

POLÍCIA DE SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA

**COMANDO METROPOLITANO DE
LISBOA**

ECPA 2005

EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION AWARD

Project: "Safer Playtime"

October 2005



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“SAFER PLAYTIME”

“Mankind owes the child the best that it has to give....” - 1924 Declaration on the Rights of the Child

The Public Security Police (PSP) has a pivotal role to play in policing schools in Portugal, responding to its responsibility of regulation, enforcement and monitoring the child rights.

Lisbon is the capital of Portugal and PSP is the primary actor responsible for providing policing in this city.

This role is much more important if we remember that in the capital city there are 2.174 schools, 1.005.428 students and 103.102 teachers and school staff.

According to the Strategic Options for 2005-2006, adopted by the Portuguese Government, Police will “continue the implementation and reinforcement of community policing projects, specially the programme *Safer Schools* and *Safer Playtime*.”

Safer school is a community-policing project launched after a protocol signed in 1992 by the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Minister of Education, in order to ensure safety and security to school communities and to promote safe and secure behaviours, through effective policing of schools, its surroundings and major itineraries, and also through seminars and contacts with the school communities.

Safer Playtime is a project that provides school policing with a holistic intervention with the various units of police activity: “safer schools” police officers and cars, Rapid Response Units, Patrol Cars and Criminal Investigation Beat Units, in plain clothes and cars, through a systematic and scientific analysis of reported crime, defining *hotspots* and restrain criminals or minors who misbehave, with timely assess reports, to decrease the number of crimes, to increase citizen’s trust in the police and to ensure children’s safety and security.

1. WHAT IS THE TITLE OF THE PROJECT?

Title of the Project: "Safer Playtime"

2. PLEASE GIVE A SHORT GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT.

"Safe Playtime" is a project to develop the police activity in and around the areas of problematic schools in Lisbon municipality.

3. PLEASE DESCRIBE THE OBJECTIVE (S) OF THE PROJECT.

The objective of the project is to decrease the number of crimes regarding drug trafficking or abuse, robberies and thefts, whenever the students are themselves the victims or the criminals.

4. HOW WAS THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTED?

The project was implemented among those schools that had more criminal situations, involving plain-clothes police officers and cars on a daily basis, that were expected to perform "stop and search" operations against suspects. Along with this activity, there was also a strong police visibility performed by police officers in uniform, especially when classes started or finished, but making sure not to be at the same spot as the police officers on plain-clothes.

5. WERE PARTNERS INVOLVED IN PLANNING AND/OR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT? IF SO, WHO WERE THEY, AND WHAT WERE THEIR ROLES?

The project was planned and developed with other partners.

Partners involved in planning:

Criminal Investigation Division - general coordination of the project and intelligence;

Operations Unit in Lisbon Police Command - Coordination of police units involved;

All Police Station Commanders and Division Commanders in Lisbon - establishment of priorities in policing;

Police Officers from the project "Safe School" - liaison with schools, teachers and school directors;

School directors and teachers - establishing priorities and intelligence.

Partners involved in the development of the Project:

Criminal Investigation Division - police activity with police officers in plain clothes, intelligence and supervision of the Project.

Operations Unit in Lisbon Police Command - coordination of Police Units

Rapid Response Unit - police visibility;

Police Officers from the project "Safe School" - police visibility and liaison with schools;

School directors and teachers - intelligence and update of statistics.

6. HOW DID YOU BUILD IN PLANS TO MEASURE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROJECT?

The Project has the ability of being continuously assessed, in order to measure its performance.

On one hand, we had the reports made by all the police officers that worked in the project, specifying the number of suspects stopped and searched, number of detainees, amount of drug seized, seized items or weapons, number and nature of the victims and other operational results.

On the other hand, the Project has been evaluated as it is discriminated below.

7. HAS THE PROJECT BEEN EVALUATED? HOW AND BY WHOM?

The assessment of the Project has been made on an ongoing basis.

Criminal Investigation Division gathered all information regarding situations that could be related with the project and its objectives.

A report was produced, on a weekly basis, to the Lisbon Metropolitan Police Commander, highlighting the operational results of the Project and specific updated information regarding schools.

Monthly, another report was made to inform Lisbon Metropolitan Police Commander, and it was transmitted to other partners with a view to making an assessment and adjusting the objectives.

At the end of the school-year, all the information gathered was sent to the National Police HQ and a general report was made regarding «School Safety and Security».

8. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS? HOW FAR WERE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT ACHIEVED?

As we can see hereunder by the chart, there was a decrease of criminal situations in ALL types of criminal offences.

The possession or abuse of drugs in 2004/2005 had a decrease of 40% considering the previous school-year.

This is due to the fact that the message of the police officers in plain clothes, along with a strong police visibility in and around schools, was brought up among the students in a mouth-to-mouth basis.

The criminals or potential criminals also acknowledged the message and started to abandon these areas because of the uncertainty of the police presence and visibility.

The message was also given to teachers and school staff who have transmitted it to parents and, this way, the Project was able to increase citizen's trust in the PSP to ensure children and youngsters' safety and security.

LISBOA	Number of crimes for each school-year					Variation considering previous school-years		
	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	Total	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Bomb threat	25	16	19	16	76	-36,0%	18,8%	-15,8%
Theft	375	348	350	298	1371	-7,2%	0,6%	-14,9%
Robbery	301	300	258	216	1075	-0,3%	-14,0%	-16,3%
Possession/Use of weapon	16	14	23	15	68	-12,5%	64,3%	-34,8%
Vandalism	65	46	69	43	223	-29,2%	50,0%	-37,7%
Calumny/Threats	45	71	89	73	278	57,8%	25,4%	-18,0%
Physical Offences	209	211	229	195	844	1,0%	8,5%	-14,8%
Possession/Abuse of drugs	13	14	5	3	35	7,7%	-64,3%	-40,0%
Sexual Offences	28	17	24	15	84	-39,3%	41,2%	-37,5%
Others	20	19	66	30	135	-5,0%	247,4%	-54,5%
Total	1097	1056	1132	904	4189	-3,7%	7,2%	-20,1%