

CURFEW SWEEPS: KEEPING YOUTH SAFE

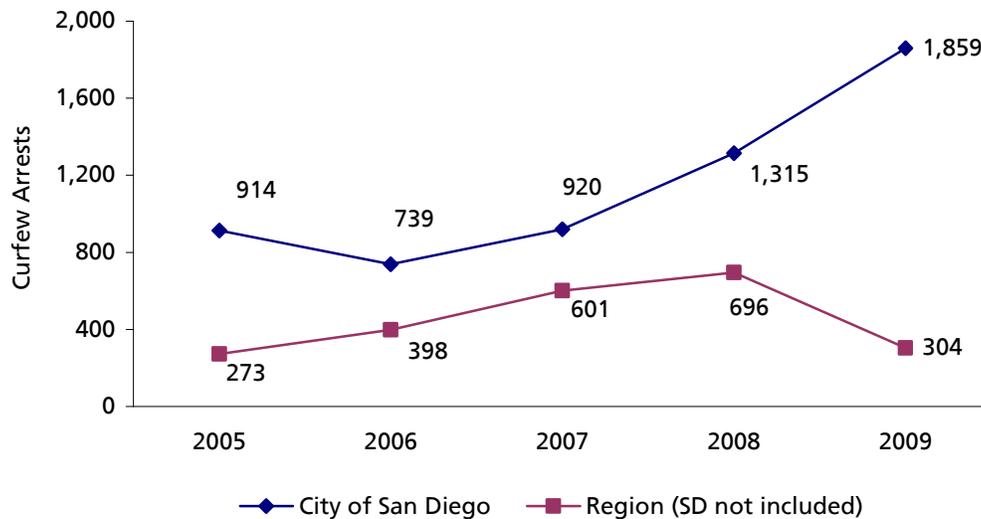
Juvenile curfew laws have been widely used in cities across the United States since the early 1990s to prevent youth delinquency and victimization.¹ The San Diego Police Department (SDPD) has made reducing juvenile gang involvement, delinquency, and victimization a priority by working collectively with the community, schools, the San Diego County Probation Department, and the City of San Diego Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention in conducting monthly curfew sweeps since 2008.

"Today's youth face a more dangerous world than we ever imagined. The results of juvenile victimization, gang proliferation, and juvenile homicides have led to an increased urgency to keep our youth off the streets during curfew hours." **SDPD Lt. in charge of curfew sweeps**

During these curfew sweep operations, police officers pick up youth who are out later than 10 p.m. (curfew time in the City of San Diego) and bring them to a school or community center where they are provided linkages to services. Youth with no previous criminal history are offered a four- to six-week diversion course provided by community organizations participating in the sweeps, or a youth can accept the citation and appeal it in court. The intent of the collaborative sweeps is to offer youth and their families support in the community. In 2009, 61 percent of the youth arrested during the sweeps were diverted to services rather than cited for a curfew violation (not shown). Figure 1 shows how curfew arrests in the City of San Diego more than doubled after the SDPD implemented the sweeps in 2008, which was the opposite trend for the rest of the region.

Figure 1

CITY OF SAN DIEGO CURFEW ARRESTS INCREASE SINCE START OF CURFEW SWEEPS



SOURCE: SANDAG, 2010

¹ Ruefle, W. J. & K.M. Reynolds. (1996). Keep Them at Home: Juvenile Curfew Ordinances in 200 American Cities. *American Journal of Police*, 15, 63-84.