



ECPA 2005

Denmark Entry

1. What is the title of the project?

SAFE NIGHTLIFE IN HOLSTEBRO

2. Please give a short general description of the project.

Safe Nightlife was developed as a pilot project in order to establish a crime preventive partnership between the local authorities and local commercial stake holders in the city's nightlife. As with most towns Holstebro has a thriving nightlife with a wide variety of bars, restaurants and nightclubs. The Safe Nightlife project worked and still works to improve the inclusion of employees working in the nightlife related businesses in the prevention of violence, drug sale and abuse, vandalism and sexual assaults among young people. Combined with initiatives targeted at young people has raised awareness among youngsters and their adult networks about the risks and hazards in the nightlife

The parties of the partnership involved in the project include representatives of local police, local and regional prevention workers, association for the prevention of alcohol abuse among youngsters, the local association of restaurants and nightclubs and the Danish Crime Prevention Council.

3. Please describe the objective(s) of the project?

- To setup a crime preventive partnership between local actors in the field of crime prevention and the association of restaurant and night club owners in the city of Holstebro.
- To work to create a safe and secure environment for the city's youngsters where competent adults provide guidance, advise and interventions where needed and specifically in situations of violence, drug-& alcohol abuse or sexual assaults.
- To place the responsibility for the youngsters' safety and well being in general at the individuals, the parents and other adults in their network as well as authorities and restaurant owners.
- To develop a brand for the "Safe Nightlife" initiative and produce materials containing information on help lines and practical numbers aimed at youngsters that need advice,

counselling or contact with police or social services.

- To distribute the brand and information to the target group through their educational institution and through the staff in the nightclubs frequented by youngsters.
- To train employees from participating night clubs in topics such as conflict solution techniques, first aid and the issues of drug sale and abuse as well as drug rape and sexual assaults. Employees at restaurants receive a general introduction to local authorities' rules, legislation and expectations for the co-operation on security issues. Furthermore employees are reminded to pay special attention to the rules that apply for businesses that hold a license to serve alcohol. Employees are also to receive a general orientation about the role of the city's SSP co-operation (which is a co-operation between Schools, Social services and the Police) and how they can involve the outreach social workers in matters relating to youngsters.
- To ensure participating night clubs and bars a positive visible association with the project through "certificates of participation" and other means of branding.

4. How was the project implemented?

The project was organised within the framework of the SSP co-operation. A project steering committee was formed comprising representatives of parties relevant to the initiative. The steering committee developed a detailed project description defining aims and objectives as well as means and measures. Members of the local Association of Night Club and Bar Owners were introduced to the project and the conditions for participation.

Each participating nightclub or bar agreed to ensure that a minimum of 50% of the staff would participate in the Safe Nightlife two days training course programme organised by the steering committee. Also nightclubs agreed to distribute information materials and to work more actively to co-operate with local authorities to ensure a safe nightlife.

Addressing the youngsters a range of information activities were launched to ensure that young people had the necessary information to handle some of the situations that can occur in the city's nightlife. This included presentations and debates at local technical schools, army barracks and other educational institutions.

The Safe Nightlife project was developed as an initiative that consists primarily of local actors and in a construction that would allow for quick implementation and long running at a low cost. Consequently it is not a static initiative with a time restraintment factor applying pressure.

That is why in the outset to establish the steering committee it was essential to secure a strong and steady hold in local networks and businesses. Hence the steering committee consisted not only of prevention experts, nightclub owners and authorities but also a group of players with the necessary knowledge, position and determination to anchor the initiatives.

5. Were partners involved in planning and/or development and/or implementation of the project? If so, who were they, and what were their roles?

Safe Nightlife was developed and implemented in a close cooperation between authorities and local actors of civil society.

The local representative of the general crime preventive co-operation established between the Police, School and Social Services was responsible for the project on a daily basis and for co-ordinating the meetings of the steering committee. The Danish Crime Prevention Councils SSP Committee was overall responsible for the project.

The Police was represented in the steering committee on Commander level to ensure that agreements were channelled to the different departments of the police such as the crime prevention department and Police units that patrol the nightlife. The police contributed as a valuable part of the program for the two days Safe Nightlife training programme providing night life employees with insights to expectations from police, tips on how to spot drug dealers, legal issues and efforts to ensure that no serving to minors happens.

The association of local nightclubs, bars and restaurants were represented in the steering committee too for a number of reasons, firstly, to ensure a link and representation of the 11 participating nightclubs, secondly, to provide an input to the development of the project and more specific to give input to the elements of the training courses. Thirdly, the nightclubs were instrumental to the branding of the Safe Nightlife at the nightclubs. The direct link to the association of night clubs was especially useful in securing the full participation of night club staff in the voluntary training course.

Further to that the project steering committee included a representative of the Danish Crime Prevention Council, an expert from the association for the prevention of youth alcohol abuse, the regional SSP co-ordinator and the prevention department of the region.

The assisting network of the steering committee was formed by liaisons with local actors without direct representation in the project steering committee. Thus enabling a wider link to the local community and

securing a strong assisting network. Among others the network consisted of:

- The SSP-committee in Holstebro
- The offices of the chief of Police in Holstebro
- The youth educational institutions in the municipal
- The City's military barracks
- Local associations such as the Night Ravens (Adult voluntary street workers)
- The parents of the target group

6. How did you build in plans to measure the performance of the project?

The steering committee identified a range of parameters to be monitored in order to measure the performance of the project.

Firstly, an evaluation was carried out at the two days training course in order to secure that topics addressed and training provided to participants were useful and met the needs of staff members. The quick and immediate feed back from participants and inputs from the steering committee's evaluation meetings allowed for organisers to make constructive and swift amendments to the different elements of the training programme.

The Police department of Holstebro keeps detailed statistics of incidents. So by monitoring the reported nightlife related crimes the steering committee was able to provide updated information on recent developments in the nightlife and on information gathered by social workers. A clear area of impact was the immediate increased control with minors' access to the nightclubs and alcohol. Feedback from nightclub staff, police, outreach workers all indicated that fewer minors were out late at night on weekends.

Furthermore, the number of incidents of violence reported by nightclub owners to the police dropped. At the same time the police saw an increase in the area of combating drugs in nightclubs. Apparently the training helped the staff to improve their abilities with new methods to spot drugs and drug sale in the nightclubs. So there was a rise in what has been called "self-reported incidents of drug abuse". These are incidents where security staff will search nightclub customers for drugs and sometimes find drugs or where service staff find drugs dropped on the dance floor in the restaurants.

Long-term results on a 3 to 5 years basis were identified as an overall drop in nightlife were identified as an overall drop in nightlife related crime and especially with focus on violent offenders and drug offences in relation to the bars and nightclubs.

7. Has the project been evaluated? How, and by whom?

Due to the financial constraints of the project it was decided to carry out a qualitative survey among the various parties and target groups. The result is a report that provides advice and serves as a guide to other municipals that want to launch long term crime prevention initiatives related to the nightlife. The report is not meant to state scientifically whether the crime rose or fell but to provide an in-depth insight on how a partnership can be established based on mutual crime prevention interests.

The qualitative survey was carried out by project manager Mette Høxbro, a member of the steering committee. The survey consists of focus group interviews with:

- Young people from the night life
- The outreach workers
- Members of staff that participated in the training courses as well as members of staff that did not participate in the training courses
- Volunteers from the "Night Ravens"
- The Police.

The questionnaire used for evaluation of the two days training course was developed by members of the steering committee.

8. What were the results? How far were the objectives of the project achieved?

The results of the Safe Nightlife project in Holstebro have been published in a report that concludes the following:

- The co-operation, understanding and dialogue between local authorities, police and night club owners have been greatly improved.
- There are significantly less minors in the night clubs.
- Young people feel that the nightlife atmosphere has improved
- Members of staff express that they feel more confident because of the tools to handle situations and they report a general drop in violent incidents inside the night clubs.
- Improved network for the SSP co-operation.

The Safe Nightlife Project.

Safe Nightlife in Holstebro is a crime preventive partnership between the local municipality, prevention workers, police and associations for prevention of alcohol abuse by youngsters and local licensed restaurants, bars and nightclubs. The pilot projects initiative builds on experiences from previous projects in Holstebro since 1999.

The aim of the project was to create a safe environment for youngsters that participate in the nightlife by having competent and responsible adults on the ready to help them. This was achieved by making the youngsters attentive of their participating in the night life by addressing them at educational institutions, high school and army barracks, to the effects of alcohol consumption, drugs abuse and risk behaviour, adding to the risk of becoming a victim of violence or sexual assault. In order to give the pilot project general attention the local newspaper was made to publish 4 pages regarding the pilot project and flyers were distributed.

The association of licensed restaurants, bars and nightclubs was essential in getting it's members to participate. The aim was to get all to participate in order to reduce aggressive marketing of alcohol so that risk behaviour of nightlife participants would be minimized. The owners and employees were given a two day course in order to make them more attentive to possible conflicts resulting from alcohol consumption, able to spot drugs abuse, give knowledge of first aid and a basic understanding of the actions of other pilot project partners especially the Police.

Restaurants, bars and night clubs participating in the pilot project was awarded a certificate signed by the Mayor, the Chief Constable and The Danish Crime Prevention Council head of Secretariat, that was placed visibly in the establishment. The certificate is an assurance to guests of the establishment's participation in the pilot project and the desire to make nightlife safer. The Police should maintain a visible presence in the nightlife. It was desirable to get better relations between police and owners of licensed restaurants, bars and nightclubs for mutual understanding and cooperation. The Police wanted the owners to formulate a clear policy regarding drugs abuse on their premises in order to make it a joint effort to combat drugs and to make the owners feel comfortable to report drugs abuse.

The outcome of the pilot project was very promising and it is now implemented as part of the SSP (School, Social services and Police) preventive work in the municipality of Holstebro. Quantitative and qualitative feedback from participants was obtained and the pilot project succeeded in getting 11 of 15 licensed restaurants, bars and nightclubs to join up. The participants in the two-day courses reported especially the parts concerning spotting drugs abuse and conflict management were of importance. The view held was that less underage as well as conflict seeking persons would take part in the nightlife.

The Police reported a greater number of violence incidents but generally a feeling of a safer nightlife. Less underage youth present in restaurants, bars and nightclubs and more reports regarding drugs abuse from the owners.

The youngsters of Holstebro reported a safer nightlife, with fewer minors, less violence, less risk behaviour and a firm policy countering drugs abuse.