

## MSU: Helping People Stay Safe Where They Live, Work, and Play

- shelter-case workers, prosecutors, police, and related officials through MSU's **Victim Assistance Academy**.
- To improve public policy, build prevention, and enhance the response to victims of sexual assault, MSU researchers worked with Michigan officials to develop the sexual assault surveillance system. This **public health approach to sexual violence** tracks trends, changes, and risk factors; measures morbidity, mortality, and hot spots; informs policy; and recommends areas for further research.
  - Two national telephone surveys conducted by MSU showed **how the threat of terrorism affected people's attitudes** toward ethnic and racial tolerance and government's responses to the threats.
  - MSU researchers analyzed a database with **information about the behaviors and decisions of participants in 186 terrorist incidents**.
  - Research by MSU faculty led to development of the **"core competencies" for judicial administrators**, endorsed by the National Association of Court Managers. MSU's Judicial Administration Program now provides **online graduate education in judicial administration**, based on the core competencies.
  - Research on **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** and other disorders related to traumatic events influenced **epidemiologic approaches to the study of trauma**.

### Outcomes for Michigan's Future:

- Michigan instituted the **Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative** in conjunction with the National Institute of Corrections. MSU researchers advise on this initiative and will work with the Department of Corrections on evaluating it.
- MSU faculty work with police, prosecutors, and community groups to **analyze patterns of gun crime**, suggest evidence-based strategies, and evaluate the impact of these strategies on levels of gun violence.
- MSU's expertise in fields such as **food safety, supply chain management, packaging, and criminal justice** will be an important contribution to the **National Center on Food Protection and Defense** awarded by the DHS to a consortium that includes MSU. MSU researchers will return the benefits of the center's research to the state through collaboration with the Michigan Department of Agriculture.
- **Detection of hundreds of pathogens using DNA biochips** is now closer to reality through grants to an MSU project team from the NIH, MEDC, and Department of Defense. A hand-held device for detecting harmful agents will help to ensure the safety of water, air, and agricultural products.

#### Spotlight on Success

"MSU has supplied the Department of Justice and local Project Safe Neighborhoods task forces with valuable expertise in the form of technical assistance, research services, and training sessions held across the country. Dedicated MSU team members have done an excellent job supplying PSN task forces with strategic problem-solving methods that have allowed them to effectively target resources at locally specific firearms crime problems. ... It has truly been a pleasure to work with MSU."

—Reagan Dunn, formerly the National Coordinator of Project Safe Neighborhoods, U.S. Department of Justice

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## Outcomes for Michigan's Future

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### *In Brief:*

Since July 1, 2003, MSU has received over **\$8 million to support research and other efforts related to homeland security, violent behaviors, and personal safety**.

MSU researchers are leaders in **understanding the links between neighborhood disorder, fear of crime, crime, and neighborhood decline**. They also lead in working with police and community groups to identify **strategies to disrupt this cycle of decline and restore neighborhood vitality**.

MSU has established an **interdisciplinary Cybersecurity Program** in collaboration with industry and government.

The MSU library developed Web sites and provides **access to online resources** on Weapons of Mass Destruction, Agro-Security, Bioterrorism (Biological and Chemical), Bomb Threats and Radiological Incidents, Emergency Management, Terrorism Groups and Related Issues, plus Transportation Security.

MSU is a member of the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN), a collaborative multi-state effort of Extension Services across the country to improve the **delivery of evidence-based services**.

**Results of MSU research on safety issues are disseminated in more than 90 classes** on criminal justice, homeland security, violent behaviors, transportation safety, and personal safety. In addition, an **online certificate in homeland security** is available for students on campus and professionals throughout the United States. The **Michigan Victim Assistance Academy** in MSU's School of Criminal Justice offers education and training to practitioners who assist crime victims. The **Victims and the Media** program teaches journalism students to report on victims of violence and catastrophe with sensitivity, dignity, and respect.

**Situation:**

**Gun violence and homicide** are believed to cost the United States \$100 billion annually in hospital costs, court and corrections costs, lost productivity, pain and suffering, and associated costs. Researchers have estimated that each homicide generates costs of \$2.9 million, and gunshot wounds average over \$18,000 in emergency room expenses alone. In 2003, Michigan had 610 murders and nearly 3,300 aggravated assaults involving guns.

**Substance abuse** disrupts lives, fuels crime, and is estimated to generate public costs of over \$100 billion per year. Michigan is pioneering specialized drug courts that combine routine drug testing with various treatment and support services. This unique approach may offer considerable cost savings and serve as a model for other jurisdictions.

**With increasing numbers of offenders being sentenced to prison, the number of individuals returning to communities after incarceration has approximately doubled nationally over the past 10 years and has increased about 250 percent in the past 20 years.** These individuals often have difficulty

finding suitable employment and housing, reintegrating with their families, and remaining free from substance abuse. Imprisonment of single mothers can be particularly disruptive because many of them leave behind young children.

**Security of private information and transactions in computer systems** is a growing issue as more information becomes available on the Internet and as terrorist and hacker incidents directed toward physical and information infrastructures increase. **Identity theft is the fastest growing crime in the United States.**

The events of 9/11 showed that fire, police, and emergency medical teams need to work together in critical incidents. The **vulnerability of infrastructure, food and water supplies, and the importance of effective intelligence-gathering** also became apparent. MSU's approach to assuring the security of Michigan's citizens parallels the principles of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS): protect civil rights and civil liberties, build coalitions and partnerships, and develop human capital.

**MSU Capacity:**

- Concerned about the costs of gun violence, the U.S. Department of Justice developed **Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN)**, the most ambitious effort in U.S. history to reduce gun crime. MSU serves as a research partner for this effort.
- MSU faculty conducted the Michigan Violent Death Reporting System (MVDRS) feasibility study for the Michigan Department of Community Health to help determine the **feasibility of a centralized reporting system on violent deaths.**
- An MSU researcher internationally recognized as an expert on women in the criminal justice system works with the Michigan Department of Corrections to design and study a **program to reintegrate women inmates into the community** with the goal of reducing future involvement in crime.
- The Michigan Department of Corrections received a federal grant for a program to stop prison rape and

- ensure that individuals who leave Michigan prisons practice safe sex, thereby **reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.** MSU faculty will evaluate the effort.
- The RAPIDware project at MSU addresses the need for adaptable software to **protect critical infrastructures like power grids** under extreme operating conditions, component failures, and cyber-attack.
- The Michigan Office of Drug Control Policy and the State Court Administrative Office asked MSU researchers to evaluate the **impact of the courts on reducing drug use and crime, increasing employability and school performance, and finding more cost-effective strategies than prison for nonviolent substance abusers.**
- The DHS asked MSU to develop a community facilitation program for **public-private sector emergency preparedness.** The program assesses levels

of "social capital" as a guide for local officials to determine their preparedness.

- Through Emergency Response Solutions MSU offers **customized, onsite training and technical assistance to first responders** in the public and private sectors.
- To prepare the law enforcement community for the **possibility that terrorists could obtain and deploy weapons of mass destruction**, the DHS asked MSU to develop an education program for law enforcement executives. The nationwide program was piloted in Detroit and East Lansing.
- The DHS asked MSU to deliver the **most significant national training program on law enforcement intelligence** ever developed. The Drug Enforcement Administration works with MSU faculty to develop research and provide courses to meet the growing need for intelligence analysts.
- Faculty and students from MSU's **Interdisciplinary Program in Forensic Sciences** collaborate with the

state on studies that have included tests of the ability to extract DNA evidence from exploded pipe-bombs, lifting fingerprints from difficult plastic surfaces, comparative soil analysis, comparative glass analysis, numerous product validations, and identifying human remains.

- MSU faculty work with the Michigan Departments of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality, EPA, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police to develop a **research and education program on environmental crime enforcement and prevention.** The first course on "environmental victimization" is being offered to both MSU students and professionals in Michigan.
- MSU researchers conduct studies to ensure both the **current and future safety of the food supply**, considering the epidemiology, evolution, and pathogenesis of microbes transmitted in foods, such as *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, and *Campylobacter*.

**Successes:**

- MSU research demonstrated that public safety and quality of neighborhood life are enhanced when **citizens and police engage together in problem-solving strategies** to prevent as well as respond to crime. This finding **transformed the field of policing.**
- MSU faculty helped Michigan police departments **assess such issues as allegations of racial profiling and the disproportionate confinement of minority youth.** MSU's Regional Community Policing Institute translates the research findings to practice through its Ethics and Integrity Training Program for law enforcement personnel.
- MSU researchers helped Michigan communities **develop online tools to assess traffic safety and youth violence problems.** Once the community assessment is complete, the program links to research evidence and resources for addressing the problem.
- MSU faculty worked with Michigan educators and community leaders on the **Michigan Safe Schools Partnership.** This evidence-led effort includes

education programs for school safety teams throughout the state.

- Researchers at MSU's **Identity Theft Partnerships for Prevention Laboratory** developed the Online Criminal Tracking Investigation System (OCTIS), which has been used to solve numerous crimes, including a homicide. Hundreds of Michigan law enforcement investigators have been trained on the system, and victim advocates use it regularly.
- **Biometric identification research** in the MSU Pattern Recognition and Information Processing Lab supports personal, public, and commercial security. Current work involves identification by face data. A prototype 3D system built with the support of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) can verify the identity of an enrolled person in about five seconds.
- MSU researchers work with Michigan communities to **improve understanding, policies, and responses to domestic violence.** This research-based information is disseminated to Michigan policymakers,