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The Orange County edition of *Prevention File* is published in cooperation with the County of Orange Health Care Agency, Alcohol and Drug Education and Prevention Team (ADEPT). Please address all comments to ADEPT, Santa Ana Transit Tower, 405 West Fifth Street, Suite 211, Santa Ana, CA 92701; or call ADEPT at 714/834-4058; or email vlee@hca.co.orange.ca.us.

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SAFE COMMUNITIES

AT WORK IN ORANGE COUNTY

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING, DATA COLLECTION AND POLICY CHANGE are public health strategies often used in combination to address a variety of health issues. This familiar combo forms the basis of CalSafe Orange County project at the University of California at Irvine aimed at reducing injuries and fatalities on Orange County roads.

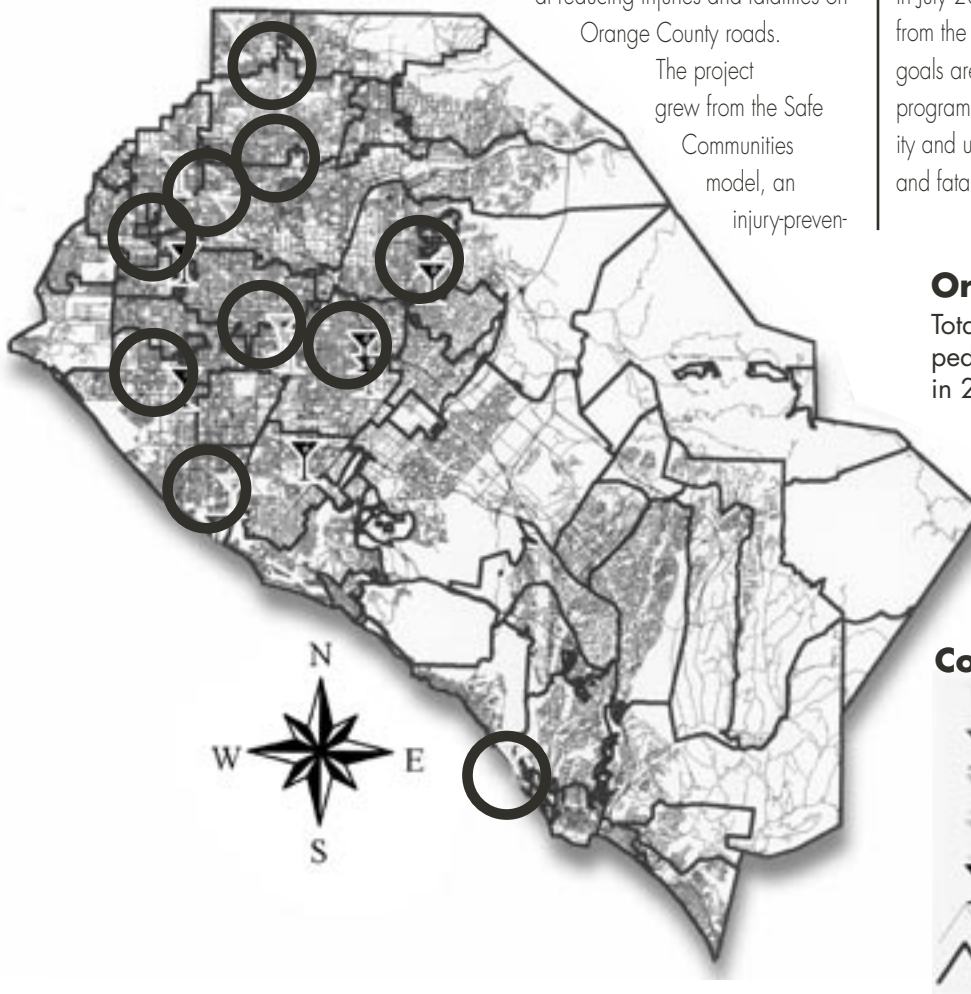
The project grew from the Safe Communities model, an injury-preven-

tion model adopted in 1995 by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. More than 1,000 such programs located all over the country focus on expanding resources and partnerships to establish community ownership of traffic-injury-prevention efforts.

The CalSafe Orange County project started in July 2000 with a two-and-a-half-year grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety. Its goals are to increase awareness, enhance local programs and networks, build community capacity and ultimately to reduce motor vehicle injuries and fatalities in Orange County.

Orange County

Total of 14 collisions involving pedestrians under the influence in 2000.



These maps give an opportunity to focus our efforts on the right locations.

"We recognized that there would be a lot of value in pulling people together and helping them to analyze the data directly," said Sue Donelson, project coordinator. Donelson drew on her background in tobacco control and injury prevention to bring a public health perspective to the traffic safety issue.

During its first year project organizers created a Steering Committee.

"There is a tremendous amount of expertise on the committee," said Donelson.

"This committee has a terrific diversity, with engineers, law-enforcement officials, and doctors and other health professionals," said committee member Shirley Land, a traffic engineer in Mission Viejo.

"As professionals we work together, but the nice thing about this project is that when we get together at this table, traffic safety is the priority. We get isolated in our own jurisdictions. But UCI has brought in new resources, along with participants you might not expect, so this project is very engaging.

"It makes a lot of sense. Mission Viejo, for example, has two school districts that span several cities. Our roadways aren't confined, so we can't always focus exclusively on our indi-

vidual cities," said Land. Last April the CalSafe Orange County project established a county-wide coalition to bring community input into traffic safety issues.

The project revolves around data and has established a geographical information system, or GIS, to track collision data and to map collision locations. The California Highway Patrol's Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System is one of the principal data sets employed by the project.

"We've loaded five years of SWITRS data onto our computer, and we can generate GIS maps" said Donelson.

Two maps detail nine months of year 2000 data. One shows the 711 DUI fatal and injury collisions, pinpointing the locations of these crashes. Another map displays the 1,850 DUI collisions that involve any kind of injury or property damage.

"These maps give an opportunity to focus our efforts on the right locations," said Donelson. The data subcommittee collected and analyzed hospital, trauma, SWITRS, law enforcement and traffic engineering data sets.

Several community groups have used the maps. For example, organizers of UCI's Alcohol Days displayed one on campus next to a crashed car.

In addition to data analysis, the group also collected "best practices" information from traffic experts through a countywide survey of law enforcement and traffic engineers.

"We asked law enforcement about speed management, pedestrian and bicycle safety, impaired driving and occupant protection," said Donelson. "We heard back from 35 of the 38 law enforcement agencies." Similar surveys were sent to traffic engineers in each Orange County city.

Another project accomplishment was a traffic safety conference held last March. About 140

people attended the meeting, with law enforcement and traffic engineers making up the majority of participants. Health educators and a variety of others from private and public sectors also attended the meeting.

Organizers used the conference to present the countywide assessment and survey data as well to learn about the traffic safety priorities of participants. Top priorities were driving under the influence and pedestrian and school zone safety, prompting the countywide coalition to organize two committees to develop plans and strategies to address these concerns.

The national Safe Communities programs have four characteristics: injury data collection and analysis; expanded partnerships; citizen involvement; and a comprehensive injury control system. Along with policy and ongoing evaluation, NHTSA promotes these strategies to accomplish traffic safety goals

All the coalitions are active with a variety of traffic safety events, such as Drive Safely to Work Week, Walk to School Day, or National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month. In addition, coalition members come together for conferences and training events. NHTSA funds many of the coalitions, which also develop other funding sources to meet their ongoing needs.

The Orange County members have welcomed the many resources offered through Safe Communities. Publications, guides, media kits and research are available on the Safe Communities Website at www.nhtsa.gov/safecommunities.

TARGET ON UNLICENSED/SUSPENDED LICENSE DRIVERS

Ted Boyne, a sergeant with the Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department, is a man with his eyes on a prize. Under the leadership of sheriff Mike Carona, Boyne has focused his sights on reducing collision and injury rates in Orange County by concentrating on suspended and unlicensed drivers.



"Twenty percent of hit-and-run accidents are caused by a suspended or unlicensed driver," said Boyne. "As we gathered the statistics it became clear that we could reduce traffic problems if we could get these drivers out from behind the wheel."

Boyne came to the traffic division in 1997, when the Sheriff's Department provided contract services to seven cities. Boyne identified two opportunities to lower collision and fatality rates.

The first was a 1995 California law authorizing law enforcement agencies to charge administrative fees when a driver with a suspended license almost \$1,000 per incident. The law reaffirmed the concept that driving a car is not a right but rather a privilege. At that time, 3.6 percent of California drivers had suspended or revoked licenses, translating to more than 100,000 licenses just in Orange County. Boyne identified a way to focus on those drivers through a \$381,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety.

The project began in July 2000 and used a variety of community enforcement activities within the department's jurisdiction—the ten Orange County communities that contract with the department for law enforcement services. Boyne has designed a program to identify, track and apprehend habitual traffic offenders. Using driver fines to support administrative costs, the program expects to become self-sustaining. Checkpoints are central to the strategy.

"In the checkpoints, in addition to scanning for drinking drivers, we have a chance to confirm that drivers have valid licenses," said Boyne. "In the last year, we've operated ten DUI checkpoints, with 15 DUI arrests, 76 impounds and 17 other arrests, such as gun-related offenses, outstanding warrants or narcotics arrests."

Information from checkpoints and collisions goes into a database where the department keeps track of drivers' records and looks for habitual offenders.

"A red flag goes up anytime one of these drivers is involved in an accident or receives another citation. If someone with a suspended license gets into an accident, we take the case to the prosecutor to be sure that person isn't driving again," said Boyne.

In the project's first year 4,520 people were arrested for driving with a suspended license. From July through December last year, the department impounded almost 2,000 vehicles for 30 days.

The Orange County project draws upon these national resources. The DUI committee has identified a list of goals, many of which mirror the national best practices list, such as frequent sobriety checkpoints, server training in alcohol outlets, media exposure and legislation.

Another feature of the CalSafe Orange County Safe Communities is networking to increase efficiencies in the many traffic safety projects.

"There are about 25 other Office of Traffic Safety-funded projects in Orange County," said Donelson (see sidebar). "Our countywide coalition meets quarterly to share ideas and coordinate a variety of initiatives on our issue."

Donelson notes that the project will soon implement several micro-community prevention strategies in Orange County.

"We have several unique communities, like the beach communities or special population groups, that need even more custom work."

THE RIGHT FIT FOR PREVENTION:

LOURDES GUTIERREZ BELIEVES THAT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUG PROBLEMS CAN BE REDUCED through community-based prevention. In her work for Project PATH-Central, she sees many of the necessary building blocks falling into place. Police, social workers, teachers and residents have all joined the prevention effort in Orange County.

But last year it became clear that one important sector was still missing—the faith community.

Research has shown that churches, temples and other faith-based institutions are often effective at reaching youths, especially high-risk youths. Gutierrez wanted the support of these groups and set out to win it.

It wasn't easy.

Her tenacious efforts resulted in the formation of the Orange County Faith Communities in Prevention, a small but growing group of religious representatives and prevention advocates who believe that together they can be a formidable force to develop caring, responsible and healthy young people.

Prevention workers in the collaborative offer faith communities a toolbox of research-based, tested prevention strategies that they can use to enrich their own youth development programs. Among these strategies is asset-building, based on the 40 developmental assets identified to strengthen youth resiliency (see *Prevention File*, Orange County edition, Vol. 16, No.3, Summer 2001).

The group has already organized a series of trainings for faith-based youth workers, made “club drug” presentations to several hundred confirmation students and sponsored a joint parent-youth night for asset-building at a local church.

“Our mindset is to look to young people as resources rather than problems,” Gutierrez says.

Most prevention groups would probably love to lay claim to the sort of success that Gutierrez has had with the faith community. So, how did she do it?

Her first move was to enter through the front door—she became a member of the Huntington Beach Interfaith Council.

“On one hand, members of the faith community have failed to realize the importance of their involvement (in prevention efforts),” Gutierrez says. “On the other, we (prevention workers) have failed to involve them.”

Gutierrez quickly befriended members of the Interfaith Council and when Project PATH scheduled a joint workshop for prevention advocates and the faith community in Fall 2000, Gutierrez invited all of her new friends.

Altogether, 600 invitations went out, but only 36 people—12 members of the faith community, and 24 prevention advocates—showed up. “And that was after twisting arms,” Gutierrez says. She was disappointed but not defeated by the low turnout.

“We came up with a shared vision of a healthy and drug-free community, and we looked at some of the barriers to that,” Gutierrez says. “At the end of the meeting, we asked who would like to continue working together and a couple of hands went up.”

Following that first meeting, Gutierrez

organized monthly meetings of the newly formed Orange County Faith Communities in Prevention and continued with her persuasive tactics.

She saw a golden opportunity in the one-million-member-strong Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange County and went straight to the top. She set up a meeting with Auxiliary Bishop Jaime Soto, who was impressed by Gutierrez’s pitch and asked Nancy Hormuth, the diocese’s director for youth and young adult ministries, to become part of the group.

Hormuth was so enthusiastic she became chair of the group’s training committee.

“We are interested in anything that can bring kids to wholeness,” Hormuth says. “One of the biggest problems among kids is the misuse

of alcohol. It interferes with the full, whole lives God has planned for them.”

Roman Catholics were not the only ones to take a role. Pastor Allan Landes and youth minister Jeff Wagner of Trinity United Presbyterian Church in Tustin became involved and ended up sponsoring the asset-building workshop for parents and youths at

One study has shown that churches, temples and other faith-based institutions are often most effective at reaching youths, especially high-risk youths.

Orange County Faith Community

their church in June. Wagner now chairs the collaborative's new youth committee. In July 2000, Trinity gave Project PATH-Central an unsolicited donation of \$4,000 in recognition of its community-based prevention programs. The Seventh-day Adventists also saw value in the effort. Jared Fulton, youth minister of the Garden Grove Seventh-day Adventist Church, recently joined Gutierrez as co-chairman of the group.

"The Seventh-day Adventist doctrine opposes (the use of alcohol), but that doesn't mean our kids are exempt," Fulton says. "In fact, the statistics show that our kids are the same as other kids when it comes to drinking and drugs."

Fulton also serves as chaplain of the school run by his church and says that he is called upon to work with families dealing with this issue. From the young people he ministers to, he hears stories of partying and "raves."

Fulton believes it is every church's responsibility to become involved in the community, and the prevention effort "is a very nice fit. We (churches) don't have access to all of the services Project PATH does, and Project PATH doesn't have access to the numbers of people we do."

Research suggests that this is a good fit. According to *National Faith-Based Initiative for High-Risk Youths*, a report from Public/Private Ventures, many highest-risk youths in poor communities are not reached by traditional youth programs, but are served by churches and other faith-based institutions.

In a study of 11 cities, P/PV found that faith-based institutions are well established at working with youths and their families, but that there were still many challenges to building partnerships between faith-based groups and community organizations, law enforcement and local government. More information about

P/PV is available from its Website at www.ppv.org.

Fulton is pleased to see different faiths working together in Orange County. He believes all faiths tell the same story in different ways.

"When one group is strong, two groups together are stronger," he says. "The more we are together, the more we can expose our strengths and firm up our weaknesses."

Hormuth, too, sees benefits in different faiths working together.

"It's all about love," she says. "Wherever we can promote that, we are all on the same page."

Despite this success Gutierrez says, "We have barely scratched the surface. We need representatives from Islam and Judaism and from independent churches. We want to embrace all faiths. We are building bridges of understanding and collaboration."

Project PATH and the National Conference on Community and Justice are currently compiling a directory of all youth workers in Orange County's faith communities to support further outreach.

In the year to come, Gutierrez expects the group to provide more training for youth workers.

Fulton says he would like to see the group educate parents and youths and build a network of services. He has been particularly encouraged to see parents and young people looking at the issue together. "That's a really positive thing." He wants the Orange County Faith Communities in Prevention to continue to provide support for prevention.

Those interested in more information about the Orange County Faith Communities in Prevention can contact Gutierrez at 949/757-1096.



DRIVING TEENS TO SAFETY

■ IN 1989, AFTER TWO TEENS DIED IN AN ALCOHOL-RELATED COLLISION ON PROM NIGHT, Thomas Shaver, MD, decided to start a Safe Rides program in Orange County. Shaver is the trauma director at Mission Hospital. Since then the trauma office staff have been leaders in organizing transportation on weekend nights for teens who have been drinking or who need a ride home from an unsafe situation.

Safe Rides programs for high school and college students operate all over the country today. The concept is pretty simple: teens can call a confidential phone line and arrange to get a ride home with no questions asked.

"Getting home safely is our primary goal. Our first priority is not to have teens drink and drive," said Connie Stalcup, trauma program coordinator at Mission Hospital. "Safe Rides is one aspect of a whole spectrum of prevention services we offer here, and having an alternative to drinking and driving is essential."

Safe Rides is active in South Orange County with ten chapters on high school campuses. Safe Rides volunteers are recruited through the chapters. They are trained in three different roles: driver, navigator or dispatcher.

"We have two teams every Friday and Saturday night that operate from 9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.," said Marcy Rositano, trauma office coordinator at Mission Hospital. Each team is composed of a male and

female student who pick up a maximum of two students at a time.

"The team comes into the office and picks up their bag. It includes a flashlight, a Thomas Guide of streets and a cell phone," said Rositano. "They have to call in frequently and they come back to the office for pizza, too."

Liability insurance for the program is covered through an arrangement with Boy Scouts of America. Both Peppino's and Upper Crust Pizza in Laguna Niguel donate to the program. Chevron provides vouchers for gas.

Larrisa Martus, 18, has volunteered for the last two years. Service has always been part of her orientation as she's been a Girl Scout since kindergarten.

"I started volunteering at the hospital because I'm interested in a career in the medical field," said Martus. "I've seen the effects of drinking and driving and it's not pretty."

Martus just graduated in June from Dana Hills High School, where Safe Rides was part of the Club Rush in the fall. Club Rush occurs in the beginning of the school year to enlist students in a variety of school clubs. Martus was president of the campus chapter of Safe Rides last year.

"We start out the year with 60 members, but it does dwindle to about 15 to 30 as a core group by the end of the year."

"Safe Rides doesn't condone student drinking, but high school students drink whether we're there or not," said Martus. "Safe Rides is a way to prevent death. I don't want to not see my friend in class the next day. We can save lives."

Martus was a dispatcher in her first year and found that role to be the hardest job.



Safe Rides Program

Safe Rides is one aspect of a whole spectrum of prevention services we offer here, and having an alternative to drinking and driving is essential.

"When someone's been drinking, at times they can't even tell you where they are, or even what they look like," said Martus. "It's not all drunks though. I've picked up a student who just had one beer and didn't want to drive at all. There are some responsible kids who call."

Martus noted that sometimes people call who just want a ride. She cited a case where "one guy's car caught on fire. He called us instead of a taxi."

Stalcup explained that the program also receives calls from girls who've been stranded on a date that turned bad.

In the 1993-94 school year, the South Orange County program got 252 calls and transported 360 students. The program provided transportation to over 800 students in its peak year of 1995-96, but organizers attribute that to the opening of Irvine Spectrum.

"We were just being used as a taxi service, so we stopped accepting calls from there," said Rositano.

Since that time the number of transports has dwindled. In the 2000-01 school year, the program provided 138 transports.

Stalcup and Martus say that Safe Ride chapter organizing is getting increasingly hard because more schools aren't allowing the clubs on campus.

"We almost need to disguise ourselves as Safe Rides," said Martus. "One campus just calls it a Health and Student Awareness club."

Orange County schools have restricted many types of student clubs. Part of the controversy about Safe Rides chapters is that some critics see Safe Rides as a mixed message to teens.

"We try to meet after school, or work around these limits," said Stalcup. "We've had relatively low transports in the last year because of this trend."

"We've had some challenges. If we don't have full teams, with three students and adult supervisors, we have to close for the night," said Rositano.

Eden Bright, Safe Rides advisor at Dana Hills High School, began when the program started in 1989.

"At first it was hard to get on campus, because there was some feeling that we were condoning drinking," said Bright. "But eventually several PTSA (Parent Teachers Student Association) members who were supporters became school trustees and then policy changed. We're dealing with reality. It's pretty impressive to see these great students picking up their peers on a Saturday night."

"We have a consequence component to our program too. Teen drinking drivers and collision survivors go through a court-mandated education program we operate," said Stalcup. "It's a huge problem that's not going away, so Safe Rides' primary objective is to keep impaired teens from driving."



CREATIVITY IN PREVENTION: POSTER AND WRITING CONTEST

IT'S A MOUTHFUL, but the Orange County Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drug and Violence-Free Poster and Creative Writing Contest has expanded the focus of the 19-year-old effort through a new partnership.

The Orange County American Academy of Pediatrics, Chapter 4 had run a writing and poster contest on violence prevention, but the group wanted to reach a broader student audience.

When Roberto Geddisman, MD, of AAP and Children's Hospital, approached the ATOD contest organizers, all parties agreed that the themes and contests could be merged successfully.

"Pediatricians see a lot of children who are sick or injured because of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs," said Sally Warrick, education specialist with the Orange County Department of Education. "The merger



made sense."

The annual contest is organized by a planning committee made up of community partners including youths, schools, service clubs and prevention professionals. Change has

been a constant for the contest. In 1987 the term alcohol and other drugs became the moniker. Tobacco was added in 1996.

One constant has been a steady stream of supporters, starting with the Orange County Board of Supervisors, funding from the Orange County Health Care Agency, and a host of private and public groups such as Bowers Museum, Costco and the Rotary Club.

The goal of the contest is to recognize students for promoting the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Every public and private school student is invited to participate.

The contest draws submissions from elementary, middle school and high school students twice a year, during the months of November and April.

"Prior to Red Ribbon Week we send information to schools to encourage student participation in prevention activities," said Warrick. "We promote the contest in conjunction with the state's violence-prevention week in January, and hold the judging in early April."

Ideally, schools qualify submissions and submit finalists to the countywide contest. A group of community youths and adult volunteers reviews all the student submissions.

"When judging the posters, we display all the work, sorted into three categories—by grade, for black and white art, and for tobacco-counter advertising," said Warrick.

Tiffany Yu, 6, was a winner in the poster category. According to her mother Tina Yu, Tiffany enters every art contest. "She won a first place in the PTA contest, so when we saw this notice, she decided to enter a countywide contest."

"Tiffany has just participated in DARE—Drug Awareness and Resistance Education—so it caught her attention."

"I don't like drugs," said Tiffany Yu. As a contest

winner this young artist landed an invitation to an award reception.

"My favorite thing about the awards was all the food," said Yu.

In addition to the award reception and recognition in May,



winners receive cash and other prizes, donated in part by the community.

The written submissions include letters to the editor, poetry and essays. For example, 5th grader Lisa Skler Manesh wrote about singer Whitney Houston. Manesh, a student in San Juan Capistrano, pointed out the need for a new role model and singer for "The Greatest Love of All" because of Houston's detainment in a Hawaiian airport where drugs were found in her luggage.

Contest organizers created a personal computer screen saver and CD-ROM to display winning artwork. This screen saver can be downloaded from the contest Website.

"We hope to see the student art screen savers on every school computer in Orange County," said Warrick. "Teachers feel that the contest is a great activity to raise awareness."

Warrick plans to survey teachers and schools to increase participation in the contest. Information on how to apply, along with other details about the contest, is available on the Website at www.ocde.k12.ca.us/prevention.