

**Taking Stock: Developing a Comprehensive Approach to Crime
Prevention in PEI**

**Research Three:
Research on Community Strengths
Toward
Safety and Well-being**

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By

The IRIS Group

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Community Strengths toward Safety and Well-being

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Executive summary

The Taking Stock project was launched to “take stock” of the status of crime prevention and enhancing public safety due to social development initiatives. As a result, the intention is to put in place a plan to work together for community safety and well-being by addressing the root causes of crime. The goal is to move towards a comprehensive community approach to crime prevention through social development in Prince Edward Island. The project has three research components. This report addresses one of the components – ‘Research on Community Strengths toward Safety and Well-being’

Lennox Island, Tyne Valley, Montague and Hillsborough Park are the four communities examined in this study through focus groups interviews with key informants and residents. The four communities have all undertaken proactive measures to build on their community strengths and to bring together partners to help with social development and community safety programs. As well, all have challenges that they are aware of in terms of making their communities safer places, and each community has developed its own approaches to deal with these.

A literature search indicates some attributes that contribute to strength in communities, especially for projects or programs for community safety where there has been a collaborative effort. These are:

- Local meaning, connection, ownership and commitment
- Clarity in community vision and processes
- Integrity and trust
- Consultation and inclusion
- Non-hierarchical, integrated and diversity-sensitive approaches
- Community capacity-building including skills and effective structures
- Strong leadership and coordination
- Good communication
- Good relationships within communities - and beyond
- Opportunities for early success, and
- Project funding and other resources, including volunteer labour

The above attributes also reflect the elements that contribute to the domains of well-being as espoused by Dr. Doug May of Memorial University. Well-being is generated by social relationships, health, culture, equality and security, human capital, working conditions and income, as well as consumption and leisure.

There are many ways that people said they obtain information related to crime and victimization, and there is variance according to age and community. Many use the tried and true ways of ‘by word of mouth’ or newspapers. Others are using electronic technology such as police scanners, radio, TV and the internet. Each community has its own ‘culture’ as to how news is spread related to crime and victimization, and it can vary with age group.

Respondents from all four communities portray their locales as safe, and say they have positive feelings of community well-being. Two communities, Lennox Island and Hillsborough Park, believe that well-being has been sharply enhanced because of the commitment to their youth and willingness to listen to their needs. Personal safety is a big part of the response in all communities. A sense of belonging, knowing others and being among friends was cited as important. Having access to sufficient resources like money, programs for social development and community safety, and good connections with others were said to be important. It is clear that money is not the only contributor to safety and well-being.

The predominant strength toward collective well-being in all four communities is the very population and commitment of the communities themselves. Many persons spoke of community pride and the desire to have safe and vibrant communities for their families. While some community resources or strengths are seen as tangible or 'concrete', such as the presence of infrastructure, most others can be described as being more intangible, or theoretical. These include social development activities, crime reduction programs, pride in community and heritage, knowing one's neighbours, helping each other, communication, and the presence of people who go the extra mile. These are seen as major assets that contribute to community as well as personal safety and well-being.

Substance abuse and parenting challenges were the overall primary barriers to collective well-being in the four communities investigated. Health issues such as obesity, smoking and alcohol abuse were specifically mentioned in one community, but probably exist to some extent in all as they are a North American problem. Other barriers in several communities were family violence, sexual abuse, poverty of some families and the scarcity of resources to help families and teens. Many barriers were 'community specific' such as school distance, community reputation, the lack of community infrastructure and, surprisingly, the close-knit nature of the community. The last is a strength as well, but it is a barrier when it inhibits the reporting of crimes and the general security of the residents to contact authorities when they are aware of criminal activity. Any of these barriers can contribute to isolation and negative feelings, and they all work against safety and community well-being.

The things that people said that they need to work together increase community safety include strong leadership, training and skills development, youth programs and places to go, communication, good connections with others, funding and other resources. The participants had definite and positive opinions as to how people can become more engaged in each community. Inclusion, consultation, skills development, communication were all seen as important and necessary. Other actions to increase community engagement include good coordination, education and awareness, as well as the ability to celebrate the 'good news'. People say they can work together if there is a culture of sharing, if there are some resources to work and leadership, if people are supportive, and if citizens are consulted and involved in their communities. Barriers include the lack of these factors, as well as social isolation and poverty.

Participants in all four communities said they thought they were generally aware of the crime that occurs in their community. In smaller or close-knit communities there seemed to be a greater awareness of what was going on according to the study participants. This is applicable to all aspects of life in their communities, not just the occurrence of crime. Awareness of and concern for crime is lower among people whose circumstances allow them to feel safe. As one resident put it “I never did (think about crime) before I was a victim, but now I do”. Residents often gave the causes of crime as youth and substance abuse.

The input or participation of the key informants and residents of the four communities in this study reinforced what was found in the literature. There is a lot of knowledge in these communities which bodes well for their future efforts at building on their strengths and contributing to their own safety and well-being.

1.0 Introduction

In 2005, the Taking Stock project was launched 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.” The goal is to move towards a comprehensive community approach to crime prevention through social development in Prince Edward Island.

Background

The project has three research components:

- What makes working together among communities and governments successful?
- What key indicators should be tracked and how will data be managed?, and
- Identify community strengths toward safety and well being

The third research component is addressed by this report. Some activities that were conducted during this research include:

- To consult in-depth with 3 geographic communities on strengths toward collective well-being including socio-economic factors, and the “domains of well-being”, and
- To build on the work of Research 2 (indicators and measurement) and identify factors and sources of information related to root causes of crime/victimization in selected communities

The project methodology used several standard techniques for this kind of study. The scope of the project was determined at the outset from a literature search, including the other two research pieces in the Taking Stock project, as well as discussions with the project proponents. Four communities were selected for field study and further research through interviews with key informants served to identify strengths that are present in these communities that contribute toward safety and well-being. As well, the barriers and challenges the communities face in this regard were documented. The conditions that make it possible for people to work together and what communities need to work toward increasing community safety were documented. This report brings together these insights, integrating the evidence from the literature on enabling conditions, success factors and barriers to successful partnerships and considers the practical experience of key informants and local citizens. Selected references are contained in Appendix One, while the key informants interviewed are listed in Appendix Two.

The report opens with an overview of the context of the research, to establish the increasingly vital role that community strengths play in crime prevention and community safety and well-being. This is followed by a description of the study methodology including the selection of the four study communities, then by a discussion of the communities’ characteristics. The report then turns to the heart of the work – a documentation and analysis of grassroots perspectives on community strengths, citizen awareness of crime, perceptions of safety and well-being, the factors that may impede or undermine the prospects for success and what is needed to engage the community and

work together for community safety. The information gathered from the communities is presented in sections 5.0 through 12.0 which answer specific questions related to the above issues. The report concludes with a synthesis of the key insights to guide the development and maintenance of the strengths that contribute to community safety and well-being.

2.0 The Broad Context

As noted in Research 1, *Building Successful Community-Government Collaborations*, in 1994 the factors of government restraint and community awareness led to holistic, integrated and participative approaches such as found expression in the *Strategy for Safer Communities*. This strategy was prepared by the Health and Community Services Agency.

This pioneering initiative was based on a consultative process intended to “involve people in local communities directly in defining the problem, developing solutions, and implementing and evaluating programs that increase safety and reduce fear.” The strategy set out a ten-year framework for social development, community development, and evaluation, overseen by a provincial Safer Communities Advisory Committee. This work eventually led to the Taking Stock initiative which this report seeks to support, discussed more fully below.

As pointed out by the John Howard Society of Newfoundland, many questions are dominated by the media which tends to sensationalize anything to do with crime, thus the public perceives that crime is increasing when the opposite is often the case. That paper also documents that opinion polls reveal that the public over-estimates the incidence of violent crime in Canada. In regard to young people and crime, any legislation dealing with young offenders is not capable of substantially reducing crime according to Doob and others in their report *Youth Crime and the Youth Justice System in Canada*. They conclude that “effective programs seem to reside outside the justice system and appear to deal effectively with problems by addressing them directly”.

Over the past decades, many questions of public concern have become dominated by specialists to the exclusion of ordinary people. Issues such as safety and well-being are clearly important to everyone, but those most affected may feel excluded and unable to make themselves heard. What are the grass roots perspectives on strengths and challenges of community safety and well-being?

One goal of this research is to create and communicate a fuller, more nuanced understanding of issues by focusing on assets and not simply on problems. Research is usually begun because someone is aware of a problem or challenge. Every community has strengths and successes which it can reflect upon and use to tackle current problems and research should draw these out. There are challenges, certainly, but there are also skills; and mobilizing these skills is the key to finding solutions as seen by the input obtained from the four communities in this study.

Vision

In documenting community strengths that contribute to safety and well-being, it is useful to have some idea of what a safe community is.

“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 of the community. There is an absence of alcohol and drug abuse, violence and fear.”

- *Strategies for Safer Communities in Prince Edward Island, 1995.*

This vision was borne in mind when speaking with key informants, focus groups and other research participants with a view to looking at the community strengths that would lead to that kind of community.

Literature

Key Findings of Research One and Two

The information from the first two research components in the Taking Stock project provides a useful background of information for Research Three.

Research 1 –Building Successful Community-Government Collaborations - This project looked at ten collaborative undertakings that occurred in PEI involving the government and other partners. The challenge is that the collaborations most likely to have an impact are also those which are the most difficult to build and sustain. Research 1 found that the evidence indicates that broad, multi-partner, community-based collaborations are necessary in order to address the root causes of complex, multi-factorial social issues, yet the results of such initiatives are realized only over the long term and are difficult to prove. The research also found that community-based processes are most likely to reflect and respond to community needs and to mobilize the commitment needed to work across sectors, cultures, professions, and socio-economic differences, yet such processes face many internal and external pressures.

It was documented that the two most important things for success in collaborations are ***inclusion*** and ***integrity***. Inclusion leads to ***commitment*** and passion, while integrity fosters ***trust***. Commitment and trust form the basis of good ***relationships*** which are important for everyone who is involved. These relationships are important for working together successfully. Commitment and trust also encourage the rise of effective ***leadership*** and a shared purpose. This is shown as ***clarity*** about what the group wants to do - i.e. the ways of doing things, in what order - and the roles and responsibilities of each player. These all make the organization stronger for setting up good ***structures*** to manage programs. They help to get ***resources*** with which to gather ***knowledge***, to get or develop ***skills***, and to put in place sound ***processes*** to work toward reaching the objectives.

Research 1 clearly demonstrated that success happens when people put a lot of effort into making sure the key factors are there to allow everyone to work together

Research 2 - *What Key Indicators Should be Tracked and How Will Data be Managed* –

This report identified two systems of measurement, of which the simpler and results-focused approach seems most appropriate for PEI, and would measure how well specific actions and programs are working at the community level. The focus should be to measure how well the separate actions are improving community safety. This should be done as simply as possible, rather than setting up complex measurement systems.

Research 2 further suggested that the Province could improve upon, and produce on an annual basis, its public reports on the state of crime which would help raise the knowledge level of Islanders about crime.

The Research 2 report indicates that some questions must be cleared up about the lack of existing data sources; a suitable agency for the collection and distribution of data; and definitions of the terms and the concept of community. Some problems in getting information in PEI include:

- Enough money and people to work on projects on a long term basis
- No one way to define a ‘community’ because it depends on the type of problem being considered, and
- Agencies do research in different ways and it is hard to match information

There is no “one size fits all” as to how each department collects or uses the information.

Other Literature

Dr. Doug May’s paper, *Atlantic Canada: The Have Provinces?*, was delivered at the Atlantic Summer Institute on Healthy and Safe Communities in 2005. It lays out a framework for understanding communities in terms of a far-reaching definition of well-being, rather than in the narrow economic terms of traditional measures. In his view, well-being is generated by many factors such as: social relationships, health, culture, equality and security, human capital, working conditions and income, consumption and leisure. The paper describes each of these and goes on to explain the Community Accounts system used in Newfoundland and Labrador which measures these factors.

Dr. May asks “What determines population health or what determines the rate of crime? If we understand the answer to this question,” he continues, “we have the evidence that permits social action to improve the quality of our lives or our collective well-being.” The paper lays out the following major categories as determinates of crime: health, social relationships, household spending, demography, labour market, income and education.

The paper profiles the Atlantic Provinces to illustrate his ideas and concludes with a summary of what’s been accomplished and what remains to be done. Dr. May concludes with a warning regarding the need to gather solid evidence before acting. “The danger is that political imperatives will demand action before we really understand what is going

on and our experience is that, not only is the problem not fixed but other ones, far more socially serious may be created”.

The publication, *A Portrait of Sustainable Crime Prevention in Selected Communities*, was produced by the Centre for Initiatives on Children, Youth and Community in 2006. The eleven lessons it related to sustainable activity in communities were particularly helpful in terms of thinking about what was heard in the four selected communities in the Taking Stock community strengths project. These are:

- **Local meaning** begins with local organizations identifying needs, problems and solutions that are meaningful for them;
- **Local connection** amongst those who share a concern about a specific problem lead individual/private concerns to become community-wide/public issues;
- **Local ownership** results in problems and their solutions being owned by the community, rather than a single individual or group;
- **Community vision** means developing and staying focused on where the community is going while working on projects and specific issues;
- **Non-hierarchical (bottom-up), integrated and diversity-sensitive approaches** help to be flexible to respond to demands in the local context that emerge;
- **Community capacity-building** builds upon existing capacity to identify problems and to mobilize communities to respond, and it includes making investments in knowledge, coordination and project implementation;
- **Coordination and communication** are crucial to develop and maintain connections amongst community partners and to establish critical links with all levels of governments;
- **Linkages within communities - and beyond** are relationships based on trust, mutual respect and a shared interest commitment to community well-being;
- **Opportunities for early success** enhance further commitment, capacity building and momentum;
- **Project funding** offers opportunity for early success, which in turn builds commitment, momentum and community capacity in specific areas. Funding alone, however, will not sustain activity but it is an important component; and
- **Resources** of different kinds are required including money for infrastructure and to support coordination and communication, including a coordinator position.

Another way of looking at community strengths is ‘asset-based community development’ which evolved from 1970s work in Chicago. This approach is documented in a 2006 paper by John E. Walker, *Building From Strength – Asset-based Community Development*. He indicates that instead of occupying themselves with a community’s deficits, forward-thinking organizations are identifying and building on local assets. A growing community-organizing movement - asset-based community development - proposes that ‘the glass is half full rather than half empty’. It aims to identify and mobilize the positive attributes inherent in local government, businesses, nonprofits, voluntary associations and individuals. The objective is to look for strengths that can be employed for progress. Once people’s eyes are opened to community assets, a positive energy for change takes over.

The next two publications have been produced through research at the University of Prince Edward Island and include two of our study's communities.

The first is a good example of participatory research designed to address specific issues identified by local people, and the results are directly applied to the problems at hand. Dr. Jean Mitchell and some of her Sociology and Anthropology students from the University of Prince Edward Island worked in partnership with the Hillsborough Promoters group (established in 2000) to conduct and produce a report, *Youth and Community in Hillsborough Park, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island*, 2005.

The research was to:

- Understand the problems young people face, and to look for opportunities to meet needs and bolster the community, and
- Respond to what they had heard

This research project was regarded as an important first step in understanding youth in this diverse urban area with a large population of children and young people concentrated in a relatively small area. It focused on the needs of youth in an area where the traditional institutions of churches and schools do not, for the most part, exist within the boundaries of the community.

The project offered young people a chance to speak about their lives and concerns. The needs assessment that was produced has subsequently been used to plan and co-ordinate activities and to increase the involvement of young people in their community. The key issues that were identified: the need for transportation to the City centre, boredom, the health of teens and community residents, the community's reputation, communication, the relationship of the police and the community, education, peer group, and the family. Family related issues were identified as:

- The absence of parents and active parenting in the lives of many teens
- The lack of family support for teens' education, and
- Identity formation among youth – lack of confidence

The report made specific recommendations to address these issues which included: implement public transit; develop a mentor program, open up the community hall for youth activities and provide a coordinator; undertake educational activities and events about health; establish a recreational sports program; address the sources of teen vulnerability; improve communication through a billboard and a community newsletter; develop a more personalized police presence; expose youth to the possibilities higher education offers and to career options; provide role models, i.e. youth in their 20s; open up the hall three times a week as a drop in centre; and use the community hall to provide advice and counseling to families and teens.

In the short time since the above study was conducted, a number of the recommendations have come to fruition – public transit, the opening up of the community to youth programs, improved community communication, some mentoring opportunities, and the police playing a more positive, supportive role in the community. As documented further

in this Taking Stock ‘community strengths’ report, a number of obstacles and barriers have been addressed in the attempt to turn them into positives.

Engaging the Community – Knowledge Translation as Transformation in the Lives of Children and Youth in Rural PEI, (2006) was a three-year study by the University of Prince Edward Island on all aspects of the health of children and youth. The principal investigator for the project was Dr. Vianne Timmons. In each of six communities, (Souris, Montague, Rustico, Kensington, Lennox Island and O’Leary) focus groups provided detailed information about the health issues for children and youth. Subsequently, community members with an interest in these issues were identified to form working groups, consider what had been accomplished to date, along with information provided by the UPEI researcher and use this to develop initiatives for the community.

The report on the proceedings from the April, 2006 symposium provides a mixture of grassroots and expert insights into the health strengths and challenges for the communities which took part. Health was described in broad terms and includes topics such as parenting, bullying and substance abuse which overlap heavily with the social development aspect of crime prevention. Community participants were asked to reflect on the ways in which they engaged and mobilized their respective communities. The theme of finding local partners for knowledge exchange is relevant to the Taking Stock project and insights gleaned from the UPEI work, especially in Montague, are reflected in sections 5.0 to 13.0 of this report.

3.0 Study Methodology

In addition to review of the literature, particularly as it related to the four communities in this study, many people were interviewed or contributed information in other fora.

Research participants

A list of key informants to be interviewed was developed for each community. In turn, these individuals often suggested other key informants or residents who could be interviewed to provide views about their community’s strengths and barriers, as well as opinions about community safety, the root causes of crime and victimization. They were asked to suggest actions that communities can take to make them safer places to live. These one-on-one interviews were conducted with citizens of all ages, a variety of backgrounds, long-time and new residents and both genders.

The key informants also suggested potential participants for community-based focus groups. One or more focus groups were held in each community. For the groups, the objective was to get representation of a variety of interests, ages and experiences, but to keep the groups small enough to be comfortable and functional.

A questionnaire was presented to the adult participants at the start of the focus group sessions to get their initial opinions on issues related to community safety before the

group discussion started. A survey was used on another occasion to obtain information at a seniors' club even though a focus group was not conducted.

Because some of the focus group participants were minors, special care was taken to ensure parental consent as well as having the teacher involved. For example, on Lennox Island, a group of Grades 3-6 children was interviewed as a focus group. Contact had initially been made with the Director of Education at the school, who received clarification on the research focus from the research team, and then consulted with the children's parents. During the focus group, a teacher remained in the classroom with the children and the researcher.

Other youth interviewed for this research were chosen by the schools as a focus group or interviewed individually. All under the age of 18 had direct parent -guardian permission to participate in this particular research, or indirect permission as an extension of another similar focus group conducted by school staff.

The people who were interviewed, whether as key informants or community residents, were given a confidentiality statement to assure them that their comments would not be attributed to them by name in this document. As well, participants in interviews were re-contacted and requested to review the written summary of the conversations and asked to make any corrections or additions they wanted. To ensure the information is consistent among a variety of people in a community, the information from the interviews is supported by focus groups as well as by the overall large number of project participants.

The total number of key informants was 32, focus group participants 69, individuals interviewed 24, and an additional 25 people submitted only survey responses. This totaled 150 people who contributed to this project.

Selection of communities

The original target for this work was for three communities for the research. The project started out with Montague, a 'mid-Prince County' section and a portion of Charlottetown that could be considered as a clearly recognized neighbourhood. However, for reasons noted below, the project is reporting on four communities – Lennox Island, Tyne Valley, Montague and Hillsborough Park.

The mid-Prince County section was originally to include Evangeline Area, Tyne Valley and Lennox Island. Evangeline was removed because it had already received a lot of study and the francophone element could be studied via issue-specific focus groups in another part of the Taking Stock project. That left Tyne Valley and Lennox Island, but the residents do not see themselves as a single community. They share many services, businesses, recreation centres and churches, and there is considerable intermarriage among the residents. However, it would appear to be a watering down of the fundamental purpose of this research to completely connect them. **Lennox Island** was chosen because it is a First Nations community, on an island of its own and, thus, with clear boundaries and strengths unique to its people. **Tyne Valley** was considered significant because it operates as a hub for smaller, outlying communities and offers a singular perspective of a small rural centre.

Montague was chosen because of its location in eastern PEI and moderate size. While not an urban area, it is about seven times the size of the smaller communities in this study, and it offered a chance to understand the strengths and challenges of a regional center.

The **Hillsborough Park** area was selected because it is a clearly defined geographical neighbourhood in Charlottetown; was established as a 'planned community' in the 1970s; and has a reputation as the "hood" due to vandalism, public partying and similar activity amongst young people. Even more important, it has a recent major success story to tell related to youth programs at the local community centre.

4.0 Description of the Four Geographic Communities

Lennox Island

Lennox Island is one of four Mi'kmaq reservations in Prince Edward Island and is located approximately 15 km from Tyne Valley. There remain approximately 3-4000 Mi'kmaqs in Atlantic Canada and this is one of the few remaining live Algonkian languages (A.H. Clark). A key informant indicated that for many years, Mi'kmaq was not taught as spoken or written word from parents to children on Lennox Island, rejected in favour of raising families in English, with the notion that English would advance opportunities for children and for purposes of assimilation. In recent years, a strong move has been made by the residents of Lennox to incorporate the teaching of the Mi'kmaq language, music and ceremonies to the children of the community. Today, Mi'kmaq language and music classes are compulsory courses at the elementary school located on the island. As well, a course of Mi'kmaq culture and crafts is offered at West Isle High School, with a language course under consideration.

There are about 330 residents on the reservation. They enjoy a reasonable socio-economic security from the lobster and shell-fisheries, tourism, businesses and services located on the island. The community is blessed with a young and approachable Band Council consisting of the Chief and three councillors. The headquarters are in the band office, which also houses a gym, the offices of the Aboriginal Women's Association and meeting rooms. On the island are the John J. Sark Memorial School (Grades 1-6), a Health Centre, the Eco-tourism Centre, a fire department, a Roman Catholic Church, the Path of Our Forefathers' Trail and a peat moss business. Besides the usual provincial daily and weekly newspapers, which provide minimal coverage of local First Nations news, the Lennox Island First Nation publishes the *Kwimu Messenger*, a monthly newsletter. The jurisdictional police force is East Prince RCMP.

Tyne Valley

Tyne Valley is a community of approximately 300 residents, part of Lot 13 in central western Prince County. Tyne Valley is governed by a community council which has a chair and four councillors.

It was settled in the early 1700s, predominantly by west English from Devonshire, possibly into former French areas. Its socio-economic life was elevated from a farming concentration with the introduction of three industries: shipbuilding, fox farming, and oyster fishing. Two of the predominant shipbuilders of the time, Richards and Yeo, lived in this area. A former premier of Prince Edward Island, and a life-long Tyne Valley resident, says there remain in the community five shipbuilding houses, all impressive structures, saved from destruction by the commitment of community members.

The community has a number of businesses and services and is considered a hub for the out-lying villages. Tyne Valley is home to Stewart Memorial Hospital, a Presbyterian Church, Britannia Hall, the area post office, a library, the Tyne Valley Child and Youth Development Centre (formerly an open custody Youth Custodial Centre), and dining and recreational services. Communication is through local daily and weekly newspapers and the bulletin board at MacNeil's Quik Way. The jurisdictional police force is the RCMP East Prince Attachment.

Montague

With approximately 2,000 people, Montague is the 5th largest municipality in PEI and the largest in Kings County. Montague was incorporated as a town in 1917, but its history goes back much further. It is governed by a town council with a mayor, deputy mayor and five councilors, and policing services are provided by the Montague Detachment of the RCMP.

Montague is the largest town east of the Charlottetown region and serves a considerable area through its schools, hospital, clinics, dental facilities, veterinary clinics, government services center, large grocery stores and other shops, churches, library, wellness centre and service clubs.

There are three public schools in the town. Montague Consolidated School has approximately 428 students, both town and rural. Montague Intermediate School has 344, and Montague High School has 720. Students attending the Regional High School are bussed in from Belfast, Murray Harbour, Murray River, Cardigan, Georgetown and other communities. In addition, there is an Alternate School, the Montessori School and a campus of Holland College.

According to a 1996 profile of Montague created by the Federation of PEI Municipalities, manufacturing, retail trade, accommodation, food and beverage service, health and social services, education, government, transportation and storage industries are the major employers in the area. Fishing is also carried out from Montague and the town is in a major farming area.

Hillsborough Park

Hillsborough Park is a neighbourhood of about 4,200 residents within the City of Charlottetown (population of 32,000). Hillsborough Park was built as a 'planned

community' in the 1970s. It existed as a separate community with its own council until 1995 when it and several other communities were amalgamated with Charlottetown. The City of Charlottetown is governed by a council comprising a mayor and 10 councillors. Hillsborough Park is a major portion of Ward 10, known as 'Falconwood'. Hillsborough Park has a clearly defined neighbourhood boundary of two major highways, Wright's Creek and the Hillsborough River. This community is within the policing jurisdiction of the City of Charlottetown Police Department

It serves as a bedroom community and enables many people to obtain affordable housing within the City. However, people mostly have to leave the neighbourhood to access services as there are no schools, hockey rinks, pools, major retail stores or service clubs within the neighbourhood. Charlottetown's French school, Le Carrefour de L'Ile-Saint-Jean, is located on the outskirts of Hillsborough Park but the students are drawn from throughout Queen's County and the school is not considered a part of the community. The one church located on the edge of Hillsborough Park, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, has few adherents from the local community. The major public facility in Hillsborough Park is the community centre.

The Southdale and Glenthorne part of the community is full of retired or semi-retired people. They built their houses, primarily through the co-op housing program about 33 years ago. There are few young families in this particular area now. However, there are other parts of Hillsborough Park such as West Ridge, West Comb and North Ridge which are populated by apartment buildings and in which there are many children. The local city councilor confirmed that Hillsborough Park has the highest ratio of single parents and highest density of children in a geographic area in the province.

5.0 Sources of Community Information on Crime and Victimization

What are the sources of information related to crime, root causes of crime, and victimization in local communities at the local community level?

There are many ways that people said they obtain information related to crime and victimization, and there is variance according to age and community. Many use the tried and true ways of 'by word of mouth' or newspapers. Others are using electronic technology such as police scanners, radio, TV and the internet.

Each community has its own 'culture' as to how news is spread related to crime and victimization, and it can vary with age group. While adults generally get their news from the electronic and printed public media, they may also be using computers. Some seniors in Montague are following issues of general interest to them using the Internet and then bringing this forward to other seniors, town council and the police. Police scanners are used by some people as was specifically mentioned in Lennox Island and Montague. Information about a crime on Lennox Island could be spread throughout the reservation in less than an hour and neighbours are likely to know of incidents before the police.

Word of mouth information is frequent among young people in schools and among adults in communities that have centres where people gather, whether it's coffee shops, community centres, clubs or shopping areas. Due to a lack of such facilities at which to gather, Hillsborough Park adults generally receive information from sources other than people in their community. Word of mouth was found to be most popular in the small, more rural communities where people said they generally know each other well. This form of communication was found "to be a useful contributor toward community togetherness wherever it exists".

MacNeil's Store is a primary source of information sharing and communication in Tyne Valley. One of the criticisms from non-life residents of this community actually is the close-knit nature of communications. For example, one complaint was in relation to notice of a yard sale at "Billy's" with no other identification of location, such as civic address.

The major newspapers in the province are The Guardian and the Journal-Pioneer. The latter is primarily a Prince County paper. The West Prince Graphic covers the western portion of Prince County. Lennox Island and Tyne Valley are in a geographic hole to some degree, as they lie at the western end of the focus of the Journal-Pioneer and the eastern end of that covered by the West Prince Graphic. The Eastern Graphic covers the eastern portion of PEI and is based in Montague. The Guardian publishes information on the regular reports that the RCMP present to the Montague Town Council. All newspapers carry stories about crimes, crime prevention activities and the court reports.

For information related to the root causes of crime, presentations are made by police and other professionals in schools, youth centres, youth groups or seniors groups. In the four communities, the police and others have made good efforts to visit schools to talk about drug use and other crime-related issues. Brochures were cited as another means to receive this information as well as from the print media. Most communities have access to general brochures on issues related to the root causes of crime and the things one can do to make their community safe.

6.0 How Local Communities Describe Safety and Well-being

How do local communities describe community well-being? How is community safety, and crime prevention included?

Respondents from all four communities portray their locales as safe, and say they have positive feelings of community well-being. Interestingly, two communities – Montague and Tyne Valley – feel that they have generally been part of safe communities for many years, while the other two – Lennox Island and Hillsborough Park – believe that well-being has been sharply enhanced because of the commitment to their youth and willingness to listen to their needs.

Personal safety is a big part of the response in all communities. A sense of belonging, knowing others and being among friends was cited as important for feelings of well-

being. “A large part of well-being comes from connections with neighbors and society whether it's through church, cards or some other way” said a key informant. Having access to sufficient resources like money, programs for social development and community safety, and good connections with others were said to be important. This reflects Dr. Doug May’s description of the value of such factors as important contributors to the domains of well-being.

Some participants said that more people now lock their homes and cars than used to be the case even a few years ago, although they mourn the need to have to do so. Most participants say they feel safe walking in their community but have some concern about dark places at night.

Programs to influence behaviour are seen as positive contributors to community safety and well-being. In Montague at the 50-Plus Club, 19 out of 25 survey respondents indicated a belief in the ability of social development programs that help people deal with their problems to also reduce crime. Through The Mi’kmaq Confederacy of PEI’s Aboriginal Justice Program and the adoption of traditional ceremonies and gatherings, Lennox Island has taken pro-active steps at crime prevention. This is credited with improving community well-being. Work is done for youth around cultural awareness, resources available to them and coping skills training. “Respect is much more evident by youth involved in traditional teaching practices” noted a key informant.

Pride in one’s home and community was cited as important to feelings of well-being in all communities. However, in Hillsborough Park, young people have internalized some negative notions of their home and community and are aware of the expectations this carries for their behaviour. As a result, the UPEI – Hillsborough Promoters study (Mitchell) found that they have a lowered expectation of success in life for themselves.

Although it was primarily expressed in Hillsborough Park, there is concern everywhere about health related issues including poor diet, drinking, smoking and other destructive activities in relation to individual well-being and the effect on the community.

7.0 Community Resources and Strengths that Contribute to Safety and Well-being

What are the community resources/strengths toward community well-being (safe communities)?

The predominant strength toward collective well-being in all four communities, as seen from our research as well as that of other studies, is the people themselves and their commitment to their communities. Many persons interviewed spoke of community pride and the desire among the members to have safe and vibrant communities for their families. While it is always easy for people to list what is wrong with their community, it is truly impressive as to how many community resources and strengths they usually list.

While some community resources/benefits are seen as tangible or ‘concrete’, such as the presence of infrastructure, most others can be described as being more intangible. These include social development activities, crime reduction programs, pride in community and heritage, knowing one’s neighbours, helping each other, good communication, and the presence of people who go the extra mile. These are seen as major assets that contribute to community as well as personal safety and well-being.

Strong leadership and coordination are seen as an essential strength in communities. This can come from the local government, individual citizens or local organizations. An equally important element is the involvement of citizens in decisions and activities. This inclusive leadership was cited in Lennox Island where the band has involved the entire population in building progress and vitality, but was not as obvious elsewhere. As a community today, Lennox Island is “thriving, pro-active, culturally-based, and eager” said a key informant. All of these attributes lead back to the passion and commitment of the current leadership with the Chief and band council.

Community pride in general is seen by the participants as a strength. Renewed interest and pride in heritage and aboriginal traditions contribute to community strength in Lennox Island and have led to greater commitment in collaboration among many community members.

While there are concerns over personal health issues like smoking and poor diet, all the communities have good access to health care services. Tyne Valley and Montague have hospitals. Hillsborough Park is adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth and Hillsborough Hospitals. Lennox Island is 15 km from the Stewart Memorial Hospital in Tyne Valley. For each community, ready access to health care services was considered an asset.

Pride in traditions - The people of Lennox Island feel renewed pride in their traditions, after generations of feeling they should walk away from the Aboriginal culture. There is an interest and commitment in collaboration among many community members, and the community itself sees that as one of its key strengths. Another person said that traditional ceremonies and gatherings and circles are “much more cool now.” They bring First Nations people to a role as teachers, to a positive centre “after years of feeling shamed upon”. A key informant indicated “We so freely want everyone to understand the benefits of circles, sweats.” Education is now an important part of the life of this community.

Community infrastructure is seen as a strength. Sometimes these facilities have been innovative such as at Britannia Hall in Tyne Valley which has a theatre, as well as rooms for video, movie and music editing and pod-casting. Some felt that the community’s assets serve to aid in crime prevention, as vandals were less likely to cause damage to occupied buildings and dwellings. “People don’t put rocks through new houses,” was one person’s response to the clean-up work done. Montague, as a major regional service hub, has extensive infrastructure for recreation, shopping, health services and education. Transportation was usually described as a barrier, but in Hillsborough Park it is now an asset with the new Charlottetown public transit system. Service groups such as Rotary

Club of Montague, the Lions Club and the Masons are considered as assets by residents in Montague.

Good communication is a major generator of strength in communities. The small size of a community was cited generally as an asset in that people know each other better, are neighbourly and parents develop informal networks to keep in touch. “All the members of the community are a resource because of neighborliness and looking out for each other” said a key informant in Montague. There is the sense that people know each other and care. Youth taking part in the UPEI *Engaging the Community* project cited growing up in a small town as an asset. “Parents are more in touch with each other here than in a larger place” and they develop informal rather than formal networks to keep in touch. A resident pointed out the casual things which are resources for safety. He named things such as activities which people attend together, visiting at people's homes and the sociable people who are the lifeblood of the community. Newsletters have proven very useful in some communities. Both Lennox Island and Hillsborough Park have regular newsletters to inform citizens of local news and events in their communities.

Family support and programs for youth are seen as contributors to community safety and well-being. Generation XX in Montague offers programs for youth including the “120 Program” which works on education and prevention related to alcohol and other drug use. Some churches provide youth programs. Programs that are most successful are those that included young people in planning them. The programs for young people at the Hillsborough Park Community Centre have been credited as having resulted in a demonstrated difference in behaviour of the participants including better school grades. Programming was started three years ago with a part-time coordinator at the Community Centre for children 7 to 12 years old. The first year had 20+ participants, second year was 35 and there are now 50 to 60. Some youth have come back as junior leaders. A new group, age range is 13-16, is meeting every Friday night. So, two floors are now in use at the Community Centre for Friday evening youth programs. The Hillsborough Park Helping Hands group was started with some funding from all levels of government. The youth carry out projects to improve their community. “These programs have brought people together” noted a key informant. This project was featured in a CBC TV news feature in October, 2006.

Crime reduction activities - The RCMP speak to many groups, including schools, about various aspects of safety, they report on crime and are widely praised for a holistic approach which makes them part of the community. Family Violence Prevention Eastern PEI has already been mentioned for its work and its recent collaboration in the creation of the Students Against Violence Everywhere (S.A.V.E.) program at Montague High School.

Dedicated people are a major resource in a community. Those who volunteer, provide mentorship, ‘go the extra mile’, and those who are willing to organize things are the lifeblood of recreation and programs for youth, seniors and families. Youth outreach workers will meet “anywhere” according to one Montague key informant, and this is an asset because there is no need for transportation and people can meet them where they're

comfortable. Since 2000, when the Hillsborough Park Promoters group was formed in Hillsborough Park, it has brought people together. Many times in all communities it is two or three active parents who get others involved, including police, and who mobilize a community to find something for young people to do. As pointed out by a Hillsborough Park resident, this is very much along the line of thinking expressed by the late author and anthropologist, Dr. Margaret Meade:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

Young people including children, youth and young adults are a community strength. Lennox Island and Hillsborough Park have high concentrations of young people compared to most communities. At a time when school populations are generally decreasing, these communities have a major asset. The youth on Lennox have shown the level of pride they feel about their community and their culture recently in going around the Westisle High School with a petition to have Mi'kmaq language classes taught at the school. The principal had informed the youth they required 200 signatures to have the classes given consideration; they obtained between 3-400 signatures, they said.

In summary, the success stories and assets in communities reflect the literature in containing elements that are needed to work together successfully. These include local meaning, ownership and commitment; consultation and inclusion; community capacity-building skills and effective structures; leadership and coordination; good relationships; and resources with which to work.

8.0 Barriers and Challenges to Safety and Well-being

What are the barriers and challenges toward community well-being and safety?

People in these communities are as intrigued by the reasons why an individual commits crime as any criminologist or psychologist. Factors listed as predisposing a person to commit a crime are described in the body of research conducted by Don Andrews and associates and adopted by Correctional Service of Canada and by criminal justice bodies in the United States. *Criminogenic or Contributing Factors to Crime*. These factors are: social-economics, education and employment, family dynamics and early childhood experiences, relationships and associates, addictions, community functioning and use of leisure/recreation time, personal/emotional factors and values. As cited by W. Huitt in his article *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*, an additional factor which affects all youth as it does all people in society is the importance of belonging, the need of all persons to be part of a group, with like interests, values and goals.

Part of the research for Community Strengths toward Safety and Well-being has been to look at the social needs of, and the issues facing, the youth of the four communities investigated. Among the considerable body of work done internationally on the social needs of youth is consideration of the psychological make-up of a variety of groups, from gangs to the military. Issues such as common ideology and lifestyle, and isolation from general community networks are cited as some of the identifying factors among young

people who form into gangs, notes researchers from Correctional Service of Canada who have been studying this issue and reviewing international literature on the topic. The Institute for Management Excellence in 2001 noted that communities need to find a place for young people to gather, with structure, and compassion and unconditional acceptance.

Substance abuse and parenting challenges were the overall primary barriers to collective well-being in the four communities investigated. Health issues such as obesity, smoking and alcohol were specifically mentioned in one community, but probably exist to some extent in all as they are a North American problem.

Family support needed - Family breakdown is seen as both cause and effect of other problems. “Breaking the cycle of problems is a multi-generational challenge,” said one informant. “Some parents are accepting of drugs and alcohol and use them themselves. In this atmosphere it is difficult to discourage children from following their elders' example,” said another. Some key informants thought social programs were aimed too much at effects and not enough at causes. “Many of our social programs focus on "hauling people out of the river." We need more focus on preventing them from "jumping into the river,” said one.

Some barriers are ‘community specific’ such as school distance (Tyne Valley), community reputation (Hillsborough Park and Lennox Island), the lack of community infrastructure (Hillsborough Park) and the close-knit nature of the community (Tyne Valley). The last is a strength as well, but it is a barrier when it reflects the reporting of crimes and the general reluctance of the residents to contact authorities when they are aware of criminal activity. Any of these barriers can contribute to isolation and negative feelings, and they all work against safety and community well-being.

Two barriers that were cited as particularly destructive are family violence and sexual abuse, and it is extremely difficult to address them in small communities. Violence and bullying exist to some extent in all communities but schools have been proactive in dealing with this behaviour in recent years.

Poverty is seen by many as a major cause of problems. “It removes choice and it reduces access” said one key informant. Some people cannot afford to go to free events if child care costs are involved. Their children can't afford sports programs due to costs including equipment. Poverty is a more direct threat to the health of people who may be forced to live in substandard housing, or those taking medication may skip filling a prescription and risk their health and safety. When working in poverty it's hard to get an education if work schedules aren't flexible. Some participants mentioned a sense of hopelessness about the future and a lack of control as features of poverty. The lack of public transit and other supports hinder those with lower incomes to take part in meetings and other efforts to work together.

Shortage of resources – The research participants indicate that all communities can use more financial and human resources. One particularly striking situation is the Mary J.

Bernard Memorial Women's Centre which was constructed in Lennox Island but has not actually opened due to the lack of suitable staff.

Parent involvement in schools and programs – Schools serving larger areas, such as Montague does, may have trouble gaining support from parents because people from “feeder” communities may not feel as involved as those where the school is located and they may not feel the school is “theirs”. It was noted in Lennox Island that it is “a challenge for the island is to increase community engagement among adults, particularly parents”.

In Hillsborough Park it is hard to mobilize parents due to the lack of churches or schools within the community. The youth programs at the community centre have helped to improve this situation. Key informants indicated that parents love their children, but there are a lot of single parent families, and people are so busy making ends meet that they do not have much time to spend with their children. The UPEI research noted the plight of the ‘working poor’ and that the children never mentioned the parents much during the research project.

Lack of community anchors – Hillsborough Park was described by several interviewees as a ‘fragmented’ community with a lack of traditional community anchors, and people have to leave the community for church, school and organized sports like hockey. There are no service clubs based in the community. The residents have the opportunity to join service clubs which are centred elsewhere in Charlottetown, but this seems not to be happening to any degree. For example, the 78 member Rotary Club of Charlottetown Royalty does not have any members from Hillsborough Park.

Transportation – The one and a half hour each way school bus ride for Tyne Valley high school students means that, without considerable effort from parents, they are not able to stay after school to participate in sports, music programs or other activities outside of school hours. They go to West Isle High School but many parents to work in the opposite direction in Summerside. Transportation was cited by seniors in Montague as a problem. The UPEI research as well as residents and key informants documented that transportation was a barrier for young people to access activities outside Hillsborough Park and was a cause of isolation. However, the new city public transit system has greatly helped to reduce this barrier. This community has the highest rider-ship on the system.

Social isolation - A key informant noted, “communities are more closed than they used to be. We've become technologically advanced but also socially isolated.” A resident echoed this theme and suggested that “if people pooled resources, helping and knowing each other would be fostered”. This person indicated that his program has had “great success” in engaging the “limited community” of parents because, he said, “we reach out, show an interest in them and invest time to make contact”.

Reputation of the community – The reputation of Hillsborough Park was cited by key informants, residents and the UPEI research as problematic. It influences how others

look at this community, but also affects how people within the community see themselves, especially young people who internalize negative feelings. During the interviews and focus groups, many confirmed that the “hood” or “Bronx” had a reputation for lots of vandalism, fights and complaints about rowdy and other bad behaviour. Recently, there has been a major effort to work with young people which has received a lot of public attention, including the feature story, “Helping Hands”, on CBC TV News October 25, 2006. Similarly, teens on Lennox felt that their off-reserve friends’ parents wouldn’t let them go to the island because of its reputation for substance abuse, violence and the weapons, such as guns, available in that community. The teens felt that the parents’ views were not racially-based but the result of a reputation that Lennox Island had some years ago. The youth also felt that this reputation was no longer justified because the reserve does not experience the violence or level of substance abuse of past years.

9.0 What is Needed to Work Together to Increase Community Safety?

What do communities need to be able to work together to increase community safety

Not surprisingly, the information provided by the participants in this research coincides with that provided in the research literature, especially regarding resources including funding, good communication, leadership, training and skills development, clarity of vision, good connections with others, strong leadership, coordination, youth programs and places to go.

Coordination, even if only by a staff person working part-time, was cited as necessary for the sustainable operation of programs. This person coordinates programs and volunteers, provides leadership, is a mentor and can change quickly into a red cape and blue tights in a telephone booth. The coordinator of the youth programs at the Hillsborough Park community centre is an example of what one part-time person can achieve with relatively modest funding and other resources.

Good communication is necessary to working together. This was expressed well by a key informant: “We need to develop a vision and a common language for expressing it”. By whatever means, media, meetings or other links, people suggested that people need to communicate in Montague. Another Montague resident said “...people need to communicate. Maybe it's through a community website, maybe it's something sent in the mail or a community cable TV channel”. Someone suggested there be some sort of town public information meetings with different service groups and enforcement groups talking about these issues.

“To work together the key players like the RCMP, municipal councillors, schools, social services, family violence counselors and the different generations of stakeholders must find ways to get together.” A key informant suggested taking events to where people are, e.g. “kitchen parties” so that travel is not a barrier.

Strong leadership at the political level and from within the community is both needed to

foster collaborations and bring resources to them. A number of service providers said political leadership was needed break down silos. “Political bosses need to proclaim that service provider groups will cooperate.” Several people said an outside force such as U.P.E.I. or a paid staff person was needed to pull people together and keep the ball rolling. Neighborhood groups are needed ‘who are interested in making them better places to live – in all respects’ according to one resident. A few key people are needed to mobilize activity. The youth programs at the Hillsborough Community Centre would not have occurred without leadership from The Hillsborough Promoters and others who partnered with them on research, getting funding and setting up programs

Youth drop-in centre- Places to meet, to work, to take part in programs and to play are needed, especially for young people. Generation XX in Montague, Britannia Hall in Tyne Valley, the community centre in Hillsborough Park and the band office in Lennox Island all serve some or all of these purposes. A number of respondents felt that a drop-in centre or youth hangout with staff there for people to talk over problems with would be a major contributor to criminal activities and boredom in the community. There was the view expressed that there are “more pressures on youth today than was the case even a generation ago, and with both parents usually working outside the home, the children spend more time alone after school with no structured activities”. An important note in the UPEI symposium *Engaging the Community* report was “the necessity of a safe, respectful and inclusive environment”.

One person noted that she once resided in Fredericton, N.B. where there was a youth drop-in was provided to people that she would like to see in Tyne Valley: “the facility had showers, a kitchen stocked with food where meals could be cooked provided everything was cleaned up, counselors to talk with about abuse issues, addiction problems, employment and education needs. Pamphlets and brochures and parenting programs were also available. When that program was cut, people returned to their homes, and remained there, isolated from supports and friends, back on welfare.”

Funding is a needed resource to develop and maintain programs. Other required resources include transportation, as cited by youth (Hillsborough Park), seniors (Montague) and volunteers. A key informant in Montague said “Assistance to cover costs would make it easier for everyone to join in community events. Even a free meeting in the evening may have child care costs which go with it.”

Mentoring - High expectations for the future are needed. Young people able to visualize themselves with a future are important for contributing to increasing community safety as noted in the UPEI study with the Hillsborough Promoters (Mitchell). Positive role models are important.

Time is an important factor. People who are working hard to learn their living are often too busy and tired to spend time either with their children or in working with others to increase community safety. The UPEI research (Mitchell) indicated that for people who do multiple jobs to make ends meet, there simply is not available time and energy to do much else.

Special training for teachers - Teachers at a school suggested they would benefit from training in how to respond to children who come to them with revelations of abuse – physical, sexual, mental. They noted that “they have at times been the first person the child approaches and, while they are familiar with the official reporting protocol, they would like training in their responses to the young face before them”.

10.0 How Community Engagement Can Be Increased

The participants had definite and positive opinions as to how people can become more engaged in each community. Inclusion, consultation, skills development and good communication were all seen as important and necessary. Other actions to increase community engagement include good coordination, education and awareness, as well as the ability to celebrate the ‘good news’.

Work to engage youth - Lennox Island is pro-active in this regard, especially in the engagement of youth. Evidence of this is the youth forum in October, 2006 to address vandalism concerns and overnight gatherings for talking circles. In the UPEI research, the youth of Hillsborough Park were surveyed to see what they thought their needs are and what they wanted to occur to serve those needs. As a result, the young people are now giving back to their community. There is peer pressure now among those participating in the youth programs to maintain the community centre. This has been attributed to the fact that they feel ownership of what is happening in their community for them. The centre and its programs are a source of community pride.

Skills development programs - Participants in more than one community referenced the need for programs on general parenting skill development. The Hillsborough Park Promoters group held sessions for parents on such topics as how to notice things and how to deal with children. As a result of recent activities in that community, parents are now starting to know each other better.

Good communication – A website for community news, notices for activities and services, and ads for businesses would help increase residents’ community engagement. As well, it was suggested to continue programs to teach basic computer skills in Tyne Valley. This is applicable to all communities in terms of computer skills, especially for seniors or other adults who missed out on training related to school or working with computers.

Co-ordination - A coordinator was also seen as helpful to engage the youth of the community in team building through sports and structured, healthy, positive activities. It was felt that volunteers are doing too much in small communities and that it was necessary to hire someone to plan and develop programs and activities. The success of the youth programs at Hillsborough Park confirms this.

Awareness - “Awareness starts from within with the realization there is a problem and it is everybody's problem. This can lead to greater engagement” noted a key informant in

Montague. Getting together in small groups can be important. Participants in the “Engaging the Community” symposium suggested that “around the kitchen table is where change can happen”. A resident noted “The stories we tell show us how we fit into our world. Build communities instead of making us afraid of each other.”

Education - The S.A.V.E. program in Montague seems a good local model for building engagement. The committee said it “hopes to create new ways to reach students with information about violence in relationships and where to go for help” (Eastern Graphic, November 29, 2006). This approach mixes professionals with volunteers and youth and it has a specific focus. Personal stories are one of the oldest and most convincing ways of helping people feel a connection with someone else. Problems don't feel like “everybody's problem” unless that connection is there.

Celebrate the ‘good news’ stories - The Montague representative at the “Engaging the Community” symposium, said good news stories such as Gen XX youth centre, the Centre of Performing Arts, the league of peaceful schools and the extracurricular support of the teachers needs to be “celebrated and promoted” to improve engagement.

11.0 Awareness of People of Crime in Their Communities

How aware are people of crime in their own communities?

Participants in all four communities said they thought they were generally aware of the crime that occurs in their community.

In smaller or close-knit communities there seemed to be a greater awareness of what was going on according to the study participants. This is applicable to all aspects of life in their communities, not just the occurrence of crime. In Lennox Island which is small, close-knit and united by cultural boundaries, there does not appear to be much happen there that is not known quickly by most of the residents. “Information is probably shared first amongst community members. When violence becomes known to the police and other professionals it is likely after it is known to the family’s neighbours” indicated one participant.

In the small and dense settlement of Tyne Valley, one resident indicated “Everyone knows everything about everyone including who commits crimes, even those not discussed openly at MacNeil’s Store.” The impression is that people know about commission of crime here, even if they choose to look the other way, for their own reasons of safety. Those interviewed appeared most concerned about, and familiar with, issues of alcohol abuse and its criminality when the drinkers got behind the wheel of their vehicles, of destruction of property and of vehicles driving through the small community at high speeds.

In Montague, awareness of and concern for crime is lower among people whose circumstances allow them to feel safe. As one resident put it “I never did (think about crime) before I was a victim, but now I do”. Another said “Crime is not that important

to me at this time. In the summer, I'm much more aware of the potential for crime...after the bars closed there was a lot of verbal assaults because of the liquor involved." As well, "awareness of crime increased for many seniors when an older man was attacked recently in his home." Another resident stated "I don't feel unsafe. I do have one concern though – I won't walk the trail anymore – but that's not because of Montague, it's because of what's happened in other places."

Montague seniors indicated that seniors or seniors living alone were groups more in danger from crime. Others they thought might be in danger were the disabled, late-night employees, the rich, children, youth, women and non-literate, marginalized groups. Residents often gave the causes of crime as youth and substance abuse.

In Hillsborough Park, the young people are most aware of crime because of their connection to other youth through schools and sports. They are also well aware of the negative reputation with which their community has been tagged.

12.0 Conditions For and Barriers to Working Together

What are the conditions which make it possible for people to act together and what are the barriers?

People say they can work together if there is a culture of sharing, if there are some resources to work with and leadership, if people are supportive, and if citizens are consulted and involved in their communities. Barriers include the lack of these factors, as well as social isolation and poverty.

Conditions for working together

Culture of sharing – The community on Lennox Island has a history of coming together to address strengths as well as difficulties. It is part of the culture of talking and sharing and meeting issues as a community with leadership from within the community rather than from outside governments.

Citizen involvement – "People need to be convinced that they have something to give" said one key informant. "Doing, is more rewarding than giving," he said. *Engaging the community* (UPEI) cited a number of things including giving people the sense of being heard and treating people with respect. A key informant in Montague indicated that their program has had great success in engaging the parents because, he said, "we reach out, show an interest in them and invest time to make contact".

When the people involved with "*Engaging the Community*" UPEI study reflected on what kept them involved, some of the things they mentioned were, "environment and food, honouring confidentiality, person contact was made to invite participation, giving people the sense of being heard and treating people with respect".

Citizen leaders – Two or more active citizens need to become involved. The Hillsborough Promoters group is an example of local leadership to develop programs for

young people and make the community a safer place. One resident expressed the concept in the words used by the late author and anthropologist, Dr. Margaret Meade:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

Consultation – Get people to focus on what the issue is and discuss what to do about it. There has to be respect for all players. In Hillsborough Park, the young folks were asked during the UPEI research what they thought should be in their community for them to do.

One resident expressed “Get people out to a public meeting to focus on what the issue is and what to do about the fact that young people need something positive to occupy their interest. There has to be respect for all the players. Ask the young folks what they think should be in their community for them to do.”

Barriers to working together

Need for resources – In Tyne Valley there are few opportunities within the community for people under 30 to get together socially. Participants in all communities cited needs for additional resources.

‘Disconnect’ between healthy people and those in trouble – One comment from an individual was that the people in the community who feel “safe and secure” are not going up to the car doors or the houses and say, “Hello, I know you and your family. What are you doing?” In small communities, the residents’ closeness and awareness of each other was that most people know who are the ones operating the drug house, running the bootlegger’s, drinking in the parking lots; but there’s a “complete disconnect between the people who are healthy and those in trouble” and this leads to mistrust between the two groups and to fear.

Small size of community – While often considered an asset, it can be a barrier to speaking out. Fear of speaking out was mentioned by more than one person. A key informant suggested this barrier might be lower “in a church or service group where there is a large friendly group. Perhaps there could be joint meetings and people could bring a friend.” Also, in small communities, it is difficult to withdraw once one gets involved. The small size of Montague was seen by some as a disadvantage because it made it hard to get a fresh start.

Social isolation – Some research participants noted that we have become “technologically advanced” but also “socially isolated”. Several noted that we have so much choice over who we see and what we do that the less social are no longer drawn into the community the way they used to be.

Poverty – is a major barrier to participation. Child care, transportation and other supports are required to overcome this.

Parent involvement in schools – As noted earlier, schools serving larger areas may have trouble gaining support from parents because people from “feeder” communities may not feel as involved as those where the school is located.

Professional mandates and privacy issues - Many of the professionals interviewed in these communities said that team work among service providers would help communities work together, but their increasing mandates, time constraints and privacy issues impede this level of cooperation.

13.0 Conclusions

Lennox Island, Tyne Valley, Montague and Hillsborough Park all have challenges that they are aware of in terms of making their communities safer places. All have undertaken pro-active measures to build on their community strengths and to bring together partners to help with social development and community safety programs. Although some efforts are the same or somewhat similar in each community, such as resources available from the provincial and federal governments, each community has developed its individual approaches to suit its circumstances including the resources to address issues of community safety and well-being.

The successful projects and programs generally involve collaborative efforts and reflect the attributes and resources that the literature indicated must be present to achieve sustainable and successful activity. This is also reflective of the findings including Taking Stock - Research 1 – *Building Successful Community-Government Collaborations*. These factors are:

- Local meaning, connection, ownership and commitment
- Clear vision for the community and ways to reach the goals
- Integrity of the system and trust in each other
- Consultation and inclusion
- Approaches are broad-based, link with other programs and include many people and different interests
- Community capacity-building including skills and effective structures
- Strong leadership and coordination
- Good communication
- Good relationships within communities - and beyond
- Opportunities for early success, and
- Project funding and other resources, including volunteer labour
- Money, volunteers and other resources

The above attributes and resources also reflect the elements that contribute to the domains of well-being as espoused by Dr. Doug May of Memorial University. Well-being is generated by social relationships, health, culture, equality and security, human capital, working conditions and income, as well as consumption and leisure.

The input or participation of the key informants and residents of the four communities in this study reinforced what was found in the literature. There is a lot of knowledge in

these communities which bodes well for their future efforts at building on their strengths and contributing to their own safety and well-being.

Appendix One List of selected readings

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Appendix Two Key informants

Hillsborough Park

Mike Sirois, youth coordinator for Hillsborough Helping Hands (HHH) for Grades 7-9
Dr. Jean MacKay, Associate Professor, Sociology & Anthropology Dept., UPEI
Cst. Gary Clow, Charlottetown City Police Department
Terry Bernard, Ward 10, Member of Charlottetown City Council
Jackie Waddell, Executive Director, the Island Nature Trust
Ethan Garrett, former chair of Hillsborough Community Council

Lennox Island

Cst. Dean Larkin, RCMP
Chief Darlene Bernard
Allan Gillis, Director of Education for John J. Sark School
Matt McGuire, development centre director
Marilyn Sark, AWA President
Grace Vos, Justice Coordinator Aboriginal Justice Program with MCPEI

Tyne Valley

Hon. Keith Milligan, lifelong Tyne Valley resident and former PEI Premier
Matt McGuire, Chair, Tyne Valley Village Council
Dr. Katherine Clough, Chair, Quality of Island Life Co-operative
Rev. Christine Schulze, Presbyterian Church
Cst. Dean Larkin, RCMP

Montague

Pat McGowan, Mayor and President of Rotary Club of Montague
Mike Doiron, Gen XX Youth Centre
Kevin Stonefield, Principal, Montague Intermediate School
Reverend Scott Hillier, Hillcrest United Church
Aileen Petrie, Exec. Dir. Families First (formerly Carousel)
Gwyn Davies, Family Violence
Bonnie Butler, Community Youth Worker
Tim Murphy, Principal, Montague Consolidated School
Kim Bailey, Guidance Counsellor, Montague Consolidated School
Rod J. MacDonald, Youth Worker, Montague Alternative School
Stephen Lewis, Community Development Officer
Wendy Guinden, Employment Specialist, P.E.I. Council of the Disabled
Teresa MacKinnon, Community Access Worker, P.E.I. Council of the Disabled
Joanne Roche, Project Coordinator, Employment Pathways
Linda Boudreault, Community Service Coordinator for Home Care and Support
Staff Sgt.-Major Larry Kavanagh, RCMP, Kings Region

General

Dr. Doug May, Memorial University