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### **Partnerships in Action**

#### **Mercer Launches New Juvenile Supervision Program - Project Safe Neighborhood**

The Mercer Vicinage Probation Division in partnership with the Trenton City Police Department and the Juvenile Justice Commission began implementation of a new juvenile supervision program to address the needs of the community while supervising juvenile offenders and monitoring their overall performance. Project Safe Neighborhood seeks to improve the enforcement of juvenile court orders, increase the safety of the community, enhance services to juvenile offenders and assist the partnering agencies in developing and sharing new resources.

Officers from the three partnering agencies will be in the community during off business hours to monitor activities of known juvenile offenders by visiting their homes and neighborhoods. Curfew checks as well as the execution of outstanding warrants are an integral part of the project.

Mercer Vicinage Chief Probation Officer Frank DiGiaino explained, "One of the main goals of Project Safe Neighborhood is to reduce the number of crimes committed by juveniles on probation or parole. Project Safe Neighborhood increases the odds that violation of conditions of supervision will be detected early by the officers assigned to the initiative. The intervention comes more quickly if the juvenile offender's adjustment begins to decline."

Project Safe Neighborhood recognizes the importance of incentives that encourage lawful behavior. Officers participating in the project will emphasize the need for education and employment, while promoting fairness in the development of a strong, viable community partnership.

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