

residents and their organizations move out.

Crimes against business range from the armed robbery of a neighborhood grocery to the electronic swindle of an international corporation and include such offenses as the theft of cash or property (by customers, employees, and suppliers), burglary, vandalism, billing scams, embezzlement, extortion, computer hacking, hijacking of shipments, kidnaping, arson, and theft of intellectual property. The cost of crime to business is, of course, ultimately borne by consumers, employees, and residents of areas that experience a decline because of crime's effect on local business.

Through this general solicitation NIJ encourages studies that will address these critical areas of citizen concern. The Institute is particularly interested in research that advances our knowledge of the extent and consequences of criminal victimization in the following areas: Assessing the harm caused by victimization, improving the delivery of services to victims and their treatment by the criminal justice system, increasing our understanding of the causes and means of prevention of victimization, improving data about the victimization of businesses, and the effects of crime and victimization on the delivery of services in affected areas.

Research Areas of Interest

Listed below are examples of research topics that will advance criminal justice knowledge of the extent, causes, and consequences of criminal victimization under Goal III of the NIJ Research Plan. Individuals are encouraged to suggest their own topics of interest. Research is encouraged in, but not limited to, the following areas:

Assessing Victim Needs. Diagnostic instruments for use by victim services providers that would assist staff intake assessment of victim harm and required services. Victim-based evaluations of services.

Program Evaluations. Evaluations of victim services programs in such areas as restorative justice, use of computers by victim services, incorporation of victim services in community policing, programs tailored to victims with special needs, including child victims, and local program compliance with victim services mandated by State legislation.

Criminal Justice System Response to Victims. How treatment of victims and witnesses by the criminal justice system affects the public's willingness to cooperate with the system at all stages of its processes.

Victimization Patterns. How routine activities, behavior, perceptions, and knowledge interact with situational variables and offender behavior to increase or lower the risk of victimization. Knowledge that can contribute to reducing the level of victimization.

Impact of Crime on Business. The quality of data on the costs of victimization of business, its customers, suppliers, and employees, and the community. Priorities for new data collection and the utility of the data for combating crimes against business.

Impact of Crime on Service Delivery. Effects of fear of crime and victimization on the ability of communities, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations to provide services and meet the needs of residents of affected neighborhoods.

Contact

Applicants are encouraged to contact NIJ Program Managers to discuss topic viability, data availability, or proposal content before submitting proposals. To obtain specific information on the programs described under this goal, potential applicants may contact Richard Titus, at (202) 307-0695.

Goal IV: Improve the Effectiveness of Crime Prevention Programs

Purpose

The purpose of this solicitation is to encourage research and evaluation projects that will increase the safety of individuals within families, and in schools, businesses, workplaces, and community environments; that will advance the knowledge of criminal justice practitioners and help prevent crime and criminal behavior, and develop and improve crime prevention programs. NIJ seeks research and evaluations aimed at preventing involvement in crime, and individual, community, and workplace efforts to improve safety and security.

Background

Crime prevention takes many forms. NIJ research in crime prevention continues to focus on potential offenders, potential victims, and particular locations and emphasizes both individual and community responses to crimes that occur in various settings. There is a need to examine how certain characteristics of neighborhoods, households, schools, businesses, public housing developments, parks and other public areas promote or constrain criminal activity. It is equally important to study populations that may be especially vulnerable, or invulnerable, to crime in those locations. It is also important to

examine crime prevention programs and strategies in the context of the communities and jurisdictions in which they are found.

Crime prevention can and should focus on deterring potential offenders by formulating strategies directed at high-risk groups that are likely to become involved with the criminal justice system. NIJ research emphasizes prevention strategies that may influence the attitudes and behaviors of persons living in high-risk environments by addressing their needs in a comprehensive manner and by promoting positive and constructive forms of behavior. This approach to crime prevention requires the coordination of mutually reinforcing efforts that involve the family, school, and community as crime prevention agents. Research has shown that efforts to assist youths at risk are more likely to be effective when they start early and provide forms of intervention based on an understanding of the developmental processes that influence the attitudes and behavior of youths over time.

Crime prevention programs can also focus on potential victims of crime and ways to prevent their victimization. A major issue in prevention research is how to influence the behavior of individuals, households, organizations, and community groups. Lessons learned in studies of citizen patrols, changes in physical design, the relationship between fear and physical signs of disorder, and the redeployment of police officers, have all been incorporated in national crime prevention campaigns and in the development of programs and strategies designed to reduce crime victimization. Citizens and community groups can accept and respond to the challenge of shared responsibility for community security. Diverse crime prevention efforts undertaken include means of preventing victimization as well as ways of addressing the personal and social needs of victims resulting from crime and drug abuse. In addition, citizen and community anti-crime efforts are more likely to be effective when they are part of a comprehensive approach to neighborhood problem solving that involves citizens in a partnership with police and other municipal agencies.

We have learned that crime can be reduced through the proper design and effective use of environmental crime prevention methods in commercial sites, public and private housing, recreational areas, and transportation systems. Research has underscored the importance of incorporating environmental strategies as key