

Approved: January 26, 1995
Date

MINUTES OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE CRIME.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson David Adkins at 9:00 a.m. on January 19, 1995 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present .

Committee staff present: Leah Robinson, Legislative Research Department
Don Cawby, Legislative Research Department
Jill Wolters, Revisor of Statutes
Gordon Self, Revisor of Statutes
Leona Fultz, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Michael Ruiz, Partnership for Children

Others attending: See attached list

David Adkins introduced Michael Ruiz, an ex-gang member, to the committee. Michael gave a presentation on the "Squash-It" program being used in the Kansas City area (Attachment 1).

The Committee meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for January 24, 1995.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON JUV. CRIME COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: January 19, 1995

NAME	REPRESENTING
Jane Adams	Keys for Networking
Jeremy Kohn	Kansas Sentencing Comm's
Duane Waterworth	Division of the Budget
Craig Grant	KNEA
Susan Chase	KNEA
Diane Gjerstad	USD 259
Joenda (Jo) Taylor	KDHE Bureau CY+P
Connie Hammer	KDHE - BOPF
Cadyn Ward	Attorney General
M. Martin	Sedgewick County
Julie Wright	Wichita Eagle
Kathie Sparks	Div. of Budget
Jan Johnson	Dept of Corrections
Mark Gleason	Office of Judicial Administration

VIOLENCE



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SIG PURWIN
Select Committee on Juvenile Crime
January 19, 1995
Attachment 1

SQUASH IT Campaign In Brief



- *Squash It* is a campaign aimed at curbing youth violence by promoting a social norm that says 'it is cool and smart to walk away' from an escalating confrontation.
- The *Squash It* campaign utilizes the mass media, at the national level, to convey the message.
 - ∞ Public service announcements will air on MTV
 - ∞ AMC Theaters will display a pre-movie slide which shares the *Squash It* message.
 - ∞ References to Squash It will be utilized in storylines of television programs
- At the **local level** - the Squash It message will be conveyed on:
 - ∞ billboards
 - ∞ bus signs
 - ∞ newspaper racks
 - ∞ t-shirts
 - ∞ posters
 - ∞ TV and radio through Public Service Announcement's (produced locally and nationally)
- The *Squash It* campaign in Kansas City is led by young people, the Partnership for Children and adult leadership from the community.
- The *Squash It* campaign in Kansas City also addresses Alternatives to Violence. The Kansas City youth have identified four areas to address:
 - ∞ A safe place to go when they are not in school
 - ∞ Employment
 - ∞ Skills in conflict resolution
 - ∞ An adult they can talk to(See Background sheet for more detailed information)
- *Squash It* was developed by Dr. Jay Winsten, Director of the Center for Health Communication, Harvard School of Public Health, who is also credited with developing the designated drivers campaign
- Kansas City is the first metropolitan area to bring *Squash It* to the local level

BACKGROUND

SQUASH IT Campaign Public Awareness/Media



Squash It is a campaign to prevent youth violence. The goal is to curb youth violence by promoting a social norm that says it's cool and smart to walk away from confrontations. It seeks to empower youth to diffuse potentially violent confrontations by using an easily understood hand gesture. The gesture along with the verbal cue *Squash It* would indicate that the persons involved in the confrontation no longer feel 'it's worth it' to fight.

Dr. Jay Winsten, Director of Harvard's Center for Health Communication, came up with this relatively simple idea for attempting to decrease levels of youth violence after he found the phrase *Squash It* was already an integral part of urban street life. Dr. Winsten and his colleague, Susan Moses, the Center's Deputy Director, combined the phrase *Squash It* with a hand gesture to provide a non-verbal cue. The hand gesture--a stylized "T" based on the time-out gesture in sports-- is formed when the palm of a flat hand comes down onto a vertical clinched fist.

Harvard's Center for Health Communication created and implemented the Designated Driver Campaign in 1988. According to Winsten, the designated driver message promotes a social norm that the driver should not drink and gives social legitimacy to the non-drinking role. Three years into the campaign the term "designated driver" was in the dictionary and 40% of Americans had served as designated drivers. Winsten anticipates the *Squash It* message could be as successful as the Designated Driver Campaign.

The campaign will rely on a **mass media effort** at the national level to help get the message out, including:

- Commitment from writers to incorporate the *Squash It* message into storylines for television shows
- National theater chain sharing messages on pre-movie slides
- Public service announcements featuring celebrity spokesperson(s)
- National poster to display in schools, community businesses, etc.

Locally, in the Kansas City area, the Partnership for Children worked with area youth to develop local media/public awareness efforts, such as:

- T-shirts based on a young artist's design
- Public service announcement for television
- Billboards based on the national poster
- Bus signs
- Radio public service announcements
- Specialized StarTouch number

SQUASH IT Campaign Alternatives to Violence



• OPEN SCHOOLS

Ramon McGlothen, *Squash It* youth, explains the need for a safe place to go after school. "A lot of kids have two choices, they can watch TV or hang out. We all know what hanging out can lead to..." shares McGlothen. Local youth serving agencies offer excellent programs in a safe environment but, like in many cities, the demand in Kansas City far exceeds the availability. *Squash It* leaders are seeking a commitment from area school districts to utilize the school buildings during non-school hours. The Kansas City, Missouri School District, one of the area's largest, has committed to opening 30 schools within the next 18-24 months for young people. Leadership and programming at these school centers will be provided by youth serving agencies with financial support from the community.

• CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

In order to walk away from an escalating confrontation, young people say they need the skills. "You can't just one day decide you're gonna walk away when somebody's frontin' you. It's hard to back down, you have to practice and learn how," explains Chris Hill. That's where the Conflict Management component of *Squash It* comes in to play. Community leaders and youth are worked to select a training which youth trainers will deliver to other young people. The training will begin to teach them skills to deal with anger and give them needed techniques to walk away from escalating confrontations. This training is seen as a complement to Conflict Resolution training many school districts deliver. Adults who work or live with youth will be offered the training, in order to offer support to young people trying to utilize non-violent solutions to disagreements. Youth trainers have completed their training and are ready to work with other young people. (See attached Request Form.)

• MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT - YouthWork

Youth share that having employment provides a meaningful alternative to hanging out. The Partnership for Children is working with organizations on both sides of the state line to provide youth with jobs in a relationship building employment setting. Employing youth during the summer, into the school year and through the following summer would help build a relationship between the young employee and the employer. "Having a job should help prepare you for your future. Employers need to help us learn and gain skills," states Torrie McDonald, who has been involved in the *Squash It* campaign from the beginning. This component gives the youth a sense of hope for the future.

• ROLE MODELS - YouthFriends

All youth agree that having an adult to turn to and be there for them is essential, but they also agree that many young people today do not have an adult like this in their life. YouthFriends, a program to provide area youth with a positive adult role model, is currently being implemented. The first wave of YouthFriends involves six area school districts who provide the youth and help identify the adults to serve as mentors. The YMCA of Greater Kansas City will screen and train all volunteers. (See enclosed packet on YouthFriends)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING REQUEST FORM

PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

1055 Broadway, Suite 170

Kansas City MO 64105

(816) 842-7643

The training will be two sessions of two hours. You must fill out and return this form to the above address, at least two weeks before the date of the training; The Partnership for children reserves the rights to request additional information or refuse to provide this free training if necessary. Training will be available weekends and week days after 4:00pm. In addition to this, an adult must be present at the training for its duration and the group of 10-18 years old should not be larger than twenty (20).

Name of organization: _____ () _____
(church, school, etc.) phone

Address:

_____ street _____ city _____ state _____ zip

Name of contact person: _____

Phone: Home () _____ Work () _____

Desired training date: ____/____/____/ ____/____/____/ ____/____/____/
1st choice 2nd choice 3rd choice

Time of training: _____ 1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____ 3rd choice

Location of training: (If different from above) _____

Please list the name(s) and telephone number(s) of adults who will be present at training:

_____ () _____
_____ () _____
_____ () _____

Number of youth to be trained _____ Age range _____ to _____

How well do these young people know each other? Very well well hardly not sure
circle one

Which of the following will be available at the training site. (check all that apply)

_____ overhead _____ flip chart _____ chalk board _____ markers