

Policing: A BC Practitioners' Toolkit

Lesson 5: Situational Crime Prevention I



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Overview of Lesson 5

Situational Crime Prevention

- Theoretical basis and definition
- Concept: Crime Triangle
- Concept: Broken Windows Theory

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Situational Crime Prevention

A crime prevention strategy that:

- manages, designs and manipulates the environment in a manner that seeks to
- increase the risk...while
- lowering the reward for committing the crime.

(Clark, 1993; Sampson, 2003; Scott, 2001)

**Will the benefits of committing a crime
outweigh the risks?**

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Theoretical Basis

Crime Routine Activity Theory

Crime requires the intersection of time and space, with respect to a potential offender, suitable target and the lack of a deterrent to prevent the crime.

Rational Choice Theory


Offenders make conscious decisions to commit crime.

Crime Pattern Theory

Criminal behavioural patterns form in familiar surroundings based on where people go, how they decide to get there, and whom they meet.

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Crime Triangle



If you can control one of these elements you can reduce or eliminate the crime

Adopts the principles from Routine Activity Theory:


Desire – cognitive desire to commit crime

Ability – physical ability to commit crime

Opportunity – the situation that enables crime to occur

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Broken Windows Theory

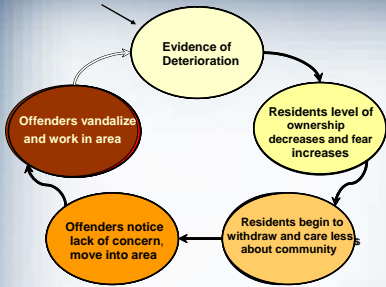


Messy or broken-down surroundings invite social disorder and an associated level of criminal activity.

(Wilson & Kelling, 1982)

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Broken Windows Escalation Model



Situation I

How does this public walkway display social disorder?

Criminal opportunity?



Situation II

What message does this yard convey?

Discuss local examples of disorder.



Next Lesson

Lesson 6: Situational Crime Prevention II

- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
- Practical applications
