

Crime  
Prevention  
Week  
Guide 2020

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Alberta Crime Prevention Week Guide

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## Introduction

Crime Prevention Week raises awareness of crime prevention strategies and educates individuals, groups and organizations about what they can do to improve safety in their communities.

Communities across the world are recognizing that traditional responses to crime, such as incarceration, are not effective at reducing and preventing crime on their own. By using proactive, non-punitive measures, crime prevention aims to address and remove factors that contribute to crime. These measures include:

- Promoting the well-being of people and encouraging pro-social behaviour through cultural, social, economic, health and educational programs and initiatives
- Changing the conditions in neighbourhoods that influence offending and victimization and the perception of crime
- Reducing the opportunities for crime
- Increasing the likelihood of criminals being apprehended
- Minimizing the benefits of crime

Crime Prevention Week began in Canada in 1983, when the federal government designated the first week of November as National Crime Prevention Week. In 1992, the Alberta government began celebrating the week with a provincial focus. In 1993, at the request of Alberta police services, the week was moved to the month of May to coincide with National Police Week.

Crime prevention is everyone's business. All Albertans are affected by crime in some way, either as a witness, as a direct victim, or as a friend, family member, or neighbour of those who have been victimized. It is estimated that one in six Albertans has been a victim of crime.

Crime prevention is a responsibility shared by individuals, families, neighbourhoods, municipalities, community-based service delivery agencies, the private sector, and all levels of government.

This guide is a tool to help you plan Crime Prevention Week events in your community. You will find a step-by-step event planning guide, ideas for different types of activities, tips on dealing with the media, as well as useful crime prevention resources.

## Event ideas

Developing and implementing a community event can be a fun, interesting process. Below are some ideas for possible Crime Prevention Week events.

### Community events

- Set up displays or information booths with local community crime prevention groups at your local mall, recreation centres, town hall, neighbourhood storefront or other public buildings. Encourage the presence of a law enforcement member.
- Seek out local corporate partnerships. Ask businesses in your neighbourhood to hang posters or sponsor a crime prevention event. Insurance companies, banks, or security companies may sponsor activities if asked.
- Work with local media (newspapers, television or radio, social media influencers, etc.) Suggest story ideas/interviews.
- Involve municipal, provincial and federal politicians. Create an opportunity for an MLA or mayor to do a media conference on local crime prevention issues.
- Set up your own award recognition night for crime prevention volunteers.
- Hold educational workshops on topics like personal safety, home safety, etc.
- Organize a walk or run for community crime prevention with local gyms or recreational centres.
- Ask an elected municipal official to proclaim Alberta Crime Prevention Week in your community (see the sample community proclamation on page 14).
- Invite local speakers to discuss crime prevention in schools, seniors' homes, recreation and community centres.
- Write a crime prevention article highlighting local crime prevention initiatives, tips and statistics for newspapers or newsletters in your area.
- Offer to create a display or ask about a potential open house at your local RCMP detachment or local law enforcement headquarters.
- Organize a neighbourhood walk or hold a crime prevention information night in your neighbourhood. Add a potluck, get to know your neighbours, and share information at the same time.
- Organize block parties in your neighbourhood as a way to get to know your neighbours, discuss issues and build a sense of community.

## Youth events

- Use social media. Set up a social media page and promote it through your followers. Ask local law enforcement agencies to promote the event through their social media channels.
- Record a promotional video and post it to social media.
- Propose a crime prevention poster, essay or video contest for junior or senior high school students.
- Organize a law enforcement student luncheon with presentations about crime prevention (e.g., personal safety, how to protect oneself against robbery etc.).
- Hold a student crime prevention get-to-know-your-peers event such as a classroom potluck, dance party, or assembly.
- Organize a student walk or run for community crime prevention with a local gym or recreational centre.
- Arrange a peer crime prevention award recognition night for students implementing crime prevention initiatives in their school (e.g., bullying awareness campaigns, addressing vandalism/graffiti problems, substance abuse awareness, etc.).
- Request your local law enforcement agency or school resource officer arrange or conduct a school safety audit.
- Adopt a park and keep it clean for the community.

## Events for specific community issues

**Crimes against seniors** - Hold a workshop at your local seniors' home or community centre to discuss seniors and crime prevention. Invite local law enforcement representatives and community service providers to discuss the topic of seniors' safety. Contact the Alberta Provincial Rural Crime Watch Association (Wise Owls Program) to arrange a presentation. To obtain materials for the presentation, go to: <https://www.alberta.ca/get-help-elder-abuse.aspx>.

**Fraud** - Speak with staff at local financial institutions, where appropriate, to find out more about financial fraud or go online and search for information from the [Alberta Securities Commission](https://www.alberta.ca/consumer-protection-complaints.aspx) or from Service Alberta at <https://www.alberta.ca/consumer-protection-complaints.aspx>. Invite a bank representative to speak at your event.

**Consumer safety** - Set up a booth in a local mall to teach people about how to protect themselves and their possessions when they are in public places. Hold an event to inform people about mass marketing fraud and what they can do to stay secure.

**Identity theft** - Hold a paper shredding event or promote existing paper shredding events. Invite local businesses and community members to shred their unwanted personal files, bills and banking information in order to raise awareness of identity theft. Visit the Alberta governments identify theft webpage at <https://www.alberta.ca/identity-theft.aspx> for materials.

**Home security** - Hold a community safety/get-to-know-your-neighbours social. Invite local police to discuss methods to improve home security.

**Business security** - Hold a business security social with local business owners. Invite local police to discuss methods to improve business security.

## Event planning

### Getting started

**Develop a planning committee** – determine your local crime prevention partners and invite representatives from organizations, such as police services, media, youth groups, schools, business associations, seniors' centres, community leagues and associations, faith-based organizations, cultural associations, and post secondary institutions. You can find a list of provincial crime prevention partners on page 17 of this document; some partners may have local branches.

**Engage the community** – discuss the kind of events that you think will interest your community. Your goal is to get citizens involved in activities that will help them feel safer in their homes, on their streets and in their communities.

**Make friends and partners** – look for ways to partner with other community crime prevention organizations, local businesses, schools and cultural centres to coordinate joint events or activities. For example, local businesses may make in-kind donations or donate food or supplies for your event, and local youth or seniors may be interested in volunteering.

## Questions to ask

Answering a few questions up front will help you plan for your event's unique needs and resources. You may have your own questions to add to the list, but the following will help you get started:

- What is the goal of the event? For example, is it to create awareness about a particular crime prevention issue or to create awareness about your organization?
- Will the date, time, and location of the event work for everyone involved? Does the date conflict with any other events in the community?
- Do you have time to successfully produce the event you want? Make sure to develop a detailed to-do list and budget early on.
- Is it possible to recruit sponsors to donate goods and services?
- Is weather a factor? Do you have an alternative plan, including a rain date or indoor location?
- If you want to attract media, ask yourself what is the story to tell? For example, you could share profiles of residents who are making a difference in interesting or unusual ways.
- Who will be the spokesperson? Whether media are invited to attend or not, it's important to designate someone who is comfortable, knowledgeable, and willing to speak with them.

## Step-by-step event checklist

- **Recruit an event committee and volunteers.** You may need help with promotion and media relations, corporate sponsorship, assisting speakers and exhibitors, set up and take down on event day, and general administration.
- **Establish your event goals and objectives.** Did you want to raise money or awareness? How many attendees are you hoping to get? Establishing this up front will make it easier to gauge the success of your event.
- **Select the date, time and location of the event.** And make sure it doesn't conflict with any other events taking place in the area, or any major holidays.
- **Identify a venue and negotiate details.**
- **Develop an event master plan.** Ironing out every detail will help ensure you don't miss a thing.

- **Create a realistic event budget.** Determine how much you have to spend and what your budgeting priorities are.
- **Get cost estimates.** Some costs you might need to consider are:
  - Room rental
  - Food and beverages
  - Equipment
  - Insurance
- **Brand your event.** Start building out an event website or pages on your website that describe the event. Develop an event logo and tagline.
- **Create and launch a publicity plan.** This includes ensuring staff and/or volunteers are identified to manage specific tasks – e.g., media relations, VIP coordination, printed material design and printing, signage, online/social media, etc.
- **Identify and confirm speakers/presenters/entertainers.** Who will you need on hand during the event?
- **Identify and contact sponsors/partners,** e.g. donations of time, physical space, food, paper, and drinks.
- **Contact your local dignitaries.** This could include your mayor, city councillor and/or MLA to find out if they may be planning or proclaiming Crime Prevention Week. If not, see if they will (see sample proclamation on page 14).

## On the day of the event

- Arrive at the site three hours in advance to make sure everything works, including the microphone, sound system, and other equipment.
- Brief your event participants and other volunteers before the event begins.
- Make sure speakers have their talking points.
- Greet reporters as they arrive, distribute press kits (refer to page 10), and introduce media to speakers and others they may wish to interview.

## After the event

- Monitor media coverage and respond to media inquiries.
- Follow up with potential new partners or anyone else who needs additional information.
- Follow up with those interested in getting involved with community crime prevention.

- Share the success of your event and email any pictures or media clippings with your partners, your community and the media.
- Don't forget to send thank-you notes.

## Event promotion

There are several tactics you can use to promote your event on a local scale:

- Create flyers, invitations, posters, banners, and other promotional materials. For crime prevention resources, contact partners listed on page 17 of this document.
- If your budget allows, buy advertising for your event.
- Invite local radio stations and other appropriate media to cover the event live and ask for opportunities to promote it in advance.
- Use social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to create events and invite guests.

## Media coverage

Generating media coverage for an event is easier than you think. This five-step process walks you through how to inform the media about an event.

1. Develop a media contact list that includes local radio and television stations, and daily and weekly newspapers. Identify all local media sources, including radio, television stations, weekly and daily newspapers, and any relevant social media sites.
2. Prepare a media notice and/or news release. Media notices and news releases are valued by reporters who are looking for story ideas (see the sample news release on page 12 of this guide).
3. E-mail the media notice to the contacts on the distribution list.
4. Respond promptly to any media inquiries about the event.
5. Assemble and distribute press kits. A press kit can inform the media about the why the event is important and usually includes:
  - A news release
  - Biographies of speakers and profiles of the organizations they represent
  - Questions and answers

## Media interview tips

- Plan visual opportunities for television media or photographers (e.g., demonstrations or simulated activities).
- Prepare in advance. Make note of important points and key messages. Prepare messaging on a variety of topics/questions, even negative ones. Find opportunities to reinforce positive messages.
- If the reporter does not ask, find an opportunity to highlight these points.
- Listen carefully to make sure you understand the reporter's questions. Clarify if necessary.
- Remember when talking with a reporter; there is no such thing as "off the record." You can still be quoted even when the camera or tape recorder is off.
- Keep your answers brief, specific and on topic.
- If you don't have the answer to a question, tell the reporter you don't know and will get back to them with information. Then do it.

## Media notice template

A media notice is used to invite reporters to cover an event. It should be brief and to the point. Make it interesting and newsworthy.

### Headline summarizes story (50 characters or less)

#### Month XX, 2020

Lead should convey in a single, full grammatical sentence the most important aspect of the event.

Body content should convey enough information for media to determine what the story is about, but not give away the news prematurely.

#### When

Insert Date

Insert Start time

#### Location

Insert location

Insert directions or include link to Google Maps if necessary

#### Participants

Insert list of participants (Name, title)

#### Additional information

Insert additional details if applicable

#### Media inquiries

Name

Email

587-XXX-XXX

## **News release template**

A news (or press) release includes more detail than an advisory, and provides more in depth information about an event and/or issue. It should be no longer than one page.

### **Headline summarizes story (50 characters or less)**

#### **Month XX, 2020**

Lead should convey in a single, full grammatical sentence the most important aspect of the story, including the audience affected and the call to action.

Body content should use plain language (including terms the audience uses) and short paragraphs. Provide details about local activities and/or projects including specific locations, timing and expected impact.

#### **Use sub-header to introduce new topic**

Use sub-heads and/or bullets to break up long text and improve readability.

“Quotes support the message and commitment to initiative but do not contain new information.”  
(about 300 characters)

*Name, then title*

#### **Media inquiries**

Contact Name

Email

Phone

Title, Organization

## Sample Crime Prevention Week proclamation

The week of May XX to XX, 2020 has been designated as Crime Prevention Week in Alberta, and in recognition thereof, communities throughout the province are actively participating in this event, and;

Whereas (insert community name) wishes to heighten public awareness of crime prevention by working together with crime prevention groups and citizens throughout the province, and;

Whereas our goal is to build a strong community which discourages crime and works cooperatively with law enforcement agencies, crime prevention groups, communities, schools, youth groups, faith based partners, cultural groups, and businesses to build public awareness and involvement in crime prevention activities, and;

Whereas the success of crime prevention depends on people working together in families, neighbourhoods, businesses and community organizations to build safe healthy communities while working in tandem with local law enforcement agencies;

May XX to May XX, YEAR, inclusive, shall be known as:

“Crime Prevention Week”

in (Community Name), Alberta.

## Sustaining activities

Crime prevention awareness and education shouldn't be limited to one week of the year. There are several steps you can take to promote crime prevention throughout the year, such as:

- Creating a committee or board, by using the Alberta government's [board development program](#).
- Organizing a community meeting and getting everyone involved in identifying pressing crime challenges in your community (e.g., graffiti, suspected drug houses, prostitution).
- Partnering and mobilizing with local resources (e.g., law enforcement and/or your local municipality/school) to get everyone involved and discover what may already be going on in your community.

## Fundraising considerations

There are many funding avenues which may assist your community crime prevention efforts.

View the following resources for more information:

- The Edmonton Community Foundation has [community grants](#) which may support your crime prevention goals.
- Look around in your community, identify potential corporate sponsors and make an inventory list (e.g., hotels or motels, retail stores, phone and cable companies, media outlets, coffee shops or banks).

If you plan to ask people in your community to donate to your fund-raising campaign or solicit contributions that will be used for a charitable purpose, you need to follow the rules set out in [Alberta's Charitable Fund - Raising Act and Regulations](#). These rules are to protect potential donors from false and misleading requests for donations, and to ensure the public has sufficient information to make informed decisions when contributing.

The Alberta government provides information about [starting a non-profit organization](#), including what needs to be registered as a charitable organization, how to apply, as well as the rules to be followed by anyone requesting charitable donations.

## Embracing cultural diversity

It's important to plan culturally diverse and inclusive community events. Cultural differences and values should be appreciated and respected. Community events and Crime Prevention Week activities are an integral part of creating healthy communities; they are a perfect opportunity to learn from each other and showcase our province's multicultural spirit.

The following principles should apply to your event:

- No person or group is excluded. People from all backgrounds are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities.
- Decisions about the venue and any potential catering are considerate of the needs of those from diverse groups (e.g., there are culturally appropriate foods/drinks).
- Advertising for the event is culturally sensitive.

## Cultural considerations

- Which cultural communities are in your neighbourhood or community?
- Are different cultural communities' experiences reflected in the way crime issues are identified?
- How are these communities impacted by crime in your neighbourhood or municipality?
- Contact leaders of cultural associations. Reach out and inform them about the event you are planning and ask them to join your Crime Prevention Week planning committee.
- Measure the effect of the planned activity with the cultural communities you involve; seek feedback (verbal or otherwise); make room for improvements for next year.

## Provincial crime prevention partners

### **Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association**

Lower Main, Condon Building  
1609 -14 Street S.W.  
Calgary, AB T3C 1E4  
Phone: (403) 313-2566  
Fax: (403) 313-2569  
Email: [administrator@albertacrimeprevention.com](mailto:administrator@albertacrimeprevention.com)  
<https://www.albertacrimeprevention.com/>

### **Alberta Citizens on Patrol Association**

#204, 9928 – 105 Street  
Westlock, AB T7P 1S7  
Phone: (780) 307-8226  
Email: [president@acopa.ca](mailto:president@acopa.ca)  
<https://www.acopa.ca/>

### **Alberta Provincial Rural Crime Watch Association**

P.O. Box 4520  
Edmonton, AB T6E 4T7  
Phone: (780) 446-0561  
Email: [aprcwa@ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca](mailto:aprcwa@ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca)  
<https://www.ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca/>

### **Wise Owls Program**

P.O. Box 4520  
Edmonton, AB T6E 4T7  
Phone: (780) 446-0561  
Email: [aprcwa@ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca](mailto:aprcwa@ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca)  
<https://www.ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca/wise-owl>

### **Public Safety Canada**

Phone: 1-800-830-3118  
Email: [prevention@ps-sp.gc.ca](mailto:prevention@ps-sp.gc.ca)  
<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/>

**REACH Edmonton: Council for Safe Communities**

Suite 901 Baker Centre  
10025-106 Street NW  
Edmonton, AB T5J 1G4  
Phone: (780) 498-1231  
Fax: (780) 498-1266

[info@reachedmonton.ca](mailto:info@reachedmonton.ca)

[www.reachedmonton.ca](http://www.reachedmonton.ca)

Facebook: @reachedmonton

Twitter: @REACHedmonton

**RCMP/municipal police**

For RCMP in Edmonton: (780) 412-5424

For RCMP in Calgary: (403) 699-2401

To find your nearest RCMP detachment, visit: <https://www.ruralcrimewatch.ab.ca/resources/rcmp-divisions>.

For comments or questions about this guide, please contact:

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