

*Shifting the Focus:
An Interdisciplinary Approach to Advancing
Violence Prevention in California*

**A Local Call to State Action
Findings from Community Hearings in California**

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A Local Call to State Action: Findings from Community Hearings in California was prepared by Shailushi Baxi and Rachel Davis of Prevention Institute.

Prevention Institute is a national nonprofit organization that was established to reduce illness and injury and improve the health and well being of communities through primary prevention. The Institute translates national models into effective local practice and synthesizes the learning of local initiatives to help shape the national approach and agenda. Prevention Institute provides training and consultation on developing prevention strategies across disciplinary and institutional barriers.

Members of Prevention Institute staff were among the initial conveners of *Shifting the Focus* and have been facilitating the collaborative efforts since its inception.

Shifting the Focus is a voluntary interagency violence prevention partnership. Leaders from over 30 departments in California's state government agencies, as well as representatives from local violence prevention agencies, state commissions, and state organizations, recognize that effective violence prevention requires a new way of doing business. This new paradigm will ensure that California communities are well served through practice at the state level that supports success at the local level.

Support and Additional Information

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More information about Prevention Institute and *Shifting the Focus* is available online at www.preventioninstitute.org.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Shifting the Focus held a series of ten hearings and distributed surveys across the State of California between November 2000 and April 2001. The purpose of these activities was to gather input from local violence prevention practitioners and decision-makers about the successes and challenges they experience working with State government. Specifically, *Shifting the Focus* sought to learn about State practices, policies, and programs that either support or hinder local efforts and about successful models of collaboration that the State could use in forming future partnerships.

Because local efforts are vital to overall violence prevention success, it is important to learn from local practitioners about how State government affects their community efforts and how State service delivery to communities can be improved. While many State officials may have an impression about local needs based on their own experiences, work with other sectors, and inquiries of community practitioners, *Shifting the Focus* members felt that an organized process to clarify, confirm, or deny these impressions was vital. It was with this understanding and goal that *Shifting the Focus* set out to learn from local practitioners.

Methodology

A local hearings subcommittee consisting of *Shifting the Focus* members guided the planning of the hearings. The committee decided to hold ten hearings, each in a different location, and selected locations that reflected the diversity of the state. Three large hearings were held, one in Northern California (Oakland), one in Southern California (Los Angeles), and one in a rural community (Redding); smaller hearings were held in Fort Bragg, Sacramento, Stockton, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Salinas, and San Diego.

Members of the planning committee felt it was important for the hearings themselves to be shaped with attention to local needs and formed State-local partnerships with community organizations to serve as local hosts wherever possible. Members of the planning committee worked closely with local hosts throughout the planning and completion of each hearing. Local hosts include the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles (Los Angeles), the Youth Violence Prevention Council (Redding), the East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership (Oakland), the California Crime Prevention Officers Association (Stockton), and Partners for Peace (Salinas). Local sponsors were responsible for helping to shape the format of the hearings, identifying and conducting outreach to participants, identifying hearing locations, and co-facilitating various parts of the hearings.

Each hearing began with an overview of *Shifting the Focus*, followed by a brief question and answer period. The hearings consisted primarily of prepared testimony from local violence prevention practitioners and local government officials. A panel of State government representatives and Prevention Institute staff was present at each hearing. Each hearing also provided time for participants to engage in a facilitated discussion about issues raised during the hearing. Invitees were also invited to submit written testimony.

Summary of Findings from Community Hearings

Over 200 local practitioners and government officials attended the hearings and 75 surveys were returned to Prevention Institute. Respondents and participants represented health, education, social services, local and county government, the faith community, law enforcement, grassroots organizations, community-based organizations, medical services, and other sectors. A variety of Northern and Southern California counties, both rural and urban, were also represented.

Responses to the survey questions and from hearing participants were compiled and analyzed by Prevention Institute. Responses clustered into ten major categories, and within each category, several themes emerged.

- I. Funding
 - a. Community practitioners supported funding for violence prevention efforts.
 - b. Local practitioners cited competitive funding as a barrier to local violence prevention success.
 - c. Participants supported increased local flexibility with State funding and cited categorical funding as a barrier.
 - d. Participants cited lack of sustainable funding as an obstacle in their local work.
 - e. Practitioners cited complicated RFPs, systems of invoicing and reimbursement, and funding cycles as barriers in their efforts.
- II. Access to Information
 - a. Local practitioners cited the need for better systems of information sharing regarding available funding, training opportunities, data, and technical assistance.
 - b. Participants cited a need for information on best practices for different populations and locales.
- III. Technical Assistance
 - a. Local practitioners reported that State technical assistance providers are knowledgeable and that State-sponsored technical assistance is high quality.
 - b. Local practitioners cited the need for technical assistance related to best practices.
 - c. Local practitioners supported expanding the content of State-sponsored technical assistance programs.
- IV. Training
 - a. Participants cited State-sponsored conferences as excellent training opportunities.
 - b. Practitioners expressed the need for State-sponsored training that addresses specific local needs.
 - c. Participants cited the lack of funding or restrictions on funding for training as a barrier.
- V. Data
 - a. Practitioners reported that the Department of Health Services data system is useful and easy to use.
 - b. Practitioners cited non-integrated data reporting and operating systems as an obstacle in local work.
 - c. Local practitioners cited the difficulty of accessing locally relevant data as a barrier.
- VI. Evaluation
 - a. Practitioners cited the need for enhanced resources (e.g., funding, staff, and training) to support evaluation.

- b. Local practitioners stated that evaluation requirements are often unrelated to local measures or indicators.
- VII. Local Needs and Community Ownership
 - a. Local violence prevention practitioners appreciated the hearing process; asking local practitioners about their experiences is valuable.
 - b. Participants called for State programs and policies to be increasingly attentive to local needs.
 - c. Local practitioners stressed the value of community ownership in local violence prevention efforts.
- VIII. Primary Prevention
 - a. Local violence prevention practitioners stressed the need for increased leadership to support and advance prevention.
 - b. Participants expressed a desire for increased prioritization of primary prevention.
- IX. Cultural Competence
 - a. Participants expressed the need to enhance cultural competence at the State level to address community differences such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and practitioner training and experience.
 - b. Participants expressed the need for flexibility to adopt multiple approaches to serve local populations.
- X. Collaboration
 - a. Practitioners claimed that State level partnerships support local violence prevention efforts.
 - b. Participants supported models that promote community-based collaborations and cited State-mandated collaborations as a barrier in their local efforts.
 - c. Local practitioners cited a lack of funding to support coalition activities as a barrier in their work.

Conclusion

The several hundred violence prevention practitioners who testified at the *Shifting the Focus* hearings across California exemplify the wisdom, compassion, and skills that can make a difference in the prevention of violence. However, local practitioners cannot sustain their efforts alone. They rely heavily on State support to actively maintain and promote local activities. Local practitioners look to the State not only for concrete avenues of support, but also for the vision and leadership that will allow them to continually improve on their work.

The combined voices of practitioners across California have laid out a mandate that the State must heed. The *Shifting the Focus* hearings have captured valuable information that can be used to transform State policies, programs, and practices to better support local violence prevention efforts. These findings represent a local call to action that the State has an obligation to meet in order to support the critical local work that promotes safe, healthy, and sustainable communities for individuals.

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the process and findings from a series of ten community hearings that were sponsored by *Shifting the Focus*. Between November 2000 and April 2001, *Shifting the Focus* conducted community hearings and distributed surveys throughout California. The purpose of these activities was to gather input from local violence prevention practitioners and decision-makers about the successes and challenges they experience working with State government. Specifically, *Shifting the Focus* sought to learn from local violence prevention practitioners about State practices, policies, and programs that either support or hinder their efforts and about successful models of collaboration that the State could use in forming future partnerships.

Shifting the Focus is a voluntary interagency violence prevention partnership. Leaders from over 30 departments in California State government agencies, as well as representatives from local violence prevention agencies, state commissions, and state organizations, have come together to change how violence prevention is approached in California. The *Shifting the Focus* approach seeks to enhance local violence prevention outcomes through interdepartmental, interdisciplinary partnerships within State government. Specifically, *Shifting the Focus* aims to reengineer State government activities from isolated violence prevention efforts to a broader emphasis on collaboration and coordination of State agencies and departments in order to better respond to community needs.

The membership of *Shifting the Focus* recognizes that local violence prevention activities are critical to preventing violence and that State government should support these local activities. In addition, in order to truly serve in a supporting role, State government must not only be aware of community concerns and needs, but must also be responsive to those concerns and needs. While many State officials may have an impression about local needs based on their own experiences, work with other sectors, and inquiries of community practitioners, *Shifting the Focus* members felt that an organized process to clarify, confirm, or deny these impressions was vital. This may be the largest such hearings process on these issues conducted in California, and perhaps the United States. It was with this understanding and goal that *Shifting the Focus* set out to learn from local violence prevention practitioners.

The Importance of Effective State Government Collaboration

Violence is a complex issue that crosses the boundaries between criminal justice, health and human services, and education. Within State government, the responsibility for reducing and preventing violence spans numerous state agencies, departments, and programs, each addressing a different part of the larger problem. These agencies, departments, and programs often work separately and independently to address violence. Few individuals and even fewer families and communities experience violence in these silos. In fact, different forms of violence — domestic violence, child abuse, sexual violence, gang violence, suicidal behavior — co-exist within the same home and community, interrelated in complicated ways. For this reason, a cohesive violence prevention approach spanning multiple departments and disciplines is required.

While expertise within each department and discipline is essential to advancing violence prevention knowledge and understanding, this can create a system that is difficult for community practitioners to access and navigate. Over the years, as public concern about violence has grown,

numerous projects and independent sources of funding have been established. Too often, these varied sources of funding and information are not coordinated effectively enough or are duplicative. As a result, the resources and services provided by State government to address community problems are delivered in a way that is not always as helpful to local efforts as they can or should be. The goal of these hearings was to identify the specific ways that State government could improve service delivery to communities in order to make violence prevention activities more effective, efficient, and sustainable.

METHODOLOGY

Planning Process

A local hearings subcommittee consisting of *Shifting the Focus* members guided the planning of the hearings. The committee included members from the Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Health Services, Department of Education, Department of Social Services, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Little Hoover Commission (see Appendix A).

The committee decided to hold ten hearings in locations that reflect the diversity of the state. Three larger hearings were held, one in Northern California (Oakland), one in Southern California (Los Angeles), and one in a rural community (Redding); smaller hearings were held in Fort Bragg, Sacramento, Stockton, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Salinas, and San Diego. In Sacramento, the hearing was held in conjunction with The California Wellness Foundation's *Violence Prevention Initiative* conference; in San Diego, the hearing was held in conjunction with the *Juvenile Delinquency and the Courts* conference. Both of these events drew attendees from across the state.

The *Shifting the Focus* hearings were designed to build on activities related to statewide violence prevention initiatives, including activities conducted by the Little Hoover Commission and the Office of the Attorney General's *Safe from the Start* initiative. Members from the planning committee worked with representatives of the Little Hoover Commission and *Safe from the Start* as they planned and executed regional forums and community meetings. Additionally, several members of the subcommittee attended Little Hoover Commission and *Safe from the Start* events. The outcome of this deliberate collaboration was an increased knowledge base about local needs and more comprehensive information from local practitioners.

Local Hosts

As the planning for the hearings began, members of the subcommittee felt it was important for each hearing to be planned with attention to local needs so that the structure and format of each hearing addressed community concerns. The subcommittee members decided to partner with community organizations to sponsor and hold *Shifting the Focus* hearings wherever possible (see Appendix B).

Members of the planning committee worked closely with local hosts throughout the planning and completion of each event. *Shifting the Focus* partnered with the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles (Los Angeles), the Youth Violence Prevention Council (Redding), the East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership (Oakland), the Stockton Police Department (Stockton), and Partners for Peace (Salinas). Local sponsors were responsible for helping to

shape the format of the hearing, identifying and conducting outreach to hearing participants, finding a hearing location, and co-facilitating various parts of the hearing (see Appendix C).

Hearings Format

Hearing participants were identified through local sponsors and local contacts of *Shifting the Focus* members. Introductory and other guiding materials were sent to participants prior to the meeting and Prevention Institute staff conducted follow-up phone calls with participants to clarify any concerns or questions in preparation for the hearing (see Appendix D).

Each hearing began with introductions and a brief overview of *Shifting the Focus*, which was followed by a question and answer period. The hearings consisted primarily of prepared testimony from local violence prevention practitioners working in health, education, justice, social services, and law enforcement, as well as representatives from local government, including elected officials. A moderator panel consisting of representatives from State government and Prevention Institute staff was present at each hearing. Participants were asked to offer time-limited testimony, and additional time was allotted for questions following the testimony. Each hearing also provided time for participants to engage in a facilitated discussion about some of the issues raised during the testimonies (see Appendix E). All invitees were also invited to submit written testimony.

Survey

Members of the subcommittee also developed a survey that *Shifting the Focus* members and Prevention Institute staff could distribute at statewide conferences and training events (see Appendix F). It was designed to supplement the hearings and a total of 75 surveys were returned to Prevention Institute.

Key Questions

Hearing and survey participants were asked to consider the following questions:

1. Which State practices, policies, and programs support local violence prevention success?
2. Which State practices, policies, and programs hinder local violence prevention work?
3. What are the successful models of local collaboration that the State can learn from?

Analysis

Over 200 local practitioners and government officials attended the hearings and 75 surveys were returned to Prevention Institute (see Appendix G). Respondents and participants represented health, education, social services, local and county government, the faith community, law enforcement, grassroots organizations, community-based organizations, medical services, and other sectors. A variety of Northern and Southern California counties, both rural and urban, were also represented (see Appendix H).

Oral and written testimony from hearing participants and responses to the survey questions were compiled and analyzed by Prevention Institute (see Appendix I). While much of the synthesis and analysis of the findings from the hearings and surveys seems straightforward, it may be worth noting that this work was conducted by an organization that is not affiliated with State government. This report is not intended to be a verbatim account but rather a synthesis of major

themes and issues that emerged in this process. Final responsibility for this report rests with Prevention Institute.

FINDINGS

Overall, hearing participants and survey respondents were pleased that the State was asking for their input. Responses clustered into ten major categories, and within each category, several themes emerged. The ten major categories are listed below:

- I. Funding
- II. Access to Information
- III. Technical Assistance
- IV. Training
- V. Data
- VI. Evaluation
- VII. Local Needs and Community Ownership
- VIII. Primary Prevention
- IX. Cultural Competence
- X. Collaboration

Although practitioners were asked to consider all three questions equally, when given the opportunity to dialogue with the State about ways to improve their work locally, participants chose more often to focus on the barriers experienced working with the State than how the State supported their work. As a result, findings tend to emphasize State practices, policies, and programs that function as barriers to local success.

I. Funding

Participants spoke a great deal about their experiences with State funding practices, both praising current funding of local efforts and highlighting several barriers related to funding. Hearing participants stressed that the State's funding practices assert a broad influence on local work, from the ability to collect data and conduct adequate evaluations to the managing of program and collaboration work. Participants spoke specifically about competition for funding, the need for increased flexibility and the effect of categorical funding streams, and the length and sustainability of funding as major issues related to their work. Participants also discussed complicated Requests for Proposals (RFPs), invoicing and reimbursement systems, and different funding cycles.

State Support for Local Violence Prevention Efforts

Many hearing participants spoke positively about State funding for local violence prevention work. Practitioners recognize that by funding local violence prevention activities and initiatives, State government affirms the value of their efforts. They stressed that existing sources of funding are essential to the work that happens at the community level. One participant stated that “without the State's support, the work just wouldn't get done.”

Competition for Funding

Competition for funding is a significant issue for local practitioners. County agencies often compete for the same funding sources, and simultaneously compete with neighboring counties. This can set up a system in which agencies and counties work against each other rather than with each other to serve similar populations. This subsequently discourages collaboration and coordination of local level efforts. Local practitioners maintain that while they see the need for the State to be selective about its funding decisions, the way funding is allocated at the local level is actually counterproductive to community-based efforts.

Rural counties in particular feel the impact of competitive funding practices. Because funding is often granted based on the magnitude of the problem, rural counties with smaller populations often have trouble proving that a problem exists. As one woman in Redding testified, “Funding decisions are sometimes made by determining who has the biggest need. In less populated areas, those numbers are always smaller than they are in urban areas. As a result, we often lose out on funding.” Practitioners called for the State to set up systems in which small counties do not lose funding to larger, more populated counties.

Increased Flexibility and Categorical Funding

Practitioners spoke about the need for increased flexibility at the city and county levels in the use of State funds. Practitioners stressed that city and county organizations need funds to address local problems in ways that they see appropriate. One participant in Redding suggested the possibility of providing block grants to the County Board of Supervisors, emphasizing the “need to stop fitting our work into other people’s boxes.” Given concerns about accountability, he and others agreed that other reforms may be more suitable options to address this need, but reiterated that flexibility at the local level is critical. Other participants across the State echoed his sentiment, calling for increased flexibility with State funds.

Local practitioners also cited categorical funding as a significant obstacle to meeting community needs. Categorical funding, or funding for work on a specific issue or problem or with a specific population, impedes local work by preventing local practitioners from implementing comprehensive solutions and restricting their ability to work across issues and disciplines. Several hearing participants testified about the importance of addressing complex problems with comprehensive solutions; the root causes of violence, such as mental illness, substance abuse, and unemployment, are often not experienced as independent problems, but as connected and inextricable from one another. “In order to help the child, I have to help the parent,” stated one practitioner. “I need the State to realize that people’s lives and problems are connected.”

Length and Sustainability of Funding

A third major concern is the length and sustainability of funding. Although the State provides significant funding support for local violence prevention efforts, practitioners claimed that funding cycles are not long enough for programs to be truly effective. Participants also noted that effective prevention takes time; outcomes may not be easily demonstrable in two or three years. As outcomes may take much longer than the length of funding, programs that may be successful in the long term are unable to continue their work due to short-term funding limits. “I have to look for funding every three years,” testified one practitioner in Redding, “so I spent most of the last year looking for more money, rather than on the work.” Participants stressed

that the short length of funding does not allow for community practitioners to truly establish themselves and find long-term sustainable sources of funding; consequently, the impact and effectiveness of their work often suffers.

Local practitioners saw changing priorities at the State level as an obstacle to setting up long-term funding options. As one participant explained, “Projects are funded for one to three years, and then funding priorities change... and we aren’t left with many options to keep our work going.” Specifically, they asked that funding cycles be lengthened by two to three years. This would allow local practitioners to establish themselves and set up more sustainable and self-sufficient sources of funding.

Local practitioners also supported funding for best or proven practices independent of new funding priorities. Often, the State funds programs or projects for several years and, when funding priorities change, programs that are demonstrating success no longer have financial support. “We have evidence that certain programs work; let’s fund them consistently,” testified one San Diego participant. Frequently cited examples of these proven programs include Healthy Start programs, mentoring programs, community centers, and community coalitions such as the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles. Several practitioners called for the State to establish different types of funding streams to fund both new programs as well as established programs, supporting the idea that “we need to reward good work.”

Complicated RFPs, Invoices and Reimbursements, and Funding Cycles

Several participants spoke about complicated RFPs as a barrier. One practitioner in Oakland spoke about his difficulty with submitting an RFP. “The form asked me for data that seemed irrelevant and the instructions were difficult to understand,” he said. “It took me days to fill out the RFP.” Other practitioners spoke about their concerns with invoices and reimbursements. Invoices, for example, can be difficult to figure out and submission requirements are inconsistent across agencies and departments. Incorrectly formatting an invoice can lead to delays in payments and reimbursements that can last as long as three months. Several practitioners lamented that while it can take months to get payments for their work, they may also have difficulty getting their work done due to lack of funds. In some cases, the State withholds a percentage of the contract, even after work has been completed. These funds are released only after the entire contract has been completed, which can put an additional strain on local efforts. Finally, local practitioners cited funding cycles as a barrier. The State’s funding cycles often do not match with local timeframes. As a result, trying to match local timeframes to State timeframes complicates local work. One practitioner offered this explanation: “State funding starts in July... right in the middle of the year. As a result, the way money comes down requires additional work to manage it.” Additionally, funding cycles are often different in different departments, resulting in the need to submit multiple reports to different State agencies at various times in the year.

II. Access to Information

Hearing participants affirmed the need for easy access to reliable and up-to-date sources of information on a range of topics related to local violence prevention. Often, however, local practitioners are unable to access the information that they need in an easy and timely manner. They stressed that the State should improve systems of communication so that local communities

are better able to access the right types of information. In particular, participants cited the need for improved access to information on issues such as funding, training opportunities, data, and technical assistance resources. Additionally, participants stressed the need for information on promising practices and proven strategies in violence prevention to strengthen their local efforts.

Increased Access to Information

Hearing participants voiced their concerns about the need for better access to sufficient and appropriate information from the State and cited the need for better information about available funding, training opportunities, data, and technical assistance as a major barrier in their work. Several participants commented that they were unaware of any prevention activities going on at the State level. As one attendee in Stockton testified, “I never get any information about prevention activities or funding... and I’m a prevention officer!” Participants in Los Angeles spoke about their inability to access information about funding at the State level: “RFPs are all last minute,” said one woman. “I don’t find out about things in a timely manner.” Other participants spoke about their inability to find current data or up-to-date information on conferences and other training venues. Because travel to out-of-town events often requires advance notice, many practitioners said they were unable to attend trainings or conferences because they did not receive information in time to request permission to travel.

For those who are able to find the information they need, most described the process as time-consuming and tedious, or as one individual said, “not at all user-friendly.” Local practitioners cited personal relationships as the most reliable way to obtain data or other information. “The best way for me to get the data I need is to call someone with whom I have a good relationship at the State level,” said one practitioner at the Oakland hearing. Rather than being able to access information through a centralized location or receiving it from the State, local practitioners are forced to navigate State channels and rely on personal relationships.

Information on Best and Promising Practices

Another issue that arose in the category of access to information was the need for information about best and promising practices. The hearings illuminated local practitioners’ desire for information about strategies and programs that work. One participant from Redding spoke of a gang violence prevention program that has drastically reduced gang violence rates in Shasta County; there has not been one act of gang violence in the last two years, a statistic that also matches community perceptions about violence. “This program could work for any rural county,” he testified. “Other counties can learn from the work done here.” Practitioners across the State echoed this sentiment, calling for the State to provide them with information on best and promising practices in violence prevention, substance abuse prevention, mentoring, and community programming. Local practitioners expressed support for a State system that would promote effective programs and projects and reduce duplication of efforts locally. Their major recommendation is a State-sponsored clearinghouse for model programs using best and promising practices in violence prevention.

III. Technical Assistance

Local practitioners spoke about the need for expanding State technical assistance resources, especially related to the implementation of best and promising practices. Practitioners point out that, at the local level, they are not always equipped to handle day-to-day problems and that they

need technical assistance to address these issues. Although current technical assistance resources are good and providers are knowledgeable, participants voiced support for expanding technical assistance resources.

Good Technical Assistance and Knowledgeable Providers

Local violence prevention practitioners praised the State's current technical assistance efforts. They indicated that State-sponsored technical assistance is high quality and very helpful in their day-to-day work, claiming that the State's technical assistance efforts are timely, efficient, and on-topic. Local practitioners also spoke highly of technical assistance providers, describing them as knowledgeable and available to answer questions. Several participants related how technical assistance providers had provided them with useful content and programming assistance for current and future projects.

Technical Assistance on Promising Practices and Proven Strategies

Based on their positive experiences, local practitioners expressed two further needs related to State-sponsored technical assistance. Participants voiced strong support for technical assistance in implementing promising practices and proven strategies in violence prevention. Similar to the request for better dissemination of best practices information, participants requested State support and assistance in translating information about successful programs into programs that work for their communities. Practitioners stressed that by sharing information among counties and cities statewide, practitioners could learn about and implement techniques and strategies demonstrating promising effects, ultimately strengthening violence prevention activities in their communities. Participants emphasized the need for assistance from the State in implementing these programs and strategies effectively and with sensitivity to their local needs. For example, one participant in Redding spoke about violence prevention as it relates to brain development. "I know the latest information," he testified, "but I need help on how to use that information in my work."

Expansion of Technical Assistance

Practitioners also spoke about the need for the expansion of technical assistance resources, including assistance in administrative and management areas. Specific topics of concern include program implementation, budgeting and finances, grantwriting, and program evaluation. Others spoke of the need for technical assistance in implementing new legislation. One educator pointed out that teacher training does not prepare teachers to deal with the effects of new legislation. "Many schools are out of compliance because they simply don't have the resources and the know-how," he offered. Another participant reflected that most community-based organizations are not run by those with strong business or technical skills. "We are the people who care," she said. "We need help to run our programs efficiently and effectively."

IV. Training

Local violence prevention practitioners value State-sponsored training and called for increased access to a broader range of training topics and opportunities. While technical assistance is intended to fill in particular knowledge gaps for local practitioners, training is intended to provide broader content information and skills development. Practitioners reflected that State-sponsored conferences and similar events are excellent training opportunities, but voiced concerns that such training too often does not address local needs and variations. Participants

also spoke about the lack of funding or restrictions on funding for training, which can prevent them from receiving adequate or up-to-date training on violence prevention.

State Conferences

Hearing participants felt that State-sponsored conferences are excellent sources of up-to-date training and information. “I learn some really important things at State conferences,” stated one participant. “They are opportunities to learn some really valuable things.” Practitioners indicated that State training and conferences are extremely helpful in their local violence prevention efforts by providing both content and management information.

Local Needs

However, hearing participants also stated that the training content should be more relevant to local needs. Rural counties in Northern California, for example, have different training needs than urban counties in Southern California. Similarly, there are different training needs for those working with specific ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic populations. “Working with different populations requires different skills. State training should address those issues for those who need it,” testified one Oakland participant. Recognizing that the State cannot tailor larger conferences and training events specifically to their needs, local practitioners did offer that smaller events might be more appropriate venues to address specific training needs for different communities.

Funding for Training

Additionally, local practitioners cited restricted funding or lack of funding for training as a barrier. As one hearing participant from Stockton stated, “I would love to be able to attend training on children and brain development. But as a police officer, I am only funded to attend trainings that are sponsored by POST (Police Officer Standards and Training).” Those working in rural areas face additional challenges regarding time and distance. “Travel and lodging are expensive,” testified one woman from Mendocino County. “I can’t afford to attend trainings that are too far away.”

V. Data

Hearing participants spoke about systems of data collection that are often uncoordinated and emphasized the need for accurate, up-to-date, and applicable data. Practitioners stressed that the right data are central to program design and implementation; data are “what drive the program” and, in turn, influence evaluation. Local practitioners cited the Health Services data system as a useful system, but also expressed the overall need for data collection and reporting efforts that are more integrated and require less manipulation at the local level. Additionally, participants cited the need for locally applicable and up-to-date data and reiterated that the success of community programs depends on finding and using data that reflect a community’s needs.

Useful Data Systems

Local practitioners cited the Health Services data system as supportive of their local efforts. They felt that this system is easy to use and provides them with necessary information. “They provided us with a lot of useful information,” testified one practitioner.

Non-Integrated Data Systems

However, a major obstacle can occur when State agencies and departments do not collaborate on data collection. Participants cited non-integrated data systems as a significant issue. This includes not only different data reporting requirements, but also entirely different operating systems. One participant recounted her experience with domestic violence funding. Her agency received funding from both the Department of Health Services and the Office of Criminal Justice Planning for domestic violence work. Each agency required different information, operated on different fiscal years, and used different types of software. This created more work for her on a daily basis, as she often had to reenter data or recalculate statistics based on each agency's fiscal year. Although she cited a significant improvement in coordination between the two agencies in recent years, other practitioners across the State told similar stories of non-integrated and uncoordinated data collection systems creating significant hardships for those working at the local level. One woman in Sacramento summed it up by saying, "One agency wants data on 13- to 15-year-olds; the other wants information on 14- to 16-year-olds. I spend all my time messing with the numbers rather than doing the work."

Accurate and Applicable Data

The issue of accurate and applicable data is also a statewide concern. Local practitioners testified that they are unable to find data that reflect local trends. Additionally, it is often difficult to find the right data, which can be outdated, too general, or inapplicable to a particular locale/population. One Los Angeles participant emphasized that data are the building blocks of effective programs. The lack of relevant data creates hardships in applying for grants and planning and implementing effective programs. "I need the right information to help me make the case," he testified. Other participants around the State also testified to the need for locally applicable and useful data.

VI. Evaluation

Local practitioners do not feel equipped to meet State requirements nor do they feel that State evaluation requirements always strengthen local efforts. While practitioners recognize that evaluation is critical to ensure that State resources are spent appropriately and that local violence prevention efforts are successful, they also know that effective evaluation requires time, staff, resources, and skill. Practitioners point out that the State's evaluation standards and schemes do not always match local needs. Specifically, they spoke about inadequate resources for evaluation, including funding, staff, training, and technical assistance, and about State standards sometimes conflicting with local measures of success. As a result, program evaluation does not always adequately assess programmatic success.

Need for Increased Resources

The need for increased resources for evaluation is a concern expressed by violence prevention practitioners across the State. For many of the participants, a more specific concern is insufficient funding for evaluation and data analysis. "There simply isn't enough money for me to collect good data and make sense of it," wrote one survey respondent. Other practitioners spoke about the need for other types of resources related to evaluation, including training, technical assistance, and staffing. Many survey respondents cited technical assistance as a major factor in their ability to evaluate programs effectively and correctly. "I know that data collection

and evaluation should be integrated efforts,” said one woman in Los Angeles, “but I’m not trained in evaluation. I need the State’s help to figure out how best to do that.”

Inappropriate Evaluation Requirements

Violence prevention practitioners statewide also cited inappropriate evaluation requirements as a barrier to local success. Practitioners spoke about inappropriate evaluation in two distinct ways. The first is that the State requires communities to evaluate data that do not necessarily provide a measure of a program’s effectiveness. Practitioners described evaluations as meaningless when they do not fit the nature of the program being evaluated. One practitioner offered a domestic violence program as an example. The program evaluation measures repeat rates for first-time juvenile offenders. He says, however, that the “box is too small,” and that this measurement does not provide the complete picture, and perhaps not even the right picture. “The nature of the offense,” he observed, “sometimes can lead to missing the victim. We need to ask and answer the right questions.”

The second way that evaluations can be inappropriate involves the time span of an evaluation. Many community participants reflected that effective evaluations should be carried out over longer periods of time, especially when a program is required to demonstrate a predetermined effect, such as a 5% drop in truancy rates. “You won’t necessarily see a decrease in juvenile delinquency in the first year that a program is working,” testified one hearing participant in Stockton, “but you may in three years and you will in five.” Local practitioners realize that effects such as these take time; in the interim, the program’s effectiveness in achieving certain outcomes may not be measured accurately. When asked, one woman in Redding replied that she didn’t need to see the numbers in order to tell that a program worked: “I know it’s working,” she said, “because I can see the difference in the child.”

VII. Local Needs and Community Ownership of Efforts

In line with the *Shifting the Focus* vision that communities are built from within, local practitioners stressed the need for violence prevention efforts to be grounded in local wisdom, needs, and strengths. Subsequently, State efforts that recognize and support local understanding are valuable and appreciated. Participants expressed strong support for the hearings as a way of learning about community needs, but stressed that increased emphasis should be placed on State responsiveness to local needs. Additionally, practitioners promoted community ownership as an essential component of local success and reiterated that programs that are locally controlled are key. Community violence prevention efforts should be powered by energy from within the community. In particular, participants promoted violence prevention models that are community-driven, rather than State-driven.

Support for Hearings Process

Hearing participants expressed strong support for the hearings process. Attendees praised the State for its efforts in learning about violence prevention work in communities and for taking steps to make local work more effective; several stated an interest in seeing this process continue in the future. They reiterated that engaging local practitioners in a dialogue about their experiences with State government helps to improve State-local partnerships and provides the State with a system to improve its service delivery to communities.

Attention to Local Needs

Regarding the issue of attention to local needs, local practitioners spoke of the need for the development and execution of State practices, policies, and programs that acknowledge differences in communities and counties statewide. They stressed that each locale has needs that are specific and unique and that effective work must account for these attributes and features. This includes considering urban/rural differences, northern/southern differences, differences in community resources, and different risk and resiliency factors within communities. Participants stressed that because of these types of differences, each community's violence prevention needs are unique. Rather than promoting rigorous guidelines and standards, it is important that the State be sensitive to these types of variations as it seeks to support local efforts.

For example, practitioners from rural counties spoke about the need for the State to be more attentive to concerns about location and distance. Travel and lodging can be difficult to arrange for those who live in rural or outlying areas. Having to travel for conferences, training events, or meetings can be problematic. One woman explained that "having to take a day off work to drive from Mendocino to Sacramento is both time-consuming and expensive." As a result, practitioners that live in rural or distant areas often have to spend a disproportionate amount of time traveling to and from events. On the other hand, participants from Los Angeles spoke about the need for increased attention to issues such as resource allocation between cities and counties. "L.A. city logs about 20% of domestic violence calls statewide," testified one Los Angeles participant, but "resource allocation between the city and the county just doesn't match up." Practitioners stressed that State programs and policies should be aware of and responsive to individual community needs.

Value of Community Ownership

Local practitioners also spoke about the value of community ownership in local violence prevention efforts. The State's efforts are not always compatible with local realities about the problems that need to be addressed or the solutions that should be used. Several practitioners stressed that efforts that are built from within the community and draw on local strengths and assets are far more effective than those that are not developed locally. Another practitioner in Los Angeles described what he called 'resource assessments.' "We look at what's out there and then build on that. That's why our program works," he concluded. The need for local violence prevention efforts to be community-based and community-driven is reflected in a variety of ways. Several participants spoke of their experiences with community coalitions. "Community coalitions are strongest when people come together because they know each other and they like working with each other," said one participant in Oakland. "They don't work so well when the State sets up the group." Others spoke about how community ownership of efforts is directly tied to the effectiveness of the work. As one attendee in Los Angeles reflected, "Setting up programs without garnering community support never works. It has to come from the bottom up...in order to really work."

VIII. Primary Prevention

Practitioners spoke of the need to prevent violence by looking at root causes, addressing problems early, and working on interconnected issues, as opposed to treating violence as an isolated problem independent of other issues. Rather than focusing mainly on treatment, suppression, and incarceration, participants stressed that primary prevention means getting to

people early, before cycles of abuse and violence can be repeated in the next generation. Local practitioners stressed that prioritizing primary prevention would allow them to effectively put their understanding of problems into practice and therefore implement the best change. In particular, they cited the need for increased State leadership on prevention issues and the desire to see the increased prioritization of primary prevention in State government.

Increased Leadership

Violence practitioners across the State expressed the desire for increased leadership in State government on prevention issues. Local practitioners called for State leaders to promote prevention in a variety of issues and in different ways. One participant at the Oakland hearing cited the Attorney General's *A Vision of Hope* report as a striking example of the type of leadership on prevention she would like to see. "[A] *Vision of Hope* is excellent. All departments should have a document like that that promotes primary prevention as the goal." Others praised *Safe from the Start*, an initiative started by Attorney General Bill Lockyer. "*Safe from the Start* is a good example of how the State should provide leadership to local communities," offered a Redding participant. However, many hearing participants expressed the desire to see even more visible leadership on prevention. As one participant exclaimed, "I want to see [State leaders] stand up for prevention!"

Increased Prioritization

Hearing participants also expressed the need for the increased prioritization of the *primary prevention* of violence. Participants stressed that this means not only increasing funding for prevention work but also adopting a broader and more multifaceted view of prevention. Although work with at-risk youth and other groups is important, prevention also means placing an emphasis on addressing the root causes of violence, such as mental health, early exposure to violence, substance abuse, and poor education. Many stated that the State's prevention efforts start too late, pointing out that programs and policies that focus merely on treatment, intervention, and ultimately incarceration only solve a small portion of the problem; efforts should also focus on keeping youth and adults from entering the system altogether. "We need to expand our views of how to prevent violence," offered one Oakland participant. "We don't pay attention to kids early enough, before they get in trouble. That's where the real violence prevention is." As one Los Angeles practitioner said, "When you get down to it, it's all prevention. Let's act like it."

IX. Cultural Competence

Recognizing that California communities are composed of people from a multitude of racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and educational backgrounds, practitioners expressed a desire for enhanced cultural competence in State practices, policies, and programs. As participants pointed out, California is composed of diverse communities and, while addressing issues of diversity in program and policy design, the State should also ensure maximum flexibility for communities to locally address diversity issues. Specifically, community practitioners voiced support for increasing cultural competence through State policies and programs and for the need to adopt multiple approaches to address the local needs of communities.

Enhanced Cultural Competence

Local practitioners voiced support for enhancing cultural competence in State programs, practices, and policies. “The kid who lives in Fresno is going to have different problems than the kid who lives in Hunter’s Point,” stated one practitioner who works with at-risk children in the East Bay. The problem, he says, is that State staff members are often not trained on cultural issues. As a result, State-sponsored programs are not always administered in a culturally sensitive manner. Several participants echoed his sentiments, recommending increased training for State staff specifically on the issues of cultural competence and diversity. They stressed that the State should become more aware of how different communities live and work in order to advance prevention efforts.

Practitioners suggested that enhancing the cultural competence of State practices, programs, and policies could include changing RFPs to allow community-based organizations (CBOs) to hire staff from within their communities. This is particularly important when hiring requirements, such as professional experience or qualifications, preclude an organization from hiring culturally competent staff. As one Los Angeles practitioner explained, “RFPs require CBOs to hire people with a certain set of credentials, but those aren’t the people who live in our communities. Therefore, we can’t hire people from within our community who know the community’s needs and who can work with community members effectively.” Another suggestion was to create a mandatory racial impact report for all new programs and policies. “This will allow the State to know how policies and programs affect communities differently,” suggested another Los Angeles participant.

Multiple Approaches

Local practitioners also stressed the need to promote multiple approaches that meet the needs of different groups. Cultural, racial, and socioeconomic differences affect the type of approach that will work for different populations. Just as programs that are successful in urban areas will not necessarily be successful in rural areas, programs that work for one ethnicity or culture may not work for another. For violence prevention to be successful, it must be tailored to a specific population. “I work with ex-gang members in my program,” stated one community representative in Los Angeles. “It makes a big difference who that gang member is: where he lives, what his race and ethnicity is, what language he speaks. In order to make the biggest difference, my work must be culturally sensitive and relevant.” They reiterated that State efforts should be designed to increase flexibility to address diversity locally.

X. Collaboration

Practitioners feel increasingly pressured by State collaboration requirements, as State funding often mandates collaboration as a requirement in RFPs and for other types of support. Local violence prevention practitioners have long recognized the value of collaboration in solving problems and have been working together across issues and disciplines to find local solutions. As such, collaboration is a process that local practitioners are comfortable with and can employ successfully. However, rather than State-mandated collaborations, participants expressed the importance of local and community-based collaborations. Collaboration among State departments and agencies is also a significant factor in local violence prevention success, and according to participants, not something that happens often. Practitioners cited State level

partnerships as particularly supportive of local collaborative activities. Additionally, participants spoke about the need for funding for collaboration activities to further violence prevention goals.

State Level Partnerships

Local violence prevention practitioners cited State level partnerships as extremely helpful in their local work. One example given is the current ongoing partnership between the California Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Planning (OCJP) on domestic violence issues. One participant stated that since DHS and OCJP have been working together, her work locally has improved and is much easier. One Redding participant summed up it best by saying, "If [State agencies] don't collaborate, how can we?"

Community-Based Collaboration

Local practitioners support community-based collaboration as a model that enhances their work. Rather than a set of mandatory partners, participants spoke about the need for community partnerships to really be community-driven. Participants stressed that coalitions and collaborations should be shaped by a local understanding of which agencies and which partners need to be involved. "When forming a partnership," testified one woman from Redding, "the key thing is what each partner brings to the table. The partnership is really successful if you can do something that the other partner[s] can't." Interpersonal and interagency dynamics must also be considered and, according to many participants, make the difference between a healthy and active collaboration and an ineffective one.

State-mandated collaborations, on the other hand, do not always result in healthy local partnerships. "As a community practitioner, I know who works well together and who doesn't. When the State tells me whom to work with, I don't get to draw in what I know," claimed an Oakland participant. Another participant echoed his comments, stating that often, the required partners do not share his energy or vision. "This creates more tension than it does results," he concluded.

Additionally, local prevention practitioners in rural areas cited specific coalition requirements as barriers in their local work. One of these requirements is the need for a new collaborative for every RFP or grant. "It's like going to the same meeting in three different places," claimed one survey respondent from Mendocino County. This need to create new partnerships also creates competition between agencies to get the right partners in order to get funded. Organizations that should be working together on programs often end up competing against one another to fill the coalition requirements. "As the chief of police in a rural area, it feels like I'm being courted," explained one Fresno participant. "What's worse is that agencies that should be working together just aren't." Rather than expanding current efforts and partnerships, organizations are forced to scramble to form new partnerships, disrupting existing ones.

Funding for Collaboration Activities

Additionally, local practitioners cited the need for increased funding for coalition activities as a major obstacle in their local work. Participants recognized the need to staff the coalition in order to keep the partnership running. Most State RFPs and grants require collaboration for organizations to receive funding, but they do not offer funding to set up, organize, and maintain coalitions. Community organizations are forced to expend some of the funds from the grant, as

well as their own resources, to maintain a collaboration required by the State. “There needs to be someone to at least set up meetings and take notes. Everyone is so busy, and the collaborative is an organization of its own,” reflected one survey respondent. Other participants echoed this sentiment, calling for increased support to ensure successful collaborations.

CONCLUSION

Violence is preventable. California’s best chance of preventing violence is through the efforts of violence prevention practitioners in communities. The several hundred practitioners who testified at the *Shifting the Focus* hearings around the State exemplify the wisdom, compassion, and skills that can make a difference in the prevention of violence.

However, local practitioners cannot sustain their efforts alone. They rely heavily on the State for information, assistance, guidelines, and financial support to actively maintain and promote their local efforts. State support for local violence prevention efforts is therefore vital. Local practitioners look to the State not only for concrete avenues of support, such as funding and training, but also for the vision and leadership that will allow them to continually improve their work.

The combined voices of practitioners across California have laid out a mandate that the State must heed. The *Shifting the Focus* hearings have captured valuable information that can be used to transform State policies, programs, and practices to better support local violence prevention efforts. These findings represent a call to action that the State has an obligation to meet in order to support the critical local work that promotes safe, healthy, and sustainable communities for all individuals.

Appendix A: Planning Committee Members

Barbara Alberson
Department of Health Services, State and Local Injury Control

Robert Bates
Department of Health Services, Maternal and Child Health Branch

Shailushi Baxi
Prevention Institute

Rachel Davis
Prevention Institute

Sy Dang Nguyen
Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention

Lupe Gonzales
Department of Health Services, Office of Women's Health

Michael Kelly
Office of the Attorney General, Crime and Violence Prevention Center

Nancy Lyons
Little Hoover Commission

Edward Melia
California Health and Human Services Agency

Bill White
Department of Education, Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office

Appendix B: Dates, Locations, and Local Sponsors for Hearings

Fort Bragg (February 9, 2001)

In conjunction with the Mendocino County Health Department conference

Los Angeles (March 9, 2001)

Ms. Billie Weiss, Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles
550 S. Vermont, Rm. 403, Los Angeles, CA 90020

Oakland (April 12, 2001)

Mr. Henry Gardner, East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership
250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Suite 2606, Oakland, CA 94612

Redding (March 29, 2001)

Mr. Tom Omara, Redding Youth Violence Prevention Council
1445 Market St., Redding, CA 96001

Sacramento (November 30, 2000)

Presentation at The California Wellness Foundation's *Violence Prevention Initiative* conference

Salinas (January 22, 2001)

Ms. Anna Caballero and Rev. Ken Feske, Partners for Peace
546 Lincoln Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901

Santa Clara (February 28, 2001)

In conjunction with the Santa Clara County violence prevention training

San Diego (January 26, 2001)

Presentation at the *Juvenile Delinquency and the Courts* conference

San Mateo (February 14, 2001)

In conjunction with the Bay Area Regional Network meeting

Stockton (March 8, 2001)

Ms. Brenda Scott-Gordon, Stockton Police Department
22 East Market Street, Stockton, CA 95202

Appendix C: Sponsor Activity List

1) Set a date for the hearing

Shifting the Focus would like to hold hearings in January and February of 2001. We want to work with you to identify and finalize a date that works both locally and for panel members for the State.

2) Identify and contact violence prevention practitioners and decision-makers to present testimony

Speakers should represent the areas of health, education, justice, law enforcement, youth development, social services, commerce, local government, and BLAH.

3) Identify and contact violence prevention practitioners and decision-makers to attend hearing as general participants

Speakers should represent, but are not limited to, the areas of health, education, justice, law enforcement, youth development, social services, commerce, and local government.

4) Shape the Los Angeles local hearing

We want to work with you to make sure this hearing meets local needs. Shaping the hearing includes decisions about the length of the hearing, how many participants should be invited, and how to structure the session for general participation.

5) Identify and secure a facility for the hearing

6) Identify sources of media coverage

Possible sources include local network affiliates, cable stations, and radio stations.

7) Provide *Shifting the Focus* with contact information for speakers and participants

8) Possibly co-facilitate elements of the hearing, depending on the final format

9) Work with *Shifting the Focus* to prepare the speakers offering testimony

Appendix D: Hearing Participant Invitation Letter



PREVENTION INSTITUTE

1181 Colusa Avenue
Berkeley, California 94707
Phone: (510) 528-4482
Fax: (510) 528-4459
www.preventioninstitute.org

Dear Participant,

I am writing to invite your participation and/or testimony at a *Shifting the Focus* hearing on Thursday, April 12, 2001 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. at Preservation Park, 1204 Preservation Park Way in Oakland. Under the leadership of Attorney General Bill Lockyer and Secretary of Health and Human Services Grantland Johnson, *Shifting the Focus* brings together over 30 California State government agencies and departments to advance violence prevention outcomes. As such, this collaborative effort strives to support and strengthen safe, healthy, and sustainable communities.

A guiding principle of *Shifting the Focus* is to learn from local practitioners and decision makers. The goal of the hearing is to learn which State organizational practices are working well and which need improvement to strengthen your violence prevention efforts. Specifically, the State is interested in your experiences with State policies, methods, and programs in violence prevention, including issues of state funding, grant requirements, state-sponsored training and technical assistance, and data requirements. Findings from this and other hearings will be synthesized into a report for the Attorney General and Secretary of Health and Human Services. This report will serve as a blueprint in the State's efforts to reengineer government practices and policies into a broader service orientation for communities.

The East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership is hosting this event. Representatives from California's Office of the Attorney General, the Health and Human Services Agency, and other state agencies will serve on a panel to hear from participants. The hearing will begin with opening remarks, followed by time-limited testimony from local violence prevention practitioners and decisions makers such as yourself. **Testimony will be limited to no more**

than 5 minutes. After formal testimony has been presented, there will also be a session for more general comments from participants.

Testimony and general comments should focus on specific features of State departments and agencies to be improved or strengthened. *Shifting the Focus* would like you to address one or more of the following questions:

- Based on your experience, which State policies, programs, and practices support local violence prevention outcomes?
- Which State policies, practices, or programs serve as barriers to local violence prevention success? Please consider the following areas: funding, training, data, technical assistance, coalitions, evaluation, access to information, as well as any additional issues you feel are important.
- How have you solved problems that you have encountered at the State level?
- What changes would you recommend to the State to better support local violence prevention efforts and goals?

I have included a set of materials on *Shifting the Focus* as background for the hearing. Also included is a *Shifting the Focus* survey. Please use this as a guide as you prepare for the hearing. **Please return the attached form by mail or fax: 510-528-4459, or contact Shailushi Baxi by phone: 510-528-4482, or e-mail: shailushi@preventioninstitute.org by April 5th** to let us know whether or not you will attend, or to ask any questions you have. Please specify whether you will present formal testimony or attend as a general participant. If you would like to invite a colleague or staff member to attend with you, please feel free to do so. Additionally, if you are unable to attend and know of someone who is interested in attending the hearing and/or presenting testimony, please feel free to pass along the invitation and *Shifting the Focus* background materials. If you are unable to attend, please consider submitting written comments or a completed survey to Ms. Baxi at the contact information above.

I hope you will participate in this event; your participation will be very valuable in this process.

Sincerely,

Larry Cohen
Executive Director

Appendix E: Sample Hearing Agenda

Shifting the Focus

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Advancing Violence Prevention

Advancing Local Violence Prevention Outcomes

1. Welcome (1:00-1:05)
2. Introductions (1:00-1:15)
3. *Shifting the Focus* Overview and Presentation (1:15-1:35)
 - a. Brief Q&A on *Shifting the Focus* methodology and goals as they relate to local hearings (1:35-1:45)
4. Presentation of Testimony (1:15-3:45)
(Please sign up if you do not have a scheduled time)
5. Facilitated Discussion (time permitting)
6. Final Comments/Close (3:45-4:00)

Appendix F: *Shifting the Focus* Survey

Shifting the Focus Survey

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Advancing Violence Prevention

Please return by April 1, 2001 to fax number 510-528-4459 (or address at end of survey)

Shifting the Focus brings together over 30 state agencies and departments, including health, education, and justice, to forge an interdisciplinary approach to preventing violence in California. Under the leadership of the Attorney General and Secretary of Health and Human Services, this effort strives to support and strengthen local violence prevention efforts.

A key principle of *Shifting the Focus* is to learn from local violence prevention practitioners, advocates, and decision makers. **The goal of this survey is to identify the ways in which the State can improve its way of doing business to support and strengthen local violence prevention efforts.**

1) Which of the following best describes your affiliation? (*Please check one*)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Based Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social services | <input type="checkbox"/> Health department |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal government | <input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith community | <input type="checkbox"/> Grassroots Organizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety (EMS/ First response team) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probation/Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

2) County in which you work: _____

3) Please name the three **State programs** that you work with most in regards to your local violence prevention efforts and **the department that administers that program**:

Program	Department
a) _____	_____
b) _____	_____
c) _____	_____

4) How many **State-required** coalitions, related to violence prevention, are you involved in?

5) We are trying to identify successful local coalitions and the elements of those coalitions that make them successful. Our goal is to incorporate these elements into our state practices. If there is a local coalition that you find successful, please indicate the name of the coalition and the particular methods, approaches, or structures that are critical to its success.

a) **Coalition name:** _____

b) What elements of the coalition above are critical to its success? (please check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information sharing | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity of membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Community partners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Leveraging power of collective/group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

6) We would like to identify the **State practices, policies, and programs** that significantly impact local violence prevention efforts and goals in California.

In each of the categories listed below, please check all that apply.

⇒ **Data**

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding data working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1	2	3	4	5	6
significantly inhibit					significantly strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding data?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality | <input type="checkbox"/> Funding for data collection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ease of collection | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to necessary technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waivers to meet local needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Relevance to local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compatibility of data sets | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate reporting categories | |

c) What problems have you encountered regarding data?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality limitations | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of funding for collection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to relevant data | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of access to necessary technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No waivers to meet local needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Relevance to local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compatibility of data sets | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Different requirements per agency/department | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple reporting categories | |

⇒ **Technical Assistance**

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding **State-sponsored** technical assistance working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1	2	3	4	5	6
significantly inhibit					significantly strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding **State-sponsored** technical assistance?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Availability | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriateness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expertise of providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate follow through |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

c) What problems have you encountered regarding **State-sponsored** technical assistance?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Availability | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriateness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expertise of providers | <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate follow through |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Funding (including competition, duration of grants, etc.)

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding funding working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1 2 3 4 5 6
significantly significantly
inhibit strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding funding?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Length of funding (short/long) | <input type="checkbox"/> Proscribed uses for monies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competition for monies | <input type="checkbox"/> Amount of monies provided |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements for grant applications | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility to meet local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of available funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Support to apply for funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

c) What problems have you encountered regarding funding?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Length of funding (short/ long) | <input type="checkbox"/> Proscribed uses for monies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competition for monies | <input type="checkbox"/> Amount of monies provided |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements for grant applications | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility to meet local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of available funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Support to apply for funding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

⇒ Access to Information (regarding best practices, funding, etc.)

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding access to information working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1 2 3 4 5 6
significantly significantly
inhibit strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding access to information?

- Sources of information (variety, number)
- Ease of access
- Knowledge about where to obtain information
- Active dissemination of information (via flyers, websites, etc)
- Other _____

c) What problems have you encountered regarding access to information?

- Sources of information (variety, number)
- Access difficult
- Lack of knowledge about where to obtain information
- Dissemination of information (via flyers, websites, etc.)
- Other _____

⇒ **Coalitions**

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding coalitions working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1 2 3 4 5 6
significantly significantly
inhibit strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding coalitions?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements to receive funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Funding for coalition activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management and leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State participation | <input type="checkbox"/> Waivers to meet local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

c) What problems have you encountered regarding coalitions?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requirements to receive funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Funding for coalition activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management and leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State participation | <input type="checkbox"/> Waivers to meet local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

⇒ **Evaluation**

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding evaluation working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1 2 3 4 5 6
significantly significantly
inhibit strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding evaluation?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Procedures to meet local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relevance to community needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to data |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate methods/measures | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical assistance/training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standards for evaluation outcomes | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to necessary technology/software |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

c) What problems have you encountered regarding evaluation?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Procedures to meet local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not relevant to community needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to data |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate methods/measures | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical assistance/training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standards for evaluation outcomes | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to necessary technology/software |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

⇒ **Training**

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding training working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1 2 3 4 5 6
 significantly significantly
 inhibit strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding training?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of trainers | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriateness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expertise/ content | <input type="checkbox"/> Funding for trainers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funding for participants | <input type="checkbox"/> Relevance to local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

c) What problems have you encountered regarding training?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of trainers | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriateness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of expertise/ content | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of funding for trainers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of funding for participants | <input type="checkbox"/> Not relevant to local needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

⇒ **Other (specify)** _____

a) How well are State practices, policies, and programs regarding this issue working in regards to local violence prevention efforts?

1 2 3 4 5 6
 significantly significantly
 inhibit strengthen

Don't know/not applicable

b) What has helped your local efforts regarding the area you mentioned above?

c) What problems have you encountered regarding the area you mentioned above?

7) Of the 8 categories listed below, please list the top three areas which you feel must be addressed at the State level to ensure local success on violence prevention efforts. (1= highest; 3= lowest)

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| ___ Data | ___ Technical Assistance | ___ Funding |
| ___ Coalitions | ___ Access to Information | ___ Evaluation |
| ___ Training | ___ Other (specify) _____ | |

8) Our goal is to identify the ways in which the State can better assist you in achieving your local violence prevention goals. If you have any additional things you would like to share or any detail you would like to add to the information you provided above, please do so here.

9) If you are interested in receiving information about future *Shifting the Focus* activities or updates on the changes we are making in State government, please fill out your contact information.

Name: _____

Organization: _____ Position: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: (____) _____ - _____ Fax: (____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

Thank you very much for taking the time to provide us with this valuable information.

Please return to:
Shailushi Baxi, Program Coordinator
Prevention Institute
1181 Colusa Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94707
Phone: 510-528-4482; Fax: 510-528-4459

Appendix G: List of Hearing Participants

Mr. Ove Wittstock
Berkeley Boosters/ Berkeley PAL
Berkeley

Dr. Camille Marden
SRI International
Menlo Park

Mr. Martin Jacks
The Mentoring Center
Oakland

Dr. Jogi Khanna
Alameda Public Health Department
Oakland

Ms. Miriam Rheiv
Alameda Public Health Department
Oakland

Ms. Kay Adams
Alameda Public Health Department
Oakland

Ms. Toni Guy
Contra Costa Health Services
Martinez

Ms. Bahati Banks
i.e. communications
San Francisco

Ms. Jessica Rothhaar
i.e. communications
San Francisco

Ms. Quanemen Wessi
Alameda Public Health Department
Oakland

Ms. Debbie Arthur
Berkeley Public Health Department
Berkeley

Ms. Deane Calhoun
Youth Alive!
Oakland

Mr. Jeff Fostor
Shasta County Sheriff's Organization
Redding

Mr. Jim Holdridge
PlusONE
Redding

Ms. Betty Futrell
Shasta County Child Abuse Prev.
Redding

Ms. Regina Lane
SUHSD
Redding

Ms. Sheila Miller
Shasta County Office of Education
Redding

Ms. Pete Seiler
Shasta COE
Redding

Ms. Rosemary Keelaz
Anderson High School STAND
Anderson

Mr. Patrick Moriarty
Health Improvement Partnership
Redding

Ms. Diane Gerard
JJ/DPC; COE
Redding

Mr. Scott McGregor
District Attorney
Redding

Mr. Renny Noll
Shasta County Probation
Redding

Mr. Andrew Dechert
Shasta County Public Health
Redding

Ms. Carla Alexander
NVCSS
Redding

Ms. Mary Stegall
Women's Refuge
Redding

Ms. Lorraine Dechter
KPR/KCHO
Redding

Ms. Judy Menoher
Redding School District
Redding

Mr. Gilbert Salinas
Los Angeles Teens on Target
Downey

Mr. Bernardo Rosas
Pomona Community Wellness Partnership
Pomona

Dr. Paul Juarez
White Memorial Medical Center
Los Angeles

Mr. Jeff Cressy
SCI Project/Rancho Los Amigos Hospital
Downey

Mr. Charles Blek
Orange County Citizens for Prevention of
Gun Violence
Laguna Hills

Rev. Ronnie Lilly
Central Baptist Church
Inglewood

Ms. Connie Watson
People Who Care Youth Center
Los Angeles

Ms. Nancy Wileman, MA, MFCC, CADC
Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center
Los Angeles

Mr. Lloyd Wilkey
Inglewood Coalition for Drug Violence
Prevention
Inglewood

Ms. Alana Bowman
LA City Attorney
Los Angeles

Ms. Betsy Lindsey
LA County Housing Authority
Monterey Park

Ms. Debra Lamana
Community Health Councils, Inc.
Los Angeles

Ms. Ella Lane
CASHE
Orange

Ms. Gloria Stevenson-Clark
City of LA Comm.Development Dept.
Los Angeles

Mr. Gus Frias
LA COE
Los Angeles

Mr. Jerry Factor
VPC
Beverly Hills

Ms. Maria Badrakhan
Community Development Commission
Monterey Park

Ms. Pamela Booth
LA DA
Los Angeles

Mr. Randal Henry
LASDHS-SPA 5
Santa Monica

Ms. Shirley D'Angelo
Community College Foundation
Sherman Oaks

Ms. Lesley Curry
Chico Police Department
Chico

Ms. Trish Beckman
Chico Police Department
Chico

Ms. Robin Parlow
UC Davis Police Department
Davis

Ms. Tawnya Bump
Sacramento Police Department
Sacramento

Ms. Lynette Taylor
Sacramento Police Department
Sacramento

Mr. Joseph Davis
Elk Grove Police Department
Elk Grove

Ms. Amanda Flaherty
Placer County Sheriff's Department
Auburn

Mr. Kurt McCray
Sacramento Police Department
Sacramento

Ms. Rayann Van Schoescia
Sacramento Police Department
Sacramento

Ms. Dena Erwin
Placer County Sheriff's Department
Auburn

Ms. Lynne Goodwin
Stockton Police Department
Stockton

Ms. Brenda Scott-Gordon
Stockton Police Department
Stockton

Ms. Kathy Maxwell
Calaveras County Sheriff's Department
San Andreas

Ms. Mary Fuhs
Lodi Police Department
Lodi

Ms. Amy Weirich
West Sacramento Police Department
West Sacramento

Ms. Nora McDowell
West Sacramento Police Department
West Sacramento

Ms. Melissa Burns
Sacramento Police Department
Sacramento

Ms. Kelly Rose
Sacramento Police Department
Sacramento

Ms. Patricia Miller
Stockton Police Department
Stockton

Appendix H: List of Counties Represented

Alameda

Contra Costa

Imperial

Los Angeles

Mendocino

Monterey

Orange

Riverside

Sacramento

San Bernardino

San Diego

San Francisco

Santa Clara

Shasta

Sonoma

Tulare

Yolo

Appendix I: Written Testimony from Hearing Participants

March 21, 2001

Shailushi Baxi
Program Coordinator, Prevention Institute
1181 Colusa Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94707

Dear Shailushi,

I am adding the following comments to Molly Wilson's questionnaire to support the mission of *Shifting the Focus*. I may also want to offer them as testimony at the hearing if time allows.

Of the 47 groups and state agencies listed in the *Shifting the Focus* materials, many are involved at one level or another in grantmaking, and it is to this function that my comments are addressed, with the hope of avoiding duplication and increasing effectiveness.

I'm sure the testimony will show that the nature of violence prevention is multi-faceted, complex, and inter-related. The emphasis on collaboration demonstrates this. A few examples are:

- Gangs profit from drugs, and drugs affect schools and streets.
- Of the school shooters in Shasta County: 11/12 had significant domestic violence histories.
- Child and adult abuse, cruelty to animals, *Safe From the Start* issues all pertains.

Also, violence issues are different from place to place. Glenn County has a significant gang problem at this time, while Shasta is most concerned with school threats, domestic violence and drugs. Therefore, as regards grants and programs, one size doesn't fit all, and it is difficult for state agencies to monitor each locality.

Most, if not all new grants agencies require collaboration on the local level. There is a high level of collaboration locally, things like HIP (Health Improvement Partnership) and CYA Youth Center grant (21 agencies collaborated) show this.

My question/suggestion is, "What about collaboration at the State level?" If the state agencies recognize that the problems are interrelated and complex, I have a specific suggestion: that these agencies decide how much money they have for violence prevention activities in Shasta County, put it in one pot, and have the Board of Supervisors or some other board hear presentations once/year, and divide the money.

There would be some significant benefit for service delivery by such a proposal. In the current situation, individual RFA/RFP's from many of these 47 organizations are issued. The response is a number of grant applications from Shasta County, each taking a lot of time and labor. One recent OCJP grant was 110 pages, mandated (in order to compete), not optional. Local organizations have to tweak their operations to fit the grant ("Do we need to

revise our mission statement?"). If you have 5 or 10 or 20 applications being submitted per county, there is a potentially large savings and improved service if this non-productive activity were eliminated.

We have been successful in gang prevention because we have collaborated, and perhaps it is time (as suggested by the Shifting the Focus literature) for the state to do the same. While such a suggestion may result in a loss of power and control at the state level, the benefits in efficiency and service delivery far outweigh the loss, and perhaps there are ways that the granting agencies can do things (such as evaluation and monitoring) which would be a fair exchange regarding preservation of control.

I have heard parts of this idea verbalized by many of my colleagues, both in the public and private sector. Just as folks at the state level don't like getting money with federal strings attached, the same is true from state to locals. Perhaps Shifting the Focus can achieve some meaningful, outside-the-box change which will dramatically improve the way the money is distributed for violence prevention.

Sincerely,

Tom O'Mara
Executive Director