

# **Situational Crime Prevention Strategies**

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# Crime Prevention

Intervening in the causal chain to prevent crime from occurring at all

# Types of Crime Prevention

## **Primary prevention**

- Effecting conditions of the physical and social environment that provide opportunities for or precipitate criminal acts.

## **Secondary prevention**

- Engages in early identification of potential offenders and seeks to intervene before the commission of illegal activity

## **Tertiary prevention**

- Dealing with actual offenders and intervention

# Two ways to prevent crime

1. Change people's criminal motivations
2. Reduce opportunities for crime

# Situational crime prevention (SCP)

1. Primary crime prevention.
2. The art and science of reducing opportunities for crime
3. Based on new crime theories:
  - Rational choice
  - Routine activity

SCP seeks to influence the offender's decision or ability to commit crimes at particular Places and times by way of particularly designed measures.

# Focus of New Crime Theories

- Crime, not criminality
- Events, not dispositions
- Near, not distant causes of crime
- How crime occurs, not why it happens
- Situational and opportunity factors

# 5 Ways to Modify a Situation

- **Increasing the effort** the offender must make to carry out the crime.
- **Increasing the risks** the offender must face in completing the crime.
- **Reducing the rewards** or benefits the offender expects to obtain from the crime.
- **Reducing or avoiding provocations** that may tempt or incite offenders into criminal acts
- **Removing excuses** that offenders may use to “rationalize” or justify their actions.



# Reducing Opportunity

Criminal opportunity is reduced by:

- **Increasing the effort** involved in crime by making the targets harder to get at or hindering the commission of crime (e.g., target hardening, access control, exit and entrance screening)
- **Increasing the risks**, whether real or perceived, of detection and apprehension (e.g., surveillance, screening, profiling)
- **Reducing the rewards of crime**, (e.g., target removal, property marking, merchandise ink-tags)


# Reducing Opportunity

- **Reducing or avoiding provocations** that may tempt or incite offenders into criminal acts
- **Removing excuses** that offenders may use to “rationalize” or justify their actions.

# Reducing Opportunity

Opportunity for crime can be reduced directly & indirectly:

- (i) **Directly**: "organizing" the immediate physical environment (e.g., target hardening, access control, target removal)
- (ii) **Indirectly**: "organizing" people to foster or reinforce their individual and collective behaviour to minimize their vulnerability to crime (e.g., Neighbourhood Watch)

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- SCP involves the management, design, or manipulation of the immediate physical environment
  - Primary objective: **reduce the opportunity** for criminal activity
  - Opportunity for reducing crime can be pursued by: (i) "organizing" the immediate physical environment or (ii) organizing individuals (e.g., Neighbourhood Watch)

# Triangle



- when a crime occurs, three things happen at the same time and in the same space:
  1. a suitable target is available.
  2. there is the lack of a suitable guardian to prevent the crime from happening.
  3. a motivated offender is present.

# TWENTY FIVE TECHNIQUES OF SITUATIONAL PREVENTION

Increase the Effort	Increase the Risks	Reduce the Rewards	Reduce Provocations	Remove Excuses
<p><b>Harden Targets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering column locks and immobilisers</li> <li>Anti-robbery screens</li> <li>Tamper-proof packaging</li> </ul>	<p><b>Extend guardianship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take routine precautions: go out in group at night, leave signs of occupancy, carry phone</li> <li>"Cocoon" neighborhood watch</li> </ul>	<p><b>Conceal targets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Off-street parking</li> <li>Gender-neutral phone directories</li> <li>Unmarked bullion trucks</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reduce frustrations and stress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Efficient queues and polite service</li> <li>Expanded seating</li> <li>Soothing music/muted lights</li> </ul>	<p><b>Set rules</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rental agreements</li> <li>Harassment codes</li> <li>Hotel registration</li> </ul>
<p><b>Control access to facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entry phones</li> <li>Electronic card access</li> <li>Baggage screening</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assist natural surveillance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved street lighting</li> <li>Defensible space design</li> <li>Support whistleblowers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Remove targets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removable car radio</li> <li>Women's refuges</li> <li>Pre-paid cards for pay phones</li> </ul>	<p><b>Avoid disputes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate enclosures for rival soccer fans</li> <li>Reduce crowding in pubs</li> <li>Fixed cab fares</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post instructions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"No Parking"</li> <li>"Private Property"</li> <li>"Extinguish camp fires"</li> </ul>
<p><b>Screen exits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ticket needed for exit</li> <li>Export documents</li> <li>Electronic merchandise tags</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reduce anonymity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taxi driver IDs</li> <li>"How's my driving?" decals</li> <li>School uniforms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Identify property</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Property marking</li> <li>Vehicle licensing and parts marking</li> <li>Cattle branding</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reduce emotional arousal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Controls on violent pornography</li> <li>Enforce good behavior on soccer field</li> <li>Prohibit racial slurs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Alert conscience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roadside speed display boards</li> <li>Signatures for customs declarations</li> <li>"Shoplifting is stealing"</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deflect offenders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street closures</li> <li>Separate bathrooms for women</li> <li>Disperse pubs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Utilize place managers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCTV for double-deck buses</li> <li>Two clerks for convenience stores</li> <li>Reward vigilance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Disrupt markets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor pawn shops</li> <li>Controls on classified ads.</li> <li>License street vendors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Neutralize peer pressure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Idiots drink and drive"</li> <li>"It's OK to say No"</li> <li>Disperse troublemakers at school</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assist compliance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy library checkout</li> <li>Public lavatories</li> <li>Litter bins</li> </ul>
<p><b>Control tools/ weapons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Smart" guns</li> <li>Disabling stolen cell phones</li> <li>Restrict spray paint sales to juveniles</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strengthen formal surveillance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Red light cameras</li> <li>Burglar alarms</li> <li>Security guards</li> </ul>	<p><b>Deny benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ink merchandise tags</li> <li>Graffiti cleaning</li> <li>Speed humps</li> </ul>	<p><b>Discourage imitation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rapid repair of vandalism</li> <li>V-chips in TVs</li> <li>Censor details of modus operandi</li> </ul>	<p><b>Control drugs and alcohol</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breathalyzers in pubs</li> <li>Server intervention</li> <li>Alcohol-free events</li> </ul>

# Increase the Effort

- Harden Targets
- Control Access
- Screen Exits
- Deflect Offenders
- Control Tools/Weapons

# Increase the Risks

- Extend guardianship
- Assist natural surveillance
- Reduce Anonymity
- Utilize place managers
- Strengthen formal surveillance



# Reduce the Rewards

- Conceal targets
- Remove targets
- Identify property
- Disrupt markets
- Deny benefits

# Reduce the Provocations

- Reduce frustrations and stress
- Avoid disputes
- Reduce emotional arousal
- Neutralize peer pressure
- Discourage imitation

# Remove the Excuses

- Set Rules
- Post instructions
- Alert conscience
- Assist compliance
- Control drugs and alcohol

# Broken Windows Theory

- Minor incivilities, if unchecked and uncontrolled, will promote more serious crimes
- 'Incivilities' act as the catalyst: they represent signs of disorder and signify that 'no one cares', that the environment is 'uncontrolled and uncontrollable'
- Solution: stop and reverse the cycle of decline in its earliest stages by a focus on 'order maintenance' and aggressive policing of incivilities and other signs of crime.





**Problem oriented policing (POP)**

**<http://www.popcenter.org>**

# Online Exercise

Complete the [25 Techniques Module](#)

at

<http://www.popcenter.org/25techniques.htm>

# POP and SCP - SIMILARITIES

- Both are preventive approaches; one is defined within policing while the other is not
- Both originated in the 1970's, SCP in the UK and POP in the USA
- Both focus on highly specific problems
- Both use action research models

# Action research

## POP

- Scanning
- Analysis
- Response
- Assessment

## SCP

- Data collection
- Analysis of problem
- Choice of solution
- Implementation
- Evaluation



# POP vs. SCP - DIFFERENCES

<b>SCP</b>	<b>POP</b>
<b>Origins:</b> Crime theory	<b>Origins:</b> Police management theory
<b>Focus:</b> Crime and disorder problems	<b>Focus:</b> Police and community problems
Implemented by an agency with a crime or disorder problem	Implemented by police
Well-evaluated	Widely implemented

# Importance of the 25 Techniques

- Help to systematize our knowledge
- Provides a stimulus for research
- The techniques may overlap - Increasing efforts can also increase risks
- Some preventive measures can serve more than one purpose
- Best used to help further thinking at the Response phase of the SARA process

# Limitations

Not all techniques are equally suitable for all types of crimes. For example:

- Removing excuses may be most effective for dealing with “everyday” crimes
- Reducing provocations may be most effective in closed environments

# Exercise I

- Take a walk on campus (or throughout your city) and identify some places/areas that might benefit from situational crime prevention.
- Using the 25 techniques of SCP, write up a summary of recommendations for improving those areas and reducing the likelihood of criminal activity.

# Exercise 2

- Identify/devise some low-cost situational crime prevention methods that would make a college dormitory more secure.

# Exercise 3

- In an effort to maximize effectiveness, try to match each of the 25 techniques to a specific crime or disorder problem.
- Explain your rationale.

# Online/Group Exercise

- Using the [25 Techniques](#), break into groups and develop two crime prevention techniques from each of the five categories (a total of 10) for one of the following crime problems:
  - Drunk driving
  - Assaults at public place
  - Robbery
  - Delinquency
  - Shoplifting
  - Disorderly youth at public place
  - Theft of vehicles
  - Street prostitution
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