



“PCS BRIGHT SPOTS”

A Technical Assistance Unit Newsletter



September, 2001
Volume 5



"If we focus our anti-crime resources and foster working partnerships between citizens, law enforcement, supervision, treatment, and other government agencies — we stand the best chance of reducing crime overall."

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend
Lt. Governor

St. Michael's Police Partner with Probation

By Glen Plutschak, Administrator, PCS-TAU

Police/Probation partnerships continue to grow in Maryland based on the success of the HotSpot initiative. One of the most recent examples of this growing partnership is an agreement signed between the St. Michael's Police Department, the Division of Parole & Probation, and the PCS-Technical Assistance Unit (PCS-TAU). Though not a HotSpot site, St. Michael's Chief of Police Michael McDonough realized that a full partnership between police and community probation services is the lynchpin of any truly effective strategy for crime reduction, reduced recidivism and safe communities. On June 22, 2001, Chief McDonough entered into an agreement with



Wayne Knowles, Regional Administrator, Division of Parole and Probation, St. Michael's Chief of Police Michael McDonough, and Glen Plutschak, Administrator, PCS-TAU display the signed partnership agreement.

Wayne Knowles, Regional Administrator for the Division of Parole & Probation, and Glen Plutschak, Administrator of the PCS-TAU.

The agreement calls for joint police/probation home visits, office space for the assigned agent/officer team, COSIS software, digital photos of all offenders, case staffing, action planning, and regular team meetings. The PCS-TAU will provide all training, technical assistance, and technological support.

We welcome the St. Michael's Police Department as the newest member in the Community Policing/Community Probation family. *For more information, contact Glen Plutschak, Administrator, PCS-TAU, at 410-295-1287.*

Spotlight on Schools & HotSpots: An Effective Blending of Juvenile Supervision Strategies

By Aaron Kahn, Department of Juvenile Justice, PCS-TAU

The beginning of this school year marks the fourth year of the Department of Juvenile Justice's Spotlight on Schools (SOS) program. The SOS initiative places a juvenile probation officer in the school where he/she will be able to have daily contact with probationers as well as work pro-actively with other students.

Each county has several SOS schools and many jurisdictions have taken the initiative to link SOS workers with the HotSpot Community Policing/Community Supervision (CP/CS) teams. The combination of these two programs has proven to be an invaluable resource to all members of the CP/CS teams and has led to a more comprehensive approach for supervising juveniles.

The Smallwood and Westlake HotSpots in Charles County have the SOS worker at each team meeting. The SOS workers frequently share information about students who may not be on active supervision but may be of interest to the Charles County Sheriff's Office. The police officers also share information regarding youth with the SOS worker.

In St. Mary's County, the Lexington Park CP/CS team has taken this approach one step further. At the team's weekly meeting, it is a common practice to staff cases and create action plans for SOS clients. Since all of the SOS clients live in the HotSpot area, the police and the SOS worker conduct joint home visits on a regular basis. The SOS worker also uses COSIS, which provides the police with an all-inclusive database of the juvenile offenders within the HotSpot.

The connection between HotSpots and Spotlight on Schools is clearly one that continues to expand as each program matures. *For more information, contact Aaron Kahn, Department of Juvenile Justice, PCS-TAU, at 410-716-9445 or Scott Beal, Department of Juvenile Justice, PCS-TAU, at 301-745-2457.*

CP/CS Teams and Partners Collaborate to Remove a Dangerous Offender

By Robert Ertter, Division of Parole & Probation, PCS-TAU

In a strong display of collaboration and coordination between the HotSpot Community Policing/Community Supervision (CP/CS) team members in Princess Anne and Crisfield, as well as several police agencies, a dangerous child sex offender was returned to a Virginia prison after committing a new offense and violating the terms of his parole.

During late October 2000, the Somerset County Sheriff's Department obtained a photograph of what appeared to be an

adolescent female posing in a "sexually suggestive" position. To gather information about the female (i.e., name, age, location in the photo, etc.) the sheriff's department distributed the photograph to area law enforcement agencies for identification. Somerset County School officials also assisted by circulating the photo. The investigation soon expanded to five surrounding counties and Northern Virginia.

The search narrowed to Wicomico County where the Fruitland Police Department identified the subject in the photo with the help of school officials. Chief Pecoraro and Officer Gale Jones, of the Crisfield CP/CS team, interviewed the victim ascertaining that she was a minor at the time the photo was taken. A photo "line-up" was arranged, and the victim identified the person who coerced her into posing.

Further investigation revealed that the photographer was a convicted child molester who was recently placed under parole supervision in Virginia. Because the offender was residing in the Princess Anne HotSpot, Agent George Webster of the Division of Parole & Probation was his supervision agent. CP/CS team members staffed the offender's case, and all team members were informed that the offender was not allowed to have any contact with children.

After determining the offender was in violation of the law and the conditions of his parole, members of the Princess Anne CP/CS team took action. Under the direction of Chief Pecoraro, Princess Anne Police Captain Scott Keller obtained search warrants for the offender's residence and vehicle. Somerset County Sheriff's Deputy George Nelson obtained charges against the offender. Logan Widdowson, Somerset County State's Attorney, provided legal advice on how to proceed with charges against the offender. Agent Webster obtained a retake warrant from Virginia and arranged for the offender to be apprehended outside of the Princess Anne probation office.

By working together, the Crisfield CP/CS team, the Princess Anne CP/CS team, adjoining law enforcement agencies, school officials, and the Somerset County State's Attorney's Office successfully sent a dangerous offender back to prison. *For more information, contact Robert Ertter, the Division of Parole & Probation, PCS-TAU, at 410-408-6709.*

Challenges of Mobilizing a Community

By Jennifer Beskid, Treatment Specialist, PCS-TAU

The West Baltimore HotSpot Community Policing/Community Supervision (CP/CS) team has a new partner, Community Organizer Robin List. The addition of Ms. List adds new life to the community mobilization aspect of the HotSpot Initiative. She also steps into a role that brings its own unique challenges.

How does a new person get a community to mobilize? Ms. List has tackled this new challenge with resources/information, an organized agenda, and the old standby of snacks and beverages. At her first meeting as community organizer, Ms. List brought an agenda that raised questions about the basic concepts of community mobilization and public safety:

1. What are the specific issues and geographical areas of the community that need to be targeted?
2. How can citizens communicate information about what is happening in a community to the CP/CS team and the community organizer (i.e., a community complaint form)?
3. How is information shared between the criminal justice agencies and the community?

Several key issues were identified and action plans for addressing them were developed.

The result of the meeting was the appreciation that communities can be re-energized into action. Residents can acknowledge that good work has already been done and continue to move forward to improve their communities. Sometimes, it's necessary for a community to revisit the same problem numerous times until a viable solution is found. The addition of a community organizer to a team can motivate residents to meet consistently and to increase their communication regarding plans to improve their communities.

While all CP/CS teams may not have the opportunity to work with a community organizer, revisiting the fundamental concepts of community mobilization, as described by Robin List, can be done by every HotSpot community. *For more information contact Jennifer Beskid, Treatment Specialist, PCS-TAU at 410-716-9171.*

TECHNOLOGY TIPS

*By John Tewey, Regional Coordinator/
Technology Manager, PCS-TAU*

Officer Safety Through Information Sharing

HotSpot Police Officers - Ask yourselves this question: With new technology in mind, is my plan to disseminate offender information to my agency still effective?

The HotSpot initiative has always encouraged police officers to share offender information with fellow officers. This is evident by the capability of COSIS to print offender photo pages. In this spirit, several HotSpot police officers are taking advantage of their agency's new data technologies. Officer safety is greatly enhanced when offender information (i.e., address, offense, etc.) is entered as an "alert" into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System. This practice promotes officer safety for every officer who might be dispatched to the home of an offender, even when the call for

service is “routine” in nature. Consider using the available technology when disseminating information to your fellow officers.

TRAINING

*By Terri Robinson, Regional Coordinator/
Training Manager, PCS-TAU*

HotSpot CP/CS Academy:

The PCS-TAU will train new members of the HotSpot CP/CS teams and members who have never been trained. Participants will be notified individually; team members who were previously trained do not need to attend. The Academy consists of five training days spread over three months. Participants must attend all five days.

The schedule is as follows:

Part 1: September 26 & 27, 2001

Supervisors and managers will receive a separate training.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*By Patricia Hiesener, Curriculum Developer,
PCS-TAU*

Welcome to Sgt. Dwight Styles who has joined the PCS-TAU from the Maryland State Police.

The PCS-TAU bids farewell to recently promoted Sgt. Anthony Rounds of the Maryland State Police. We wish him well!

We also send our best wishes to Patricia Baker-Simon, Domestic Violence Specialist with the PCS-TAU. She relocated with her family to Rhode Island and is working as a domestic violence trainer and national consultant.

MARYLAND

Proactive Community Supervision

Technical Assistance Unit

1623 Forest Drive, Suite 203
Annapolis, MD 21403
410-295-1287
Fax: 410-990-1523
Toll Free: 1-877-411-7547

Administered by



AN INITIATIVE OF THE
CABINET COUNCIL ON

Part 2: October 17 & 18, 2001

Part 3: November 14, 2001

GOVERNOR PARMENIUS GLENDENNING
LT. GOVERNOR KATHLEEN KENNEDY TOWNSEND