



## **Community Safety Awards 2011**

### **Winner profile: Ottawa Community Youth Diversion Program**

### **Community Safety Program Award**

The Ottawa Community Youth Diversion Program is designed to keep young people, aged 12 to 17, out of the judicial system by treating them in the community. This Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa program receives referrals from the police and Crown of youth in conflict with the law.

Each participant is assessed, and a case worker develops an action plan that might include programs, counseling, community service work, or assignments. If a young person is dealing with addiction, a compulsion to set fires, shoplifting or other issues, the program staff will get them the help they need to address the problem through existing community services.

Designed for young people who are at a moderate to high risk of reoffending, the program holds young people accountable for their actions and gives them the support they need to overcome the barriers to their success. As a result, it helps decrease crime in our communities. Parents, who are at the end of their ropes, get the lifeline they need to help their child. And the Crown and the police get to focus on other crimes that need attention.

For successful participants, it means a second chance. No charges are laid, or if they have been previously charged, the charges are withdrawn.

A small team of three case workers—Brenda Cairns, Roxanne Landreville and Ruth Reckman—together with Manager Tom Scholberg, handle 360 cases each year. While they're seeing results, they're reluctant to take credit. They say it's the excellent support they receive from community partners that has helped them change lives, one young person at a time.

#### **For information, contact:**

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