

## *The Opportunity of this Generation*

**Finding 2: California has a historic opportunity to align scientific knowledge, community commitment and public resources to promote and establish prevention as the primary policy response to youth violence.**

In major cities across the country where prevention has been coupled with enforcement and treatment – and where partnerships have been developed between police, probation, social services, schools and other key agencies – the declines in crime have been astounding. These community successes, complemented by a growing body of scientifically evaluated prevention strategies, provide new and compelling evidence that prevention can reduce youth violence. In some cases, where the efforts are targeted at children and families that are most at risk of violence, the programs can pay for themselves by reducing criminal justice and other costs.

In no small way, California has contributed to this learning by funding numerous prevention programs in schools, through law enforcement agencies, recreation and community-based organizations. The State now has an opportunity to use this expertise to help a rapidly growing number of young people avoid crime and violence and mature into successful adults. To do so, however, the State will need to fundamentally reshape how it develops, organizes, funds and manages programs that help California's communities help themselves. These same reforms will help the State to evolve many of its own programs to respond at the earliest possible opportunity to prevent violence.

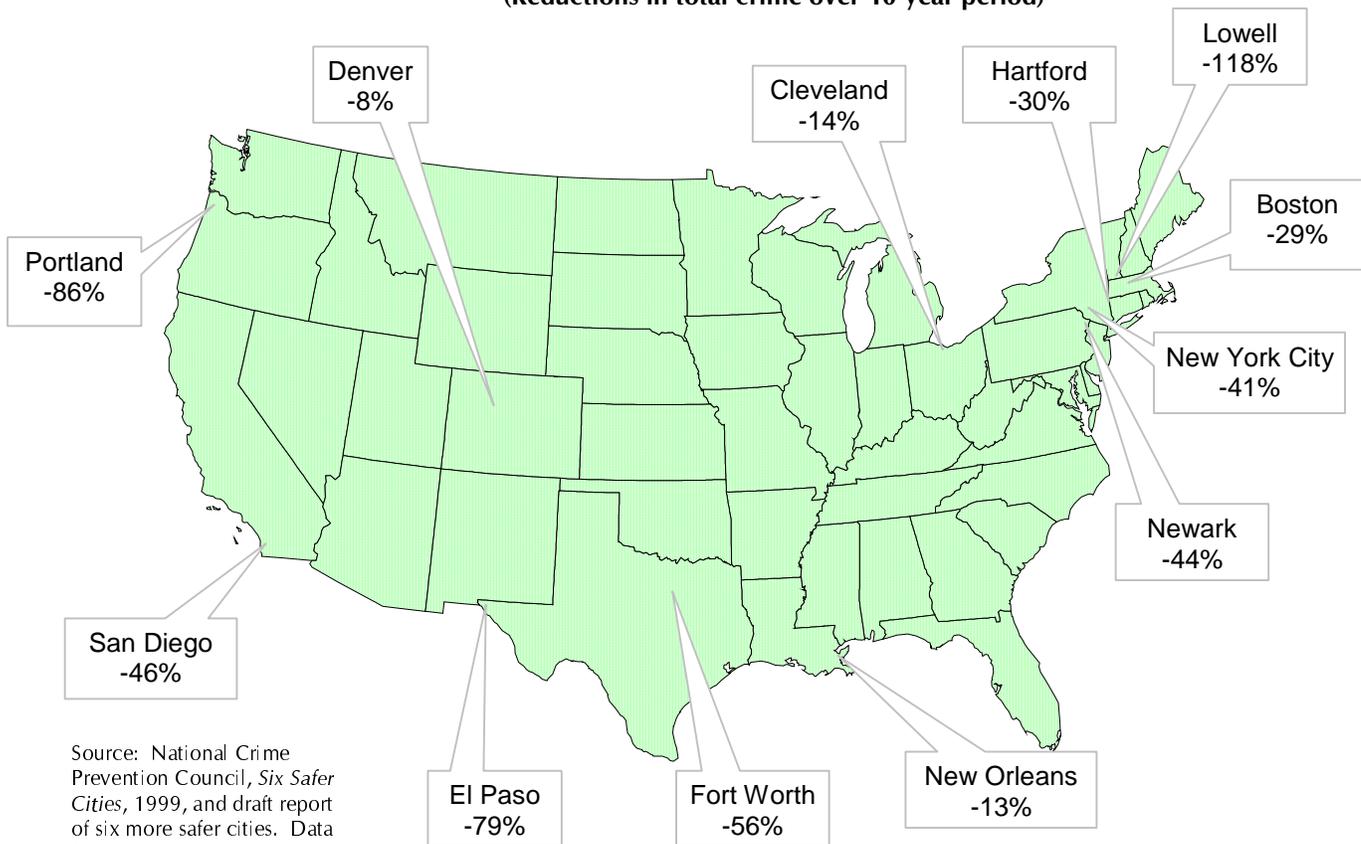
### ***Protecting Youth***

Much has been made about the declining crime rates that virtually all states and all communities have enjoyed. With the economy booming, the population aging and prisons expanding, the crime rate nationally dropped about 7 percent between 1989 and 1999.

But some communities have seen their crime rates – particularly juvenile crime rates – fall faster and farther. Crime has dropped 30 percent in Boston, 46 percent in San Diego, and by comparable amounts in other major cities. The National Crime Prevention Council asserts that the communities with the largest declines have something in common. Government officials and citizens, police officers, teachers, social workers and parents, have worked together to integrate prevention, intervention and enforcement policies. They planned strategically, targeted their efforts and held each other accountable for results.<sup>51</sup> Twelve examples:

## Twelve Safer Cities

(Reductions in total crime over 10-year period)



Source: National Crime Prevention Council, *Six Safer Cities*, 1999, and draft report of six more safer cities. Data for Boston, Denver, Fort Worth, Hartford, New York and San Diego are from 1986-1996. Data for Cleveland, El Paso, Lowell, Newark, New Orleans and Portland are from 1988-1998. Rates are per 100,000 population.

In these 12 cities efforts to reduce crime were comprehensive and community-wide. Several elements contributed to the successes, including the following youth-focused violence prevention efforts:

**Boston, MA – Youth Service Providers Network:** The Boston police and Boys & Girls Clubs provide social workers for at-risk youth. Social workers guide young people and their families to counseling and treatment, academic services, recreational programs or jobs.

**Cleveland, OH – Safe Schools Liaisons:** City employees work with neighborhood groups, parents, youth and school staff to ensure safety on campus and safe passage to and from 82 elementary schools. Police give top priority to school-related incidents.

**Denver, CO – The SafeNite Curfew and Diversion Program:** It is unlawful for youth under age 18 to be in public from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. (Sun.-Thurs.), and 12 a.m. to 5 a.m. (Fri.-Sat.). Police ticket violators and take them to a SafeNite location. Parents are called and counselors interview the family to identify service needs. The cases are dismissed if young people complete a diversion program. Between 1995 and 1997, 6,200 young people completed the diversion. Since 1994, crimes involving juvenile suspects have dropped 40 percent.

**El Paso, TX – Youth Initiative Program (YIP):** Law enforcement, community agencies, schools, churches and businesses formed a 127-member collaborative to provide intervention and prevention services to at-risk youth. A referral process has been set up and staff are available for on-campus consultations. It publishes a Youth Helpline Directory and monthly newsletter and has created a Web site highlighting youth services: ([www.elpasoyouth.com](http://www.elpasoyouth.com)).

**Forth Worth, TX – The Tarrant County Advocate Program, Juvenile Offender Intervention:**

TCAP hires advocates for juvenile offenders, particularly for serious repeat offenders. Advocates are assigned to young people on probation and their families, providing close supervision and mentoring, conflict resolution, and links to appropriate community resources and support systems. Of the 210 youth who successfully completed the program in 1997, only 89 were rearrested, and of those, only 40 were tried for a crime.

**Hartford, CT – Our Piece of the Pie:** Since 1996, the program has provided pre-work orientation to 268 youth from middle and high schools, and post-high school vocational institutes. Young adult managers (20 to 26 years old), who are attending or have graduated from college, work as trainers, counselors, and role models for at-risk students. Participants develop social and work skills, receive support during placement and afterward, and have access to entrepreneurial opportunities, paid work and volunteer opportunities. An employment placement rate as high as 87 percent has been achieved.

**Lowell, MA – Safety First:** Formed in 1996, Safety First is a working group of local criminal justice agencies that identifies and helps to meet the needs of high-risk youth. It offers after-school and evening programs. The summer of 1997 saw a 29 percent decrease in juvenile assaults from the previous summer, and a decrease in on-campus violence during school.

**Newark, NJ – Juvenile Conference Committees:** An advisory board of juvenile court judges, community volunteers and law enforcement prescribes alternative sentences to first-time offenders of non-violent crimes. Sentences can include babysitting during adult education classes or supervised study time. The committee meets once a month, hearing 10 to 15 cases per month. Only 6 percent of juveniles involved in the program have been re-arrested.

**New York City, NY – After School Program for Interactive Recreation and Education (ASPIRE):** ASPIRE is a partnership among the New York Police Department, the Housing Bureau and the New York City Housing Authority to improve the relationship between youth and police. It serves children ages 9 to 19 who live in or near public housing projects. A 10-week program consists of half-hour workshops on leadership, responsibility, communication, drug prevention, conflict resolution, diversity, decision-making, consequences and team games that provoke thought and build trust. In 1998, 1,000 children ages 9 to 12 and over 500 youth ages 13 to 19 participated in the program.

**New Orleans, LA – Juvenile Curfew:** New Orleans has one of the toughest juvenile curfew laws in the nation. During the academic year, children under 17 are not allowed on the streets between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. on school nights and 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. on weekends. In the summer, curfew is Sunday through Thursday, 9 p.m. to 6 a.m., and Friday and Saturday, 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. The Juvenile Curfew and Assessment Center is open 7 days a week, from 7:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. Violators are provided an array of services including counseling, anger management and assistance for runaway youth. Since its adoption in 1994, overall juvenile crime averages have dropped steadily, between 5 percent and 10 percent a year.

**Portland, OR – Youth Gun Anti-violence Task Force (YGAT):** Led by the Mayor's office, YGAT involves 35 agencies focused on three goals: to track and record youth gang violence, focus and reduce youth violence in neighborhood hot spots, and reduce accessibility of guns to youth. Information is shared among the city, Portland Police, State Police, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the FBI and community-based outreach groups. The initiative's Cease-Fire program seeks to rehabilitate the most serious incarcerated gang members by providing them employment, substance abuse and spiritual counseling. Portland reports an 86 percent decrease in drive-by shootings from 1995 to 1999, a 45 percent decrease in youth victims of murder from 1996 to 1999, and 2,669 guns seized since 1998.

**San Diego, CA – Choice Program:** The Choice Program is an intensive mentoring and probation program for juveniles at risk of becoming serious habitual offenders. Recent college graduates receive a small stipend to be caseworkers for 10 adolescent charges (ages 9 to 18). Caseworkers partner with teachers and families to ensure that youth are succeeding in school. They check on their charges throughout the day and provide resources, accountability, and support, as well as links to appropriate community services.

## ***Four Major Developments***

A closer look shows that in the last 10 years at least four important developments have changed the debate from *whether* crime and violence can be prevented to *how best* crime and violence can be prevented.

- 1. There is a better understanding of what causes violence, and how it can be prevented.*** As described in the Background, medical researchers have linked with other experts to understand in greater detail the cycle of violence: how victims become perpetrators; how children are physically altered by emotional trauma; and as a result, how violent behavior can be unlearned and violence prevented.
- 2. The effectiveness of some prevention programs has been scientifically demonstrated.*** Rigorous research has proven that some programs can reduce violent and criminal behavior. Strategies have been identified that prevent the onset of delinquency by children considered “at risk” and lower recidivism of young offenders. Moreover, even conservative methodologies show that some programs, properly implemented, cost effectively reduce crime. That is, the cost of the programs is easily recovered through lower crime-related expenditures and economic losses.
- 3. Communities have pioneered effective strategies.*** Because of the nature of evaluations, researchers can tell policy-makers the most about particular programs, rather than particular strategies. They can say more about whether a teen mother program reduced pregnancies, than whether children in comprehensive prevention programs are successfully guided away from a variety of unhealthy outcomes. But assertive and collaborative community efforts in recent years have resulted in overwhelming anecdotal and qualitative evidence that broad-based strategies can change the lives of individuals. Evaluating programs is enormously challenging, and there are reasons to believe that prevention programs are even more effective than can be statistically measured by researchers – issues that are explored in Finding 4.
- 4. States have developed the capacity to assist communities.*** A number of states – California among them – have made considerable investments in prevention programs. In this development phase, numerous agencies, relying on different procedures and approaches, have gained valuable experience in how to plan, fund, support and evaluate prevention programs that are actually operated by diverse organizations. Other states have gone even further to develop outcome measures, to coordinate efforts and target resources.

Together, these developments provide California the opportunity to more strategically help communities improve the lives of children and families.

## ***What Does it Mean to Say Prevention “Works”?***

Increasingly, the public and policy-makers want evidence that programs work. This focus on results, while appropriate for all public expenditures, has been a central issue for prevention efforts, given the scarcity of resources and the fear and anger that often guides discussions about public safety.

In its review, the Commission found dozens of programs – some in California, others described in the literature – that report documented results of fewer arrests, reduced drug use, improved academic attendance and achievement. In some cases, efforts have been made to evaluate the evaluations – meta-analysis, which gives the reader even greater confidence that evaluations mean what they say.

Two efforts in particular show what is possible:

***Blueprints for Violence Prevention.*** In 1996, the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence began a project to identify 10 violence prevention programs that met specific, high standards for effectiveness. The goal for the project – funded by the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Centers for Disease Control and Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency – was to identify programs that could provide an initial nucleus for a national violence prevention initiative. The resulting *Blueprints for Violence Prevention* includes 10 model programs that met the criteria and several more designated as promising programs because they met some of the criteria.<sup>52</sup>

All of the programs are intensive, community-based and multi-dimensional. They reach young people where they live, play, work and learn – in their families, communities and schools. The programs range from home visits by nurses during pregnancy and two years after birth to an alternative to group or residential treatment, incarceration, and hospitalization for adolescents with chronic antisocial behavior, delinquency and emotional disturbance.

### ***Dollar for Dollar***

Researchers at the Washington State Institute for Public Policy analyzed the cost effectiveness of some of the *Blueprints* programs. They found that Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care saved \$14.07 for each dollar spent, and that two other *Blueprint* programs – Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy – saved \$8.38 and \$6.85, respectively, for every dollar spent in juvenile justice costs alone.

The Prenatal and Infancy Home Visitation by Nurses Program was shown to be highly successful in reducing dependence on welfare, child abuse and later delinquent behavior by the children, with the cost of the program recovered by the child’s fourth birthday. A RAND study reported that home nurse visitation programs could be more cost-effective than prison in reducing crime.

**Preventing Crime: What Works?** In 1996 Congress directed the U.S. Attorney General to provide a "comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness" of over \$3 billion annually in federal grants to state and local law enforcement and communities for crime prevention activities. The research was to be "independent in nature," and "employ rigorous and scientifically recognized standards and methodologies." Special emphasis was to be given to "factors that relate to juvenile crime and the effect of these programs on youth violence," including "risk factors in the community, schools, and family environments that contribute to juvenile violence." The University of Maryland was contracted to review the more than 500 existing scientific program impact evaluations.

### **Policy Options**

RAND analyzed the different options for responding to crime, from the taxpayer's perspective. The comparative costs for equal reductions in crime:

- \$225 per taxpayer for the "three strikes" law.
- \$125 per taxpayer for intensive supervision of delinquents.
- \$50 per taxpayer for parent training.
- \$30 per taxpayer for Quantum Opportunities, a *Blueprints* initiative to help troubled youth get educated and get jobs.

The final report – *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising* – found that some prevention programs work, others do not, some are promising, and others have not been tested adequately. Based on the evidence, the report found that the effectiveness of funding depends heavily on whether it is directed to the urban neigh-

borhoods where youth violence is highly concentrated. "Substantial reductions in national rates of serious crime can only be achieved by prevention in areas of concentrated poverty, where the majority of all homicides in the nation occur, and where homicide rates are 20 times the national average."<sup>53</sup>

## **Confidence and Momentum is Building**

New knowledge and understanding that well-managed prevention efforts work and are cost-effective have increased confidence in and support for prevention among state and local policy-makers, grass roots organizations, law enforcement and the public. According to the Department of Finance, state support for youth prevention programs has increased steadily over the last five years. For the second year, the 2001-02 budget contains \$121 million for youth crime and violence prevention programs that have evidence of success, the largest singular investments in prevention ever. The budget proposes \$140 million to support after-school programs and funding for numerous other categorical programs aimed at preventing or intervening in youth violence.

Just a decade ago law enforcement and elected officials risked being considered "soft on crime" if they focused too much on prevention. But times have changed. In a 1999 nationwide poll of police chiefs, 69 percent said

that after-school and educational programs are the most effective programs for reducing juvenile crime.

- George Sweat, a former police chief and North Carolina's director of juvenile services, has said: "If we don't concentrate on the high chair, we will be concentrating on the electric chair."<sup>54</sup>
- Fresno County Chief Probation Officer Larry Price told the Commission that prevention is the only solution to youth violence.
- Monrovia Police Chief Joseph Santoro strives for a balance between prevention and enforcement: "I am absolutely convinced the earlier we identify a child who is exhibiting behavior that would put him/her at risk, the better chance we will have to help and minimize the negative consequences the child will experience as he/she grows up."

**"If we don't concentrate on the high chair, we will be concentrating on the electric chair."**

A recent statewide poll on youth violence revealed that 78 percent of voters think investment in youth crime prevention is a higher state priority than spending for new prisons.<sup>55</sup>

## ***From Programs to Strategies***

The State has responded to this growing technical expertise and political momentum by creating numerous state "prevention" programs. The programs represent the gamut, from trying to encourage innovation to trying to replicate proven efforts. In some programs, the State has encouraged communities to take cooperative approaches and to develop plans based on community priorities. In other programs, the state or federal governments have determined the priorities, based on the media-driven malady of the moment.

This incremental development has created pockets of expertise in many departments. It has yielded valuable experience in administering grants and working with local communities. And it has created within those departments internal advocates for prevention. The Attorney General, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Secretary of Health and Human Services also have become visible and passionate advocates for

### ***States Placing a Priority on Prevention***

In Arizona, the governor has committed to a 5 percent annual funding increase for prevention. "Prevention must be the long-term solution..."

The Connecticut governor has begun using "embedding prevention" language in his public remarks and has committed to "investing in comprehensive, community-based prevention efforts..."

In Iowa, the governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general and several cabinet secretaries are fully committed to the state's participation in the "Embedding" initiative.

In Oregon, under the leadership of the governor, five agencies are working together to develop a single planning process for local agencies and he has committed to spending "as much on prevention as on prisons."

In Kentucky, the governor and legislature have put the state-level crime/violence/substance abuse prevention council into operation...the statewide prevention infrastructure is developed...the statewide prevention infrastructure is in operation."

Source: National Crime Prevention Council. January 5, 2001. *Embedding Crime Prevention in State Policy and Practice.*

transforming public policies from reactive to preventive – from always too late to never too early.

While each program was deliberately created, as a whole, they have never been strategically aligned. As the State has dedicated more resources to “prevention,” it has not developed the policy or organizational structure for managing the programs to achieve certain results.

### ***Three Barriers to Strategic Prevention***

Within the executive branch, three constitutional officers play critical roles in administering policies for youth crime and violence prevention: The Governor, the Attorney General and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Legislature shares in the critical role of establishing fundamental policies and allocating resources. Working together, these officials and their institutions can form a powerful alliance. However, the current organization and management of prevention policies fail in three fundamental ways:

***1. Lack of a unified coordination and commitment from all top policy-makers.***

Top level policy-makers have not joined forces in declaring youth violence a top public policy priority and have yet to embrace prevention as the best long-term solution to youth violence. This unified and persistent leadership is necessary for the numerous state agencies involved to emphasize prevention on a daily basis and lower barriers to coordination.

#### ***Same Goals, Same Problems***

In its previous work in child care, juvenile justice, and foster care the Commission identified problems with how the State organizes and manages those efforts. The problems are similar to those that hinder the State’s response to youth crime and violence. Chief among them:

- Lack of executive and legislative leadership.
- Lack of clearly articulated and shared policy goals among executive and legislative leaders.
- Failure to place a priority on prevention.
- Fragmented funding and service delivery systems that fail to meet the needs of children and families.
- No person or agency responsible to solve management issues, improve coordination and hold all agencies responsible for aligning their activities with statewide goals.

***2. No mechanism for effective policy-making.*** Programs have been created in isolation of each other, often based on state concerns rather than community priorities. The programs are not assessed or managed as a portfolio of prevention tools. New tools are added and old tools are lost without thoughtful consideration of what California is trying to accomplish and how the State can best help communities achieve their goals. Policy-making and budgeting are not based on a rigorous assessment of how existing prevention efforts are performing, and how they could be improved.

***3. The State’s efforts are not organized to effectively support local communities.*** The structure and organization of the State’s prevention efforts do not effectively support the youth violence

prevention goals of communities. Effective community-based youth violence prevention efforts are multidisciplinary and collaborative. But multiple state agencies administer multiple programs, with little coordination among them. Fragmented eligibility criteria, funding streams and evaluation criteria thwart the efforts of local communities to implement collaborative strategies.

### ***Three Steps in the Right Direction***

Despite evidence and increased support for prevention, as well as repeated calls to action, California has not made prevention a priority or developed the organizational structure and policy-making strategy to put prevention at the center of California's policies for reducing and preventing youth crime and violence. The Commission has identified three steps the State could take to rectify the problems.

**1. Provide executive level leadership.** In states where prevention is a priority, it is because the Governor has declared it a priority and provided leadership to implement the infrastructure and policies necessary to support it.

Leadership from the State's chief policy-makers is needed to establish common goals for prevention and to ensure that all of the State's prevention efforts for youth are coordinated and aligned with those goals. The Governor, Attorney General and Superintendent of Public Instruction – working together – could prioritize prevention and provide the leadership to ensure that it is embraced by other state leaders and embedded in all of the State's policies for youth.

**2. Establish a mechanism to ensure coordination.** A dozen state agencies have some responsibility for youth violence prevention. But no one person or agency is responsible for ensuring that efforts are coordinated, that progress toward statewide goals is being made, and that prevention is a priority of all of the agencies with responsibility for youth.

#### ***Embedding Prevention in State Policy and Practice***

The National Crime Prevention Council is working with selected states and communities to implement prevention as the policy of choice for reducing crime, violence and drug abuse.

The initiative stresses the importance of executive leadership and coordination among state agencies. Six states – Arizona, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Kentucky and Oregon – are the first to participate.

Of the six, California is the only one without the endorsement of its Governor. The Attorney General's involvement permitted California's participation.

### ***Shifting the Focus***

*Shifting the Focus* is an interagency partnership among state agencies and departments that administer youth violence prevention programs.

It identifies and attempts to overcome barriers to collaboration at the state level to provide better, less fragmented service to communities.

The Attorney General and Health and Human Services Secretary have supported the effort by dedicating high level staff and resources. But commitment from the leaders of other agencies – and institutionalization of the process – are missing.

High profile leadership and executive-level management is critical to make prevention a priority and integrate the State's disparate efforts. But unifying the state's policies for youth has been hampered by the complexity of the programs, lack of common goals and objectives, and turf issues. The enormity of the task has precluded the transition from individual programs to statewide strategy.

A cabinet-level position could be established to provide the day-to-day leadership that reforms will require: forging and sustaining partnerships among state agencies, ensuring that their practices are consistent with statewide goals, and serving as a liaison between the State and communities.

**3. Meet the needs of local communities.** Effective community-based youth violence prevention efforts are multidisciplinary, multifaceted and collaborative. Those same qualities should characterize the State's prevention strategy, capturing the value of having multiple disciplines involved in prevention.

Guidance from a multidisciplinary advisory body would ensure that policies and practices are multidisciplinary, reflect the needs of California's diverse communities and the latest understanding of youth violence prevention issues.

In its 1987 report, *The Children's Service Delivery System in California*, the Commission examined the State's problems serving children in need of child care services, runaway/homeless youth and abused and neglected children. It recommended establishment of a Commission on Children and Youth or a Children's Czar to allow California to set overall state priorities for serving children, coordinating services, eliminating duplication and reducing gaps in service.

In its 1992 report, *Mending Our Broken Children: Restructuring Foster Care in California*, the Commission focused on key issues surrounding out-of-home placement for children in California. Among the Commission's primary recommendations were greater emphasis on prevention programs and establishment of a Child Development and Education Agency. In 1992, then-Governor Wilson created a Secretary for Child Development and Education by executive order. But attempts to fully authorize a children's services agency failed.

Most recently, in its 1999 report, *Now In Our Hands: Caring for California's Abused and Neglected Children*, the Commission recommended that the Governor and Legislature create an Office of Child Services, headed by an Undersecretary of Child Services, responsible for preventing child abuse and caring for abused children. Again, the Commission recommended focusing more resources on prevention.

### ***Summary: Use Momentum, Seize the Moment***

There is evidence and momentum for making prevention the policy of choice for reducing youth violence and for coordinating and integrating the State's efforts in this area. As one analyst observed, "Youth violence prevention has more traction than ever before in the Legislature. For a critical mass of Democrats and Republicans, this is an issue."<sup>56</sup>

*Shifting the Focus* has begun the work, but the process must be institutionalized. Making youth violence prevention a priority will require commitment and leadership from the top, and a structure that organizes and aligns all of California's related efforts with prevention goals.

California has an unprecedented opportunity to make a difference in the lives of millions of young people, their families and their communities. Research and the tireless efforts of communities across the country have provided the tools to prevent and intervene – cost effectively – in the tragedy of youth violence. But unless California accepts the challenge, the momentum – and the moment – will be lost.

***Recommendation 2: To make prevention the primary policy response to youth crime and violence, the State needs to create the organizational infrastructure to define goals, establish strategies and implement programs, as outlined below.***

***A community-focused Youth Violence Prevention Coordinating Council should be established to define and advocate for a youth violence prevention policy agenda that meets the needs of California communities. Specifically, the council should:***

- ❑ ***Be appointed by top policy-makers.*** Community members representing schools, law enforcement, social services, public health, the judiciary, parents and youth should be appointed by the Governor, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- ❑ ***Develop community indicators and set goals.*** Community health indicators, outcome measures that reflect the well-being of families and young people, should be developed in cooperation with state agencies that have a role in prevention. The council should use these indicators to set prevention goals, assess needs, craft prevention strategies, evaluate performance, and document progress and trends for the public.

It should propose expenditures to support an effective continuum of youth violence prevention strategies.

- ❑ **Identify barriers.** The council should identify organizational, funding and procedural barriers to accomplishing California’s goals for prevention and recommend ways to overcome them. It also should recommend ways to ensure that juvenile justice, education, child welfare and other policies are not undermining those goals by excluding children from the treatment necessary to heal trauma and prevent future violence. The council should identify statutory, regulatory and operational changes that need to be made. It should identify ways to streamline, standardize or consolidate applications and accounting forms.
- ❑ **Assess progress.** The council should annually report to policy-makers and the public on the progress California has made toward prevention goals, including trends in community health, the embedding of prevention in state policies, and improvements in the administration of state programs.

***The Governor should appoint a Secretary for Youth Development and Violence Prevention with the authority and responsibility to advance a community-focused youth crime and violence prevention strategy. The secretary should:***

#### ***Making Prevention a Priority***

In its 1994 report, *The Juvenile Crime Challenge: Making Prevention a Priority*, the Little Hoover Commission’s central recommendation was for the State to make prevention a priority.

In 1995, Attorney General Dan Lungren’s Policy Council on Violence Prevention issued a report that recommended prevention and early intervention as top priorities.

In 1996, the California Task Force on Juvenile Crime and the Juvenile Justice response concluded: “California lacks a central state mechanism for the identification, funding and coordination of... violence prevention programs. Reinvigorated leadership is needed to raise the overall priority given to violence prevention efforts throughout the state.” In 1999, the chair of the task force told the Little Hoover Commission that of the 16 prevention recommendations in the report, only one had been implemented.

Source: Grover Trask testimony to Little Hoover Commission, August 24, 2000.

- ❑ **Provide day-to-day leadership.** The secretary should serve as a member of the Youth Violence Prevention Coordinating Council. The secretary should serve as the liaison between the council, “Shifting the Focus” and the Legislature.
- ❑ **Coordinate state efforts.** The secretary should be charged with formalizing “Shifting the Focus” and should serve as its chairperson. The secretary annually should recommend to the Governor and Legislature ways to improve the coordination, integration or consolidation of the funding and administration of youth violence prevention programs. Over time, the secretary should identify ways that other children’s services could be improved to make them more effective at improving the health, well-being and resiliency of the Californians they serve.
- ❑ **Promote public understanding.** The secretary should promote public-private partnerships to educate Californians on the cost and public safety benefits of prevention and promote citizen action and involvement in violence prevention.

The graphic on the following page displays these recommendations.

