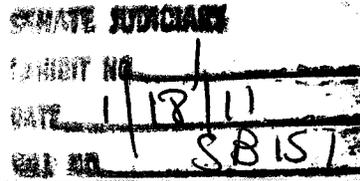




Montana Crime Prevention Association



5 S. Last Chance Gulch
PO Box 201408
Helena, MT 59601

www.mtcrimeprevention.org

MCPA SUPPORTS SB 151

The Montana Crime Prevention Association (MCPA) is a non-profit group organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. It is a professional organization encompassing community representation at all levels dedicated to providing collaborative partnerships and education that addresses, encourages, and supports crime prevention efforts across the Tribal Nations and the State of Montana.

We exist to promote comprehensive awareness about the role that effective crime prevention plays in improving the quality of life for all Montanans. MCPA includes community and Tribal representatives from professional organizations across the State of Montana. These representatives focus on partnering with local communities to address their crime problems by providing information, training and expertise.

In its first year of existence, MCPA has established a membership based organization with nearly 60 individual and corporate members. MCPA has obtained three grants totaling over \$30,000, hired a part-time executive director, developed a web site that shares cutting edge crime prevention solutions, issued its first quarterly newsletter addressing crime problems in Montana, co-sponsored Montana's 4th annual Crime Prevention Conference, and conducted training for over 200 law enforcement and community leaders. All of this has been accomplished on a shoe-string budget with a largely volunteer staff; however, without funding the MCPA cannot continue its mission.

MCPA feels that crime prevention is best practiced at the local level and best paid for by those that create the problem, criminals. MCPA supports SB 151 because it funds crime prevention through criminal convictions not through taxpayer's wallets, because it adds not a single FTE to State Government, and because it can create a sustainable crime prevention effort that will continue year-after-year to address changing crime problems that threaten our local communities.

If SB 151 passes, and if the Montana Crime Prevention Association is the recipient of some of these funds it plans to do the following: grow our organization to include all those interested in preventing crime in their communities, provide expertise and training to those who ask for it, and to continue to provide cutting edge crime prevention training to law enforcement and communities across the state. Specifically we plan to tackle what we consider the 5 largest crime issues facing Montana today, DUI, Child Bullying and Safety, Prescription drug and substance abuse problems, Identity theft, and crime in our neighborhoods.

To be recognized as the driving force in promoting and advancing sustainable crime prevention programs and in enhancing public safety through progressive resources and training tailored to address local needs throughout the Tribal Nations and the State of Montana.

MCPA AND DUI PREVENTION

Driving under the influence is a serious public health problem in the United States. Each year, alcohol is involved in nearly 40 percent of all traffic-related deaths. An alcohol-related motor vehicle crash kills someone every 33 minutes and a nonfatal injury occurs every two minutes. Prevention and awareness of DUI related issues through education, training, and DUI community forums will raise awareness and provide crucial information regarding the impact that DUI's have upon our community and can be a vehicle for educating the public and enhancing public safety.

MCPA AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS/SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Prescription drug abuse has become a public health crises and public safety concern in Montana. Accessibility to prescription drugs and the number of prescriptions being written has increased through the use of doctor shopping. Combination use of alcohol and drugs are on the rise. Substance abuse (including alcohol) can change the direction of a young person's life-physically, emotionally, and behaviorally. Addiction is a process that begins with use and continues with abuse before becoming a full blown addiction. While there is no cure, there is prevention. The goal is to educate early before the use becomes abuse and leads to addiction. Dependence on alcohol and drugs is our most serious national public health problem. Millions of Americans misuse or are dependant on alcohol or drugs. Drug or alcohol dependence disorders are medical conditions and can be effectively treated. Education, resources, and training for families, educators, law enforcement and the community is important to deal with this mounting problem we are facing.

MCPA AND NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Neighborhood Watch programs provide an opportunity to enhance the safety and the quality of life in our city through empowerment of community groups to undertake new and innovative programs and activities aimed at prevention and reducing crime in the community. The aim and purpose of the Neighborhood Watch program is to detect, deter and/or delay crime. This is done by educating individuals to work together to solve problems, encouraging citizens to develop a sense of ownership for their neighborhoods, developing and addressing common neighborhood goals, coordinating pertinent neighborhood/community meetings, and teaching crime prevention and safety techniques. Many towns in Montana have effective Neighborhood Watch Programs. However, many of the smaller communities have not been provided with education and resources on how to start a neighborhood watch program. Different towns and communities in Montana are in need of a program through resources and training and resources to help the communities come together to start a program.

MCPA AND CHILD BULLYING/SAFETY

Today's kids face tough issues such as bullying, cyber bullying, missing and exploited children, and sexting. Keeping our children safe at schools, home, and in their neighborhoods is a paramount concern. Bullying, for example has become a tidal wave of epic proportions. Bullying was once considered a rite of passage, and community leaders now see bullying as a devastating form of abuse. Every new generation of parents and children needs up to date information on how to keep children safe from crime. Because the very nature of crimes changes over the years, the techniques for addressing crime must be changed as well. Training, resources, and tools can reduce the opportunities for crimes committed against children and youth. Community members, educators, law enforcement officers, and community leaders can help prevent these types of problems by becoming educated along with children and youth through education, resources and training. We need to protect our children and youth.

MCPA AND IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft is serious. Everyone can become a victim. The monetary and emotional cost of repairing the harm caused by identify theft can be extensive, requiring years to recover. In addition, the financial impact of this crime is estimated at more than \$55 billion annually, impacting both businesses and consumers. Clearly, no one is immune. Identity theft happens across the spectrum of income ranges and other demographic factors. Identity Theft Awareness, business impact, Reducing Corporate Risk of Identity Theft, and Victim Support are just a few topics which can be provided through training and education for both Law Enforcement and the Community.

MCPA AND CRIME PREVENTION TRAINING

Crime prevention courses for law enforcement professionals and community members interested in starting crime prevention initiatives or refreshing their knowledge. Effective Crime Prevention has been seen as a key strategy in reducing crime and violence in our communities. The course will be designed to address local community issues ranging from physical security to violence prevention. It can be tailored to the needs of today's crime prevention and community policing practitioners and places emphasis on programmatic initiatives giving the practitioners the knowledge, tools and resources to do their jobs successfully. Crime Prevention is the anticipation, recognition and the appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it. Crime Prevention means working in partnership, rather than in isolation, and working with concerned citizens to address ways to prevent crime and drug abuse. It means communities and individual citizens learning how to protect themselves and to work together to keep their neighborhoods crime and drug free. It means law enforcement working with communities, businesses, and service organizations to develop action plans based on information about crime and other problems.