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)
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)
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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase the Effort</th>
<th>Increase the Risks</th>
<th>Reduce the Rewards</th>
<th>Reduce Provocations</th>
<th>Remove Excuses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harden Targets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Extend guardianship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conceal targets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reduce frustrations and stress</strong></td>
<td><strong>Set rules</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Steering column locks and immobilisers</td>
<td>- Take routine precautions: go out in group at night, leave signs of occupancy, carry phone</td>
<td>- Off-street parking</td>
<td>- Efficient queues and polite service</td>
<td>- Rental agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Anti-robery screens</td>
<td>- “Cocoon” neighborhood watch</td>
<td>- Gender-neutral phone directories</td>
<td>- Expanded seating</td>
<td>- Harassment codes</td>
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<td>- Tamper-proof packaging</td>
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<td>- Unmarked bullion trucks</td>
<td>- Soothing music/muted lights</td>
<td>- Hotel registration</td>
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<td><strong>Control access to facilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assist natural surveillance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Remove targets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Avoid disputes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post instructions</strong></td>
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<td>- Entry phones</td>
<td>- Improved street lighting</td>
<td>- Removable car radio</td>
<td>- Separate enclosures for rival soccer fans</td>
<td>- &quot;No Parking&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Electronic card access Baggage screening</td>
<td>- Defensible space design</td>
<td>- Women's refuges</td>
<td>- Reduce crowding in pubs</td>
<td>- &quot;Private Property&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Pre-paid cards for pay phones</td>
<td>- Fixed cab fares</td>
<td>- &quot;Extinguish camp fires&quot;</td>
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<td><strong>Screen exits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reduce anonymity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify property</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reduce emotional arousal</strong></td>
<td><strong>Alert conscience</strong></td>
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<td>- Ticket needed for exit</td>
<td>- Taxi driver IDs</td>
<td>- Property marking</td>
<td>- Controls on violent pornography</td>
<td>- Roadside speed display boards</td>
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<td>- Export documents</td>
<td>- &quot;How's my driving?’ decals</td>
<td>- Vehicle licensing and parts marking</td>
<td>- Enforce good behavior on soccer field</td>
<td>- Signatures for customs declarations</td>
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<td>- Electronic merchandise tags</td>
<td>- School uniforms</td>
<td>- Cattle branding</td>
<td>- Prohibit racial slurs</td>
<td>- &quot;Shoplifting is stealing&quot;</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Deflect offenders</strong></td>
<td><strong>Utilize place managers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disrupt markets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neutralize peer pressure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assist compliance</strong></td>
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<td>- Street closures</td>
<td>- CCTV for double-deck buses</td>
<td>- Monitor pawn shops</td>
<td>- &quot;Idiots drink and drive&quot;</td>
<td>- Easy library checkout</td>
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<td>- Separate bathrooms for women</td>
<td>- Two clerks for convenience stores</td>
<td>- Controls on classified ads.</td>
<td>- &quot;It's OK to say No&quot;</td>
<td>- Public lavatories</td>
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<td>- Disperse pubs</td>
<td>- Reward vigilance</td>
<td>- License street vendors</td>
<td>- Disperse troublemakers at school</td>
<td>- Litter bins</td>
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<td><strong>Control tools/ weapons</strong></td>
<td><strong>Strengthen formal surveillance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Deny benefits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discourage imitation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Control drugs and alcohol</strong></td>
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<td>- &quot;Smart&quot; guns</td>
<td>- Red light cameras</td>
<td>- Ink merchandise tags</td>
<td>- Rapid repair of vandalism</td>
<td>- Breathalyzers in pubs</td>
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<td>- Disabling stolen cell phones</td>
<td>- Burglar alarms</td>
<td>- Graffiti cleaning</td>
<td>- V-chips in TVs</td>
<td>- Server intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Restrict spray paint sales to juveniles</td>
<td>- Security guards</td>
<td>- Speed humps</td>
<td>- Censor details of modus operandi</td>
<td>- Alcohol-free events</td>
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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

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<th>POP</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Origins:</strong></td>
<td>Crime theory</td>
<td>Police management theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong></td>
<td>Crime and disorder problems</td>
<td>Police and community problems</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Implemented by</strong></td>
<td>an agency with a crime or disorder problem</td>
<td>Implemented by police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Well-evaluated</strong></td>
<td>Well-evaluated</td>
<td>Widely implemented</td>
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</table>
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 1

- 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