



# **State Administering Agencies for Edward Byrne Memorial Block Grant Funds A Snapshot -- Summer 2004**

## **Executive Summary: Potentials, Challenges, and Next Steps**

The state agencies that manage Edward Byrne Memorial Block Grants (the agencies commonly known as SAAs) direct substantial national resources to public safety in their communities. Where does crime prevention stand in the use of these funds? What might help to improve prevention's priority in such funding? This report provides a basis for looking more closely at answers to these and related questions.

The National Crime Prevention Council on behalf of the Crime Prevention Coalition of America conducted a survey of SAAs chiefly by e-mail and fax during the summer of 2004. Forty-eight of the 50 state SAAs replied. Responses from the non-state SAAs will be tallied separately. The survey methodology and survey responses are detailed at the end of the Executive Summary.

In the majority of states, crime prevention receives very little of the Edward Byrne Memorial Block Grant Funds. More than half of the respondent agencies (55.1 percent) award less than 10 percent of their grant funds to crime prevention. Three out of four (74.5 percent) of SAAs allocate less than 20 percent of their Byrne Block Grant funds to crime prevention. Crime prevention is one of the specified program areas in which Byrne funds may be awarded by states to applicants. It is arguable that some of the other categories of funding permitted by Byrne legislation are preventive in nature, but no respondents mentioned such a connection.

A second major finding reveals that Byrne Block Grants Funds go chiefly to a limited range of recipient groups. Local law enforcement, state government agencies, local government (non-law-enforcement) agencies, and criminal justice groups receive Byrne funds from half or more of the respondent agencies. All respondents said they funded local law enforcement agencies. Virtually all (99% ) fund state government agencies. Seven out of ten respondents (72%) fund local government non-law enforcement agencies. Half of the responding agencies fund criminal justice groups. Three out of ten fund schools (30%) and community groups (32%). Only one in five (19%) funds state crime prevention associations. Faith-based groups are funded by 17 percent; public housing authorities are funded by 13%.

This pattern is not surprising for a number of reasons. The composition of the boards that allocate Byrne funds likely plays a role. Better than seven of ten respondents include state law enforcement, local law enforcement, and other state agencies on their boards. About half of respondents include other local government (55%) and community leaders (43%) in these boards. A key question is how well informed board members are about crime prevention's value and potential to their states. Another is the extent to which their own experience predisposes them to favor or reject prevention. A third is whether they see valid crime prevention roles for agencies other than their own.

Another area which might affect funding patterns is the relatively limited knowledge of crime prevention within SAAs. In six out of ten responding agencies, fewer than 20 percent of the staff have crime prevention expertise. This suggests that agencies may not have the most up-to-date information on crime prevention or the ability to properly analyze crime prevention grant applications.

A third consideration that may well skew distribution of Byrne funds is whether (and with what quality) applications for prevention projects are received. It may be that, despite help offered by the SAAs, crime prevention applicants do not submit high quality proposals. It may also be that potential crime prevention applicants are unaware of the availability of Byrne funds or their eligibility to receive them.

A fourth significant finding is that SAAs do combine and coordinate Byrne grant monies with other federal and state grants. Half or more of the SAAs report linking Byrne funds with other Office of Justice Programs (federal) funds, with other state criminal justice funds, with federal substance abuse prevention funds, with other state funds, with Safe and Drug Free Schools (federal) funds, with some other type of federal funds, or with other state funds. Given the low priority of crime prevention funds within the SAAs, it is projectable that such coordination may only push crime prevention lower when the priorities of multiple agencies are combined, especially in the absence of vocal proponents.

Few SAAs (18%) combine Byrne funds with state crime prevention funds (which may be accounted for by the number of state crime prevention programs (19) identified in a companion survey). Fewer than five percent of SAAs coordinate Byrne monies with homeland security, Project Safe Neighborhood, High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), highway safety, mental health, or other types of funds.

### **Potentials**

The expressed needs of SAAs in a number of substantive crime prevention areas presents an important opportunity to boost prevention. Linking homeland security with crime prevention (84%), help with drug and gang prevention (68%), developing crime prevention program standards (47%), and improving training and program development (47%) are among the topics requested by the greatest numbers of SAAs.

Another area of opportunity is educating the Byrne boards -- the groups charged with directing these funds. The positive results and cost-effectiveness of prevention programs, the importance of reducing fear as well as crime, and the leveraging of investment are all persuasive arguments for putting more money toward prevention. If Byrne board members are better informed about prevention, they will likely increase their support for it.

A third opportunity lies in linking the SAAs with crime prevention associations and programs in those states where such partnerships are possible. There may be situations where local or regional associations and state programs that deal in some major aspect of crime prevention can be brought together with SAAs in the absence of fully developed state crime prevention associations or programs. A major part of fostering such relationships may involve strengthening crime prevention associations and programs.

Those SAAs with some resident crime prevention expertise may well be more receptive to supporting prevention. Analysis suggests that careerist-headed agencies are somewhat more likely to disburse more funds toward crime prevention, but the staff experience alone is not necessarily predictive of the share of funds directed to crime prevention. Education for careerists on effective prevention programming and outreach to appointed agency heads on crime prevention's community benefits may prove helpful in drawing more support toward crime prevention. Crime prevention updates to SAA staff may be equally beneficial.

There is currently a strong push for improving program design, implementation, and evaluation in the field. The fact that about half of the SAAs are interested in program standards for crime prevention provides an excellent opportunity for building a platform for both program and practitioner standards. These standards might even be positively enforced by linking them with grants. Certainly, these states will be interested in evidence of crime prevention's effectiveness.

An additional opportunity that emerges for NCPC is the potential for SAAs to support localizing of public service ads (PSAs) that address pertinent issues for their states. For example, the community preparedness PSAs and the internet safety PSAs for children and adults meet needs expressed by a number of states. We have print materials that can be localized and serve as leverage for state groups' resources.

## **Challenges**

The low level of grant support for crime prevention is the greatest challenge this study has identified. Institutional inertia is among the most difficult situations to change. It requires patience, persistence, and a sympathetic understanding of the forces that affect the institution. For SAAs, money that is spent cleanly on projects that are instantly understood (e.g. multijurisdictional task forces) may appeal because the margin for programmatic and bookkeeping error is relatively small and finding local funding for these endeavors is often difficult. Diversifying funds will require thoughtful, consistent, long-term strategy and energy.

A second challenge presented by these findings is to identify the range of crime prevention activity in each state that takes place outside SAAs. In some cases, states have programs in various departments that handle different aspects of crime prevention; there is no focal point. This decentralization means that crime prevention advocates may exist, but may never have been linked with the national movement. A certain amount of detective work will be necessary to identify these state-level programs and make the connections.

Among the interesting challenges these findings present is the need to help SAAs form working relationships outside other state agencies and state and local law enforcement. By and large, both working relationships and funding by SAAs are confined to government agencies. The benefits of involving other sectors, benefits learned in community justice (including community policing, community courts, and community corrections) need to be made available and attractive to the SAAs. Successful experiences should be well publicized and shared.

In order to better understand crime prevention's role within SAAs, clarification on some questions raised by the survey findings should be explored. With a more in-depth knowledge of the SAAs' activities, more informed solutions and suggestions can be offered and work to make crime prevention a priority will be more successful.

-- The survey does not speak to whether SAAs are receiving few or no requests for Byrne funds from crime prevention programs or whether the applications are lacking in quality or some other feature that makes them not fundable.

-- Analysis of the Byrne agency funding patterns as reported to BJA might provide information on whether crime prevention activities are being funded under other purpose categories. It might also suggest ways in which the SAAs could help programs include a preventive aspect in their proposed operations.

-- It is unclear where crime prevention is positioned in the state strategic plans that are provided to the Bureau of Justice Assistance as part of the Byrne funding process. Analysis of this data (and of the degree to which states adhere to these plans) could help develop a measure of states' commitment to crime prevention.

### **Next Steps**

NCPC will develop findings and recommendations across three studies - State Crime Prevention Associations, State Crime Prevention Programs, State Administering Agencies, and share these with Coalition members and other interested parties. NCPC will use the findings of all this research in developing action plans and strategic direction.

In the coming months NCPC will be compiling *Crime Prevention 2005: Status and Trends*. The last work of its type was published almost 20 years ago and needs to be updated. The report will draw from the three major studies conducted during the summer of 2004 of the state crime prevention associations, programs and state administering agencies as well as a number of other sources.

### **Methodology**

The National Crime Prevention Council developed this questionnaire for state agencies that administer federal Edward Byrne Memorial Block Grant funds. The Byrne process provides funds to states through boards appointed by the governors of each of the states. The agencies charged with administration provide the staff support to the board, ministerial services needed to disburse and account properly for these funds, and assurance that the laws and regulations regarding their use are followed. NCPC benefitted from insights of the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) in identifying issues this questionnaire should address, but NCPC is solely responsible for the questionnaire and for this report.

The survey was conducted by E-mail, with E-mail and telephone follow-ups. Respondents were invited to fax or E-mail the completed survey to NCPC and were reminded of this multiple times. The NCJA's executive director graciously offered to submit the survey to the SAAs, most of whom are members of NCJA. NCPC conducted the follow-ups, which included E-mail and telephone reminders. Data were collected between August and September 15, 2004.

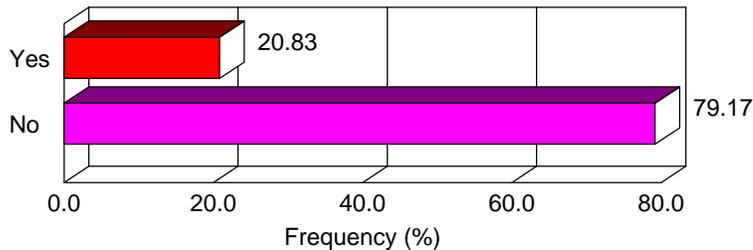
Forty-eight of the fifty states provided responses. Only Minnesota and Washington failed to submit responses. The responses of the non-state SAAs (District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and Northern Marianas) will be discussed in a separate report.

## What Are Some Key Characteristics of SAAs?

SAAs are typically housed outside the governor's immediate office. A substantial majority are located in state agencies whose chief focus is criminal justice. By a 2 to 1 ratio, they are headed by appointees rather than careerists.

### Most SAAs Are Located Outside Governors' Offices

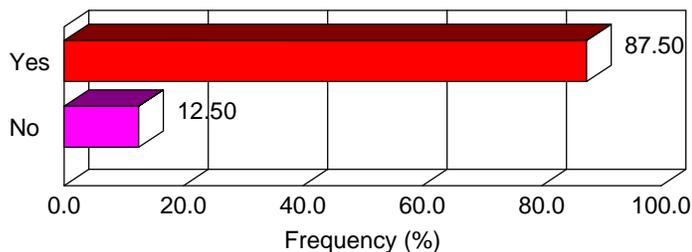
Is the SAA directly within the governor's office?



Only one in five SAAs is located directly in a governor's offices, though governors are given the administrative power of directing Byrne funds. This finding suggests that the sizable majority of SAAs are relatively insulated against day to day political activity while providing the overall criminal justice expertise and experience to handle the Byrne program more effectively.

### Seven Out of Eight SAAs Are in Agencies Focused on Criminal Justice

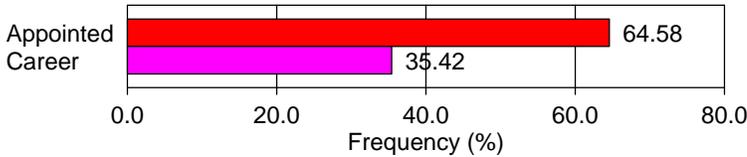
Is criminal justice the main focus of your agency?



The substantial majority of SAAs are located in state agencies that primarily focus on criminal justice. If the immediate demands of the state's criminal justice system are high, it is possible that crime prevention may not have a strong enough presence to gain a place at the table when funding is distributed.

## Two Out of Three SAAs Are Headed by Appointees

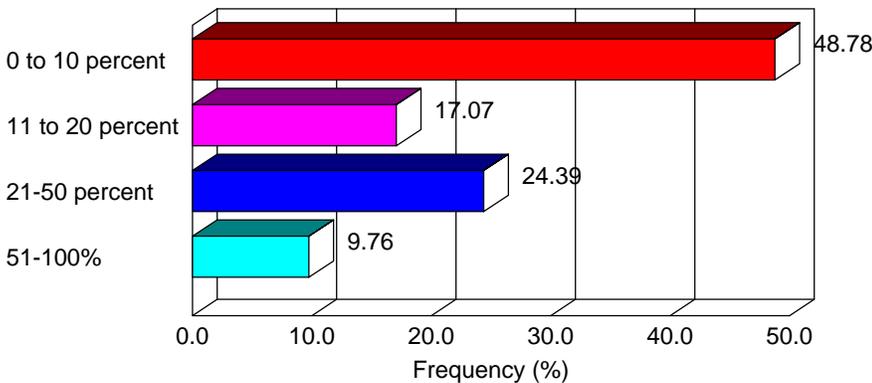
Is the head of the program an appointed or a career person?



Two thirds of SAAs are headed by appointed persons rather than career civil servants. The appointment process may or may not result in someone familiar with crime prevention assuming this key post, which argues for education of SAA chiefs on crime prevention's benefits.

## Six out of Ten SAAs Have Limited Crime Prevention Expertise on Staff

How many staff members have crime prevention expertise? (Please indicate number (FTE) and percent)



Crime prevention expertise is sparse in more than six out of ten SAAs. In just about half (48.8 percent) of SAAs, fewer than 10 percent of the staff have crime prevention experience. In almost one fifth (17.5 percent), only 11 to 20 percent of the staff have crime prevention expertise. This, in two thirds of the SAAs, fewer than 20 percent of the staff have crime prevention expertise. This lack of expertise may well mean the SAAs are uninformed or under-informed about crime prevention developments.

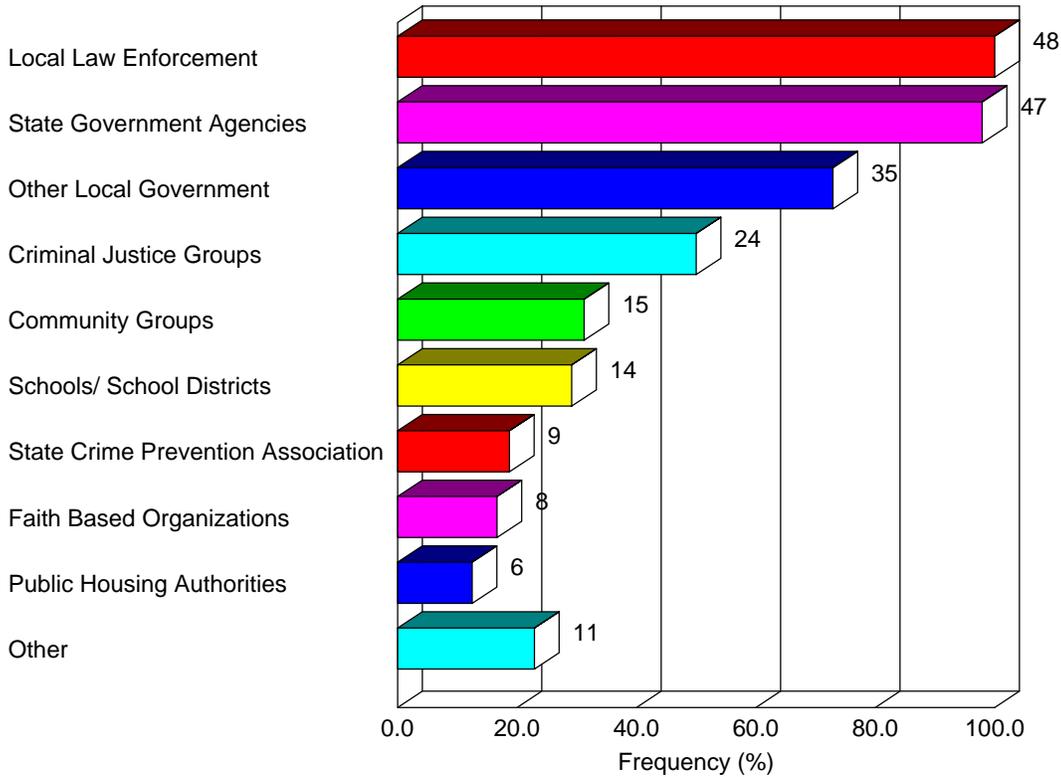
## Byrne Funding Panels Consistently Include State/Local Law Enforcement, Other State Agencies

Who sits on the board that allocates Byrne funds?			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0 100
State Law Enforcement	40	83.3%	
Other State Agency	35	72.9%	
Local Law Enforcement	36	75.0%	
Other Local Government	27	56.3%	
Community Leaders	21	43.8%	
judges	3	6.3%	
N/A	3	6.3%	
private citizens	3	6.3%	
U.S. Attorney	2	4.2%	
Other	20	41.7%	
Totals	48	n/a	

Seven out of ten states include state law enforcement, other state agencies, and local law enforcement in the composition of their Byrne funding panels (aka boards). Just about half of states include other local government (non-law-enforcement) and community leaders. There is no consistent and widespread outreach beyond the criminal justice community, based on the responses to this survey. There may be some benefit in encouraging the presence of persons outside the government who are substantially involved in crime prevention, either as a professional or as a volunteer.

# Byrne Grants Consistently Go to Local Law Enforcement, Other State/Local Government Agencies

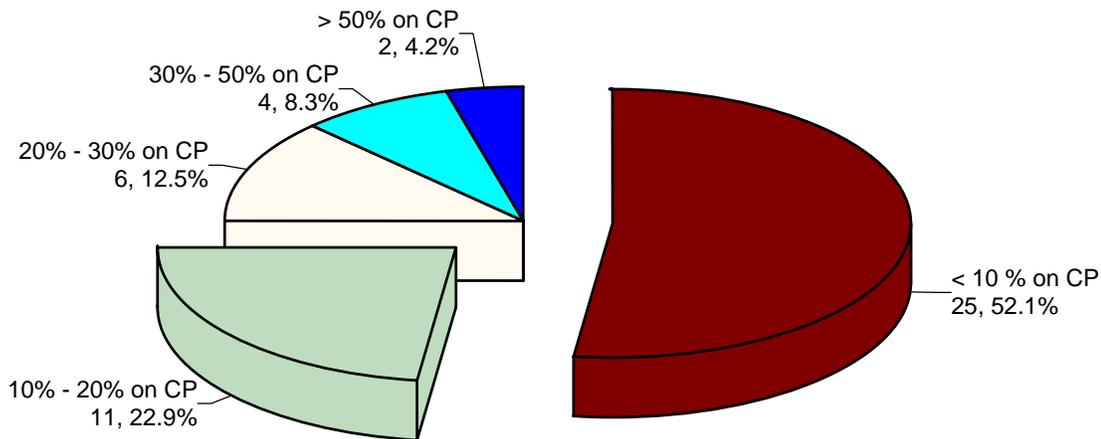
Who receives grants from Byrne funds?



\* Note: Multiple answer percentage-count totals not meaningful.

The distribution of Byrne grantees within the states makes it clear that these funds go to local governments (law enforcement and other agencies) and to state governments. One strategic move to consider is a "bubble up" approach in which current recipients are trained and supported in tapping Byrne funds for prevention programs. Four out of five SAAs offer training in grant writing and other subjects; these skills could be focused on outreach toward the non- government prevention community.

## Majority of States Put Less Than 10 Percent of Byrne Funds Toward Prevention

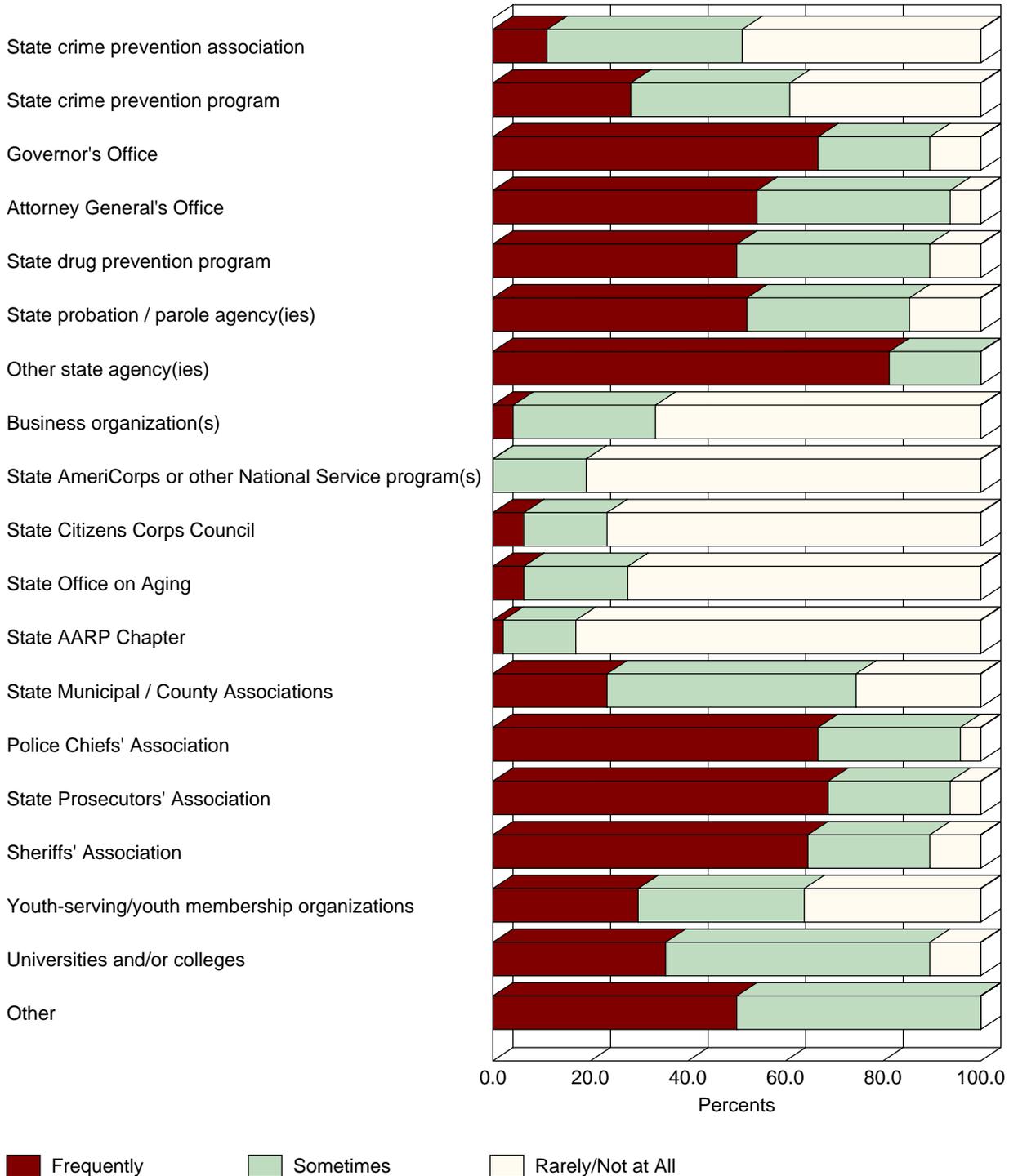


What percentage of the Byrne funds are allocated for crime prevention work? (Please estimate.)

This is beyond doubt the single statistic that generates the greatest concern about prevention. Despite its proven cost-effectiveness, prevention is receiving only a minimal amount of funding through the Byrne allocations to each of the states.

Potential strategies to address this problem are many. What NCPC or federal agencies may be empowered to do about creating a focus on prevention cannot stand alone, however. Those persons in various states who are seeking support for prevention need to know how to convey their interest to appropriate state officials and agencies. They need to be able to prepare and present effective program proposals. They need to secure appropriate publicity for their prevention initiatives and to deliver meaningful results.

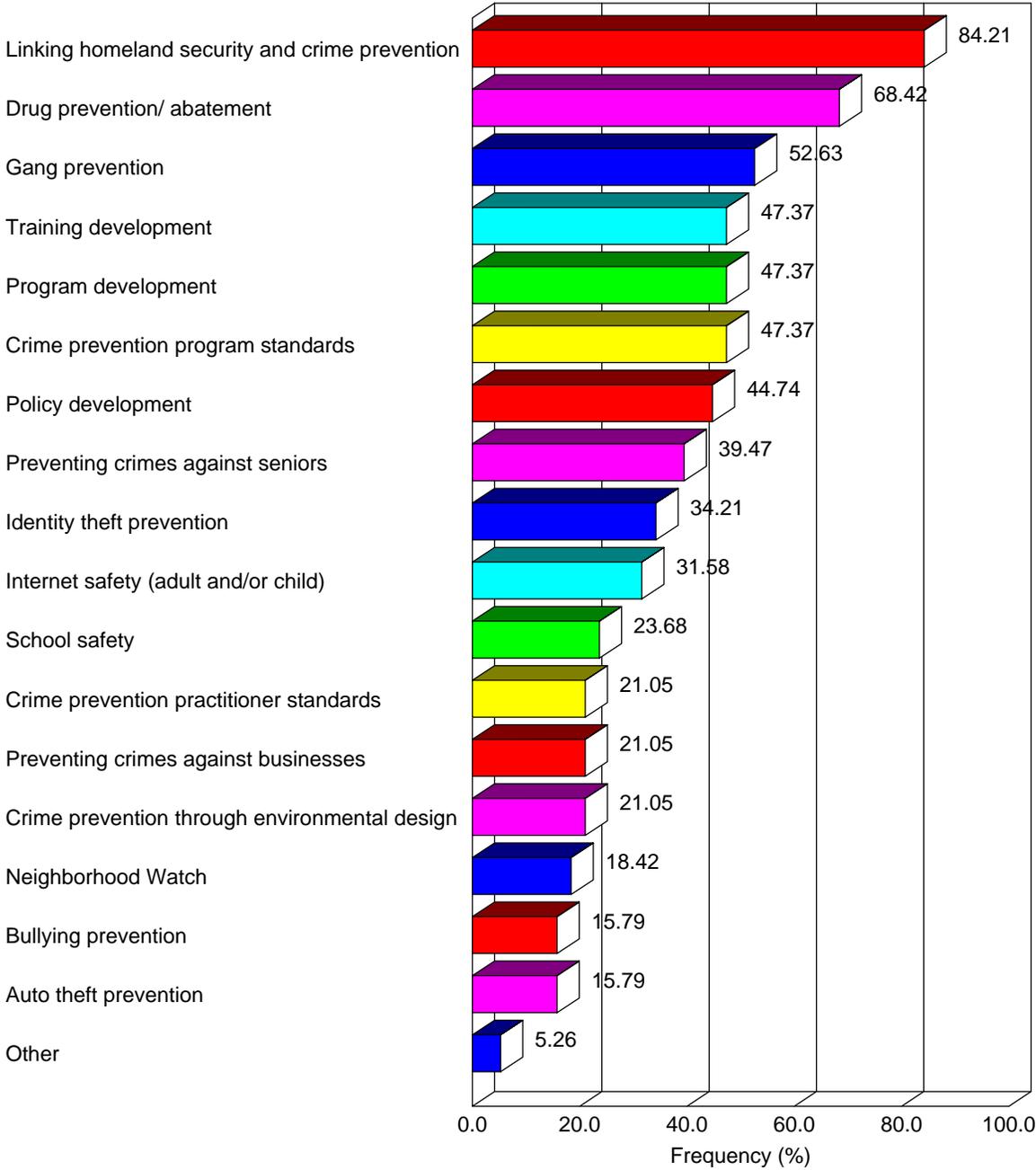
# SAAs Partner Often With State Criminal Justice Agencies and Law Enforcement; Less With Others



The criminal justice community comprises the substantial majority of SAA partnerships. This suggests that a fruitful area of effort would be to demonstrate, promote, and facilitate such partnerships, both to increase prevention programming and to broaden the concepts of community justice.

# SAAs Seek Assistance in Variety of Areas From Homeland Security to Internet Safety

Please indicate areas in which your agency would be interested in receiving help. Please check all that apply.



\* Note: Multiple answer percentage-count totals not meaningful.

SAAs clearly (6 out of 7) want help in linking homeland security and crime prevention. Two out of three (68%) want assistance in reducing drug use and dealing. About half are seeking gang prevention help or some assistance with program standards, training and program development. Beyond gangs and drugs, the major substantive areas of interest are crime against seniors, identity theft, and internet crime.

It is important to note that the substantial majority of SAAs are located in criminal justice agencies, which could account for the near-term prevention and enforcement-related subjects for which states seek help.

## Most States Have Seen Decreases in Crime Prevention Funding; Some Changes in Policy, Program Interest but Overall, No Net Change

SAsAs were asked their view of the situation in their states with respect to support for crime prevention policy, programs, and funding over the past three years.

Policy focus on crime prevention remained generally unchanged. A modestly larger number of states reported increases in policy focus than reported decreases.

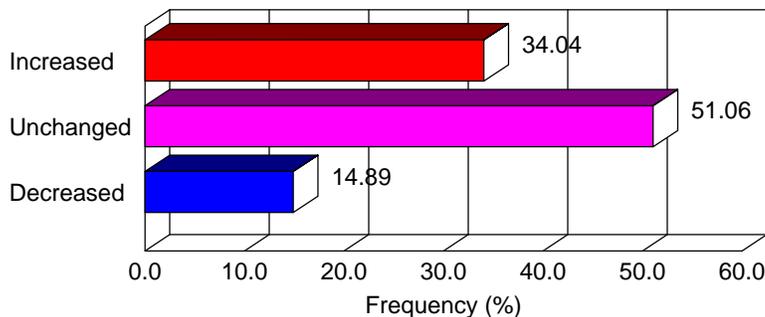
When asked about crime prevention program support, SAsAs reported generally that the past three years have seen no change. Those who did report change, reported almost 2 to 1 that support had increased.

State crime prevention funding unquestionably was static or decreased during the past three years. Almost equal numbers of states reported "no change" or "decreased." Only one percent reported an increase.

It may prove useful to perform further analysis on the states that reported increases in interest in policy and/or program activities. These states may be among the best candidates for further work in crime prevention.

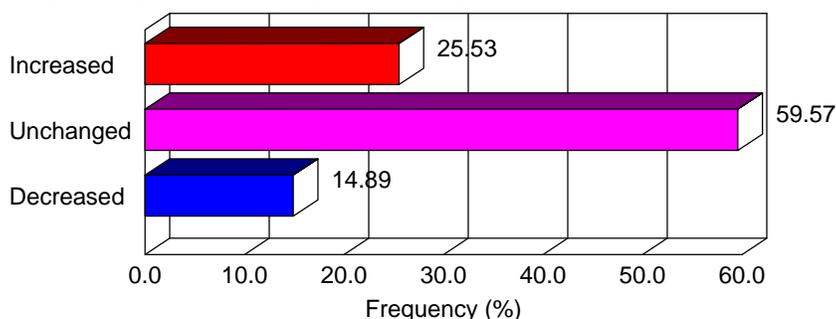
## Policy Focus on Crime Prevention Generally Unchanged; Modest Net Increase

Policy emphasis on crime prevention in your state



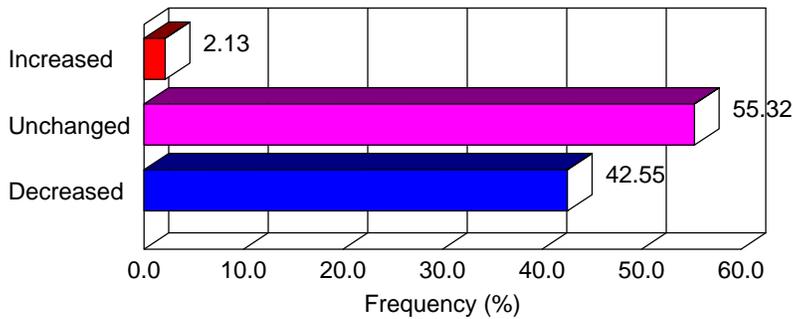
## Crime Prevention Program Emphasis Mostly Unchanged Over Three Years; Modest Net Increase

Program emphasis on crime prevention in your state



# State Funding For Crime Prevention Down/Unchanged in Nearly All States Over Past Three Years

Funding (from state level) for crime prevention



## More Than Half of SAAs Face Demand for Evidence-Based Programming

Does your state have requirements for evidence based programming in crime prevention or are they being considered?			
	Counts	Percents	Percents
			0                      100
Yes	8	17.0%	<div style="width: 17%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>
Soon to come	2	4.3%	<div style="width: 4.3%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>
Some discussion	18	38.3%	<div style="width: 38.3%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>
Not at all	13	27.7%	<div style="width: 27.7%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>
Not sure	2	4.3%	<div style="width: 4.3%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>
Other	4	8.5%	<div style="width: 8.5%; height: 10px; background-color: red;"></div>
Totals	47	100.0%	

The issue of proving crime prevention's effectiveness is quickly emerging as vital. One in five SAAs (21.3%) either has in place or expects to have soon a requirement for evidence-based programming. In another two out of five states (38.3%), there has been at least some discussion of such requirements.

One of the challenges facing the crime prevention community is the need to update evaluations of key personal protection strategies in ethical and rigorous ways. This challenge is especially urgent given the pressure for evidence-based programming. It might be beneficial to host a colloquium on this issue in which key states, a variety of national agencies engaged in prevention, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the National Institute of Justice and prevention researchers are engaged.

## **SAA's Provide Range of Help**

A substantial majority (8 out of ten or better) of SAA's reported that they provide assistance in grant writing (91.5%), training (80.9%), peer to peer referrals (80.9%), a web site (80.9%), and networks within their states (79.3%). Almost three-quarters (73.9) provide a newsletter. Fifty percent say they help SAA's in other states. Thirty percent offer list serves. One challenge is to make these resources better known to the crime prevention community so that they can engage them.

## **SAA Comments – Summary Observations**

SAA's were offered the opportunity to comment. Several pointed out that their funds go exclusively to statewide or multijurisdictional drug task forces. Others noted that budget pressures have forced conservative approaches in recent years. Still other comments suggested that these budget pressures (combined in several cases with homeland security demands and lack of administrative funds to go with these program demands) had resulted in cutting or diminishing the role of crime prevention.

Some agencies indicated support for Byrne as a means for strategic, purposive grant-making. Others indicated that they are moving toward performance measures and outcome evaluations of programs as a means to build credibility.

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