Program: Juvenile Curfew Laws
Reviewer: Pedro Vasquez
Date: October 2012

Abstract: Juveniles curfew laws are establish to reduce criminal behavior committed by juveniles. The finding of the study of juvenile curfews indicates that there aren’t any strong cases that show the effectiveness of these curfew laws. I feel that if a study was conducted in a city where there are no juvenile curfew laws and compare it to a city where there are curfews law will help give a better analysis of the effectiveness of curfew laws. Other recommendation will be to educate juveniles and family members about the importance of curfews laws.

1. Describe it

Juvenile curfew laws are designed to prevent crimes committed by young people and from preventing young people from becoming victims of crimes themselves. These laws limit the time in which juveniles are allowed in public. Juveniles are expected to be off the streets and in their homes after certain hours of the day. Juvenile’s curfew laws require the assistance of community members as well as law enforcement for the curfew to be effective. These laws are not just intended to prevent crime or victimization, but to deter young people from becoming a delinquent.

2. Is the program or something similar reviewed on http://www.crimesolutions.gov/ or Blueprints for Violence Prevention (http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/)?

Yes, http://www.crimesolutions.gov has reviewed a similar program called “Dallas (Texas) Anti- Gang Initiative”. This program was established in 1996 after the Dallas Police Department seen an increase in gang violence among juveniles. Similar to juvenile curfew laws this program forces on reducing juvenile’s gang activity and violence by enforcing a curfew as one of the program components. Once this program was enforced in Dallas, juveniles under the age of 17 were expected to be home between the hours of 11p.m to 6p.m and 12am to 6am on Fridays and Saturdays. Overall this program was rated has having some evidence that showed that it reached its intended goal, but it will still need additional research to be consider an effective program. According to the website this program is no long active.
This program or anything similar to this program was not found on http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints.

3. What type of crime is it intended to prevent or reduce?

Juvenile Curfew Laws are intended to reduce all crimes committed by young people. Its goal is to reduce violent crimes such as homicide, rape, aggravated assault, and burglary. Other crimes it intends to reduce are larceny, motor vehicle theft, simple assault, vandalism, and robbery. Officials feel that young people are committing these crimes in the night hours and early morning hours.

4. Is there a clear theoretical foundation?

Yes, according to Martha Yeide (2009) juvenile curfew laws fit into an approach of more vigorous enforcement efforts, more sentencing, and increased social control. It also identifies juveniles in early stages of delinquency and can benefit from intervention strategies.

5. Is there a direct, indirect or no clear link to Crime reduction?

This program has an indirect link to crime reduction. Juvenile curfew laws are intended to reduce crime by placing a curfew on young people. These curfews start late at night and early morning still leaving time for juveniles to commit crimes at other times of the day. So crime rates involving juveniles can still increases and decreases during times when young people are not under curfew. This issue can affect the reduction of crime.

6. Describe the logic model. Diagram it. How is it intended to reduce crime?

The logic model of juvenile curfew law is as followed: by controlling the hours when young people are in public will limit their opportunities to commit crime or become a victim of a crime. Since juvenile crime often takes place in groups and among same age groups the curfew law will reduce the contacts between victims and offenders. Juvenile laws also give parents more control of their children activities. Overall juvenile curfew dependants strongly on the enforcement of these curfew law so it can be effective.
Juvenile curfew laws are intended to reduce crime by limiting the times juveniles are on the street during specified hours of the day.

7. Does this program or strategy exist in this community? If yes, what agency is it run through? How long has it been in existence here? How is it funded?

Juvenile curfew laws did exist in Rochester NY, but were found to be unconstitutional by New York Court of Appeals. Jiovon Anonymous and Thomas Anonymous v. City of Rochester was the case in which this decision was ruled. A brief of this case can be found at: [caselaw.findlaw.com/ny-court-of-appeals/1038167.html](http://caselaw.findlaw.com/ny-court-of-appeals/1038167.html)

Juvenile curfew laws do exist in Buffalo, NY, which is 73.7 miles from Rochester, NY. Rochester NY curfews violated the due process right of parents as well as the rights of the juveniles. In Rochester parents were required to be with their child during curfew hours and were not able to allow their children to go anywhere during curfew hours. This is one of the reasons why the New York Court of Appeals found curfew laws in Rochester to be unconstitutional. In Buffalo NY parents are not required to be with the children during curfew hours. The juvenile curfew laws in the city of Buffalo call this "Normal travel", which is an exception to the ordinance when the minor has consent from his guardian. This is one of the reasons why Buffalo curfew laws aren’t unconstitutional.
8. Does it exist in other communities? If yes, where?

Yes, there are approximately 279 cities in the United States that have curfew law in place. Here are the cities in New York State that have curfew laws in place for young people.

- City of Buffalo NY
- City of Schenectady
- City of Troy
- City of Yonkers
- Village of Hilton


Yes, but there isn’t enough research done to determine the effectiveness of juvenile curfew laws. According to Adams (2003) study of the effectiveness of juvenile curfew at crime prevention, indicates that there isn’t a strong case in study the supports the effectiveness of curfew laws.


10. Provide a review of the research (at least 2 studies)

a. What was the research design?

David McDowall, Colin Loftin, and Brian Wiersema conducted a study on the impact of youth curfew laws on juvenile crime rates. To conduct this research on juvenile law the researchers use panel data from all 57 U.S. cities with a 1980 population of 250,000 or more (McDowall et al., 2000). They base their model on the changes in juvenile crime rates which is followed by a new or revised law. The study focus on the age range of 17 to 15 and the curfew law that being between 10:00pm and midnight and ended at 4:00 and 6:00am. For this research the laws treat as identical in every city, because the laws were highly similar in every city.
Kenneth Adams conducted a study on “The effectiveness of juvenile curfews at crime prevention”. The research was designed around a systematic review of research that was conducted for the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Group. Adams (2003) described that the studies that were reviewed had to meet the following three characteristics:

1. The study investigated the effects of a curfew statute that restricts the presence of juveniles on the street during certain hours.
2. The study included measures of public safety, criminal offense behavior, or victimization as outcome variables.
3. The study makes or allows for statistical comparisons of outcome variables before and after curfew implementation.

The researcher looked at both published and unpublished work for this study. Educational as well as professional databases were searched for studies. The Google search engine was also used to find information on juvenile curfew laws. Other approaches the researcher conducted were to write to other researchers and hand searches for research journals.

b. Describe the data.

McDowall, Loftin, and Wiersema used two different bodies of data for their study. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR), which shows data of the annual juvenile arrest totals. The arrest data used included ages 17 and younger and cover a variety of offenses. The time span of the data was a 12-year period between 1985 and 1996. The researchers point out that the UCR arrest counts suffer from unreported observations. The second body of data that is used in this research is statistics count of homicide victims age 17 or young. This data was obtained from tapes that were provided by the National Center for Health Statistics. This data will allow the researchers to study the effects of curfew laws on juvenile victimization. The data of homicide counts were longer than the data of arrest, so the researchers were able to cover a 20–year span between 1976 and 1995.

Adams used data from other research that were reviewed in other studies that relied on administrative data. These data sources collected in the 1900’s. The data was used to
measure changes in juvenile crime. The data sources that were analyzed in this study are as followed:

- State arrest records
- Police call for service records
- Police offense and gang records
- National Center Health Statistics
- Fatal accident reporting system
- Victimization records
- Police and the UCR arrest records
- Police arrest records
- State arrest records
- Homicide record

c. Summarize the findings.

Both research studies found that that crimes increases and decreases at time were juvenile curfew laws were established. The increases in the studies of arrest happen because juveniles were getting arrested for violating the curfew. Overall the studies do show decreases in larceny, simple assaults and burglary crimes, but these crimes end up increasing again. Thus, the findings suggest that curfew laws don’t really have impact on the reduction of juvenile crime and victimization.

11. How would you rate this program or strategy?

- Generally recognized as effective
- Good likelihood that it is effective
- Inconclusive
- Probably not effective
- Generally recognized as not effective
- Harmful or likely to be harmful

12. Explain your rating.

Research has shown that juvenile curfew laws do not reduce crime and victimization. In some case it does decreases crime, but these crimes occur mostly during other hours of the day and not during curfew hours. For the most part researchers show that juveniles are being arrest for violating curfew laws than any other crime. For these reasons I feel that curfew laws for young people do not impact the reduction of crime.

13. Finally, provide a one-paragraph summary of the program, the findings and your recommendation.

Juveniles curfew laws are establish to reduce criminal behavior committed by juveniles. The finding of the study of juvenile curfews indicates that there aren’t any
strong cases that show the effectiveness of these curfew laws. I feel that if a study was conducted in a city where there are no juvenile curfews laws and compare it to a city where there are curfews law will help give a better analysis of the effectiveness of curfew laws. Other recommendation will be to educate juveniles and family members about the importees of curfews laws.