



Taking Stock:

*communities and governments working together for
community safety and well-being*

Project Overview

The Purpose

The purpose is to take stock and with community and government partners, put in place a plan to work together for community safety and well-being by addressing the root causes of crime.

Our vision: A safe community is one where people know their neighbours, respect themselves and each other, where everyone is valued and included in decisions and activities in the community. There is an absence of alcohol and drug abuse, violence and fear.

Strategies for Safer Communities in PEI (1994)

Steps September 2005 to June 2007

Step 1: Management Group to oversee and evaluate the project

Step 2: Planning Committee to learn together and plan for the future

Step 3: Research to answer the questions:

- What makes working together among communities and governments successful?
- What crime/victimization and socio-economic conditions should we track and how?
- What can selected communities tell us about their strengths and needs?
How can we support communities to have what they need to plan?

Step 4: Focus Groups to learn from communities about what makes communities safe

Step 5: A Plan for Working Together the “how” and “what” of a framework and action plan for working together for community safety and well-being

Step 6: Provincial Workshop held April 12, 2007

Step 7: Evaluate

Step 8: Communicate



The Members of the Management Group are: the Aboriginal Women's Association; Cooper Institute; Federation of PEI Municipalities; Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce; l'association des femmes acadiennes et francophones de l'IPE; Office of the Attorney General; PEI Association of Chiefs of Police and the PEI Network – Canada Volunteerism Initiative.



Taking Stock is supported by the PEI Office of the Attorney General
and the National Crime Prevention Centre, Public Safety Canada

What we learned from the research

What makes working together among communities and governments successful?

Research says that working together gets the best results when everyone is included and the community plays a strong role. This kind of cooperation is needed to get at the root causes of complex social issues. However, the success is shown only over the long term and is difficult to prove. Processes that are based in the community are the most likely to respond to local needs, and also tend to get the commitment that is needed to work across sectors, cultures, professions and socio-economic differences. Success happens when people put a lot of effort into making sure the key factors are there to allow everyone to work together for well-being.

What crime/victimization and socio-economic conditions should we track and how?

A first step for the Province at this time is to:

- Improve the reports it gives to people on the state of crime, and
- Measure how well each action and program works at the community level to reduce crime. Local community surveys should be done when crime reduction programs are started in order to test if they are working well.

The report also recommends that:

- A ‘comprehensive’ crime report be produced for the province each year and a decision made on who will manage a data measurement system
- The Province play a role in setting up a ‘standardized’ set of indicators and a measurement system for all projects and programs related to crime and public safety.
- The focus should be to measure how well each action, as it is made, is working to improve safety for communities.

What can selected communities tell us about their strengths and needs?

How can we support communities to have what they need to plan?

The four communities in this study are Lennox Island, Tyne Valley, Montague and Hillsborough Park. The communities have all taken steps to build on their strengths and to bring people together to work on social change including programs for community safety. All of them face continuing challenges in working to make their communities safer places. People know a lot about the community’s strengths and what it will take to work together to increase their own safety and well-being. In short, change requires a few people to become leaders, get the others going and to find ways to reach their goal.



What we learned from focus groups

What makes a community safe?

Most focus group participants named a short list of factors that answered the question:

- Looking out for each other and a sense of belonging
- Being able to leave your house or car unlocked
- Being connected to your history and heritage
- The presence of police and other services as a deterrent to crime
- Community inclusion, diversity in language, religion and culture
- Lack of family violence and resources to support families
- Absence of drug and alcohol abuse, and
- Prosperity and having resources.



In discussing the root causes of crime, most groups mentioned the same issues, in the same order of importance. These included: drugs and alcohol, poverty and lack of good paying jobs, youth and parental responsibility, stranger and family violence, lack of inclusion, literacy and education/consolidated schools, and architecture and environmental concerns such as lighting.

A plan for working together

A plan for working together for community safety and well-being includes:

- a framework— vision, principles, goals, strategies, partners, and protective and risk factors, and
- action plan for two years

One focus of the action plan is to provide local communities with knowledge, skills and access to resources to improve community safety and well-being.

[The Provincial Safer Communities Framework](#) provides information on what a framework is and how it can be used. It shows both risk factors and protective factors for community safety. The framework provides some statistics on crime for PEI. There is information about Crime Prevention through Social Development, as a means of tackling social and economic factors that can lead to crime or victimization. The framework builds on previous work by community and government partners and includes a circle of partners to show that we all have a role to play. The framework provides the foundation for future work.

“[A Framework Worksheet](#)” assists people to find themselves in community safety.





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Provincial Workshop (April 12, 2007)

The purpose of the provincial workshop was to invite community and government partners to learn and plan for working together. At the event, the research and the framework were presented. Participants contributed to planning for the next steps.

Evaluation

Evaluation has been ongoing and is a tool to support our work and help discover lessons learned. An evaluation report will be ready at the end of the project.

Communication

Throughout, the project communicated with partners and the public. Information includes:

- Full research reports
- Brief Information sheets
- Framework

All information will be made available in English and French on the CLIA (Community Legal Information Association) website at: www.cliapei.ca

Next Steps

- An Advisory Group is being set-up to oversee the plan
- The Justice Resource Service, Office of Attorney General will help to get the plan in place

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