

Crime prevention begins before birth - Ex-police chief ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Crime rates won't drop until communities start addressing underlying social issues like poverty and child care, Edmonton's former police chief told a crime prevention conference yesterday, organized by the Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association.

Doug McNally, the city's police chief from 1990-95, told audience members from Alberta, B.C., and Saskatchewan they won't reduce crime by jailing more people and posting cops on every corner.

"Crime prevention begins before birth," said McNally.

His experience as a police officer has shown criminals often have poverty-stricken backgrounds, have suffered or witnessed abuse, were exposed to criminal behaviour and addictions, and often have behavioural disorders.

Communities have to band together to look after children, forge bonds with isolated single parents, and help parents improve parenting skills and prenatal care.

"We need to encourage cognitive development on the part of young kids," said McNally. "One of the most stable indicators of criminality is poor school performance and a poor bond to schooling."

-Reprinted from The Edmonton Sun

Region: Alberta ^[2]

Tags: poverty ^[3]

child development ^[4]

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