



Community Concerns

A New Approach To Cutting Gun Crime Rates

(NAPSA)—When it comes to deterring crime, family matters.

Research indicates that young people are more likely to steer clear of gun crime if they are aware of the negative ways in which it can affect their families. This finding may be a greater crime deterrent than the threat of incarceration or even death, according to a study conducted by Boston-based ad agency Mullen.

Now, a new set of public service advertisements (PSAs) launched by the U. S. Department of Justice in partnership with the Ad Council may use those findings to help curb gun violence among youth in America. The PSAs target at-risk youth ages 14 to 25 and are part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) initiative, a nationwide commitment to reduce gang and gun crime. PSN helps to create safer communities through heightened coordination and cooperation among federal, state and local law enforcement and the community.

The new television, radio and outdoor PSAs illustrate the consequences that innocent people face when a family member commits a crime and conclude with the tagline “Gun Crimes Hit Home.” They were created pro bono by Mullen.

The radio spots feature testimonials from offenders who are currently in prison, speaking about how their incarceration has affected their families. The lives of family members are often characterized by emotional pain, loneliness and financial hardship. The television PSAs demonstrate that the family of a child who goes to jail for a gun crime experiences an emotional pain similar to that felt by families



A new campaign shows the consequences that families face when a youth commits a gun crime.

who have lost a child to injury or death.

Despite progress in the fight against gun crime in America, gun-crime rates continue to be among the highest in the industrialized world. In 2005, for example, guns were used in more than two-thirds of the 16,700 homicides and in an estimated 420,000 nonfatal violent crimes in the country.

Furthermore, 31 percent of all homicide victims were 13 to 24 years old, and these teenage and young adult victims were four times more likely to be murdered with a gun than with all other weapons combined.

Peggy Conlon, president and CEO of the Ad Council, says the new PSAs are a continuing effort to change that.

“This poignant advertising speaks directly to the mind-set of potential offenders, and I believe it will have a significant impact,” she says.

To view the new PSAs, visit www.AdCouncil.org.