

County of San Diego METHAMPHETAMINE

STRIKE FORCE

PREVENTION

INTERVENTION

TREATMENT

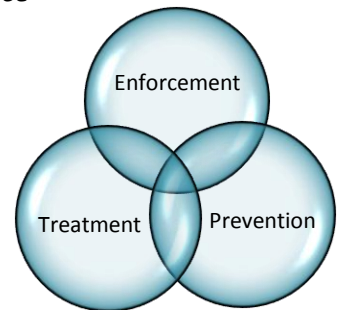
INTERDICTION

Operation Tip the Scale: Partners Making a Difference

Tip the Scale is a collaborative operation where probation, local law enforcement, substance abuse treatment, child welfare and prevention advocates work together to promote the concept that you can get busted if you're not compliant with court orders and probation conditions. This deterrent effect has demonstrated outcomes in preventing DUI's – The Strike Force believes Tip the Scale produces similar deterrent effects.

How Do Tip Operations Work?

Since March 2009, a total of ten operations have been conducted in San Diego County. A “host” law enforcement agency convenes the right partners to reflect the area—critical to the success of the operation. Probation identifies target cases with drug-related issues and works up detailed information to guide mixed teams of Probation and other officers to conduct compliance checks to assure individuals are complying with the identified terms and conditions. Additionally, a variety of local resources are given to each contact and/or family member.



If someone is found in violation, they are arrested and meet with a treatment professional during the booking process. This “teachable moment” is a brief conversation to encourage engagement in drug treatment. Child welfare workers are on hand to ensure children are taken into protective custody if endangered by a parents’ drug use.

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Methamphetamine: Mark Curtis, left, and county Probation Officer Jason Brinson affect the handcuffs on two women after they were arrested on suspicion of selling under the influence of meth to a dog in cooperation by Vista on Thursday morning. ©2009 by North County Times

Prevention advocates work with the media to cover the story by arranging media ride-alongs and promoting opinion pieces in print media. Media coverage informs the community what the goals of the project are. Each operation has generated four to ten media ‘hits’ in both TV news and print mediums, as well as very positive letters to the editor in the weeks following operations.

Tip the Scale operations utilize existing and in-kind resources from partner agencies: the Sheriff Department has leveraged services and transportation services. Treatment and child welfare workers fit the evening operations into schedules without overtime.

What are the Benefits?

In the East region, after five operations over a year, property and violent crime rates dropped lower than countywide reductions. Additionally, local teams report increased collaboration across agencies and disciplines on other projects resulting from relationships established during Tip the Scale projects. Each operation tracks detailed information on arrests, treatment conversations, information packet distribution, media coverage and calls to the Meth Hotline. More information is available at www.no2meth.org