SENSELESS

Is it the shoes? ...
Money, it's gotta be the shoes!

TO MICHAEL JORDAN IN A Nike commercial
For 15-year-old Michael Eugene Thomas, it definitely was the shoes. A ninth-grader at Meade Senior High School in Anne Arundel County, Md., Thomas was found strangled on May 2, 1989. Charged with first-degree murder was James David Martin, 17, a basketball buddy who allegedly took Thomas's two-week-old Air Jordan basketball shoes and left Thomas's barefoot body in the woods near school.

Thomas loved Michael Jordan, as well as the shoes Jordan endorses, and he cleaned his own pair each evening. He kept the cardboard shoe box with Jordan's silhouette on it in a place of honor in his room. Inside the box was the sales ticket for the shoes. It showed he paid $115.50, the price of a product touched by deity.

"We told him not to wear the shoes to school," said Michael's grandmother, Birdie Thomas. "We said somebody might like them, and he said, 'Granny, before I let anyone take those shoes, they'll have to kill me.'"

Michael Jordan sits in the locked press room before a workout at the Chicago Bulls' practice facility in suburban Deerfield, Ill. He is wearing his practice uniform and a pair of black Air Jordans similar to the ones young Thomas wore, except that these have Jordan's number, 23, stitched on the sides. On the shoelaces Jordan wears plastic toggles.
Prevention

a systematic process that promotes healthy behaviors and environments and reduces the likelihood or frequency of an incident, condition, or illness occurring.

Primary Prevention

taking action before the onset of symptoms.
A new set of problems that cannot be solved by a simple approach
“For every complex problem there is an answer that’s simple, clear, and wrong.”

H.L. Mencken
Four Phases:

1. Define the problem
2. Describe the solution
3. Define the role that different sectors play in the solution
4. Full implementation of the solution
Toward a Lifetime Commitment to Violence Prevention in Alameda County:

Preliminary Findings and Recommendations
Alameda County: Findings
Finding #1

- There has been an absence of leadership on the issue of violence prevention
Finding #2

- There is a lack of accountability for violence prevention outcomes
Finding #3

- There is little coordination and no regular venue where such coordination might appropriately take place
Finding #4

- While there was a significant understanding of the underlying factors that relate to violence, there was inadequate understanding of what effective violence prevention entails.
Overall, informants were not optimistic about violence being reduced.
Need for Strategy

- A common knowledge base
- A structure of accountability, leadership and collaboration
- A connection between everyone engaged in violence prevention
- A consistent and vigilant focus on the problem of violence and the potential for prevention approaches to be effective
Alameda County:
Recommendations
Recommendations

1) Institute a structure that establishes leadership and accountability
“The county needs strong leadership and a clear agenda regarding violence prevention.”
“Bring the powers that be together and let them see the picture.”
Recommendations

2) Develop a strategic blueprint that delineates an overall approach, key stakeholders, and opportunities to leverage and raise resources
Recommendations

3) Create a venue for coordination and communication within the county
Partnerships Among Systems

Health

Justice

Education

www.preventioninstitute.org

PILC2012-'13 10/99
Types of Collaborations

- Grassroots Community-Based Organizations
- Governmental Organizations
Recommendations

4) Increase public awareness about the underlying contributors to violence
The Weight of Oppression

Oppression
- Racial
- Sexual
- Age-based
- Economic
- Religious
- Cultural
DATE RAPE

(West County) 236-7273
(Central County) 798-7273

Want to talk? Need help?

Sex is a series of choices two people make.
Rape is violence it's not just a mistake.
Rape shatters, rape matters.

This project is funded by the Health and Human Services, Maternal and Child Health Division Prevention Program, Contra Costa County Health Services, 75 Santa Barbara Rd., Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
5) Provide interdisciplinary staff training
Recommendations

6) Ask for assistance from the state

7) Establish a system to measure effectiveness and an integrated data system
8) Shift the norms: violence is intolerable and everyone is engaged
9) Ensure that prevention efforts not only reduce risk but also build hope.
10) Establish a set of shared violence prevention principles
Advisory Board Response

- In addition to the findings, are there other things to consider when developing recommendations?

- What is your overall response to the recommendations?

- What recommendations are missing?

- Are there any recommendation that need modifications?
Alameda County:
Roles & Responsibilities
Supervisor Miley’s Office

- Provide overall leadership in shaping the violence prevention strategy
- Chair advisory board, and subgroup
- Ensure framework becomes implemented (grant applications, partnerships, city activities)
- Secure funding to support efforts
- Oversee Prevention Institute contract
Prevention Institute

- Manage overall project
- Conduct in-person interviews to collect information to inform the strategy
- Bring knowledge of best practices and effective collaboration to the strategy development process.
- Facilitate the process
- Present drafts to all involved parties to solicit input and recommendations; synthesize findings from meetings, interviews, and report review
- Revise and finalize documents and present to Supervisor Miley’s Office and advisory board
Advisory Board

- Attend all three meetings in phase two
- Provide input on project at meetings and to the subgroup
- Critique draft strategy
- Share the potential of the project with other community representatives
- Implement recommendations
Core Group

- Attend *all* six working meetings
- Provide insight and perspective to planning process
- Shape and own the blueprint
- Share documents and resources that will add to blueprint
- Offer thorough feedback on drafts
- Serve as active ambassador of the project
Proposed Core Group Criteria

- Interest and willingness to partake in the work
- Strong understanding of county structure and needs
- Brings credibility to the project through leadership
- Brings viewpoints and perspectives that complement other members
- Other?