


Crime and gang violence in the spotlight



Photo : Archives

Published on October 18, 2012

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Liberals launch new grant, while Ottawa Police promote awareness

Last week, the Ontario government announced that, with an investment of \$1 million, they will be supporting 32 community initiatives across the province, that aim to help at-risk young people develop job skills and rehabilitate those already in trouble with the law.

Topics : [First Nations](#) , [Correctional Services](#) , [Ottawa Police Services](#) , [Ottawa](#) , [Ontario](#) , [OttawaDespite](#)

The Safer and Vital Communities grants help community-based, not-for-profit organizations and First Nations chiefs and band councils deliver a variety of crime prevention programs. These programs are aimed at vulnerable young people and focus on the risk factors associated with crime and victimization.

"We're taking action to help vulnerable young people avoid a life of crime and protect our communities," said Ottawa-Vanier MP Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. "It is on the ground, at the community level, that we can make the biggest difference, and that's why we're pleased to support community groups that work to meet these objectives."

According to provincial government officials, the overall youth crime rate in Ontario is 23 per cent lower than it was in 2000. The youth violent crime rate is also believed to be down by 17 per cent over the same period, better than the national rate, which dropped 10 per cent.

With that said, Ontario is still investing over \$20 million in new funding to support the Youth Action Plan, which aims to benefit 13,000 young people each year.

Youth crime lower in Ontario, gun-violence on the rise in Ottawa

Despite these positive statistics, gang-related violence seems to be on the rise in Ottawa.

So far in 2012, Ottawa has seen a 36 per cent increase in shootings over last year. Of reported 34 shootings this year, up 25 from last year, approximately half have been related to gang violence.

For this reason, Ottawa will be hosting a gang symposium at City Hall on Oct. 17, presented by Ottawa Police Services, Crime Prevention Ottawa, the Youth Services Bureau, Ottawa Community Housing, and other community experts and leaders.

However, in a one-on-one interview with the [Orléans Star](#) in August, Ottawa Police Chief Charles Bordeleau said that Orléans was a relatively "quiet community" with no real "guns or gangs" problems. Two weeks later, 22-year-old Levy Kasende was gunned down at 2676 Innes Rd., outside a Blackburn Hamlet home. The incident is believed to have been gang related.