



Hundreds of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs, District Attorneys,
other Law Enforcement Leaders, and Violence Survivors
Preventing Crime and Violence

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Santa Barbara County District Attorney Visits State Capitol to Seek Legislative Support for Crime-Prevention Programs

SACRAMENTO – Members of a statewide anti-crime organization made up of over 400 police chiefs, sheriffs, district attorneys and crime survivors visited the Capitol today to urge legislators and administration officials to protect state-funded programs scientifically proven to steer children away from crime.

Santa Barbara County District Attorney **Joyce Dudley** and other FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *California* members participated in individual meetings with 20 key policymakers.

"Law enforcement leaders from all over the state joined this effort because they understand that prevention is essential to a balanced crime-fighting strategy," said FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS State Director Barrie Becker. "Keeping youth engaged in school and on track for graduation is essential to keeping California safe and prosperous."

In their meetings with both Republican and Democratic legislators and administration officials, members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *California* called on elected officials to maintain state funding for programs that keep kids away from crime. Such initiatives include high school dropout prevention and after-school programs, high-quality preschool and mental health interventions for juvenile offenders and troubled youth.

Research demonstrates that kids who receive high-quality early education and care are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to ever become involved in crime. A child's early years of learning create large gains in brain development and socialization skills; one study found that at-risk kids who did not participate in a high-quality preschool program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18. Another study shows that preschool saves the public more than \$16 in corrections and welfare costs for every \$1 invested.

"Law enforcement leaders know that the most effective crime prevention strategies in our toolbox are improving access to high quality early learning and starting earlier to prevent truancy and dropouts by marshaling community resources to help struggling students stay engaged in school," said District Attorney Dudley.

To review FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *California's* complete 2011 legislative agenda, or to arrange an interview with a member of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, please contact Meghan Moroney at mmoroney@calfightcrime.org

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