

Treasure Valley Neighborhood Watch Summit

Neighborhood problem solving concepts & tools

By:



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Origin of a Community Leader (Part I)

**When Help Doesn't Arrive...
(Option I):**

99% say:
**"If nobody except me is willing to do anything,
then *this problem will not be solved*"**

Origin of a Community Leader (Part II)

**When Help Doesn't Arrive...
(Option II):**

1% say:
**"If I am the only one willing to do anything, then
I must be in charge of fixing this problem."**

Definition of a Community Leader

A person who...

A) Decides to take responsibility and...

B) Is able to get others involved in solutions.

Most Common Solutions

(Almost Everywhere)

- ▶ Add more police officers
- ▶ Make a new law
- ▶ Elect somebody new
- ▶ Install hardware: window bars, razor wire fences, bigger deadbolts, alarms
- ▶ Buy more guns and ammo and get a really big dog
- ▶ Build something, either a bigger jail or a community center
- ▶ Board up that tavern or house
- ▶ Do a study/make a pin map.

What citizens don't like about their police (everywhere)

Police should:

- ▶ Show up faster
- ▶ Show up at all
- ▶ Be around more
- ▶ Enforce curfews more and make parents be responsible
- ▶ "Do something" when they show up
- ▶ Know how to solve a problem, instead of just saying "We can't"
- ▶ Make criminals stay in jail
- ▶ Understand what it is like to live in my neighborhood.

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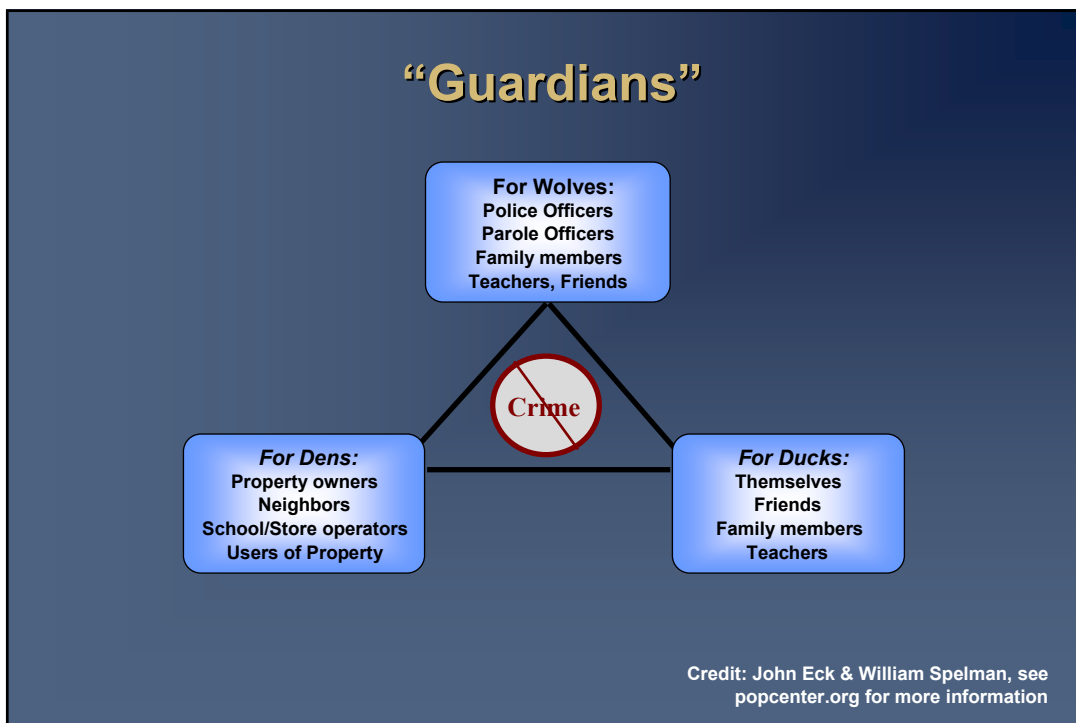
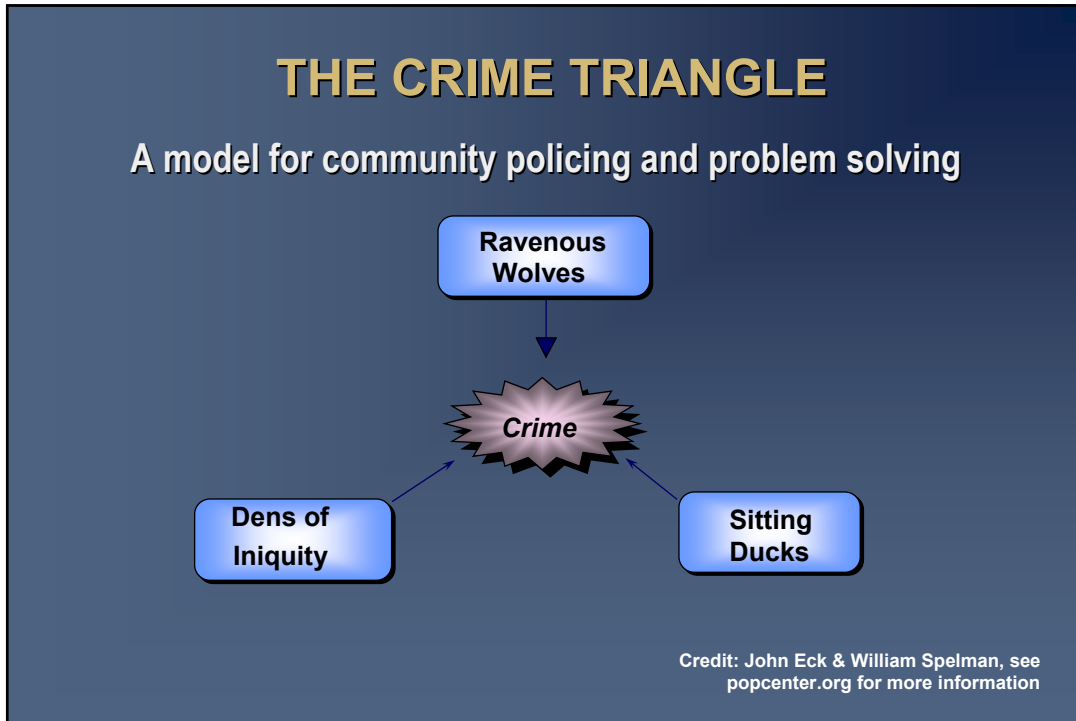
What police don't like about citizens (everywhere)

Citizens...

- ▶ Don't care enough to get involved
- ▶ Want police to show up fast for minor problems
- ▶ Expect police to arrest on one anonymous tip
- ▶ Believe that telling one officer tells them all
- ▶ Don't call 9-1-1 when they should
- ▶ Call 9-1-1 too often
- ▶ Don't take orders well when they do get involved
- ▶ Don't understand the difficulties of policing.

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THE CITIZENS' PARADOX

The way we respond to fear of crime can increase likelihood of crime.

DOJ: Defensive, individualistic solutions by themselves only harm the whole.

- ▶ Hiding behind locked doors, pulled shades
- ▶ Isolation, pulling back from the community
- ▶ Allowing decay -- garbage, broken windows, derelict cars
- ▶ Abandoning parks & streets
- ▶ Burglar alarms in unorganized neighborhoods
- ▶ Reliance on firearms and panic buttons alone.
- ▶ Have house look like its "eyes" are open
- ▶ Knowing neighbors by name and phone
- ▶ Ridding area of "attractive nuisances"
- ▶ Citizens using public spaces
- ▶ Alarms in conjunction with organizing
- ▶ Expand circle of safety beyond moment of confrontation.

"The police are the public; the public are the police. The police are only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties that are incumbent on every citizen in the interest of community welfare and existence."

-- Sir Robert Peel, 1829

One location with all of the following:

- ▶ Trash and debris
- ▶ Late-night shouting matches
- ▶ Vandalism
- ▶ Fire hazards
- ▶ Broken windows
- ▶ Barking dogs
- ▶ Trespassing on adjacent property
- ▶ Rotten steps
- ▶ Reckless driving
- ▶ Curfew violations
- ▶ Blocked parking spaces
- ▶ Graffiti
- ▶ Foul odors
- ▶ Truancy
- ▶ Drug abuse
- ▶ Intimidating behavior
- ▶ Missing handrails
- ▶ Disabled vehicles

...You live next door. What do you do?

The emotionally “desired” solutions vs. ones that work

- ▶ Steel traps vs. driving slowly
- ▶ “Slow down” vs. “How fast?”
- ▶ Immediate results vs. results over time
- ▶ Others...

Twelve Ways to Improve Your Neighborhood Now

1. Report crime promptly
2. Report nuisances & other non-criminal problems promptly
3. Remove the opportunity for crime
4. Meet the young people on your block & greet by name
5. Make a list of names & numbers of every neighbor on your block and greet also
6. Make a list of landlords on the block as well

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Twelve ways continued...

7. Turn on your porch light
 8. Walk around the block, daily
 9. Drive *slowly* in the neighborhood
 10. Pick up litter daily, even if you didn't put it there
 11. Stay where you are
 12. Help your neighborhood association (they need it)
- Finally, don't stop at 12.

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Simple agreements...

- ▶ Turn my porch light on
- ▶ Know neighbors from six households
- ▶ Maintain my property in a way that communicates that I care about the block
- ▶ Help solve problems on my block and contact the City about problems that may require their help
- ▶ Express appreciation to neighbors who take extra responsibility
- ▶ Respect everyone's right to a peaceful and safe community and work to keep it that way.

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Moving the level of thinking...

Ask "When" more and "Did" less

- ▶ How many can find the name and number...
- ▶ When you called back...
- ▶ When you spoke with the landlord...
- ▶ What are their parents' names?
 - ✓ When you spoke with the parents, how did the conversation go?
- ▶ When you spoke with the owner...
- ▶ What's your neighbor's name?

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8 Common Stages of All-Volunteer Groups

1. A leader emerges with a mission & vision
2. Initial high impact: Leader organizes others, fulfills part of that mission
3. Longer term goals are set and regular meetings are held
4. People attending meetings develop a history together
5. Curious newcomers come to meetings & feel left out
6. To encourage involvement, a big event is organized
7. Other work stops for the big event & often stays stopped
8. Meetings now run by a small clutch of slightly misguided veterans who like to talk about old times.

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Five Questions of the “Civil Force Continuum”

1. **Communicate:** Can the problem be solved by getting information to the enablers or potential guardians?
2. **Educate:** If not, by educating an enabler or guardian regarding the action that must be taken?
3. **Motivate:** If not, by exercising more leverage over reluctant enablers, guardians, or both?
4. **Warn:** If not, by communicating that legal action may be considered if the problem escalates further?
5. **Legal action:** If not, by lawsuit or other enforcement, & if so, who should bring the suit?

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