offending population perceived any changes in how the criminal justice system does business in their community; second, we provide an assessment of the lever-pulling program using official and survey data collected from participants and a matched control group; and third, we describe our analysis of the VIPER initiative using official data sources.

We provide the methodological details for each element of our evaluation strategy when it is discussed. In addition, we describe how the evaluation results were communicated back to the members of the working group with written summaries and presentations, discuss their reactions, and then identify how the working-group process changed after the data was presented.

Process Evaluation

Process evaluations are most informative when multiple research methodologies are used. In addition, although we agreed to a general research design at the beginning of the project to assess process, we thought that it was necessary to be flexible and adapt the design in a way that best captured an understanding of the forces that impeded or facilitated the intervention. Planned evaluation strategies often have to be changed,

altered, or abandoned in the middle of a problem-solving effort. Our general approach included four strategies.

First, our primary assessment tool was participant observation. We took detailed field notes at all meetings of the working group (two meetings a month), the action group (two meetings a month), the policymaker group (two meetings a year), and the various subcommittees (the number of subcommittee meetings varied by issue and over time). We also analyzed all documents circulated at these meetings or produced in an effort to achieve the goals of the working group. Examples of these documents include meeting agendas, reports and documents provided by the agencies involved in the project, working papers such as the strategic plan, data presented to the group, and email correspondence. We also attended any additional events organized by the working group. Examples include the lever-pulling meetings, task force meetings focused on other problems, and probation sweeps. At most of these meetings and events, we had multiple individuals (principle and co-principal investigator of the study, Hudson research assistants, and Indiana University graduate students), providing opportunities to take notes, share insights, and identify issues relevant to understanding process. The members of the research team would also follow-up with informal questions outside of meetings.

Second, we conducted numerous interviews and surveys to explore specific issues and concerns. We did three waves of interviews (in roughly six month intervals) with working group members to discuss the successes and failures of the project, identify issues that needed to be discussed, and explore how the working group was influencing the day-to-day activities of individual participants. We also did exit interviews with participants who changed jobs. We surveyed the working group to assess whether the

objectives stated in the strategic plan were being accomplished. Data were also collected from individuals not participating in the working group. We surveyed criminal justice personnel after both homicide reviews and interviewed community leaders after they attended lever-pulling meetings.

The third research strategy is more of a general category of supplementary data collections used to assess process. The Hudson Institute/Indiana University research team was frequently asked to collect data relevant to a question or concern of the group. Some of these questions were ongoing data collection efforts, such as providing homicide and other crime updates, calls for service data, and presentation of data relevant to the identification of geographic or suspect priorities. The research team frequently had to formulate a data collection strategy to answer a question and feed the information back to the working group. These data served many different purposes, but our concern for the evaluation of the process was in assessing the types of questions and concerns the group identified as priorities and analyzing how it used data when making strategic decisions.

The fourth strategy, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, is the combination of different research strategies used to conduct three large data collection efforts. These data collection efforts are valuable for assessing both process and impact effects.

Process Evaluation Results

We structure the presentation of the process evaluation results into two general areas. First, we evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative effort. In particular we examine the balance of participation of agencies involved in the working

group, the types and amount of information shared by these agencies, and the allocation of resources to accomplish the goals of the problem-solving effort. Second, we focus on the evolution of the problem-solving framework, discussing how closely the group followed problem-solving steps, what types of data were used to inform decision-making, and identify key decision points in the process. In this section, we are particularly interested in discussing whether the interventions were logically connected to the group's understanding of the violence problem generated from analysis.

Collaboration

Scholars have described the criminal justice system as a loosely linked "mishmash" of fragmented bureaucracies (Hagan, 1989). This fragmentation is often thought to contribute to inefficiency because of the duplication of effort, the hording of information, and the protective hurdles constructed to protect an organization's turf. Although it can be argued such fragmentation sustains a healthy system of checks and balances (see Wright, 1980), it can also result in organizations working to accomplish very different and often competing goals. Such conflict is frequently the bane of reform efforts. However, criminal justice organizations have grown increasingly appreciative of opportunities to share resources and information to more effectively respond to crime, collaborating on specific cases or creating task forces to pursue a broader mandate.

The Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership was a significantly expanded version of such collaborative efforts. This collaborative partnership differed by the number and scope of agencies committed to participating in the process. One of the first activities accomplished by the working group was the identification of existing task

forces. Most of these task forces included only federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. IVRP not only involved all of these key law enforcement agencies, but prosecution, probation, corrections, and the Mayor's office. The agencies participating also made a long-term commitment to the IVRP, and there was an expectation that the working group would tap into the resources of various other social services and community organizations when needed. Another way that this working group was different was in the scope of its effort to change the way the criminal justice system conducted business in Indianapolis. The success of the working group was dependent on the commitment of the individuals collaborating together, but also in their ability to use the information in a way that would influence the goals and priorities of their organization.

Multiple Agency Involvement

A clear success of the IVRP was the representativeness of agency involvement in the effort as well as the long-term commitment to achieving success. There was an almost across-the-board 'buy-in' by the policymakers and the working group. The leaders of the agencies involved consistently devoted resources and personnel. The policymakers approved the participation of their agency participant in the working group and consistently contributed staff when a strategic action required additional personnel. This commitment is astounding when recognizing the length of time it takes to work through the analysis stages of problem solving before committing to a target. Their long-term commitment, and not pressuring the group to react quickly, is contrary to the belief that policymakers are only concerned with symbolically successful and quick fix

solutions. The policymakers trusted their representatives and did not exert any obvious pressure to pursue interventions hastily. Working group members were also incredibly committed to the process. The people involved in the working group were talented, professional, and sincere. The participants embraced the opportunity to think differently about what they were doing, enhancing the results by working towards a common goal. The interviews and observational data clearly indicated that members of the working group were dedicated to the process, and despite leadership turnover and changes in personnel attending the working group, the amount of energy and effort was consistently high.

There are several other indicators of the success of the collaboration. The working group has been meeting without interruption since January 1998. Almost every single organization that was present at the initial meetings of the IVRP remained committed to the working group and continued to attend. This commitment is particularly impressive considering the turnover that occurred at many of the agencies as well as within the working group. For example, there were changes in political office (from a Republican to a Democratic Mayor and from a Democratic to Republican President), in federal law enforcement (leadership changed hands in the US Attorney's Office, FBI, US Marshals, ATF, and DEA), and local law enforcement (police chief and chief probation officer turnover). Moreover, the representatives of the agencies attending working group meetings changed considerably over time. Some agencies, for example, had three of four different representation changes. For example, the probation department was a critical partner involved in many of the strategic-action items, identifying probationers for lever-pulling meetings and coordinating sweep activities.

The participation and commitment of probation did not change even though the chief's position changed hands and three different probation officers were assigned to represent probation at working group meetings. Another change was in the person responsible for coordinating the strategic activities of the working group. This position was first housed in the United States Attorney Office and more recently it became the responsibility of a representative of the Marion County Justice Agency.

The scope and diversity of agencies involved in the working group resulted in the formation of many specific partnerships that improved the effectiveness of how the system responds to specific types of crime or processes cases. The activities and partnerships of the police department's gun unit illustrate the value of such partnerships and how the working group was used to sustain and further the goals of these collaborative arrangements. The Indianapolis Police Department's Firearms Unit was re-institutionalized in February 1998. This unit directly partnered with the local prosecutor's office and the U.S. Attorney's Office and individuals from all these agencies work closely together to search for incidents that could be charged for gun violations. These partners attended the working group meetings and discussed specific cases, highlighting problems with the probable cause affidavits filed by officers. They also frequently suggested additional levers that might be pulled when responding to a group of chronic offenders. This police-prosecutor gun partnership was also able to use their newly formed links to probation and parole to obtain additional information to enhance gun charges from misdemeanors to felonies. Gun databases were exchanged, increasing the quality of information for all participating agencies. Moreover, when several offenders could not be charged with gun enhancements because of missing information or

poorly written reports, members of the gun unit created a training tape that highlighted key elements necessary to pursue gun charges. This tape was distributed to all agencies in Marion County. The Firearm's Unit was constantly trying to improve how the State Police responded to their requests to suspend or revoke gun permits. The Unit presented the difficulties they were having in preventing felons from possessing gun permits to the working group and various agencies suggested solutions. The problem was never really resolved to the satisfaction of the working group, but it was prioritized as a problem and the Unit tried many different approaches to fixing it. There were technological and bureaucratic hurdles that limited the effectiveness of the proposed solutions, but the efforts were ongoing and several working group representatives continued to exert pressure to fix the problem.

Other evidence of the group's collaborative success can be found in its ability to rely on other agencies that were not active members of the working group in order to accomplish specific objectives. For example, the working group decided that neighborhood involvement was a critical component of the lever-pulling sessions. Many of these sessions included only offenders from specific neighborhoods so the working group identified several support organizations in each neighborhood to attend. Other examples of involving outside agencies for support include working with nuisance abatement on problem housing and problem landlords, having immigration discuss the types of data collected about illegal immigrants, and asking "Crimestoppers" to attend several meetings to discuss how they might help accomplish the goals of the working group. The result was a special Crimestoppers insert in the local newspaper profiling offenders with outstanding warrants that were believed at high risk of being involved in

violence. When the working group decided to spread the message about "Stopping the Violence" to the community using television and radio ads and billboards, the working group was able to partner with an advertising agency to construct the artwork and advertisements, get assistance in disseminating the message, and obtain financing for the project.

Information Sharing

Interviews with working group members consistently indicated that one of the most significant accomplishments of the working group was the improvement in communication between agencies. The working group helped to build an environment of trust and cooperation between people working in different agencies. One interviewee, when asked about the major accomplishments of the working group, said: "Shedding traditional turf concerns. We are now involved in many very successful partnerships—true collaborations with federal, state, and local agencies." Another interviewee discussed how the information sharing that occurred at working group meetings strengthened the quality of other partnerships they participated in. The information disseminated at working group meetings was filtered to these other partnerships and the efforts or strategic actions that occurred as a result of that information were also supported by the IVRP.

The trust ensured that working members felt free to speak candidly about issues without fear of reprisal. It also helped to eliminate any inhibitions working group members had about sharing information to the group that was critical to the scanning and analysis stages of the problem-solving effort. The working group discussed specific

cases, highlighting facts and identifying potential avenues for further investigation. Data about every new homicide was circulated to the group through email and individuals would respond with any information they had about prior offenses, probation or parole status, and whether they were a known member of a specific gang. Additional information would be gathered during the Monday action meetings and an overview of the homicides would be presented at working group meetings. The working group also spent time discussing what groups were active, the associates of victims and/or suspects of recent homicides, and "hot spots" of criminal activity. These discussions would often require individuals to elicit additional information from other people in their organization. Another type of information that was often shared at meetings was updates from participating agencies. Representatives discussed programs and projects, opportunities for collaboration, and other crime-fighting efforts that their agency was pursuing. When issues were raised about a case or a policy decision or a specific problem was identified, the agency representative would investigate and provide an explanation at a later meeting.

The bi-weekly working group meetings provided a good opportunity to share information, but an additional benefit of this effort was the creation of informal communication networks between agencies. When the working group first started meeting in early 1998, it was interesting to see the limited understanding that individuals had about the activities and responsibilities of other agencies involved in the group. People discussed how the working group provided an opportunity to develop knowledge about the system, what other agencies were doing, and contacts for questions and problems. An interviewee described how being involved in the working group improved

communication “because our people got to know their people and we felt we could call on them for assistance or their special knowledge.” It was also interesting that working group meetings usually lasted about two hours, but many of the participants stayed longer to discuss issues or share information informally.

The sharing of information also helped promote an environment of cooperation between agencies working collaboratively on specific initiatives. A good example of such efforts is probation sweep activities. These sweeps were a key surveillance mechanism used by the working group that typically involved probation and parole officers, Indianapolis police and sheriff’s department officers, and individuals from the United States Marshals Service. Probation and parole would identify a group of offenders usually living in a specific targeted area or known members of a certain group. Mixed-teams would make the unannounced visits and, about forty percent of the time, would discover a probationer in violation of the conditions of his or her probation. Occasionally, they would make arrests usually when drugs and/or guns were found in the home. An ancillary benefit of these collaborative sweeps was increased sharing of information between the agencies generally. For example, probation officers learned from police officers which probationers were considered problems in the neighborhood and how often the police made runs to a probationer’s house. This information helped the probation officer establish priorities to decide when and how frequently they would make home visits.

Resource Sharing

Another benefit of the collaborative effort was that it was an effective way to overcome some of the bureaucratic dilemmas of public service organizations. These organizations are almost always strapped for personnel and resources, forcing them to establish priorities and attend to the most pressing problems. It is often the case, however, that the problems defined as most pressing may not accurately represent the most significant needs. The working group collaboration helped agencies better manage these bureaucratic dilemmas in two ways. First, the extensive problem analysis resulted in agencies making better choices in establishing priorities. Responding to violence became a top priority for all of the agencies involved in the working group and the focus on a specific pool of suspects or geographic areas resulted in more efficient responses through the merging of resources and personnel. A good framework to think about the benefits of sharing resources is "loosely- and tightly-coupled" systems (see Hagan, 1989). The criminal justice system is probably best understood as a "loosely-coupled system," although there are many examples of the divergent components of criminal justice working closely together on issues or specific cases in times of crisis. The efforts of the working group resulted in a more consistent tight coupling of the criminal justice system. Agencies were more likely to share similar priorities and goals and thus could work together to respond. The participation of a large number of agencies resulted in the pooling together of the limited resources of many agencies and the product of the collaboration was sufficient means to respond more strategically to violence.

A good illustration of the merging of resources is the reliance on lever-pulling plans to respond to particular incidents or specific groups. The most successful of the

lever-pulling plans occurred in February and March of 1999. Three contiguous police beats were chosen for a response because of a high number of homicides and gun assaults that had occurred in the area and data indicating that several were gang-related. The lever-pulling plan assigned individuals or agencies to gather intelligence, pull levers, or analyze the effects of the intervention. The Indianapolis Police Department, Marion County Prosecutor's Office, Parole, the FBI, and the research team contributed intelligence. For example, the police department interviewed district officers about gang activity, checked drug hotline complaints in the area, identified VIPERs living in the beats, and helped develop profiles of the suspects and their associates involved in the homicides in the area. The prosecutor's office utilized its grand jury powers to collect additional intelligence about the homicides, the FBI created a profile of the key gang involved, and parole provided a list of visitors to the suspects and associates when they were incarcerated. The research team pulled narcotics warrants, calls for service data, and assisted in the development of the offender profiles. The police department, probation, parole, U.S. Marshal's, and nuisance abatement were involved in the strategic response. The tactics used by these agencies included directed patrol, drug market area buy and busts, probation and parole sweeps and home visits, serving warrants in the target area, and involving specialized units such as canine. The intelligence and data about the effectiveness of the response was funneled to the police department's District Criminologist who prepared a summary of the activities and analyzed crime data in the beats. This information was then fedback to the working group and the individuals and agencies involved in the effort.

Limitations of the Collaborative Effort

Although there are many impressive aspects of the collaborative effort, a few limitations are mentioned here. First, one concern that interviewees noted related to the balance of participation of agencies. The burden of following through on the strategic action plans was not evenly distributed and several of the participating agencies refused or did not have the resources to make sustained contributions to the efforts of the working group. The lack of participation by some agencies appeared to get worse over time. There are a couple of explanations for the unbalanced participation. First, the problem identified as the priority biased the strategic involvement towards involvement of primarily local law enforcement agencies. The resources expended and intelligence gathering activities fell disproportionately on these local agencies. It should be noted, however, that prioritizing violence as a local problem provides only part of the explanation because one of the strongest and most successful partners that enhanced the success of many strategic action items was the United States Marshals. The Marshals Service served an exceptional number of warrants to support the goals of the working group and was constantly enhancing the strategic action items by suggesting additional responses or providing crucial intelligence. A good example of their contribution occurred when a high profile federal trial occurred, temporarily increasing the number of agents assigned to Indianapolis. The agent that was active in the working group suggested that the group identify hot-spot locations and suspects with outstanding warrants to take advantage of the additional manpower.

Another explanation for the lack of balance in participation is the resource limitations of some of the agencies. Several agencies were strapped for resources and

could not contribute significantly to the effort. For example, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms was actively involved in the working group during the first year of the project, making important contributions to understanding gun markets in Indianapolis. The lead agent had to stop attending when he was assigned to investigate a statewide spree of church fires. The lack of federal agency resources has been a chronic problem in Indianapolis. One interviewee, for example, discussed the importance of expanding the federal role to the success of the working group, describing the "diverse tools" and "longer tentacles" of these agencies. The interviewee described how the number of federal agents assigned to Indianapolis was small even though local politicians consistently make requests to the federal government to address personnel levels. This interviewee identified this as a major weakness of the effort: "The FBI, DEA, Marshals, and ATF are spread entirely too thin. We don't get the resources that we believe our jurisdiction deserves compared to other jurisdictions. We have been told by the federal agencies that we need more people. We have conveyed that message to Washington and it was never addressed." (1999 interview)

The second weakness is the absence of participation of several key agencies. One of the most consistent concerns voiced by working group members was that there was not enough involvement of agencies dealing specifically with juveniles. Working group members attempted to bring relevant information about juvenile offenders to the analysis and on occasion would involve juvenile probation or police units focusing specifically on juveniles in a homicide response, but efforts to get these agencies to be regular working group participants failed. It is difficult to pinpoint why these agencies were not regular participants. Part of the explanation was that the early analysis of the problem and the

strategic plan focused the group on older offenders fairly along in their criminal careers. Another part of the explanation was that policymakers from agencies focusing primarily on juveniles did not think that the goals of the working group were consistent with preferred responses to juveniles in Indianapolis. These policymakers thought that many of the services that IVRP offered to attendees of lever-pulling meetings were already being provided to juveniles as a condition of their probation. There was also concern regarding whether juvenile probation could follow through on the threats made at the meetings. The working group attempted to work around this lack of policymaker support and was able to arrange several lever-pulling meetings with juveniles despite some resistance. However, the working group members noted that a more concentrated focus on juveniles was necessary to the long-term success of the working group.

A third weakness concerns the ability of the working group to follow-through on all elements of its strategic action. It was very difficult to maintain the energy and expend the resources necessary to consistently follow through on the group's strategic plan. Most of the people that participated as working group members were incredibly overworked and often the implementation of aspects of the strategic plan simply provided additional obligations. The strategic action was probably most effective when a specific unit of the police department (the SOAR unit) was assigned to enhance the implementation. The leader of this unit would attend working group meetings, facilitated Monday action meetings, and coordinated the homicide responses. During the spring and summer of 1999 the involvement of this unit significantly enhanced the resources available to accomplish strategic action items. Unfortunately, this unit was in high demand and often had to participate in some other activity not tied to the working group's specific goals.

Over time, it became less involved, further adding to the workload of other agencies and individuals and depleting the effectiveness of some action strategies.

The final weakness is the difficulties the group had in staying true to the original intent of the strategic plan and the underlying premises of the theory guiding the plan because of personnel turnover. The theory seemed to get watered down over time because of the difficulties in constantly updating the new people involved in the working group. Many of the original members involved understood how this collaboration was different compared to other task forces, but this appreciation dwindled with personnel change. There is a learning curve involved in understanding the basic ideas underlying the approach and it was difficult to constantly communicate these ideas to new members. Key documents were shared and members of the working group discussed the effort informally with these new members, but it was a challenge to provide a thorough understanding. A more general concern, because of the scope of this effort, was the difficulties keeping track of what everybody was doing and the specific programs that were put in place. The working group was often working on many different initiatives at the same time and it was challenging to understand the effects of these efforts, and some strategic initiatives disappeared when specific personnel transitions occurred.

The Problem-Solving Process

The working group made a commitment early on to undertake a systematic, problem-solving approach. Many of the working group members had some prior experience deploying the SARA model, but they also acknowledged that what they wanted to do here was different. The group was committed to a full analysis of the

problem and relied on the results to decide responses. The group was also committed to collecting data and refining the strategy based on evaluation results. The following discussion describes how the problem-solving process evolved over time. We also examine how data informed the process and highlight three early decisions about the structure of the response that influenced the nature of the intervention. Throughout this section we highlight the major obstacles faced.

Evolution of Problem-Solving Process

Table 4.1 provides a list of key activities completed by the working group. The table identifies when specific activities were accomplished, but we acknowledge that these points were significantly influenced by the formal and informal collaborations that were occurring in and out of working group meetings. We believe that there were many additional activities not listed, contributing to the overall success of the working group, but here we focus on the activities critical to understanding the progression through the problem-solving process.

In general, the working group progressed logically through the steps of problem solving. Although it is very difficult to pinpoint the beginning and end of specific steps because the process was always ongoing, the activities highlighted in Table 4.1 demonstrate that the working group adhered closely to the problem-solving framework. The working group analyzed the violent crime problem for six months prior to initiating any strategic actions, compiling extant data sources, identifying limitations with these data, and initiating data collection efforts to overcome these weaknesses. The key analysis accomplishment was the organization of a nine-hour homicide review session.

Over sixty different criminal justice practitioners met to review all 1997 homicides in order to develop a much more thorough understanding of violence in Indianapolis. The findings from this review were compiled into a summary report and distributed to all working group members, significantly influencing the strategic plan developed in May 1998. This plan was presented to the policymaker group for approval and various strategic actions were initiated immediately after this meeting. The first wave of surveys occurred at about the same time and the results from these interviews were filtered back to the working group, highlighting perceptions of the successes and failures of the process.

The working group continued compiling data about violence, conducting a second comprehensive homicide review in August 1998. These data essentially confirmed what had been learned during the first review, providing additional support for the plan of action. The first strategic response that flowed from the working group's analysis of data was the coordination of a multi-agency response to new homicides. Since the results of the reviews showed that a high percentage of the homicides occurring involved groups of known chronic offenders and drug markets, the working group only initiated these multi-agency efforts when the homicide appeared to fit the priority pattern. The police and sheriff's department would increase patrols, probation and parole would make home visits, and the Marshal's Service would serve warrants. The police increased their visibility in these neighborhoods by parking one of their crime prevention vans in the neighborhood, and various members of the working group would contact community leaders to explain why the response was occurring.

With the exception of the first half of 1999, these neighborhood-based homicides responses were only modestly effective. The principal problem was that they were sporadically implemented. Although the strategic plan called for a multi-agency response to group- and drug-related homicides and shootings, in reality such responses occurred in only a fraction of the relevant homicides.[22]

The reasons for this uneven implementation are several. For much of the time there was confusion within the police department in terms of who would initiate a homicide response. During the period that the Major within the above-mentioned SOAR unit was given this responsibility, the strategy largely followed the strategic plan. This was difficult to sustain over time when the SOAR unit was re-assigned from the IVRP. The responsibility for initiating a homicide response was decentralized to district commanders with varying levels of familiarity, available resources, and commitment to the strategy. Some commanders would routinely initiate, others would rarely initiate a response.

Additionally, it was difficult to coordinate these responses because most lasted only a short period of time. When another homicide occurred, the resources committed to the response moved to another neighborhood. Second, these responses were initiated almost immediately after a homicide. A quick response was critical to success, but it also resulted in the initiation of a response to homicides that did not always fit the priority pattern. Third, since the responses coincided closely with the homicide, the agencies involved had to be careful to not jeopardize the incident investigation.

[22] We note that the exception was during the first six to eight months of 1999 when there was a sense of crisis and seemingly the highest level of commitment and focus on responding to gang/group- and drug-related homicides.

A positive aspect of these responses, however, was that it provided a demonstration of the potential of collaborative efforts, and the agencies involved used them as an opportunity to spread the word that violence was not going to be tolerated and the rules of the game had changed. The working group also learned from the weaknesses of these responses, changing the nature of them to focus more generally on neighborhoods or groups when there was evidence of *multiple incidents*. The group became more strategic in when and where it would initiate a response by adopting lever-pulling plans, pinpointing locations and police beats, and assigning individuals and agencies to specific and ongoing action items. It also expanded its focus to develop and implement general suspect-based responses. The key strategic suspect-based action item was the lever-pulling meetings.

Probation and parole were responsible for identifying violent, drug, and gun offenders in particular neighborhoods, inviting them to attend one of these meetings. The first lever-pulling meeting was in October 1998 and, for the next two years, the group averaged about one meeting a month. Most of the lever-pulling meetings invited probationers/parolees from specific neighborhoods, but some did focus on gang members or a homicide suspect's associates, and a few involved juveniles. There were three different types of lever-pulling meeting. The most common was a general meeting. At these meetings, offenders were told that violence was not going to be tolerated and that several levers would be pulled if it continued. The presentations at these meetings included the discussion of choices, encouraging attendees to take advance of the community services available to them. The second type of meeting was almost entirely focused on the positive message. These meetings were usually a follow-up with a group

of offenders that attended previously and stayed out of trouble. The third type of meeting was the most confrontational because attendees were drug-tested and the message focused on their continued involvement in violence. In 2000 and 2001, the lever-pulling meetings were expanded to include domestic violence offenders and offenders recently released from prison. These meetings were also important as they provided an opportunity for the working group to develop partnerships with key community organizations.

Table 4.1

DATE	KEY POINTS OF THE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS
December 1997	Initial Meeting of Policymakers
January 1998	Initial Meeting of Working Group (WG); Discuss Boston Model
March 1998	Homicide Review I
May 1998	Draft of Strategic Action Plan; WG Reports to Policymakers
May 1998	First Communication Subcommittee Meeting
June 1998	Start Homicide Responses; WG adopts IVRP as name.
June 1998	First Wave of Working Group Interviews; Feedback to Group.
July 1998	IVRP Community Summit
August 1998	Homicide Review II
September 1998	5-City SACSI Meeting in Boston
October 1998	First Lever-Pulling Meeting
November 1998	First Lever-Pulling Follow-Up Meeting
December 1998	SOAR Unit Assigned to Assist IVRP
January 1999	First Lever-Pulling Meeting for Gangs
February 1999	Second Wave of Working Group Interviews; Feedback to Group
February 1999	Development of First Lever-Pulling Plan (Beats 61, 62, 63)
February 1999	Pulling Levers in Beats 61-63.
March 1999	Data on Pulling Levers Response Feedback to Group
March 1999	Policymaker Briefing II
March 1999	Community Leaders Survey; Feedback to Group
April 1999	5-City SACSI visit Indianapolis; Brightwood Arrests
June 1999	First IVRP Newsletter Distributed
July/August 1999	Presentation, "What is IVRP?" to all police roll calls
September 1999	Crime Impact Results I Feedback to Group
September 1999	First Lever-Pulling Meeting at Juvenile Facility
October 1999	Memphis SACSI attendees report back, "Moving IVRP Forward"
December 1999	Meeting of IVRP Community Council
February 2000	Process of Creating/Adding to Associate Lists Formalized
March 2000	ADAM Evaluation Results I; Feedback to Group
April 2000	Pull Levers of Associates; First Domestic Violence LP Meeting
May 2000	Data on Associate List Lever Pulling Presented to Group
June 2000	Crime Impact Results II Feedback to Group
July 2000	First Juvenile Probationer Lever Pulling Meeting
August 2000	Policymaker Briefing III
October 2000	VIPER Evaluation-Feedback to Group; District Homicide Review
November 2000	Lever Pulling Evaluation Results; Feedback to Group
Nov./Dec. 2000	Strategic Plan Survey; Feedback to Group
January 2001	"Stop the Violence" Billboards and Ads Appear.
January 2001	Revisit Strategic Plan and Revise
January 2001	Prioritizing VIPER list and distribution of VIPER packets
March 2001	IVRP Webpage On-Line
April 2001	First Re-Entry Lever Pulling Meeting
July 2001	ADAM Evaluation Results II; Feedback to Group

The working group continued to make progress by implementing a strategic action, assessing effectiveness and collecting additional data, and refining the effort. For example, when the group was concerned that the lever-pulling attendees were not being

monitored closely enough, strategic lever-pulling plans were devised as an accountability mechanism, because it assigned specific individuals and agencies to follow through on the threats if the violence continued. When concerns were raised that the rest of the criminal justice system was unaware of the activities and responsibilities of the IVRP, several working group members made an effort to educate criminal justice personnel about it goals. The working group was constantly reassessing its progress and adapting to concerns and limitations in a response. Specific problems were discussed in the working group meetings and then the appropriate agencies or individuals would attempt to fix the problem. During the process, the group offered constructive criticism in an effort to move the process forward in a positive manner.

The progress and the shape of the problem-solving process in Indianapolis were also influenced by two important facts. First, since the research team had collaborated previously with many of the agencies participating in the working group, we were familiar with extant data sources and were able to work with key information systems. McGarrell's involvement in the Indianapolis Management Accountability Program, the Indianapolis police department's adaptation of New York City's COMPSTAT program, was extremely helpful because it provided an overview of the types of official, law-enforcement data available.

Second, the process was certainly influenced by the Boston template. It was impossible to ignore the approach that was used in Boston because of the assumption that it could have very well been "Project Ceasefire" that resulted in the drop in homicide. The success in Boston was the focus of the first policymaker group meeting and the model was dissected frequently as the working group discussed the violence problem and

considered potential responses. The Indianapolis working group frequently contacted the researchers and practitioners involved in Boston, and several key figures involved in the Ceasefire Program visited Indianapolis and attended working group, lever-pulling, and community summit meetings. The five-city SACSI program additionally supported the influence of the Boston template. Working group members would attend the quarterly meetings and report on the progress of Indianapolis, but more importantly gather information from other cities or from the people presenting at these sessions about the major hurdles faced and strategies to overcome these concerns. The members attending these SACSI sessions would report to the working group about what they learned and the strategies discussed would sometimes result in a change of practice.

An indication that the working group was allowing the analysis of the problem to guide its strategic plan, however, was how it emphasized how Indianapolis was different from Boston. The working group frequently highlighted why certain strategic components had to be adapted to respond more effectively to violence in Indianapolis. The group acknowledged that they learned a lot from the effort in Boston, and when surveyed, noted the value of activities, such as the homicide reviews and the lever-pulling meetings, that were directly borrowed from Boston. The members of the working group noted significant differences in the structure of the violence problem in Boston and Indianapolis, recognizing that Boston was able to focus on specific gangs because of clearly defined affiliations. The working group acknowledged that there were a few structured gangs in Indianapolis, but also determined that there was less structure and many individuals involved in violence were associated with multiple groups. The working group avoided using gang vernacular, preferring instead to discuss the loosely

affiliated individuals as known groups of chronic offenders. Many of these groups acted like gangs and the level of violence was certainly characteristic of groups competing over turf and drug-related profits, but they tended to have fewer members and many had multiple associations with different groups. The understanding of the problem in this way highlighted a significant hurdle to the effective response to violence in Indianapolis because focusing solely on the well-known gangs and gang members would overlook a significant number of key offenders. Thus the working group's strategic plan essentially had a two-tiered structure. On the first level, there was a concern about the known gangs involved in violence. Federal and local police intelligence helped prioritize the most active gangs, and then strategic levers were pulled or in some instances long-term investigations were undertaken. On the second level was the use of intelligence to respond to the groups of chronic offenders that had many affiliations. The response to these groups included producing associate lists including groups of known chronic offenders and other offenders associated with them. Strategic responses, such as inviting these chronic offenders and their associates to lever-pulling meetings, were undertaken as key action items.

Quality of Data Gathering

A critical component for the success of a problem-solving response is gathering quality data in an effort to make good decisions about priorities. As was briefly mentioned above, the working group was very methodical in its analysis of the problem. The group collected a lot of data, relied on it to make its decisions, and over time, grew to appreciate how strategic responses are more effective when they flow from data. It was

challenging to use these data on a consistent basis because of the amount that was available and it could not be collected from one location. In addition, data collection and analysis is cumbersome and progresses in a manner inconsistent with an action-oriented culture. Although these challenges existed, the working group did an excellent job of collecting and using data for decision-making.

The data used by the working group to inform strategic decision-making included official homicide, robbery and aggravated assault data. Gun tracing data that were available from federal and local agencies were also analyzed, and data were collected in an effort to better understand gun markets and hot spots of illegal gun sales. Crime maps depicting official crime data, the home addresses of probationers, parolees and VIPERs, and gang activity were generated to pinpoint place-specific targets. When a homicide occurred, the research team would generate calls for service data from the location. These data provided additional evidence for prioritizing specific neighborhoods and specific locations. The names of homicide victims and suspects were constantly being compared to gang, associate, probation and parole lists. Working group members also presented agency-specific data back to the group to demonstrate progress on issues of interest to problem-solving activities.

The working group also acknowledged that informal, "street-level" knowledge about suspects and groups was critical to effective decision-making. The homicide reviews provided good evidence that talking about these instances with many different representatives from various agencies, and exploring their gun, drug, and group affiliations, provided crucial intelligence. The problem was that conducting such comprehensive homicide reviews was time-consuming and resource draining for the

agencies. The working group attempted various different methods to continue to collect street-level knowledge for its understanding of patterns of violence. The first methodology was conducting action meetings on Monday afternoons to discuss any homicides or issues related to violence that had occurred during the previous two-week period. The plan was to have working group members attend these action meetings, but that other representatives, such as homicide detectives, line-level officers, police district representatives, and federal, state, and local agents, would attend. The intelligence generated by the broad involvement of different agencies would be filtered back to the working group during the Tuesday meetings to inform the strategic activity. One of the problems that the working group was faced with, however, was that the quality of these Monday action meetings varied tremendously influenced primarily by the number and range of representatives that attended to provide street-level intelligence. In short, it was difficult to get the key parties who could enhance the quality of intelligence collected involved in the ongoing reviews on a consistent basis and many times the number of working group members outnumbered the other representatives in attendance. The working group recognized that this was a significant shortcoming and attempted various additional strategies to collect street intelligence, including conducting the action meetings at specific districts, calling key informants about incidents, and holding mini-reviews when several homicides occurred in a neighborhood. There was a similar inconsistency of success with these efforts because it was very difficult to coordinate the different activities. It appears that, although the comprehensive homicide reviews consumed an incredible amount of resources, it may be most effective to hold such

reviews frequently in order to be able to consistently inject street-level officer knowledge into strategic planning and action.[23]

The evaluation data collected to examine the impact of the IVRP was frequently fedback to the working group and was used to refine the process and structure the strategic action. After the research team would prepare a data report, it would present the findings in a general way. The group would react and discuss the findings and then suggestions were made in altering the response. For example, the Monday-Tuesday meeting structure was decided on after the interviews indicated that too much time was being spent discussing the facts about homicide incidents at the Tuesday meetings and typically there was not enough time to brainstorm about strategic responses. The two-day structure provided the opportunity to generate better data about the incidents, and then only a brief summary of the incidents needed to be presented on Tuesday morning.

Another example of how the research results influenced process is how results from the survey of community leaders helped revise the message and location of the lever-pulling meetings. After six months of lever-pulling meetings, the research team interviewed community leaders who had either participated or attended. The purpose of these interviews was to get feedback from the community leaders about the success and failures of these meetings, whether the message was effective, how the meetings could be improved, and whether offenders had taken advantage of the community resources made available to them. In general, the community leaders were very supportive of the lever-pulling meetings. They believed that in most instances the message was appropriate and

[23] This observation appears to be consistent with the benefits of timely crime pattern review processes such as NYPD's COMPSTAT program. See Silverman, 1999).

needed to be said, and discussed how most speakers were very effective. They discussed how the offenders needed to know that their actions affect the community, that there are consequences for their actions, and that the system and the community will not tolerate criminal activity. The community leaders were very impressed with the willingness of the law enforcement community to reach out to them for assistance. They discussed how working together to address crime in the community is very important. They liked the fact that they had the opportunity to be involved in doing something about crime. They believed that the offenders were clearly affected by the message. Several of the community leaders discussed how they watched the body language, facial expressions, and other non-verbal cues of the offenders, and they were impressed with what they saw.

The community leaders thought that the message presented at lever-pulling meetings was very clear, and was very appropriate to the audience in attendance. They stressed how it was important for these offenders to know that they are not an anonymous face in the community. However, the leaders also stressed that the message had to be more effectively balanced. They discussed how the presentation of the positive message was too short. The meetings were long, and the attendees were anxious to leave immediately after, and so community leaders thought that they did not have enough time to interact with the offenders. They also suggested that a former offender present a success story. Several interviewees suggested having either a former gang member or someone who attended one of these meetings who had made positive changes make a presentation about the good choices they made to change their lives. We also learned from the interviews that most of the offenders did not contact these community leaders

after leaving the meeting. About half of the community leaders said they had no contact with any of the offenders after the meetings.

The lever-pulling meetings were changed in several ways after the interview results were presented to the working group. First, most meetings were moved from downtown to neighborhood specific locations. Moreover, instead of having the meetings in a courtroom, community locations were used in an attempt to bring the offenders closer to the service-providers to take advantage of these opportunities. Second, the working group altered the script of the meeting to focus more on the benefits and opportunities available. Third, the working group developed an inventory of community groups and services in each neighborhood, providing contact persons, locations, and a list of types of services, and followed-up with a letter after the meeting to attendees reminding them of the services available. Fourth, the leaders suggested that the message be delivered to populations other than the "hard-core" offenders typically invited to attend. The working group responded by using the lever-pulling model to reach out to several other populations, including middle school students, non-violent juvenile offenders, juveniles on probation for gun charges, and individuals re-entering the community after incarceration.

Key Early Decisions

This section describes several key decision points contributing to the progress and success of the IVRP. Although there were many critical decisions made during the course of this project, we think that the motivation for considering the Boston model, the

personnel structure, and the formalization of goals and strategies into working documents were crucial.

It was important to note that the decision to formulate a Boston-like working group in Indianapolis was made before federal support was available. The Mayor and the United States Attorney knew about the success in Boston and had started discussions about collaborating to adopt the model. Federal research support and the Justice Department's support framework certainly contributed to the long-term success and the rapid progress the working group made through the problem-solving process, but the IVRP was not a program that practitioners only implemented because it provided an opportunity to bring federal support dollars to Indianapolis. The primary motivating force for the interest in the Boston model was the burgeoning homicide problem. At the first couple of meetings of the policymakers and the working group, one could sense the urgency among the participants that the violent crime problem was out of control. Turf issues were set aside, and early on the agencies involved committed the resources to the IVRP because of the crisis. In addition, these feelings of urgency were not symbolically constructed by pressure from external forces, but the people involved in the working group were truly fed-up with the amount of violence. The common bond that all of the active participants agreed upon was the need to reduce violent crime levels. The working group often reminded itself of this objective, and it was always emphasized when interacting with members of the public, the news media, and offenders.

A second important early decision was related to the structure of the decision-making process of the working group. The group created an atmosphere where everyone's opinion mattered and decisions were made by working towards consensus.

When opportunities for publicity arose, the partners made sure that all agencies were present. Although it was a very action-oriented group, they tried not to jump to conclusions and waited for data to make better decisions. The IVRP group chose a neutral party, the research partner (McGarrell), to be the facilitator of the working group.[24] The facilitator's role included planning, organizing, and setting the agenda for the bi-weekly partnership meetings. He was also a crucial contact point for all members of the working group. When individuals or organizational representatives missed a meeting, the research team relayed the information discussed and made them aware of strategic plan initiatives. Having a researcher facilitate the process allowed the facilitator to remind working group members of the underlying theoretical and practical purposes of the strategic actions, keeping the working group focused on developing ways to maximize the impacts of the interventions. He also met with other organizations in the community to publicize the goals and objectives of the violence reduction partnership. This decision to have a researcher as facilitator had two very important effects on the quality of decision-making of the working group. First, it leveled the playing field in that all agencies involved were equal partners working towards reducing violence. Second, it helped ensure that data were not only injected into the problem-solving framework, but were valued and necessary to decision-making.

One of the limitations of partnerships involving many different agencies is accountability. It is difficult to identify weaknesses in the delivery of services because

[24] The unusual circumstance of having a researcher facilitate a law-enforcement working group appeared to have benefits for the Indianapolis context during this time period. It would appear to be more feasible in communities where the researcher has an established track record with local criminal justice officials that has resulted in a high degree of trust. This may not be generalizable or desirable in other contexts.

there is limited oversight and few opportunities to punish an individual or agency not pulling its weight. Lack of accountability was certainly a threat to the success of the IVRP because the facilitator was not in a position to criticize somebody for not delivering a service when promised. This threat was overcome, however, by the involvement of a criminal justice coordinator. Melinda Haag, who was initially involved in the project as a representative of the local prosecutor's office, eventually took over as coordinator in a new position created in the United States Attorney's Office. This support position was critical for several reasons. First, Haag was well known and respected by members of the working group, and this respect was crucial when she had to confront an individual about what was being done or why something was not done. Second, she became a hub of information and an effective coordinator of the many functioning parts of the process. The group was working in many different directions at the same time and it was difficult to know who was doing what and where. She was constantly making inquiries outside of meetings and facilitating the various collaborations. The coordinator kept track of the various efforts and reported back on the progress and additional needs to the group. The facilitator and coordinator were in constant contact sharing information or identifying needs, and they then reported this information back to the rest of the working group. Third, she also coordinated activities with the policymakers. The working group only arranged three formal policymaker briefings. These briefings were critical to the continued support by policymakers, but they were time-consuming. Rather than conducting these briefings more frequently, the coordinator would meet with policymakers to provide reports, make requests for additional support, and discuss strategies to address problems.

The last critical decision that occurred early in the problem-solving process was the commitment to formalizing the goals and strategies of the working group. These documents provided an effective way for the group to monitor its progress and provided a common framework that influenced strategic decisions. For example, the group produced a concept paper early in the project that was discussed and then distributed to all members of the working group. Another document created was the group's mission statement, formalizing its commitment to the broad objective of reducing violence in Indianapolis. After about six months of meetings, the group created the strategic plan that identified the mission of the group, the elements influencing the strategic plan, and the key action items that would occur. The group discussed this strategic plan and made revisions and later would revisit it as a reminder of its progress and areas that needed attention.

After the group had been meeting for nearly two years, the research team constructed a survey instrument to gather data from the working group about its satisfaction with achieving the goals of the strategic plan. The survey also asked questions that helped the group revise its priorities. In general, this survey indicated that the working group was satisfied with its approach to responding to violence. The group was reminded of several action-items that it did not pursue, but there was a general consensus that many of the items did not need to be a priority. The strategic action items receiving attention were consistent with what the group thought should be emphasized. The open-ended responses to questions identified several additional issues that needed to be addressed by the group. These items included making the VIPER list more manageable, informing line-level officers about the purpose of the IVRP, and responding more effectively to offenders who continue to commit violent acts after attending a lever-

pulling meeting. The group discussed the results of this survey, identified concerns that needed to be revisited, and discussed the changes necessary to enhance the effectiveness of the response.

Conclusion

In the next chapter, we continue the evaluation of the problem-solving effort in Indianapolis. The process evaluation generally indicated that the working group was able to stay focused on what it had intended to do. There were issues and shortcomings to the quality of the response, but the working group continued to gather information, make adjustments, and implement new strategies to move the intervention forward. Another important area of evaluation is an assessment of the impact of the intervention. In the next chapter, we examine the effects of working group activities on crime, and assess the effectiveness of specific elements of the strategic action plan.

Chapter Five

Impact of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership on Firearms-Related Violent Crime

Introduction

This chapter describes several data collection efforts undertaken to evaluate the impact of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership. There were two components to the evaluation process. The first, an outcome evaluation, involved an assessment of the impact on violent crime. The first section of this chapter provides an analysis of changes in the levels of violent crime over time. Since the overall objective of the IVRP was reducing violent crime levels, it was important to examine crime patterns over time. We also consider changes in the nature of homicides in Indianapolis before and after the IVRP interventions.

The second dimension involved assessment of particular components of the IVRP strategy. This was intended to inform the outcome evaluation, but it also supported the dynamic action research model employed in this initiative by providing feedback to the IVRP working group. This section of the chapter provides the results of three data collection initiatives intended to assess strategic interventions that were implemented to respond to violence. We discuss how these data were presented to the working group and how it revised the strategic plan because of concerns identified by the results of these studies.

Impact of IVRP on Homicide, Gun Assaults and Armed Robbery

As described in earlier sections of the report, homicides continued at high levels from the beginning of the project in 1998 through early 1999. Given that many of the

interventions began in mid- to late-1998, continued high rates of homicide proved frustrating for the IVRP working group. However, in spring 1999 the implementation of significant numbers of lever pulling meetings was complemented with a major federal-local intervention targeted at a criminal gang operating in the Brightwood section of Indianapolis. The coupling of the lever pulling meetings, the arrests, and federal prosecution of a major gang was very similar to the lever pulling strategy that included arrests and prosecution of the Intervale Posse in Boston and the Bogus Boyz in Minneapolis. Each of these interventions was associated with reductions in firearms violence (Kennedy, Braga, and Piehl, 2001; Braga, Kennedy, Piehl, and Waring, 2001; Kennedy and Braga, 1998). Consequently, we focused on the crackdown on the Brightwood gang as the key intervention in the implementation of the lever pulling strategy.

In the next section we examine the basic trend in homicides, gun assaults and armed robberies in the Brightwood neighborhood and citywide following the crackdown on the Brightwood gang. That is followed by a series of time series analyses of these trends.

The Brightwood Investigation[25]

On April 5th, 1999, a joint federal-local investigation culminated in a series of arrests of members of the Brightwood gang. The group of offenders targeted had ties to criminal activity throughout the city, but the investigation focused primarily on the drug market situated in an area of the city known as Brightwood. The Brightwood neighborhood had long been a violent crime hot spot. The arrest, indictment, and

[25] See also McGarrell and Chermak, 2003.

eventual conviction of offenders controlling the Brightwood drug market was the product of a 10-month investigation conducted by a task force of law enforcement personnel from federal and local agencies. The United States Attorney's Office, the FBI, the IPD, the Marion County Sheriff's Department, local prosecutors, and several other local police departments were involved. The investigation included long-term surveillance of the major players, controlled drug purchases, and the use of wiretaps. The investigation concluded with the execution of 33 search warrants, the arrest of 16 individuals, and the seizure of 78 firearms, 12 kilograms of powdered cocaine, 500 grams of crack, and over $150,000 in cash.

Although this investigation was not a direct product of the IVRP, many of the law enforcement officials responsible for this successful investigation were members of the working group. It also provided a good example of the potential of collaborative efforts between agencies. In addition, the "Brightwood Gang" provided an excellent example of the key factors driving the increases in the Indianapolis homicide problem in the 1990s—factors that were substantiated with the homicide review data. The Brightwood Gang was a tightly organized group of individuals working together to distribute crack and cocaine. Suppliers, mid-level distributors, and street-level sellers were arrested. This gang also used several "police spotters" to warn street level distributors of police presence with cell phones. It was documented that they distributed nearly 50 kilograms of cocaine during the investigation period—a street value of about $1.5 million. The primary objective of this group was profit making, and they protected their turf and product with threats and acts of violent crime. These offenders had assault weapons, semi-automatic handguns, shotguns, pistols, and revolvers. The members of the gang were chronic offenders, well

known as major players by federal and local authorities as well as the offending population. The individuals arrested had over twenty prior convictions for violent felonies, and nearly seventy convictions for other offenses.

The arrests and prosecution of this gang was exploited by members of the IVRP to accomplish its objective of communicating a no tolerance of violence message to the offending population. Working group members made a significant effort in the neighborhood where the arrests occurred to suppress activities of rival groups attempting to replace the significant gaps in drug supply. In addition, they communicated to people living in these neighborhoods that the arrest was part of a new commitment to reducing violence in the neighborhood and across the city. Several lever-pulling meetings were held following the arrests. Working group members that presented at these sessions used the Brightwood crackdown to describe how law enforcement was using a new collaborative approach to respond to violence in Indianapolis. The United States Attorney, for example, described how the case against the Brightwood Gang was going to be heard in Federal District Court and described the amount of prison time that the defendants faced when convicted. Other law enforcement officials and members of the community described how they were not going to stand for gangs terrorizing neighborhoods. This message, however, was coupled with concern for the probationers in attendance. Other speakers presented a message of hope and opportunities for change, encouraging the attendees to take advantage of the community resources and support that was present at the meeting.

Impact in the Brightwood Neighborhood

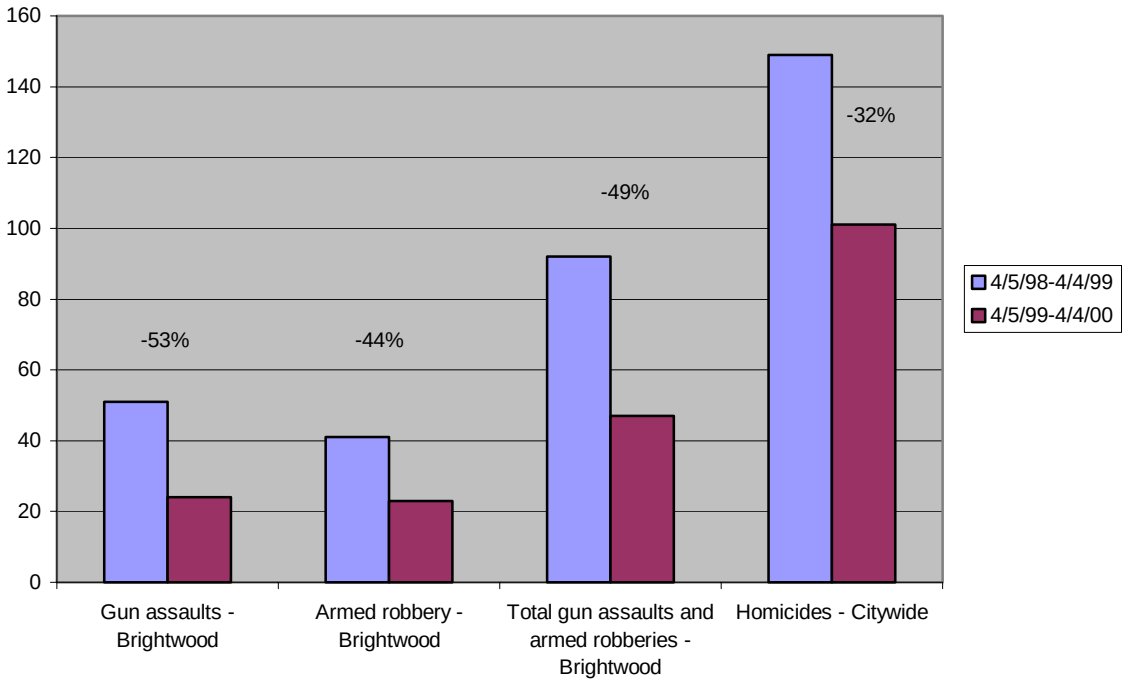
To assess the potential impact of this crackdown on the Brightwood gang we compared the number of gun assaults and armed robberies in the Brightwood neighborhood for the twelve-month period before the arrests (4/5/98-4/4/99) and the twelve-month period after the arrests (4/5/99-4/4/00). As Figure 5-1 indicates, there were significant reductions in violent crime following the Brightwood arrests. Indeed, gun assaults declined 53 percent and armed robberies declined 44 percent in the Brightwood neighborhood in the twelve months following the arrests. During this same time period, gun assaults and armed robberies declined by 19 and 8 percent, respectively, in the remainder of the city.

City-wide Homicide Trend

As noted above, the IVRP group also tried to use the Brightwood gang arrests as an example of law enforcement's focus on gun violence. In doing so, the hope was to influence other potential offenders not to engage in violence. Thus, we wanted to examine not only the potential impact within the Brightwood neighborhood but also the trend in citywide homicides.

Indeed, there was evidence of potential impact. Following the April 5, 1999 crackdown there was an immediate decline in homicides. In three of the next six weeks there were no homicides. This compared to a total of six weeks during the previous 104 weeks that experienced no homicides. As Figure 5-1 indicates, the city had experienced 149 homicides in the 12 months prior to April 5th. This declined to 101 in the next 12 months. The average number of homicides declined from 2.9 per week to 1.9 per week following the Brightwood crackdown.

Figure 5-1
Violent Crime, 12 Months Before and After Brightwood Gang Arrests



Time Series Analyses

City-wide Homicide

To further assess the potential impact of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership on firearms-related violence we conducted an interrupted time series quasi-experiment. The analysis was conducted in accordance with modeling techniques developed by Box and Jenkins (1976). This entails identifying, estimating, and diagnosing autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) models in order to find the most appropriate stochastic model of the series prior to estimating the impact of the intervention. The analyses were conducted using SPSS 10.0.5 equipped with the Trends Module for time series analysis.

The initial analysis examined the trend in homicides. The data allowed for aggregation into either weekly or monthly intervals. Weekly intervals permit greater power in detecting a change in the series, as the number of weeks would be larger than the number of months. However, monthly intervals allow for the detection of seasonality in the data, and are not plagued by problems associated with frequencies of zeros. Attempts were made to model the series at both interval levels.

The data were first aggregated into weekly intervals. This created 239 full weeks in all, starting at January 5, 1997 and ending June 30, 2001. There were 117 preintervention weeks and 122 postintervention weeks (the intervention was week 118).

Several models were attempted with the weekly data but none appeared appropriate either statistically or theoretically. In addition, the data could not be transformed into its natural logarithm to account for possible nonstationarity in variance

due to several weeks where no homicides occurred (i.e., it is impossible to take the natural logarithm of zero). Given these difficulties, emphasis turned to modeling the data in monthly intervals.

The homicide data were subsequently aggregated into monthly intervals. Each month was operationalized as running from its first through its last day. Utilizing data from January 1, 1997 to June 30, 2001, yielded a total of 54 months. Both the preintervention and postintervention periods were comprised of 27 months (the intervention was month 28).

The number of monthly homicides was plotted over the assessment period. The time-plot indicated that the variance of the series was nonstationary in that it reduced over time. Therefore, the data were transformed into their natural logarithm form and replotted. This plot illustrated a considerable improvement in stabilizing the variance. Although the plot suggested that the data may have been following a downward trend over time, the autocorrelation function (ACF) and partial autocorrelation function (PACF) of the logged series indicated that there was no trend requiring to be modeled. In addition, the ACF and PACF revealed that there were no significant correlations at key lags, suggesting neither autoregressive or moving average components (standard or seasonal) needed to be modeled.

Estimation of the impact of the intervention requires coupling both the noise parameters to account for autocorrelation in the data and a transfer function to capture the impact. Based upon the time-plots and the ACF and PACF, the tentative model of this series requires no components to account for autocorrelation in the data. Therefore, the model contains only the transfer function to estimate the impact. Given the expectation

that the intervention would reduce homicides immediately and sustain the reduction over the course of the evaluation period (which is also consistent with the time-plot of monthly homicides), an abrupt, permanent transfer function was used to estimate the impact of the intervention. This entails introducing a dummy variable into the model, where 0 represents all preintervention time periods and 1 all postintervention time periods.

Since there were no noise parameters to include with the transfer function, this model simply reduced to a bivariate regression of the natural logarithm of homicides each month on the dummy intervention variable. The F-test of this model was significant at .000, indicating that the model statistically explained variation in the natural logarithm of homicides per month. The R-Square revealed that this model explains approximately 22 percent of the variation in the natural logarithm of homicides per month. The intervention was also significant at .000. The estimate of the impact, -.42, signifies that at the time of the intervention, the number of homicides per month declined immediately by 42 percent (see Table 5-1). Moreover, this reduction was sustained over the evaluation period.

The appropriateness of this model was diagnosed by calculating the ACF and PACF of the model residuals. There were no significant spikes in either the ACF or PACF, and, accordingly, the Box-Ljung Q-statistic, testing whether the residuals as a whole are random, was not significant. Demonstrating that there was no autocorrelation remaining to be modeled, these tests established that the estimated model was proper and no further adjustments were required.

Table 5-1
Citywide Homicide Analysis

	Pre-Intervention Mean (Ln)	Post-Intervention Mean (Ln)	Mean Difference (Post-Pre)	ARIMA Model p	d	q	Intervention Coeff (s.e.)	p-value
Monthly[a]	2.46	2.04	-.42	--	--	--	-.42(.11)	.000

Gun Assaults and Armed Robberies

Like the homicide analysis, we assessed the impact of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership on aggravated assault with a gun and armed robbery by way of an interrupted time series quasi-experiment using ARIMA modeling. Two models were estimated. The first was for the Brightwood neighborhood where the arrests and prosecutions of members of the Brightwood gang occurred. The second analysis was for the entire city. Given the relative tradeoffs of interval selection (statistical power versus ability to detect seasonality) we estimated models for each area using both weekly and monthly intervals. Given the expectation that the intervention would have an immediate and sustained impact on these gun offenses, we modeled an abrupt, permanent transfer function to capture the impact of the intervention in each of the series.

Brightwood Weekly Analysis

Aggregating the data into weekly intervals yielded 181 observations. The intervention date was April 5, 1999. As this was a Monday, weeks were operationalized as running from Monday through Sunday. The preintervention period began January 5, 1998 and comprised 65 weeks. The postintervention period consisted of 116 weeks and ended June 24, 2001.

The weekly number of aggravated assaults with a gun and armed robbery in the treatment area were plotted over time. The variance of the data appeared to be stationary and no systematic trend was evident. The ACF and PACF of the intervention series indicated no serial correlation in the data. We therefore assessed the impact of the intervention by way of a bivariate regression of the weekly number of aggravated assaults with a gun and armed robberies occurring in the treatment area on the abrupt, permanent transfer function. The impact of the intervention was statistically significant (t = -3.045, p = .003). The intervention explained about five percent of the variation in aggravated assaults with a gun and armed robberies, and the estimate of the impact suggests that after the intervention these offenses reduced by .570 offense per week, or about one such offense every two weeks on average (see Table 5-2 for a summary of the models used to assess the weekly intervention). We diagnosed this model by calculating the ACF and PACF of the residuals. There were no spikes at key lags and the Box-Ljung Q-statistic (p = .584) of the ACF indicated the residuals overall were statistically no different from a random, white noise process. We therefore accepted the appropriateness of this model.

Brightwood Monthly Analysis

Creating monthly intervals from the aggravated assault with a gun and armed robbery data resulted in 42[26] months beginning January 1, 1998 and ending June 30, 2001. A single month of data was operationalized as the total number these offenses occurring from the first through the last day of month. The intervention occurred April 5,

[26] McCain and McCleary (1979) note the difficulty of ARIMA modeling with less than 50 to 100 observations. Although less confidence is placed in the monthly analyses due to the limited sample size, the substantive findings are essentially no different from those provided by the weekly analysis.

1999, which is the 16th month of the series. Thus, there were 15 preintervention months and 27 postintervention months of data for each of the treatment and control areas.

We plotted and estimated the ACF and PACF of the monthly number of aggravated assaults with a gun and armed robberies in the Brightwood neighborhood. These tests did not exhibit nonstationarity in variance or mean. We therefore assessed the intervention by a bivariate regression of these offenses on the abrupt, permanent transfer function. Based on this analysis, the intervention was statistically significant ($t = -2.843$, $p = .007$) and explained about 17 percent of the variation in these offenses. According to the estimate of the intervention, the average number of aggravated assault with a gun and armed robbery per month reduced by 2.807 after the intervention. The residual analysis revealed no systematic noise process ($Q = 15.277$, $p = .504$), thereby supporting the model.

Table 5-2
Aggravated Assault with a Gun and Armed Robbery Analysis

	Pre-	Post-	Mean	ARIMA				
	Intervention	Intervention	Difference	Model			Intervention	
	Mean	Mean	(Post-Pre)	p	d	q	Coeff (s.e.)	p-value
Brightwood – weekly	1.63	1.06	-0.57	--	--	--	-.57 (.19)	.003
Brightwood – monthly	7.40	4.59	-2.81	--	--	--	-2.81 (.99)	.007
City – weekly	50.03	40.86	-9.17	--	1	1	-0.25 (3.74)	.944
City - monthly	219.93	178.15	-40.79	--	1	1	2.01 (19.11)	.913

Weekly analysis based on 65 pre-intervention weeks and 116 post-intervention weeks (total sample = 181 weeks). Monthly analysis based on 15 pre-intervention months and 27 post-intervention months (total sample = 42 months).

City-wide Gun Assault and Armed Robbery

Table 5-2 also presents the results of the time series analyses for the impact on citywide gun assaults and armed robberies. Models were estimated using both weekly and monthly analyses. The results were consistent. Although there were sizeable reductions in gun assaults and armed robberies for the entire city after the IVRP intervention in April 1999, the time series analysis did not reveal a statistically significant difference in the post-intervention reduction.

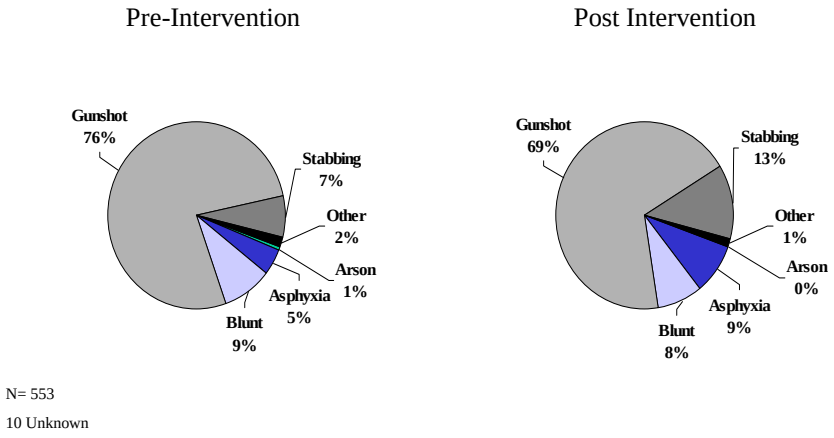
Homicide Patterns

To complement the analysis of homicide trends, we also examined the characteristics of homicides before and after the intervention in order to assess whether there were any shifts that could potentially reflect impact of IVRP strategies.[27] The key strategies that were implemented by IVRP focused on the elements of homicides revealed in the problem analysis. Specifically, IVRP sought to reduce firearm homicides involving chronic offending groups or gangs and involving illegal drugs. Consequently, we examined whether there were shifts along these dimensions.

The first characteristic examined was method of death. As Figure 5-2 shows, whereas gunshot was the method of death in76 percent of the homicides in the pre-intervention period, it accounted for 69 percent in the post-intervention period. Stabbings increased from 7 percent of homicides to 13 percent in the post-intervention period. Thus, both total homicides and homicides committed with a firearm were reduced.

[27] We utilize the same April 5, 1999 date as the pre- post-intervention date.

Figure 5-2
Method of Death
Pre-Intervention and Post Intervention

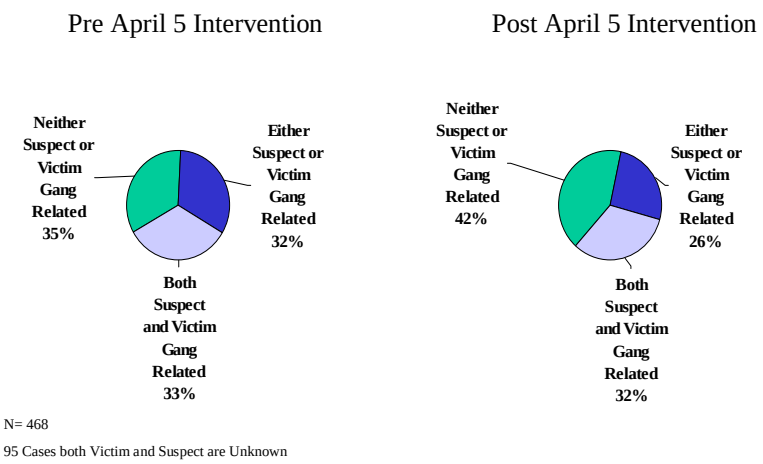


N= 553

10 Unknown

We also considered whether the incident was believed to involve gangs or groups of known chronic offenders. During the pre-intervention period, 56 percent of homicide victims were described as members of gangs or groups of known chronic offenders. This dropped to 44 percent in the post-intervention period. For suspects, the corresponding figures were 54 percent in the pre-intervention period and 39 percent in the post-intervention period. Figure 5-3 illustrates that during the pre-intervention period 65 percent of homicides were described as involving a victim, suspect or both who were part of a gang or group of chronic offenders. This declined to 58 percent in the post-intervention period.

Figure 5-3
Percent of Homicides Gang/Group-Related
Pre-Intervention and Post Intervention

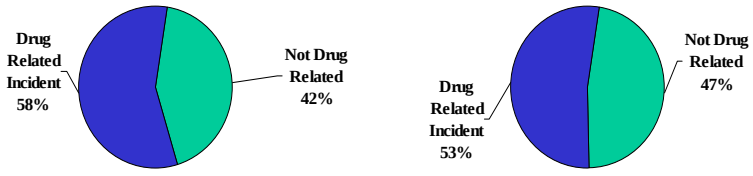


N= 468

95 Cases both Victim and Suspect are Unknown

The findings were similar for drug involvement. As Figure 5-4 indicates, 58 percent of pre-intervention homicides were described as having some drug component. This declined to 53 percent in the post-intervention period.

Figure 5-4
Drug Related Incident
Pre-Intervention and Post Intervention



N= 301

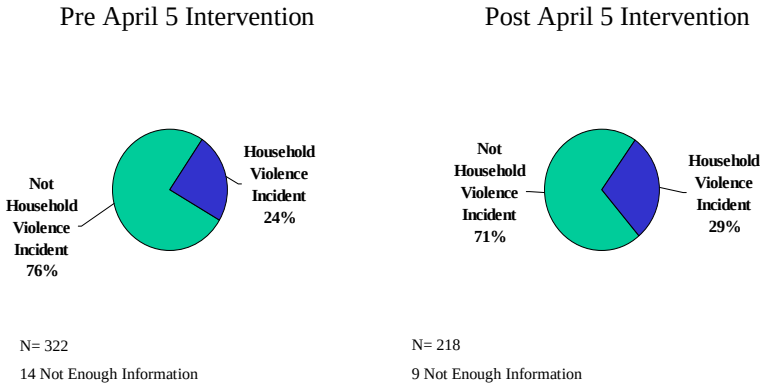
35 Not Enough Information

N= 188

39 Not Enough Information

Finally, during the post-intervention period the percent of homicides involving household violence increased to 29 percent compared to 24 percent in the pre-intervention period (see Figure 5-5). This did not reflect an absolute increase in household violence but rather a proportionate increase in the total number of homicides.

Figure 5-5
Household Violence Incident
Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention



The declines in homicides involving firearms, gangs or groups of chronic offenders, and drugs, are not large and should be interpreted cautiously. The pattern across these variables is, however, quite consistent. Given IVRP's strategic focus on firearms violence involving gangs/groups and illegal drugs the reductions are consistent with the possibility that the overall reduction in homicide was attributable to the IVRP strategic intervention.

Geographic Concentration

An additional characteristic of the firearms violence pattern in Indianapolis was the concentration in particular areas of the city. Most of the violent crime was concentrated within particular police beats within three of the city's five police districts. Consequently, IVRP responses to the homicides and firearms violence tended to be concentrated in these areas.

As another strategy for assessing whether IVRP interventions had an impact on firearms violence we analyzed whether there were changes in the geographic concentration of violence in Indianapolis. Specifically, we examined whether the reductions in violence were more pronounced in the areas of the city where IVRP resources were concentrated.

Table 5-3 presents data on the geographic concentration of gun assaults and armed robberies across the IPD police beats. The data are ordered from high- to low-rate beats based on pre-intervention levels. As discussed in Chapter 3, the data do indicate that firearms violence is concentrated in select police beats. The data also indicate that these offenses became somewhat less concentrated in the post-intervention period. Similarly, the greatest reductions in the daily rate of gun assaults and armed robberies occurred in the police beats with the highest rates of these offenses during the pre-intervention period. These were the police beats where IVRP strategic interventions tended to be focused.

These results should be interpreted cautiously. A rival hypothesis is that the reductions in the highest rate police beats simply reflect a regression to the historic mean. With this caution in mind, however, the findings are consistent with the hypothesis that

IVRP strategies had their most significant impact in the police beats where IVRP resources were concentrated.

Table 5-3
Gun Assaults and Armed Robberies by Police Beat

	Gun assaults and Armed Robberies								
Police Beat	Total	Pre-intervention	Post - intervention	% of total – pre	% of total - post	Pre- post-difference	Rate per 100 days - pre	Rate per 100 days- post	Pre- post-difference
B61	443	202	241	6.6	5.3	-1.2	44.0	29.5	-14.5
B63	423	192	231	6.2	5.1	-1.1	41.8	28.2	-13.6
A52	371	145	226	4.7	5.0	0.3	31.6	27.6	-4.0
B31	310	131	179	4.2	4.0	-0.3	28.5	21.9	-6.7
A61	281	126	155	4.1	3.4	-0.6	27.5	18.9	-8.5
B42	268	117	151	3.8	3.3	-0.4	25.5	18.5	-7.0
A71	267	115	152	3.7	3.4	-0.4	25.1	18.6	-6.5
B41	235	111	124	3.6	2.8	-0.9	24.2	15.2	-9.0
B62	221	109	112	3.5	2.5	-1.1	23.7	13.7	-10.1
D11	230	92	138	3.0	3.1	0.1	20.0	16.9	-3.2
B32	234	90	144	2.9	3.2	0.3	19.6	17.6	-2.0
B52	221	87	134	2.8	3.0	0.1	19.0	16.4	-2.6
D41	237	87	150	2.8	3.3	0.5	19.0	18.3	-0.6
D22	205	86	119	2.8	2.6	-0.2	18.7	14.5	-4.2
B51	227	83	144	2.7	3.2	0.5	18.1	17.6	-0.5
A41	200	80	120	2.6	2.7	0.1	17.4	14.7	-2.8
D31	199	80	119	2.6	2.6	0.0	17.4	14.5	-2.9
A51	223	78	145	2.5	3.2	0.7	17.0	17.7	0.7
A21	117	66	51	2.1	1.1	-1.0	14.4	6.2	-8.1
A62	153	65	88	2.1	2.0	-0.2	14.2	10.8	-3.4
A31	145	62	83	2.0	1.8	-0.2	13.5	10.1	-3.4
D32	162	62	100	2.0	2.2	0.2	13.5	12.2	-1.3
D33	152	61	91	2.0	2.0	0.0	13.3	11.1	-2.2
B22	151	56	95	1.8	2.1	0.3	12.2	11.6	-0.6
C32	84	47	37	1.5	0.8	-0.7	10.2	4.5	-5.7
C42	133	47	86	1.5	1.9	0.4	10.2	10.5	0.3
D12	175	45	130	1.5	2.9	1.4	9.8	15.9	6.1
D42	150	44	106	1.4	2.4	0.9	9.6	13.0	3.4
C41	103	41	62	1.3	1.4	0.0	8.9	7.6	-1.4
A72	84	39	45	1.3	1.0	-0.3	8.5	5.5	-3.0
C61	98	38	60	1.2	1.3	0.1	8.3	7.3	-0.9
D21	121	34	87	1.1	1.9	0.8	7.4	10.6	3.2
C12	75	32	43	1.0	1.0	-0.1	7.0	5.3	-1.7
C51	80	31	49	1.0	1.1	0.1	6.8	6.0	-0.8
C21	78	27	51	0.9	1.1	0.3	5.9	6.2	0.4
A11	81	25	56	0.8	1.2	0.4	5.4	6.8	1.4
C11	60	25	35	0.8	0.8	0.0	5.4	4.3	-1.2
C23	70	25	45	0.8	1.0	0.2	5.4	5.5	0.1
C31	53	24	29	0.8	0.6	-0.1	5.2	3.5	-1.7
C62	55	24	31	0.8	0.7	-0.1	5.2	3.8	-1.4

E32	64	24	40	0.8	0.9	0.1	5.2	4.9	-0.3
C22	55	21	34	0.7	0.8	0.1	4.6	4.2	-0.4
C53	73	21	52	0.7	1.2	0.5	4.6	6.4	1.8
E31	30	16	14	0.5	0.3	-0.2	3.5	1.7	-1.8
E21	40	15	25	0.5	0.6	0.1	3.3	3.1	-0.2
E33	32	14	18	0.5	0.4	-0.1	3.1	2.2	-0.8
C52	40	13	27	0.4	0.6	0.2	2.8	3.3	0.5
E12	29	12	17	0.4	0.4	0.0	2.6	2.1	-0.5
D43	24	6	18	0.2	0.4	0.2	1.3	2.2	0.9
E22	10	5	5	0.2	0.1	-0.1	1.1	0.6	-0.5
X11	11	3	8	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.7	1.0	0.3
E11	9	2	7	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.9	0.4

Homicide Reduction for Different Demographic Groups

Finally, it is important to note that the reduction in homicides observed in the post-intervention period was consistent for males and females, African-Americans and whites, and for the highest risk age group (18-30). This was true for both victims and suspects and in terms of both absolute numbers and the daily rate. In terms of absolute numbers, African-Americans witnessed the largest reduction in both the number of homicide victims and in terms of individuals identified as suspects in homicides. This is particularly important given the impact of lethal violence on African-Americans, and particularly young, African-American males.[28]

Impact Assessment of the Strategic Interventions

As noted above, three additional data collection initiatives were undertaken to accomplish two objectives. First, the results of these projects provided valuable assessment information to the working group about the effectiveness and limitations of the strategic initiatives. For example, the effectiveness of the "lever-pulling" meetings

[28] There were 65 fewer African-American victims in the post-intervention period and 128 fewer African-American suspects. In comparison there were 54 fewer white victims and 52 fewer white homicide suspects. See Tables A-15 and A-16 in Appendix for the demographic comparisons.

was evaluated by collecting survey and official record data from all offenders who had attended these meetings. We also collected similar data from a matched control group. We used these results to assess whether people attending the lever-pulling meetings were less likely to recidivate while on probation, to collect their perceptions of the law enforcement and community-based message presented at the meetings, and to assess whether the individuals attending the meetings took advantage of the community resources offered. When preliminary results indicated that the lever-pulling attendees were not significantly less likely to recidivate, these data were analyzed to look for potential explanations. It was discovered that most offenders were not required to attend more than one lever-pulling meeting. The working group members recognized that the follow-up message was a key component of the strategy, and thus revised the lever-pulling strategy to focus on a smaller group of offenders so that they can be brought to a meeting every 4 to 6 weeks.

The second objective of the long-term data collection projects was to provide evaluation data on the promises and pitfalls of the general strategic planning approach. The problem-solving process is ongoing and changing, and it would be difficult to identify reasons for the successes and failures without the collection of impact data. It is obvious that there is much promise for the problem solving methodology and the collaboration that occurs within a SACSI framework. However, as an increasing number of cities attempt to employ the model, it is also vital to assess how and why such an approach impacts crime, the criminal justice system, and community building.

In this section, we describe the three projects that were undertaken to accomplish these objectives. The first project provides an assessment of the general changes in

perceptions of the offending population. The second project is an assessment of the lever-pulling meetings. The third project is an evaluation of the VIPER initiative.

Project I: Drug Abuse Monitoring and the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership

The IVRP working group operated under the assumption that for criminal justice deterrent strategies to work effectively, the targeted population and other potential offenders must have knowledge of the likelihood of apprehension and the costs that may be incurred under the new approach. Although politicians, the media, and some community residents may be aware of new strategies such as sentencing enhancements, mandatory sentences, and police crackdowns, such strategies may not be known by the population likely to be affected by them. Of course, the targeted population may eventually learn of these changes over time as word filters down to them from their interactions with others that have some direct knowledge of the change (e.g., public defenders, street workers, and others processed under the new policy). This knowledge, however, is also given perspective from their experiences within the system. It is likely that they have frequent contact with the system and have extensive knowledge of "how the system really works." This population understands how informal working norms shape the functioning of the system, and they know that they will only have to serve part of their sentence because of the opportunity to exchange information, plea bargain, and receive good time credits. These realities of the system are much less intimidating, and undermine the deterrent capacity of many strategies.

The Boston Gun Project Working Group (BGPWG) recognized the potential for enhancing the deterrent value of their approach by communicating their objectives more

effectively to the targeted population. Kennedy (1997: 479) noted that "the strategic use of information is central to the 'pulling levers' concept, because it can increase general offender knowledge, can be used to explain the nature of the strategy to the targeted population, and can be used as a substitute for action." For example, the BGPWG had formal meetings with gang members, visited correctional facilities, spoke at schools, circulated flyers, and had individual contacts to warn potential offenders of the new strategy and promote compliance. There is far greater potential for deterrent strategies when the cost of non-compliance is communicated effectively to a targeted population.

One data collection strategy we used to assess whether the target population was aware of the strategic interventions of the violence reduction partnership was by using our access to these populations through the Indianapolis Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program. Researchers have developed a very innovative approach to gathering self-report data from arrestees by using the ADAM program as a research platform (Decker, Pennell, and Caldwell, 1997). Indianapolis is one of approximately 35 cities participating in the ADAM program. This program, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, tracks drug use by arrestees by asking questions about their history and activities. Since ADAM and its predecessor DUF was established in 1987, Decker et al. explain, "its uses have expanded, and it now is used also as a research 'platform'--a way to obtain information not just about drug use trends, but also potential drug epidemics, illegal markets and firearms use. One of the major advantages of using DUF as a platform is that the information comes from the people closest to the street--arrestees who have yet to be confined for their most recent offense."

We used our access to the offending population through the Indianapolis ADAM program to assess offender awareness of IVRP activities and perceptions of criminal justice effectiveness. After arrestees completed the ADAM drug use survey instrument, we administered an IVRP addendum during eight waves of interviews conducted since 1999. The IVRP addendum focused on two general areas. We surveyed arrestees about their awareness of several criminal justice initiatives taking place in the community. Most of the initiatives were products of the working group process. We also wanted to gauge the offending population's understanding of the likelihood of arrest, conviction, and imprisonment for a variety of crimes. Here we were trying to tap into the "offender grapevine." The offending population makes judgments about the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. These judgments are based on their own experiences with the system, but also from talking with other offenders and associates. The ADAM data collection process, where data are collected from arrestees every three months, provided an excellent opportunity to gauge changes in awareness and changes in the understanding of criminal justice effectiveness over time. We were able to look at trends in these areas, how significant events influenced these trends, and what changes had occurred across time. In general, we expected that the offending population's awareness of the various working group initiatives would increase over time and that perceptions of the likelihood of arrest, conviction, and imprisonment would also increase.

We present eight waves of data. We surveyed 273 individuals in Wave 1 (1st Quarter, 1999), 270 individuals in Wave 2 (2nd Quarter, 1999), 296 individuals in Wave 3 (3rd Quarter, 1999), 108 individuals in Wave 4 (4th Quarter, 1999), 215 individuals in Wave 5 (3rd Quarter, 2000), 177 individuals in Wave 6 (4th Quarter, 2000), 204

individuals in Wave 7 (2nd Quarter, 2001), and 243 individuals in Wave 8 (4th Quarter, 2001). Ideally, data would have been available prior to the implementation of IVRP. The reality, however, is that the first wave on interviews occurred in January 1999. At that point, eight lever pulling meetings had taken place but few other IVRP interventions had been implemented. Thus, utilizing Wave 1 as a pre-intervention measure is in no way a "pure" measure. Between Wave 1 and Wave 2 (late April-May 1999) IVRP activities had expanded. An additional nine lever pulling meetings had occurred, multi-agency responses to several homicides had been initiated, and the Brightwood gang crackdown had occurred. We continued to utilize the ADAM addendum interviews until late 2001 as a vehicle to assess the impact of IVRP activities on offender awareness and perceptions.

Knowledge of the Initiatives of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership

Essential to the strategy of the IVRP initiative is effective communication that violent crime will not be tolerated in Indianapolis and surrounding communities. Many techniques involving various criminal justice agencies were adopted in pursuit of this end: lever-pulling meetings with at-risk individuals and the surrounding community, increased police presence directed at "hot spots" of criminal activity and enhanced probation and parole supervision. The IVRP also tried to communicate with the community by manufacturing media publicity for key events, contacting key community leaders about the effort, and creating a *Safe Summer Video* distributed to all county schools. IVRP also gave two presentations in 1999, called the "Safe Summer Convocation," at middle schools to encourage students to be safe. In January 2001, an

innovative public ad campaign was launched with billboards posted on signs and in buses throughout the city. Additionally, television ads were run locally. The ad campaign was designed to communicate the dangers of violent crime as well as advertise the punishments available to the criminal justice system when offenders commit violent crimes.

One of the issues explored with the IVRP ADAM addendum was whether the arrestee population was aware of some of the key law enforcement strategies used to respond to homicide in Indianapolis. We first asked arrestees whether they were familiar with several of key programmatic elements, such as whether they had knowledge of IVRP, VIPER, and the lever-pulling meetings. We also asked whether they had knowledge of several of the strategic initiatives put in place to respond to violence. The strategies we asked about include probation/parole making frequent contacts with high-risk offenders, probation sweeps, and police traffic stops. Table 5.4 presents these results by strategy and wave.

Table 5.4
Knowledge of IVRP Initiatives Over Time (Percent Responding "yes")

Strategy	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8
	Q199	Q299	Q399	Q499	Q300	Q400	Q201	Q401
IVRP	10.3	7.8*	7.1	7.4	5.1	2.8	3.9	3.7
VIPER	16.1	11.9*	16.6*	16.7	7.9**	10.7	8.4	9.9
LP Meetings	21.6	23.5*	16.9*	19.4	14.0	10.7	12.3	9.1
Prob. Contacts	36.3	41.0*	34.5*	38	28.4	28.2	36.3	32.5
Prob. Sweeps	27.8	36.4*	26.4*	38.9**	28.8	28.8	31.9	36.2
Police Stops	56.8	75.0*	65.2*	62	51.6	45.8	65.2*	56.4

* p< .01; ** p< .05
NOTE – interviews conducted quarterly. Thus, Q1 indicates the first quarter of 1999.

As we expected, the arrestees were generally not familiar with the IVRP and VIPER monikers. For example, only ten percent of the arrestees surveyed had heard of the IVRP in Wave 1, and general knowledge decreased in subsequent waves. Less than four percent of the arrestees in Waves 6, 7, and 8 had heard of IVRP. Arrestees were somewhat more familiar with the VIPER and lever-pulling meetings, but the percentage with knowledge was still relatively low and knowledge generally decreased over time. Over 20 percent of arrestees had heard of the lever-pulling meetings in Wave 1 and Wave 2, but there was a steady decline across the other waves. The relatively low number of arrestees who had heard about these items was not surprising. These three items are gauging arrestee knowledge of abstract concepts. Moreover, the working group did present itself to the public as the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership, but it did not make a conscious effort to publicize the VIPER program. The working group also used several names to describe the lever-pulling meetings such as offender meetings and probation meetings that may have contributed to lack of knowledge.

The arrestees were more aware of the interventions that probably directly influenced their lives, such as police stops and probation sweeps. Arrestees across all waves were more likely to be aware of the various strategic initiatives of the partnership. The arrestee population was generally aware of the two major probation initiatives undertaken to support the goals of the partnership. Between thirty and forty percent of the arrestees surveyed at each wave had heard that the probation department was making frequent contacts with probationers, and about thirty percent of probationers had heard of the frequent probation sweeps that had been occurring. In wave 2, knowledge of these initiatives increased significantly, but declined significantly by wave 3. The majority of

arrestees across all waves had knowledge with police making frequent stops in their neighborhood.

We conducted two additional analyses to further examine the knowledge of IVRP initiatives. One of the questions we included was whether they had attended a lever-pulling meeting (LP). Less than three percent of the entire sample of arrestees had attended one of these lever-pulling meetings. This small number is not surprising considering the random selection process of ADAM and the small number of probationers (about 220) who attended these meetings. Although there were only a small number of meeting attendees in the sample, we still wanted to compare whether those that did attend at least one lever-pulling meeting were more aware of the initiatives than the general arrestee pool. We thought that if the partnership was accomplishing its goal of identifying a select pool of chronic offenders and increasing the law enforcement presence in their lives, then the meeting attendees would be more aware of the initiatives.

Although the number of meeting attendees in the ADAM sample is very small (n=39), the LP meeting attendees responding were significantly almost all of the IVRP initiatives. These data are presented in Table 5.5. Arrestees who attended at least one of the lever-pulling meetings were more likely to be aware of all of the various IVRP initiatives. Knowledge about police stops, when comparing the meeting attendees and arrestee pool results, was similar. This result is not surprising because this strategy attempts to accomplish general deterrence goals, focusing on increasing the police presence in a neighborhood by making as many stops as possible. All arrestees would have been exposed to this strategy. The LP meeting attendees were much more likely to be aware of all of the other strategic initiatives. For example, only 12 percent of all

arrestees had heard of the Indianapolis VIPER program. Almost thirty-six percent of the attendee sample had heard of this program. Approximately seven percent of the arrestee pool had heard of IVRP, but over twenty percent of the lever-pulling sample had some recollection of IVRP. The LP meeting attendees were also more likely to be aware of the two probation strategies included in the survey. Although we expected that most of the LP sample would understand the question about whether they had heard of the Lever-Pulling meetings, it is clear that they did not, although lever-pulling attendees were significantly more likely to have heard of these meetings compared to the arrestee pool.

Table 5.5
Knowledge of IVRP Initiatives, LP Attendees and Arrestee Pool
(percent responding "yes")

Strategy	LP Meeting Attendees	Arrestee Pool
IVRP	20.5%	6.7*
VIPER	35.9	12.4*
LP Meetings	74.4	17.8*
Prob. Contacts	56.4	36.5**
Prob. Sweeps	51.3	32.7***
Police Stops	69.2	63.4

* p < .001; ** p < .01; ***p < .05

The second analysis focused on knowledge of the media ad campaign that was initiated in January 2001. We had completed Wave 6 just prior to the ads appearing on the billboards, television, and buses, and asked the arrestees whether they had seen them as a pre-publicity measure. We asked the same questions at Wave 7. These data are provided in Table 5.6. There is clearly error in the figures as almost half of the arrestees stated they saw the billboards, bus signs, and television commercials before they had even been distributed. The arrestees were obviously confusing the IVRP ad campaigns with other issues or anti-crime messages they might have seen. What is important about the findings, however, was the statistically significant increases at Wave 7. Over sixty percent of the arrestees stated they saw the billboards and bus signs, and nearly eighty percent said they saw the television commercials. The billboards, commercials, and signs were very powerful, and obviously the offending population took notice. These results also show that there may be value using similar advertising campaigns to communicate the no tolerance message.

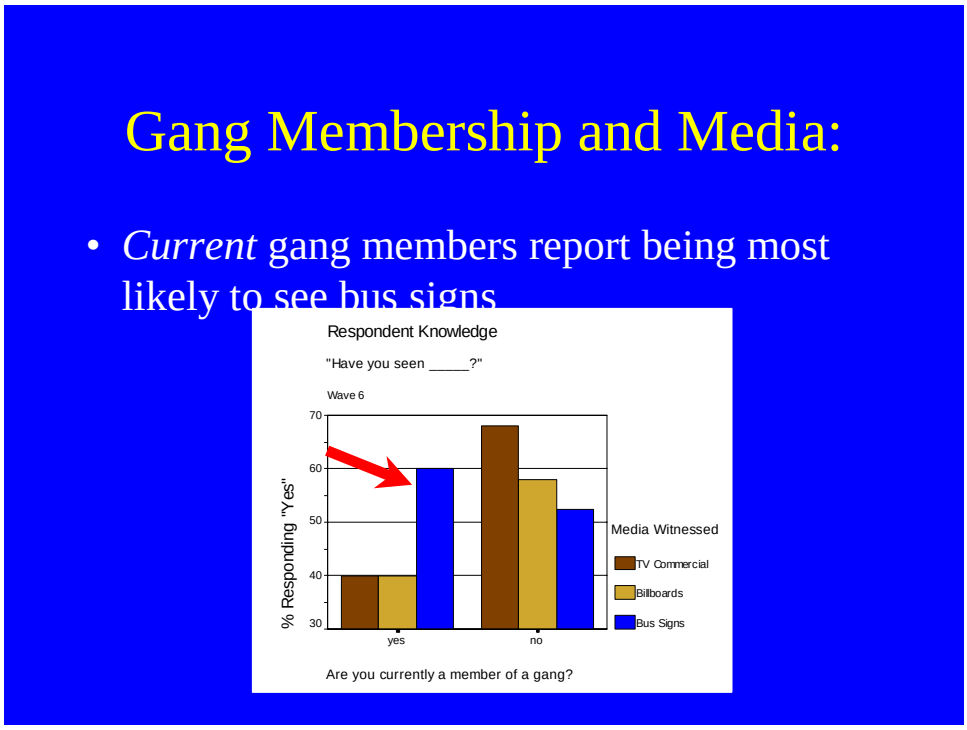
Table 5.6
Knowledge of IVRP Media Campaign
(percent responding "yes")

Media Type	Wave 6	Wave 7
TV Commercials	56.9	77.1*
Billboards	51.4	63.7*
Bus Signs	41.1	62.9*

* $p < .001$

An additional interesting finding emerged when we compared self-reported gang member's knowledge of the IVRP media campaign to other offenders. The gang members were much more likely to say that they had seen the anti-violence messages on bus signs compared to non-gang members (see Figure 5-6). This became a useful finding in terms of constructing a long-term public education strategy.

Figure 5-6
Arrestee's Reporting Awareness of Media Campaign, by Gang Membership



Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System

We also included questions in the IVRP addendum about arrestee perceptions of criminal justice system effectiveness. Arrestees were asked to rate their chances of being arrested, getting charged, being convicted, and going to prison if they committed homicide, robbery, or drug crimes, the types of offenses most closely associated with violence in Indianapolis. We were particularly interested in documenting changes in their evaluation of the chances of getting arrested and then punished for particular crimes. Increases would indicate that the perceptions of criminal justice effectiveness have changed in a positive way, and that arrestees believe that the system is doing a better job

of punishing people who commit crime in Indianapolis. Table 5.7 presents the results for the four sanctions and three offenses by wave.

We can make a couple of general observations about these results. First, arrestees think that the criminal justice system responds effectively to crime. Arrestees think that there is a high likelihood of arrest, charging, conviction, and being sent to prison for these three offenses. For example, over seventy percent of the arrestees thought that their chances of arrest, being charged, getting convicted, and being sent to prison are good or very good if committing a homicide. Arrestees thought that they were less likely to be processed for a robbery, but most thought the chances were good or very good. Over half of the sample of arrestees thought that the chances of arrest, being charged, getting convicted, and being sent to prison were good or very good for selling drugs.

Another observation that we can make about these data is that arrestees have a very good sense of the different levels of effectiveness of the criminal justice system. They recognize that this effectiveness varies by type of crime. Arrestees generally thought the system does a better job processing homicide offenders compared to those committing either robbery or drug crimes. They do, however, tend to overrate its effectiveness. This is probably tied, in part, to their current position (in jail following recent arrest), but offenders perceive that the system is much more effective than it actually is in practice. The percentage of homicides actually cleared by arrest and the number of offenders sent to prison is quite similar to arrestee perceptions. However, robbery and drug crime clearances are significantly lower in practice than what offenders would expect them to be.

Table 5.7
Perceptions of Chances of Being Sanctioned (percent responding "very good or good")

Sanction	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5	Wave 6	Wave 7	Wave 8
Homicide	Q199	Q299	Q399	Q499	Q300	Q400	Q201	Q401
Arrest	72.9	87.3*	78.7*	84.2	81.4	82.5	86.8**	88.9%
Charged	74.2	88.3*	78.7*	83.4	82.4	85.3	87.8**	90.1
Conviction	72.2	85.6*	79.0*	81.4	81.4	84.2	86.3**	89.7
Prison	72.2	84.8*	80.0*	85.2	83.3	83.0	84.3**	89.7
Robbery								
Arrest	68.1	79.6*	72.3*	79.7	77.7	79.7	80.4	84.8
Charged	69.2	82.0*	74.0*	78.7	78.6	78.5	81.9	83.5
Conviction	67.0	78.5*	72.9*	78.7	78.6	77.4	80.3	83.5
Prison	61.1	72.0*	69.5*	75.0	77.7	75.1	78.4	81.5
Drug Sale								
Arrest	58.6	68.7*	59.5*	59.3	61.0	66.1**	70.1	61.7**
Charged	57.9	73.3*	58.5*	60.2	66.1	66.1**	70.1	60.9**
Conviction	56.4	67.7*	57.8*	55.6	62.7	62.7	67.5	58.9**
Prison	53.8	60.8*	54.8**	55.6	58.7	58.7	65.7	58.0**

*p < .001; **p< .05
NOTE – interviews conducted quarterly. Thus, Q1 indicates the first quarter of 1999.

Table 5.7 also indicates some interesting variations across the different waves of data collection. In particular, arrestee perceptions of criminal justice effectiveness increased substantially from Wave 1 to Wave 2, decreased significantly from Wave 2 to Wave 3, and then increased modestly at each remaining wave for all offenses. For example, only 73 percent of arrestees said that there was a good or very good chance of being arrested for homicide at Wave 1. At Wave 2, the percentage increased to 87 percent and then declined at Wave 3 to 79 percent. Eighty-four percent of Wave 4 arrestees, eighty-two percent of Wave 5 arrestees, eight-three percent of Wave 6 arrestees, eighty-seven percent of Wave 7 arrestees, and eight-nine percent of Wave 8 arrestees said there was a good or very good chance of arrest for homicide.

The increases that occurred from Wave 1 to Wave 2 are particularly pronounced and the differences are significant. There was at least a ten percent increase for all offenses and all stages between Wave 1 and Wave 2. For example, seventy-four percent of arrestees at Wave 1 thought the chances of being charged for a homicide was good or very good compared to the over eighty-eight percent at Wave 2. Only 72 percent of arrestees thought the chance of going to prison for homicide was good or very good at Wave 1 compared to over eighty-four percent that felt the chances were good or very good at Wave 2. There were also changes for the robbery and drug sale responses, but the increases were not as dramatic compared to the changes observed on homicide. For example, over eighty percent of Wave 2 arrestees thought the chances of being charged for robbery were good or very good compared to the seventy percent of arrestees at Wave 1. At Wave 2, 68 percent of arrestees thought they had a good or very good chance of being convicted of drug sales compared to the 56 percent that thought similarly at Wave 1. The percentage of arrestees that thought the chance of being sanctioned for any of these offenses declined significantly when comparing Wave 2 and Wave 3 data.

The interesting point is that the Wave 2 interviews occurred just after the previously described Brightwood crackdown. Thus, the increases observed in Wave 2 of the ADAM survey may be attributable to this high profile arrest and the follow-up efforts of the working group to communicate its significance to the community and to offenders attending the lever-pulling meetings. As noted in the previous section on trends in homicide, following the Brightwood arrests there was a significant decline in homicide. The fact that this decline in homicides occurred at the same time that we see the increase in perceived deterrence (from Wave 1 to Wave 2) is suggestive of a focused deterrent

effect of the combination of lever pulling meetings and a high-profile crackdown on a violent gang.

The contrast between wave 2 and 3 results suggests that the effects of the Brightwood crackdown may have been short-term. It is significant, however, to note the differences in arrestee perceptions comparing Wave 1 and Wave 8 results. The Brightwood case may have contributed to the significant changes, but it is interesting that there were incremental improvements in arrestee perceptions of effectiveness of the criminal justice system over the course of the IVRP evaluation. On average, sixteen percent more arrestees at Wave 8 compared to Wave 1 said that their chances of being arrested, charged, convicted, and sent to prison was greater for homicide and robbery. The changes in perception for drug offenses increased only slightly.

We were also able to examine differences between meeting attendees and the general arrestee pool. We included a question on the ADAM addendum to identify arrestees that attended a lever-pulling meeting. Thirty-nine arrestees said that had attended a meeting. Table 5.8 compares the perceived likelihood of arrest and sanction between lever-pulling meeting attendees and the rest of the arrestee population for all waves. When contemplating how the criminal justice system responds to homicides between the two groups, the arrestee pool was somewhat more likely to think that the chances of being sanctioned was good or very good. However, the LP meeting attendees were more likely to think that the criminal justice system response to robbery and drugs was good or very good. For example, over 85 percent of the LP meeting attendees thought that the chances of being arrested for robbery were good or very good, 87 percent thought the chances of being charged and convicted for robbery were good or very good,

and 80 percent of the LP meeting attendees thought the chances of going to prison were good or very good. Fewer arrestees from the general pool thought that the chances were good or very good at every stage. The results for the drug offense categories were similar: A higher percentage of the LP meeting attendees thought that the chances of being arrested, charged, convicted, and put in prison for drug sales were good or very good than did the general arrestee pool.

Table 5.8
Perceptions of Chances of Being Sanctioned
(percent responding "very good or good")

Sanction	LP Meeting Attendees	Arrestee Pool
Homicide		
Arrest	79.5%	85.4%
Charged	84.6	86.8
Conviction	82.0	85.2
Prison	82.1	85.2
Robbery		
Arrest	84.7	79.4
Charged	87.2	80.3
Conviction	87.2	78.8
Prison	79.5	74.9
Drug Sale		
Arrest	74.4	64.9
Charged	71.8	65.5
Conviction	69.4	62.9
Prison	69.2	60.2

Perceived Access to Guns and Drug Markets

Systematic analysis of homicides in Indianapolis conducted by the IVRP revealed that homicides involved young men, using firearms. Drugs were also linked to a high number of homicides. We used the ADAM addendum to supplement the results from analysis of official data and the homicide reviews by exploring arrestee perceptions of gun and drug markets. The findings provided additional support for directing the response towards cases and offenders fitting this general pattern.

One dimension explored was *perceived ease-of-access* to guns. The IVRP asked arrestees about their perceptions of the firearms market in their communities. Of those respondents that answered the question, 43 percent stated that it was easy to get a gun in their neighborhood. The percentage of arrestees stating it was easy remained relatively stable over time. The results also indicate that men in the offender sample were less likely than women to say that it is "easy" to get a gun in their neighborhood.

Beyond homicides and other violent crimes being predominantly committed by males, the IVRP homicide study also revealed that "gangs" or chronic offending groups also contributed to the problem. Consequently, the IVRP asked respondents to the ADAM addendum whether they had ever, or were presently, a member of a "gang." The number of people affiliating themselves with a "gang" in each of the waves was quite limited. Across the waves for which data are available, the largest percentage of respondents reporting *any* affiliation with a "gang" was 13.8 percent. This is clearly not an overwhelming number, but not an insignificant proportion of respondents, either, for a couple of reasons. First, the number of arrestees admitting gang-involvement is certainly underrepresented. Second, it is widely felt that this small group of offenders commits a disproportionate amount of crime, and is therefore an important component of the overall crime rate of center city Indianapolis and surrounding communities. And, in fact, there is a significant difference in the perceived ease of access to firearms between those that identify themselves as having some "gang" affiliation compared to those that hold no such ties when all of the data is pooled (see Table 5.9 below).

An interesting pattern begins to emerge when examining the perceived ease of access to firearms for the sample. Recall that female respondents are slightly more likely

than men to report that acquiring a gun in their community is "easy." And, gang members are more likely than non-members to report that it is easy to get a gun. Approximately 73 percent of gang members and 49 percent of non-members said is was easy to get a gun. Yet, male respondents are significantly more likely to be members of a gang than females.[29] When controlling for gang affiliation, women remain more likely to report that it is easy to acquire a handgun in their neighborhood than men.

Much of the data taken from the IVRP addendum to the ADAM survey does not tap actual respondent behavior. Rather, the IVRP portion of the instrument was designed to tap general *perceptions* of respondents in accordance with the overall lever-pulling strategy of the partnership. Still, the IVRP addendum did ask arrestees two behavioral items concerning their participation in the illicit drug market. Respondents were asked about drug purchases,[30] as well as whether or not they had sold illicit drugs.[31] Survey results show that a minority of those arrested in the Indianapolis area self-report being active sellers of illicit drugs. Approximately fourteen percent indicated that they had sold illegal drugs in the past year. The percentage of those that have purchased illegal drugs in the past year is substantially larger, however, with more than half of the sample responding that they had purchased illegal drugs in the past year.

Among the sample of arrestees there is a significant difference in the percentage of those reporting that they had sold illegal drugs in the last year by gang affiliation. Pooling all waves of data, arrestees with gang experience are almost three times as likely as non-members to report selling drugs within one year of their present arrest. In addition,

[29] Chi-square = 14.368; $p = .001$; $n = 1013$.
[30] "Have you purchased any illegal drugs in the past year?"
[31] "Have you sold any illegal drugs in the past year?"

those individuals that reported being a current or past member of a gang are also more likely to have purchased illegal drugs in the past year than those respondents with no reported gang affiliation. Men and women were nearly identical in their responses to the drug sales item. For males, 13.8 percent said that they had sold illegal drugs in the past year, while the percentage of women admitting to the same activity was an almost identical 13.5 percent[32]. Similarly, whether a respondent was a man or woman made no significant difference in determining the probability of purchasing illicit drugs within the past year.

Table 5.9
Access to Guns and Drug Offenses
(Percent responding "yes")

	Gang Member	Non-Gang
Easy Access to Guns in Neighborhood	73.4%**	48.7%
Purchased Drugs in Past Year	64.7%**	50.5%
Sold Drugs in the Past Year	30.4%*	11.6%

* $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$

Feedback to the Working Group

We presented the results of the first four waves of data collection in March 2000, highlighting the changes that occurred across time. We also discussed the significant changes that occurred in Wave 2 and linked it to the possibility that the change that occurred was the result of the combination of the Brightwood crackdown and the IVRP's efforts at communicating the no violence message to the community and the offending population. Members of the working group were pleased that Lever-Pulling Meeting attendees were more likely to be aware of the various initiatives of the partnership, but

[32] Chi-square = 3.021; $p = .221$

they were also surprised that arrestee knowledge was low. The results helped to reaffirm a commitment to linking the implementation of the strategy to the communication of its purposes and objectives to the offending population. It also stimulated the working group to think of other approaches for communicating the message of the partnership. For example, there had been some talk about attempting a broader media campaign about the goals and objectives of the partnership that would include billboards, posters, and newsletters being posted throughout the city. The IVRP addendum results helped to re-ignite interest in following through with conducting a media campaign, and the end product was a partnership between the working group and an advertising agency to create and distribute the working group's message using a variety of publicity strategies (implemented in January 2001). The second presentation focused on Waves 6 and 7, and we highlighted offender reactions to the media campaign. The finding that gang members were most likely to report having seen the message on bus signs was also used by the IVRP working group to insure that this media tool continued to be employed.

The results also provided encouragement to the working group to continue to use specific offenders or specific cases to illustrate their commitment to responding to violence. The Brightwood investigation was frequently referred to when the case progressed through the court system. One of the fears of many members of the working group is that the system is ill equipped to follow through on its threats of focused attention on chronic offenders. The successful arrest, but also the indictment, conviction, and long sentences handed out to the Brightwood Gang helped to suppress some of these concerns. All of the offenders received significant federal prison sentences with the average length of time being fourteen years. These cases, along with convictions of other

chronic offenders and gang members, continued to be used as examples in lever-pulling meetings. The IVRP frequently used "poster children" at lever-pulling meetings, where pictures of recently convicted or murdered probationers and parolees were displayed for meeting attendees to see. This even included offenders that had previously attended LP meetings but who were now either incarcerated or deceased through violence. This segment of the LP meetings is theoretically important because offenders are more likely to believe that penalties have increased substantially if they know people from their group or neighborhood who have actually been targeted by new initiatives (see Stafford and Warr, 1993).

Project II: The Lever-Pulling Meeting Evaluation

The IVRP decided to engage in Boston-like communication meetings to spread its message to offenders. The group copied the script used in Boston, but refined it to the specific concerns of Indianapolis. In the meetings, probationers and parolees were told by neighborhood leaders that the people of Indianapolis were no longer willing to tolerate violence. A similar message was communicated by criminal justice officials who noted that local, state, and federal law enforcement was working together as never before to reduce the unacceptable level of homicides and firearms violence. A central theme of the meetings was that offenders have the choice to stop engaging in violence (pointing out that offenders are just as likely to become homicide victims as they are to become suspects) or to face the consequences—the "levers" that could be "pulled." As mentioned earlier, these levers can come from all agencies in the working group, and include such actions as increasing probation and parole supervision, actively pursuing violations of probation or parole, or increasing penalties for offenders engaged in particular activities

(such as drug use or possession of firearms). Offenders were told that both government agencies and local community groups were willing to provide support. The presenters also encouraged offenders to spread the lever-pulling message to friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors.

Over thirty lever-pulling meetings occurred since the beginning of the project. Since the lever-pulling concept and communication meetings were going to be central to the strategic approach used in Indianapolis, and since there has not been any direct study of this approach, the research team designed a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the lever-pulling formula. The previous section of the report provided evidence that the LP meetings may have spread the deterrence message to the arrestee population. In this section we consider the impact of the meetings on those probationers and parolees that attended the LP meetings.

In addressing this issue, the best approach would have been an experimental design, randomly assigning priority offenders to a lever pulling or no lever-pulling group. Unfortunately, random assignment was not feasible for this study. The best alternative available was a matched control group design. This section presents the findings from this study.

Description of the Project

We compared the behavior and attitudes of lever-pulling meeting attendees to a control group of offenders on probation (or parole) for similar offenses. Our analysis utilized two types of data. First, the criminal histories of attendees were examined in an effort to compare criminal behavior before and after having attended their first lever-

pulling meeting. We also compared attendee criminal histories to the control group. Second, we surveyed the attendee and control groups. The two groups were asked to provide opinions about criminal justice effectiveness, recognition of IVRP initiatives, and participation in community programs.

Creating Two Groups of Study Subjects

Probationers who attended lever-pulling meetings were selected by probation or parole officers using two criteria. First, the probation and parole IVRP representative would identify offenders, trying to match their selection to IVRP's priority as close as possible. Thus, most of the attendees were on probation for violent felonies, gun, and drug offenses. Second, neighborhood boundaries were commonly used to determine who would attend a meeting. Once a meeting was scheduled and probationers selected, a letter informed the probationer of the meeting and indicated that the probationer should attend the meeting as if it was an individualized meeting with the probation officer.

Searching For Meeting Attendees

A list of probationers who had attended at least one of the lever-pulling meetings in 1999 was provided to the research team. As meetings continued in 1999 and 2000, the list was updated to include all meeting attendees. The research team first attempted to interview meeting attendees at the probation department as they arrived for their regularly scheduled meetings with their probation officer. In a two-month period, with interviews being conducted approximately two times per week, this effort garnered only eighteen completed surveys.

Two problems with this method quickly emerged. First, potential participants were not necessarily scheduled to come into the probation department on the days that researchers conducted interviews. Since probationer appointment times were scattered throughout the week, it was not possible to have a researcher at every scheduled appointment. Second, many probationers missed their appointments, and they were rescheduled on days when the research team was not present.

It soon became clear that another method had to be used. The telephone numbers and addresses of meeting attendees were obtained from the probation department and telephone interviews were conducted. We completed twenty-seven instruments using this method. This was an improvement over the previous method, which only garnered 18 interviews, but still a disappointment since attempts were made to reach nearly 200 individuals. The response rate was only fifteen percent. While employing this method, researchers found that the majority of probationers were simply unreachable. For instance, many moved without providing the probation department with new information and many were not home very often.[33]

The small number of successful interviews by telephone required the research team to employ a third method to reach meeting attendees. An easy-to-follow version of the instrument was placed—along with instructions and an introductory letter to the probationer—in each remaining meeting attendee's file at the probation department. Also attached was a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the instrument to the research team. We received twenty-four additional responses using this method, which

[33] The large number of incorrect addresses was notable in light of the requirement that probationers and parolees notify their PO of address changes.

was also a fifteen- percent response rate. The combination of these three approaches generated only sixty-nine completed surveys.

The Control Group

A matched control group design requires that subjects in both the treatment and control groups be similar in certain important criteria. In this case, the distinguishing criterion used to match probationers in the two groups was their offense. Therefore, only those who were on probation for a felony, gun offense, or drug offense were asked to participate. This method garnered two groups similar in age, percent male, marital status and education. The groups, however, were different on race and income variables. Table 5.10 presents these demographic data.

Individuals for the survey control group were selected as they came into the Marion County Probation Department for a regular appointment with their probation officer. After the research team verified their felony gun, drug or violent offense conviction, they were asked if they would be willing to participate in a survey meant to gauge their awareness of specific violence reduction initiatives employed recently in Indianapolis. One hundred fifty six control group interviews were completed at the probation department.

Table 5.10
Comparison of LP Meeting Attendees and Control Group

DEMOGRAPHICS	CONTROL GROUP	ATTENDEE GROUP
Mean Age	31.5	29.1
% Male	84.0	81.2
% Caucasian	42.3	18.8
% African American	51.3	79.7
% Total Household Annual Income Over $35,000	26.3	15.9
% Total Household Annual Income Less Than $10,000	23.1	37.7
% Married or Living With A Partner	39.1	31.8
% Who Completed 11 or Fewer Years of School	35.3	30.4
% With High School Diploma or GED	39.1	50.7
% Who Completed Greater Than 12 Years of School	17.9	10.0
% With Associates Degree or Trade School Degree	4.5	2.9
% With Bachelor's Degree	3.2	2.9

Part One: Comparing the Criminal Behavior of Lever-Pulling Meeting Attendees and the Control Group

The research team had access to a list of attendees at all sixteen meetings that occurred between February 2, 1999, and February 10, 2000. An additional community-wide summit meeting occurred in October of 1999 that was sponsored by the local faith community and run by a partnership of ministers and other community leaders. Criminal history data were collected on both groups in March and April of 2000.

There were 209 meeting attendees in the study group. Of these, there were 172 offenders who attended only one regular lever-pulling meeting, four offenders who attended two regular lever-pulling meetings, and 33 who attended only the faith community's meeting in October of 1999. Of the 172 who attended one regular meeting,

56 also attended the faith community's meeting on October 6th, 1999. Of the four who attended two regular meetings, three also attended the October 6th meeting.

Offending Behavior Before and After Current Offense

The criminal histories of those in the control and attendee groups were collected. The information gathered from the criminal histories was separated to reflect the number of arrests, convictions, times on probation, and times incarcerated for each individual both (1) up to and including the subject's current offense (the one that got him or her on the current probation) and (2) after the current arrest. The data were collected in this way to ascertain if there had been any significant behavioral changes in the attendee group.

The number of arrests before the current conviction ranged from one to 45 for the control group and from one to 40 for the attendees. The number of arrests after the current offense ranged from zero to seven for the control group and from zero to ten for the attendees. Just under half (46.5%) of the control group, and nearly two-thirds (62%) of the meeting attendees were arrested during the study period.

Other data collected from the criminal histories included information about felony and misdemeanor convictions for each individual, the number of times sentenced to probation, and the number of times sentenced to executed time in the Department of Correction (DOC) or the local jail (MCJ). Table 5.11 includes the range, mean and standard deviations for both groups on twelve variables, as well as the percentage of offenders rearrested in both groups.

Table 5.11
Offending Patterns of LP Attendees and Control Group

OFFENDING BEHAVIOR	Control Group Range Mean Standard Deviation	Attendee Group Range Mean Standard Deviation
# of arrests up to and including current offense	1-45 6.99 7.96	1-40 6.55 6.81
# of arrests after current offense	0-7 1.00 1.45	0-10 1.32 1.67
% arrested during study period	46.5%	61.7%
# felony convictions up to and including current offense	0-8 1.66 1.43	0-8 1.47 1.21
# felony convictions after current offense	0-3 .0845 .39	0-1 .0670 .25
# misdemeanor convictions up to and including current offense	0-24 2.11 2.98	0-15 2.01 2.64
# misdemeanor convictions after current offense	0-3 .30 .66	0-3 .22 .55
# times sentenced to probation up to and including current offense	1-11 2.08 1.58	1-8 2.00 1.39
# times sentenced to probation after current offense	0-1 .11 .31	0-1 .0526 .22
# times sentenced to incarceration in the DOC up to and including current offense	0-7 .85 1.20	0-5 .98 .93
# times sentenced to incarceration in the DOC after current offense	0-3 .0775 .36	0-1 .0622 .24
# times sentenced to incarceration in the MCJ up to and including current offense	0-8 1.37 1.61	0-13 1.44 1.87
# times sentenced to incarceration in the MCJ after current offense	0-3 .24 .56	0-3 .18 .49

Table 5.11 shows that the control group's felony and misdemeanor convictions both before and after the current offense were slightly higher than the attendee convictions both before and after the current offense. The number of probation sentences

for the control group was also higher than the attendee group both before and after the current offense. However, a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) conducted to compare the control and attendee groups on all six of these variables indicated that the two groups were not significantly different in any of the categories. Table 5.12 shows the p-values for these comparisons.

Table 5.12
Comparison of Means of Control and LP Attendee Groups on Behavioral Variables

VARIABLE	P-VALUE
Felony convictions before this offense	.174
Felony convictions after this offense	.606
Misdemeanor convictions before this offense	.751
Misdemeanor convictions after this offense	.231
Times on probation before this offense	.649
Times on probation after this offense	.063
Times in DOC before this offense	.252
Times in DOC after this offense	.634
Times in MCJ before this offense	.728
Times in MCJ after this offense	.305

The last four variables in Table 5.12 compare the incarceration rates of the two groups both before and after the current offense. For both incarceration in the DOC and in the MCJ, the control group was slightly lower in the "before" categories and higher in the "after" categories than the attendees. Looking only at these four variables, there appears to be a slight decrease in the incarceration rates of meeting attendees. In other words, it appears that attendees were previously more likely to be sentenced to incarceration but then were less likely to be incarcerated after attending lever-pulling meetings. These differences, however, were not significant.

When the criminal histories for each offender were examined, it became clear that, in many cases, offenders were arrested repeatedly in between the time that they were arrested for the offense that got them on their current probation and the time that they

were finally sentenced for that offense. It was not unusual to see the time it took an arrest to be adjudicated in court exceed 18 months. Further, this did not account for the fact that some offenders spent little or no time incarcerated while others spent many months or years incarcerated. These two issues highlight the importance of gathering offending data in a different manner--results described in the following section.

Examining Changes in Behavior While on Probation

One approach to the problem of examining re-offending following the instant offense was to count the number of arrests for each individual from the date that their probation started (their intake date) to the end of the study period. The number of arrests after intake ranged from 0 to 7 (See Table 5.13). The control group's mean number of arrests was .60 with a standard deviation of 1.05. The attendee mean was .75 arrests with a standard deviation of 1.10. Sixty-four percent of the control group and fifty-five percent of the attendees were not rearrested after intake. There was no significant difference between the two groups in the number of arrests after probation intake.

Table 5.13
LP Attendee and Control Group Offending Behavior while on Probation

OFFENDING BEHAVIOR WHILE ON PROBATION	Control Group	Attendee Group
Minimum # of arrests in this category	0	0
Maximum # of arrests in this category	7	7
Group mean of # of arrests	.60	.75
% of arrests after intake (% not arrested)	36.0 (64)	44.6 (55.4)

Examining Changes in Behavior After Attending a Lever-Pulling Meeting

The criminal histories of those who attended a regular lever-pulling meeting as their first meeting were examined for changes in their behavior. The original intention of this step in the analysis was to determine the optimum number of meetings necessary.

However, since almost all meeting attendees only attended one regular meeting, the focus of this analysis shifted.

For this part of the analysis, the time-to-failure for each attendee (the number of days between the first regular LP meeting and the first subsequent arrest) was calculated. The mean time-to-failure for all attendees was 107 days, ranging from one to 330 days.

Examining arrests following attendance at a LP meeting revealed that nearly seventy percent of attendees were not arrested during the study period. Seven percent were arrested within one month of their meeting, 8.2 percent were arrested within three months of their meeting, 7.1 percent were arrested within five months, and 8.8 percent were arrested more than five months after their first lever-pulling meeting. Considering only those who were subsequently arrested, there is approximately the same number of people in each of the four time categories. (See Table 5.14)

Meeting attendees were then analyzed to see if there are differences in the time-to-failure and the category that the offender is on probation for. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted, which suggested that there might be significant differences between the time-to-fail for property offenders and violent offenders (with property offenders taking a very short time to reoffend and violent offenders taking a longer time to reoffend).

Table 5.14
Time to Failure for LP Meeting Attendees

TIME-TO-FAIL FOR MEETING ATTENDEES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not arrested	125	68.7
Arrested within 1 month of meeting	13	7.1
Arrested within 3 months of meeting	15	8.2
Arrested within 5 months of meeting	13	7.1
Arrested more than 5 months after meeting	16	8.8
TOTAL	182	100

Part Two: Survey Findings

The research team felt that it was important to measure the perceived effectiveness of the IVRP's strategies among the offending population. Therefore, the survey participants were asked if they had heard of a variety of initiatives that had been part of the IVRP's overall crime reduction strategy. Recall that we asked a similar set of questions to the ADAM sample. These data are presented in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15
LP Attendees and Control Group Awareness and Perception of IVRP Strategies

INITIATIVE RECOGNITION AND EFFECTIVENESS*	**CONTROL GROUP** (percent)	**ATTENDEE GROUP** (percent)
Heard of IVRP	4.5	18.8
IVRP Is Effective	28.6	53.9
Heard of Lever-Pulling Meeting	1.9	10.1
L-P Meetings Are Effective	0	42.9
Heard of Offender Meeting	100	100
Offender Meetings Are Effective	26.3	37.7
Heard of Probation Frequent Contacts	46.2	69.6
Probation Frequent Contacts Are Effective	34.7	50.0
Heard of Probation Sweeps	41.7	72.5
Probation Sweeps Are Effective	63	66
Heard of VIPER	15.4	14.5
VIPER Is Effective	29.1	60
Heard of Police Car Stops	62.2	68.1
Police Car Stops Are Effective	53.6	55.3
Heard Agencies Are Working Together	81.4	87.0
Working Together Is Effective	46.5	66.7

* The effectiveness items were asked only of those respondents that reported having heard of the strategy.

The meeting attendees were more likely to have heard of all of the initiatives except for the VIPER program. The meeting attendees who had heard of an initiative were more likely in *every case* to believe more strongly in the effectiveness of the strategies for deterring crime. This finding speaks to the importance of making the offending population better aware of the existence and tactics of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership. For example, when asked about the effectiveness of the IVRP, 28.6 percent of those in the control group who had heard of it responded that it was either effective or very effective, while 53.9 percent of those in the attendee group gave that response. Of the three people in the control group who had heard of the lever-pulling meetings, none thought that it was effective or very effective, while 42.9 percent of the attendees thought it was effective.

Equally important to note is the fact that only 13 of the 69 meeting attendees (18.8%) had heard of the IVRP. This is extremely low, especially considering that all had attended at least one meeting presented by the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership. It appears that these probationers were not fully aware of who had brought them to the meetings (or at least the formal title, IVRP).

When asked about frequent contacts between probationers and the probation department, 46.2 percent of the control group had heard of the initiative. Of those, 34.7 percent thought it was an effective or very effective strategy to keep offenders from committing more crimes, and half of the attendees who had heard of it thought this was an effective or very effective strategy. Interestingly, a very large number (63%) of the control group thought that the probation department sweeps were a good strategy for deterring future crime. This was almost the same as the attendee response of 66 percent. Less than 10 percent in each group responded that this strategy was "not very effective."

A large percentage of respondents said that they were aware of police stopping cars in their neighborhood (62.2% of the control group and 68.1% of attendees). Similarly, over half of the respondents in each group who had heard of this strategy (53.6% of the control group and 55.3% of the attendee group) thought that the police stops were either effective or very effective as a means of deterring individuals from offending.

By far, the largest affirmative response from respondents was to the question, "Have you heard that federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies are working together to reduce crime?" Eighty-one percent of the control group answered "yes" to this question, with 46.5 percent stating that this is an effective or very effective method.

Eighty-seven percent of the meeting attendees were aware that law enforcement agencies were working together, with 66.7 percent believing that this was an effective or very effective strategy.

Perceptions of Law Enforcement Believability

There were four questions on the control group survey and seven questions on the attendee group survey that were designed to measure offenders' perceptions of the willingness or ability of criminal justice agencies to follow through with the promises made at lever-pulling meetings, and the expected impact those promises could have on the offending population.

Table 5.16
LP Meeting and Control Group Perceptions of Credibility of Deterrence Message

AGREE WITH STATEMENT	CONTROL GROUP (percent)	ATTENDEE GROUP (percent)
Meetings Just Scare Tactics	26.9	33.3
Law Can't Follow Through	34.6	26.1
Probationers Watched More	69.2	59.4
Serious About Crime	82.1	87.0

Table 5.16 indicates that the response differences between the two groups were small, and for several questions, were in the direction opposite to what was expected. For example, a higher percentage of the attendee group thought that lever-pulling meetings were just scare tactics and a lower percentage agreed that probationers were being watched more closely. The attendees, however, were more likely to agree that criminal justice agencies are serious about responding to crime and less likely to agree with the statement that law enforcement is unable to follow through on their threats of cracking down on offenders. We asked three additional questions of the attendee group to further

gauge their opinion about the ability of the system to respond to offenders. Forty percent of the attendees agreed with the statement that the meetings would make it more difficult to avoid processing by the system, eighty-three percent agreed that the lever-pulling message should be heard by all probationers/parolees, and fifty percent said that they were less likely to break the law after hearing the message.

Assessing Perceived Differences Between Criminal Justice Stages

The respondents were asked to imagine they knew a person who had committed three different crimes: homicide, robbery of a convenience store, and selling drugs on a street corner (the same questions asked in the ADAM addendum). They were then asked if the likelihood of (1) getting arrested, (2) getting charged, (3) getting convicted, and (4) going to prison for each of the three different crimes was poor, good, or very good. The purpose of this type of question was to measure the respondent's perceptions of the likelihood of consequences being imposed at each of stage in the criminal justice system. The concept of deterrence is based on the assumption that if a would-be offender believes that the chances of being caught and punished for committing a crime are high, that person will be less likely to engage in criminal activity for fear of punishment. Conversely, if the potential offender believes that the chances of being caught and punished are relatively low, the offender will be more likely to commit the crime.

Overall, the meeting attendees seemed slightly more likely than the control group to believe that the sanctions would be applied at each stage of the criminal justice system. Both groups, however, were similar in their tendency to say that the chances of getting charged for robbery or selling drugs were greater than the chances of getting arrested. This is a logical conclusion since the chances of being charged *depend on* the chances of

being arrested. Several respondents thought out loud during the interviews and made statements to the effect of, "Well, if he's been arrested, then the chances of getting charged are…" For the conviction and prison indicators, both groups similarly chose a response that reflected a lower likelihood of being sanctioned. The control group's drug sales question is the most dramatic representation of this phenomenon.

As is clearly seen in Table 5.17, the meeting attendees were slightly less likely than the control group to believe that the chances of getting arrested or charged for a homicide are good or very good. However, for the remainder of the categories, the attendees were more likely to believe that the chances of being sanctioned at the different criminal justice system stages are good or very good. The differences between the attendees and control group in the remaining ten categories ranged from a 1.9 percent difference between the two groups (chances of being charged for selling drugs) to a 12.1 percent difference (chances of going to prison for robbery).

Table 5.17
LP Attendee and Control Group Perceptions of Likelihood of Sanctions

"PERCEIVED CHANCES OF"	***Control Group***	***Attendee Group***	**PERCENT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GROUPS**
Homicide—Chances Are Good or Very Good Of:			
Arrest	90.4%	88.4%	-2
Charge	90.4	88.4	-2
Conviction	83.3	86.9	+3.6
Prison	83.3	89.9	+6.6
Robbery—Chances Are Good or Very Good Of:			
Arrest	76.3	84.0	+7.7
Charge	82.7	88.4	+5.7
Conviction	78.9	87.0	+8.1
Prison	70.0	82.6	+12.1
Selling Drugs—Chances Are Good or Very Good Of:			
Arrest	66.6	72.5	+5.9
Charge	76.3	78.2	+1.9
Conviction	68.6	75.4	+6.8
Prison	61.6	66.6	+5.0

Probationers in both groups tended to respond consistently to the homicide question. In other words, if a respondent said the chances of getting arrested for homicide were "good", he was also very likely to say that the chances of getting charged, convicted, and going to prison for homicide were also "good." If a respondent answered that the chances of arrest for homicide were "poor," he was also very likely to choose "poor" as his response for the three remaining sanctions.

This tendency to respond equally for all sanctions was not the case for the crimes of robbery and drug sales. Both groups were likely to upgrade their response at the "charging" stage, and then down grade for both conviction and prison time. In other words, they believed that the chances of being sanctioned at the prosecutorial stage were

greater than the chances of getting arrested; however, they believed that both the chances of being convicted and going to prison decreased.

Lifestyle Changes

As previously noted, the LP meetings were also intended to link probationers and parolees to legitimate opportunities and services. Consequently, probationers were asked a series of questions to see if the lever-pulling meetings were leading to positive changes in their lives. The control group was asked the same questions. The results are presented in 5.18.

Table 5.18
LP Attendees and Control Group Likelihood Self-Reported Lifestyle Changes

% RESPONDING "YES" TO EACH LIFESTYLE CHANGE	CONTROL GROUP (percent)	ATTENDEE GROUP (percent)
Gotten job or job training	44.9	29.0
Started school or education program	29.6	13.0
Entered drug or alcohol treatment	40.4	14.5
Begun going to church regularly	24.4	14.5
Hanging out with different friends	42.9	23.2
Missed meeting with probation officer	21.8	10.1
Nothing has changed since first meeting	N/A	40.6

The attendees were asked if any of these changes had occurred since attending their first offender meeting (we asked the control group whether the changes had occurred in the last six months). The results of this section were discouraging in terms of the LP meetings increasing linkages to services. In almost all categories, the control group reported more positive lifestyle changes. In most cases, the percentage of control group members who reported positive lifestyle changes was over twice that of the attendee group. The only category in which the meeting attendees seemed to be more successful was in keeping their meetings with their probation officers. In this case, 10.1 percent of

attendees said they had recently missed a meeting with their probation officer, while 21.8 percent of the control group said they had done so. Just over forty percent of the attendees responded that nothing in their life had changed since they attended their first offender meeting.

General Conclusions and Feedback to the Working Group

The comparison of LP meeting attendees and non-meeting attendees was difficult to implement and assess. The difficulties included the basic design of the research as well as the challenges in generating a response rate.

The most significant problem related to selection issues. As noted earlier, the preferred approach from an evaluation standpoint would have been to randomly assign similar offenders to either attend or not attend the LP meetings. That was not a viable option. Rather, using criteria that emerged from the analysis of homicide patterns, probation and parole officers were asked to refer high-risk clients (those with violent crime, firearms, and drug charges and gang affiliations) to LP meetings. Using offense record we were able to identify a comparison group yet we cannot rule out the possibility that the probation and parole officers were indeed identifying their "highest-risk" clients to the LP meetings. This issue was magnified by the difficulty tracking LP attendees and the resulting low response rate.

With these significant qualifications in mind, there are several interesting results of the comparison between survey results and the actual behavior of the probationers. First, many attendees were not arrested after attending a meeting. Second, while the two groups of probationers had similar offending patterns prior to their current offense, attendees were more likely to be arrested after beginning their current probation than were

those in the control group. This elevated number of offenses may reflect what drew the attention of the probation department and led to their being placed in the LP meeting program (for being "high-risk"). In contrast, attendees of LP meetings were slightly less likely to be convicted of a felony or misdemeanor after the LP meeting. Similarly, LP meeting attendees were more likely than the comparison group to be incarcerated before the current offense but less likely to be incarcerated after the intervention (despite more arrests). This may indicate that their subsequent arrests were for less serious offenses.

An additional finding was that about half as many meeting attendees as control group members reported having made positive lifestyle changes. Again, this may indicate that the meetings were unsuccessful in connecting probationers to services or it may mean that these clients were already at high risk and reflective of the factors that led the PO to refer the client to the meeting. It is clear that most attendees chose not to take advantage of the help offered to them.

In contrast, it seems that the offenders who attended the meetings were slightly more likely to be aware of the initiatives of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership and to believe in their effectiveness. Unfortunately, their corresponding behavior does not reflect a change in their willingness to change their offending habits. Similarly, most attendees understood and remembered at least one of the lever-pulling messages though, again, their behavior did not correspond to the lever-pulling message. This behavior may be a reflection of the fact that almost half of the meeting attendees did not believe those law enforcement agencies have followed through on the threats they made at the meetings.

Nearly all of the comparisons between the LP meeting attendees and the comparison group were not statistically significant and thus should be interpreted cautiously. In the concluding chapter we provide interpretation of these findings.

The findings from this study were presented to the working group in November 2000. The group was disappointed that the surveys did not reveal more positive support for the lever-pulling meetings, but they also analyzed what needed to be changed in the implementation of these meetings. The working group focused on remedying two possible explanations for the lack of differences between groups. First, a decision was made to choose fewer people to attend and have them attend several meetings.[34] The working group decided that attending only one meeting resulted in an insufficient communication of the message. In addition, they recognized that the pool of attendees was too large and the group was unable to back-up the threat conveyed. Strict follow-up was necessary to provide better supervision of those who attended the meetings. The probation department and other agencies, such as police and prosecutors, were generally unaware of the offenders that had attended these meetings. The second response was to revisit the criteria for selecting who should attend these meetings. There was concern that many of the attendees did not fit the priority pattern particularly well. The group responded by changing the selection criteria, attempting to involve probationers/parolees that were either identified gang members or identified as an associate of groups involved in violence.

The group also struggled with identifying ways to inform other criminal justice actors about the lever-pulling status of these offenders. Most criminal justice personnel

outside the working group did not know about these meetings and were unaware of the priority status of these offenders. For example, supervising probationer officers rarely sanctioned the lever-pulling attendees if they missed a meeting. The IVRP long struggled with this issue due to typical shortcomings in the technological capabilities of government agencies. The inability of the working group to make lever-pulling status immediately available at the time of arrest, prosecution screening, or sentencing seriously hindered the deterrent capacity of the program. However, as previously mentioned, the IVRP working group believed that tracking of these offenders could be greatly improved if a smaller group of people were chosen for more intense involvement in the lever-pulling strategy.

Finally, it was clear from this research that meeting attendees had not taken advantage of the opportunities presented to them. When asked about the key message they remembered from the meetings, the second most popular response was that opportunities for help were being offered. Clearly, many of the offenders understood and remembered this part of the message. Yet, of the sixty-nine offenders surveyed, only four said they contacted law enforcement officers as a result of the meeting, and only a quarter of probationers said that they attempted to contact community leaders as a result of the meeting. As discussed briefly in Chapter 4, the group revised its approach in delivering the message, providing more time in the meeting for the community leaders and the offenders to interact, and then contacting them after the meetings to remind them of services and opportunities available to them to overcome this limitation.

[34] Follow-up meetings to reinforce the deterrence message and to reiterate the connection to services occurred sporadically during 1999 but proved difficult to sustain from a resource standpoint.

The feedback of these findings and the subsequent programmatic revisions reflect the action research component of the strategic problem solving approach. Unfortunately, our survey results did not capture whether this revised meeting approach resulted in increased linkage to services.

Project III: An Analysis of Violent Impact Program Enhanced Response (VIPER) Program

As noted in previous sections, the VIPER program was created by the Indianapolis Police Department. Early in the evolution of the IVRP, the finding that many homicide suspects and victims were characterized by extensive criminal histories led to discussion among the working group of the need to identify violent chronic offenders. The belief was that if these chronic, violent offenders could be identified the system could become more effective in ensuring prosecution and thereby increasing incapacitation and deterrence of violence.

The VIPER program was implemented within the IVRP framework in an effort to maximize the efficient deployment of scarce criminal justice resources, and to direct those efforts at those offenders most responsible for violence in the community. The VIPER designation was also designed to improve officer safety through the identification of high-risk individuals. By 1999, officers knew if the person they had stopped was a VIPER because it was information included on their mobile terminal.

The goals of the VIPER program were explicit:

1. Identification of the most violent adult and juvenile offenders
2. Aggressive prosecution at state and federal levels for chronic violent offenders
3. Aggressive enforcement of illegal use, possession and purchase of firearms
4. Strict parole and probation supervision of VIPER offenders

This section examines whether the IVRP accomplished these goals.

Identification of the Most Violent Offenders

An IPD sergeant, formerly a homicide investigator, who was a key member of the IVRP working group, initiated the VIPER program. The sergeant worked with staff of the Marion County criminal records system to statistically identify individuals with the most arrests for violent offenses. As an initial criteria, the information system was searched for two or more arrests for the most violent crimes such as murder and attempted murder, robbery, rape, possession of a machine gun or bomb, sawed off shotgun and unlawful use of body armor. The initial list included 270 individuals.

Table 5-19
Initial Designation of VIPER Offenders

	Number	Mean
Violent Felony Arrests*	1,173	4.3
Weapons Charges	325	1.2
Murder Charges**	173	0.6

*excludes non-violent felonies and misdemeanors
** includes attempted murder and conspiracy to commit murder

VIPER Criminal Activity (General)

Following the initial designation of the VIPER list, the IPD regularly revised the list by removing individuals who were deceased, incarcerated for very long time periods, or who had not witnessed any additional criminal activity for several years. New individuals were also added based on their multiple arrests for violent offenses. In July 2000 the research team worked with the then-current VIPER list to develop a profile of

the VIPER offenders and to assess whether the VIPER-program goals were being achieved.

As of July 2000, there were 254 individuals designated as VIPER offenders. The 254 individuals listed on the VIPER roster accounted for nearly *four thousand* arrests. Of these, 1,986 were arrests for violent crime, most commonly robbery or battery. In addition, this sample of offenders was also frequently charged with resisting arrest, often one of several violent charges among many in an arrest incident.

Of particular interest for the strategy implemented by the IVRP was the number of homicides that involved VIPERs. As might be expected, VIPERs were frequently arrested for murder. Out of the 245 cases for which there was adequate information, there were 133 homicide arrests. What is more, as with all of the count/percentage data presented here, this is a conservative estimate of criminal activity. Although not a frequent occurrence, one arrest incident might contain several murder *charges*. Further, the data reflect arrests occurring only in Marion County, Indiana. Finally, a significant portion of violent arrests consisted of firearms offenses (nearly 700 arrests). It is clear that the violent criminals selected for inclusion in the VIPER program frequently carry and use firearms of various sorts. In addition, over 500 arrests contained at least one drug charge. Overwhelmingly, VIPERs' drug arrests were made up of cocaine possession and distribution as well as marijuana possession. Possession of paraphernalia and vague "controlled substance" offenses represented the remainder of drug arrests included in this analysis.

Consistent with the IVRP analyses of homicides, a substantial amount of crime in the Indianapolis area was committed by a relatively small number of offenders. The

sample of VIPER offenders was suggestive that the VIPER offenders overlapped with the group of chronic offenders involved in a large portion of Indianapolis homicides. These offenders tended to engage in violent, person crimes such as robbery and battery; such behavior was also often coupled with drug use and distribution. Finally, this "core" group of offenders also routinely used and carried firearms. It was also evident that the VIPER program, by failing to list juvenile offenders, did not fully succeed in identifying *all* of the most chronic offenders in the Indianapolis area. Just the same, Table 5.20 demonstrates that the program appeared to succeed in identifying a relatively small group of offenders responsible for an inordinate amount of illicit activity.

Table 5.20
Offense Profile of VIPER Offenders as of July 2000

	Number	Mean
Total arrests	3931	16.0
Total violent arrests	1986	8.1
Homicide	133	0.5
Firearms	684	2.8
Drug Arrests	549	2.2

* The number of arrests is a conservative estimate. These include arrests occurring in Marion County, Indiana only. Further, the arrest incidents can include multiple charges. N = 245 due to missing information in 9 cases.

Of the 254 violent offenders identified in the VIPER program, 51 percent (n = 130) were incarcerated[35] as of July 2000. In an attempt to examine the differences (if any) between the two groups, arrest data for both imprisoned VIPERs and those that were not incarcerated were compared. Table 5.21 presents summary arrest data for the two groups representing the aggregate totals for each sample's entire criminal career (both prior to and following VIPER designation). The number of arrests for the two groups

was similar overall and for most of the crimes. The number of homicides was the only major difference between the two groups.

Table 5.21
Comparison of VIPER Offenders by Incarceration Status

	Incarcerated on 7/27/00		Not incarcerated on 7/27/00	
	#	Mean	#	Mean
Total arrests	1896	14.6	2022	16.3
Total violent arrests	970	7.5	1008	8.1
Homicide arrests	88	0.7	44	0.4
Firearms arrests	362	2.8	317	2.5
Drug arrests	274	2.1	270	2.2
N	130	NA	124	NA

VIPER Demographics

Race, age, and gender data are provided in Table 5.22. Chronic offenders identified in the VIPER program were overwhelmingly male, African-American, and in their mid- to late-twenties. The average age for VIPERs was 25.6 years of age. The disproportionate inclusion of African-Americans was a concern among IVRP working group members yet it reflected the disproportionate victimization of African-Americans as well. Further, the VIPER list was based on a simple count of arrests for violent offenses. The compilation of the arrest data for designation as a VIPER did not include information as to the racial and ethnic characteristics of the offenders.

[35] For the purposes of this analysis, "incarcerated" is operationalized by an offender being *sentenced* to either a local jail or state prison facility. Offenders being held pending legal action, for example those unable to make bail, were not classified as "incarcerated."

Table 5.22

VIPER Demographic Summary (as of July 27, 2000)	
Characteristic	**Total VIPER Population (%) N=254**
RACE	
Black	90.2
White	8.7
Asian	.4
Unknown	.8
AGE	
Mean	25.61
Std Dev	*2.4*
GENDER	
Male	99.2
Female	.8

Aggressive Prosecution of Chronic Violent Offenders

Among the goals of the IVRP were the "aggressive" *prosecution* of chronic, violent offenders and the "aggressive" *enforcement* of illegal use, possession, and purchase of firearms. This analysis focuses on the prosecution of VIPER offenders before and after their formal designation as high-priority cases within the Marion County justice system.

Prosecutorial "Aggressiveness"[36] Prior to VIPER Program

Table 5.23 depicts the arrest and disposition totals for the sample of VIPER offenders in the years before the IVRP had developed a VIPER program. Because each individual arrest could potentially result in a conviction, a not-filed/dismissed disposition and a not-guilty disposition, ratios or coefficients can be used to assess the level of

[36] Due to the methodology adopted for this analysis, which attempts to capture both criminal activity as well as prosecutorial aggressiveness with incident-based data, the summary provided here will use ratio measurements rather than percentages. In order to use percentages, one would need to have used absolute counts of charges in order to determine proportional values.

"successful" case prosecution across decision stages. Table 5.24 presents a series of ratios that aid in understanding the "aggressiveness" of prosecution prior to VIPER designation. The term "Pre-VIPER" simply represents the period for each individual before they were entered into the VIPER database.

Table 5.23
Arrests and Case Dispositions of VIPER Offenders, Pre-VIPER Program

	# Arrests	# Convictions	# Not filed	# Not guilty
Total	3489	1596	2785	167
Mean	14.2	6.5	11.4	0.7
Standard deviation	7.1	3.5	5.9	0.9
Violent	1794	790	1329	101
Mean	7.3	3.2	5.4	0.4
Standard deviation	2.8	1.9	2.3	0.7
Homicide	127	16	95	12
Mean	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.1
Standard deviation	0.8	0.3	0.7	0.2
Firearm	632	225	437	51
Mean	2.6	0.9	1.8	0.2
Standard deviation	1.8	1.0	1.4	0.4
Drug	495	200	368	18
Mean	2.0	0.8	1.5	0.1
Standard deviation	1.9	1.1	1.5	0.3

As Tables 5.23 and 5.24 indicate, there were more than twice as many arrests for violent crimes than convictions for violent crimes, for nearly every violent arrest there was a dismissal of a violent charge or a charge for a violent crime was not filed at all. There were over seven arrests for every one conviction for homicide. Similar trends held for drug and firearms offenses as well.

Table 5.24
Ratio of Arrests to Case Dispositions, Pre-VIPER Program

	Arrest per conviction	Arrest per case not filed	Arrest per not guilty finding
Total	2.2 : 1	1.3 : 1	20.9 : 1
Violent	2.3 : 1	1.3 : 1	17.8 : 1
Homicide	7.9 : 1	1.3 : 1	10.6 : 1
Firearm	2.8 : 1	1.4 : 1	12.3 : 1
Drug	2.5 : 1	1.3 : 1	27.5 : 1

Prosecutorial "Aggressiveness" Following Implementation of VIPER

For the entire VIPER population there were a total of 332 arrest incidents between March 2, 1998 and July 27, 2000 (the entire post-VIPER period). Yet, this understates the amount of criminal activity because, as mentioned previously in this report, more than half of the VIPER population was incarcerated during the analysis period. The bulk of arrest incidents (75.3%) originated from VIPERs that were NOT incarcerated at the July 2000 date used to check criminal records. In fact over two-thirds (68.5%; n=89) of VIPERs incarcerated had no arrests at all in the post-VIPER period compared to only 30 percent (n=37) of VIPERs *not* incarcerated. Indeed, of the 130 individuals that were incarcerated, 60 percent (n=79) were also imprisoned on the day of entry into the VIPER program. In practical terms, this means that these offenders have never been exposed to the "treatment" of the VIPER program via the IVRP, hence no "effect" can be measured. Moreover, the mean sentence length in years for those offenders imprisoned at the time of entry into the VIPER database and as of July 2000 was 20.25 years.[37]

In order to assess the overall "aggressiveness" of the IVRP in general toward VIPERs, the 59 cases of incarcerated VIPER offenders, as well as two cases for which

[37] n=59 ; Standard Deviation = 19.14.

data were not available were excluded. The data presented below are for the remaining 193 VIPER offenders that were exposed to the IVRP during from March 1998 through July 2000.

As Table 5.25 indicates, the 193 VIPER offenders that were in the community during at least a portion of the March 1998 – July 2000 period were involved in 329 arrests. These included 144 arrests for violent crimes, six arrests involving homicide charges, 37 involving firearms, and 43 drug offenses. Several points emerge. First, although the level of arrests indicates continued involvement in serious criminal activity, the six arrests involving homicide charges and 144 arrests involving violent crimes are a relatively small proportion of the total number of homicides, gun assaults, and armed robberies occurring in Indianapolis during this time period. Indeed, there were over 300 homicides and nearly 5,400 gun assaults and armed robberies during this time.

Table 5.25
Arrests and Case Dispositions of VIPER Offenders, Post-VIPER Program

	# Arrests	**# Convictions**	**# Not filed**	**# Not guilty**
Total	329	100	339	35
Mean	1.8	0.5	1.8	0.2
Standard deviation	2.2	0.9	1.8	0.4
Violent	144	42	159	27
Mean	0.8	0.2	0.8	0.1
Standard deviation	1.2	0.5	1.0	0.4
Homicide	6	6	1	4
Mean	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.02
Standard deviation	0.2	0.2	0.01	0.2
Firearm	37	36	41	13
Mean	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1
Standard deviation	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2
Drug	43	9	57	4
Mean	0.2	0.05	0.3	0.02
Standard deviation	0.6	0.2	0.7	0.1

By comparing the Pre- and Post-VIPER program data, one can begin to assess whether or not there was increased intensity in the enforcement of law against those chronic, violent offenders. According to the aggressiveness coefficients calculated using arrest – disposition ratios, the IVRP did not seem to be showing signs of success across all dimensions of the "aggressiveness" concept applied here. Rather, there were signs of increased prosecutorial aggressiveness for homicide and firearms charges but not for other offense categories. Note, for example, the decrease in the number of arrests per conviction for homicide and firearms charges compared to the increase for all the other offense types.

Table 5-26
VIPER Arrest to Case Processing Ratios, Pre- and Post-VIPER Program

	Arrest per conviction		**Arrest per case not filed**		**Arrest per not guilty finding**	
	Pre-VIPER	**Post-VIPER**	**Pre-VIPER**	**Post-VIPER**	**Pre-VIPER**	**Post-VIPER**
Total	2.2 : 1	3.3 : 1	1.3 : 1	.97 : 1	20.9 : 1	9.4 : 1
Violent	2.3 : 1	3.4 : 1	1.3 : 1	.91 : 1	17.8 : 1	5.3 : 1
Homicide	7.9 : 1	1 : 1	1.3 : 1	6 : 1	10.6 : 1	1.5 : 1
Firearm	2.8 : 1	1.1 : 1	1.4 : 1	.91 : 1	12.3 : 1	2.9 : 1
Drug	2.5 : 1	4.8 : 1	1.3 : 1	.75 : 1	27.5 : 1	11.0 :1

This pattern held for most of these indicators of case processing aggressiveness. For all of the offense categories examined here except for homicide, there were more not-filed/dismissal dispositions for every arrest incident than before the inception of the program (indicated by the decreased ratio of arrests per case not filed). The situation for other violent offenses and for drug offenses did not indicate increased prosecutorial aggressiveness for VIPER offenders.

Discussion and Feedback to the Working Group

The IVRP, and the VIPER program specifically, sought to enhance the enforcement of existing gun laws as well as to intensify the prosecution of chronic, violent offenders. The finding that with the exception of arrests involving homicide and firearms charges, the IVRP had seemingly failed to increase the prosecution of VIPER offenders was presented to the IVRP working group. The group identified several problems with the implementation of the VIPER program. First, it was difficult to communicate to others outside the working group the importance of prioritizing VIPER offenders. For example, the working group made several presentations to the judges in Marion County, explaining the program and the significance of the VIPER list. Yet, it was unclear whether this educational effort was successful given judicial desires to maintain independence from law enforcement policy.

These data also suggested that the prosecutor's office was not aggressively prosecuting VIPER offenders. The discussion of the findings led to the discovery that line-level prosecutor's were generally unaware of the VIPER program, and thus did not treat VIPER offenders as priority offenders. In contrast, the joint firearms unit as well as the local prosecutor responsible for screening homicide cases was well aware of the VIPER designation and thus responded by prioritizing VIPER cases. The working group responded by holding a training session with prosecutors and also arranged to have the VIPER tag be attached to prosecutorial records.

Second, the VIPER list was considered unwieldy. There was concern that too many offenders were on the list, and it was impossible to focus and monitor such a large group of offenders. It was also difficult to collect informal street knowledge on VIPER

offenders. Over time, the IVRP group made adjustments to make this list more manageable. The working group established a priority list of top VIPER offenders. In addition, the working group member who created and monitored the list, distributed packets of materials to the various participating agencies about specific VIPERs. An important follow-up assessment project would be to examine whether this priority list of VIPERs has been aggressively prosecuted.

The sharing of the findings from the VIPER analysis, as well as other findings from the IVRP study, also reflected the role of research in the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative. As opposed to the traditional role of the distant evaluation team, the action research partner role included ongoing feedback to the IVRP working group so that the process could include an ongoing feedback, assessment, and adjustment component.

Chapter Six
Summary and Conclusions

The Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership (IVRP) represented an attempt to employ a strategic problem solving process to reduce homicide and serious firearms violence in Marion County. The strategic problem solving process was characterized by a multi-agency structure, community partners, and a data-driven process. In this concluding chapter we include observations about the strategic problem solving process as well as address the issue of whether this process had an effect on levels of violence in Indianapolis.

Multi-Agency Strategic Problem Solving

The multi-agency structure, including community partners and the active participation of a research team, was intended to accomplish a number of objectives. These included increased sharing of information, creative use of limited resources, and the use of data for problem analysis, feedback and assessment. Along these dimensions it appears that the IVRP was a success.

This was evident in interview data with members of the working group that revealed that participants saw this as different from many prior task forces and who described an unprecedented sharing of information between both local agencies and between local, state, and federal agencies. It was also reflected in the sharing of information between police investigators and probation officers and neighborhood leaders including many from the faith community. Early in the process we did an inventory of all task forces, programs, and initiatives that were in operation in Marion County at that time. We were somewhat surprised by the large number of initiatives in operation, but

were very surprised just how much of this information was unknown to participants. The IVRP's bi-weekly meetings, newsletters, and informal communication that occurred helped spread information about ongoing and new initiatives. When working group participants needed information, they had a key contact in every key criminal justice agency in Marion County.

Perhaps more telling than the interviews were the behavioral indicators. The IVRP working group began meeting on alternate Tuesday mornings in January 1998 and continued nearly five years later as this report is being written. Indeed, the working group continues despite the near total turnover in appointed and elected officials of the participating agencies and local government.

The problem solving process also appears to have been a key component in the observed commitment of participants. Interviews reflected the belief that the problem analysis helped to provide a focus and shared understanding of the firearms violence problem that created both a sense of purpose and accomplishment. This included both the initial problem analysis that revealed the dimensions of group structure and the tie to drug distribution, but also to the ongoing problem assessment that included sharing of information about current activity on the streets. The research team made an effort to listen to the needs of the working group and would collect data relevant to their questions and concerns. The team also knew that a vital stage of the problem-solving process is feedback and assessment. The research team presented both our short-term and larger evaluation projects to the group. Some of these data, as discussed earlier, led to revision of the strategic plan.

In many respects, the dynamics observed in the IVRP appear similar to those described in the New York Police Department's COMPSTAT program (Silverman, 1999). Although COMPSTAT is more police department driven (though not exclusively) and assesses a broader range of criminal activity, the two initiatives share in common routine review of timely crime data in order to craft interventions to address the current criminogenic forces operating on the streets. The informal and formal communications that occurred inside and outside the working group process also acted as an accountability mechanism—critical to the success of such interventions.

Challenges for the Problem Solving Process

Despite these accomplishments, the IVRP experienced a number of challenges. One of these was a lack of resources. This was evident in a number of ways and at different times during the study period. For example, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) was an important partner throughout the entire period. Yet, early in the process the agents were pulled away from IVRP due to a rash of church-related arsons throughout the state. Since that time BATF has become a much more active participant but for a period of time there were simply insufficient resources for BATF to be a major player in the IVRP.

The probation and parole agencies similarly struggled with limited resources. Staff to client ratios were extremely high and created significant challenges for implementing accountability mechanisms. During the course of the IVRP process, analysis revealed that the county had approximately 25,000 outstanding felony warrants yet there were only a small number of police, sheriff, and U.S. Marshal Service agents available to routinely search for felons and serve warrants. In both the case of

probation/parole service and in terms of proactive warrant service, simple calculations of the number of clients or warrants simply overwhelmed available resources. Yet, the strategic process employed in the IVRP provided a vehicle for targeting limited resources in a meaningful way. Thus, the discussion shifted from why home visits to 10,000 probationers and parolees (or service of many of the 25,000 outstanding warrants) was impossible, to a focus on home visits and warrant service to those individuals believed to be most at-risk for current involvement in violence. In addition, the working group became the place where the probation department coordinated with other participating agencies in order to conduct probationer sweeps. The Indianapolis Police Department, the Marion County Sheriff's Department, the U.S. Marshal's Service, and Marion County Justice Agency contributed manpower to increase the effectiveness of the sweeps. In fact, the probation sweeps provide a good illustration of the potency of the working group process. The working group collected data to identify key hotspots worth targeting with the sweeps as well as probationers at high risk for being involved in violence. The probation department was strapped for resources, but having willing partners that contributed time and personnel to the sweep efforts significantly increased the presence (and the safety for participating officers) of probation in the targeted neighborhoods. Recall also that the ADAM data indicated that probation contacts and sweeps were among the IVRP initiatives that were well known by arrestees.

Another challenge for the IVRP was the turnover of key personnel both in leadership positions and throughout the working group organizations. With each successive wave of turnover it became critical to educate new leaders and new working group members on the mission, goals, and strategic approach of the IVRP. Because

turnover occurred at different times, there were almost always new faces in attendance at the meetings. The working group always made an effort to bring new members up to speed by discussing the process and sharing reports and other printed materials, but there was clearly a steep learning curve for each new member.

A related challenge was finding effective ways of communicating to the rank-and-file of the participating agencies. Despite roll-call trainings, in-service training, newsletters, e-mail messages, and similar approaches there was abundant evidence that many colleagues within the various criminal justice agencies remained unaware of what the IVRP was. This was a critical challenge because being able to follow through on the message delivered at lever pulling meetings depended on other rank-and-file personnel committing to the priorities of the IVRP. These agencies also experienced frequent turnover in key positions, and so the IVRP and its strategic plan became one of many different items that each new official had to learn.

Another challenge that emerged was sustaining energy and commitment once the crisis of homicide violence appeared to be abated. Observers of major organizational and interorganizational change often note the critical role that crises can play as an instigator in change. This appeared to be true in Indianapolis as record setting levels of homicide proved a strong motivator for bringing political leaders, agency heads, and their staffs to the table. Yet, there was also a sense among some of the working group members that following the spring and summer of 1999, when significant declines in homicide occurred, that there was some loss in commitment and momentum. This was evident in the drop in frequency with which a homicide would result in a police-led multi-agency response to the homicide, a decline in the number of lever pulling meetings, and the

difficulty of getting street-level officers to attend the ongoing incident review action meetings.

The challenge of sustaining such a multi-agency focus, after success has been achieved and crisis abated, appears to have been true not only in Indianapolis but also in Boston, the forerunner for the strategic problem solving approach (Decker, 2003). Fortunately, in both Boston and Indianapolis there remained local commitment to reducing firearms violence and the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhood has provided an infusion of both resources and energy that may sustain and enhance the multi-agency strategic approach (www.psn.gov).

The IVRP experience also revealed that the problem solving process represents a new way of doing business for all involved. This raises philosophical issues. For example, the traditional thinking on homicide among criminal justice officials is that once an arrest, conviction, and incarceration have occurred the issue has been addressed. The IVRP working group sought to go beyond arrest and prosecution and to influence the broader context of homicides in order to prevent future incidents. Particularly early in the project, many working group participants continued to focus on using the information shared to solve cases and often did not see the value of information or strategies that did not relate to solving cases. This related to questions in the minds of some members of the working group about whether it is possible reduce homicide through planned, strategic action. This mindset appeared to be less of an obstacle over time but clearly involved a

new way of thinking about addressing violent crime.[38]

The strategic problem solving process also involved a new role for the research team. The research team members were active participants in working group meetings. The researchers were asked to provide data of practical value in terms of understanding the patterns of firearms violence and ongoing evaluation to help inform the working group of the utility of various strategies. This role had a number of implications for the research team. This was a very time consuming role yet also a very rewarding experience. The researchers had to be mindful of ethical obligations related to the sharing of information and the distinction between the research and law enforcement roles.

The working group process created significant time demands on all partners. Although commitment remained high throughout the study period, there were occasionally concerns raised about being "meeting'd out." Further, the time demands on key players within the IVRP were on top of normal responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, the rewards of engaging in the problem solving process appeared evident in the commitment of so many different actors to stay involved for what has become a five-year (and ongoing) period.

Lessons about Firearms Violence in Indianapolis

The problem analysis dimension of the IVRP process also provided insight into the dynamics of firearms violence in Indianapolis. The analysis process included a

[38] Over time it seemed to become clear that the responsibilities of reacting to and solving crimes were not necessarily contradictory with the goals of intervening to prevent future violence. For example, incident reviews proved useful both in sharing information relevant to ongoing investigations and for crafting strategic interventions.

review of a variety of data sources: UCR offense trends and patterns, calls-for-service, court records, probation and parole records, BATF gun tracing data, and geographic information system (GIS) mapping analyses. These techniques revealed a number of characteristics of the firearms violence in Indianapolis. As in most U.S. urban settings, firearms violence was largely concentrated in particular areas of the city, involving young males using firearms, and with homicide victims and suspects looking quite similar to one another in terms of extensive histories of criminal involvement. At this level of focus, the analysis seemed accurate but not particularly helpful in terms of informing strategic intervention.[39]

The additional analytical tool that proved very useful was the systematic incident review. Borrowed from an approach used in Boston and Minneapolis the incident review involved a case-by-case review of homicide incidents (later expanded to gun assaults) with representatives of all the participating IVRP agencies. The initial reviews were all-day sessions involving the review of large numbers of incidents. Subsequent to these sessions bi-weekly (later monthly) incident reviews with smaller number of street-level officers, probation/parole officers, prosecutors, crime analysts, and investigators were implemented that involved review of incidents occurring within the previous two weeks. The incident reviews proved crucial for informing the picture of firearms violence in Indianapolis. In particular, the reviews indicated that firearms violence involved groups of chronic offenders and often involvement in drug sales. Further, many of the victims

[39] The exceptions to this statement were the crime maps that showed close relationships between indicators of violence, drug activity, and residences of probationers and parolees. The maps were also useful for community meetings whereby it became clear that violence was highly concentrated in particular neighborhoods. Additionally, the extensive criminal histories of homicide suspects and victims suggested the criminal justice system might have some tools for intervening with high-risk individuals and groups.

and suspects were individuals who repeatedly were associated with violence. A common scenario would be an individual who was in the car with another suspect in one incident, on the scene of another incident, known to "hang" with a group involved in a drug market shooting, and eventually a victim or suspect in a current offense. The incident reviews, typically based on the knowledge of street-level officers,[40] brought these relationships and these patterns to light. The finding of group structure and drug sales role in violence was also very revealing because the official police records did not reveal these patterns.

The additional benefit of the incident reviews was in developing a group consensus on the nature of the firearms violence problem and on the types of strategic interventions that should be used to reduce violence. Simply put, it was very difficult to leave the incident reviews and not believe that the strategies to be developed had to address the group and drug connection to violence. As the incident reviews continued it also became evident that when you bring knowledgeable street level actors together that it was possible to have a very timely picture of what was occurring on the streets and where resources should be directed to attempt to prevent violence from arising in current hotspots.[41] At the same time, it was also evident that this type of dynamic incident review faced challenges of getting the right people in the room and then following through with strategic interventions.

[40] Typically no single individual had complete awareness of these patterns but the reviews would reveal that several police officers, a probation officer, and a prosecutor had dealt with the individual in separate incidents. The patterns only emerged when all these criminal justice professionals were in the same room.
[41] Hotspots could involve groups or geographic locations, or a combination.

Lessons about Practitioner-Researcher Collaborations

One of the great successes of the Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership was that the partners did commit to the problem solving and data driven process. Through this process, we learned a great deal about the promises and obstacles for researchers working collaboratively with criminal justice officials. This intensive experience provided insights and lessons learned that may be of value to other researchers interested in participating in "action research."

First, problem-solving research and data collection takes an incredible amount of time and effort. We tried to have researchers present at all working group meetings, incident-review meetings, subcommittee meetings, and specific strategic initiatives such as lever-pulling meetings. This provided rich process data, and helped build the trust necessary to have candid discussions about what is and what is not working.

Second, it seemed helpful that the two senior researchers played different, but complementary research roles in the working group. McGarrell's was "researcher-facilitator," developing data collection strategies to support the analysis stages of the problem-solving model. He also attended most of the meetings mentioned above and was the facilitator of the problem solving process. This role included planning, organizing, and setting the agenda for the bi-weekly partnership meetings. He was a crucial contact point for all members of the working group. When individuals or organizational representatives missed a meeting, McGarrell relayed the information discussed and made them aware of strategic plan initiatives. He used his position as facilitator to remind working group members of the underlying theoretical and practical purposes of the problem-solving strategy, keeping the working group focused on developing ways to

maximize the impacts of the interventions. Chermak's role is better described as "researcher-evaluator." Chermak and McGarrell collaborated on devising and implementing the short-term data collection strategies that informed the practical, day-to-day operations of the working group. However, Chermak was also involved as an evaluator of the broader impact of the strategy and thus was somewhat removed from the process. This evaluator role provided the opportunity to view the process with a critical and objective eye, focusing on the political, organizational, and practical hurdles that often impeded the effectiveness of implemented strategies. He was also responsible for implementing the long-term data collection strategies.

Third, it is very important to take time to understand the data information systems available to criminal justice personnel and appreciate their strengths and weaknesses. We were fortunate in that the research team had been working closely with the Indianapolis Police Department and other Marion County Agencies and had some expertise about the information systems before IVRP started. In fact, the work on IPD's COMPSTAT-type program, IMAP, provided a foundational working appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of available data. This working knowledge made the initial analysis stages go rather smoothly.

Fourth, it is important to know and build relationships with the people who work daily with these information systems. For example, although crime analysts of the IPD and Sheriff's department, and district criminologists did not attend working group meetings regularly, they provided valuable data to the working group on a frequent basis. These people were incredibly giving of their time and expertise that helped strengthen the data driven strategic planning. These experts helped the research team dramatically

because they would produce maps, calls-for-service run data, and some crime data, which in turn allowed the researchers to devote time and attention to other data collection initiatives.

Fifth, it is important to find ways to feed information back to the working group that increases the likelihood that the data will inform the strategic initiative. We used many different data collection strategies, including written and telephone surveys, mail surveys, official data collection, as well as the evaluation projects. We presented this information back to the group in written and presentational form. Several of these later presentations went well, igniting a dialogue about what the data meant and what can be done to address the issues raised. Other presentations did not go as well. It was important to talk about issues that were central to members of the group, highlighting issues related to the strategic initiative. It was also important to choose how and when to present the information. For example, some of the research we conducted on the lever pulling meetings about service provision was only of direct interest to a few members of the working group. Thus, we presented these findings to some members informally, and then included the findings in a report provided to the rest of the group.

It was also crucial to be sensitive to the political environment in which public officials operate yet also to be faithful to sharing potentially controversial findings with the working group. This was most evident in the analysis of case disposition data related to the VIPER program. The data were first shared with the IVRP representatives from the prosecutor's office and then with the full working group. Rather than use the data to criticize one of the member agencies, the data were used to problem-solve and ultimately

led to a technological innovation ensuring that prosecutors and pre-trial screeners were aware when they were dealing with a defendant that was on the VIPER list.

Finally, effective researcher-practitioner relationships depend on the timely sharing of data with the working group. On occasion this meant sharing preliminary findings and utilizing imperfect data. Balancing timely responsiveness with a certain degree of confidence in the findings is a challenge likely to confront researchers in this type of action-research partnership.

Strategic Interventions

As noted in prior chapters, the strategies developed by the IVRP involved a focused deterrence approach coupled with increased linkage to services for high-risk offenders. This included both suppression and intervention components that have been included in many prior crime reduction initiatives (e.g., see Sherman et al. 1997; Decker, 2003). The distinguishing characteristic of the IVRP approach was the attempt to use a problem-solving framework to focus these components on the key dimensions of the local firearms violence problem. What emerged was a focused deterrence lever pulling strategy (Kennedy, 1998) that sought to focus limited criminal justice resources on firearms violence, to use both state and federal sanctions to deter illegal gun carrying and use, to communicate this strategy through as many venues as possible to those individuals believed to be most at-risk for involvement in violence, and to link potential offenders to legitimate opportunities and services.

Impact on Firearms Violence

Of course, the bottom line question is whether the IVRP strategic problem solving approach reduced firearms violence. The answer to this question is that there is evidence, though not without qualification, that the IVRP process did lead to reduced levels of firearms, at least with respect to homicide. The most solid evidence for this assessment is the time series analysis of homicide trends. This indicated that monthly homicides were reduced 42 percent following the April 1999 intervention.

The time series analysis is also supported by the finding that the nature of homicides changed following the intervention. Specifically, the dimensions of homicide that were identified in the problem analysis (firearms, geographically concentrated, groups, drugs) were proportionally reduced in the post-intervention period. Specifically, homicides were reduced and homicides were less likely to involve firearms, groups, and drugs, and were reduced most substantially in high-violence neighborhoods. Thus, the nature of homicides in Indianapolis changed along the dimensions that were targeted by the IVRP interventions.

It is also important to note that daily homicide rates for both victims and suspects were reduced for males and females, African-Americans and whites, and among the highest risk age group (18-30). The largest reduction in absolute numbers was for African-Americans. Critics of deterrence-based approaches to firearms violence should weigh such criticism against this reduction in homicides, particularly for young, African-American men, the group most heavily affected by firearms violence.

The impact on aggravated assaults with a gun and armed robbery was less clear. Although these offenses also declined approximately 40 percent in the post-intervention

period, the time series analysis of pre- and post-trends did not reveal a statistically significant intervention effect.

The most significant threat to the finding that the IVRP intervention had an impact on homicide is that the pre-intervention rates were exceptionally high and that the numbers were likely to decline absent any intervention ("regression to the mean"). Although this threat cannot be dismissed it is less likely the explanation of the decline in homicides because homicides had been at a fairly stable level from 1994 through early 1999. Indeed, the weekly trends during 1997, 1998, through the first quarter of 1999 were remarkably stable. Thus, it is not the case that the results capture a short-term "peak" in homicides.

The additional factor that suggests that homicides were substantially reduced is the sudden decline in homicides following the intervention. Homicides dramatically declined in the spring and summer of 1999 and have been relatively stable since that time. We would anticipate that a regression to the historic mean would have resulted in a more gradual decline in homicides.

The findings of this study are also promising when read in light of the experience in Boston and Minneapolis (Kennedy, Braga, and Piehl, 2001; Braga, Kennedy, Piehl, and Waring, 2001; Kennedy and Braga, 1998). Combining Boston, Minneapolis, and Indianapolis, we see evidence from three cities experiencing group-related firearms violence that a lever pulling strategy involving face-to-face communication of a deterrence message and a federal crackdown on a violent gang resulted in immediate and significant reductions in violence. All three cities experienced what Kennedy has referred to as a "light-switch" impact on homicide.

Impact on the Offender Population

The lever pulling strategy attempted to influence two groups of offenders (and potential offenders). The first were individuals believed to be involved, or associates of those involved, in street violence. These were the probationers and parolees invited to attend lever pulling meeting. The second group was individuals who associate with the lever pulling attendees but who were not on probation and parole and thus could not be communicated with directly. The hope for this second group was that the group structure of offenders would result in spread of the deterrence message among the high-risk networks of offenders. The data suggested that the deterrence message was spread through IVRP strategies yet again the results merit qualification.

The interviews conducted with recent arrestees indicated that perceptions of the deterrence threat were affected in the desired direction following the Brightwood Gang crackdown and over time. Lever pulling meeting attendees (LP) were more likely to be aware of IVRP interventions, more likely to believe these strategies were effective, and more likely to perceive that the threat of sanctions had increased.

On the other hand, there was little evidence that LP attendees had altered their offending behavior. Compared to other probationers, LP attendees were more likely to be arrested in the post-intervention period, though less likely to be convicted and incarcerated. LP attendees were also less likely to report having made positive changes. Complicating the picture is the fact that the LP attendees were selected purposively because they were considered the highest risk probationers and parolees.

An additional complicating factor is assessing the credibility of the threat of sanctions. It appears that the high-profile Brightwood crackdown was perceived as

evidence of the joint local-federal focus on violence and the potential for the imposition of federal sanctions. In contrast, the analyses of processing of VIPER offenders, indicating that the likelihood of sanctions in non-firearms offenses was still very low even for the most high-profile offenders, raised questions about the ability to sustain the credibility of threat. The findings do suggest that communities considering the lever pulling type strategy should seriously consider the challenge of creating and sustaining credible sanctions.

Judging the "success" of the IVRP strategies in influencing high-risk offenders is contingent on the goals of the intervention. To the extent that the goal is to influence the behavior of the highest risk offenders (LP attendees and VIPERS), the evidence does not demonstrate clear impact. To the extent that the goal is to influence a broader group of high-risk offenders and their associates, the data is more promising. The data indicate that the IVRP strategies were communicated to the offender population, that the strategies were perceived as effective, and that the perceived threat of sanction for violent crime was increased among the offender population.

Impact on the Community

One of the common ingredients of firearms violence in urban communities is that such violence tends to be geographically concentrated in particular neighborhoods and has a differential and substantial impact on minority populations. One of the advantages of the data-driven problem solving approach is that it creates an opportunity for constructive dialogue among the police and neighborhood leaders on the need to address violence in particular neighborhoods. The sharing of crime maps demonstrating the

highly concentrated nature of homicides, gun assaults, and firearm injuries, and the presentation of other data demonstrating the extremely elevated risk of violence victimization among young men of color in these neighborhoods, can have a galvanizing effect on bringing police and neighborhood groups into partnership to address firearms violence.[42]

As noted in previous chapters, one of the most positive effects of the IVRP process was the positive working relationships that emerged between IVRP criminal justice officials and neighborhood leaders, faith-based community leaders, and service providers. These relationships were crucial in a number of respects. First, the community often had additional understanding of the violence problem that helped inform the IVRP strategies. Second, the community could bring additional strategic resources unavailable to criminal justice agencies (e.g., street-level mentoring and intervention with groups involved in a cycle of violence). Third, the process of engagement was crucial for building legitimacy for interventions that had disproportionate impact on particular neighborhoods and particular segments of the community.

Conclusion

As Zimring and Hawkins (1999) point out, the crime problem in America is largely a problem of firearms violence. Despite the substantial decline in firearms

[42] An oft-heard complaint of many community-policing officers is that the neighborhood leaders do not care about violence, that they are more concerned with signs of disorder than with serious violence. Although our observations of community meetings revealed this to often be the case it was also abundantly clear that there are many members of these neighborhoods who are sincerely committed to working to reduce the devastating impact of firearms violence in these high-crime neighborhoods.

violence witnessed throughout the 1990s, the level of firearms violence in the U.S. continues to distinguish this country from other industrialized democracies.

The decade of the 1990s, however, also provided evidence of promising approaches to reducing levels of firearms violence. The COMPSTAT program implemented by the New York City Police Department and involving the ongoing analysis of emerging crime problems coupled with focused responses to those problems was associated with dramatic reductions in homicide in New York City (Silverman, 1999). Directed police patrols focused on illegal gun possession and use were found to lead to significant reductions in firearms violence in Kansas City, Indianapolis, and Pittsburgh (Sherman, 1995; McGarrell, Chermak and Weiss, 2002; McGarrell, Chermak, Weiss and Wilson, 2002; Cohen and Ludwig forthcoming – ask NIJ). The Boston Ceasefire Program coupled problem solving analysis with a focused deterrence strategy and a retail marketing communication strategy targeted at high-risk groups of offenders. Youth related homicides were reduced by over 60 percent (Kennedy, Braga, and Piehl, 2001; Braga, Kennedy, Piehl, and Waring, 2001). Similar results were found in Minneapolis (Kennedy and Braga, 1998).

The findings from the IVRP initiative should be considered in this context. The Indianapolis findings, coupled with the above studies, suggest that problem solving approaches that can focus limited criminal justice resources on the most serious dimensions of the firearms violence problem hold promise for reducing levels of violence. Further, the multi-agency structure and the relationship to community groups holds the potential for bringing new information, resources and strategies to affect firearms violence. Although the current findings are not unequivocal, the collective

findings from this line of research suggest promising directions in the nation's search for reducing the level of lethal violence.[43]

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[43] It is very encouraging that the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods explicitly builds on the strategic problem solving approach and includes funding for the inclusion of research partners to work collectively with multi-agency teams to reduce firearms violence (see www.psn.gov).

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Appendix A

Profile of Homicides During Study Period (1/1/97-6/30/01)

Table A-1
Demographic Profile of Homicide Victims and Suspects
Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender:				
Male	439	79.2%	427	90.9%
Female	115	20.8%	43	9.1%
	N= 554		N= 470	
Race:				
African-American	387	70.6%	350	75.4%
White	136	24.8%	102	2.4%
Hispanic	18	3.3%	11	22%
Other	7	1.3%	1	.2%
	N= 548		N= 464	
Age:	(mean=30.9)	(median=28)	(mean=26.3)	(median=23)
0 to 10	22	4%	0	0%
11 to 17	25	4.6%	51	10.4%
18 to 22	122	22.2%	183	37.3%
23 to 30	158	28.8%	142	29%
31 to 40	108	19.7%	65	13.3%
41 to 50	65	11.8%	36	7.3%
51 to 60	18	3.3%	3	.6%
61 + years	31	5.6%	10	2%
	N= 549		N= 490	

*A total of 685 suspects were identified. A total of 563 victims were identified. Suspects gender: 215 unknown. Victims gender: 9 unknown. Suspects Race: 221 unknown. Victims Race: 5 were unknown. Suspects Age: 195 unknown. Victims Age: 14 unknown.

Table A-2
Prior Arrests of Victims and Suspects,
Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Prior Adult Arrest	(mean =5.7)		(mean =4.4)	
0	170	40.3%	157	39.1%
1	34	8.1%	44	10.9%
2	21	5%	25	6.2%
3 to 5	56	13.3%	66	16.4%
6 to 10	67	15.9%	59	14.7%
11 to 19	48	11.4%	34	8.5%
20 to 59	25	5.9%	17	4.2%
60 + arrests	1	.2%	0	0%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Juvenile Arrests				
0	315	77.6%	334	74.1%
1	17	4.2%	14	3.1%
2	14	3.4%	19	4.2%
3 to 5	31	7.6%	35	7.8%
6 to11	25	6.2%	43	9.5%
12 to 19	4	1%	6	1.3%
	N= 406		N= 451	
Either Juvenile or Adult Arrest				
0	122	35%	70	20.2%
1 or more	273	65%	278	79.8%
	N= 395		N= 348	
Prior Adult Convictions	(mean=2.5)		(mean=1.9)	
0	216	51.2%	204	50.7%
1	47	11.1%	47	11.7%
2	33	7.8%	44	10.9%
3-5	60	14.2%	61	15.2%
6-16	60	14.2%	43	10.7%
17-25	5	1.2%	2	.5%
26 +	1	.2%	1	.2%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Highest Conviction				
None	216	51.2%	204	50.7%
Misdemeanor	91	21.6%	77	19.2%
Felony D	57	13.5%	59	14.7%
Felony C	33	7.8%	33	8.2%
Felony B	15	3.6%	26	6.5%
Felony A	10	2.4%	3	.7%
	N= 422		N= 402	

Table A-3

Type of Prior Adult Arrests of Victims and Suspects, Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Violent Crime Arrests				
0	255	60.4%	224	55.7%
1	51	12.1%	63	15.7%
2	29	6.9%	49	12.2%
3 to 11	82	19.4%	64	15.9%
12 to 15	4	.9%	1	.2%
16 +	1	.2%	1	.2%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Violent Crime Convictions				
0	312	73.9%	289	71.9%
1	57	13.5%	66	16.4%
2-6	51	12.1%	46	11.4%
7 +	2	.5%	1	.2%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Violent Crime Open Cases				
0	414	98.1%	392	97.5%
1	8	1.9%	10	2.5%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Drug Crime Arrests				
0	275	65.2%	258	64.2%
1	75	17.8%	71	17.7%
2 to 6	69	16.4%	73	18.2%
7 to 10	3	.7%	0	0%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Drug Crime Convictions				
0	342	81%	326	81.1%
1	56	13.3%	49	12.2%
2 to 5	24	5.7%	27	6.7%
	N= 422		N=402	
Drug Crime Open Cases				
0	412	97.6%	393	97.8%
1	10	2.4%	9	2.2%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Prior Weapons Charges				
0	334	79.1%	307	76.4%
1 to 2	74	17.5%	84	20.9%
3 to 5	13	3.1%	9	2.2%
6 +	1	.2%	2	.5%
	N= 422		N= 402	
Prior Weapons Convictions				
0	386	91.5%	346	86.1%
1 to 3	36	8.6%	56	13.9%
	N= 422		N= 402	

Table A-4
Gender Breakdown of Victims and Suspects,
Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Arrests for Females				
0	61	67%	12	41.4%
1	9	9.9%	4	13.8%
2	2	2.2%	2	6.9%
3 to 5	6	6.6%	3	10.3%
6 to 10	7	7.7%	5	17.2%
11 to 19	3	3.3%	1	3.4%
20 to 59	3	3.3%	2	6.9%
	N= 91		N= 29	
Arrests for Males				
0	107	32.8%	118	37.7%
1	25	7.7%	35	11.2%
2	18	5.5%	20	6.4%
3 to 5	50	15.3%	53	16.9%
6 to 10	59	18.1%	44	14.1%
11 to 19	45	13.8%	30	9.6%
20 to 59	21	6.4%	13	4.2%
60+ arrests	1	.3%	0	0%
	N= 326		N= 313	
Convictions for Females				
0	72	79.1%	15	51.7%
1	4	4.4%	4	13.8%
2	4	4.4%	2	6.9%
3 to 5	5	5.5%	5	17.2%
6 to 16	6	6.6%	3	10.3%
	N= 91		N= 29	
Convictions for Males				
0	142	43.6%	156	49.8%
1	41	12.6%	36	11.5%
2	29	8.9%	36	11.5%
3 to 5	55	16.9%	49	15.7%
6 to 16	53	16.3%	34	10.9%
17 to 25	5	1.5%	2	.6%
26+	1	.3%	0	0%
	N= 326		N= 313	

Table A-5
Types of Prior Arrests by Gender,
Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Violent Arrest for Females				
0	81	89%	21	72.4%
1	7	7.7%	2	6.9%
2	1	1.1%	2	6.9%
3 to 11	2	2.2%	4	13.8%
	N= 91		N= 29	
Violent Arrest for Males				
0	171	52.5%	170	54.3%
1	44	13.5%	54	17.3%
2	28	8.6%	38	12.1%
3 to 11	78	23.9%	50	16%
12 to 15	4	1.2%	1	.3%
16+	1	.3%	0	0%
	N= 326		N= 313	
Drug Arrest for Females				
0	73	80.2%	21	72.4%
1	14	15.4%	5	17.2%
2 to 6	4	4.4%	3	10.3%
	N= 91		N= 29	
Drug Arrest for Males				
0	198	60.7%	192	61.3%
1	61	18.7%	57	18.2%
2 to 6	64	19.6%	64	20.4%
7 to 10	3	.9%	0	0%
	N= 326		N= 313	
Weapons Arrest for Females				
0	89	97.8%	26	89.7%
1 to 2	2	2.2%	3	10.3%
	N= 91		N= 29	
Weapons Arrest for Males				
0	240	73.6%	237	75.7%
1 to 2	72	22.1%	68	21.7%
3 to 5	13	4%	7	2.2%
6 +	1	.3%	1	.3%
	N= 326		N= 313	
Juvenile Arrest for Females				
0	81	93.1%	22	88%
1	4	4.6%	0	0%
2	1	1.1%	1	4%
3 to 5	1	1.1%	2	8%
	N= 87		N= 25	
Juvenile Arrest for Males				
0	227	72.8%	174	61.1%
1	13	4.2%	13	4.6%
2	13	4.2%	18	6.3%
3 to 5	30	9.6%	31	10.9%
6 to 11	25	8%	43	15.1%
12 to 19	4	1.3%	6	2.1%
	N= 312		N= 285	

Table A-6
Victim and Suspect Demographics in Cases Involving
Groups of Chronic Offenders

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender:				
Male	192	91.4%	235	96.3%
Female	18	8.6%	9	3.7%
	N= 210		N= 244	
Race:				
African-American	178	84.8%	213	87.7
White	26	12.4%	27	11.1
Hispanic	5	2.4%	3	1.2
Other	1	.5%	0	0
	N= 210		N= 243	
Age:				
14 to 15	0	0%	5	2%
16 to 17	16	7.7%	27	10.7%
18 to 22	66	31.6%	118	46.6%
23 to 30	79	37.8%	75	29.6%
31 to 40	27	12.9%	23	9.1%
41 to 50	14	6.7%	5	2%
51 to 60	3	1.4%	0	0%
61 + years	4	1.9%	0	0%
	N= 209		N= 253	

*There are 333 gang (chronic offenders) suspects. There are 210 gang victims. Gang suspects age: 253 valid, 30 missing. Suspects sex: 244 valid, 89 missing. Suspects race: 243 valid, 90 unknown. For victims, age: 209 valid, 1 unknown. Victims sex & gender: 210 valid, 0 unknown.

Table A-7
Victim and Suspect Criminal Histories in Cases Involving
Groups of Known Chronic Offenders

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
	(mean=7.04)		(mean=4.4)	
Prior Adult Arrests:				
0	42	20%	69	35.8%
1 to 5	45	21.4%	69	35.8%
6 to 10	32	15.2%	32	16.6%
11 +	37	17.6%	23	11.9%
	N= 156		N= 193	
Juvenile Arrests				
No	88	60.3%	126	63.6%
Yes	58	39.7%	72	36.4%
	N= 146		N= 198	
Either Juvenile or Adult Arrest				
No	18	11.5%	27	17.4%
Yes	138	88.5%	128	82.6%
	N= 156		N= 155	
Violent Crime Adult Arrest	(mean=1.88)		(mean=1.24)	
0	72	46.2%	106	54.9%
1 to 2	41	26.3%	52	26.9%
3 to 5	27	17.3%	27	14%
6 +	16	10.3%	8	4.1%
	N= 156		N= 193	
Drug Crime Adult Arrest	(mean=1.23)		(mean=.98)	
0	77	49.3%	105	54.4%
1 to 6	76	48.7%	88	45.6%
7 +	3	2%		
	N= 156		N= 193	
Weapon Adult Arrest	(mean=.57)		(mean=.48)	
0	106	68%	135	70%
1 or more	50	32%	58	30%
	N= 156		N= 193	
Prior Adult Convictions	(mean=2.99)		(mean=1.87)	
0	57	37%	91	47.2%
1	17	10.5%	22	11.4%
2	17	10.5%	28	14.5%
3 +	65	42%	52	21.3%
	N= 156		N= 193	
Highest Adult Conviction				
0	57	36.5%	91	47.2%
Misdemeanor	33	21.2%	37	19.2%
Felony	66	42.3%	65	33.6%
	N= 156		N= 193	

Table A-8

Victim and Suspect Demographics in Domestic Homicides

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender:				
Male	79	53%	97	77.6%
Female	70	47%	28	22.4%
	N= 149		N= 125	
Race:				
African-American	86	58.9%	78	63.4%
White	54	37%	42	34.1%
Hispanic	2	1.4%	3	2.4%
Other	4	2.7%	0	0%
	N= 146		N= 123	
Age:	(mean= 32.9)	(median= 31)	(mean= 32.4)	(median= 30)
0 to 10	21	14.2%	0	0%
11 to 17	3	2%	4	3.1%
18 to 22	15	10.1%	32	24.8%
23 to 30	34	23%	35	27.1%
31 to 40	29	19.6%	23	17.8%
41 to 50	26	17.6%	25	19.4%
51 to 60	6	4.1%	2	1.6%
61 + years	14	9.5%	8	6.2%
	N= 148		N= 129	

* There are a total of 154 domestic victims. There are a total of 157 domestic suspects.

Table A-9
Victim and Suspect Criminal Histories in Domestic Homicides

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
	(mean=2.52)		(mean=4.3)	
Prior Adult Arrests:				
0	76	62.3%	42	39.3%
1 to 5	29	23.8%	35	32.7%
6 to 10	7	4.5%	15	14%
11 +	10	6.5%	15	14%
	N= 122		N= 107	
Juvenile Arrests				
No	105	90.5%	99	88.4%
Yes	11	9.5%	13	11.6%
	N= 106		N= 112	
Either Juvenile or Adult Arrest				
No	63	56.2%	29	30.2%
Yes	49	43.8%	67	69.8%
	N= 112		N= 96	
Violent Crime Adult Arrest	(mean=.57)		(mean=1.12)	
0	97	79.5%	60	56.1%
1 to 2	15	12.3%	31	29%
3 to 5	8	6.6%	10	9.3%
6 +	2	1.6%	6	5.6%
	N= 122		N= 107	
Drug Crime Adult Arrest	(mean=.25)		(mean=.39)	
0	101	82.8%	80	74.8%
1 to 6	21	17.2%	27	25.2%
7 +	0	0%	0	0%
	N= 122		N= 107	
Weapon Adult Arrest	(mean=.11)		(mean=.25)	
0	113	92.6%	87	81.3%
1 or more	9	7.4%	20	18.7%
	N= 122		N= 107	
Prior Adult Convictions	(mean=1.05)		(mean=2.06)	
0	89	73%	55	51.4%
1	11	9%	13	12.1%
2	6	4.9%	9	8.4%
3 +	16	13.1%	30	28%
	N= 122		N= 107	
Highest Adult Conviction				
0	89	73%	55	51.4%
Misdemeanor	17	13.9%	27	25.2%
Felony	16	13.1%	25	23.4%
	N= 122		N= 107	

Table A-10
Victim and Suspect Demographics in Drug Related Cases

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender:				
Male	239	87.5%	216	93.5%
Female	34	12.5%	15	6.5%
	N= 273		N= 231	
Race:				
African-American	216	79.4%	196	85.2%
White	46	16.9%	30	13%
Hispanic	8	2.9%	4	1.7%
Other	2	.7%	0	0%
	N= 272		N= 230	
Age:	(mean= 29.4)	(median= 27	(mean= 24.5)	(median=22)
0 to 10	2	.7%	0	0%
11 to 17	14	5.1%	26	11.1%
18 to 22	73	26.8%	106	45.1%
23 to 30	86	31.6%	60	25.5%
31 to 40	57	21%	31	13.2%
41 to 50	27	9.9%	10	4.3%
51 to 60	5	1.8%	0	0%
61 + years	8	2.9%	2	.9%
	N= 272		N= 235	

*There are a total of 357 drug incident suspects. There are a total of 274 drug incident victims. For victims sex: 273 are valid, 1 unknown. For victims race: 272 are valid, 2 unknown. For victims age: 272 are valid, 2 unknown. For suspects age: 231 are valid, 126 are unknown. For suspects race: 230 are valid, 127 are unknown. For suspects age: 235 are valid. 122 are unknown.

Table A-11
Victim and Suspect Criminal Histories in Drug Related Homicides

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Prior Adult Arrests:	(mean=6.5)		(mean= 4.8)	
0	54	27.3%	70	37%
1 to 5	65	32.8%	60	31.7%
6 to 10	35	17.7%	35	18.5%
11 +	44	22.2%	24	12.7%
	N= 198		N= 189	
Juvenile Arrests				
No	135	71.4%	152	70.7%
Yes	54	28.6%	63	29.3%
	N= 189		N= 215	
Either Juvenile or Adult Arrest				
No	33	17.6%	24	15.2%
Yes	154	82.4%	133	84.8%
	N= 187		N= 157	
Violent Crime Adult Arrest	(mean=1.5)		(mean=1.3)	
0	102	51.5%	104	55%
1 to 2	49	24.7%	54	28.6%
3 to 5	32	16.2%	23	12.2%
6 +	15	7.6%	8	4.2%
	N= 198		N= 189	
Drug Crime Adult Arrest	(mean=1.03)		(mean=.98)	
0	102	51.5%	101	53.4%
1 to 6	94	47.5%	88	46.6%
7 +	2	1%	0	0%
	N= 198		N= 189	
Weapon Adult Arrest	(mean=.45)		(mean=.47)	
0	144	72.7%	138	73%
1 or more	54	27.3%	51	27%
	N= 198		N= 189	
Prior Adult Convictions	(mean=2.89)		(mean=2.1)	
0	81	40.9%	95	50.3%
1	23	11.6%	19	10.1%
2	21	10.6%	24	12.7%
3 +	73	36.9%	51	26.9%
	N= 198		N= 189	
Highest Adult Conviction				
0	81	40.9%	95	50.3%
Misdemeanor	47	23.7%	31	16.4%
Felony	70	35.4%	63	33.3%
	N= 198		N= 189	

Table A-12
Type of Prior Adult Arrests of Victims and Suspects
Either Adult or Juvenile Arrest,
Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Violent Crime Arrests				
0	106	38.8%	99	35.7%
1	51	18.7%	63	22.7
2	29	10.6%	49	17.7%
3 to 11	82	30%	64	23.1%
12 to 15	4	1.5%	1	.4%
16 +	1	.4%	1	.4%
	N= 273		N= 277	
Violent Crime Convictions				
0	163	59.7%	164	59.2%
1	57	20.9%	66	23.8%
2-6	51	18.7%	46	16.6%
7 +	2	.7%	1	.4%
	N= 273		N= 277	
Violent Crime Open Cases				
0	265	97.1%	267	96.4%
1	8	2.9%	10	3.6%
	N= 273		N= 277	
Drug Crime Arrests				
0	126	46.2%	133	48%
1	75	27.5%	71	25.6%
2 to 6	69	25.3%	73	26.4%
7 to 10	3	1.1%	0	0%
	N= 273		N= 277	
Drug Crime Convictions				
0	193	70.7%	201	72.6%
1	56	20.5%	49	17.7%
2 to 5	24	8.8%	27	9.7%
	N= 273		N= 277	
Drug Crime Open Cases				
0	263	96.3%	268	96.8%
1	10	3.7%	9	3.2%
	N= 273		N= 277	
Prior Weapons Charges				
0	185	67.8%	182	65.7%
1 to 2	74	27.1%	84	30.3%
3 to 5	13	4.8%	9	3.2%
6 +	1	.4%	2	.7%
	N= 273		N= 277	
Prior Weapons Convictions				
0	237	86.8%	221	79.8%
1 to 3	36	13.2%	56	20.2%
	N= 273		N= 277	

There are 273 victims with either a juvenile or adult arrest. None are missing. There are 278 Suspects with a juvenile or adult arrest, 1 Suspect has missing information.

Table A-13
Prior Arrests of Victims and Suspects
Male with Adult or Juvenile Arrest,
Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Prior Adult Arrest	(mean =9.22)		(mean =6.27)	
0	18	7.6%	31	13.7
1	25	10.5%	35	15.5
2	18	7.6%	20	8.8
3 to 5	50	21.1%	53	23.5
6 to 10	59	24.9%	44	19.5
11 to 19	45	19%	30	13.3
20 to 59	21	8.9%	13	5.8
60 + arrests	1	.4%	0	0
	N= 237		N= 226	
Juvenile Arrests				
0	152	64.1%	115	50.9
1	13	5.5%	13	5.8
2	13	5.5%	18	8
3 to 5	30	12.7%	31	13.7
6 to11	25	10.5%	43	19
12 to 19	4	1.7%	6	2.7
	N= 237		N= 226	
Prior Adult Convictions	(mean=4.04)		(mean=2.7)	
0	53	22.4%	69	30.5
1	41	17.3%	36	15.9
2	29	12.2%	36	15.9
3-5	55	23.2%	49	21.7
6-16	53	22.4%	34	15
17-25	5	2.1%	2	.9
26 +	1	.4%	0	0
	N= 237		N= 226	
Highest Conviction				
None	53	22.4%	69	30.5
Misdemeanor	78	32.9%	57	25.2
Felony D	49	20.7%	45	19.9
Felony C	32	13.5%	28	12.4
Felony B	15	6.3%	25	11.1
Felony A	10	4.2%	2	.9
	N= 237		N= 226	

There are a total of 237 male victims with an adult or juvenile arrest. There are a total of 226 male suspects with an adult or juvenile arrest. There are no missing data for victims and suspects in this table.

Table A-14
Type of Prior Adult Arrests of Victims and Suspects
Male with either Adult or Juvenile Arrest,
Marion County Homicides, 1997-June 30, 2001

	Victims		Suspects	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Violent Crime Arrests				
0	82	34.6%	83	36.7%
1	44	18.6%	54	23.9%
2	28	11.8%	38	16.8%
3 to 11	78	32.9%	50	22.1%
12 to 15	4	1.7%	1	.4%
16 +	1	.4%	0	0%
	N= 237		N= 226	
Violent Crime Convictions				
0	132	55.7%	136	60.2%
1	53	22.4%	54	23.9%
2-6	50	21.1%	36	15.9%
7 +	2	.8%	0	0%
	N= 237		N= 226	
Violent Crime Open Cases				
0	229	96.6%	218	96.5%
1	8	3.4%	8	3.5%
	N= 237		N= 226	
Drug Crime Arrests				
0	109	46%	105	46.5%
1	61	25.7%	57	25.2%
2 to 6	64	27%	64	28.3%
7 to 10	3	1.3%	0	0%
	N= 237		N= 226	
Drug Crime Convictions				
0	162	68.4%	162	71.7%
1	51	21.5%	40	17.7%
2 to 5	24	10.1%	24	10.6%
	N= 237		N= 226	
Drug Crime Open Cases				
0	229	96.6%	217	96%
1	8	3.4%	9	4%
	N= 237		N= 226	
Prior Weapons Charges				
0	151	63.7%	150	66.4%
1 to 2	72	30.4%	68	30.1%
3 to 5	13	5.5%	7	3.1%
6 +	1	.4%	1	.4%
	N= 237		N= 226	
Prior Weapons Convictions				
0	201	84.8%	180	79.6%
1 to 3	36	15.2%	46	20.4%
	N= 237		N= 226	

Table A-15
Demographic Profile of Homicide Victims
Pre & Post Intervention

	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender:				
Male	260	78.1%	179	81%
Female	73	21.9%	42	19%
	N= 333		N= 221	
Race:				
African-American	226	67.9%	161	74.9%
White	95	28.5%	41	19.1%
Hispanic	8	2.4%	10	4.7%
Other	4	1.2%	3	1.4%
	N= 333		N= 215	
Age:	(mean= 30.6)	(median= 28)	(mean= 31.4)	(median= 28)
0 to 10	10	3%	12	5.5%
11 to 17	18	5.4%	7	3.2%
18 to 22	76	23%	46	21.1%
23 to 30	94	28.4%	64	29.4%
31 to 40	66	19.9%	42	19.3%
41 to 50	44	13.3%	21	9.6%
51 to 60	5	1.5%	13	6%
61 + years	18	5.4%	13	6%
	N= 331		N= 218	

Table A-16
Demographic Profile of Homicide Suspects
Pre & Post Intervention

	Pre-Intervention		Post-Intervention	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Gender:				
Male	295	90.8%	132	91%
Female	30	9.2%	13	9%
	N= 325		N= 145	
Race:				
African-American	239	74.7%	111	77.1%
White	77	24.1%	25	17.4%
Hispanic	4	1.3%	7	4.9%
Other	0	0%	1	.7%
	N= 320		N= 144	
Age:	(mean= 25.7)	(median= 22)	(mean= 27.4)	(median= 24)
0 to 10	0	0%	0	0%
11 to 17	43	12.8%	8	5.2%
18 to 22	128	38.1%	55	35.7%
23 to 30	94	28%	48	31.2%
31 to 40	41	12.2%	24	15.6%
41 to 50	20	6%	16	10.4%
51 to 60	2	.6%	1	.6%
61 + years	8	2.4%	2	1.3%
	N=336		N= 154	

Appendix B

Indianapolis Violence Reduction Partnership Strategic Plan

Reducing Violence in Indianapolis:
Initial Draft of a Strategic Plan

May 8, 1998

VISION: We seek a city and county where violent crime has been significantly decreased over current levels.

MISSION: The mission of the multi-agency working group is to use a focused and coordinated problem solving approach to reduce the level of homicide and serious violence in the community. The working group will draw on information and expertise from multiple sources to develop a systematic picture of the violence problem in the county. From this picture the working group will suggest responses to the problem and then analyze the effect of these strategies on the violent crime problem.

Elements of the Strategic Plan

- Increased arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of the most serious and chronic violent offenders
- Disruption of illegal firearms markets
- Multiple-level and multiple-agency strategic response to homicides
- Communication of anti-violence message to potential offenders and to community at large
- Development of community-based prevention components

Key Principles

- Incapacitation of serious and chronic violent offenders
- Reduction in illegal firearms possession and carrying
- Specific deterrence of potential violent offenders
- Reaffirming and communicating a set of norms and values that violence is unacceptable
- Development, coordination, and communication of legitimate opportunities for potential offenders

NOTE: The initial focus of this strategic plan is on street-level violence, particularly that associated with drugs and groups of chronic offenders. These types of homicides are the largest category of homicides in Indianapolis. As the project develops, similar problem solving processes will be applied to other types of homicides (e.g., domestic violence) and to other categories of violence (e.g., all non-fatal gun related assaults).

I. Increased arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of the most serious and chronic violent offenders and disruption of illegal firearms markets

Rationale:

Research consistently shows that there is a small segment of the general population, and a small segment of the offending population, that accounts for a disproportionate amount of violent crime in any community. The results of the homicide review in Indianapolis, and the corresponding review of offense histories of the suspects and victims involved in homicides, indicates that this is clearly the situation in Indianapolis. Approximately 70 percent of homicide suspects and victims in 1997 had prior adult and/or juvenile offense histories. Most of these individuals had extensive arrest backgrounds. The first element of the strategy seeks to reduce the level of violence by removing these chronic violent offenders from the streets of Indianapolis (incapacitation) through increased arrest, prosecution, and incarceration.

The key elements of this strategy are included in the VIPER (Violence Impact Program Enhanced Response) Program.

Related to the focus on chronic violent offenders, this strategy also seeks to disrupt the illegal firearms markets that provide these offenders with easy access to weapons.

Key Action Items:

1) **Identification and development of a criminal intelligence list of the most violent offenders in the community (referred to as VIPER offenders).**

Through the use of JUSTIS system records and related agency intelligence, a list of the most violent offenders has been developed and will continue to be updated.

2) **Viper offenders will be targeted for arrest.**

To the extent that VIPER offenders are wanted on outstanding warrant or in violation of probation or parole conditions, they will be given high priority for arrest and prosecution.

3) **Viper offenders on parole and probation will be given heightened supervision status.**

Viper offenders, and other probationers and parolees with a high propensity for violence, will receive increased probationary supervision. This may include more restrictive conditions of probation and parole.

4) **Viper offenders who are arrested will receive special screening from the Marion County Prosecutor's Office.**

5) All firearms-related crimes will receive special screening from IPD's firearms unit and from the Prosecutor's Office, in coordination with federal law enforcement.

In addition to offenders formally on the VIPER list, special screening will occur of all firearms-related crimes to maximize the likelihood of successful prosecution.

6) **Where possible, and particularly where state prosecution may be unlikely to yield an incapacitation sentence, federal prosecution of chronic and firearms-using offenders will occur.**

Given limited resources, it is important to prioritize the use of federal prosecution. Federal prosecution will be utilized to target the most violent offenders, particularly where there may be obstacles to successful local prosecution. An example would be where a local homicide or assault conviction may be unlikely but where the offender has violated federal firearms or chronic offender provisions.

7) **The VIPER list must be made available to line-level police officers.**

The goal is to place the VIPER list on the MDT's so that an officer making an inquiry about an individual will be alerted that this is a dangerous offender. This is important for officer safety and so the officer can take extra steps to ensure successful prosecution in the event of an arrest.

8) **The VIPER list must be shared among the local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.**

To maximize impact, the VIPER list should be available to the local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies (including probation and parole). This includes all of the agencies that will deal with the offender (e.g., bail decision). Appropriate safeguards of this intelligence list will need to be developed.

9) When a VIPER offender is being investigated and arrested there should be a coordinated effort among local, state, and federal agencies to determine the most successful avenue of prosecution of the offender.

10) Debriefing of offenders arrested on gun, drug, and violence offenses will become a high priority for gathering intelligence.

Criteria should be established to prioritize cases to be debriefed and mechanisms to determine who will do the debriefing and how the information will be stored and shared.

11) Intelligence information developed in juvenile debriefing, particularly related to guns, drugs, and gangs should inform these strategic efforts.

12) The Working Group will analyze data on firearms used in crime to develop strategies for disrupting illegal gun markets.

Nationally, most firearms used illegally are acquired on the street. Broad-based efforts to identify, arrest, and prosecute individuals involved in street-level firearms dealing are practical and called for. Data from Project LEAD (BATF's illegal firearms tracking information system) will be used along with arrestee debriefing to identify straw buyers, scofflaw dealers, and gun traffickers.

13) High violent crime neighborhoods should regularly receive enforcement efforts aimed at illegal firearms carrying (see Strategy II).

14) Arrests of gun traffickers should be prioritized and publicized (see Strategy III).

15) **The Firearms Unit should be a referral resource for firearms cases uncovered by various local, state and federal agencies.**

IPD's new firearms unit has already established positive relationships with the Prosecutor's Office and with BATF. These relationships should also extend to other agencies such as probation and the Marshal's Service that periodically discover illegal weapons.

16) Pawn shop records should be reviewed periodically to look for individuals that have pawned a stolen firearm or those who are legally prohibited from owning a gun.

The established work of the Pawn Shop detail should be utilized by the Firearms Unit in collaboration with BATF.

17) The Working Group will investigate how to relate SHOCAP juvenile status to the VIPER Effort

The SHOCAP program identifies chronic juvenile offenders. This list is similar to the adult VIPER list. The Working Group should utilize this information system as it develops prevention, intervention, and enforcement efforts.

18) The Working Group should review procedures related to the information provided by hospitals on firearms crimes and injuries.

Atlanta has developed a "COPS and DOCS" program in which the police and hospitals submit an information sheet on all gunshot injuries. The reports are then compared to insure that all gun-related injury events are investigated. The information system provides a tool for searching for wounded fugitives, identifying potential offenders, and monitoring rates of firearm violence. The system can also be used to identify high risk groups, track patterns and trends, develop preventive interventions, and evaluate impact. Preliminary reports from local officials indicate the local reporting system is quite successful and thus may not require new efforts. The information from hospitals may be useful in problem analysis.

II. Multiple-level and multiple-agency strategic response to homicides

Rationale:

Perhaps the fundamental goal of the project is to establish new norms for potential offenders that violence will no longer be tolerated. To demonstrate this message violent incidents will receive an unprecedented law enforcement response. Specifically, when a violent incident occurs the multi-agency team will respond by imposing all possible sanctions on chronic offenders residing or found within the high crime area where the incident occurred or who are otherwise connected to the violent incident. This comprehensive use of sanctions is what is known as applying "levers". When a violent incident occurs, all potential levers are pulled. The strategy works because of the characteristics of high crime offenders. By its very nature, their chronic offending leaves them particularly vulnerable to a varied menu of sanctions.

This effort does not involve the investigation function. Rather, the idea is that homicides should trigger enhanced enforcement efforts as a signal to offenders that violence is no longer tolerated and to the community that criminal justice agencies are responding in a concerted and serious way to violent crime.

In the language below, the term homicide response team is used. The details on the structure and composition of this team remain to be determined. The concept, however, is the idea that there would be a meaningful criminal justice response to homicides.

Key Action Items:

1) For homicides occurring in high violent crime target areas, the response team will respond to the geographic area where the incident occurred. This is known as the geographic-based homicide response.

The IMAP program has clearly identified high violence neighborhoods in Indianapolis. These are the same neighborhoods with high levels of drug trafficking, gang activity, disorder, and fear of crime. The working group will refine the identification of high violence neighborhoods and the violence response team will respond to all homicides occurring in these neighborhoods. A key aspect of this plan is to focus the multi-agency levers on those high crime neighborhoods where intervention is most likely to have an effect.

The geographic-based response necessarily includes a focus on suspects who may be tied to the violent incident. Thus, when a geographic-based response occurs, it includes investigation of offenders residing in the area but also investigation of individuals connected to the violent incident who may reside in other parts of the city/county (see Figure One).

2) **For homicides occurring outside the targeted neighborhoods (city or county jurisdiction), the response team will focus on those homicide incidents involving known groups of chronic ofenders. This is known as the suspect-based response.**

Resource constraints make it impossible to respond to every homicide incident with the full panoply of law enforcement actions (beyond investigation of the incident itself). The homicide review revealed, however, that certain homicides falling outside the high violent crime neighborhoods also involve groups of chronic offenders. Where it is clear that an incident involves these group of offenders the response team will focus resources on those offending groups.

The suspect-based response will involve investigation of individuals connected to the homicide but it may not include the geographic response to the specific neighborhood where the incident occurred (see Figure One).

Figure One				
Homicide Response Plan				
Homicide Occurs in High Violent Crime Neighborhood?		Type of Response		
		Geographic-based		Suspect-based
Yes		Yes		Yes
No		No		Yes

3) **The homicide response team will respond by investigating known offenders and gang members residing in the incident area or connected to the incident. Offenders whose behavior constitutes an offense, including outstanding warrants and probation/parole violations, become the subject of the levers.**

Specific elements of the response plan include:

4) **For geographic-based homicide response incidents, IPD will engage in directed patrol activities in the area where the incident occurred.**

Directed patrol clearly communicates to law abiding residents that IPD is being responsive to the violence experienced in the neighborhood. To potential violent offenders, directed patrol demonstrates a concrete response to the violent incident and raises the likelihood of being detected in gun, drug, and other criminal activity. Directed patrol can also lead to the increased removal of illegal firearms from the high crime neighborhood.

5) **For geographic-based homicide response incidents, IPD will engage in K-9, horse, foot, bike or similar patrol activities in the area where the incident occurred.**

Similar to the directed patrol response, increased police presence can reassure law abiding residents while also disrupting illegal activity. To lawbreakers, this visibly demonstrates that violence will lead to increased police attention. This can be particularly effective in disrupting street-level drug dealing. The homicide review suggested that over half of the IPD-investigated homicides were drug-related.

6) **For geographic-based homicide response incidents, probation-IPD and parole-IPD sweeps, and Marshal's Task Force sweeps, will be conducted in the neighborhood where the incident occurred.**

Probationers and parolees residing in the high violence neighborhood will be visited by a probation-IPD or parole-IPD team (or federal law enforcement). This can be accomplished through coordination with "Operation Probationer Accountability" and the Federal Marshal's Task Force, "Operation Failed Chance". Related to this, juveniles on home detention in the target area should receive police-probation home visits.

7) **For geographic-based homicide response incidents, a fugitive response team will search for offenders on wanted on outstanding warrant in the neighborhood where the incident occurred.**

A fugitive response team (coordinated with Operation Failed Chance) will be created to search for offenders wanted on warrant in the target area.

8) For geographic-based homicide response incidents, juvenile curfew sweeps will occur in the neighborhood where the incident occurred.

Although it is unlikely to be able to respond to each homicide, as often as resources allow, and particularly when a clustering of homicides occur, a juvenile curfew sweep should occur. This will assist in communicating to juveniles the new law enforcement response to homicide.

9) For geographic-based homicide response incidents, nuisance abatement proceedings should be initiated at appropriate locations in the neighborhood where the incident occurred.

It is likely that the high violent crime neighborhoods already are comprised with problem locations that have been targeted for nuisance abatement proceedings. To the extent possible, a homicide should lead to an intensification of these proceedings in the neighborhood. This should be coordinated with the Safe Street Neighborhood Task Force.

10) For geographic-based homicide response incidents, where there is intelligence information suggesting that local youths are in possession of firearms, a home visit should occur with the goal of a consent search for the firearm.

This follows an approach of the St. Louis Police Department. SLPD found a high level of compliance from parents who were concerned about their children's risk given their possession of a firearm.

11) For suspect-based homicide response items, an intelligence list of the suspects and their associates will be maintained. This will indicate who is currently wanted on warrant, on probation or parole, or under another form of legal restriction. There will also be consultation with drug enforcement units to determine if the suspects and their associates are believed to be involved in active drug dealing activity.

Following a homicide incident, intelligence data on the suspected players and their associates will be reviewed. For individuals connected to the homicide incident the following types of responses will occur:

12) **For suspect-based homicide response items, probation-IPD(MCSD) and parole-IPD(MCSD) teams and Marshal's Task Force teams will conduct home visits and searches.**

In addition to searching for probation/parole violations, and searching for illegal weapons, drugs, and related criminal activity, this will serve the purpose of communicating the message to high risk offenders that violence will generate unprecedented law enforcement response.

13) For suspect-based homicide response items, the warrant response team will respond to all suspects currently wanted on warrant.

14) For suspect-based homicide response items, nuisance abatement proceedings will be considered at appropriate locations involving suspects from the intelligence list.

15) For suspect-based homicide response items, where intelligence information indicates that the players in violence are involved in drug dealing, appropriate law enforcement response will occur.

Many of the groups of chronic offenders involved in homicides are also involved in drug markets. Depending on the nature of the dealing, an appropriate law enforcement response will occur. If it is primarily street level dealing, then increased K-9 and foot, bike, or car patrol will occur in the targeted location to disrupt street dealing. In other situations a longer-term focused narcotics investigation may be initiated.

16) **For suspect-based homicide response items, the working group will explore additional potential levers that may be applied to chronic, violent offenders. Examples might include loss of food stamps and similar welfare benefits, eviction from public housing, and the like.**

17) For both geographic-based and suspect based responses, arrestee debriefing will occur to identify intelligence information related to violence and related criminal matters.

18) Law enforcement and related criminal justice officials will need to work with community groups to communicate the rationale behind, and gain support for, the increased law enforcement emphasis.

III. Communication of anti-violence message to potential offenders and to the community at large

Rationale:

The Working Group Members and the Response Team will systematically inform chronic offenders and high-risk potential offenders that violence will not be tolerated and will be met with an unprecedented multi-agency law enforcement response. Essentially the message is stop the violence, stop the flow of firearms, or face rapid, focused, and comprehensive law enforcement and corrections attention. The idea is that for the effectiveness of the targeted offender and application of levers approaches to have maximum effect, potential offenders must hear this message. Additionally, efforts will be undertaken to communicate the change in policy and the anti-violence message to the community at large so as to reassure law-abiding citizens that the criminal justice community is responding to the violence problem.

Key Action Items:

1) **At-risk probationers and parolees (adult and juvenile) will be required to come to court where the multi-agency team will explain how violence will be responded to.**

2) The multi-agency team will also visit targeted high schools and correctional settings to explain how violence will be responded to.

DOC release centers and the Boy's School provide examples of settings where individuals about to be returned to the community could receive this message.

3) **Police and probation contacts with individual offenders will also be used as vehicles for communicating these new norms.**

4) **Contacts with offenders, suspects, probationers and parolees, and youths during curfew sweeps, will also provide opportunities to communicate the zero-tolerance message.**

5) Posters of successful law enforcement actions will be developed and distributed in neighborhoods and to targeted offender groups.

6) The working group will select a spokesperson to communicate the parameters of success to the media.

The working group will develop indicators of success (e.g., incarceration of a chronic violent offender, illegal weapons seized, etc.) and a spokesperson to regularly provide information to the media. This will include both the major media outlets and more localized, neighborhood media.

IV. Development of community-based prevention components

Rationale:

The focus of the preceding three strategies is to deter potential offenders from engaging in violent behavior and to incapacitate those who continue to commit violent crimes. The final strategies seeks to create mechanisms for moving potential offenders into legitimate opportunities and situations. To implement this strategy we will rely heavily on various community and neighborhood groups and associations. Given the reliance on community groups, effective implementation will be dependent on the partnerships created. Thus, the following action items are offered as recommendations for community consideration. These include prevention efforts that have been identified as promising in a major review of crime prevention sponsored by the National Institute of Justice.

The crime prevention efforts are important in several respects. First, is the simple idea that preventing problems is preferable to reacting to violent crime. Second, this is consistent with community-policing and community justice efforts to work with the community on crime prevention and problem solving. Third, these efforts may mitigate concerns held by certain members of the community about the increased law enforcement emphasis of Elements I and II.

Key community groups that may be resources for these efforts include: Commission on African-American Males; Frontporch Alliance; GIPC; health community; business sector; weed and seed, ….

1) **Focused intervention with gang-associated youth should be initiated.**

The homicide review indicated a high proportion of the City's homicides involve individuals who are parts of known groups of chronic offenders. This is consistent with national research. For example, the Rochester youth study found that although gang members constitute only one-third of the youth panel, they committed 90 percent of the serious crime, 80 percent of the violent crime, and 83 percent of drug sales. Similarly, a Seattle study found 15 percent of the youth in the research were gang members but that they committed 85 percent of the robberies. Consequently, efforts to keep youths from developing gang affiliations are warranted. In particular, younger siblings of hard core gang members and other youths becoming involved in gang activities are appropriate targets for focused intervention. Research suggests that the most effective strategies focus on reducing gang cohesion and membership.

2) **The community should consider a program focused on children witnessing violence**.

Research suggests that youths who witness violence, particularly in the home, are at heightened risk for becoming perpetrators of violence. Referral of youths who have witnessed domestic violence to counseling or adult role models may interrupt the cycle of violence. Such an approach may be possible in coordination with the YES program and other community resources.

3) **Supervised educational and recreational programs, particularly drop-in and afterschool programs should be developed.**

Churches, schools, and community centers provide opportunities for monitored drop-in and afterschool programs. It is important that such efforts be monitored, however, as unsupervised youth gathering places may actually be criminogenic.

4) **Employment programs for at-risk youth and young adults.**

Although employment programs as an alternative correctional intervention have not proven effective, creating opportunities for youths and young adults to move into the world of work can prevent at-risk individuals from becoming involved in crime and violence. Given the current low unemployment rate, efforts to move young people into jobs may produce both crime reductions and economic benefits.

5) **Mentoring programs for youth in the community and youth returning from correctional settings should be expanded.**

Recent evidence suggests that mentoring may provide prevention benefits. Opportunities for mentoring may be expanded by drawing on a variety of community resources. The AIM program, focused on youths returning from correctional institutions, provides a current example of such an approach.

6) **Churches and community-based health centers may collaborate on counseling for families in crisis situations.**

7) **Coordinated efforts to address crime and disorder, particularly in the high violent crime neighborhoods should be continued and intensified.**

Efforts such as the Street Level Advocacy Program, Drug House Eviction, Weed and Seed, and Community Justice Initiative should be supported to ameliorate the contexts in which violence is most likely to occur.

8) **Situational crime prevention and target hardening efforts at repeat hot spot locations should be expanded.**

9) Safe Home efforts should be initiated in public housing to eliminate drug trafficking and violent crime.

10) Conflict mediation in the schools should continue to be supported.

11) Restorative justice programs as an early intervention in delinquency cases should continue and be expanded.

12) Home nurse visitation programs for at-risk families should be considered.

Research indicates that home visitation programs, particularly for single parent homes and for individuals with a history of abuse and neglect, can have long-term crime prevention benefits.

13) Current neighborhood economic revitalization efforts should be supported as providing crime prevention benefits.

Neighborhood economic growth and crime affect one another. Neighborhood crime problems mitigate against economic investment and growth and economic disinvestment and decline facilitate crime. Consequently, anti-crime and economic revitalization efforts should be seen as mutually reinforcing efforts that warrant public-private, comprehensive efforts.

14) Promotion of safe and secure storage of firearms.

Many guns used in crime are acquired through burglary or smuggling from a parent's home. A community campaign promoting safe storage may reduce the availability of illegally possessed weapons on the streets.

V. All of the above efforts will be supported by the working group's ongoing collection of accurate and timely data and intelligence

Beyond the analysis of official crime data and criminal history records, the working group will draw upon line level officers, members of the gang unit, homicide detectives, and many others within the police department, probation and parole officers, state and federal law enforcement, and prosecutors that have extensive knowledge of the pattern of street violence. One key element is the pooling of this intelligence, as well as background research on the identification of chronic offenders through various police, court, and corrections record systems, to identify key players within the neighborhood, their network connections, and their vulnerability to various levers (e.g., outstanding warrants, probation status). Offender debriefing is a valuable source of intelligence.

Additionally, the working group will seek ways of gathering information from community groups and individuals about the crime problem in their neighborhoods.

VI. The Violence Reduction Group should also consider appropriate programmatic and legislative initiatives

The Working Group and the Policymaker Group of the Violence Reduction Group, on the basis of the problem solving analyses, will make recommendations for legislative changes and for program development. For example, currently Marion County has recently implemented, or is considering a variety of crime control initiatives. These include programs judged as promising in the National Institute of Justice review. Included in either local planning or the national review are the following:

- Drug Court
- Drug Treatment and/or Coerced Abstinence through Urine Screening
- Juvenile Corrections Aftercare
- Day Fines
- Expanded Battered Women's Shelters and Orders of Protection

This group is well-positioned to review national best practices and, having examined in light of local problems and resources, make recommendations for additional violence reduction strategies. Further, given the multiple agency participation in this project, the group is likely to be effective in advocating and implementing desired strategies and/or legislation.

Preliminary review of these issues suggest the need to consider the following:

- Bail Matrix as it applies to VIPER Offenders and Firearms-related offenses
- Probation revocation of probationers found to be possessing firearms

VII. Benchmarks of Success

Following a minimum of twelve months of intensive activity, we anticipate indications of success. Among the goals of this project are the following:

- Reduce the annual homicide rate by 20 percent
- Reduce the incidence of assault-related shootings by 20 percent