Citizen Involvement Kit

resources for

YOUTh

an honest dialogue about strategies to prevent youth violence
Like so many Californians, you and I are deeply concerned about the terrible toll that violence and crime takes on young people. Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 are five times more likely to be crime victims than people over 35. Violence among youth in California has reached staggering proportions, and has become a public health epidemic. While ensuring public safety is a priority, we believe much more can be done to prevent youth violence and crime before it happens.

The California Wellness Foundation believes that the best way to curb this epidemic is to prevent violence before it happens. Too much attention is given to what happens after violence occurs. This Citizen Involvement Kit gives you facts and information about what you can do to help prevent youth violence and crime.

Here's how you can make a difference.

- Let others know what you learn from the enclosed facts about the awful consequences of violence and crime against California youth.
- Call a statewide or local organization and find out what you can do in your community to help prevent this epidemic.
- Send the enclosed postcards to elected officials to ask them what they are doing to stop violence against kids before it happens.

When Californians like you become involved, California will become a healthier and safer place for our children. Thank you.
The California Wellness Foundation

The California Wellness Foundation is an independent private foundation created to improve the health and well-being of the people of California. It was funded in February 1992 by a substantial endowment from Health Net. Recognizing that violence has become a public health problem of severe magnitude and that youth are disproportionately affected, the Foundation has made youth violence prevention the focus of its first initiative. More than $35 million has been allocated over an initial five-year period to the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) for the development and evaluation of a comprehensive approach to reducing youth violence.

One objective of the Foundation’s VPI is to alter the view of many Californians that violence is inevitable. It is not. By placing the issue on the public health agenda, The California Wellness Foundation hopes to stimulate understanding and support for policies and programs that will prevent youth violence. To that end, The California Wellness Foundation provided a grant to Martin & Glantz to create Resources for Youth, a public education campaign on violence prevention. The aim of the campaign is to facilitate understanding and consideration of policies that will increase resources for programs that help to reduce the level of violence and crime among the state’s young people.

Unfortunately, discussion of solutions to the epidemic of youth violence is often difficult because this issue has become both polarized and politicized. One thing we can all agree on however, is the need for an honest dialogue. Resources for Youth provides Californians with facts, perspectives, voices and strategies on preventing youth violence and crime so that together we can become resources for our youth.
To engage in a productive and honest start with facts.

- Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 are crime victims five times more often than people over the age of 35.¹
- Every 17 hours another child in California is a murder victim. Homicide is the leading cause of death for youth in California.²
- In 1995, there were 85,052 juvenile felony arrests in California.³ Twenty-six (26%) of all juvenile felony arrests are for violent offenses.⁴
- Ninety-seven percent (97%) of all juvenile offenders are handled by county probation departments, including placements in county-run juvenile facilities.⁵ In 1989, over 66,000 youth were on probation and being supervised by counties.⁶ California counties house over 6,000 minors in juvenile halls and 4,000 minors in ranch and camp facilities each day.⁷
- Three percent (3%) of juvenile offenders are committed to the California Youth Authority (CYA).⁸ CYA currently incarcerates 9,808 young men and women. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of these youth have been convicted of violent offenses.⁹

²California Department of Justice, Bureau of Criminal Statistics, Crime and Delinquency in California, Table 3c, ‘Juvenile Felony Arrests,’ p.11. 542 juveniles (17 or younger) were murdered in California in 1994, or one every 17 hours.
³Legislative Analyst’s Office. 1995 juvenile felony arrests in California.
⁵Ibid., p. 46.
⁶Legislative Analyst’s Office. This figure has not been available since 1989, when the program requiring the California Department of Justice to segregate data on juvenile crime was defunded due to budget cuts.In 1995, AB 488, a bill carried by Assemblyman Joe Baca, was signed into law and reinstated juvenile data collection by expressly requiring the Department to keep statistics on juvenile crime.
⁸Ibid., p. 46.
⁹Legislative Analyst’s Office. As of September 18, 1996.
¹⁰Legislative Analyst’s Office, $6.7 billion total on law enforcement. In 1989, the California Department of Justice estimated that 16% of all arrests are juveniles.
¹¹Legislative Analyst’s Office, $1.1 billion total on prosecution and public defense. Use of estimated juvenile arrests at 16% of total.
¹²Legislative Analyst’s Office, $1.4 billion total on all court and court related costs. In 1989, it was estimated that juveniles accounted for 38% of court costs.
discussion of the issues, we need to

California taxpayers spend $2.2 billion annually for state and local responses to juvenile crime and violence.


- State and local law enforcement agencies spend an estimated $1.8 billion a year to respond to juvenile crime and violence.²⁶
- Total prosecution and public defense costs for juvenile offenders are estimated at $176 million annually.²⁷
- The California court system spends an estimated $532 million each year to process juvenile cases.²⁸
- The California Youth Authority budget for 1996-1997 is $361.4 million.²⁹
- Annual County probation costs for youth offenders are estimated at $15 million.³⁰
- California Department of Education received $26 million for seven violence prevention and intervention programs.³¹
- Board of Corrections will distribute $50 million in community challenge grants under the Juvenile Crime Enforcement and Accountability Challenge Grant program³² and $3.5 million for Repeat Offender Prevention Program³³ targeting first-time juvenile and recidivist offenders for intensive probation.
- California Mentor Initiative/Governor’s Office will spend $9.1 million for the California Mentor Initiative,³⁴ administered by three separate departments.³⁵
- Office of Criminal Justice Planning will distribute $12.3 million in grants for local youth violence prevention efforts³⁶ and $2.25 million in pass-through (non-competitively awarded) grants for anti-gang and gang prevention pilot projects.³⁷
- California Youth Authority will spend $2.9 million for Gang Violence Reduction.³⁸
- Department of Social Services will spend $10 million for the Juvenile Crime Initiative for 12 family resource centers to provide programs and services targeting at-risk youth and families.³⁹

For more information, visit the Pacific Center for Violence Prevention world wide web site at www.pcvp.org

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²⁷ Legislative Analyst’s Office, $210 million – 1992-1993 total on all probation expenditures. In 1999, 18% of the probation caseload was for juvenile offenders.
²⁹ Data on SB 1770 – Juvenile Justice Accountability and Challenge Grant Act – provided by State Senator Bill Lockyer’s office. This Act provides $50 million over three years in competitively awarded grants to counties for multi-agency juvenile justice coordinating councils to develop and implement strategies for preventing and responding to juvenile crime.
³⁰ Board of Corrections, State of California. Program in Humboldt, Fresno, San Diego, San Diego, San Diego, and Los Angeles Counties.
³¹ California Mentor Initiative. Specimen.
³² California Department of Finance. The three departments are: Governor’s Office of Child Development and Education, Department of Community Services and Development, and California Youth Authority.
³⁴ Budget Unit, Office of Criminal Justice Planning. Refers primarily to Alameda, Orange and Solano Counties and the City of Long Beach.
³⁶ California Department of Social Services.
The following is a list of organizations who may be able to provide you with additional information on what you can do in your community to prevent violence and crime against California's youth. This is only a sampling of the many organizations that are working on various strategies to prevent youth violence and crime.

### Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources for Youth</td>
<td>(415) 331.5991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific Center for Violence Prevention</td>
<td>(415) 285.1793</td>
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<tr>
<td>California Child, Youth &amp; Family Coalition</td>
<td>(916) 739.6912</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center on Juvenile &amp; Criminal Justice</td>
<td>(415) 621.5661</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commonweal</td>
<td>(415) 388.6666</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omega Boys Club</td>
<td>(800) SOLDIER</td>
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<td>(800) 765.3437</td>
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### Local Community Organizations

**Los Angeles Area**

- Community Wellness Partnership                          | (909) 469.2299|
- Inland Agency/People Reaching Out for Peace on the Eastside (of Riverside) | (909) 686.8946|
- Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women         | (213) 462.1281|
- Proyecto Pastoral at Dolores Mission                     | (213) 881.0030|
- Southern California Youth & Family Center                | (310) 671.1222|
- Teens on Target                                          | (310) 401.8166|
- Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles     | (213) 240.7785|

**San Diego Area**

- EYE Empowerment Corps                                    | (619) 480.6130|
- International Mutual Assistance Association               | (619) 584.4018|

**Northern California**

- Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos                                 | (408) 457.8208|
- Bayview Hunter's Point Foundation                         | (415) 671.1010|
- Providing Leadership Alternatives for Youth (PLAY) Project | (707) 463.4915|
- Mendocino County Youth Project                            | (510) 891.0427|
- The Mentoring Center                                      | (510) 235.9780|
- Neighborhood House of North Richmond/Community In Peace   | (415) 282.9984|
- Real Alternatives Program                                 | (510) 444.6191 ext. 300|
- Teens on Target                                           | (510) 485.1800 ext. 326|
- West Oakland Violence Prevention Project                   | (510) 444.6191 ext. 300|
- Youth Alive!                                              | (415) 841.5123|

**Sacramento & Central California**

- Asian Resources                                           | (916) 424.8960|
- Boys & Girls Club of Stockton                             | (209) 466.5237|
- Chicano Youth Center                                      | (209) 497.8552|
- La Familia Counseling Center                              | (916) 452.3601|
- Rites of Passage (located in Nevada)                      | (702) 782.7191|
- SacraMentor Program                                      | (916) 875.5010|
Your elected officials need to know that people like you are alarmed about youth violence and crime. Use the attached postcards to ask them, "What are you doing to help youth steer clear of crime and violence to build a healthy future?" Write a short note using the facts in this kit, tell about your own experiences and/or state your views about the need to invest in effective programs to prevent youth violence and crime in California.

Be sure to print your name and address clearly so that the recipient will know where to respond — and will see that voters like you are watching what they are doing and saying!

The following is a list of statewide and legislative leaders for the state of California. To find the names of your Mayor, City Councilmember, Assemblymember, State Senator, and Congressmember, please consult the blue government pages in your local phone book.

**State Elected Officials**

Governor Pete Wilson  
State Capitol, First Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attorney General Dan Lungren  
1515 K Street, #1600  
Sacramento, CA 94244

Senator Bill Lockyer  
State Senate President Pro Tempore  
State Capitol, Room 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblyman Cruz Bustamante  
Speaker of the Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 219  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Find the name of your Assemblymember and/or State Senator and write to them at:**

State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Federal Elected Officials**

Senator Barbara Boxer  
US Senate  
Hart Senate Office Building, Suite 112  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Dianne Feinstein  
US Senate  
Hart Senate Office Building, Suite 331  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Find out the name of your Congressmember and write to him/her at:**

US House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear California Leader:

What are you doing to help youth steer clear of crime and violence to build a healthy future?


Your Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:

Dear California Leader:

What are you doing to help youth steer clear of crime and violence to build a healthy future?


Your Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:

Dear California Leader:

Thank you for my Citizen Involvement Kit. I sent postcards to:


Please keep me on your mailing list □ yes □ no

Your Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
An honest dialogue about strategies to prevent youth violence.
Funded by a grant to Martin & Glantz from The California Wellness Foundation.