

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

**From the Margins to the Middle
A violence prevention strategy to achieve
safe, healthy, sustainable communities in California**

Prepared by Rachel Davis and Larry Cohen
Prevention Institute
Oakland, California
June 2001

Crime is not prevented and children are not nurtured at the state level... The State's role is to support community-based efforts helping children and families who are at risk of inflicting harm or being harmed.

Michael Alpert, Chairman
Little Hoover Commission

From the Margins to the Middle: A Violence Prevention Strategy to Achieve Safe, Healthy, Sustainable Communities in California was prepared by Rachel Davis and Larry Cohen 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

Shifting the Focus efforts are made possible by support from the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Health and Human Services Agency as well as the National Crime Prevention Council for California's participation in a national six-state initiative entitled *Embedding Prevention in State Policy and Practice*.

Initial funding to launch *Shifting the Focus* was provided by The California Wellness Foundation, Sierra Health Foundation, Max Factor Family Foundation, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and Children's Safety Network.

Finally, none of this would be possible without the ongoing commitment from and contributions by *Shifting the Focus* members, representing a diversity of State departments and agencies as well as local organizations.

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

Recommended Citation:

Davis R, Cohen L. *From the Margins to the Middle: A Violence Prevention Strategy to Achieve Safe, Healthy, Sustainable Communities in California*. Prepared for the Shifting the Focus initiative. Oakland, Calif: Prevention Institute; 2001.

Preface

Violence is a learned behavior that can be prevented — and it must be. Its prevention is critical because of the damage violence does both in human and economic terms. There are not only significant costs associated with individual incidents of violence as they occur, but also numerous costs to individuals and communities that accumulate well after violent incidents have occurred. Both types of costs have tremendous ramifications for California. One major example of a cost associated with the aftermath of violence is incarceration. The money spent for incarceration is largely jeopardizing our capacity to address broader human service needs by requiring a huge investment of taxes and other funds that could otherwise be used to provide adequate transportation, improved health care, quality education, and expanded social services to individuals and communities in California.

Government is critical in violence prevention. Although many people involved in prevention have begun relying less on government and more on foundations and grassroots efforts to address violence prevention, government is still a major source of economic support through the allocation of tax funds. Even at the state level, tax money far exceeds the amount of money contributed to serve the public good by charitable donations, foundations, and businesses. In fact, the combination of government funding with individual commitment and volunteerism is probably the most important resource in creating change for the common good. It is therefore incumbent on state government to closely examine how an issue like violence prevention, with its deep and far-reaching effects on communities everywhere, is approached.

California is currently one of the largest economies in the world and with its size comes a large government. Consistently effective and coordinated efforts can be difficult to achieve within state government. Such efforts *are* possible, however, and increasingly we are more aware of the methodology needed to achieve this. This methodology requires individual commitment and will from people who are involved in government. It requires people to learn one another's languages, to better understand the barriers to working together, and to regularly communicate with one another. It requires responsibility and recognition that the role of the State is not to provide all of the answers, but to provide the services and support that strengthen local communities and families. It requires the knowledge that one more program is not going to do the job and that one more initiative is not the answer. Rather, it requires setting forth systematic strategies and looking at the policy fabric of the State, designing a set of principles on how current programs can work together more effectively, and discovering how efforts can be unified and based in the state-of-the-art knowledge of violence prevention.

Shifting the Focus is a partnership of people in state government with this commitment and will. The art of being a bureaucrat who can truly contribute to the common good is the ability to recognize — even though far from the everyday happenings of a particular community — the tremendous importance of the decisions and actions that s/he can undertake. *Shifting the Focus* members demonstrate leadership through their passion, commitment, and willingness to take risks, and by doing so, provide an example of how bureaucrats can truly have an impact on communities. These leaders know that what they are doing matters in the lives of real people, and *Shifting the Focus* is one example of how well coordinated, sound practices at the state level can truly make a difference at the local level.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	i
Table of Contents	ii
Executive Summary	iii
Introduction	1
Defining Terms	1
Background: <i>Shifting the Focus</i>	
The Role of Government in Violence Prevention	2
The Need for an Interdisciplinary Approach	3
History	4
Vision and Core Principles	5
Activities	5
Overarching Outcomes	7
Background: Strategy Development	
Building from Existing Efforts	8
Barriers	11
Strategy Development Process	12
Chart: Strategy Development Process	14
Key Strategy Objectives: From the Margins to the Middle	15
Objective #1: Support Local Efforts	15
Objective #2: Prevention Leadership	19
Objective #3: Integration	21
Objective #4: Skill Development	23
Next Steps and Conclusions	
Prioritization	24
Next Steps	25
Outcomes	25
Sustainability and Institutionalization	26
Conclusion	26
Appendices	
I. <i>Shifting the Focus</i> : Participating Agencies, Departments, and Organizations	28
II. <i>Shifting the Focus</i> : Steering Committee	29
III. <i>Shifting the Focus</i> : Organizational Structure	30
IV. A Local Call to State Action: Summary of Findings from Local Hearings	31
End Notes	33

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence affects every community in California. Locally owned and coordinated violence prevention efforts are demonstrating success in reducing the threat and prevalence of violence. The State must work intentionally to support them, and must work to expand this success to every community in California. Numerous state programs and staff members are dedicated to this goal. Yet too often the programs and efforts at the state level are fragmented, creating barriers for local efforts. This is not surprising. Given California's size, with its length nearly equal to that of the Eastern Seaboard, its residents comprising 10% of the United States population, and its economy one of the largest in the world, it is to be expected that its government departments, each with somewhat different purposes and intents, may not always be aware of one another's activities.

There are efforts within State government to address this fragmentation and *Shifting the Focus*, a voluntary partnership among State departments and agencies, was established to do just that. Strategic coordination and collaboration happen too often "in the margins," with small or short-term programs or ad hoc or voluntary efforts, instead of "in the middle," with integrated, unified, well-supported efforts and programs. California's violence prevention efforts are often too uncoordinated to maximize effectiveness and require a system purposively designed to manage the collaboration process. This document describes a strategy for *Shifting the Focus* to get to the 'middle' to more effectively support local efforts and provide needed leadership on the *prevention* of violence.

Shifting the Focus is a state partnership designed to coordinate interagency violence prevention efforts. The group's membership, leaders from more than 30 departments, recognizes that effective violence prevention requires a new way of doing business. This new way of operation will ensure that California communities are well served through practice at the state level that supports success at the local level and promotes the vision of safe, healthy, sustainable communities in California, supported by effective state and local collaboration.

History

Since its initial retreat in 1997 and the subsequent development of an interdisciplinary framework for advancing violence prevention, *Shifting the Focus* members have been meeting and working to advance an interdisciplinary approach within State government. The partnership has developed several subcommittees to address high priority needs including creating an inventory of violence prevention programs, collecting and disseminating data, and strengthening training and technical assistance. As new initiatives emerged within various departments, members have been deliberate in their efforts to ensure participation across departments and agencies. The partnership participates in a national initiative to embed prevention in State policy and practice, coordinated by the National Crime Prevention Council, and has launched new initiatives such as the *From Evidence to Policy* forums. Members of the collaborative have participated in conferences across the state and at the American Public Health Association's annual conference to train others on this approach. As part of its fundamental commitment to serving California communities, *Shifting the Focus* held a series of local hearings in Spring 2001 to learn about more effectively supporting local efforts. Critical to moving *Shifting the Focus*

from rhetoric to reality has been the sponsorship of the Secretary of Health and Human Services Grantland Johnson and the Attorney General Bill Lockyer.

The goals of *Shifting the Focus* are to:

- 1) Facilitate the State's violence prevention efforts to significantly reduce the incidence of violence over time
- 2) Build community infrastructure to help achieve and preserve this improvement

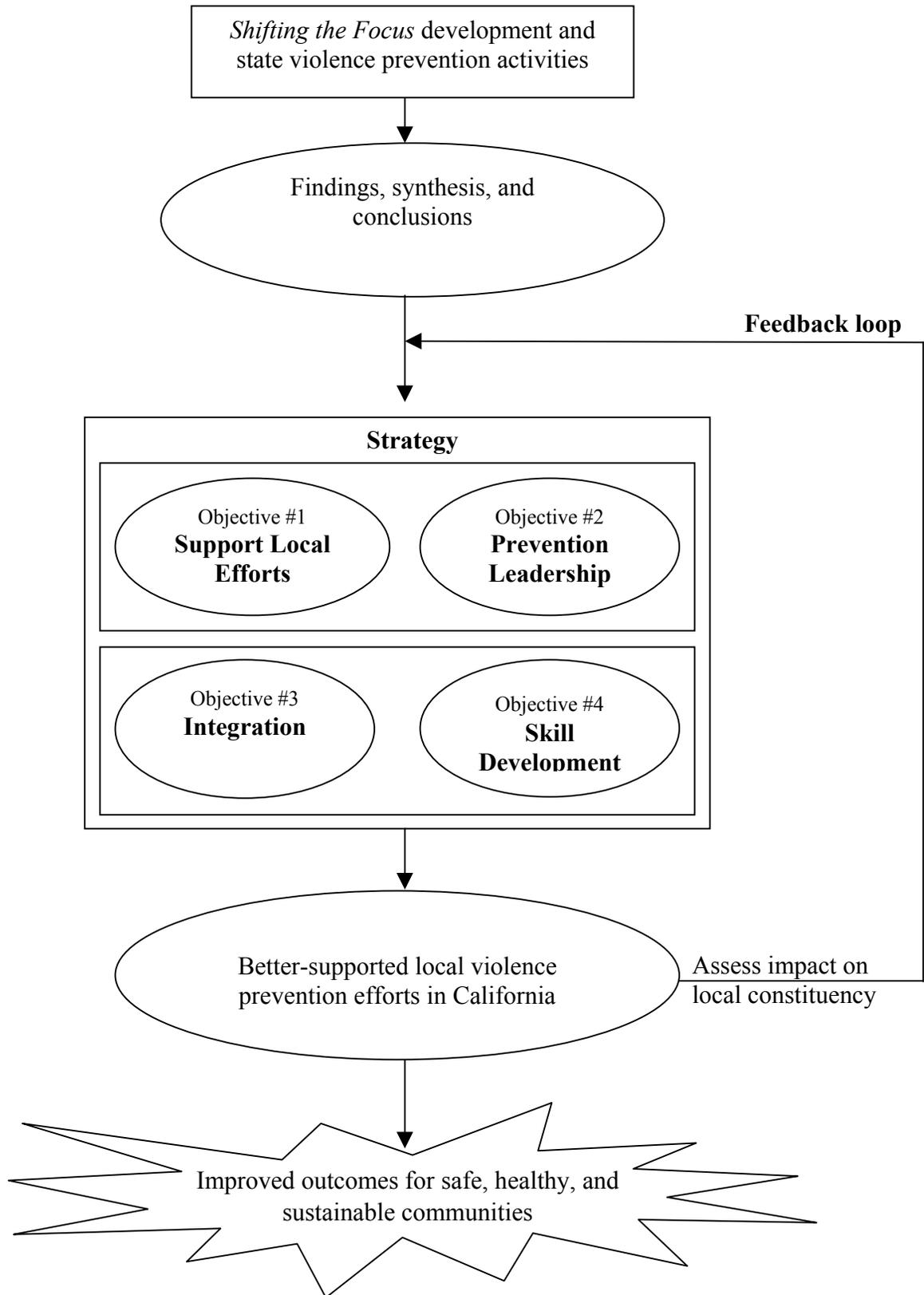
Strategy Development: Building from Existing Efforts

Achieving the vision, core principles, and ultimate outcomes of *Shifting the Focus* requires an agreed upon strategy to serve as a roadmap as State government implements changes in policy, practice, and programs to better support local efforts across the state. This document delineates such a strategy. The strategy is based on ongoing work of the collaborative and other government processes. These include: recommendations from the initial *Shifting the Focus* retreat, findings from local hearings conducted on behalf of *Shifting of the Focus* in Spring 2001, findings from the Little Hoover Commission's study on youth crime and violence prevention, *Safe from the Start: Preventing Children's Exposure to Violence* community forums, learning from other efforts and reports such as *Embedding Prevention in State Policy and Practice* and *Violence Prevention: A Vision of Hope*, and the ongoing strategy development and work of the *Shifting the Focus* collaborative, steering committee, and subcommittees.

Chart A details the strategy development process beginning with development of *Shifting the Focus* and ongoing State violence prevention activities. These resulted in the findings, synthesis, and conclusions that are the basis of four strategy objectives.

As is indicated in Chart A, the overarching goal of these objectives is to better support local violence prevention efforts. The underlying assumption of this approach is that the most effective violence prevention efforts are locally owned and locally controlled. As these efforts benefit from a broader service orientation from State government, greater outcomes for safe, healthy, and sustainable communities will be achieved.

Chart A. *Shifting the Focus* from the Margins to the Middle:
Strategy Development Process



Key Strategy Objectives: Shifting the Focus from the Margins to the Middle

Shifting the Focus is committed to improving its service to communities to advance violence prevention in California. To accomplish this, it must achieve four objectives, outlined below. The first two relate to provisions to support local efforts and prevention more generally and the second two are methodologies to achieve them.

Shifting the Focus to Advance Violence Prevention in California

Objective #1: Support Local Efforts

State government better supports local violence prevention efforts in order to achieve improved outcomes.

- a) Develop common Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for violence prevention and related grants.
- b) Braid funding sources to allow communities flexibility when implementing violence prevention programs.
- c) Develop action steps to ensure that the capacity of *Shifting the Focus* member departments and agencies is strengthened to serve California's diversity.
- d) Develop an integrated 'first-stop' website that serves as a gateway to key violence prevention information for local constituencies.
- e) Create a more unified approach to data management.
- f) Develop action steps to improve local access to state data and to modify reporting requirements to *Shifting the Focus* member organizations.
- g) Develop an overarching approach to evaluation and a tiered evaluation system for violence prevention programs.
- h) Expand violence prevention training and technical assistance opportunities and content for local constituencies.
- i) Include local constituencies as participants in shaping state violence prevention strategy and programs.
- j) Measure the local response to changes in State government practice and modify accordingly.
- k) Request procedural changes from the federal government to minimize constraints on the State that hinder local efforts.

Objective #2: Prevention Leadership

State government demonstrates increased leadership and more emphasis on the *prevention* of violence.

- a) Develop a set of Common Prevention Principles for adoption by *Shifting the Focus*.
- b) Provide current information to state policymakers about the value of prevention and effective prevention strategies.
- c) Support the development of California's *From Evidence to Policy* initiative and ensure widespread dissemination of its findings to policymakers and others.
- d) Advance a strengths-based approach to violence prevention.
- e) Present *Shifting the Focus* Common Prevention Principles to federal departments and agencies.
- f) Support local access to the State legislature and encourage local constituencies to communicate with their elected officials.

Methodology to Achieve a “Shift in Focus”

Objective #3: Integration

State government achieves strategic collaboration and coordination on violence prevention within and across departments and agencies.

- a) Determine the linkages needed between State departments to ensure service coordination to California communities.
- b) Ensure ongoing linkages and cross-membership between *Shifting the Focus* and other state multidisciplinary efforts.
- c) Expand department and agency membership and participation in *Shifting the Focus*.
- d) Engage designated leadership in advancing a collaborative and coordinated approach.
- e) Ensure ongoing strategy development to advance and refine the *Shifting the Focus* approach.
- f) Continue to hold regular meetings of the *Shifting the Focus* steering committee, entire collaborative, and working subcommittees.

Objective #4: Skill Development

State government develops leadership and violence prevention skills.

- a) Incrementally launch a comprehensive and cross-disciplinary training effort for State staff on effective violence prevention practice.
- b) Enhance the capacity of State staff to collaborate across departments and agencies.
- c) Exchange training, conference outreach, and mailing lists to increase opportunities for interdisciplinary training.
- d) Establish a Violence Prevention Leadership Institute for State staff.

Conclusion

Since its inception, *Shifting the Focus* has represented both a group of committed people and an approach dedicated to improving California’s State government service to communities to ensure improved violence prevention outcomes. This strategy represents a synthesis of the partnership’s efforts, community input, and conclusions from other State activities such as the Little Hoover Commission’s report.

Well-coordinated and conceptually sound State leadership is essential for effectively supporting local violence prevention initiatives and preventing and reducing the violence faced by California communities. Given the commitment implied by the hearings process — that the *Shifting the Focus* group would respond to community concerns by making appropriate changes — concerted *Shifting the Focus* efforts are essential. To date, these actions have been sustained through the ongoing commitment of individual members and more recently, yearly funding has furthered this initiative. While there have been significant accomplishments thus far, the stage is set for major improvements in how the State prevents violence. Institutionalization is critical. At its core, this requires the embedding of strategic collaboration and coordination within State government, beyond the individual members of the partnership.

The *Shifting the Focus* membership has always recognized that the kinds of efforts needed to achieve these recommendations will not make it easier for State staff to do their jobs. But this has never been the goal of this partnership. The goal, rather, has been to better fulfill the State’s obligation to the public to offer the broadest service orientation to support local efforts that are working to achieve safe, healthy, and sustainable communities in California.

INTRODUCTION

Violence affects every community in California. The State's role in violence prevention is to support the locally controlled and locally owned efforts demonstrating success in reducing the threat and prevalence of violence. While many State programs and staff members are dedicated to supporting, enhancing, and further building on these local successes, too often State efforts are fragmented, creating barriers for local work. State violence prevention efforts are often marginal, occurring as small, short-term, ad hoc, or voluntary programs and initiatives, and tend to be too uncoordinated to maximize effectiveness. This is a challenge that may not be unique to California, but is intensified by the sheer size of the state: its residents represent 10% of the U.S. population, its economy is the 5th largest in the world, and its length is nearly equal to that of the Eastern Seaboard.

There are efforts within State government to address the need for the managed collaboration and coordination of violence prevention activities. Ultimately, this requires efforts to be more integrated and unified, and the attempts to accomplish this must be shifted from the "margins" to the "middle." *Shifting the Focus*, a voluntary partnership among State departments and agencies, was established to do just that. This document describes the *Shifting the Focus* strategy, which focuses on strategic coordination and collaboration occurring "in the middle" instead of marginally to more effectively support local efforts and provide needed leadership in the *prevention* of violence. As the Little Hoover Commission asserted, however, the efforts of this partnership are not yet institutionalized,¹ and this remains a key next step.

Defining Terms

Violence: There are many definitions of violence. While there are limitations to any definition, definitions that are broad in scope are most helpful in approaching violence from a broad perspective. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, violence is the "threatened or actual use of physical force or power against another person, against oneself, or against a group or community that results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, or deprivation."ⁱⁱ

Violence prevention: To be effective, violence prevention must be comprehensive in scope. The following general characterization was adapted from SB2097, State of California, February 2000. Violence prevention is a comprehensive and multifaceted effort to address the complex and multiple root factors associated with violence including, but not limited to, poverty, unemployment, discrimination, alcohol and other drug abuse, educational failure, fragmented families, domestic abuse, internalized shame, and felt powerlessness. Efforts build on resiliency in individuals, families, and communities. Violence prevention is distinct from violence containment or suppression. Violence prevention efforts contribute to empowerment, educational and economic progress, and improved life management skills while fostering healthy communities in which people can grow in dignity and safety. Finally, violence prevention efforts realign institutions to be more inclusive and receptive in responding to community needs.

BACKGROUND

Shifting the Focus

The Role of Government in Violence Prevention

I have observed people of the highest integrity and with the best of intentions fail repeatedly in their efforts to create a rational system of services that address the needs of communities and the families who live in them. Rather than a systems approach that addresses the whole fabric of a community and its problems, we have a patchwork of isolated, categorical approaches to “problems” like unemployment, crime, alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, poor education, child abuse, and violence. I believe we must shift our focus away from the isolated to the systematic, and away from the notion that “it’s your problem” to “it’s our problem.”

Secretary Grantland Johnson, May 17, 2000

Within State government, the efforts to reduce and prevent violence, and deal with its consequences, span numerous State agencies, departments, and programs. Effective violence prevention requires the mobilization of a broad array of activities, staff, and resources across departments in order to support the efficacy of local efforts across California. In issuing its report *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*, Little Hoover Commission Chairman Michael Alpert declared that, “The State’s role is to support community-based efforts helping children and their families who are at risk of inflicting harm or being harmed.” He further stated, “In the statehouse, in every county seat, and before city councils and school boards, prevention efforts need to be made a priority. They must be considered a basic essential — not an experiment, not a luxury, not a discretionary action.”ⁱⁱⁱ As such, government has a significant role to play in advancing violence prevention efforts in California.

Over the years, as public concern about violence has grown, numerous projects and independent sources of funding related to violence prevention have been established. In its yearlong study on youth crime and violence prevention, the Little Hoover Commission found, however, that the State’s management and funding of prevention programs is not coordinated.^{iv} Similarly, California’s violence prevention efforts are often too uncoordinated to maximize their effectiveness, unless they are part of a system purposively designed to manage the collaboration process. Unfortunately, even when collaboration does occur, it is too often marginal, occurring as an ad hoc or voluntary effort for small or short-term programs, instead of as an integrated, unified, well-supported, and coordinated effort “in the middle.” Moving collaboration to the middle means strategic consideration for all programs that impact violence in California,¹ from mini-grant programs to large federal block grant programs.

¹ **Violence and crime prevention programs:** *Violence and/or crime prevention/reduction is the stated or main objective or is paramount* in relation to other program objectives. Evaluation of these programs is linked specifically to violence and crime prevention outcomes. Success indicators may include reduced gang involvement, lower arrest and incarceration rates, and decreased incidents of child abuse. Examples of these types of programs include gang prevention programs, hate crime prevention programs, mentoring for abused children, and *Safe from the Start: Reducing Children’s Exposure to Violence*.

Other prevention programs that impact violence: Although the stated or main objective of these programs is other than youth violence and/or crime prevention, *these programs have a probable or demonstrable effect in the*

Shifting the Focus is a state violence prevention partnership designed to coordinate interagency efforts. The group's membership, leaders from more than 30 departments, recognizes that effective violence prevention requires a new way of doing business. This new method of operation will ensure that California communities are well served through practice at the state level that supports success at the local level and promotes the vision of safe, healthy, sustainable communities in California, supported by effective state and local collaboration.

The Need for an Interdisciplinary Approach to Violence Prevention

17-year-old Robert hangs out on the corner of 19th and Mission Streets in San Francisco, long hair pulled back in a blue bandana that defiantly makes clear his gang allegiances. Were it possible to see his eyes — he hides behind dark glasses day and night — we'd see fear and focused rage, see eyes that constantly scan the street. Last week, someone shot at him again. Two of his friends were hit, one died. He's been a gang member since he was eleven, when he became old enough to escape from a house where the violence was predictable. He remembers vividly the sound of his sister being thrown down the stairwell. He's reluctant to talk about it, and when he does the memories are overwhelming. He has memories of his mother bruised, and of long days locked in the garage by his alcoholic father for having dared to intervene to protect his mother. Robert is a father, too. His commitment to his baby boy is etched in his face every time he talks about him. But, despite his pledges to never be like his father, despite the pain he knows so well, Robert is prohibited from seeing his son by a restraining order. Two months ago, after a night of partying with his "homies," he beat up his girlfriend.

While some of the facts have been modified to protect confidentiality, it is based on a true story. It highlights the tragedy of violence and demonstrates its complexity. Violence happens in every community in California and it affects and involves people of all ages, from the very young to the elderly. Few individuals and even fewer families and communities experience the violence that affects them as isolated experiences without further consequences. In fact, different forms of violence — domestic violence, child abuse, sexual violence, gang violence, and suicidal behavior — often co-exist within the same home and community, interrelated in complicated ways.

Violence is complex not just because different forms of violence are interrelated. It is also complex because the factors that contribute to violence — such as poverty, alcohol and other drug abuse, and the effects of media — are multifaceted and seldom well understood. As a result, the field of violence prevention is likely to succeed only in as much as approaches are comprehensive and multifaceted. All too often prevention and intervention strategies are predictably narrow in both focus and goals. A range of constraints, such as categorical funding, territorialism, use of specialized language, long histories of conflicts, and myopia often hinder well-intentioned prevention strategies. As a result, people like Robert, his girlfriend, and their son are ill served and frequently destined to repeat intergenerational cycles of violence.

prevention or reduction of violence and/or crime. Typically these programs address either healthy youth development or risk factors that are associated with violence. Evaluation of these programs is linked to the program's objectives. Success indicators may include increased graduation rates, decreased alcohol and other drug use and abuse, increased job skills and employment opportunities, improved mental health, and decreased teen pregnancy rates. Examples of these types of programs include Healthy Start, alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs, school readiness efforts, after-school tutoring, apprenticeships, and mentoring.

History

Shifting the Focus grew out of “The Advanced Training for Violence Prevention Practitioners,” a training series conducted by Deborah Prothrow-Stith of the Harvard School of Public Health and Larry Cohen of Prevention Institute. The series, held in 1996, reaffirmed for California representatives of justice, health and human services, and education, the necessity of working in an interdisciplinary mode to address the multiple risk factors that lead to violence.

Recognizing that government structures tended to reinforce singular, rather than collaborative approaches, a two-day forum, *Shifting the Focus: An Interdisciplinary Violence Prevention Approach for California* was held in March 1997. Facilitated by Prothrow-Stith and Cohen, the symposium brought together leaders from the State of California Attorney General’s Office, the Department of Health Services, and the Department of Education. Community-based violence prevention practitioners were included in the forum to ensure that State-formulated solutions would reflect the needs of people working at the local level. The participants agreed that a coordinated, collaborative approach would constitute a more effective strategy, ultimately improving local violence prevention efforts as well as State programs. Not only would programs benefit from the expertise of other programs, but they also could reduce duplication and share data resources and “best practices” information. The *Shifting the Focus* conference clarified how governmental agencies and organizations with different mandates and perspectives could work together more effectively. From the conference a methodology for collaboration emerged and was published in the paper *Shifting the Focus: An Interdisciplinary Framework for Advancing Violence Prevention*.^v _

Since the initial retreat and framework development, members have been meeting and working to advance a *Shifting the Focus* approach within State government, detailed later in this document. Broadly speaking, the partnership has developed several subcommittees to address high priority needs including compiling an inventory of violence prevention programs, data, training, and technical assistance. As new initiatives, such as *Safe from the Start*, emerged in various departments, members were deliberate in their efforts to ensure participation across departments and agencies. The partnership began participating in a national initiative to embed prevention in State policy and practice, coordinated by the National Crime Prevention Council, and launched new initiatives such as *From Evidence to Policy*. Members of the collaborative have also participated in conferences across the state and at the American Public Health Association’s annual conference to train others on this approach. As part of its fundamental commitment to serving California communities, *Shifting the Focus* held a series of local hearings in Spring 2001 to learn about more effectively supporting local efforts.

Critical to moving *Shifting the Focus* from rhetoric to reality has been the sponsorship of the Secretary of Health and Human Services Grantland Johnson and the Attorney General Bill Lockyer. The Attorney General and the Secretary have formed a partnership and adopted an agenda to foster safe and sustainable communities. This partnership acknowledges the *Shifting the Focus* philosophy of collaboration at the highest level.

Vision and Core Principles

The vision of *Shifting the Focus* is safe, healthy, sustainable communities in California through effective state and local partnerships. A fundamental tenet of this vision is that communities can and must be built from within while State government serves in a supportive role. The Little Hoover Commission reaffirmed this in stating, “Crime is not prevented and children are not educated and nurtured at the state level. If a single crime is prevented two blocks from the state capital, it will be the work of parents and neighbors, community members and civic leaders, local law enforcement and teachers.”^{vi}

The collaborative is committed to reengineering State government from isolated efforts to a broader service orientation. This will enable locales to better focus on strengthening individuals, families, and communities rather than responding to state bureaucracies. Efforts are designed to transform violence prevention efforts through intergovernmental collaboration with an emphasis on primary prevention. They shift current government practices by educating practitioners, fostering coalitions and networks, changing organizational practices, and influencing policy and legislation in order to enable and facilitate local solutions to violence prevention.

Shifting the Focus is based on the following core principles:

- Communities can and must be built from within. State government serves in a supporting role.
- Primary prevention is emphasized while working at all levels of prevention.
- Violence is a complex problem and its prevention therefore requires a comprehensive solution.
- Collaboration and sharing of resources are fundamental to success.
- State efforts are designed to maximize violence prevention outcomes at the local level through supporting locally owned, locally controlled efforts.
- Local successes inform state government practices.

Activities

Based on these principles, *Shifting the Focus* has embarked on a multifaceted effort to improve governmental efficiency and increase support for local violence prevention efforts. This effort includes identifying and addressing barriers placed on locales by the State, compiling a Statewide Inventory of Prevention Programs That Impact Violence² for policymakers to identify gaps and for local practitioners to identify resources, creating formal partnerships and cooperative agreements between *Shifting the Focus* member departments, reassessing data needs and requirements to simplify requirements, and improving violence prevention training at both the state and local levels. Examples of efforts that utilize this approach include the following:

- *Safe from the Start: Reducing Children’s Exposure to Violence*: The California *Safe from the Start* campaign is a strategy to bring together elected officials and community leaders from throughout the state to hear and discuss new and pertinent information on the impact of violence on children and develop plans to address the problem in their communities.
- *California Mentor Initiative*: The California Mentor Initiative (CMI) works in partnership with community-based organizations to provide opportunities for communities and

² Available online at www.adp.ca.gov/PreventionSurvey2001

businesses to support mentoring and to promote standards for mentoring programs across the state.

- *Young Men as Fathers*: This curriculum is being revised by the California Youth Authority (CYA) and the Department of Health Services (DHS). The new curriculum will involve both prevention of recidivism for young men who have already spent time in corrections and child abuse prevention.
- *Youth Crime and Violence Prevention in California: From Evidence to Policy*: In 1985, with Surgeon General Koop's declaration that violence in America is a public health emergency, public health and criminal justice professionals, policymakers, and community leaders began to view violence and violent crime as preventable rather than inevitable. Yet there are various factors affecting the decline in violence and violent crime in the 1990s including the economy, incarceration policies, and trends and issues related to drugs and alcohol, family violence, juvenile crime and violence, and firearms. These issues and the complex interrelationships between them consistently require examination and analysis. In September 2001, the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General will sponsor a research- and evidence-based symposium to explore the reasons behind the decline in violence and violent crime in California in the 1990s. A policy forum to explore policy options for reducing violence and violent crime will follow this symposium in January 2002. The September symposium will focus on educating legislators, youth, community leaders, local lawmakers, and others about the problem of violence in California. An advisory committee oversees the project, with appointments made by the Attorney General and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.
- *Youth Development and Crime Prevention Initiative*: The initiative is a collaboration among the Departments of Alcohol and Drug Programs (DADP), Mental Health, and Employment Development Workforce Investment, demonstrating a model system of services for substance-abusing youth who are engaged in or at high risk of committing juvenile crime.
- *Epidemiology of Self-Inflicted and Unintentional Gunshot Wounds Project*: This is a collaboration between the Department of Health Services (DHS) and Department of Justice (DOJ). Assembly Bill 106/Senate Bill 130 require all police jurisdictions to report to DHS all self-inflicted and unintentional gunshot wounds to people under age 19 when the firearm was manufactured, sold, or transferred in California. While not mandated, DHS infers an obligation to automate, analyze, and report on these data. The DOJ is providing in-kind support to develop and handle the logistics of reporting. This is the first time DHS will have statewide data on gunshot wounds to children not serious enough to result in overnight hospitalization, filling in a wide gap in knowledge and testing whether laws requiring safety devices (like trigger locks) to be provided with newly sold guns are effective in reducing injuries.
- *Survey of California Prevention Programs That Impact Violence*: This is a voluntary effort to build a Web-based inventory of violence prevention programs across agencies and disciplines. The inventory will begin with programs at the state level, and then extend to local programs irrespective of funding source. While it might include a paper process, the goal is a Web-based, dynamic database that can be modified, viewed, and queried at any time. Staff from DADP and the California Youth Authority have created a user-friendly website that contains a county by county listing of existing programs including

grant-making opportunities, funding cycles, and contact persons. Work on this project is in progress and information is continuously updated.

- *State Child Death Review Council*: The main roles of the State Child Death Review Council are to maintain the directory of child death review teams, implement a statewide data system for tracking fatal child abuse and neglect, and provide information and training to local teams. This Council includes representatives from the Department of Health Services, Department of Social Services, Office of the Attorney General, and the Office of Criminal Justice Planning.
- *Embedding Prevention in State Policy and Practice: Shifting the Focus* is participating in this six-state initiative coordinated by the National Crime Prevention Council. The effort focuses on elevating prevention as the preferred state policy in reducing opportunities for and causes of crime, violence, and alcohol and other drug abuse.

Overarching Outcomes

The goals of *Shifting the Focus* are:

- 1) Facilitate the State's violence prevention efforts to significantly reduce the incidence of violence over time
- 2) Build community infrastructure to help achieve and preserve these improvements

Clearly, these are goals that will take time. Based upon state-of-the art knowledge in the field of violence prevention, rates of violence appear to be most significantly impacted by sustained interdisciplinary and multifaceted efforts. Therefore, success can be gauged in the short term by monitoring the success of activities that aim to improve the comprehensiveness and interdisciplinary coordination of such efforts. To determine the impact of any initiative resulting from improved collaboration, it is essential to measure and track a variety of both qualitative and quantitative indicators. This is also critical for determining what improvements are needed in program content and methodology. Success indicators of this effort include:

- **Increased collaboration** resulting in more integrated government operations among departments and agencies that either directly address violence prevention or address issues that are likely to have an impact on violence prevention.
- **A focus on primary prevention** that includes increased funding for prevention based on an increased understanding of need and efficacy.
- **Reduced duplication** among State departments and agencies resulting in a decrease in the number of separate requirements or local constituencies (e.g., reporting, grant applications, data sets) across departments and agencies.
- **Improved access to information** for local constituencies about best/promising practices, funding opportunities, data, training opportunities, technical assistance resources, etc.
- **Increased capacity for collaboration** among State departments and agencies to collaborate and coordinate services for local constituencies.
- **Increase in program-specific goals** for local constituents. This includes collaboration and funding goals such as producing specific program outcomes to increase and improve collaboration and increasing flexibility on local spending to address local violence prevention needs.
- **A positive local response to State efforts**, or the "What We Do Makes a Difference" indicator. Specifically, this relates to improved perception among local constituents that

the State is supporting and strengthening local violence prevention efforts and outcomes. This includes creating mechanisms for **local to State evaluation** for community grantees to evaluate improvement in their work related to state violence prevention activities as the State reaches new levels of collaboration.

Strategy Development

Building from Existing Efforts

Achieving the vision, core principles, and ultimate outcomes of *Shifting the Focus* requires an agreed upon strategy to serve as a roadmap as State government implements changes in policy, practice, and programs to better support local efforts across the state. This document delineates such a strategy. The strategy is based on the ongoing work of the collaborative and other government processes, specifically:

- Recommendations from the initial *Shifting the Focus* retreat³
- Findings from local hearings conducted on behalf of *Shifting the Focus* in Spring 2001⁴
- Findings from the Little Hoover Commission's study on youth crime and violence prevention⁵
- *Safe from the Start: Preventing Children's Exposure to Violence*⁶ community forums
- Learning from other efforts and reports such as *Embedding Prevention in State Policy and Practice* and *Violence Prevention: A Vision of Hope*^{vii}
- Ongoing strategy development and work of the *Shifting the Focus* collaborative, steering committee, and subcommittees

Recommendations from the Shifting the Focus Retreat

At the first *Shifting the Focus* retreat, participants acknowledged a systems problem that minimized interagency and interdepartmental collaboration. The participants developed a set of recommendations designed to promote systemic change. The recommendations, detailed in *Shifting the Focus: An Interdisciplinary Framework for Advancing Violence Prevention*, fall into the four categories delineated in the following chart.

³ These findings are thoroughly delineated in *Shifting the Focus: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Advancing Violence Prevention in California*, available online at www.preventioninstitute.org

⁴ These findings are described in *A Local Call to State Action: Findings from Community Hearings*, Spring 2001, available online at www.preventioninstitute.org.

⁵ The Little Hoover Commission's Report, *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence* is available online at www.lhc.ca.gov.

⁶ Sponsored by the Attorney General with support from the California Health and Human Services Agency and the California Commission on Children and Families. Additional information is available online at www.safefromthestart.org.

Shifting the Focus: Recommendations Spring 1997

<i>Educate Providers</i>	a) Enhance comprehensive, multidisciplinary violence prevention training. b) Collaborate with colleges and universities to provide multidisciplinary training.
<i>Foster Coalitions and Networks</i>	c) Build upon and strengthen efforts to bring together multiple disciplines and sectors. d) Encourage opportunities for local interdisciplinary collaboration. e) Capitalize on existing networks such as the Monthly School's Roundtable.
<i>Change Organizational Practices</i>	f) Ensure long-term, collaborative funding. g) Integrate the programs of multiple departments to provide comprehensive services. h) Standardize and share interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral data. i) Strengthen an interdisciplinary evaluation process that is meaningful for all players.
<i>Influence Policy and Legislation</i>	j) Encourage local level policy change. k) Collaborate to strengthen and support important policy and legislation.

These recommendations were in fact prescient. As this document later reflects, the major recommendations were validated and further refined in ongoing strategy development and in the local hearings. One additional key idea, not reflected here, has emerged from local practitioner input. This is the importance of State staff supporting local efforts through increased leadership on prevention as a critical strategy to address the problem of violence in California.

Findings from Local Hearings

A major *Shifting the Focus* effort, community hearings conducted in Winter and Spring 2001, contribute to the strategy delineated in this document. These hearings were specifically designed and conducted to determine how the State best supports local violence prevention efforts and where the State presents barriers to effective violence prevention practice. The hearings identified a desire for increased leadership from State government on violence prevention and a desire for increased prioritization of the *prevention* of violence in State policies, programs, and practices. The findings also reveal a number of ways in which the State can do a better job of supporting local efforts. This strategy is designed to strengthen efforts that are working and overcome State-imposed barriers to effective local prevention.

Findings from the Little Hoover Commission's Study

In June 2001, the Little Hoover Commission issued a report entitled *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*. The report's main conclusions are that crime and violence are preventable and that the State must alter how it supports communities to prevent crime and violence. The Commission identified six practical ways that the State can accomplish this including: take action now, make prevention a priority, reorganize funding, develop leaders, impart new knowledge, and evaluate effectively. In its study, the Commission held public hearings, convened an advisory board, and conducted community hearings for input. The findings of this process validate the sentiment of *Shifting the Focus* members, and more importantly, support the findings from the *Shifting the Focus* hearings conducted in communities throughout California.

Safe from the Start Community Forums

The California Attorney General's Crime and Violence Prevention Center, in partnership with the California Commission on Children and Families and the Health and Human Services Agencies, conducted a series of forums in California. The purpose was to educate law enforcement and community partners about the impact of exposure to violence on young children and to encourage the development of local action plans by multidisciplinary teams. An evaluation of the project reveals a number of lessons learned.^{viii} These include: the need to design programs and events in partnership with the community and to meet local needs, the conviction that collaborative efforts have a greater impact than efforts by a single discipline or jurisdiction, and a need for State government support including the provision of effective models, adequate funding, and technical assistance to support implementation.

Learning from Other Efforts and Reports

Using a *Shifting the Focus* philosophy that builds on current efforts, this strategy builds on the findings of a number of other efforts. For example, as part of its ongoing efforts, *Shifting the Focus* participates in an initiative with the National Crime Prevention Council entitled *Embedding Prevention in State Policy and Practice*. This effort involves six states working to implement prevention as the policy of choice for reducing crime, violence, and drug abuse. This initiative provides an opportunity for California's *Shifting the Focus* effort to learn about other examples of success across the country related to changing state practices and policies to more effectively serve communities. *Violence Prevention: A Vision of Hope*^{ix} lays out a conceptual framework designed to achieve a vision of healthy communities, families, and youth in California. As part of this vision, the policy council encourages the adoption of a strengths-based perspective, encourages effective community building, and promotes a focus on prevention. Further, the council delineates a set of recommendations whose successful implementation requires a multidisciplinary response. While *From the Margins to the Middle* describes a strategy for state government, it also promotes and draws upon the principles put forth in *Vision of Hope*.

Ongoing Strategy Development and Shifting the Focus Work

Since the initial retreat in 1997, the collaborative has expanded and members have had regular meetings, strategy meetings, and subcommittee meetings. In addition to strategy planning by the steering committee, the collaborative held a strategy retreat in January 2000. At this time, the group prioritized particular areas of action including the need for a violence prevention inventory, attention to data issues, mentoring, and early detection/intervention. To implement these, several subcommittees were formed including the inventory and data committees. With regards to mentoring, it was determined that the work be carried out by the California Mentor Initiative and that this group and *Shifting the Focus* maintain cross-membership and ongoing communication. Since this meeting, the group has reprioritized training and technical assistance to meet needs arising from the *Safe from the Start* as high priority areas. A technical assistance and training committee was established to address this. The strategy delineated in this document builds on this ongoing work and is designed to give further structure and purpose to these ongoing efforts.

Barriers

Understanding barriers to achieving outcomes is the first step in overcoming them. This section describes barriers that must be overcome for State agencies to better support local violence prevention efforts and achieve safe, healthy, and sustainable communities. Specific barriers include:

- Barriers given the size and characteristics of California and its government
- Barriers imposed by the State as identified by local hearing participants
- Collaboration barriers identified at the initial *Shifting the Focus* retreat
- Barriers to strategic prevention identified by the Little Hoover Commission

California's Size and Characteristics

California's economy is one of the largest in the world and California has the largest and most diverse population in the United States. With this comes a large bureaucracy, built over time to address the range and number of issues that government is designed to address. Different agencies and departments have developed crime and violence prevention efforts, yet each of them emerged independently. There was no process to integrate or coordinate these and other efforts. Similarly, new legislation that does not take into account existing efforts and resources is often passed, and consequently, the wheel is reinvented in a new area of government. As Michael Alpert stated, "(With) youth crime and violence prevention, the majority of the resources are state, not federal. We have no one but ourselves to blame for the stacks of paperwork, duplicative forms, and differing requirements... If we can't integrate the prevention programs that are entirely within the State's purview, we do not stand a chance of integrating more expensive 'downstream' programs."^x

Barriers Identified by Local Hearing Participants

The consequences of this are problematic for local individuals trying to do good work. The *Shifting the Focus* local hearings revealed a range of barriers imposed by State government practices on local violence prevention efforts. A full report of the findings from the *Shifting the Focus* community hearings is available and describes barriers related to needed leadership and prioritization of primary prevention, cultural competence, data, evaluation, training, technical assistance, and collaboration. The prevalence and number of these barriers diminish successful community outcomes.

Collaboration Barriers

While many in State government recognize the need to address these barriers, they also recognize that barriers to collaborating exist within State government, making it even more difficult to address these concerns. Many of these barriers were outlined at the initial *Shifting the Focus* retreat and include:

- **Funding:** This includes inadequate funding, fragmentation of state and federal funding sources, narrow and prescriptive funding streams, a lack of sustainable funding, and the unreliable nature of violence prevention funding and the competition it may engender.
- **Competition:** Competition between and within disciplines is not restricted to funding, but includes issues about who will define a problem and set a programmatic or policy agenda to address it. Competition is also exacerbated by legislative and political battles, which may be borne of differences in viewpoint, but often result from a politician's need to be viewed as the "winner" on a given issue or piece of legislation.

- **Timeframes:** The difference between the time required for many governmental processes and the urgency of communities' day-to-day struggles can create tension. In addition, while prevention requires a sustained effort over time, politicians' attentions focus on re-election every two to four years.
- **Data and Technology:** The lack of comprehensive data, long-term in scope, is a significant barrier to more effective work. Data may be interpreted or manipulated differently by those with different purposes or agendas. Incompatible hardware and software, as well as inconsistent types of data collection, make sharing and comparing data difficult.
- **Knowledge:** Individuals and agencies from different disciplines may lack the vocabulary to effectively communicate or may not understand each other's perspectives or goals. A lack of knowledge about other disciplines adds to divisions and biases that inhibit the development of partnerships and collaborations.
- **Confidentiality:** Some potential collaborations may be impeded by internal or legal restrictions regarding confidentiality. Confidentiality problems arise frequently when data are sought to document a problem.
- **Commitment:** Because cooperative efforts are extremely time intensive, require many resources, and can take time to develop, it is a challenge to maintain ongoing support.
- **Vision:** There are movements and individuals that have deemed violence prevention unworthy of concern or funding. Shortsightedness is demonstrated in the view that somehow violence prevention is not an integral part of health, education, or criminal justice. This perspective assumes that violence affects only a certain segment of the population, that it can be solved with one single approach, such as a criminal justice response, or that it simply cannot be prevented at all. These beliefs undermine support for multidisciplinary collaboration as part of a comprehensive violence prevention movement.

Barriers to Strategic Prevention

Given the scope of these barriers and the importance of overcoming them to support local efforts, the State needs a strategy to address these barriers and better advance prevention efforts. In its report on youth crime and violence prevention,^{xi} the Little Hoover Commission identified three additional barriers to strategic prevention:

- 1) Lack of unified coordination and commitment from all top policymakers
- 2) No mechanism for effective policy making
- 3) Lack of organization of state level efforts

The Commission also recommended three steps to address these barriers: 1) Provide executive level leadership, 2) Establish a mechanism to ensure coordination, and 3) Meet the needs of communities.

Strategy Development Process

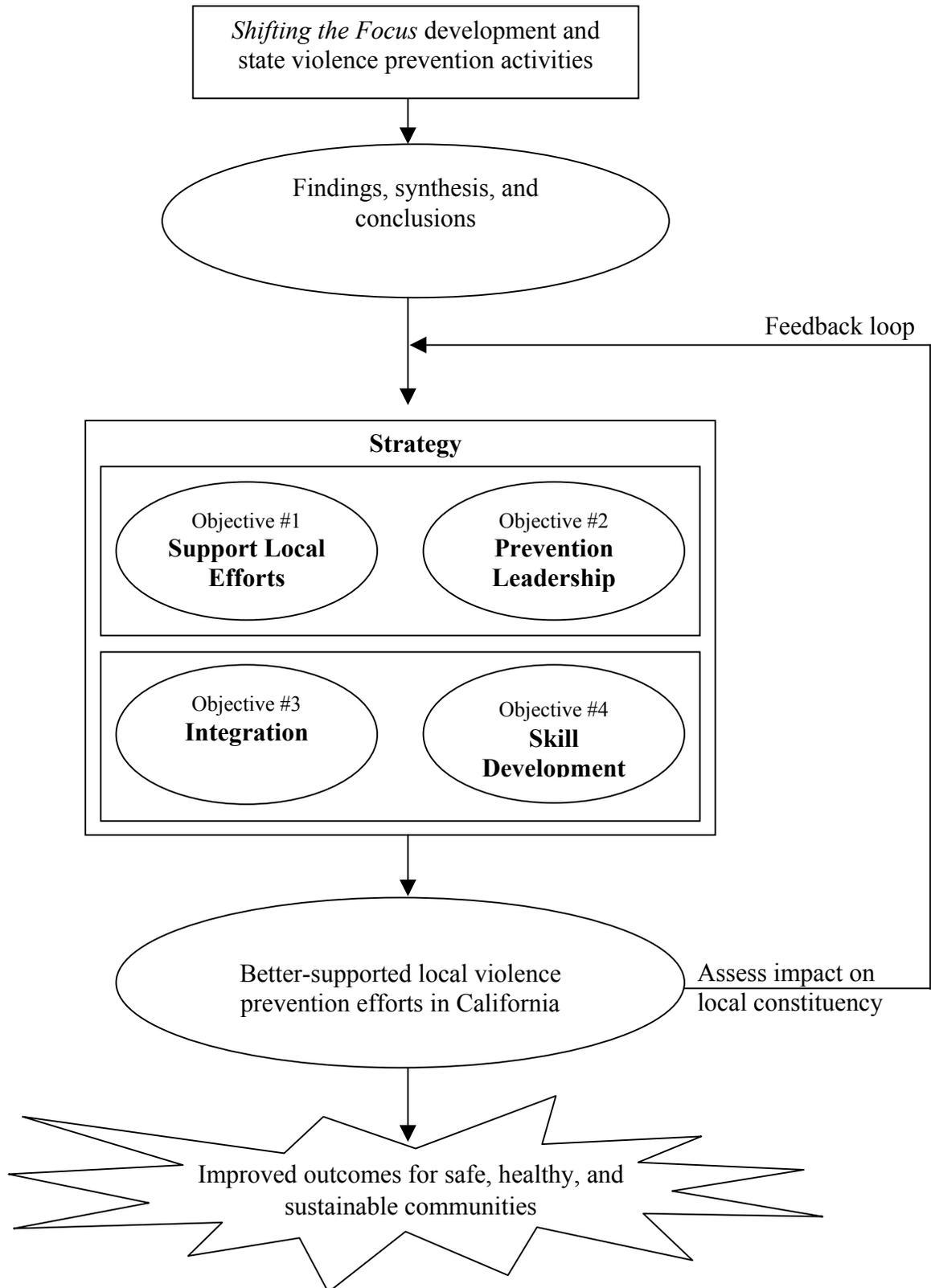
This document lays out a strategy framework for California's *Shifting the Focus* initiative to establish a more deliberate mechanism for coordination with the goal of better serving communities. Increasing membership, leadership, and institutionalization will strengthen the objectives, recommendations, and ultimate outcomes.

The chart on page 14 details the strategy development process beginning with development of *Shifting the Focus* and the ongoing state violence prevention activities detailed earlier in this document. These resulted in findings, synthesis, and conclusions that are the basis of a strategy delineated in the following section. This strategy details four key objectives:

- 1) Support Local Efforts
- 2) Prevention Leadership
- 3) Integration
- 4) Skill Development

As is indicated in the chart, the overarching goal of these objectives is to better support local violence prevention efforts. The underlying assumption of this approach is that the most effective violence prevention efforts are locally owned and locally controlled. As these efforts benefit from a broader service orientation from State government, greater outcomes for safe, healthy, and sustainable communities will be achieved.

Shifting the Focus from the Margins to the Middle Strategy Development Process



KEY STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

Shifting the Focus is committed to improving its service to communities to advance violence prevention in California. To accomplish this, it must achieve four objectives. The first two relate to provisions to support local efforts and prevention more generally and the second two are methodologies to achieve them.

Shifting the Focus to Advance Violence Prevention in California

- 1) **Support Local Efforts:** State government better supports local violence prevention efforts in order to achieve improved outcomes.
- 2) **Prevention Leadership:** State government demonstrates increased leadership for and more emphasis on the *prevention* of violence.

Methodology to Achieve a “Shift in Focus”

- 3) **Integration:** State government achieves strategic collaboration and coordination on violence prevention within and between departments and agencies.
- 4) **Skill Development:** State government develops leadership and violence prevention skills.

Shifting the Focus to Advance Violence Prevention in California

Objective #1: Support Local Efforts

State government better supports local violence prevention efforts in order to achieve improved outcomes.

(W)e cannot call ourselves successful...until the people we serve determine that we have implemented improvements that they can see and touch in their own neighborhoods and experience in their own lives.^{xiii}

Grantland Johnson, Secretary
California Health and Human Services Agency

Within State government, the responsibility for reducing and preventing violence spans numerous State agencies, departments, and programs, each addressing a different part of the problem. Violence in communities, however, is not experienced in fragmentation; boundaries that exist in the public sector do not exist in community and family life. As a result, the government resources and services designed to address community problems are often delivered in “silos.” While it is valuable to have specialization at the state level to ensure expertise in designing and implementing programs and policies, the barriers to accessing resources within this system can be challenging for those working in communities. As a result, local work is made more difficult than it needs to be. *Shifting the Focus* local hearings confirmed this as practitioners across California identified barriers erected by State practices and policies. Similarly, according to the Little Hoover Commission’s findings, “Fragmented eligibility requirements, funding streams and evaluation criteria thwart the efforts of local communities to implement collaborative strategies”^{xiii} when local collaboration is attempted.

Despite its breadth and size, State government can reengineer the way it does business to better support local efforts. To achieve this, the State can increase flexibility and access to information.

In so doing, the State still has a responsibility to assure that public resources are well directed and appropriately utilized. Therefore, while not prescribing specifics, the State can fulfill assurance through assessing progress of locally controlled efforts.

The following recommendations are designed to either address barriers imposed by State practices or strengthen those efforts that local practitioners have identified as helpful.

Key Recommendations

a) **Develop common Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for violence prevention and related grants.**

To the extent possible, RFPs from different departments and agencies should ask the same questions and include the same elements. For example, needs statements should accept appropriate data from a variety of disciplines and sources. Such RFPs should allow for flexibility in collaboration requirements. When appropriate, a single RFP issued and funded jointly by multiple State departments would be desirable.

b) **Braid funding sources to allow communities flexibility when implementing violence prevention programs.**

Currently many funding sources narrowly define activities and outcomes and do not enable communities to fully address their own violence concerns. A braided funding model increases local flexibility while addressing local violence issues more comprehensively. This process can begin with the development of a template for braided funding across agencies and departments and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between departments to collaborate in braiding funding when possible.

c) **Develop action steps to ensure that the capacity of *Shifting the Focus* member departments and agencies is strengthened to serve California's diversity.**

Given California's diversity, it is critical that the State be increasingly culturally competent and responsive to communities' needs. *Shifting the Focus* members should delineate steps to train staff, deliver programs, and establish policies that take different communities' diverse needs into account. This includes exploring the provision of flexible program hiring requirements that enable local programs to hire qualified people from within their community, ensuring a more diverse and culturally appropriate mix of staff to develop and implement programs and approaches that meet local needs. In addition, *Shifting the Focus* members should take steps to further diversify its own staff to better reflect California's diverse population.

d) **Develop an integrated 'first-stop' website that serves as a gateway to key violence prevention information for local constituencies.**

Many departments and agencies have websites and/or information about funding resources, training, technical assistance, best and promising violence prevention strategies, and data. In fact, the vast amount of information available can often seem overwhelming and unwieldy, and finding the right information can be a time-consuming and challenging task. A first-stop website would provide local constituencies,

policymakers, and state staff with a location to promote easy accessibility to information to support local violence prevention efforts.

e) **Create a more unified approach to data management.**

Shifting the Focus members should explore the ways in which departments can more consistently standardize the types of data they require and the time periods and age groupings for this data. Further, data managers should take steps to share data among partner agencies and departments and produce shared analyses. Given the constraints of confidentiality, different federal requirements, and different technologies, it is recognized that a fully unified approach is not possible, but improved collaboration among data managers could result in incremental improvement.

f) **Develop action steps to improve local access to state data and to modify reporting requirements to *Shifting the Focus* member organizations.**

Data is an important part of developing and monitoring violence prevention initiatives, yet local practitioners identify issues related to access and reporting requirements as key barriers to local work. State government can assist communities in overcoming these barriers. Given the multiple types of data and data sources, one action step should be the development of a website (see item d above) with links to sources of data that are of use to local violence prevention practitioners. Another step should be the development of community indicators and associated intermediate outcomes for violence prevention, and related interdisciplinary data that can be shared among State agencies. Using community indicators to monitor local activities and outcomes would also support the State's responsibility of assurance.

g) **Develop an overarching approach to evaluation and a tiered evaluation system for violence prevention programs.**

Current evaluation requirements spread limited resources too thinly. Rather than putting the burden of proof on each local project, the State should have an overarching approach that accepts responsibility for determining what is working. It should then provide guidelines to local groups about the efforts that seem to work and help them to measure implementation. In line with the Little Hoover Commission's recommendation,^{xiv} a tiered evaluation system would rigorously evaluate new and unproved strategies, while programs deemed effective would be measured for implementation, responsible management, and effective tailoring to meet the needs of local demographics. Further, any evaluation process should also take into account that the complexity of violence demands a comprehensive approach and should not discourage multifaceted approaches simply because they are more difficult to measure. Judging such approaches requires the consideration of local practitioner wisdom as opposed to quantitative measures alone. In addition, some desired program outcomes may take years to achieve. *Shifting the Focus* members can establish a set of jointly agreed upon outcomes, including intermediate outcomes.

h) **Expand violence prevention training and technical assistance opportunities and content for local constituencies.** *Shifting the Focus* local hearing participants value current training and technical assistance opportunities. However, they also called for

expanded access to these opportunities and a need for broader content offering. *Shifting the Focus* member departments should implement steps to expand training and technical assistance opportunities. With regards to technical assistance, practitioners can benefit from increased technical assistance in implementing best and promising practices and new legislation, as well as in administrative and management areas. In terms of training, local practitioners can benefit from a broader range of violence prevention topics than are currently available, as well as training that is more specifically oriented to particular community needs. In addition to current conferences, *Shifting the Focus* members can explore further opportunities to hold smaller training events that are more specific to the needs of particular communities, such as those of rural communities and those of inner-city communities. Not only is it critical that more opportunities are made available, but also that funding is made available to support participation in these opportunities. Finally, *Shifting the Focus* should ensure that local practitioners have the opportunity to participate in training and receive technical assistance related to the development and implementation of comprehensive approaches to violence prevention.

i) **Include local constituencies as participants in shaping State violence prevention strategy and programs.**

Many *Shifting the Focus* members include local partners in their advisory and planning groups. They recognize that effective violence prevention happens locally and that the State's role is to provide service to these local efforts. Further, they understand the value of local voices in shaping effective State initiatives. Partnerships must be strengthened to ensure that State efforts are consistently designed or reengineered to best meet local needs. One possibility is the development of an exchange program in which local and State staffs spend as long as one to two weeks in each other's job sites. This would facilitate a better understanding among State staff of local barriers, needs, and solutions, as well as a local understanding of State resources and functioning.

j) **Measure the local response to changes in State government practice and modify accordingly.**

As *Shifting the Focus* departments and agencies make changes in practice and policy to better support local violence prevention efforts, they must receive an assessment as to the value of the changes. In addition, local practitioners can provide feedback about the extent of overall State responsiveness to local concerns. This feedback will allow the State to further modify its efforts and be continually responsive to local needs.

k) **Request procedural changes from the federal government to minimize constraints on the State that hinder local efforts.**

Federal policies and regulations can hinder State efforts to develop local prevention programs and disburse local funding effectively. *Shifting the Focus* members should present California's local concerns to federal departments and agencies and encourage federal staff to adopt procedures that will enable the State to better support local efforts. The *Shifting the Focus* local hearings report, *A Local Call to State Action*, will serve as a valuable tool to clarify local concerns for federal staff.

Objective #2: Prevention Leadership

State government demonstrates increased leadership for more emphasis on the *prevention* of violence.

I believe if we want to ensure that crime rates don't return to their record highs in years past, we must focus more energy and resources on long-term prevention efforts.^{xv}

Bill Lockyer
California Attorney General

According to John Calhoun, President and CEO of the National Crime Prevention Council, “We know what works to make ourselves, our children and our communities safer. What we need is a firm commitment from the Administration, Congress, and the private sector to assist communities in developing local comprehensive and inclusive strategies to prevent and reduce crime and to build safer and more caring communities.”^{xvi} *Shifting the Focus* hearing participants voiced a desire for stronger leadership in State government on the primary prevention of violence.

Government officials, legislators, and staff can play strong leadership roles in support of prevention. As Calhoun says, we are sending a clear message, “If you’re bad, we’re waiting for you with very expensive solutions... This nation must erect a companion promise.”^{xvii} California also needs to be willing to invest in solutions for problems before they arise. Since most violence prevention resources are provided by the State, there is a tremendous opportunity to utilize these resources in a way that will address the underlying root factors of violence.

Key Recommendations

- a) **Develop a set of Common Prevention Principles for adoption by *Shifting the Focus*.** Certain ways of structuring violence prevention initiatives are more effective than others. For example, prevention initiatives funded for less than three years have little opportunity to achieve success. State officials can demonstrate leadership by delineating the characteristics of effective prevention efforts. The principles would establish a baseline set of standards to guide departments in the development of violence-related prevention legislation and in the bill analysis process. Further, they could guide the modifications and implementation of current violence prevention initiatives. Principles might relate to adequacy, length of funding, and the importance of multifaceted approaches that emphasize both risk and resiliency. The principles should address how new initiatives can be built into the fabric of existing local work. New initiatives should be designed to enable localities and collaborative members to build on what they are already doing rather than compete with current efforts and partnerships; they should inspire innovation while continuing what is successful. The Common Prevention Principles should address the development of pilot projects and assess when to apply them on a larger scale. A key principle related to State departments is that any new initiatives must maximize coordination and collaboration between appropriate State departments.⁷ These principles

⁷ Key participants in *Shifting the Focus* at the state level include departments, agencies, and programs. For simplicity, rather than mentioning the participation between all three, the word department is often used, but generally all three units are being referred to. For a complete list of members, please see Appendix I.

can be shared with members of the legislature and agency and department directors to ensure that prevention policies and legislation will support effective implementation and outcomes.

b) Provide current information to state policymakers about the value of prevention and effective prevention strategies.

It is easier and more common for legislators to fund “after the fact” interventions rather than prevention. Yet research-based strategies in violence prevention and related fields have demonstrated the value of prevention in reducing death and injury. Early investment, before the onset of symptoms, can significantly reduce spending and suffering over the long term. For example, as evidence about brain development emerges, there is clearer evidence that focusing on the healthy development of young children can reduce their chances of becoming perpetrators or victims of violence. As policymakers understand the value of effective prevention and learn which strategies are promising, prevention can emerge as a policy of choice to reduce violence.

c) Support the development of California’s *From Evidence to Policy* initiative and ensure widespread dissemination of its findings to policymakers and others.

Given the complexity of violence and the number of factors that contribute to it, policymakers need reliable, high quality information about policies that will result in effective violence prevention. The two *From Evidence to Policy* forums and related research are being conducted by the Attorney General and Secretary of Health and Human Services as one method of gathering and disseminating such information. This initiative is a unique opportunity to synthesize the learnings from a variety of perspectives and further an understanding of the kinds of policies that will contribute to the prevention of youth crime and violence.

d) Advance a strengths-based approach to violence prevention.

Effective violence prevention requires attention to both risk and resiliency. Historically, more attention has been paid to reducing risk.^{xviii,xix} In many cases, building on what people and communities do well, rather than focusing on what is wrong, will achieve more success. Building on the strengths within communities can foster a safer environment for residents. *Shifting the Focus* members can promote this strengths-based perspective in their violence prevention efforts. One particular emphasis should be on promoting the perspective of youth as an asset and encouraging the inclusion of young people in violence prevention planning at the state and local levels.

e) Present *Shifting the Focus* Common Prevention Principles to federal departments and agencies.

Given that many California resources are significantly shaped by federal agencies, it is important to present these principles to the federal government. Just as these principles are needed at the state level, they will serve as a tool for federal staff and policymakers designing violence prevention policies. Further, they will help align California’s federally funded efforts with those funded by the State. This recommendation builds on a previous recommendation to encourage federal staff to adopt procedures that will enable the State to better support local efforts (see item 1k).

f) **Support local access to the State legislature and encourage local constituencies to communicate with their elected officials.**

Policymakers are elected by and responsible to a local constituency. When this local constituency is more engaged in the political process and educates their representatives about their interests in prevention (as constituencies did throughout the local hearings process), policymakers will be able to make more informed decisions about prevention efforts.

Methodology to Achieve a “Shift in Focus”

Objective #3: Integration

State government achieves strategic collaboration and coordination on violence prevention within and across departments and agencies.

Effective violence prevention requires the mobilization of a broad array of activities, staff, and resources across departments. Over the years, as public concern about violence has grown, numerous projects and independent sources of funding have been established. Today, California’s violence prevention efforts are often too uncoordinated to maximize effectiveness *unless there is a system purposively designed to manage the collaboration process*. According to Secretary Johnson, “(W)e must collaborate in the delivery of services to communities.”^{xx}

‘Collaboration’ has meant different things to different people. For some, it has meant working on jointly planning and implementing programs, for others it has meant participating in conversations and meetings with other departments and agencies. Recognizing the different perspectives that are represented within the partnership, *Shifting the Focus* must fundamentally be about deliberate coordination, braiding, integration, and decision-making. This means purposefully deciding what makes sense to do jointly and what makes sense to do individually (e.g., within a single department or agency). The decisions should be based in the fundamental *Shifting* premise and goal: better service to locals. Such an approach will ensure that the collaboration of State departments and agencies working in coordination as a whole are of greater service to the public than the sum of the parts working in fragmentation. As the approach becomes increasingly coordinated, they will achieve a synergy, already achieved by many local multidisciplinary efforts.

Key Recommendations

a) **Determine the linkages needed between State departments to ensure service coordination to California communities.**

Given the breadth of California’s efforts to address violence, it is critical that interdepartmental linkages that will improve service to communities be established and maintained. *Shifting the Focus* members can assess their own new and existing programs for opportunities to collaborate with other departments to enhance service delivery. An initial step in looking for opportunities for collaboration is to examine existing commonalities (e.g., risk factors, target population) and to develop joint program and implementation arrangements.

b) **Ensure ongoing linkages and cross-membership between *Shifting the Focus* and other State multidisciplinary efforts.**

A number of State efforts focus on issues related to violence prevention such as mentoring and youth development. Ongoing communication among managers and participants and cross-membership in such efforts, such as the California Mentor Initiative (CMI), will decrease duplication and increase opportunities for synergy between efforts. For example, *Shifting the Focus* members identified mentoring as a high priority for a multidisciplinary violence prevention partnership and acknowledged the valuable work of CMI, which also includes *Shifting the Focus* members. Instead of launching a new initiative, *Shifting the Focus* members can support an already existing strong effort. In addition, *Shifting the Focus* members can partner with CMI in conferences and training events.

c) **Expand department and agency membership and participation in *Shifting the Focus*.**

Shifting the Focus is a voluntary partnership whose success depends on its members. Despite a membership of more than thirty departments, there are State agencies and departments committed to violence prevention that are not yet engaged in this process; the inclusion of these agencies and departments through outreach and recruitment will strengthen the State's violence prevention efforts. Furthermore, within the departments that are active in *Shifting the Focus*, the depth of knowledge and participation of staff should be expanded.

d) **Engage designated leadership in advancing a collaborative and coordinated approach.**

Collaboration and coordination are difficult and time-intensive. Effectively advancing this approach requires strong, high-level leadership to insist that this is the preferred violence prevention approach to address community needs. Advancing a collaborative approach in government from a leadership position includes: the provision of incentives and rewards for collaboration, modeling effective interdisciplinary collaboration, modifying hiring and promotion guidelines to ensure that new staff and leaders embrace a collaborative approach, expanding cross-disciplinary training, and developing programs and policies that foster collaboration between departments and with other agencies.

e) **Ensure ongoing strategy development to advance and refine the *Shifting the Focus* approach.**

Strategy development and refinement is critical to the success of improved government service and violence prevention. *Shifting the Focus* members can strengthen this process through consistent attention to strategy including holding an annual off-site session for planning and intensive strategic development. Successful strategy development also includes documenting the effectiveness of strategic coordination and collaboration in State government. As statewide and local input is received and the value of this approach is assessed, strategy can be refined and developed accordingly.

- f) **Continue to hold regular meetings of the *Shifting the Focus* steering committee, entire collaborative, and working subcommittees.**

Regular partnership meetings will ensure the effective implementation of key recommendations, ongoing strategy development, and the advancing of a collaborative approach to meet local needs. Members can be encouraged to participate in subcommittees that reflect their department's goals and advance collaborative approaches to support local efforts.

Objective #4: Skill Development

State government develops leadership and violence prevention skills.

Since violence is a complex problem, a broad range of skills is required to work towards its prevention. As more State staff members increase their violence prevention skills, they will be better equipped to design and implement programs, understand how their programs fit with or can build on other efforts, and design and deliver better training and technical assistance to local constituencies. One effective model for training local constituencies is a "training of trainers" model, whereby State staff can either deliver training to locals to pass these skills on to others in their own communities or can identify practitioners in communities who would be skilled to do this.

A comprehensive violence prevention curriculum includes the following topics: risk and resiliency factors, tools for comprehensive strategy development and coalition building, youth development, understanding and locating key data, the interrelationship between different kinds of violence, cultural considerations, understanding the role of evaluation in violence prevention, media advocacy and literacy, and violence prevention strategies in early childhood. Leadership development is also a key to advancing the State's capacity to support local efforts and increase attention to violence prevention. As these training packages are developed, they can be institutionalized across State departments and agencies working in violence prevention.

Key Recommendations

- a) **Incrementally launch a comprehensive and cross-disciplinary training effort for State staff on effective violence prevention practice.**

State staff who design and implement violence prevention programs must be well trained in comprehensive violence prevention approaches. This includes an understanding of multifaceted approaches, risk and resiliency, best practices, youth and community development strategies, and issues of evaluation. In addition to other training materials, the curriculum should include a synthesis of violence prevention approaches from different fields and disciplines.

- b) **Enhance the capacity of State staff to collaborate across departments and agencies.**

Interdisciplinary collaboration requires a set of skills that enables people to work across disciplines and institutional barriers in spite of different mandates and languages. State staff need training in the elements of effective collaboration and should be given skills to better participate in and lead collaborative efforts. Further, they need to better understand the different languages, approaches, and partners common to different sectors of

government and community. Including member departments and agencies together in these trainings ensures that State staff members are increasingly comfortable using a common language as they work together.

c) **Exchange training, conference outreach, and mailing lists to increase opportunities for interdisciplinary training.**

Many departments currently conduct their own training. Departments and agencies could foster a more collaborative approach to violence prevention by opening up training to and recruiting participants from other disciplines. This could reduce the duplication of training events for staff at the State level. In addition, exchanging mailing lists and conducting outreach to a broader audience could increase cross-disciplinary attendance at conferences offered by State departments and agencies. Department barriers precluding staff from attending trainings in other departments should be removed.

d) **Establish a Violence Prevention Leadership Institute for State staff.**

Leadership plays an essential role in advancing the key objectives outlined in this document. As local hearing participants identified increased State leadership in the prevention of violence as a higher priority, it is incumbent on State staff to enhance these skills. While leadership is at times mystified as a set of innate character traits, it includes a learned set of skills that can be attained through training. A violence prevention leadership training could take a cadre of State staff and enhance their ability to carry forth the *Shifting the Focus* mandate. In addition to intensive background on effective violence prevention practice and interdisciplinary collaboration, other issues covered might include public speaking, engaging community and bureaucratic participation, and local policy development skills. As violence prevention has developed as a field, people who demonstrated leadership early on have continued to lead. It is imperative that leadership skills be transmitted to a new cadre of younger staff who must be encouraged to emerge, as well as to staff already advanced in their careers. Leadership training could also be made available to local violence prevention practitioners.

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSIONS

Prioritization

On June 5, 2001, the *Shifting the Focus* steering committee held an extended strategy meeting to delineate and refine recommendations contained in this document and to prioritize items for action. They brainstormed the following list of criteria to prioritize recommendations:

- Builds on existing work
- Proven/evaluated
- Draws legislators
- Easily achievable
- Locally visible
- Passes “public square” test
- Demonstrates a “shift” in State practices
- Has impact/achieves results
- Strengthens a *Shifting the Focus* approach
- Will engage many members and their willingness to commit resources

- Can be accomplished in 2-3 years
- Priority issue for local constituency
- Responsive to the Little Hoover Commission's recommendations
- Can be done with minimal administrative costs

Based on these criteria, the steering committee members selected the following recommendations as high priority areas:

- Braid funding sources to enable flexibility for communities in implementing violence prevention programs.
- Develop an integrated 'one-stop' website with key violence prevention information, including information about best and promising practices.
- Provide in-depth information about effective violence prevention policy options to policymakers in California.
- Develop a set of Common Prevention Principles for adoption by State agencies and departments to develop and/or respond to violence and violence-related prevention legislation.
- Advance a strengths-/assets-based approach to violence prevention.
- Determine what state level partnerships and coordination will strengthen service to California communities by assessing new and existing State programs.

Next Steps

The *Shifting the Focus* partnership must engage in some immediate next steps to build on the momentum achieved in the strategy development process and to achieve the recommendations outlined. Some immediate next steps include:

- Refine prioritization criteria.
- Prioritize recommendations for *Shifting the Focus* membership based on criteria.
- Develop a work plan detailing activities to implement the recommendations and who is responsible for each activity.
- Establish any additional needed subcommittees to address priority recommendations and activities.
- Delineate specific outcomes to be achieved for high priority recommendations.

Outcomes

The recommendations outlined in this document are designed to achieve significant outcomes to advance violence prevention in California. The outcomes fall into three categories: a) policy and practice outcomes resulting from changes in State practices, b) long-term community outcomes achieved through improved service to communities from the State, and c) process outcomes as a result of implementing more deliberate and strategic collaboration, coordination, and training.

Examples of policy and practice outcomes include a 'one-stop' website, shared RFPs, braided funding sources, flexible collaboration requirements, a tiered evaluation system, common principles for violence and violence-related prevention legislation, adequate funding and timeframes to support effective prevention, and a positive local response to State service. Examples of long-term community outcomes that can be achieved by communities with support from the State include decreased violence rates, decreased abuse of alcohol and other drugs, increased school attendance and graduation rates, increased literacy rates, increased community

service, and increased social linkages among members of a community or neighborhood. Examples of process outcomes include increased collaboration among State departments and agencies and increased leadership skills among State staff.

Sustainability and Institutionalization

Given the mandate that local practitioners gave to the State through the local hearings process, sustaining *Shifting the Focus* efforts is instrumental to effectively supporting local violence prevention efforts. To date, these efforts have been sustained through the ongoing commitment of individual members and generous funding from a few sources. While efforts to date have resulted in the accomplishments outlined earlier and the development of an organizational structure to support ongoing development and activities, institutionalization is critical. At its core, this requires the embedding of strategic collaboration and coordination within State government and transcending the individual members of the partnership. At this phase, ongoing financial support is critical, and part of this funding must go to building the capacity and infrastructure of State government to “shift the focus.”

In order to ensure the availability of current resources to advance this, *Shifting the Focus* should explore opportunities for additional and longer-term funding, including pooled funds from participating member departments as well as the possibility of foundation funding. Such funding should be utilized for ongoing facilitation, expansion of key subcommittees, the expansion of state-local partnerships, and the development and delivery of effective training.

As these activities proceed, attention should be paid to increasing the State’s capacity to carry them forth and institutionalizing state government efforts. For example, a leadership development institute can be developed and then institutionalized within State training departments, ensuring the ongoing skill development of State staff. Similarly, other training modules can be developed and departments can be trained to deliver them, increasing the capacity of *Shifting the Focus* to reach State staff and ensuring there is a mechanism to transfer these skills within State government.

Finally, while it is important to maximize the ways in which this approach is institutionalized in State government to ensure maximum support to communities, there may remain a need for the facilitation of this effort to remain outside of government. Given the structure of California government, it is critical to have a party that can pay attention to a range of roles and activities and ensure that proper attention is paid to appropriate, deliberate collaboration and coordination.

Conclusion

Since its inception, *Shifting the Focus* has represented both a group of committed people and an approach dedicated to improving California’s State government service to communities to ensure improved violence prevention outcomes. This document outlines the strategy that represents a synthesis of the partnership’s efforts, community input, and conclusions from the Little Hoover Commission’s findings on youth crime and violence prevention, and delineates a set of recommendations that can improve State efforts and impact local activities.

Well-coordinated and conceptually sound State leadership is essential to effectively support local violence prevention initiatives and prevent and reduce the violence faced by California

communities. Because the hearings process implied a commitment by the State to local practitioners to respond to community concerns and make appropriate changes within State government, concerted *Shifting the Focus* efforts are essential. To date, these actions have been sustained through the ongoing commitment of individual members and more recently, yearly funding has furthered this initiative. While there have been significant accomplishments to date, the stage is set for major improvements in the way the State supports violence prevention. Institutionalization of this effort is critical. At its core, this requires the embedding of strategic collaboration and coordination within State government beyond the individual members of the partnership.

The *Shifting the Focus* membership has always recognized that the kinds of efforts needed to achieve these recommendations will not make it easier for State staff to do their jobs. But this has never been the goal of this partnership. The goal, rather, has been to better fulfill the State's obligation to the public to offer the broadest service orientation to support local efforts that are working to achieve safe, healthy, and sustainable communities in California.

Appendix I: *Shifting the Focus* Participating Agencies, Departments, and Organizations

Local Participants

- City of Los Angeles, Deputy City Attorney
- County of Los Angeles, Department of Health Services
- Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles
- Mendocino County Youth Project

State Agency Participants

- Office of Senator Dede Alpert
- Office of Senator Hilda L. Solis
- Office of Criminal Justice Planning
- Office of Planning and Research
- California Commission on Improving Life through Service
- Little Hoover Commission
- California Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Services; Office of Women's Health, Domestic Violence Section, State and Local Injury Control Section, Maternal and Child Health Branch, Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board
Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs; Prevention Services Division, California Mentoring Initiative
Department of Mental Health; Children's Systems, Specialized Programs
Department of Aging
Department of Rehabilitation
Department of Developmental Services
Department of Community Services and Development
Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention

- Office of the Attorney General
Crime and Violence Prevention Center
Criminal Division, Criminal Justice
Statistic Center
- California Youth and Adult Correctional Agency
- Department of Corrections, Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs
- Board of Corrections, Corrections Planning and Programs
- California Youth Authority, Office of Prevention and Victims Services
- California Business, Transportation, and Housing Authority; California Highway Patrol, Traffic Safety Program
- Office of the Inspector General
- Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training
- Department of Education; Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office, Education Support Division, Child, Youth, and Family Services Branch
- State Independent Living Council
- California Conservation Corps

State Organization Participants

- Alliance for Education Solution
- California Prevention Collaborative
- California District Attorneys Association
- Community College Foundation
- California Victims of Crime Committee

Facilitator

- Prevention Institute

Appendix II: *Shifting the Focus* Steering Committee

Barb Alberson, Health Education Manager, Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control Branch, Department of Health Services

Milton Braswell, Assistant Deputy Director of the Office of Prevention and Victim Services, California Youth Authority

Amy Dean, Principal Consultant, Senate Select Committee on Family Child and Faith Development

Kathy Jett, Director, Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, California Health and Human Services Agency

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

Alex Kelter M.D., Chief, Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control Branch, Department of Health Services

Dr. Jim Kooler, Director of Governor's Mentoring Partnership, Office of Governor Gray Davis Planning and Research

Kathy Lewis, Deputy Superintendent, Child, Youth and Family Services Branch, California Department of Education

Nancy Lyons, Deputy Executive Director, Little Hoover Commission

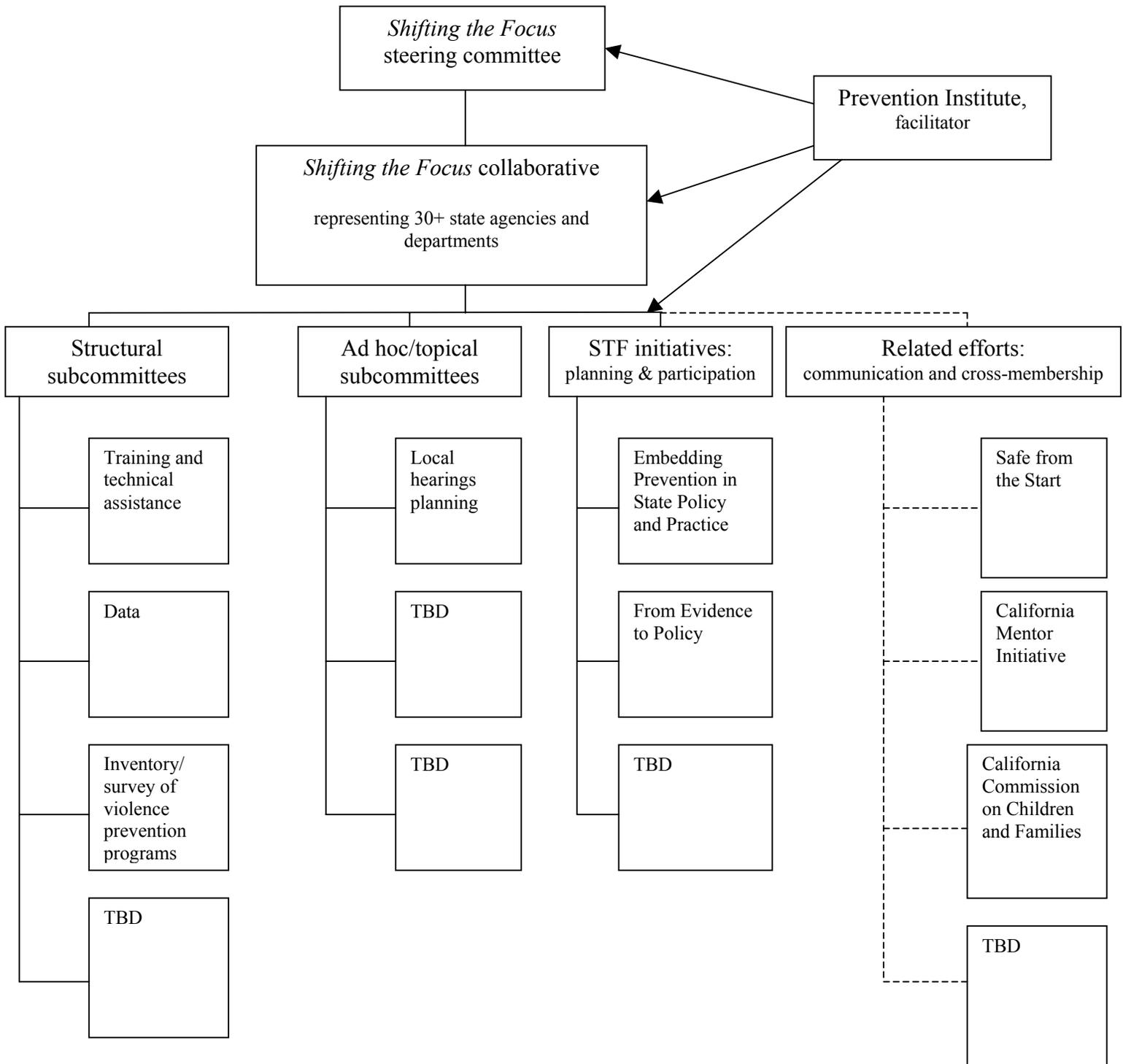
Nancy Matson, Assistant Director, Crime and Violence Prevention Center, Office of the Attorney General

Ed Melia, Special Assistant on Children and Families to the Secretary of Health and Human Services

Paul Seave, Director, Crime and Violence Prevention Center, Office of the Attorney General

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

Appendix III: *Shifting the Focus* Organizational Structure



Appendix IV: A Local Call to State Action: Summary of Findings from Local 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 clustered into ten major categories, and within each category, several themes emerged. Findings are outlined below.

I. Funding

- a. Local practitioners cited competitive funding as a barrier to local violence prevention success.
- b. Participants supported increased local flexibility with State funding and cited categorical funding as a barrier.
- c. Participants cited lack of sustainable funding as an obstacle in their local work.
- d. Community practitioners supported funding for violence prevention efforts.

II. Access to Information

- a. Local practitioners cited the need for better systems of information sharing regarding available funding, training opportunities, data, etc.
- 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.
- b. Participants characterized State-sponsored technical assistance as high quality.
- c. Local practitioners supported expanding the content of State-sponsored technical assistance programs.
- d. Local practitioners cited the need for technical assistance related to best practices.

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. Local practitioners cited the difficulty of accessing locally relevant data as a barrier.
- b. Practitioners cited non-integrated data reporting and operating systems as an obstacle in local work.

- c. Practitioners reported that the Department of Health Services data system is useful and easy to use.

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 promoted models in which work is locally owned and locally driven.

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.

Endnotes

- ⁱ Little Hoover Commission. *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*. Sacramento, Calif: Little Hoover Commission; June 2001:40.
- ⁱⁱ Rosenberg M. Violence prevention: integrating public health and criminal justice. Presented at: United States Attorneys' Conference; January 20, 1994; Washington, DC.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Alpert ME. Letter to the Governor and Members of the Legislature. June 12, 2001.
- ^{iv} Little Hoover Commission. *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*. Sacramento, Calif: Little Hoover Commission; June 2001.
- ^v Cohen L, Davis R, Franchak S, et al. *Shifting the Focus: An Interdisciplinary Framework for Advancing Violence Prevention*. Prepared for Office of the Attorney General, State of California. Oakland, Calif: Prevention Institute; 1997.
- ^{vi} Alpert ME. Letter to the Governor and Members of the Legislature. June 12, 2001.
- ^{vii} Crime and Violence Prevention Center, California Attorney General's Office. *Violence Prevention: A Vision of Hope*. Sacramento, Calif: State of California Dept of Justice; August 1995.
- ^{viii} *i.e.* communications. *Safe from the Start: Forums on Reducing Children's Exposure to Violence, Evaluation Report*. San Francisco, Calif: *i.e.* communications; 2001.
- ^{ix} Crime and Violence Prevention Center, California Attorney General's Office. *Violence Prevention: A Vision of Hope*. Sacramento, Calif: State of California Dept of Justice; August 1995:4.
- ^x Alpert ME. Letter to the Governor and Members of the Legislature. June 12, 2001.
- ^{xi} *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*, Little Hoover Commission, June 2001, pg. 38-39.
- ^{xii} Grantland Johnson, May 17, 2000. Presentation at Safe from the Start, Los Angeles, CA.
- ^{xiii} Little Hoover Commission. *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*. Sacramento, Calif: Little Hoover Commission; June 2001:39.
- ^{xiv} Little Hoover Commission. *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*. Sacramento, Calif: Little Hoover Commission; June 2001:83
- ^{xv} Lockyer B. Message from the Attorney General. *Action Line: A Crime and Violence Prevention Newsjournal*. Sacramento, Calif: Crime and Violence Prevention Center, State of California Office of the Attorney General; Fall 2000.
- ^{xvi} Crime is down – fear persists: women, minorities and children remain vulnerable [press release]. Washington, DC: National Crime Prevention Council; February 5, 2001.
- ^{xvii} Calhoun J. NCPC launches new initiative. *Catalyst: Newsletter of the National Crime Prevention Council* [serial online]. March 13, 2001. Available at: <http://www.ncpc.org/catalyst/2001/002ed.htm>, Accessed May 31, 2001.
- ^{xviii} Pollard JA, Hawkins JD, Arthur MW. Risk and protection: are both necessary to understand diverse behavioral outcomes in adolescence? *Social Work Research*. 1999;23(3):145-158.
- ^{xix} Cohen L, Swift S. A public health approach to the violence epidemic in the United States. *Environment and Urbanization*. October 1993;5:50-66.
- ^{xx} Johnson G. Presentation at: Safe from the Start: A Statewide Symposium on Making Communities Safe for Children; May 17, 2000; Los Angeles, Calif.